Remapping the Rhetorical Situation in Networked Culture

Ramesh Pokharel

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2021

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is built on the research I did for my PhD dissertation at the University of Texas at El Paso. First, I want to acknowledge Dr. Beth Brunk-Chavez (my supervisor), Dr. Evelyn Posey (the second reader) and Dr. Stacy Sowards (outside reader) for providing me with valuable suggestions for the completion of my dissertation. I would like to give Dr. Beth Brunk-Chavez credit for her prompt, encouraging, constructive and critical feedback and suggestions, enabling the completion of my dissertation. I am always extremely grateful to her. Likewise, I would also like to thank all my professors, cohorts, friends, and relatives, who helped me to complete my dissertation in one way or another.

A long time has elapsed since I completed my dissertation and started working to give it the shape of a book, which required incorporating new sources and updating information. During this time, my life partner kept me nudging me to write a book. So, I acknowledge her, for her encouragement and support to complete this book, which otherwise would have been impossible.

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Ramesh Pokharel
March 12, 2021, Toronto, Canada

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In simple terms, the rhetorical situation means the contexts in which a communicative artifact takes place. Understanding the rhetorical situation in any communicative practice makes the communication effective. The traditional notions of the rhetorical situation primarily focus on, and around, Bitzer's (1968) theory that conceives the rhetorical situation as something 'real', 'genuine', or 'objective', based on historic reality. However, this conception of the rhetorical situation limits our understanding about it in a broader sense because it cannot capture the changed meaning that naturally exists with the impact of new media and technology. With the advent of new media and technology, the notion of the rhetorical situation has also changed, and thus, there is an exigence of a new theory of rhetorical situations that better incorporates the new notions. This book remaps the rhetorical situation and proposes a new theory on it which better incorporates the changed/changing notions of it, given the impact of new media and technology. I'm remapping a complete and updated picture of the rhetorical situation by bringing together critical theory of technology and theory of critical geography, along with rhetoric and language theory, and proposing a new, more viable, theory of the rhetorical situation, namely, "The Rhetorical Situation as Trans-situational Networked Ecology" which has more explanatory power, and in which I account for, frame, critique, and analyze, the fundamental assumptions and beliefs on rhetorical situations. This theory conceives the constituents of rhetorical situations as indiscrete and non-linear entities. Moreover, the elements of the rhetorical situation have multiple layers of relationships; a networked system connected as an ecology. The rhetorical situation involves a plurality of the constituents of the rhetorical situation with complex, recursive, and co-adaptive relations. The rhetorical situation, as a complex thing, involves the rhetor, audience, subject, occasion, and speech in disjunctive, but networked, relationships in an ecology. These components are in constant relationships, mutually influencing each other, and, thus, co-adaptive. This is an innovative way to study the rhetorical situation from a new light.

        The notion of the rhetorical situation traces back to the notion of
kairos as expressed in the rhetoric of classical philosophers like Plato,
Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and others. The ancient Greeks used *kairos* in
a more or less similar sense to the way the rhetorical situation is used
nowadays. Sipiora (2002) stated: as "a fundamental notion in ancient
Greeks, *kairos* carried a number of meanings in classical rhetorical theory
and history, including 'symmetry', 'propriety', 'occasion', 'due measure',
'fitness', 'tact', 'decorum', 'convenience', 'proportion', 'fruit', 'profit',
and 'wise moderation', to mention some of the more common uses" (1).
An underlying sense of all these meanings of *kairos* is "the right or
opportune time to do something or right measure in doing something"
(Kinneavy 2002, 58). This meaning of *kairos* resembles the meaning of a
constituent of the rhetorical situation as generally used today. Another
term that is verisimilitude to the notion of the rhetorical situation is
'rhetorical stance' first used by Wayne C. Booth (1963) to mean the
rhetorical situation. Both *kairos* and 'rhetorical stance', though similar to
the rhetorical situation as used today, are actually closer to the partial
meaning of the rhetorical situation. In fact, they can be better understood
as constituents of the rhetorical situation because it has a much broader
meaning than *kairos* or 'rhetorical stance'.
        Broadly speaking, the rhetorical situation means the context and
its constituents that create a context for a communication to happen. The
basic factors that generate an artifact include the writer or speaker, the
audience, the purpose, the topic, and the medium, or the context or culture
in which a writer writes, or a speaker speaks. When a writer writes, or a
speaker speaks, his or her personal characteristics and interest affect what
s/he writes or speaks about, and how s/he writes or speaks about it.
Moreover, the writer's age, experiences, gender, location, political beliefs,
parents and peers, education, and background, in other words, affect the
writing and speaking. Likewise, the reason for writing, genre, topic,
context (situation that generates the need for writing) and audience also
affect writing. All these phenomena in totality comprise the rhetorical
situation. Thus, understanding the notion of the rhetorical situation as a
whole will help students, scholars, and teachers in the field of rhetoric and
composition, writing studies, communications, film studies, philosophy,
and literature. It will also benefit general practitioners of communicative
arts, rhetoricians, politicians, and media people, as it provides them with a
solid grasp of the context in which they practice and use rhetorics.
Developing a comprehensive understanding of the rhetorical situation
empowers, more specifically, both undergraduate and graduate students
with the rhetorical acumen needed for effectively communicating their

ideas rhetorically. Because this book introduces the topic for beginners, and then offers a fair amount of specialist knowledge, all beginners, generalists, and experts, will benefit from it. This book introduces the rhetorical situation as a fundamental idea in the field of communications, rhetoric, writing, and composition, that is widely taught or researched, thereby extending its international appeal to the audience across the world.

A fully-fledged theory of the rhetorical situation was initiated by Bitzer's (1968) *The Rhetorical Situation* and followed by a three decades-long response of theories that reassert, re-examine, and contend with Bitzer's model. However, regarding several notions of the rhetorical situation, this book presents some dissonance with some of the writers like Bitzter (1968), Miller (1972), Jamieson (1973, 1975), Patton (1979), Kneupper (1980) and Grant-Davie (1997), who tend to define rhetorical situations as something 'real', 'genuine', or 'objective', based on historic reality. For them, events are inherently meaningful and objectively real, and so are the rhetorical situations. I believe that this modernist tendency to conceive the constituents of the rhetorical situation as objectively real, and discrete entities can be detrimental to understanding it in a broader sense, as it promotes modernist containment, and, thus, cannot capture the changed meaning that naturally exists with the impact of new media and technology, consequently limiting the scope of the rhetorical situation. As a result, this confining tendency makes it stagnant. The rhetorical situation is not a self-contained objective fact, or a determinate phenomenon, so I argue that the rhetorical situation conceived as a self-contained and determinate phenomenon does not truly capture the fluid and indeterminate nature of the rhetorical situation. The rhetorical situation is a complex thing, not discretely born, but rather linked with discursive formation and indeterminate relation, because it could be better understood as multiple and plural entity, as it fosters indeterminate and various responses. Contrary to the generally conceived notion, I believe that the rhetorical situation is a purely subjective phenomenon, because a rhetorical discourse exists in response to the exigency based on the perception, interest, beliefs, attitude, and motives of the rhetor on given shared common experience and communication culture. To sum up, the rhetorical situation as a subjective phenomenon involves a plurality of exigencies and complex relations between the audience and rhetorician's interest, thereby making it more interactive with other elements of the situation. I also contend with the classification of rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourse by Bitzer and argue that the use of language is rhetorical in itself because all the discourses have the power to modify the existing beliefs, and to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the world. These gaps in our scholarship lead to

my broad and fundamental question of inquiry regarding the rhetorical situation: *In the period of 1968-2020, how have the concept of the rhetorical situation and its various naming permutations been variously characterized? Moreover, how does the emergence of new media and technology compel the revision of our notions of the rhetorical situation? What theories can help the revision of our notions of the rhetorical situation? What does the rhetorical situation as trans-situational networked ecology indicate for the discipline of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies?*

       With the advent of new media and technology, the notion of the rhetorical situation has also changed, and thus, there is an exigency of a new theory of the rhetorical situation that better incorporates the new notion of the rhetorical situation germinated by the emergence of new media and technology. For example, new media and technology have broken the traditional relationships between the writer, audience, exigence, and constraints, and have blurred the division among them to some extent. In this context, I believe the existing modernist notion of the rhetorical situation does not fully express the changed meaning that naturally exists in the notions of the rhetorical situation with the impact of new media and technology. Consequently, it limits the scope and understanding of the rhetorical situation because this confining tendency is likely to make the notion of the rhetorical situation that does not incorporate the changed/changing situation stagnant, thereby giving only an 'incomplete' picture. So, by researching how the concept of the rhetorical situation has changed over time, particularly given the impact of new media and technology, I propose a new stance to look at the notion of the rhetorical situation that fits the changed situation and makes the picture more complete. In order to do so, I engage the philosophical inquiry on the rhetorical situations, in which I account for, frame, critique, and analyze, the fundamental assumptions and beliefs on the rhetorical situations, and finally propose a theory that extends the existing notion of the rhetorical situations and, thus, expresses the changed/changing meaning. Here, I speculate that theories of the rhetorical situation are not monolithic, and that we need to understand them more thoroughly, and that scholarship in areas such as new media studies may use terms other than rhetorical situation, and we need to better understand how such terms do, or ought to, enlarge our conception of the concept.

       Keeping in mind the task of exploring how the rhetorical situation and its various naming permutations have been variously characterized, I aim to position this book as a meaningful contribution to the scholarship in the discipline of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies.

In other words, this book inculcates the rhetorical tendency to search for discrepancies from existing 'norms' and seeks to locate the urgency for a new notion that better describes and explains the rhetorical situation in our contemporary moment. In order to do so, I first conduct an historical mapping that collects various characterizations of the rhetorical situation from 1968-2020, and then I analyze these existing notions of the rhetorical situation, problematize them from a postmodern perspective, and explore the need to conceive the rhetorical situation from a new perspective. To do the historical mapping, I map the existing notions of the rhetorical situation and then remap it, thereby illustrating why some existing theories cannot address the change in the notions of rhetorical situations, and why there is an exigence for a new theory. Specifically, I engage in an examination of the historical and contemporary situatedness that shapes and reshapes the meaning of the rhetorical situation, by bringing in a postmodern reading of rhetoric that includes language, subjectivity, reality, space/place, technology theory, and new media, along with their relationships in defining the rhetorical situation. It is my strong belief that we cannot have strong Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies that continue to be relevant to current communications practices without seriously and continuously examining the history relative to our contemporary situation. This book is built upon Berlin and Inkster's (1980) critique and evaluation of how the current-traditional paradigm construes the elements of the communication triangle: in reality, the writer, the audience, and the discourse. By bringing in their insights, I map, remap, and re-examine the concurring Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny position that developed scholarship on the rhetorical situation. In so doing, I also re-examine the consecutive theories and debate which reasserted, re-examined and critiqued their theories, and, in some cases, called for some new approaches to understanding the rhetorical situation in order to fit in the changed situation, particularly given the impact of new media and technology.

Understanding the rhetorical situations is the fundamental and the most important thing in order to understand any communicative practice. In his seminal essay, "The Rhetorical Situation", Bitzer (1968) first theorized the rhetorical situation, though its concept existed before, in different terms. He described three constituents of any rhetorical situation necessary prior to discourse — exigence, audience, and constraints — which "comprise everything relevant in a rhetorical situation" (8). Bitzer's conception of the rhetorical situation reflects his realist view of an objective, external reality, and, in this sense, the rhetorical situations are 'real' or 'genuine' based on historic reality and independent of rhetorical

discourse (11). For Bitzer, then, a rhetorical discourse is secondary — a response to the "demands imposed by the situation" (5). Thus, he takes it as a given that "rhetoric is situational" (3). While Miller (1972), Jamieson (1973, 1975), Patton (1979), Kneupper (1980), and Grant-Davie (1997) followed Bitzer's model of the rhetorical situation, some others like Vatz (1973), Consigny (1974), Larson (1970), Wilkerson (1970), Baxter and Kennedy (1975), Hunsaker and Smith (1976), Biesecker (1989), Crismore and Vande Kopple (1990), Garret and Xiao (1993), Benoit (1994), Smith and Lybarger (1996), Gorrell (1997), and Edbaur (2005) problematized Bitzer's classification and definition of the rhetorical situation in one way or another. In this context, I situate my book in the exploration of the debate on the rhetorical situation, show my dissonance with some existing notions of the rhetorical situation, and argue for the exigence for new theory, by borrowing the arguments of the scholars as mentioned above, and extending them to fit in the new context, given the impact of new media and technology. In the following part, I briefly describe and analyze their arguments in order to situate my position in it.

Of so many scholars who argued for, or against, Bitzer's model of the rhetorical situation, three theories of the rhetorical situation as articulated by Lloyd Bitzer (1968), Richard Vatz (1973), and Scott Consigny (1974), in fact, lay the foundation to theorize the rhetorical situation along with ongoing debate on it. As I mentioned above, Bitzer's realist view of an objective, external reality lays the foundation of the rhetorical situation on the one hand while, on the other, it excites a shower of criticism. While Arthur B. Miller (1972) further elaborated the meaning and significance of exigence as defined and conceptualized by Bitzer, and, thus, treats exigence as the most important of all constituents of the rhetorical situations, Richard E. Vatz (1973) in *The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation* critiqued Bitzer's realist conception of the rhetorical situations as objective historic facts, suggesting instead an opposing perspective based on a different philosophy of meaning, including a different view of the relationships between rhetoric and 'situations'(154), thereby providing a contrary notion about the relationship between rhetoric and situations. Vatz believed that 'events' do not exist objectively in reality but are instead 'created' by choosing facts and translating meaning in rhetorical discourse (157). Vatz argued that the rhetorical situation is not self-contained objective fact, and contended along the line of Larson (1970) and Wilkerson (1970) to problematize Bitzer's classification of rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourse, and argued that the use of language is rhetorical in itself, because all discourses have the power to modify

existing beliefs and to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the world (Larson 1970, Nietzsche 1989).

In *Rhetoric and Its Situations*, Scott Consigny (1974) attempted to resolve the "antinomy for a coherent theory of rhetoric" resulting from Bitzer's and Vatz's opposing conceptions of the rhetorical situation, (176) and assuming that there are "the indeterminate phenomena of a situation" (178). He proposed "rhetoric as an 'art'" (176), which, he believed, explains how a rhetor can engage and make sense of novel and indeterminate situations (179). While Jamieson (1973, 1975) argued along the line of Bitzer's concept of the rhetorical situation by bringing in the issues of genres as rhetorical constraints in the discussion of the rhetorical situations, Baxter and Kennedy (1975) complicated and problematized the linear and singular notion of rhetorical situations. They analyzed the connection between rhetorical situations and the rhetorical response, critically, in more depth, by asserting that a rhetorical situation cannot be determinate to elicit a single response because it is not being, but a process of becoming; "the rhetorical situation as a determinate concrescence of propositions can be viewed as a process of becoming, and more" (160). They stressed the multiplicity of existence of a rhetorical situation that fosters indeterminate and various responses, which make a rhetorical situation a complex thing, unlike the way Bitzer conceived it, thereby suggesting the complex nature of the rhetorical situations when they asserted, "[t]he rhetor, audience, subject, occasion, and speech […] can be said to be the members of a multiplicity which, at the outset of a speech, have a disjunctive relationship" (160). They conceived of the rhetorical situation "as a process" (161), and "as an epochal whole of becoming" (162), unlike the way Bitzter conceived it, as a finality, and hence deconstructing the established conception and providing another view of it. Their deconstructive approach interests me in two ways: first, it helps me understand the rhetorical situation from a postmodern perspective, and second, based on this approach, I argue for the exigence of a new theory.

Hunsaker and Smith (1976) critique Bitzer, Vatz and Consigny for not mentioning the importance of perception, along with admitting that their situation-based examinations of rhetoric have provided a new insight into the nature of issue. They valued the importance of perception in constructing the potential issues in a rhetorical situation, but also believed that the cognitive and affective experiences that shape human perception "are not completely private, but are to some degree shared through common experience and communication" (147). Bitzer (1980) extended the argument for the situational perspective that incorporated the role of the interest of the rhetors and their environment as the fundamental

interacting ground which functions as the basic conditions and factors to cause a rhetorical act as a functional or pragmatic communication. This modification, thus, provides a space for the subjective nature of the exigence when he mentions "every exigence has a component consisting of an interest" (24). In so doing, Bitzer (1980a) asserted that the rhetorical situation integrates both objective and subjective phenomena, "[t]he rhetorical situation is real and objective, however, in the sense that an observer, possessing appropriate knowledge and interests, can usually see its parts and appreciate its force" (24), and, thus, because of the different subjective perspectives toward the existence of the exigence, they bring different rhetorical discourses in response to the same exigence.

        The overarching argument made by Hunsaker and Smith (1976) and Bitzer (1980b) on the importance of perception and interest of the rhetor and his or her environment for creating a fundamental interacting ground for a rhetorical act, helps me to argue throughout this book that the rhetorical situations are not discrete, objective phenomena. By drawing on their argument, I argue that a rhetorical discourse exists in response to the exigency based on the perception and interest of the rhetor, on given shared common experience and communication culture. This argument opens up avenues for further arguments of a subjective nature on exigencies that the shared experience and communication culture have changed, and so does the notion of the rhetorical situation.

        Biesecker's (1989) call for the appropriation of deconstructive insights, and thus the deconstruction of the relationship between rhetorical discourse and the audience in order to rethink the rhetorical situation, adds a new dimension in the discussion of situation and rhetorical discourse. For her, the relationship between a rhetorical discourse and its situation is discursive and thus indeterminate; "neither the text's immediate rhetorical situation nor its author can be taken as simple origin or generative agent since both are underwritten by a series of historically produced displacement" (Biesecker 1989, 121). The discursivity and indeterminacy of the connection between a rhetorical discourse and its situation are more evident in the reception of rhetorical texts because they are received differently by different audiences. This notion fleshes out her logic of the rhetorical situation as articulation, and "the deconstruction of the subject opens up possibilities for the field of Rhetoric by enabling us to read the rhetorical situation as an event structured not by a logic of influence, but by a logic of articulation" (126), which is essentially provisional. This notion reads rhetorical discourses as processes entailing the discursive production of the audience, "whose identity is produced and reproduced in discursive practices" (127), thereby resituating "the rhetorical situation on the

trajectory of becoming rather than Being" (127). I bring in her idea of discursivity and indeterminacy and bind it up with Foucault's notion of discursive formation, arguing that the constituents of the rhetorical situations are not discretely born; rather, they are linked with discursive formation and indeterminate relation.

Crismore and Vande Kopple's (1990) explanation of Bitzer's notion of constraints also very clearly demonstrates the fact that a rhetorical discourse exits in plurality, as it is an expression of subjective phenomena, like beliefs, attitude, interest, and motives. They state that "[t]he sources of constraints are many: beliefs, attitudes, facts, documents, traditions, images, interests, and motives" (50). It elucidates that the rhetor's personal character, logical proofs, and style, cause diverse rhetorical discourses in response to the same exigence, suggesting that exigence has indeterminate relation with the rhetorical discourse. I further argue along the line of Benoit (1994), who critiques Bitzer's objective situational theory in *The Genesis of Rhetorical Situation*, and believes that Bitzer's situational theory has "yet to be fully assimilated into our current understanding of the nature of rhetoric" (343), by correcting it on the basis of epistemology, the importance of purpose, and the importance of agent and agency, which are lacking in Bitzer's model of the rhetorical situation that ignores the epistemic nature of rhetoric. A rhetorical exigence is epistemic, as it is perceived in different ways by different rhetors. This epistemological assumption is related to the rhetor and the rhetor's purpose, and so, depending on the purposes of the rhetors, the same situation generates different rhetorics. Likewise, the nature of a rhetor also influences the discourse produced in response to a certain situation. This assumption also speaks to Smith and Lybarger's (1996) revision of Bitzer's relatively autonomous notion of exigence. They argue that the rhetorical situation involves a plurality of exigencies and complex relations between the audience and the rhetorician's interest, thereby making it more interactive with other elements of the situation. They emphasize the important role of perception when they say, "each auditor will have a perception of the rhetor and the message in addition to a perception of the issues", and so "rhetorical communication is always in a state of flux that requires the critic to move beyond the strict realism of Bitzer" (200). This notion of exigence, which is more like a complex of various perceptions, helps me argue for my position in this book.

In her article "Unframing Models of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situation to Rhetorical Ecologies", Jenny Edbauer (2005), unlike earlier works on the rhetorical situation that focus upon the elements of audience, exigence, and constraints, argues that "rhetorical

situations operate within a network of lived practical consciousness or structure of feeling" (5). Her article advances a new debate on the rhetorical situation. By borrowing Phelps's (1988) notion of ecology, that "is constituted through interdependence and transactions among all levels of a system, both horizontally (the relations of parts within the whole at a given level of organization) and vertically (the relations among elements at different levels)" (3), Edbauer (2005) places the rhetorical elements within the wider context that destabilizes the discrete borders of a rhetorical situation, and thus attempts to provide "a framework of *affective ecologies* that recontextualizes rhetorics in their temporal, historic, and lived fluxes" (9). For her, the rhetorical situations are not discrete entities; they are perceived as a circulating ecology of effects, enactments, and events, resulting in rhetorical ecologies where all the elements are networked and connected, which could be called "sites of complex network or networked process" if we borrow Helen Foster's (2007) terminologies. As Foster believes, "the networked process evokes both the growing number of sites and the relational loops", and thus it "encompasses a variety of sites" (xv). This ecological notion does not treat the rhetorical situation as a relatively closed system; rather, it perceives the elements as distributed acts, thereby placing the situation within an open network. Edbauer (2005) also perceives the rhetorical situation as a process when she says, "the rhetorical situation is better conceptualized as a mixture of processes and encounters" (13). She argues that the standard models of the rhetorical situation mask the fluid nature of rhetoric. Her argument about the fluidity of the rhetorical situations is expressed when she says "[r]hetorical situations involve the amalgamation and mixture of many different events and happenings that are not properly segmented into audience, text, or rhetorician" (20). Rather, rhetorical situations are trans-situational and open-ended process.

By borrowing terminologies from Cooper (1986), Phelps (1988), Edbauer (2005), and Foster (2007), I propose a new theory of rhetorical situations as a trans-situational networked ecology. In so doing, I situate my discussion on the current notions of the rhetorical situation and argue for an extension of the notions of the rhetorical situation that incorporates the changing/changed notion. My theory does not only address the exigence for a new stance, but also, hopefully, contributes to direct Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies with new insight.

I have primarily used a bibliographic research method as discussed by North (1987). I use one of North's modes of inquiry, that is, a mode of inquiry of scholars. In the mode of inquiry of scholars, "North identifies three major types of knowledge-makers who produce scholarship: historians, philosophers, and critics" (Byard 2009, 25). To map the rhetorical situation,

I engage an historical and theoretical mapping. The historical inquiry, as North (1987) says, has two stages — the empirical and the interpretive. As per this inquiry, on the empirical stage, I first collect the scholars' understanding about the rhetorical situation, and then, on the interpretive stage, I create a narrative chronicling its changes over time. Though the empirical and interpretive stages are an interconnected process because interpretation is based on "the body of the available texts, and the search for further texts" (71), they are "not necessarily or neatly sequential" (71). Identifying the problem precedes both the empirical stage and the interpretive stage of inquiry. It arises "in the context of the overall narrative, out of some perceived gap or error in the history itself" (North 1987, 72). In this connection, I ask questions like: *What have the rhetorical situations been? What are they now? Why have the existing notions of the rhetorical situations not been able to express the changed/changing meaning?* In order to discuss these problems (questions), I identify, search for, assemble, and validate relevant texts on rhetorical situations (which are known as the empirical stage). Stepping on this empirical inquiry, I move on to the interpretive stage of my historical inquiry on rhetorical situations. In the interpretive stage, I search for pattern(s) in texts, explain the pattern(s) (which creates a narrative), relate the new narrative to existing narratives (which creates a dialectical narrative), and finally, draw conclusions and implications.

Based on the historical inquiry, as mentioned above, I engage the philosophical inquiry on the rhetorical situation, which is going to be the major part of this book, in which I account for, frame, critique, and analyze, the fundamental assumptions and beliefs on rhetorical situations. In this philosophical inquiry or 'theorizing', to use Bizzell's term, I make a speculation about what is a new stance to understand the new notion of rhetorical situations. However, I believe, this 'theorizing' will not simply be a talk on theory for the sake of theory; rather, I attempt to formulate a new model (rhetorical situations as trans-situational networked ecology) that hopefully theorizes the notion of rhetorical situations from a new perspective which incorporates new situations caused by recent developments of new media and technology, in order to complete the meaning of rhetorical situations. Finally, I argue that rhetorical situations as trans-situational networked ecology expands our understanding of rhetorical situations and can also be fruitfully used in the design and development of scholarship in the field, as well as pedagogies for Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communications Studies majors.

Since debate is the nature of philosophical knowledge, I believe that the logic and form of philosophical knowledge are dialectical, and a

dialogic that "takes the form of a free-ranging, never-ending debate" (North 1987, 96). Guided by these assumptions, I propose a working theory that completes the notion of the rhetorical situation incorporating the new context and keeps the debate going, which, I believe, contributes to the field of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communications Studies. The philosophical inquiry that I am going to use looks like this: 1. Identifying problems; 2. Establishing premises; 3. Making argument(s): The communal dialectic; and 4. Drawing conclusion(s): Dissemination to a wider audience (North 1987, 99).

Along with the philosophical inquiry, I engage the rhetorical inquiry as a methodological frame because it better suits my purpose in this book, as Foster (2001) asserts: "Rhetorical inquiry […] begins with some dissonance or motivating concern that serves as a catalyst to the questions that direct inquiry" (6). The process of the rhetorical inquiry follows these steps: 1. Identifying a motivating concern; 2. Posing questions; 3. Engaging in heuristic search; 4. Creating a new theory or hypotheses; and 5. Justifying the theory (Lauer and Asher 1988, 5). Along the line of the rhetorical inquiry, I first identify my motivating concern. The study of the rhetorical situation is highly valued in the study of rhetorical theory because it is very important aspect to understand any communicative activity. Though the history of the rhetorical theory talked about a rhetorical situation to some extent, as through the discussion of *kairos* and 'rhetorical stances', which convey the meaning of the rhetorical situation, it is only with Bitzer (1968) that a fully-fledged theory of the rhetorical situation came up. Following Bitzer, there is a shower of theories on it, which assert, re-examine, and contend Bitzer's model, but still lack a theory that incorporates the changed notion of the rhetorical situation. This fact has motivated me to write this book.

Based on the primary question I seek to address, I engage an heuristic search in the line of literature review, in which I map the rhetorical situation (Chapter II), define new media and technology, examine how new media and technology have changed the notions of the rhetorical situation (Chapter III), analyze the theories in relation to the rhetorical situation (Chapter IV), build a theory on the rhetorical situation (Chapter V), and justify the theory by situating it in the field of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communications Studies (Chapter VI). First, I situate my book on mapping the rhetorical situation (Chapter II). Then, I discuss the exigence for a new theory in order to address the changes brought by new media and technology and propose a theory (Chapter V).

In order to show my dissonance with the current notions, and argue for the exigence for a new approach, I bring in postmodern theory as

a fundamental tool, as it provides me a broad theoretical lens to study how signifying systems organize the self, society and everyday life, and how knowledge is always contingent, partial, and situated, and thus, particularly, how the notion of the rhetorical situation is plural and fluid. I explore this notion in examining the relationships between/among the constituents of the rhetorical situation that are reshaped by new media and technology.

As I have already mentioned, many of the scholars in Rhetoric and Composition use, or subscribe to, a notion of the rhetorical situation that characterizes the modernist containment. It does not necessarily capture the changed meaning of the rhetorical situation, particularly given changes that the new media and technology have brought. My assumption is that it is appropriate to rethink and re-examine the notion of the rhetorical situation from a new stance that corresponds to the changed/changing situation and proposes a new model. To propose a new stance to study the rhetorical situation, I primarily rely on Foucault's (1972) theoretical approach, as discussed in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* in general, and his notion of "discursive formations" in particular, to map the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. As Foucault believes in the interplay of rules and relations of different entities that define a notion, I plan to examine the constituents of the rhetorical situation, not as distinct watertight compartments, but as a relational discursive formation. As Foucault asserts "[w]e must question those ready-made syntheses, those groupings that we normally accept before any examination, those links whose validity is recognized from the outset" (22), I question those divisions or groupings of the constituents of the rhetorical situation and propose a new stance that defines the rhetorical situation in new terms. My methodology to analyze a discourse on the rhetorical situation speaks to what Foucault strongly believes about how we should comprehend a discourse:

> We must be ready to receive every moment of discourse in its sudden irruption; in that punctuality in which it appears, and in that temporal dispersion that enables it to be repeated, known, forgotten, transformed, utterly erased, and hidden, far from all view, in the dust of books. Discourse must not be referred to the distant presence of the origin but treated as and when it occurs (25).

Analyzing a discourse according to the framework of the rhetorical situation as formulated by Bitzer and discussed by many others, can sometimes lead to insufficient and inappropriate analyses because it does

not address the changed meaning of the rhetorical situation given the impact of new media and technology. So, I analyze the rhetorical situation of a discourse when it occurs, because the situation in which it occurs may not rightly be analyzed by prototypical definition of the rhetorical situation. But while doing so, the prototypical constituents of the rhetorical situation must not be rejected definitively, of course, but only remain in suspense because I believe a new approach can emerge by suspending the old notion for a while, and by re-examining it from a new light.

Foucault's notion of "discursive formations" describes different entities of a notion/object as "systems of dispersion" (37) that discover dispersions themselves "between these elements, which are certainly not organized as progressively deductive structures" (37), but not the discursive unity that attempts to see homogeneity, regularity, successive appearance, simultaneity, reciprocity, links, and hierarchies. The attempt to describe the systems of dispersion, but not discursive unity (which is characterized as a defining regularity of a kind), is known as "discursive formation". The rules that govern this dispersion are the rules of formation that include the "conditions of existence (but also of coexistence, maintenance, modification, and disappearance) in a given discursive division" (38). As Foucault believes a statement itself has no consistent linguistic unit, by bringing in his notion of "discursive formation", I argue that the constituents of the rhetorical situation do not always consistently constitute the rhetorical situation because "discursive formation really is the principle of dispersion and redistribution" (107). I re-examine the rhetorical situation not as a developing totality, but as a distribution of gaps, voids, absences, limits, and divisions, by using discursive formation.

Jenny Edbauer's (2005) "framework of affective ecologies", Helen Foster's notion of "networked process", and Janice Lauer's notion of 'dissonance' help me to reconceptualize the meaning of the rhetorical situation in a new light. As Edbauer "argues that rhetorical situations operate within a network of lived practical consciousness or structure of feeling" (5), the rhetorical situations as discrete entities are perceived as a circulating ecology of effects, enactments, and events, resulting in rhetorical ecologies, where all the elements are networked and connected. As Foster believes "networked process evokes both the growing number of sites and the relational loops", and thus it "encompasses a variety of sites" (xv), this ecological notion does not treat the rhetorical situation as a relatively closed system; rather, it perceives the elements as distributed acts, thereby placing the situation within an open network. By borrowing their arguments, I argue that rhetorical situations are trans-situational, open-ended, and networked processes. I use the theories of critical

geography (Soja 1980, 1987, 1996; Sack 1986, 1993; Sibley 1995; Creswell 2004; Delaney 2005), critical theory of technology (Bolter 1991, 2001; Johnson-Eilola 1997, 2005; Johnson 1998; Feenberg 1991, 2002, 2006; Morville 2005), and rhetoric and language theory (Nietzsche 1989; Berlin 1987, 1988, 1992, 2003) to discuss how the notions of language, rhetoric, technology, and space/place/territory revise the concepts of the rhetorical situation.

As a plan for the following chapters, Chapter II (Mapping Rhetorical Situation: 1968-2020) discusses how the concept of the rhetorical situation and its various naming permutations have been variously characterized in the period of 1968-2020. Chapter II serves as a background that functions as a springboard to study the new stance on the rhetorical situation. To map the rhetorical situation, I engage postmodern mapping. In this connection, I study scholarship about the rhetorical situation that is commonly used by scholars in Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communications Studies. I continually revisit and question the past to ensure that we are not working with faulty assumptions. While so doing, I study how a theory of the rhetorical situation changes in response to the reality(ies) it seeks to describe. This chapter does more historical/theoretical mapping of the rhetorical situation, along with interpretive mapping. Chapter III (Impact of New Media and Technology to Change the Notions of Rhetorical Situation) defines new media and technology and answers how they change the notions of the rhetorical situation. With the advent of new media and technology, the notion of the rhetorical situation has also changed, and, thus, there is an exigence of a new theory of the rhetorical situation that better incorporates the new notion of the rhetorical situation germinated by the emergence of new media and technology. For example, new media and technology have broken the traditional relationships between the writer, audience, exigence, and constraints, and have blurred the divisions among them to some extent. In this context, I believe the existing modernist notion of the rhetorical situation does not fully express the changed meaning that naturally exists with the impact of new media and technology. Consequently, it limits the scope and understanding of the rhetorical situation because this confining tendency is likely to make the notion of the rhetorical situation that does not incorporate the changed/changing situation stagnant, thereby giving only an incomplete picture. This chapter also answers how the emergence of new media and technology compels the revision of our notions of the rhetorical situation. Chapter IV (Analyzing Theories of Rhetorical Situation: Where Are We Now?) is a theoretical discussion to lay a foundation for suggesting a new theory of

the rhetorical situation. By bringing together the theories of critical geography, critical theory of technology, and rhetoric and language theory, I discuss how the notions of language, rhetoric, technology, and space/place/territory revise the concepts of the rhetorical situation. All these discussions help me theorize the rhetorical situation from postmodern perspectives, which I bring in as a theoretical underpinning to argue for the dissonance, exigence, and proposition of a new theory in Chapter V. In this chapter, I also answer what theories can help the revision of our notions of the rhetorical situation. In Chapter V (Rhetorical Situations as Trans-situational Networked Ecology), based on the analysis done in Chapters II, III and IV, I primarily analyze my dissonance of the existing notions of the rhetorical situation and argue for the exigency of a new theory. Then, I propose a theory of the rhetorical situation that has more explanatory power than any current theory presently available, theorize it extensively, and describe the constituents of this theory. To do so, I first answer the following questions in this chapter: *What is my dissonance with some of existing notions of the rhetorical situations? Why do these notions not work and thus need to be revised, and why can some (if any) be developed to propose a new theory? What needs to be retheorized, relative to the rhetorical situation, to make it a viable concept for our contemporary moment?* Chapter VI serves as the concluding chapter (Justification and Significance of the New Theory in RWS and Communications Studies), in which I discuss the justification of my theory and its significance for scholars, teachers, and students in the discipline of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communications Studies. This chapter also discusses pedagogical implications of the new theory on the rhetorical situation. In a nutshell, this chapter answers what the rhetorical situation as trans-situational networked ecology indicates for the discipline of RWS and Communications Studies, and what its pedagogical implications are.

CHAPTER II

MAPPING THE RHETORICAL SITUATION: 1968-2020

Mapping the rhetorical situation builds a foundation on which to study the new stance on the rhetorical situation. In so doing, this chapter answers the question: *In the period of 1968-2020, how have the concept of the rhetorical situation and its various naming permutations been variously characterized?* Answering this question entails historical/theoretical and interpretive mapping of the rhetorical situation, which serves as a point of departure that supports the proposition of a new theory in Chapter V. Engaging with postmodern mapping of the rhetorical situation, I study scholarship about the rhetorical situation that is commonly used by scholars in Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies. While so doing, I continually revisit and question the past to ensure that we are not working with faulty assumptions, and I analyze how a theory of the rhetorical situation changes in response to the reality(ies) it seeks to describe.

The concept of the rhetorical situation traces back to the notion of *kairos* as expressed in the rhetoric of classical philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and others. The ancient Greeks used *kairos* in a more or less similar sense of how the rhetorical situation is used nowadays. As a fundamental notion in ancient Greeks, *kairos* carried a number of meanings in classical rhetorical theory and history, including 'symmetry', 'propriety', 'occasion', 'due measure', 'fitness', 'tact', 'decorum', 'convenience', 'proportion', 'fruit', 'profit', and 'wise moderation', to mention some of the more common uses" (Sipiora 2002, 1). An underlying sense of all these meanings of *kairos* is "the right or opportune time to do something or right measure in doing something" (Kinneavy 2002, 58) which very aptly resembles the meaning of a constituent of rhetorical situation as used today. Wayne C. Booth (1963) uses the term "rhetorical stance" to mean rhetorical situation. Booth defines "rhetorical stance" in an article with the same name:

> [A] stance which depends on discovering and maintaining in
> any writing situation a proper balance among the three
> elements that are at work in any communicative effort: the
> available arguments about the subject itself, the interests and
> peculiarities of the audience, and the voice, the implied
> character, of the speaker. I should like to suggest that it is this
> balance, this rhetorical stance, difficult as it is to describe, that
> is our main goal as teachers of rhetoric (141).

Here, he very clearly asserts that a writing situation consists of an
argument about the subjects, audience, and the speaker, and the balance of
these three elements in any communicative effort is what he calls the
rhetorical stance. Booth believes that the proper balance is lost in
unbalanced stances — the pedant's stance and advertiser's stance —
which can be termed as rhetorical perversions. He explains them thus
"[t]he first perversion […] springs from ignoring the audience or over-
reliance on the pure subject. The second […] comes from undervaluing the
subject and overvaluing pure effect: how to win friends and influence
people" (Booth 1963, 143). Both these perversions (unbalanced stance)
are, in fact, a result of ignoring the audience. Hence, Booth attaches much
importance to the audience as the major constituent of the rhetorical
situation when he says, "good writers always to some degree accommodate
their arguments to the audience" (144), especially to the interest and
peculiarities of the audience.

Though Bitzer (1968) does not mention that he drew on the
notion of *kairos* and "the rhetorical stance", he may have been indirectly
influenced by them to coin the "rhetorical situation" in his essay "The
Rhetorical Situation", because he indirectly asserts that there were some
notions of the rhetorical situation in undeveloped form when he says:
"This essay […] should be understood as an attempt to revive the notion of
rhetorical situation […]" (3). By asserting that he wants to revive the
notion of the rhetorical situation, he indirectly admits that there were some
notions of the rhetorical situation as in the concept of *kairos* and "the
rhetorical stance". He makes it clearer in the following statements: "No
major theorist has treated rhetorical situation thoroughly as a distinct
subject in rhetorical theory; many ignore it. Those rhetoricians who
discuss situations do indirectly — as does Aristotle, for example, who is
led to consider situation when he treats types of discourse. None, to my
knowledge, has asked the nature of rhetorical situation" (2). This suggests
that Bitzer was not working in a vacuum because there were similar ideas
in circulation, *kairos* and "the rhetorical stance," for example, which were
circulated and likely to have influenced his thoughts. He only assumed that

the existing notions of the rhetorical situation were not fully developed, and so he wanted "to provide at least the outline of an adequate conceptions of it, and to establish it as a controlling and fundamental concern of rhetorical theory" (2) in order to make the picture more complete. Though *kairos* and "the rhetorical stance" existed to mean the rhetorical situation to some extent before Bitzer (1968) systematically gave full-fledged definitions of the rhetorical situation, they were pretty close to the notion of the rhetorical situation, but not exactly the rhetorical situation as it is understood today; instead, they were like some constituents of the rhetorical situation.

Now, I conduct historical and thematic mapping of the notions of the rhetorical situation in the period of 1968-2020, as to what the theories of the rhetorical situation are and discuss how the concept of the rhetorical situation and its various naming permutations have been variously characterized in this period. To achieve this end, I divide it into four headings and subheadings based on time and theme. I see a connection between time and theme. While the first heading "Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny and More Debate from 1968 to 1974" concentrates on the fundamental debate among Bitzer, Vatz, and Consigny, along with some other theorists in this period who in some ways focus their argument around the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate, the second heading maps the notions of the rhetorical situation as a departure from the debate. While the third heading maps the concepts of the rhetorical situation from a different perspective, that is, the rhetorical situation as ecologies of a networked, complex system, the fourth heading discusses the notions of context collapse as the rhetorical situation.

II.I: Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny and more debate from 1968 to 1974

The debate on rhetorical situation begins with Bitzer (1968) when he theorizes the rhetorical situation in his seminal essay with the same name. Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation values its importance in the rhetorical theory, which was ignored by many, and expresses a need to conceptualize it in more systematic way. Three theories of the rhetorical situation as articulated by Lloyd Bitzer (1968), Richard Vatz (1973), and Scott Consigny (1974), in fact, lay the foundation to theorize the rhetorical situation along with ongoing debate on it. Underlying each theory of the rhetorical situation is a different theory of meaning and where it resides, with implications for both the morality of rhetoric and the disciplinary conception of rhetoric. Ultimately, Consigny's theory of rhetoric as an art

of topics resolves the opposition of Bitzer's and Vatz's theories of the rhetorical situation.

II.I.I: Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation

In "The Rhetorical Situation" (1968), Lloyd F. Bitzer sets out to theorize the rhetorical situation with the belief that "the presence of rhetorical discourse obviously indicates the presence of a rhetorical situation" (2). However, even a rhetorical discourse "is a reliable sign of the existence of situation, it does not follow that a situation exists only when the discourse exists" (2). In other words, not every rhetorical situation is accompanied by a rhetorical discourse, as sometimes the opportunity to speak on a matter is missed (2). Bitzer (1968) describes three constituents of any rhetorical situation necessary prior to a rhetorical discourse — exigence, audience, and constraints — which "comprise everything relevant in a rhetorical situation" (8). He defines exigence as "an imperfection marked by urgency; a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done" (6). In order to be rhetorical, an exigence must be "capable of positive modification […] [requiring] discourse" (7). For Bitzer, any rhetorical situation has "one controlling exigence […] [which] functions as the organizing principle: it specifies the audience […] and the change to be effected" (7). In addition, the rhetorical situations always require audiences, as a rhetorical discourse "produces change by influencing the decision and action of persons who function as mediators of change" (7). Similarly, every rhetorical situation contains a set of constraints made up of persons, events, objects, and relations that are parts of the situation; these can be "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, [or] motives" (8). Bitzer describes two classes of constraints as those originated or managed by the rhetor and his or her method (Aristotle's "artistic proofs") and the other situational constraints which may be operative (Aristotle's "inartistic proofs") (8).

Bitzer (1968) makes quite explicit that the rhetorical situation is antecedent to, and 'invites', rhetorical discourse: "it is the situation which calls the discourse into existence" (2). Similarly, the rhetorical situation 'dictates' the responses and "constrains the words which are uttered in the same sense that it constrains the physical acts of paddling the canoes and throwing the nets" (5). So, a situation has controlling power to create a discourse, and it is the very ground of rhetorical activity. The implication is that, for Bitzer, a rhetorical discourse is not a moral act; the ethical imperative in rhetorical discourse is independent of the rhetor, determined entirely by the exigence of the rhetorical situation. Instead, rhetors are

"obliged to speak" or "required by the situation" to create a discourse (5). Rhetors are thereby relieved of moral responsibility because "exigence amount[s] to an imperative stimulus" (5), which prescribes a fitting response that is "strongly invited — often required" (9). Indeed, the "speaker's intentions [are] determined by the situation," which "invites" and "prescribes" a specific, fitting response (9-10). So, it is in the power of the rhetorical situation to both invite and constrain a fitting response from the rhetor (11).

Bitzer's conception of the rhetorical situation reflects his realist view of an objective, external reality: "The exigence and the complex of persons, objects, events and relations which generate rhetorical discourse are located in reality, are objective and publicly observable historic facts in the world we experience, are therefore available for scrutiny by an observer or critic who attends to them" (11). In this sense, the rhetorical situations are 'real' or 'genuine', based on historic reality and independent of rhetorical discourse (11); for Bitzer, events are inherently meaningful because events (i.e., rhetorical discourses) have logical connection with the rhetorical situation. They have a cause-and-effect relationship as the rhetorical situation causes the birth of rhetorical discourses.   Additionally, rhetorical situations exhibit structures of stronger or weaker organization, depending on the number of exigencies and situations at play (12). Finally, as objectively real, rhetorical situations "come into existence, then either mature or decay or mature and persist" (12). Bitzer notes that rhetorical forms develop as a response to those rhetorical situations that recur over time (12). For Bitzer, then, a rhetorical discourse is secondary; a response to the "demands imposed by the situation" (5). Thus, he takes as a given that "rhetoric is situational" (3). By this he means that rhetoric "obtain[s] its character-as-rhetorical from the situation which generates it" (3). Rhetoric responds to, and is essentially related to, a rhetorical situation, because "[a] particular discourse comes into existence because of some specific condition or situation which invites utterance" (4).

Bitzer summarizes that rhetoric being situational means: 1) rhetoric comes into existence as a response to a situation; 2) speech is given a rhetorical significance by the situation; 3) the rhetorical situation must exist as a necessary condition of a rhetorical discourse; 4) many rhetorical situations exist and pass without rhetorical response; 5) "a situation is rhetorical insofar as it needs and invites discourse capable of participating with situation and thereby altering its reality"; 6) "discourse is rhetorical insofar as it functions (or seeks to function) as a fitting response to a situation which needs and invites it; and 7) "the situation controls the rhetorical response" (5-6). Therefore, Bitzer formally defines

the rhetorical situation as "a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence" (6). In other words, "the world really invites change — change conceived and effected by human agents who quite properly address a mediating audience" (13). Bitzer thus contributes to the knowledge of the field by being the one to pull together these disparate, but connected, concepts to develop a theory of the rhetorical situation that shows his controlling and fundamental concern of rhetorical theory. He conceives of rhetoric as a practical discipline — one which responds to an exigence through discourse that urges an audience to action: "a work of rhetoric is pragmatic; it comes into existence for the sake of something beyond itself" (4). Thus, "rhetoric is a mode of altering reality […] by bringing into existence a discourse of such a character that the audience […] is so engaged that it becomes mediator of change" (4). In this sense, rhetoric is always persuasive.

II.I.II: Treatment of exigencies: Bitzer and Miller

While Arthur Miller (1972) further elaborates the meaning and significance of exigence as defined and conceptualized by Bitzer, and, thus, treats exigence as the most important of all constituents of the rhetorical situations, Richard E. Vatz (1973), in "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation" (1973), critiques Bitzer's realist conception of the rhetorical situations as objective historic facts, suggesting instead an opposing perspective based on a different philosophy of meaning, including a different view of the relationships between rhetoric and "situations" (154), thereby providing contrary notion about the relationship between rhetoric and situations. Miller's (1972) notion of exigence agrees with the meaning of *kairos* when he suggests that a rhetor should speak to an exigence when it has "ripened," which truly grasps the temporal nature of an exigence. Talking about the relationships between a rhetor and exigence, Miller asserts "in addition to perceiving the foregoing horizontal dimension, the rhetor must also attempt to perceive the qualitative, or vertical, dimensions of the exigence" (111). However, "the rhetor has creative latitude to interpret the significance of the exigence" (111) within the limits specified by each exigence. It is in fact the freedom of opinion inherent in a rhetor that makes the difference in the ultimate or perceived nature of the exigence which depends on the constraints of the perceiver (112). While Bitzer limits a rhetorical discourse only as a response to the exigence as a

fixed entity, Miller makes it more flexible within the limits based on the rhetor's "creative latitude". Miller summarizes his argument about exigence:

> [T]he antecedent of every rhetorical situation is the exigence from which the situation derives its significance. This exigence specifies the limits of the topic of communication and simultaneously provides opportunities with those limits for adapting to hearers. Rhetors elect given options for communication depending on their own constraints and their judgments of the constraints of their hearers (118).

II.I.III: Classification of discourse: Larson and Wilkerson

Richard L. Larson (1970) problematizes Bitzer's classification of discourse into two binaries — rhetorical and non-rhetorical — and suggests a third class of discourse: "discourse that was thought to be rhetorical when produced, but is not truly so, because (as events turn out) it could not have modified the exigence" (165). To him the distinction between rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourses, as done by Bitzer, is tricky and problematic, as, upon close observation, all discourses are rhetorical as they are produced in response to an ongoing rhetorical situation, whether those be 'scientific' or 'poetic' (non-rhetorical as classified by Bitzer). All the discourses, Larson (1970) believes, have the power to modify the existing beliefs and to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the world. Larson asserts that Bitzer's definitions suggested "ubiquitousness of rhetorical discourse in the lives of readers and listeners and emphasize the need for men to recognize the workings of this force that shapes human lives in so many ways" (168). It implies that there are some common features in seemingly unrelated discourses, and thus, it is necessary to differentiate rhetorical from non-rhetorical discourses more deftly and succinctly, because it helps understand what rhetorical is and how it is changed over a period of time.

K. E. Wilkerson (1970) also disagrees with Bitzer's classification of rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourses, as he finds the distinction arbitrary because the discourse Bitzer labeled as non-rhetorical could be rhetorical in its essence. Regarding the rhetorical discourse that comes in response to the rhetorical situation, Wilkerson (1970), like Kneupper (1980), adds another causal dimension of the "communicative abilities within both speaker and audience" (90). He develops it as an alternative framework of rhetorical theory that suggests a departure from Bitzer's notion of exigence by asserting that a situation cannot be solely

determinant to the response; rather, it "involve[s] the speaker's conscious selection, use, and control, of certain features of the communicative process in human interaction" (91).

II.I.IV: Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate

Whereas Bitzer conceives of rhetorical situations as intrinsically meaningful events that invite, prescribe, and constrain a rhetorical response, Vatz instead argues that "meaning is not intrinsic in events, facts, people, or 'situations' [sic] nor are facts 'publicly observable'" (156). According to Vatz, people learn about events through communication that involves a two-part process of choosing what to communicate and then translating "chosen information into meaning" (156-157). He argues that "[t]he very choice of what facts or events are relevant is a matter of pure arbitration" — thus, events are given "salience" or "presence" according to which facts are chosen (157). Drawing on Murray Edelman, Vatz notes that people must choose to report only a fraction of the information that reaches them (156). The act of choosing facts is then followed by a creative or interpretive act, "the rhetorical act of transcendence" (157), which translates information into meaning. Thus, for Vatz, "events become meaningful only through their linguistic depiction" (157). This reflects his view that 'events' do not exist objectively in reality but are instead 'created' by choosing facts and translating meaning in rhetorical discourse (157). Whereas Bitzer argued for the rhetorical situation as antecedent to, and determining of, rhetoric, Vatz instead argues that rhetoric is antecedent to and determining of the rhetorical situation (157) — "a *cause* not an *effect* of meaning" (160). In other words, the reality of the rhetorical situation does not exist externally, but is instead created, by and through rhetoric. In response to Bitzer, Vatz, therefore, argues that "[n]o theory of the relationship between situations and rhetoric can neglect to take account of the initial linguistic depiction of the situation" (157).

This view of the rhetorical situation as created by rhetoric through arbitrary choice and the translation of information into meaning have both academic and moral consequences (157). The academic consequences of this view are the elevation of rhetoric as a discipline. This departs from Bitzer, who justified rhetoric pragmatically, as a merely practical discipline that responded to real-world rhetorical situations to effect a change in the audience. For Vatz, however, a conception of "meaning as a consequence of rhetorical creation" means that one's "paramount concern will be how, and by whom, symbols create the reality to which people react" (158). Drawing again from Edelman, Vatz argues

that meaning is "established by a process of mutual agreement upon significant symbols" (159). Thus, it follows that "the rhetorician can best account for choices of situations, the evocative symbols, and the forms and media which transmit these translations of meaning" (158). For Vatz, then, this philosophy of meaning and reality as created through rhetoric "requires a disciplinary hierarchy with rhetoric at the top" (158). He concludes that, "when meaning is seen as the result of a creative act and not a discovery […] rhetoric will be perceived as the supreme discipline it deserves to be" (161). Similarly, his view of the rhetorical creation of meaning and reality has ethical implications for the rhetor. Vatz characterizes Bitzer's view of the rhetorical situation, which 'requires' and 'prescribes' a fitting response, thereby determining the moral action and freeing the rhetor of any ethical responsibility (158). In Vatz's opposing view, the rhetor's "choice, interpretation, and translation" of information is moral, in that, the rhetor bears responsibility for the "*decisions* to make salient or not make salient these situations" (158). In short, the rhetor is morally responsible for selectively choosing to create — through rhetoric — one reality or situation instead of another. Thus, Vatz's conclusions for "the relationship between rhetoric and situations" are the converse of Bitzer's in nearly every respect (158-159). Contrary to Bitzer, Vatz argues that "situations are rhetorical", that "utterance invites exigence", that "rhetoric controls the situational response", and that "situations obtain their character from the rhetoric which surrounds […] or creates them" (159).

In "Rhetoric and Its Situations", Scott Consigny (1974) attempts to resolve the "antinomy for a coherent theory of rhetoric" resulting from Bitzer's and Vatz's opposing conceptions of the rhetorical situation (176). He instead proposes a more "complete view of the rhetorical act" which "account[s] for actual rhetorical practice" (176). To do so, he builds upon and integrates the theories of both Bitzer and Vatz, attempting to characterize how a rhetor effectively functions in rhetorical situations. Consigny (1974) argues that Bitzer "correctly construes the rhetorical situation as characterized by 'particularities', but misconstrues the situation as being thereby determinate and determining" (176). In opposition to Bitzer, he notes that particular situations are not clearly rhetorical, but instead present "an indeterminate existential situation, in which [the rhetor] must make the best of the 'facticities' he encounters" (177). In his view, the rhetor "must find strategies for shaping the indeterminacies, thereby formulating concrete problems which can be potentially solved" (177). Here, Consigny draws on Aristotle's distinction of rhetorical situations as those which have "no clear principles or formulated propositions" (177). Thus, while a situation includes

particularities, these exist indeterminately and require a rhetor to shape them and formulate concrete problems to be solved rhetorically. According to Consigny, the rhetor is, therefore, charged to "*ask* good questions and to formulate or *discover* relevant problems in an indeterminate situation" (177).

Similarly, Consigny (1974) notes that "Vatz correctly treats the rhetor as creative, but […] fails to account for the real constraints on the rhetor's activity" (176). He opposes Vatz's conception of the rhetorical situation as "created solely through the imagination and discourse of the rhetor" (178). Consigny instead argues that the rhetorical situation exists independently of the rhetoric — it "involves particularities of persons, actions, and agencies in a certain place and time" (178). In his view, these situational particularities act as real constraints on the rhetor if the rhetoric is to be effective (178). Thus, in contrast to Bitzer's view of a determining rhetorical situation and Vatz's alternate view of the arbitrary rhetorical creation of situations and meaning, for Consigny "the rhetor must work through […] the *pragmata* of the situation in such a way that an issue emerges from his interactions with the situation" (178). In other words, Consigny views meaning and reality as constructed in the interaction of rhetor and situation, rather than in one independently of the other. Much like Vatz, Consigny, therefore, conceives of the rhetor's role as ethical in that the rhetor has a "responsibility to discover and formulate […] purposes and central problems" (178). Here, both Vatz and Consigny argue that a rhetor selectively and ethically chooses among available information. However, whereas Vatz characterizes this choice as arbitrary and antecedent to the existence of a situation, Consigny, instead, argues that the discovery and formulation of purposes and problems are grounded on "the indeterminate phenomena of a situation" (178).

Consigny, then, is primarily concerned with how a rhetor makes sense of, and effectively responds to, an indeterminate rhetorical situation (179). To be effective and relevant, a rhetor must be able to "enter into an indeterminate situation and disclose or formulate problems […] [and] present the problems in such a way as to facilitate their resolution by the audience engaged with him in the rhetorical process" (179). This relates to Bitzer's conception of audience as a constituent of the rhetorical situation. Just as Bitzer conceives of a rhetorical situation that invited or required a rhetor to create discourse to move an audience to action, so, too, does Consigny conceive of the rhetor's task as moving an audience to action (179). However, whereas Bitzer views exigence as a constituent of the rhetorical situation, Consigny instead argues — much like Vatz — that the rhetor creatively "discloses issues and brings them to resolution" (179).

For Consigny, "when the audience reaches a decision or judgment, it renders" the problem solved, transforming and unifying the indeterminate situation (179). Consigny notes that neither Bitzer nor Vatz conceived of a "special capacity" for their respective rhetors to function in situations; Bitzer's rhetor naturally responds to the exigence of the rhetorical situation whereas Vatz's rhetor is "free to create 'problems' at will" (180). To address how a rhetor thus discloses and manages exigencies in an indeterminate situation, Consigny "propose[d] a mediating third factor, namely, rhetoric as an 'art'" (176). His view of rhetoric as an 'art' explained how a rhetor can engage and make sense of novel and indeterminate situations (179).

Bitzer conceives of rhetoric as a merely practical discipline, responding to rhetorical exigencies to effect a change in the audience. Vatz, on the other hand, conceives of rhetoric as a supreme discipline atop the hierarchy of disciplines, one which creates both meaning and reality through rhetoric. In contrast to Bitzer and Vatz, then, Consigny argues for rhetoric as an heuristic art — a "truly 'universal' power or capacity to function in the various rhetorical situations which constantly arise" (180). This art is also 'managerial' in that it "provide[s] the rhetor with means for controlling real situations and bringing them to a successful resolution or closure" (180). Thus, Consigny proposes a rhetorical 'art' as the essential power by which rhetors make sense of situations and effectively formulate and address problems to an audience (180). To become effectively engaged, the art must meet two conditions: *integrity* and *receptivity*. By integrity, Consigny means that the art of rhetoric is 'universal' and allows the rhetor to "function in all kinds of indeterminate and particular situations" (180). By receptivity, he means that the art of rhetoric allows the rhetor to become engaged in situations, thereby discovering 'relevant issues' and "achiev[ing] an effective resolution or management of the situation" (181). It is therefore important for a rhetor to be "responsive to… the given situation, those aspects and order which the rhetor discloses through engagement, which may cause him to alter his strategy (178). Thus, the art of rhetoric allows a rhetor to face novel situations and receptively engage him or her to determine and resolve problems (181).

Specifically, Consigny proposes rhetoric as an art of topics or commonplaces, which serves "as an instrument or device […] to discover through selection and arrangement, that which is relevant and persuasive in particular situations" (181). For him, a "command of topics provides the rhetor with a means for exploring and managing indeterminate contexts" (176). Thus, the topic is an "essential instrument for discovery or invention", which the rhetor must master (181-182). In addition, the topic

functions as the "realm in which the rhetor thinks and acts" (182). For Consigny, then, the topic itself is the 'site' or 'situation' in which, and from which, the rhetor must act — "the instrument *with which* the rhetor thinks, and the realm in and *about which* he thinks" (182). Again, meaning and reality exist in an interaction of rhetor and situation through the art of topics. For Consigny, then, a "coherent view of the rhetorical act" requires both meanings of rhetoric as an art of topics (182). A "dynamic interrelation" of topic exists as both instrument and realm of action (182). This full conception of the rhetorical art of topics, with both meanings of topic, is precisely what distinguishes Consigny's theory from those of Bitzer and Vatz. According to Consigny, Bitzer "ignores the topic as an *instrument*", leaving the situation to determine the actions of the rhetor (182). Similarly, "Vatz ignores the topic as *situation*", allowing the rhetor to "create problems arbitrarily and at will" (182). In contrast, Consigny thus resolves and integrates Bitzer's and Vatz's opposing views of the rhetorical situation, conceiving of topic as both instrument and situation, thereby requiring and making the effective engagement of the rhetor in the situation possible (182).

II.I.V: Jamieson's generic constraints and the rhetorical situation

Kathleen M. Jamieson (1973) in "Generic Constraints and the Rhetorical Situation" buys Bitzer's notion of the connection between rhetorical discourses and rhetorical situations with a slight departure from that of Bitzer in relation to that nexus, as she brings in the question of genre in the discussion of the rhetorical situation. She asserts that genres constrain the rhetorical situation. She argues that "perception of the proper response to an unprecedented rhetorical situation grows *not merely from the situation* but also from antecedent rhetorical forms" (author's emphasis) also because "[t]he chromosomal imprint of ancestral genres is evident at the conception of new genre" (163). But while so doing, she also admits how the audience and situation constrain genres, "[g]enres are shaped in response to a rhetor's perception of the expectations of the audience and the demands of the situation" (163). Going one step further, Jamieson (1973) argues that genre should not have procrustean function to constrain new rhetorical discourses in the traditional frame of genre but should liberate them based on changing contexts: "Genre should not be viewed as static forms but as evolving phenomena. One should approach study of genres with a Darwinian rather than a Platonic perspective. While traditional genres may color rhetoric, they do not ossify it. Rhetors

perpetually modify genres. New genres do emerge" (168). While so saying, she seeks for the need for the revision and change of classificatory assumptions of genres that impinge and impose on any work of rhetoric.

However, Jamieson (1975) in "Antecedent Genre as Rhetorical Constraints" argues how rhetorical responses are constrained by antecedent rhetorical genres because, as she argued above, there exists "chromosomal imprint of their ancestral genre" (412). She illustrates that the same rhetorical situation elicits two radically different types of response because of the antecedent generic constraints. As "[a]ntecedent genres are capable of imposing powerful constraints" (414), Jamieson suggests that rhetors should choose an appropriate genre to respond to an exigence in consonant with the situational demand because she believed that "[a]n understanding of genre, useful in all critical encounters, is indispensable in some" (415).

II.II: A departure from the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate from 1975 to 2003

The writers discussed above who categorically belong to the period from 1968 to 1975 argued around the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate primarily in some ways, and this debate primarily dominates the scene in the rhetorical situation up until 1975. However, Pomeroy (1972) problematized fitness of response in Bitzer's concept of rhetorical discourse. By summing up Bizter's arugment on rhetorical discourse "any rhetorical exigence which did not produce rhetorical discourse was not truly rhetorical" (46), Pomeory critiqued that it "runs the risk of being not only misunderstood and misapplied; it may never be applied at all" (46). There are some scholars from 1975 to 2003 who concentrate more on the departure from the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate. For example, while Jamieson argues along the line of Bitzer's concept of the rhetorical situations by bringing in the issues of genres as rhetorical constraints in the discussion of rhetorical situations, Baxter and Kennedy (1975) complicate and problematize the linear and singular notion of rhetorical situations. In this part, I examine what some of the major departures are, and how the scholars in this period discuss the notions of the rhetorical situation as a departure from the previous debate.

II.II.I: A departure from Bitzer

In "Whitehead's Concept of Concrescence and the Rhetorical Situation," Gerald D. Baxter and Bart F. Kennedy (1975), drawing on

Alfred North Whitehead's philosophy of organism ("the subject emerges
from the world" (162)) and concrescence (rhetorical situation), critically
analyze the connection between rhetorical situations and rhetorical
response in depth. Baxter and Kennedy (1975) assert that a rhetorical
situation cannot be determinate to elicit a single response because it is not
being, but a process of becoming, "the rhetorical situation as a determinate
concrescence of propositions can be viewed as a process of becoming, and
more" (160). They stress the multiplicity of existence of a rhetorical
situation that fosters indeterminate and various responses, which make a
rhetorical situation a complex thing, unlike Bitzer conceived it, thereby
suggesting the complex nature of the rhetorical situations when they assert
"[t]he rhetor, audience, subject, occasion, and speech […], can be said to
be the members of a multiplicity which, at the outset of a speech, have a
disjunctive relationship" (160). Unlike Bitzter who conceived the
rhetorical situation as a finality, Baxter and Kennedy (1975) see the
rhetorical situation as a 'process' (161) and "as an epochal whole of
becoming" (162), hence deconstructing the established conception and
providing another view of the rhetorical situation.

         Whereas Baxter and Kennedy brought in a deconstructive picture
of rhetorical situations as conceived by Bitzer, John H. Patton (1979) aims
at the clarification and elaboration of the situation theory of Bitzer. By
asserting that situation causes a rhetorical discourse, Patton (1979)
explains Bitzer's point in positive terms, and so extends his argument:
"Rhetorical situations may or may not produce discourse; whether
rhetorical discourse occurs depends upon various factors, some of which
lie within the rhetors' emotional and cognitive structures. Such factors are
in addition to, which is not to say apart from, the existence of the situation
itself" (41). He argues for the indeterminate nature of rhetorical situations
to cause rhetorical discourses, thereby attaching much importance to the
rhetors' interest to create the discourse, while equally focusing on
rhetorical exigences as necessary conditions to cause the rhetorical
discourses, "rhetorical exigences exist as *necessary* conditions, not as
sufficient conditions, in the situational approach" (Patton 1979, 44). While
he explains Bitzer's theory of the exigence, Patton also makes a departure
from Bitzer when he asserts the subjective elements ("the rhetor's
perceptual capacities or inclination") to define the exigences in causing the
discourse. By buying Patton's views on the role of the rhetor's perceptual
capacities in causing the discourse, Charles W. Kneupper (1980), in
"Rhetorical Creativity: The Person, the Situation and the Art", argues that
"[t]he material conditions are necessary but not sufficient conditions for
rhetoric" (162), and thus attaches the significance to the role of the person

as definer of situation. In this context, Kneupper asserts: "Although situations may be objectively present, the meaning attributed to situation is both personal and social", and "it remains ultimately the power of the person to define the situation and to choose whether to communicate/share the attributed meaning with others" (162). Kneupper, like Vatz but more subtly, objects to the supposedly minimized role of the agent as found in Bitzer's model, especially in terms of perception and creativity in rhetorical action. The person makes a choice to communicate, and how to communicate is based on "an intricate meshing of definitions" of self, exigence, audience, constraints, purpose, and probabilities. Thus, to him, a rhetorical response is a very complex phenomenon.

While many critics, as stated above, critique Bitzer for discounting the role of the rhetors in defining the exigences, Bitzer (1980a) extends the argument for the situational perspective that incorporates the role of the interest of the rhetors and their environment as the fundamental interacting ground which functions as the basic conditions and factors to cause a rhetorical act as a functional or pragmatic communication. This modification, thus, provides a space for the subjective nature of the exigence when he mentions "every exigence has a component consisting of an interest" (24). In so doing, Bitzer (1980a) asserts that the rhetorical situation integrates both objective and subjective phenomena, "[t]he rhetorical situation is real and objective, however, in the sense that an observer, possessing appropriate knowledge and interests, can usually see its parts and appreciate its force" (24), and thus, because of the different subjective perspectives toward the existence of the exigence, they bring different rhetorical discourses in response to the same exigence. While Patton (1980) is critical of Bitzer's interpretation of the notion of rhetorical exigence as a purely objective and independent phenomenon, unlike others, Tompkins (1980) does not see Bitzer's position as completely wrong, and he does not find the positions of Bitzer and Vatz necessarily contradictory. Patton (1980) believes that Bitzer's "tendency to interpret the concept of rhetorical exigence as purely objective and independent phenomena, separate from the functions of constraints in rhetorical situations […], neglects the interdependent relationship of external and internal elements in rhetorical situation" (88), and so he attacks Bitzer's objectivist interpretation as misleading, and failing "to recognize the roles of perception and creativity which follow when all the elements of the situational approach are considered" (88). Tompkins (1980), on the other hand, has lenient views toward both Bitzer and Vatz, and rather, thinking that their positions are "half right and half wrong" (87), he offers a new fomulation of situational theory: "Rhetorical

discourse shapes, and is shaped by, rhetorical situations; by imparting causal status either to discourse or situation, in whatever degree of force, one may be simply bracketing a sequence of events in an arbitrary manner" (87).

Intended to provide more perspicuous and more coherent notions of the rhetorical situation, Alan Briton (1980), in "Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric", attempts to analyze the relationships between the rhetorical situation and rhetorical act, and whether or not the rhetorical situation is a matter of objective facts. Briton sees three different kinds of relationships between the rhetorical situation and rhetorical act: a causal connection, a "meaning-dependence," and a normative. Unlike some critics, he does not see the causal connection between them, "the causal reading of the relation between rhetorical situation and rhetorical act is not so clearly emphasized in Bitzer's account" (235). For him, "'meaning-dependence' is the most fundamental aspect of the relationship between situation and act in Bitzer's theory" (235). He defines "meaning-dependence" as "the essential character of the act, as rhetorical depends upon its connection with the situation" (234), which essentially emphasizes the rhetorical relationship between them. The normative connection is also an equally fundamental relationship, as it suggests the rhetorical situation only 'demands' or 'calls for' or 'requires' a fitting discourse but does not necessarily cause it. Bitzer (1981a) himself offers some opinions on the rhetorical situation later, that serve as a departure from his original views on the rhetorical situation that project the constituents of the rhetorical situations are objective, real, historic, and observable fact. He clarifies his position on not being an objectivist regarding his notions of the rhetorical situation, and asserts:

> I am not an objectivist in the sense that I think the constituents are all brute facts. Rather, I hold that such mental entities as attitudes, beliefs, perspectives, aspirations, values, etc. are historic and real; and while it is true that you cannot at this moment know my attitude through observation of it, you surely can make an inference about my attitude when relevant data are available to you (101).

By critiquing Bitzer's (1968) objective situational theory, William L. Benoit (1994) in "The Genesis of Rhetorical Situation" believes that Bitzer's situational theory has "yet to be fully assimilated into our current understanding of the nature of rhetoric" (3450). Benoit corrects it on the basis of epistemology, the importance of purpose, and the importance of agent, which are lacking in Bitzer's model of the rhetorical situation.

Bitzer's situational theory is based on the fact that "the constituents of rhetorical situations are objective, real, historic, and observable or detectable" (Bitzer 1981a, 101), which ignores the epistemic nature of rhetoric. However, Bitzer departs from this idea when he says: "My essays on the subject [the rhetorical situation] do not characterize situations as having inherent meaning and discrete boundaries; nor do I hold that situations are always easily discernible" (Bitzer 1981b, 100). Benoit (1994), by rejecting the Bitzer's objective nature of exigence, believes that a rhetorical exigence is epistemic, as it is perceived in different ways by different rhetors. By using persuasive discourse and thus creating knowledge about it, rhetoric can answer the questions that do not have empirical verification. This fact about rhetorical construction is lacking in Bitzer's situational theory. So, Benoit says, "Bitzer's objective view of reality ignores an important epistemic function rhetoric can perform" (345). This epistemological assumption is related to the rhetor and the rhetor's purpose. Depending on the purposes of the rhetors, the same situation generates different rhetorics. Likewise, the nature of a rhetor also influences the discourse produced in response to a certain situation.

In "Bitzer's Model Reconstructed", Craig Smith and Scott Lybarger (1996) also critique Bitzer's definition that locates exigencies in the external conditions of material and social circumstances and treats it as singular phenomenon. By revising Bitzer's relatively autonomous notion of exigence, they argue that the rhetorical situation involves a plurality of exigencies and complex relations between the audience and rhetorician's interest, thereby making it more interactive with other elements of the situation. They emphasize the important role of perception, when they say, "each auditor will have a perception of the rhetor and the message in addition to a perception of the issues" and so "rhetorical communication is always in a state of flux that requires the critic to move beyond the strict realism of Bitzer" (200). In this way, the exigence is more like a complex of various perceptions.

Based on the belief that examining rhetorical situations as sets of interacting influences from which rhetoric arises, helps in providing a better method of examining causality, Keith Grant-Davie (1997) intends "to review the original definitions of the term [rhetorical situation] and its constituents, and to offer a more thoroughly developed scheme for analyzing rhetorical situations" (264). Accordingly, Grant-Davie (1997) explains Bitzer's definition of a rhetorical situation, "a rhetorical situation is one in which a speaker or writer sees a need to change reality, and sees that the change may be effected through rhetorical discourse" (265). Talking about the constituents of rhetorical situations, he adds rhetors as a

constituent in Bitzer's model, and makes some changes and improvement by proposing three amendments to Bitzer's model. In her model, an exigence demands more comprehensive analysis; all the constituents are plural; and rhetors, like audiences, are part of rhetorical situations. By deriving the logic for the order of questions from the version of stasis theory explained by Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor, she orders the essential questions addressing the exigence of a situation, and thus engages in more comprehensive analysis of the exigence. While Bitzer's definition of the exigence pivoted around the question "Why is the discourse needed?", she, in her scheme, proposes this order based on stasis theory: what the discourse is about, why it is needed, and what it should accomplish. In her model, rhetors as constituents of the rhetorical situation mean those people, real or imagined, who are responsible for the discourse and its authorial voice, the audience means those people, real or imagined, with whom rhetors negotiate through discourse to achieve the rhetorical objectives, and constraints are factors in the situation's context that may affect the achievement of the rhetorical objectives.

In "The Rhetorical Situation Again: Linked Components in a Venn Diagram," Donna Gorrell (1997) reviews Bitzer's theory along with the modifications suggested by Richard Vatz and Scott Consigny and proposes her approach by using a Venn diagram "that synthesizes the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny models with the communication, or rhetorical triangle" (395). Her approach, by focusing on the dynamic interaction of the situational components, adds to both models. Gorrell (1997) likes Consigny's model as the most productive, and buys his arguments about rhetorical situations, that "they can be discovered and managed by means of heuristics, such as topics, which allow the rhetor to develop meanings and relationships beyond those available in rhetor-determining situations and in situation-controlling rhetors" (399). By combining the Kinneavyan-Aristotelian model and the Bitzer-Consigny model, Gorrel's model overlaps and links rhetor, audience, and reality, with the help of the Venn diagram. These components are in dynamic play, interacting with each other constantly, and the overlap creates a common ground in the central part, which "is the textual common ground where meaning is constructed" (Gorrell 1997, 400). "The larger the overlap of circles, the greater the chances of a successful text" (402), and the expansion of the central part suggests the increase of the rhetorical effectiveness of the text. Thus, her model suggests that the more the components come close in a dynamic play, the better rhetorically 'fitting' response it generates, and the less they join in this process, the more chance of adversarial, mere, and failed, rhetoric. The crux of her argument is that "the fitting response to any

rhetorical situation results from the interactions of all its components — rhetor, audience, and reality. Anything less is not a true rhetorical situation" (411). Besides this, her model suggests the synthesis of its components and its responsiveness to the variety of situations. While many scholars' notions of the rhetorical situation as discussed above can be seen as an unequivocal emphasis on Bitzer, because Bitzer is a pivotal force to generate discussion on the rhetorical situation either as a commend or as a critique of him, some others, like the ones I discuss below, focus on the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate as a whole.

II.II.II: Hunsaker & Smith's critique on Bitzer, Vatz, and Consigny

David M. Hunsaker and Craig R. Smith (1976), in "The Nature of Issues: A Constructive Approach to Situational Rhetoric", critique Bitzer, Vatz, and Consigny, for not mentioning the importance of perception, and admit that their situation-based examinations of rhetoric have provided a new insight into the nature of the issue. Hunsaker and Smith (1976) value Consigny's classical system of topics as an alternative to Bitzer's and Vatz's antithetical model, but believe that, though Consigny's model is useful, its "system fails to encompass all aspects of the rhetorical situation" (145). They argue that "the perceptions of the rhetor and auditor are crucial to an adequate understanding of rhetoric as art" (145). Hunsaker and Smith assert: "While we recognize the generating power of a rhetorical exigence, we also recognize the ability of a communicator to manipulate perception of that exigence, as well as the variety of audience perceptions of exigence and communicator, and the capacity of an auditor to perceive selectively" (145). They value the importance of perception in constructing the potential issues in a rhetorical situation, but they also believe that the cognitive and affective experiences that shape human perception "are not completely private, but are to some degree shared through common experience and communication" (147).

II.II.III: A deconstructive approach to the rhetorical situation

As influenced by the Derridean notion of *difference,* Barbara A. Biesecker (1989) calls for the appropriation of deconstructive insights and deconstructs the relationships between rhetorical discourse and audience in order to rethink the rhetorical situation. Biesecker (1989), by adding a new dimension to the discussion of situation and rhetorical discourse, argues that a rhetorical discourse also influences the constituent elements of the

situation. For her, the relationship between a rhetorical discourse and its situation is discursive, and thus indeterminate; "neither the text's immediate rhetorical situation nor its author can be taken as simple origin or generative agent since both are underwritten by a series of historically produced displacement" (Biesecker 1989, 121). The discursivity and indeterminacy of the connection between a rhetorical discourse and its situation is more evident in the reception of rhetorical texts because it is received differently by different audiences. This notion fleshes out her logic of the rhetorical situation as articulation, and "the deconstruction of the subject opens up possibilities for the field of Rhetoric by enabling us to read the rhetorical situation as an event structured not by a logic of influence but by a logic of articulation" (126), which is essentially provisional. This notion reads rhetorical discourses as processes entailing the discursive production of audience, "whose identity is produced and reproduced in discursive practices" (127), thereby resituating "the rhetorical situation on the trajectory of becoming rather than Being" (127).

Crismore and Vande Kopple's (1990) explanation of Bitzer's notion of constraints also very clearly demonstrates the fact that a rhetorical discourse exits in plurality, as it is an expression of subjective phenomena like beliefs, attitude, interest, and motives. They state "[t]he sources of constraints are many: beliefs, attitudes, facts, documents, traditions, images, interests, and motives" (50). It elucidates that the rhetor's personal character, logical proofs, and style, cause diverse rhetorical discourses in response to the same exigence, suggesting that an exigence has an indeterminate relationship with the rhetorical discourse. Unlike Crismore and Kopple, and many others, Mary Garret and Xiaosui Xiao (1993) resituate and revisit the notion of the rhetorical situation from a fresh perspective that adds a new dimension in the study of the rhetorical situation, and thus, makes a significant expansions and refinements in the notion of the rhetorical situation. While the role of the discourse tradition was ignored in most treatments of the rhetorical situation, they focus on the notion of 'discourse tradition' in shaping and influencing both speakers' and audiences' perceptions of an exigence. They also revert to Vatz's model, which focused on the rhetor, by seeing the audience rather than the rhetor as the pivotal element "in determining exigency, constraints, and the 'fittingness' of the rhetor's response" (30), thereby "placing much greater stress on the interactive, organic nature of the rhetorical situation" (31). Their case study of the 19th century Chinese response to the two Opium Wars shows that "the discourse tradition functioned as a powerful aspect of the rhetorical situation" (37) as the case study evinces the perception of exigency, and the construction of the

response to it "depended in large part on the discourse tradition" (37) because discourse tradition shapes, influences, and conforms audience's opinions about forms of discourses, the proper style, and the right modes of argumentation. Garret and Xiao's treatment of the role of discourse tradition treats the audience as the active center of the rhetorical situation:

> Usually, though not always, the rhetor is not separate from the audience but arises out of the audience […]. In the same way, the rhetorical exigencies are expressions of the situational audience's unsolved questions, concerns, anxieties, frustrations, and confusions, which need modification by discourse. The constraints, on the other hand, reflect the audience's expectations for an appropriate discourse in a given circumstance (39).

II.III. A networked complex system from 2004 to 2015

With the advent of new media and technology and their integration into all forms of communication in particular and human life in general, the notions of rhetorical situations have changed. This change is reflected in some writings. In this part, I synthesize and discuss how some essays written on the rhetorical situation treat the notions of the rhetorical situation, particularly given the impact of new media and technology.

By drawing from Mark C. Taylor, Byron Hawk (2004), in "Toward a Rhetoric of Networked (Media) Culture: Notes on Polarities and Potentiality", provides a solution to the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate on the prominence of situation or discourse, thereby defining the rhetorical situation as complex adaptive systems where there is a dynamic interplay between the polarity of situation and discourse in networked (media) culture. In this way, Hawk always perceives the rhetorical situation as complex adaptive systems which "remain open to their environments and adapt accordingly […] produce strange loops among their individual parts that create" (835-836). Hawk believes that the notion of the rhetorical situation is not as simple and straightforward as discussed in the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate; it is much more complex, and thus the complexity of the rhetorical situation can be better understood by complexity theory, because "[a]ll the elements of a rhetorical situation are effects of their place in an economy of differences — they each form polarities with the others and evolve co-adaptively" (Hawk 2004, 837). Just as "[e]nvironment, rhetoric, texts, and audiences are complex adaptive systems […][they] are networks linked to other networks" (837), the rhetorical situation is also a complex adaptive system, each one is linked to other networks. As Walby (2007) believes that complexity theory is a new concept of a social system

which can more adequately constitute an explanatory framework to make the social system better understood, the gist of complexity theory that any entity of social system "linked with a range of linked concepts" (Walby 2007, 450) better explains the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation and resolve the ongoing Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate.

To bring in complexity theory as an explanatory framework, the constituents of the rhetorical situation, unlike the way they are perceived in the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate, are not discrete entities; they are rather interconnected, networked, and linked with a range of linked concepts, and thus, can be better understood as an ecology. In this context, to argue for the causal relationship between the situation and discourse, or vice versa, is based on faulty assumptions. No entity alone is prominent over the others; rather, all the constituents of the rhetorical situation are connected as a web, at least partially or mutually constituting each other.

In her article "Unframing Models of Public Distribution: From Rhetorical Situation to Rhetorical Ecologies," Jenny Edbauer (2005), unlike earlier works on the rhetorical situation that focus upon the elements of audience, exigence, and constraints, "argues that rhetorical situations operate within a network of lived practical consciousness or structure of feeling" (5). Her article advances a new debate on the rhetorical situation. By borrowing Phelps's (1988) notion of ecology that "is constituted through interdependence and transactions among all levels of a system, both horizontally (the relations of parts within the whole at a given level of organization) and vertically (the relations among elements at different levels)" (3), Edbauer (2005) places the rhetorical elements within the wider context that destabilizes the discrete borders of a rhetorical situation and thus attempts to provide "a framework of *affective ecologies* that recontextualizes rhetorics in their temporal, historic, and lived fluxes" (9). For her, rhetorical situations are not discrete entities; they are perceived as a circulating ecology of effects, enactments, and events resulting in rhetorical ecologies, where all the elements are networked and connected, which could be called "sites of complex network or networked process" in Helen Foster's (2007) terminologies. As Foster believes "the networked process evokes both the growing number of sites and the relational loops," and thus it "encompasses a variety of sites" (xv), this ecological notion does not treat the rhetorical situation as a relatively closed system; rather, it perceives the elements as distributed acts, thereby placing the situation within an open network. Edbauer (2005) also perceives the rhetorical situation as a process when she says, "rhetorical situation is better conceptualized as a mixture of processes and encounters" (13). She argues that the standard models of the rhetorical

situation mask the fluid nature of rhetoric. Her argument about the fluidity of rhetorical situations gets expressed when she says "[r]hetorical situations involve the amalgamation and mixture of many different events and happenings that are not properly segmented into audience, text, or rhetorician" (20). Rather, the rhetorical situations are trans-situational and open-ended processes.

Killoran (2009, 2015) discusses how new media and technology have impacted visible changes in genre and social web, and how these changes have contributed to the change in the notions of the rhetorical situation. Given the impact of new media and technology, there have been visible changes in genre resulting in less visible changes in genre's rhetorical orientation. This has also changed the notions of the rhetorical situation. In this context, Killoran (2009) argues that, "a more insightful approach to change as genres migrate to a new medium would seek how the new medium, together with its users, offers old genres not just new technological features but also new rhetorical situations" (264). New media and technology have created new rhetorical situations that have impacted the change in genre. So, "genres, as responses to rhetorical situations, change not in response to the new medium's technology *per se*, but in response to the new situations that the medium hosts" (264). By exploring the genre of a web resume, he illustrates how the web has created new rhetorical situations. Because a genre has evolved with the advent of new media and technology, "we should inquire not just into the new medium's technology but also into the new situation's exigences, audiences, and constraints" (267). Killoran (2015) believes that new media and technology have transformed the relatively static world wide web into the social web - Web 2.0 - which has changed our daily rhetorical situations by inviting response to them, because "quotidian rhetorical situations are more readily perceived to invite our correspondingly unassuming quotidian postings" (280). Consequently, "[e]ach post potentially creates a new quotidian ongoing self-presentation as a mutually supportive collective project" (281). While this process exponentially multiplies quotidian postings in response to each post on the social web, it creates a context for the new rhetorical situations that are inherently fluid, transactional and networked. Killoran (2015) argues that the movement from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 will have a tremendous impact, not only in the way we communicate, via what means, but in that it compels us to respond as per the demand of the new rhetorical situations: "I anticipate that the legacy of rhetorical situations that have invited selective bits of ourselves, both onto independent web 1.0 sites, and more extensively into Web 2.0 social media, should encourage us not only to respond to, but to compose,

further such rhetorical situations" (283). This shift from Web 1.0 to the social web has broken the linear and discrete relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, where the context collapses into a situation known as 'context collapse'.

II.IV: Context collapse as the rhetorical situation from 2008 to 2020

The term 'context collapse' was first coined by cultural anthropologist Michael Wesch (2008). It is a concept used by academics writing about the effects of social media on communicative activities. Context collapse has created a situation which refers to the infinite audience possible online, as opposed to the limited groups a person normally interacts with face-to-face. In a limited group, in normal face-to-face interaction, a person is constantly adjusting his/her tone and presentation of self to fit into the social context, but, in a situation of context collapse, this becomes impossible. In addition, behaviors and materials intended for a limited audience can suddenly clash with parts of the wider audience which they actually receive, because of social convergence and information overload. In this information age, the social web has become a convergent site for social and information convergence, thereby creating a context known as 'context collapse', as a new version of the rhetorical situation that fits into our networked culture today. In this part, I discuss the notions of 'context collapse', how it can play the role of the rhetorical situation in our contemporary time, and how it can be extended to better capture the changed meaning of the rhetorical situation in our networked culture.

The idea of 'context collapse' emerged in imagining the audience online that conceived every participant in a communicative act as an imagined audience, who are not discrete, and who "might be entirely different from the actual readers of a profile, blog post, or tweet" (Marwick and Boyd 2010, 115). Marwick and Boyd (2010) use the phrase 'context collapse' in a study of communication on Twitter: "Twitter flattens multiple audiences into one – a phenomenon known as 'context collapse'" (122). They define it as a process by which "social media collapse diverse social contexts into one entity, making it difficult for people to engage in the complex negotiations needed to vary identity presentation, manage impressions, and save face" (123). They rightly say "[t]echnology complicates our metaphors of space and place, including the belief that audiences are separate from each other" (115), and "[s]ocial media technologies collapse multiple audiences into single contexts"

(114). They also argue that social media and technologies "collapse multiple contexts and bring together commonly distinct audiences" (115). Their statements about how networked social media and technologies impact the traditional notions of audiences, and how the lines between them are broken and complicated, truly express the changed notions of audiences given the impact of networked media technologies.

By echoing Marwick and Boyd (2010), Boyd (2011) defined context collapse as "[t]he lack of spatial, social, and temporal boundaries" (49) by bringing in the notion of 'networked publics' as a conceptual framework. In her conceptualization of context collapse, networked publics play a crucial role because they "both complicate the traditional mechanism for assessing and asserting context, as well as collapse contexts that are traditionally segmented" (51). Network publics, as an overall product of networked technologies, offer a context, in which "contexts often collide such that the performer is unaware of audiences from different contexts, magnifying the awkwardness and making adjustments impossible" (51). Like Boyd (2011), Vitak (2012) follows Marwick and Boyd (2010) in defining context collapse as "the flattening out of multiple distinct audiences in one's social network, such that people from different contexts become part of a singular group of message recipients" (451). The technical features of social network sites blur temporal, spatial, and social boundaries, thereby collapsing the contexts in such a way that "users can quickly diffuse information across their entire network and facilitate interaction across diverse groups of individuals who would otherwise be unlikely to communicate" (451). This phenomenon does not help to keep various audiences separate; "[i]nstead, these audiences are flattened into one homogenous group" (454) by "encourag[ing] public, one-to-many forms of communication over more individualized interactions, making it difficult to maintain distinct self-presentations for different audiences" (Vitak 2012, 454). Like Boyd (2011), Davis and Jurgenson (2014) conceptualize the notion of context collapse by building on 'networked publics' when they say: "affordances of networked publics create dynamics to be managed by networked individuals" (478). Context collapse changes networked individuals into a single mass of invisible audiences: "Collapsing contexts challenge clean movement between networks and across Generalized Others. Indeed, the default within social media platforms is such that diverse Generalized Others converge into a single mass [...] (478). They extend the notion of context collapse from the limited scope of networked publics, where audiences are conceived as a single mass of invisible entity, to real-life face-to-face in person and real-life face-to-face online settings, where people familiar with each other

meet. They argue that context collapse happens in all kinds of settings, e.g., face-to-face and online, and "*all* contexts maintain some degree of collapse, as, for example, spouses bring stresses and successes from work into the home, workers bring family worries into the office, and colleagues meet up — intentionally or unintentionally — at local pubs" (479). However, some contexts tend to collapse more than others when they are more porous, because they allow "outside networks and roles to easily seep in, or alternatively, maintain relatively solid contextual boundaries. Contextual porousness is exacerbated by the affordances of social media and the dynamics of networked publics" (479). This situation shows the presence of context collapse even in our daily communicative activities, including face-to-face interaction, because of increased networked situations.

Talking about how social distance is regulated through new media and technologies, Marvin (2013) argues that context collapse has provided a new perspective through which to look at the human condition: "New social hierarchies, new forms of openness and reticence, new etiquette styles and social obligations — all these emerge from context collapse" (155). Context collapse is so pervasive in our current computer-mediated communicative practices that our social trust is threatened with "the fragile conviction that our shared world is manageable and safe" (155). Marvin (2013) outlines four elements of context collapse: deep connectivity; temporal acceleration; expanded legibilities; and asymmetric transparency (155-156), which have contributed to "recalibration of social distance in a new world of context collapse" (157). Androutsopoulos (2014) uses context collapse and "examines strategies of language choice in social networking interactions among multilingual young people on Facebook" (62). He defines context collapse as "a communicative process that occurs whenever a social occasion brings together people who would normally not be simultaneously addressed" (71). Similarly, Duguay (2014) discusses the notion of context collapse in relation to social networking sites (SNSs) that provide a foundational basis for the existence of context collapse, in which "context collapse can be understood as an event, or episodic occurrence, within a specific situation where certain aspects of the setting and identity performance influence its likelihood" (893). She believes "SNSs bring audiences together as users build vast online networks" (893) because Web 2.0 platforms bring personal profiles, publicly articulated connections and multiple modes of interaction of user-generated content, thereby forming networked publics where context collapses, because they dissolve the spatio-temporal boundaries and thus "make it difficult to maintain distinct social contexts" (Boyd 2011, 49). As a result, SNSs "dissolve the boundaries of front stage and backstage

regions, increasing the porousness of contexts" (893). Gaunt (2015) also stresses the omnipresence of context collapse in social media and the networked world: "Without a shared history in real life, context collapse is always happening, and it is not limited to social media, but is hyperactive in the networked world we live in, where everyone has their own handheld digital interface to the web — networked individualism and context collapse at billions of points in the ecosystem" (262).

The issue of reconceptualization of the audience as per networked technologies is central to context collapse (Marwick and Boyd 2010, Boyd 2011, Vitak 2012, Georgakopoulou 2017, Kaul and Chaudhri 2017). Georgakopoulou (2017) sees context collapse mainly in terms of audience formation in the online world. For her, "[c]ontext collapse arises from the infinite audience that is possible online, as opposed to the limited groups a person interacts with face-to-face" (171). She thinks that unlimited and unknown audiences are the main constituents of context collapse, which "routinely create a multiplicity of participation frameworks for users" (172). Similarly, Kaul and Chaudhri (2017) raise the question of imagined audiences to collapse the traditional notions of context. In a study that shows how "[t]he meshing of social contexts portends problematic issues, as messages inadvertently reach unimagined audiences causing shame and leading to loss of 'face'" for celebrities, Kaul and Chaudhri (2017) discuss how "[w]ith the advent of social media and increase in networked publics, context collapse has emerged as a critical topic in the discussion of imagined audiences and blurring of the private and the public" (1). Following centrality of audiences in causing context collapse, Beam, Child, Hutchens, and Hmielowski (2018) and Gil-Lopez et al. (2018) believe that context collapse happens when multiple audiences converge into single imagined audiences. For Beam et al. (2018), "Facebook, like most SNS, treats all contacts as a single audience by default, which causes those various contexts to collapse when engaging in online activities" (2298). Similarly, Gil-Lopez et al. (2018) opine that "[c]ontext collapse occurs when disparate audiences are conjoined into one, creating potentially uncomfortable situations when users broadcast messages to an entire social network with different appropriateness norms across diverse groups" (138).

While some scholars mentioned above discussed context collapse primarily in terms of reconceptualization of audiences, some other scholars stress how multiple social settings, social media platforms, media spaces and complex social context, have created a context for context collapse to happen (Dennen and Burner 2017, Triggs, Moller, and Neumayer 2019, Vargas and Santosh 2020). In this context, Dennen and Burner

(2017) consider multiple social settings as the main constituting factors of context collapse, and say: "Context collapse occurs when multiple social settings come together in the same online space" (175). Talking about how context collapse causes problems for queer people for their self-presentation through social media platforms, Triggs, Møller, and Neumayer (2019) argue "context collapse in an era of big data and social media platforms operates beyond the control of any one user, which causes problems, particularly for queer people" (1). The emergence of social media has enabled multiple, fractured, and invisible, audiences to navigate at the same time, thereby facilitating "the coexistence of multiple publics on one platform" (3) resulting in creating uniquely opaque structures that "make it difficult for the individual user to separate and distinguish between different audiences, while everyday tools for audience targeting are becoming increasingly widespread and sophisticated" (3). Unlike one-to-one or face-to-face interaction of any kind, be that online one-to-one interaction, "social media platforms in practice offer less control over intended audiences, and contexts (e.g. work, family) collapse on one platform" (3). Vargas and Santos (2020) define context collapse as "media spaces where distinct situations and people overlap, such as in social networks, where co-workers, friends, family, and unknown people mix, with online statements directed to a very varied audience" (589). This creates a complex rhetorical situation through digital medium interaction in which multiple audiences collapse at the same time, making it hard to distinguish one from the other.

While context collapse has been in the air in social media studies, some voices of critical scrutiny on context collapse have been heard, almost in parallel, in some scholarships. Litt (2012) has taken the lead in this regard. She notes that the popularity of social network sites "has also given individuals the opportunity to interact with large and diverse audiences — dozens, hundreds, thousands, and sometimes even millions of people" (332). Because these large and diverse audiences exist in the online realm only, they are imagined audiences, as "many social media platforms by default 'collapse' contexts and audiences […]" (332). In online world, "social media users create and attend to an imagined audience for their everyday interactions" (333) because of being unable to know the actual audience. However, there is "the actual audience on the other side of the screen reacting and judging the performance" (333). The existence of actual audience on the other side of the screen brings the notion of the imagined audience and context collapse under critical scrutiny which questions the complete collapse of contexts and audiences. Litt and Hargittai (2016) follow Litt's (2012 lead in questioning the

complete collapse of contexts because of the existence of actual people on the side of screen. They argue "[w]hile users may depend on the imagined audience to help navigate through a situation, the difficulty is that on the other side of the screen, there are actual people forming impressions — and the imagined audience may not always align with the actual audience" (2). This situation, they believe, does not let the contexts collapse completely.

Szabla and Blommaert (2018) are more critical about context collapse in arguing for the expansion of contexts instead of collapse: "In fact, the 'networked publics' rarely seem to occur in practice, and contexts do not collapse, but expand continuously without causing major issues for contextualization" (1). By admitting that "simple contexts are no longer afforded in the blended, complex networked publics of SNS" (4), they assert "we notice that people don't usually interact with 'audiences' or 'networks' but with specific addressees placed in specific relationships with them during highly specific forms of interaction" (7). For them, context collapse does not actually happen in reality; rather, contexts are segmented into specific micro contexts in which addressors and addressees communicate in one-on-one relationships. So, they state that "the diffuse (and confusing) 'audiences' and 'network publics' causing context collapse appear, in actual practice, to be chopped into much smaller and highly specific sets of addressees" (7). In a study that examined whether context really collapses in social media interaction, Szabla and Blommaert (2018) found that "[c]ontexts did not collapse; if anything, they multiplied and expanded into a mountain range" (27). Brandtzaeg and Lüders (2018) extends the notion of context collapse by adding the time collapsing aspects of social media. They state "[b]y including time as well as space, therefore, we frame our work as a contribution to the concept of context collapse" (3). Because "context collapse may complicate audience segregation and the tailoring of self-performances in social media" (2), they "argue for the need to include the collapse of temporal patterns in the conceptualization of context collapse in social media" (8). Though "[t]he concept of context collapse has remained largely unchallenged in the literature on social media" (Costa 2018, 3642), Costa illustrates how Mardinites keep context collapse absent from social media by appropriating it in such way that they keep different social contexts strictly divided. For example, "by integrating social media into their everyday lives, Mardinites have produced patterns of usage that reproduce longstanding boundaries between different social contexts of the offline world, and local meanings of private and public" (Costa 2018, 3644-45). They keep context collapse absent from social media in number of ways: "Changing privacy settings,

opening multiple Facebook accounts, creating anonymous and fake profiles, forming different closed groups within the same account, unfriending people, blocking undesired acquaintances, and largely using private chat, are the natural and presumed way of using Facebook in Mardin" (Costa 2018, 3644). So, some social networking sites like Facebook can be modeled as traditional public context, where context collapse does not necessarily happen.

Though the scholars discussed above present two different perspectives on context collapse, they unanimously agree on the idea that context collapse means collapsing the traditional notions of contexts. As discussed above, while the notion of context collapse builds the foundation for defining the rhetorical situation from a new perspective, the critiques on context collapse extend the argument of context collapse from limiting it to audience only, to other constituents of the rhetorical situation. The scholarships on context collapse mainly treat audiences as the main constituents of contexts. However, rhetorical contexts do not mean only audiences; rhetorical contexts, to name some, consist of writers, audiences, messages, and texts. By developing the concept of the rhetorical contexts more against the backdrop of networked social media technologies and building on the dissonance with the notions of context collapse, I propose to extend the notions of context collapse, and thus, develop networked rhetorical context that better captures the essence of contexts given the impact of new media and technologies. Instead of just collapsing the context only in terms of audiences, the networked rhetorical context collapses the traditional notions of all constituents of the rhetorical situation and sees them as a co-adaptive system in a networked ecology. To sum up, the rhetorical situations are not discrete, linear, and singular entities; rather, they are networked ecologies of a complex system. Since new media and technology have contributed to this change, in Chapter III, I will define new media and technology at considerable length and discuss how and why new media and technology have changed the notions of the rhetorical situation.

CHAPTER III

IMPACT OF NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGY TO CHANGE THE NOTIONS OF THE RHETORICAL SITUATION

Technologies are part and parcel of human life, as they are inevitable and inseparable from human activities. Humans have been living with, and using, technologies from even before they invented language. For example, humans had skills or tools for hunting food before they learned to use human language systematically. People have used technology as a medium to do something in a better way and communicate across space and time, from time immemorial as Nye (2006) says: "One way to define 'technology' is in terms of evolution" (1). Technology is so much attached to evolution that it is "not foreign to 'human nature' but inseparable from it" and "technologies have been used for social evolution" (2). Technologies are characterized as social evolution, and as ever-changing and ever-advancing sites, because they facilitate human lives with the supply of tools and methodologies to meet their needs, which humans continually redefine to suit themselves (2). However, there are mutual relationships between necessity and technology: most of the time, necessity engenders technologies, and sometimes technologies (tools) generate necessity. So, "[t]echnologies are not just objects, but also the skills needed to use them" (4), hence both object and process. The ancient Greeks used the word *techne* instead of technology, which had to do with skills in the arts that meant rational faculty used in making something, and a productive quality exercised in combination with true reasoning. In simple terms, technologies mean any tools, from simple to high-tech, and skills that are used to perform things in a better and more effective way.

As time has progressed, technology has advanced, and become more complex and sophisticated, thereby making human consciousness more complex. As a result, when it comes to media technology, linear media, such as print, failed to capture the structure of our thought, given the impact of new media and technology, thereby being unable to address our changed need. As an intellectual predicament of the second half of the

20th century, we experienced flickering focus and a deferral of meaning between the signifier and the signified. Against this backdrop, geared up by advanced technology (digital technology), new media, as a new medium of human expression, was born as "a sign of our current confusion about where these efforts are leading and our breathlessness at the place of change" (Murray 2003, 3). Though communication scholar Marshall McLuhan first used the term 'new media' in 1953, "the term really emerged in the late 1990s, when it began to be used as an all-encompassing description for emerging and digital technologies" (S. Smith and Hendricks 2010, 4). So, new media is usually associated with the digital spread of information that is characterized by computer-mediated forms of production, distribution, and communication. Smith and Hendricks (2010) argue that new media surpasses the digital communication and the technology that made it possible. For them:

> It has become associated with converged, computerized, networked, interactive and compressible technologies and information. If we go with this all-encompassing definition, we are primarily talking about only the technology that truly makes it new media. For many, the definition goes even further. It is not just the technology, but it is the way in which we interact with the technology that truly makes it new media (5).

Like Smith and Hendricks, Kember and Zylinska (2012), in *Life after New Media,* extend the definition of new media even further. They make a significant shift in the way new media is perceived and understood "as a set of discrete objects […] to understand media [new media] predominantly in terms of processes of mediation" (xiii). For them, new media as processes of mediation "is a complex and hybrid process that is simultaneously economic, social, cultural, psychological, and technical" (xv). This can be a big debate on new media scholarship, but I am not going to explore this issue here because of the limitation of my focus. Here, I plan to define new media only in terms of its technological features that could be useful in understanding how it has changed the notions of the rhetorical situation.

We cannot move along without new media technology because it is inevitable in our lives, and has so much impacted our lives, that we have become 'cyborgs' both physically and mentally. As a powerful means to master the complexity of life, new media has enabled us to understand the complex world around us, and thus helped us to "refigure our bodies, our cultures, ourselves in hopeful ways" (Murray 2003, 5). Many scholars have felt the need to define new media technology. So, there have been

many efforts to define and explain new media technology. However, "[e]fforts to understand, explain, and analyze the new media are demanding and endlessly complex" (Dennis 1998, xi) because, as Lievrouw and Livingstone (2002) believe, new media has been defined in terms of technological, economic, behavioral, and critical/cultural issues that deal with system features and services, industry structure and ownership, psychology of media users, and content and forms, respectively. This chapter is divided into three broad parts: the definition of new media and technology, the impact of new media and technology in changing the notions of the rhetorical situation, and conclusion. While in the first part, I delineate the definitions of new media primarily in terms of technology, in the second part, I discuss how new media and technology have changed the notions of the rhetorical situation. The third part will conclude the discussion of the first two parts.

III.I. What is new media technology?

When we define new media in terms of the technological aspects, it refers to a number of affordances, systems features, and services, which new media inherently entails. Lister et al.'s (2009) list that sums up the features of new media can be useful to define it. According to them, 'new media' refers to the following: new textual experiences (new kinds of genres and textual forms); new ways of representing the world; new relationships between subjects (users and consumers) and media technologies; new experiences of the relationship between embodiment, identity and community; new conceptions of the biological body's relationship to technological media; new patterns of organization and production; computer-mediated communication; new ways of distributing and consuming; virtual 'realities'; a whole range of transformations and dislocations of established media (12-13). From these enumerations of the characteristics of new media, they derive some defining concepts that are essential qualities of new media: digital, interactive, hypertextual, virtual, networked, and simulated (13). Recently algorithmic quality has been added to this list, as one more additional feature of new media. In what follows, I define new media technology under some headings, and I discuss and explain these essential qualities.

III.I.I. Computerization—the heart of new media technology

As Lievrouw and Livingston (2002) argue: "Undoubtedly, most definitions of new media and ICTs [information and communication

technologies] to date have focused on their technological features" (5), computerization in particular and technology in general represent the pivotal force giving birth to new media. New media (the internet, websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMs, DVD, and electronic books, for example) is usually defined as something that has created a massive transformation of the old media (television, film, and publishing) on the basis of computer-based production, storage, and distribution of information. The basis for this transition to computer-based production, storage, and distribution, is computer technology. Dizard's (2000) statement reconfirms the argument that computerization is the heart of new media technology: "This new media pattern is qualitatively different from earlier [old] media in several ways. One technology — computerization — is now the module for all forms of electronic information: sound, video, and print […]. Computers are forcing a massive restructuring of older media services and, at the same time, creating a new set of competing services" (28). Computer-mediated forms of production, distribution, and communication, as a massive restructuring agent of new media, have changed the face of old media in such a way that it has transformed television sets "from passive receivers of distant pictures into multimedia interactive instruments, capable of handling all types of video, print, and sound services" (Dizard 2000, 28). Manovich (2001) also believes that the use of computers for distribution and exhibition of information and communication is what identifies new media as new media; different from old media. He explains the difference between old media and new media with examples in this way: "[…] texts distributed on a computer (websites and electronic books) are considered to be new media, whereas texts distributed on paper are not. Similarly, photographs that are put on a CD-ROM and require a computer to be viewed are considered new media; the same photographs printed in a book are not" (19). New media has, thus, revolutionized the production, distribution, and communication of information more profoundly than the previous media, and they are able to do this with the use of computer, thereby affecting all stages of communication (acquisition, manipulation, storage, and distribution) and all types of media (texts, still images, motion picture, sound, and spatial construction). In the center of these changes that new media has brought is its ability for networking and using all forms of computing. Further defining new media, Manovich (2003) says, "new media is the cultural objects which use digital computer technology for distribution and exhibition. Thus, the internet, websites, computer multimedia, computer games, CD-ROMs and DVDs, virtual reality, and computer-generated special effects, all fall under new media" (16-17), and, for mass exhibition

and distribution, it uses digital data that could be manipulated by software based on the principle of numerical representation, modularity, automation, variability, and transcoding.

It is necessary here, to talk about how new media uses digital data — known as digitization — to store, process, transmit, and retrieve data in a more advanced way than in non-digital (analogue) text. Goggin (2012) explains digitization in a very lucid way:

> Simply put, the stuff of media [new media] — words, texts, images, sounds, sensations, and design — can be converted to a stream of ones and zeros (binary code). This fundamental encoding of what otherwise is non-digital […] into digital form has profound implications. It allows media [new media] to be stored, transmitted, communicated, retrieved, inspected, and enjoyed across what were thought to be previously distinct areas of the media [new media]. (14)

As mentioned above, new media uses digital data that makes the mass exhibition and distribution of information possible. It involves conversion, processing and storing of all input data in numbers which "are 'dematerialized'; […] can be compressed into very small spaces; […] can be accessed at very high speeds and in non-linear ways;[…] can be manipulated far more easily than analogue forms" (Lister et al. 2009, 18). Thus, by assigning numerical values to phenomena, data is decoded and received as screen displays and sound. The use of digital technologies in new media, which makes it inherently multimodal by incorporating sounds, color, photographs and other semiotic resources, facilitates storing, dissemination, and proliferation of data, thereby enabling us to effectively communicate as Sheridan, Ridolfo, and Michel (2005) say, "the internet and other digital technologies allow us to communicate, not just through words, but also through sounds, colors, photographs, and other semiotic resources" (803). The conversion of digital data from digital codes to material entity in the form of sounds, color, photographs, and other semiotic resources enhances materiality of new media, thereby making new media something concrete and a palpable thing for all. So, without intending to discount the value of digitality in the making of new media, Wysocki (2004) defines new media in terms of materiality instead of digitality, in order to give justice to the importance of materiality in new media, because she believes "to look at texts only through their technological [digital] origin is to deflect our attentions from what we might achieve, mindful that textual practices are always broader than the technological" (19). For her, the materiality of texts comprises of the

making process and the contexts which make the texts easily accessible, not only for its composers but also the readers. It is materiality that helps "readers/consumers/viewers stay alert to how any text […] doesn't function independently of how it is made and in what context" (15). Thus, any text that has been designed with sufficient focus on the context and process of making, thereby not effacing its materiality, can count as new media. For Wysocki, materiality is important aspect of new media also, because it gives agency to the reader, as she asserts, "it helps us see where openings for agency are within the new media texts we compose" (15) because the various materialities of new media help the readers understand how it is read and understood, and how the compositing process, words and visual representation, for example, function and relate. As discussed above, computerization as a primary feature of new media that distinguishes it basically from old media, and defines its inherent qualities, also contributes to its definition as a multimodal site, which I discuss next.

III.I.II. Multimodality

Since new media uses the most advanced technology in processing, storing, distribution, and exhibition of digital data controlled by software, it is natural to expect that it will fully obey the principles of modularity, variability, and automation. However, it does not always do so; it can be seen as a multimodal site that combines both the traditional and modern means of presenting data and genres. In this context, Manovich (2003) stresses this mix: "new media today can be understood as the mix between older cultural conventions for data representation, access, and manipulation, and newer conventions of data representation, access, and manipulation" (19). This mix is possible also, because new media is fundamentally multimodal. Selfe (2004a) believes that new media is "created primarily in digital environments, composed in multiple media (e.g., film, video, audio, among others), and designed for presentation and exchange in digital venues" (43). Sorapure (2006) echoes Selfe, Kress, van Leeuwen, and Ball when she talks about the multimodality of composing in new media, "composing in new media usually involves bringing together multiple modes — text, image, sound, animation, and/or video— in order to convey a meaning or create an effect" (4). While so doing, new media challenges containment of alphabetical systems of print (old media), which privileges only reading and makes the readers only receivers of information, thereby demanding the multiple literacies of seeing, listening, writing, and even allowing readers to manipulate the information. The physical/material/aesthetic characteristics of new media make it appealing,

because, as Selfe (2004a) says, "they are often richly textured with combination of visual elements, sound, and words; they are interactive and often hypertextual, and they can be aesthetically pleasing […]" (44). Unlike old media, new media, thus, attaches more importance to visuals and sound, making it richly textured. While so doing, new media demands visual literacy from both the authors and readers. By 'visual literacy', Selfe (2004b) means "the ability to read, understand, value, and learn from visual materials (still photographs, videos, films, animations, still images, pictures, drawings, graphics) […] as well as the ability to create, combine, and use visual elements (e.g., colors, forms, lines, images) and messages for the purpose of communicating" (69).

Multimodality better expresses the modes of communication today because it can express various modes and communicative experiences in a most truthful way, and visual literacy is one color we cannot ignore to make communication complete. In this context, both Kress (1999) and Hocks (2003) value the importance of visual rhetoric in new media. Like Hocks (2003) says: "Its [visual rhetoric] importance has been amplified by the visual and interactive nature of native hypertext and multimedia writing" (629), Kress (1999) also suggests the increasing emphasis on the visual presentation of information, and the challenge to alphabetical texts by visual text, in new media: "The visual is becoming more prominent in many domains of public communication. From a different perspective, this is to realize that written language is being displaced from its hitherto unchallenged central position in the semiotic landscape, and that the visual is taking over many of the functions of written language" (68). Visual literacy has become an essential aspect of new media technology (Selfe 2004a, 2004b; Kress 1999; Costanzo 1994; Reynolds 2004). In her article "The Movement of Air, the Breath of Meaning: Aurality and Multimodal Composing" (2009), Selfe adds a dimension in multimodality, i.e. aurality, while talking about "the need to pay attention to *both* writing and aurality, *and* other composing modalities, as well" (618). While Costanzo (1994) argues that "the visual composition of a message, whether a movie or an advertisement, represents a large part of its meaning" and "computers seem to reinforce this notion by drawing more attention to the visual aspects of text" (15), Reynolds (2004) asserts that "new technologies are generating more attention to visual culture" (63). Reynolds also talks about how new media technology has contributed to the ubiquity of visual literacy as "screen culture":

> The terms visual literacy or visual rhetoric are becoming more
> common as well; that is, the ability to 'read' images critically,
> analyze the way they work, and choose or design images that

communicate effectively […]. There's a direct correlation, of course, between the rise of (visual-based) electronic technologies — screen culture — and the scholarly or pedagogical interest in visual literacy (64).

New media technology, thus, creates a differently configured communicational world by making it so inherently multimodal that "[e]ven visual modes, such as television and billboards, are interwoven with speech, writing and sign" (Aitchison and Lewis 2003, 1). This new communicational world provides many choices to design a new media text in any mode, genre, or ensemble of modes and genres, on any occasion. This flexibility opens up "a new possibility of arrangements, the new grammars of multimodal texts" (Kress 2003, 117). In this way, new media technology has liberated mono-modal traditional text, thereby making it multimodal, as Kress (2003) says:

> Where before, up until twenty or thirty years ago, writing carried all the communicational load of a message, and needed to have grammatical and syntactic structures that were equal to the complexities of that which had to be represented in that single mode, now there is a specialization, which allows each of the modes to carry that part of the message for which it is best equipped (117).

In this way, new media uses alternative, blended, diverse, mixed, or experimental, discourses, making it essentially hybrid and intertextual, thereby overlapping, or intersecting print with digital and multimodal text. Thus, new media technology has ruptured the traditional notion of genre by creating a multimodal genre in mixed genre mode. Even in a predominantly written mode, new media dismantles the existence of one genre alone, because there is always a shift from one genre to another in a new media text, which I call 'genre-switching' or 'mode-switching'. This mixing of many genres (modes) breaks the traditional norms of writing mode, and through this mix, new media enhance plural perspectives in the reader. In this context, Brooke (2009) argues that "one of the things that new media interfaces do stylistically is to help us from the abstracted, single perspective of the reader of a static text, or the viewer of a painting, to the multiple and partial perspectives necessary for many forms of new media" (114).

The possibility of mixing traditional and modern means of presenting data in new media and its composition that puts up together multiple media like print, speech, still images, video and sounds rhetorically, materially, or technologically, thereby making it a multimodal

site, also inherently makes it an interactive space, which I discuss below. Whereas the writers discussed above talk about the technical aspects of multimodality in new media, Janice Lauer (1993) details its contribution to rhetoric and composition as a discipline to enrich them with heuristic power, epistemology, and questioning capability. She asserts:

> Multimodality gives rhetoric and composition heuristic power, creating dialogic inquiry that enables the field to raise new questions about writing in our time. Such a rhetoric as an art is radically democratic because it redistributes the knowledge of social practices that characterize act of insiders, thus enabling both the critical examination of culture and the invention of new social possibilities (44).

However, Shipka (2011) wants to liberate the multimodal definition of new media technology from its association only with "terms like *multimodal, intertextual, multimedia,* or *media-rich* as synonyms for digitized products and processes" (10) and, thus, broadens it "to include everything from conventional essays, to painting, photographs, video, *and hybrid that we have yet to imagine*" (11). She believes that new media technology's association only with the terms listed above limits its scope to "text that can be composed, received, and reviewed onscreen" that risks "missing or undervaluing the meaning-making and learning potentials associated with the uptake and transformations of still other representational systems and technologies" (11). Palmeri (2012) also buys Shipka's views on incorporating 'old' technologies to design multimedia text in new media. With the introduction of more and more advanced technology, new media has been using more advanced computerized technology, and has been able to make it multimodal in a more advanced way, resulting in making it a more interactive and participatory space in a creative way. So, as Yancey (2004) says, new media technology "bring[s] us together in new ways" (100). In the heart of this advancement and change, there is motional quality of new media. It is because of its motion toward ever-burgeoning advancement, that new media can be seen as a motional site, which I will discuss in what follows.

III.I.III. Interactivity

By nature, humans have a tendency to engage with new technologies, and they try to see how they can make life easier by making new media technology more participatory, in such a way that it pushes it beyond its limits. Tribe (2001) rightly captures the participatory ability of

the internet: "The internet is particularly ripe with the potential to enable new kinds of collaborative production, democratic distribution, and participatory experience" (xi). As a result, new media technology has made communication and information not only mass communication and mass information, but also more interactive in real sense of the term, because it has made communication and information more easily accessible for the mass. Murray (2003) argues that "the awe-inspiring representational power of the computer derives from its four defining qualities: its procedural, participatory, encyclopedic, and spatial properties" (6), which fundamentally defines new media. The most obvious property of new media is its encyclopedic capacity which enables it to store enormous data at a location which is both actual, and, more importantly, symbolic (as on a website) and available for random access. Murray (2003) believes that:

> This spatializing quality is based upon the other two properties of the digital medium, the two most basic and defining attributes: its processing power, which allows us to specify procedures which will be not merely recorded but executed; and its participatory quality, which will allow it to receive input, to allow manipulation of its process and data by the user (6-7).

The procedural and participatory attributes of new media are what define 'interactivity' as the fundamental experience of new media. The spatial feature of new media as represented by a website (Web 2.0 platform), in particular, provides participatory experiences with so much ease of availability and interactivity that "it will allow us to say more complicated things to more people with greater understanding" (Murray 2003, 11), thereby being "a pool of human knowledge, which would allow collaborators in remote sites to share their ideas and all aspects of a common project" (Berners-Lee et al. 2003, 792). Two defining elements of Web 2.0 — platform and participation - truly enhance participatory experiences of readers/users (audiences) and designers (writers). By defining how these two elements work, technologically and rhetorically, Sorapure (2010) says: "Over the years, two defining elements have emerged. The first is that Web 2.0 is a platform, with applications and files stored on the web rather than on a user's desktop; in this arrangement, software is a service (and often a free service) rather than a product. The second defining element of Web 2.0 is participation; the web is now the participatory web, the social web, the read-write Web" (60). Thus, Web 2.0 as a participatory platform, provides an interactive space for writers

and readers to engage in multiple literacy practices, thereby enhancing writer-reader collaboration, democratic distribution, and expression of texts and messages.

Wysocky (2004), talking about new media texts, also takes 'interactivity' as "a buzzword for describing something about readers and digital texts", though "not as an isolated property inherent to digital texts" (17). She believes that it is 'interactivity' that apparently makes online texts [new media] different from print texts [old media], and 'interactivity', for her, speaks to the relationship the readers have with new media, which is fundamentally different from the readers' relationship with old media, because readers have a linear relationship with old media while they have recursive interaction with new media, as the role of readers might change in the process of interaction with new media. For Carnegie (2009), interactivity is a more complex thing in new media than just conceiving it in terms of navigation. She identifies three defining elements of interactivity and elaborates on them: "Interactivity is created through three primary modes — multi-directionality, manipulability, and presence. Each mode contains strategies and enacts models for creating various degrees of interactivity" (166). Likewise, there are three fundamental features of new media: the networked system, digitization, and computerization, which are tied to the three primary modes of interactivity respectively. New media's reliance on a global, networked-based system is based on multi-directionality: "Multi-directionality is a mode of interactivity associated with systems that have networked and nodal points of contact and interaction" (166). The digital nature of new media allows it to inscribe images, sounds, text, animations, and video, as units of numerical codes on new media that can be easily manipulated to store, convert, disseminate, and materialize. This ability of algorithmic manipulation makes new media an inherently manipulable mode of interaction because "[w]ithin the mode of manipulability, the ability to create and add content offers the highest levels of interactivity" (169). Carnegie (2009) further elaborates on primary modes of interaction and how they can be achieved:

> Whereas networked systems give rise to the mode of multi-directionality, digitization gives rise to the mode of manipulability [...]. Whereas the first two modes of interactivity, multi-directionality and manipulability, arise from a particular phenomenon, networked systems and digitization, presence as a mode of interactivity materializes as a result of the convergence of media with computer technology that has formed new media. The third mode of interactivity, presence, is a product of the integration of system attributes

with user perceptions. System attributes include features such
as speed, range, and the number of actions the system makes
available to the user (168-69).

While Selfe (2004a), and other scholars discussed above, stress
new media's fundamental nature of interactivity, Lister et al. (2009)
discuss the ideological aspect of interactivity in new media. For Lister et
al., "the term [interactivity] stands for a more powerful sense of user
engagement with media texts, a more independent relation to sources of
knowledge, individualized media use, and greater user choice" (21) that
liberates users from author-centered old media text, thereby making new
media 'user-centered' technology, where users have ability to directly
intervene and change the content as they wish. As Johnson (1998) says,
"technologies are constantly tested and refigured by those who use them"
(10) in order to fit them into changed context and users. While explaining
the user-centered approaches, Johnson (1998) elaborates:

> User-centered approaches should rethink the user as being an
> active participant in the social order that designs, develops, and
> implements technologies. Users as producers have the
> knowledge to play an important role in the making of
> technologies; users as practitioners actually use the
> technologies and thus have a knowledge of the technologies in
> action; users citizens carry user knowledge into and arena of
> sociotechnological decision making (64).

Johnson's examination of user-centered technology, thus, rightly expresses
the notion of interactivity in new media, and, because of interactivity, "the
audience for new media becomes a 'user' rather than the 'viewer' of visual
culture, film and TV, or a 'reader' of literature" (Lister et al. 2009, 22).
New media technology highly values online interactivity
"primarily as an attribute of technological functions of the medium, such
as hyperlinking, activating media downloads, filling in feedback forms and
playing online games" (Warnick and Heineman 2012, 51). It helps
sequencing and reciprocal communication in the context in which
communication occurs, and functions as a significant rhetorical appeal,
thereby engaging and activating user responses rhetorically. So, Warnick
and Heineman (2012) assert: "Online interactivity […] functions as a
means of activating user responses, and as a mode of address that can
influence users and can itself be rhetorical in its effects" (53). This, in turn,
makes the responses persuasive. Sally J. McMillan (2002) developed a
taxonomy of three types of online interactivity which have enabled
analysts to identify communication patterns in online exchanges: user-to-

user, user-to-system, and user-to-document (174). Very importantly, we can see the users in the center of all these online exchanges having a kind of crucial role in making the interactivity possible. Users' engagement here is also possible because intertextuality "offers a wide repertoire of ways to engage attention, such as the use of embedded hyperlinks to external resources, as readers become complicit in constructing the meanings of the text they encounter" (Warnick and Heineman 2012, 77).

Hypertextuality also enhances interactivity in new media by allowing "a web of connection which the user explores using the navigational aids of the interface design" (Lister et al. 2009, 26). Johnson-Eilola (1994) defines hypertext as "a computer-based organizational scheme that allows them [writers and readers] to move from one section of text […] to related sections of the text quickly and easily"; that "consists of a network, or web, of multiple connected text segments" (197). This resonates with Ted Nelson's original definition of hypertext as nonsequential writing. However, Rice (2006) argues that "web-based developments over the last few years have shifted Ted Nelson's original definition of hypertext as nonsequential writing to a more multimedia method of expression centered around HTML tags" (151). While Johnson-Eilola's (1994) definition of hypertext is associated primarily with textual experience related to writing and reading, and Bolter (2001) defines it as only linking, "hypertext consists of discrete units — pages, paragraphs, graphics — and the link between them" (29), Rice's (2006) definition of hypertext is a departure from both Johnson-Eilola and Bolter, as he believes technology […] has outgrown the vision of hypertext as only linking" (151). In this context, Catherine F. Smith (1994) adds a dimension to Johnson-Eilola's definition by defining hypertext as "intellectual experience" (266), thereby providing an alternative view of hypertext. She views "hypertext as mental activity and examines it in relation to the philosophy of mind, the cognition of comprehension, and the computational modeling of discourse processes […] it is a technology for defining meaningful units of information (nodes) and making meaningful connections (link) among them" (267). This definition broadens the scope and meaning of hypertext from just a textual experience to cognitive experience or human thinking, whereas Dryden (1994) further extends it to an expanded notion of literacy: "Hypertext […] by virtue of its associative, multilinear, branching and linking, offers a powerful medium for an expanded notion of literacy" (285) that integrates electronically the media of print, video, and sound, and provides space for a rich interplay of text, which I will discuss in some paragraphs below. Hypertext uses electronic technology that "empowers hyperfiction

to simulate a multiplicity of narrative times simultaneously; the timing of one reading/writing may possess a different duration from another, or it may follow upon it chronologically" (Strasma 2001, 261).

Braaksma et al. (2002) buy Dryden's view of hypertextuality as a multilinear linking. While talking about the composing process of hypertext, they mention that it is a *hierarchicalization* process that makes it distinct from the *linearization* process of the composition of linear text. Johnson-Eilola's (1997) postmodern definition of hypertext truly captures the essence of hypertextuality, "[t]he text [hypertext] is no longer a linear or hierarchical string of words […] but now an explicitly open space of text that can apparently be entered, navigated, deconstructed, reconstructed, and exited, in nearly infinite ways" (147). Defined as connected through webs or pathways, hypertext can also be seen as an interaction between, and among, texts because, through a number of pathways to other units of text, a hypertext allows different texts to interact with each other in non-linear fashion. This non-linear connection as a fundamental quality of hypertext makes it sophisticated, and differentiates it from computer and networks, as Selfe and Hilligoss (1994) argue: "Unlike computers and networks, hypertext is not a physical thing, but a sophisticated idea developed in a number of widely available computer programs" (5). Digital technology, as discussed earlier, makes it possible to access texts from different pathways instantaneously and recursively. Lister et al. (2009) say: "Such technology offers the idea that any data location might have a number of instantly accessible links to other locations built into it. Equally the many interventions and manipulations enabled by this facility create the qualities of interactivity" (26). In this way, hypertext as a multifarious notion is the essence of new media. Johnson-Eilola and Kimme Hea (2003) truly capture its meaning in the following lines:

> Hypertext has always been a multiple and conflicted term, shifting and configuring at the nexus of local tendential forces. Hypertext coalesces, it seems, around a wish of what we want text to be — contingent, anchored, slipping, caught in net, disappearing. In this time and in this place (themselves slipping away), we use hypertext as a deconstructive hinge, as an opening into which we find (and lose) ourselves. For although we want to avoid claiming a foundation or core truth for hypertext, we also want to make a space that can help us think about the future of hypertext as well as its past (416).

Since "hypertext binds together a variety of positions, tones, voices, authors, and context" (Brooke 2009, 4), it creates space for multiple

interactions of these entities, thereby causing symptomatic "broader changes in the range of informational, communicative, and expressive potentials embodied in new media" (5). Carnegie (2009) conceives hypertext as a network that links "the objects (discrete units of data) of new media to other objects outside of themselves" (167), thereby creating a web-like nexus of information and texts connected via reading pathways. In this context, Modir, Guan, and Aziz (2014) rightly observe: "hypertext is a kind of writing that offers multiple text fragments, text chunks, text units, or reading pathways that are interconnected through hyperlinks" (3), which produce intertextuality "manifested through hyperlinks whereby other texts from different authors can be brought together in a single node" (3). Bringing multiple texts and authors together, thus, creates a participatory space for all elements of the rhetorical situation that influence each other. This idea of hypertext contributes to other qualities of new media, i.e. networked and collaborative. Because new media technology facilitates group writing, conferencing, and peer review, it is highly networked and collaborative. While Costanzo (1994), in this connection, gives the example of *interactive fiction* as perhaps the most fascinating instance of collaboration between the user and the computer, which I will explore more in the second part of this chapter, Zeni (1994) talks about a new hypertext environment, *Storyspace,* that "supports planning, organizing, and collaborative response to work in progress", in which, "[s]tudents create writing windows with links to other texts […] play with organization by rearranging these spaces and design paperless essays for readers to navigate" (81).

As a networked tool, users use new media and technology to collaborate and promote active learning. Duin and Hansen (1994) see "computer networks as a means for students to acquire literacy" because "[a]s students write, interpret, and negotiate texts via computer networks, they are participating within a context that promotes active learning" (89). While Duin and Hansen (1994) call the literacy learnt this way "situated literacy" because it is "situated within the computer network" (89), Forman (1994) names it "computer-supported literacy"*,* and defines it as "the ability to work in groups effectively, to learn collaboratively, to create a high quality written product, and to make intelligent choices and uses of technology that assist in collaborative composing" (132). In the heart of both words and definitions, there exists the notion of collaboration and networks. Duin and Hansen (1994) define computer networks in this way: "Computer networks are no more than electronically linked computers through which users can readily share, send, and receive, files. Yet they can liberate students, who discover new ways of sharing and receiving

information, of reacting and responding to their own texts and those of others" (89-90).

Digital technologies have also created an interactive space known as virtual space. Virtual space refers to "an alternative or parallel space — a space that it is believed that *we* or *they* inhabit for some, or most of the time" (Gillen and Merchant 2013, 9-10). Gillen and Merchant believe "this space is variously conceived of as an extension of the 'real world' or an unhelpful, distracting, or even perilous escape from it" (9-10). Though, of course, we create a virtual world similar to the world described here through our creative imagination while watching a movie or reading a literary piece, the world created thus cannot be a virtual world because there is no interactivity. A virtual world created as a product of computer-based simulation allows users to interact with the computer, as two-way traffic, which, unlike the world we experience by reading literature, is interactive in true sense of the term. By quoting Hayles, Gillen and Merchant (2013) make an interesting point about virtuality:

> 'Virtuality is a negotiation between materiality and information' through interactions between people and technology — at least in the sorts of virtual environments […] [that] is actually constructed from bits of data, or 'information,' the material affordances of the computer and screen allow these users to see, inhabit, and often to modify that world — and in doing so they become material (11).

New media technologies produce virtualities of different kinds, like virtual space, virtual reality, cyberspace and augmented reality. Poster (1995) opines that "'[v]irtual reality' is a more dangerous term [than virtual space] since it suggests that reality may be multiple or take many forms" (85). He thinks so because multiple forms of reality can be sometimes misleading, confusing, tricky, and ambiguous, as they produce different interpretations to different audiences, hence challenging the linear relationships of text and message as we normally assume them. Poster further defines the technical aspect of virtual reality as "a computer-generated 'place' which is 'viewed' by the participant through Google, but which responds to stimuli from the participant or participants" (85). Because it exists in, and through, participants' perception and interpretation of the reality in their creative imagination, it demands audiences' active involvment to make a sense of it. So, "[v]irtual reality takes the imaginary of the world and the imaginary of the film or video images one step further by placing the individual 'inside' alternative worlds" (86). In so doing, virtual reality forms the audience's identity of the self by modifying

reality: "By directly tinkering with reality, a simulational practice is set in place which alters forever the conditions under which the identity of the self is formed" (86). Virtual reality (VR) is "produced by immersion in an environment constructed with computer graphics and digital video, with which the 'user' has some degree of interaction" (Lister et al. 2009, 36). Users' immersion in an environment created by their engaged interaction with new media creates a microcosmic world (virtual reality) that replaces the real world. It also "refers to the space where participants in forms of online communication feel themselves to be" (36). It is also used to mean retrospective contemplation that one experiences while watching film and television, reading books or contemplating photographs and paintings. Unlike its old use, to mean 'almost' or 'as good as,' "it now suggests an alternative to the real, which is, maybe, 'better than the real'" (36).

'Cyberspace' is an alternative and generic word that is used to mean VR. Alexander (2006) defines cyberspace as a large textual universe: "Cyberspace is a textual artifact of immense size, developed at an historically unprecedented pace, and including a rich variety of audiences, authors, discourses, and narrative production" (27). Cyberspace's ability to include a rich variety of audiences, authors, discourses, and narrative production interests me here, which I will explore in the second part of this chapter. To go back to the notion of virtuality, "'[v]irtual' has close association with 'simulation', which means "artificial, synthetic and fabricated, but [...] not 'false' or 'illusory'" (38). The multimedia mix is another advanced output of computerization technology of new media. VR programming (a new kind of human-computer interface), as a model of a multimedia mix, has made new media more interactive by allowing the user "to create and experience fantasy situations that are generated by computers filled with interactive software" (Dizard 2000, 41). More than science-fiction gaming, its application in business, online shopping, research, planetary exploration, and education and training fields also contributes to the changes in the notions of the rhetorical situation, which I will discuss later in part two of this chapter.

All the qualities discussed above make new media different from old media, but we cannot find all these qualities necessarily present in one example of new media at one time. Lister et al. (2009) aptly express this idea in the following lines: "The characteristics [of new media] [...] should be seen as part of a matrix of qualities that we argue is what makes new media different. Not all these qualities will be present in all examples of new media — they will be present in differing degrees and in different mixes" (44). And what characteristics will be present in what degree, and in what mixes in new media, also depends on how new media technology

evolves. It is customary to say that everything in the world changes. However, it is imperative to talk about new media technology as a dynamic and evolving space as its inherently qualifying characteristics. In what follows, first describing algorithmic interaction as a technological feature of new media technology, I will then discuss new media technology as a dynamic and evolving space.

III.I. IV. Algorithmic interaction

An algorithm is a fundamental feature of new media technology. It usually means a procedure or formula for solving a recurrent problem, based on conducting a sequence of specified actions. A computer program can be viewed as an example of an elaborate algorithm. Algorithms are widely used throughout all areas of IT including new media technology. A search engine algorithm, for example, takes search strings of keywords and operators as input, searches its associated database for relevant web pages, and returns results. An encryption algorithm transforms data according to specified actions to protect it, and a secret key algorithm uses the same key to encrypt and decrypt data. As long as the algorithm is sufficiently sophisticated, no one lacking the key can decrypt the data. In relation to new media technology, Koenig (2020) defines an algorithm as "a complex, computational procedure that identifies, codes and decodes data collected through user engagement" (5), meaning that users' interaction with the algorithm is an essential aspect of algorithmic interaction. So, "[t]he functionally aware user understands that there are computational calculations for how these platforms process information" (5). Algorithms are pervasive in our everyday interaction with new media, directing our life in one direction or the other. In this context, Crider, Greene, and Morey (2020) say: "In our everyday lives, we are inundated with 'visible and invisible' algorithmic nudges that move us in particular economic, ideological, and rhetorical directions" (9). Invisible algorithmic nudges can be sometimes misleading; they give misperception to the users that they are actively making decisions about their participation in a given system, but, in fact, they are not because they are misguided by an insidious aspect of algorithmic rhetorics, "in which this invisibility masks user agency" (9). Users' algorithmic interaction with new media is rhetorical, and how users interact with it determines the topics and content they are looking for. Describing the rhetorical aspect of algorithmic interaction, Shepherd (2020) says:

> Changing the way that algorithms sort content is rhetorical—
> and like all rhetoric, it can be used both conscientiously and

> insidiously. People can use sorting algorithms to amplify their arguments on social media. That is to say, users change the content of their posts or reactions to them so that sorting algorithms will order their posts differently. Amplification is rhetorical, allowing people to make and disseminate arguments differently. Taking advantage of how algorithms sort content often has the result of pushing specific posts higher in users' feeds. Possible methods for using sorting algorithms like this include using specific keywords or hashtags, connecting to trending topics, encouraging interaction with specific posts from the audience, or even signing in from other accounts to interact with posts — among many other methods (2).

Though users may not always recognize that they are interacting with algorithms, "[a]lgorithms help to determine what, and who, users are exposed to, as well as which opportunities are available to them" (Eatman 2020, 3). As an interactive and rhetorical tool, an algorithm sorts out information and "make[s] arguments about what is possible, desirable, and important" (3). It requires users' participation in order to make interaction possible, and "[t]he requirement that users participate in this argument by practicing the system's apparent logic, often unknowingly, gives algorithms an even more powerful rhetorical force" (3) to invite users for algorithmic interaction.

III.I.V. A dynamic and evolving space

There is a joke about new media and technology: the moment you define what new media and technology is, it will already be old. Due to continuous innovation and reinvention, new media technology is always in flux, as Haas and Neuwirth (1994) say, "technologies are continually evolving; they are not static but shaped subtly and constantly by the uses to which they are put, and by the discourse that accompanies those uses" (324). By birth and by nature, new media is a motional site because it maintains its qualifier ('new') by changing and modifying itself, thereby incorporating recent advanced technology and also by inventing new technology to make it always new. In this context, Jenkins (2003) says: "The media never rest. Their various modes are in perpetual circulation. Consulted, scanned, and read in every country and on every continent, they are a vital means of communication in the modern world. Sometime criticized or even abused, they are also refreshed and renewed as they accomplish multiple tasks" (ii). Lister et al. (2009) also buy Jenkins's (2003) view and admit that new media is always in a state of constant flux: "such media had continually been in a state of technological, institutional

and cultural change or development; they never stood still" (10). New media can be seen as an agent of globalization of all kinds by dissolving "national states and boundaries in terms of trade, corporate organization, customs and cultures, identities and beliefs, in which new media are seen as a contributory element" (Lister et al. 2009, 11).

As Tribe (2001) believes, "new media represents a constantly shifting frontier for experimentation and exploration" (xii), it does not simply keep up with the changing environs around it; rather, it leads the change, thereby doing experimentation with, and exploring, new technology that could be useful to motor the change. As a motoring agent of new technology, as well as cultural change or development, new media keeps on changing and generating changes in society, thereby always causing epoch-making phenomena of some sorts with the emergence of new media. Lister et al. (2009), in this context, rightly observe, "the emergence of 'new media' as some kind of epoch-making phenomena, [which] was, and still is, seen as part of a much larger landscape of social, technological and cultural change; in short, as part of a new technoculture" (11).

In what preceded, new media technology is seen as an evolutionary pivoting force to effect global changes in the world, because it has an imperative push and pull tendency that keeps us doing some sorts of activity to bring changes in both technology and society. C. R. Miller's (2010) idea about technology is very pertinent here: "Technology, like rhetoric, can both push and pull at us […]. Technology pushes or manipulates us by requiring us to do certain things and in certain ways" (ix). What I find interesting and touching in these lines of Miller is technology's ability to push or manipulate us. People generally take for granted that they use technology as a means to do things, without ever being aware of how technology shapes them both physically and psychologically. It is the push-pull tendency of new media technology that constantly shapes new media technology and is shaped by it, thereby making it a motional site forever. The web can be seen as a most fertile site for new developments in information technology. Berners-Lee et al. (2003) illustrate how the web orchestrates innovation and invention of new media and technology: "The W3 [world wide web] initiative occupies the meeting point of many fields of technology. Users put pressure and effort into bringing about the adoption of W3 in new areas. Apart from being a place of communication and learning, and a new marketplace, the web is a show ground for new developments in information technology" (797).

New media technology as a motional and evolutional site is seen as suggesting that evolution happens for better reasons, because it is believed to have brought some sorts of hopes and claims to make life

easier than before. I conclude this section by citing Lister et al.'s (2009) optimistic lines in this regard: "New media appear, as they have before, with claims and hopes attached; they will deliver increased productivity and educational opportunity and open up new creative and communicative horizons" (11). In what preceded, I briefly defined new media technology highlighting its technological aspects in terms of how they impact communicative practices of humans, and, in what follows, first discussing the overall impact of new media technology in revising the notions of the rhetorical situation, I will discuss how new media technology particularly changes the notions of the rhetorical situation.

III.II. How does new media technology change the notions of the rhetorical situation?

New media technology has an overall impact in our lives including the way we write and read a text, and teach writing, because, as Selfe and Hilligos (1994) argue, "[t]echnology changes us, and redirects our thinking about the primary tasks of teaching reading and writing" (1). William Costanzo (1994) extends Selfe and Hilligoss's idea on technology further; "computers are altering the way many of us read, write, and even think. It is not simply that the tools of literacy have changed; the nature of texts, of language, and of literacy itself, is undergoing crucial transformation" (11). By altering our overall literacy practice, new media technology always creates a new situation and requires the users to use it in a defined way; "to explain what a tool [technology] is and how to use it seems to demand narrative" (Nye 2006, 5). For this matter, here, I will create a narrative that tells stories of how new media technology has created a new situation through which to redefine/reexamine/remap/revive the existing notions of the rhetorical situation. New media technology has moved us at least some distance away from the familiar realm of paper, ink, and books, and, thus, has affected the locus of reading, writing, and interpreting texts, thereby enabling us to understand the new interfaces through which most communication is done these days. How new media does this is rightly observed by Brooke (2009) in these lines: "new media invites us to rethink (or reinvent) the canons of classical rhetoric, understanding it as practices that might, in turn, be used to understand the proliferation of interfaces that surround us" (xiii). Selber (2010) also buys Brooke's idea as to how new media and technology helps us to reinterpret the canons of classical rhetoric. As Selber (2010) says, "[t]heir increasingly widespread integration into all facets of culture has encouraged scholars and teachers to reinterpret (yet again) the traditional cannons of rhetoric" (2), given the

impact of new media and technology, the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation have to be reinterpreted in order to incorporate the changing/changed social and cultural milieu as a product of overall impact of new media technology.

While old media is characterized as an old-fashioned, rigid, author-determined, scheme of presentation, new media offers a digital, networked environment (Stroupe 2007) that is conceived as a fluid presentation of the constituents of the rhetorical situation: authors, texts, and readers. A Web 2.0 site as a legitimate product of new media presents the elements of the rhetorical situation as plural and complex. Dilger (2010), in this regard, says: "Web 2.0 style understands that both 'reader' and 'writer' are in many senses plural, layered, and complex, much like Web 2.0's approach to function. There are many ways to be the writer of a Web 2.0 site, far more than for traditional web presences" (19). A Web 2.0 site expects users to contribute responses and take writerly roles, thereby breaking the linear relationships between author and audience as perceived in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Even as a Web 1.0 site, new media has democratized writers and readers in matters of designing and distribution of texts and message because, as Dalton (2012) says: "The availability of inexpensive and easy to use composing and production tools, access to media resources on the internet, and opportunities to publish work online has democratized who, what, and how, design production and distribution happens" (335). Echoing Dalton (2012) and by bringing in the context of presidential campaigning, Bruner et al. (2017) highlight how new media offers innovative resources for new modes of composition to all users engaged in different fields, thereby empowering them to effect changes in the discourses of different kinds. They clarify this situation: "New media have their own unique exigencies and innovative resources. They foster new modes of composition, activism, teaching, policy, art, and presidential campaigning. User-specificity and digital design invite new reflection on rhetorical ideas of authorship, audience, and arrangement" (340).

New media has not only transformed the traditional writers and audiences into web-writers/digital writers and online audiences respectively, but also has refigured how they interact with each other in multi-layered ways. Understanding this phenomenon of online rhetoric in terms of rhetoricity of interaction helps revise the traditional idea of the rhetorical situation. In this context, Gallagher (2018) suggests teachers and students engage in teaching and learning web-writing to develop understanding of this mechanism: "A detailed understanding of how web-writers interact with audiences can add a layered, process-based, account of the audience

to our knowledge of online rhetoric, help those already teaching web-writing in the classroom to get beyond the teacher as audience, and direct students toward acknowledging changing audiences and their evolving relationship to them" (35). While audience studies have lagged notably behind in the past century in Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communications Studies, the emergence of new media technology has spurred the value of online audiences, "a spate of recent rhetorical scholarship about online audiences suggests otherwise" (Riddick 2019, 1), thereby increasing audiences' more active engagement than ever before, which compels the revision of the traditional notion of audience. Audiences have a greater role to play in digital writing, as digital writers have to acknowledge the audience more than ever before in pre-digital writing. Amicucci (2020) rightly expresses writers' and audiences' changed role in digital writing: "while pre-digital writers chose whether to imagine their audiences while writing, digital writers have no choice but to acknowledge the audience because they are nearly always writing in the presence of networked others" (2). These changed roles of the writer and the audience complicate the traditional notions of the writer and audience and projects them differently as having recursive relationships between them, unlike the way their linear relationships were conceived in the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Amicucci clarifies this reformulation of their relationships, when she says, "a writer's act of considering and responding to the audience is recursive, particularly in a digital environment where responses may cause a writer to reformulate his or her conceptualization of audience" (5).

The discussion above clearly suggests that the concept of the rhetorical situation has also changed with the advent of new media technology, which leads to an exigence of a new theory of the rhetorical situation that better incorporates the new notion of the rhetorical situation germinated by the emergence of new media technology. For example, new media technology has broken the traditional relationships between the writer, audience, exigence, and constraints, and has blurred the division among them to some extent. In this context, I believe the existing modernist notion of the rhetorical situation does not fully express the changed meaning that naturally exists with the impact of new media and technology. Consequently, the modernist notion limits the scope and understanding of the rhetorical situation, because this confining tendency is likely to make the notion of the rhetorical situation that will not incorporate the changed/changing situation stagnant, thereby giving only an 'incomplete' picture. In the part that follows, I will first discuss how new media and technology have caused overall changes in the notions of

the rhetorical situation, and then examine the changes in particular components of the rhetorical situation (writers, readers, and text, for example) in terms of how some characteristics of new media technology discussed above impact the change as an agent.

III.II.I. General impact

Digital composition as an inherent qualifier of new media and technology has impacted not only the way we write and read a text, but also the way we perceive the constituents of the rhetorical situation — writers, readers, text — and their relationships as a product of the overall impact of new media technology which has changed the notions of the rhetorical situation. Whereas Johnson-Eilola (1997) sees this radical disruption of the connection situated in print media in this way, "[t]he links between author and text, sign and signified, that were reinforced by the physical and social structure of book discourse seem to come radically unglued" (171), Takayoshi and Selfe (2007) believe that digitization has played a crucial role in revolutionizing new media, and thus, has challenged overall existing literacy practices in general, and the nexus between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in particular. In this connection, they argue: "It is fast becoming a commonplace that digital composing environments are challenging writing, writing instruction, and basic understandings of the different components of the rhetorical situation (writers, readers, texts) to change" (1). Like Johnson-Eilola and Takayoshi and Selfe, Marilyn M. Cooper (2010), in her essay "Being Linked to the Matrix", "reimagines the basic structures of the rhetorical situation, offering a view that embraces dynamic interaction, negotiation, and coordination as major elements" (Selber 2010, 6). Likewise, new media technology has the potential to "bring us together in new ways" (Yancey 2004, 100), to "change the way students write, read and think", and to "cultivate multiple literacies, to blur the writer/reader boundary and to broaden notions of 'composing'" (Zoetewey and Staggers 2003, 135). New media and technology have impacted our lives so much that "[c]omputers change the ways in which we read, construct, and interpret texts. In so doing, technology forces us to rethink what it means to be human" (Selfe and Hilligoss 1994, 1).

As an overall impact of new media technology, our rhetorical practices have also changed in the new media context which has impacted the notions of the rhetorical situation. New media constrains and guides us to reconfigure the relationships between text and audience, because audiences have no choice but participate in the delivery of the text. Grigar

(2005b) nicely explains this phenomenon: "when the rhetorical texts to be analyzed are developed specifically for new media contexts where a computer or some electronic device is required to mediate between text and audience, where the audience must participate physically in the delivery of the text" (105). The new media has enabled us to use appropriate modes of expression to fit in the purpose of representation and communication. However, "[a]ptness of mode and what is represented is not the only issue: Equally significant now is the aptness of fit between mode and audience" (Kress 2005, 19), which has caused an added challenge to find the ways in which modes of expression can effectively fit with audiences, because of the complex nature of new media, although it allows you to choose the mode you prefer for what kind of audience is in your mind. Kress, in this regard, thinks: "This links directly to the crisis in both social framings and in representation: If I can no longer rely on convention to make my audience take information in modes that are not congenial to them, then questions of my relationship to the audience have to become foregrounded" (19). This happens because of multiple modes of expression, and the plural existence of the audience and their indefinite relationships enhanced by affordances in new media. Kress explains how he has to accommodate his mode of expression by refiguring his audience each time he addresses them: "each occasion of representation and communication now becomes one in which the issue of my relation to my audience has to be newly considered and settled on" (19). If looked at from a different perspective, the plurality of audiences and modes of expression give new freedoms for authors and readers to create themselves anew each time they perform, by expressing their subjectivity; however, they have to actively participate, as Kress reports what he experiences in this situation as an author or reader: "Presenting myself as the appropriate subject for this occasion of communication means that I am each time performing, staging, myself […] when there is no stability to authorship or readership that has to be produced each time for this audience, on this occasion. So, whether in choice of genre, in choice of medium, or in choice of mode, subjectivity is at issue" (19). Talking about student perceptions of writing quality using digital tools and online writing environments, Nobles and Paganucci (2015) show that writing in a digital online writing environment helps the authors develop a good sense of an unseen audience, and makes them extra vigilant to understand the message and the text by providing them with the rhetorical knowledge and the knowledge about the complex nature of the rhetorical situation as changed by the very nature of digital online writing. In a study, they noticed that "the presence of an unseen audience, as well as the lack of a spellcheck

function, caused students to construct texts with greater care and precision, thus improving the quality of composition" (18). As shown in the discussion above, new media technology, thus, has broken the linear relationships between writer and audience, or performer and viewers. As a result, readers can act like writers in many ways, and writers sometimes have to behave like readers. In this sense, it has changed some existing notions of the rhetorical situation as something static, linear, real, genuine, and objective. This situation influences and shapes our understanding of the rhetorical situation, because the writers and readers now do not act like traditional writers and readers. They have a changed role: the writers do not have so much authority on the text/message while readers have been empowered to take author-like roles more than ever before.

III.II. II. Impact of multimodality

The traditional notion of the rhetorical situation treats readers only as passive receivers of information, thereby limiting their scope. But, as a multimodal and interactive space, new media challenges the containment of alphabetical systems of print (old media) which privileges only reading, thereby making the readers only receivers of information, demands multiple literacies — seeing, listening, and writing — and allows them even to manipulate the information. Multimodality in new media, thus, produces new possibilities for the existence of different rhetorical situations because it creates a new site, where writer, reader, and text, crisscross. This fact is expressed in Williams's (2007) lines: "We should instead regard the ability to use multiple modalities of communication as a call to examine how new ways of conceiving of literacy and composing produce new possibilities for different rhetorical situations. The multiple purposes and audiences for which we write demand multiple approaches for communicating our message" (xi). While so doing, new media changes the role of a reader and dismantles the line between readers and writers, which breaks the linear notions of the rhetorical situation. Since new media technology stresses much on the use of visuals and visual literacies, the traditional notions of 'author' and 'reader', as perceived in Bitzer's notion of the rhetorical situation, are changing, or taking on new meanings of 'composer/designer' and 'viewer' respectively. As Lauer (1993) points out, "[m]ultimodality represents, if we're using Bakhtin's term, a dynamic diversity of modes grounded in different points of view on the world, in diverse forms for conceptualizing the world, each characterized by its own objects, meanings, and values" (45). This fosters polyvalent, multiple, and plural messages, hence breaking the traditional notion of message 'out

there' designed by the author. Ball (2004) talks about how a multimodal text operates to make meaning by placing readers in the center of the meaning making process, unlike in traditional text, which privileges the author. She says:

> Without the reader choosing clips to include on the timelines, this new media text would not be able to perform its intended argument […]. The reader must participate by dragging the still, audio, or text clips that she wants to the timelines. For the fullest understanding of the text's meaning, all three timelines must be used, and then the reader must click the play button on the viewer to see the composed collage. No matter which selection and arrangement of clips the reader makes, the argument she constructs will be a smaller version of the whole, perhaps made to lesser or greater strengths depending on the combination of clips chosen (417).

Hocks (2003) also opines that multiple modalities enhanced by communication and information technologies allow ongoing dialogues and negotiations among the constituents of the rhetorical situations — writers, audiences, and text — thereby making multiple meanings possible. She believes that "digital rhetoric describes a system of ongoing dialogues and negotiations among writers, audiences, and institutional contexts, but it focuses on the multiple modalities available for making meaning using new communication and information technologies" (632). It echoes Kolb's (1994) argument how the roles of author and reader change in a multimodal text and how it makes difference in meaning: "the roles of author and reader begin to shift as the being of the text changes" (323). As Sheppard (2009) argues, "[e]xploration of multimodal possibilities should be used as a primary means for navigating rhetorical situations" (125), multimodality reconfigures the notions of the rhetorical situation from a new light. In one study, K. P. Alexander, Powell, and Green (2011) found that multimodal texts enhance students' understanding of the audience concretely, because the authors must have a solid grasp of audiences in designing multimodal texts, which makes multimodality a viable space where the traditional notions of the constituents of the rhetorical situation are reconfigured differently from in print media. K. P. Alexander, Powell, and Green (2011) explain it in a study of how students understand audiences in multimodal texts: "In addition to perceiving the audience more concretely, students also view the audience as more involved in making meaning when reading multimodal texts, which thus allows for a wider range of interpretive and communicative possibilities" (11). Multimodal texts, thus, draw readers' attention tremendously in the meaning making

process, because they are not explicitly instructed how to get to the point directly; consequently, the meaning of multimodal texts is dependent on the reader, thereby making readers active in the meaning making process, unlike the traditional notion of reader. So, because "it is possible to see multimodal ensembles as polyphonic expressions, or media utterances that express a plurality of voices" (Doerr-Stevens 2016, 337), "multimodal composition can impact meaning in various ways, some of which extend beyond the intended outcomes of expression" (337). Doerr-Stevens (2016) explains why multimodal texts do have multiple meanings and why the meaning changes based on context and audience: "a given multimodal ensemble may have been crafted with certain audiences in mind for purposes of establishing social alliances or connectedness. However, that same multimodal combination can circulate and reproduce meaning in ways not always intended, depending on context and audience" (337). Understanding the dynamics of these dialogic relationships between multimodal texts and audiences helps understand the changed notion of audiences, texts, and meanings in multimodal texts.

L. A. Johnson and Arola (2016) shed light on the connection between multimodality and the rhetorical situation when they say: "When situating how multimodality factors into the rhetorical situation, we need to consider both the tool used, and the representations folded into the entire context of composing" (99). It suggests that multimodality changes the notions of the rhetorical situation because the context of composing is different. The rhetorical situation of multimodal texts both shapes, and is shaped by, multimodal texts. Because "the rhetorical situation frames how one retains, understands, and utilizes the resources to compose" (99), the rhetorical situation of multimodal texts guides how we do multimodal composition. On the other hand, multimodal composition conceives the notion of the rhetorical situation differently from the traditional notion of the rhetorical situation. This is expressed in conceiving the notion of audience widely as multimodal texts reach out to wide and massive audiences. Unlike the way the notion of audience is projected by Bitzer (1968) and some other scholars, the modes in a digital environment "provide particular affordances in reaching a wider audience than composing previously encountered" (100). Because "[t]he goal with multimodal composition, as with composition in any single mode, is for students to practice so that they can synthesize modes, genres, ideas, and skills, and become ever more fluid and flexible composers" (Kitalong and Miner 2017, 40), multimodality enhances authorial ethos and agency as well apart from actively engaging readers in meaning making process "by incorporating supporting material such as references to songs, movies, and

academic articles to document research and elicit a particular kind of response from the audience" (49).

The fundamental features of digital composition are multimodal, nonlinear, and interactive, involving "new relationships with wider audiences and ways of communicating that transcend the qualities of written text" (B. E. Smith 2017, 259). This not only enhances the qualities of the texts in communicating the message effectively, but also establishes renewed relationships with a massive audience body, thereby revising the traditional notion of audience. Because "multimodal composition involves the fluid interweaving of visuals, sounds, movement, and text, to create synergistic messages" (259), this multimodality also broadens and revises the notion of the constituents of the rhetorical situation: authors, audiences, texts, and messages. Some research has shown that multimodal composition not only makes the text beautiful for the eyes, but also primarily focuses on "fostering student engagement, identity expression, and agency - particularly with 'marginalized' groups" (262). Such practices revise the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, empowering both authors and readers by allowing them to express their identity and agency. Opel and Rhodes (2018) also talk about how multimodality enhances the agency of the authors and readers of multimodal texts, as they believe "multimodality tends to position its makers/composers agentially within rhetorical situations, and the specific making activities themselves necessitate a sort of play" (77). Because "[d]igital multimodality offers students (and teachers) capacious ways to respond dynamically and flexibly to changing rhetorical situations through the use of video, audio, and text" (77), it situates the authors and readers in a new rhetorical situation that conceives the constituents of the rhetorical situation as having recursive and indiscrete relationships with each other. As a key rhetoric and composition pedagogy, multimodality emphasizes "agency rather than reception on the part of students" (77), and, by the same token, enhances the agency and identities of the readers and writers, hence their empowerment in the meaning making process.

All these points made above about the contribution of multimodality to shifting the roles of readers and writers, empowering readers unlike in traditional texts, allowing ongoing dialogue among writers, readers and texts, and creating plural messages, orchestrate how the notions of the rhetorical situations have changed, and how traditional notions cannot necessarily function in today's world because it has been influenced by new media technology so much. Thus, new media technology breaks the traditional version of the rhetorical situation as it blurs the distinction between the reader and writer, questions the existence of exigencies in

their palpable forms, and decontextualizes the context as perceived in traditional notions.

III.II.III. Impact of hypertext

The idea of the author being at the center of traditional texts (e.g. books), and the reader being in the center of hypertexts, gets expression when Selber (2004) compares books and hypertext: "Books are static, linear, hierarchical, author-centered, and dialogic, whereas hypertexts are dynamic, non-linear, non-hierarchical, reader-centered, and polylogic" (20). As Hilligoss and Selfe (1994) say "[w]ith hypertext, teachers and researchers have also blurred the boundaries between writing and reading" (337), hypertext has also blurred the boundaries between the two constituents of the rhetorical situation — writers and readers. What interests me in the views expressed above is the reversal of author-reader role in making meaning that shifts not only the role *per se*, but also changes the value attached to one of the constituents of the rhetorical situation, i.e., readers, in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, because it allows users to collaborate more substantially in the act of writing and making meaning which complicates traditional notions of authorship. In its relationship to the rhetorical situation, hypertext creates a space for readers in such a way that it empowers them and frees them from their subservient role, unlike the way they are perceived by Bitzer and many other scholars (as mentioned in Chapter II) who believe that readers are only recipients of messages, always passively waiting for the authors to solve the exigencies through rhetorical discourses.

The use of hypertexts in new media has complicated the linear notion of the writer and reader because it "has potential to change fundamentally how we write, how we read, how we teach these skills, and even how we conceive of text itself" (Charney 1994, 239). In hypertext, which is a non-linear and computer-supported text, "the common distinctions between 'writer' and 'reader' begin to collapse in a way that has long been theorized for print text but not realized in such visible form" (Johnson-Eilola 1994, 195). Unlike print text, readers have a very important role in hypertext, because the sequence of reading, which is fundamentally nonsequential, is determined by readers' navigational interest, which involves selecting parts of the hypertext and deciding which other parts they want to navigate. So, "[w]ithin hypertext the reader can become something of a co-author, because the order of a nonsequential document is determined only at the time of reading" (Carter 2003, 4). The nonsequential and fluid nature of hypertext, readers' increased ability to

make meaning, and the author-reader role shift, are expressed when Claire
Lauer (2009) says:

> The notion of the author as a single, solitary voice
> communicating to his or her audience through the finished
> product of the book has been transformed as communications
> media have opened up the possibilities for textual production
> to be non-linear, hypertexual, continuously revisable, and
> interactive. As writing becomes an increasingly screen-based
> activity, the ways in which we write (from the grammar we use
> to the style, tone, appearance, and structure of our words,
> sentences, paragraphs, and pages) necessarily make more fluid
> and transitory the role we occupy as the 'author' of a text. This
> change in the relationship of author to text, and thus in the way
> in which meaning can be communicated through text, was
> facilitated by technological advancement that allowed for a
> shift from the static medium of the page to the more fluid
> medium of the screen (227).

This notion of hypertext has contributed to the creation of
hyperfiction, which has broken the spatio-temporal concept of the
beginning, middle, and end, of fiction. This is pronounced in Pavlik's
(1998) lines: "Writers are even venturing into a new form of non-linear
text known as hyperfiction, in which notions of beginning, middle, and
end, have little meaning, and the reader enters the realm of story creator"
(xii). Hypertext creates a space for "fundamental alterations in the roles of
the writer, the reader, and the text" (Johnson-Eilola 1994, 196), thereby
collapsing the distinction between the writer and reader. Thus, hypertext
allows two-way multiple interactions between the writer and readers,
because "[h]ypertext writers set up multiple connections between nodes of
a text, and readers choose which links to follow, which nodes to read, and
which nodes to skip" (197). The readers have so much freedom to read the
text in any way they like, based on their interest, which allows them to
create meaning of their own. This opens up possibilities for readers to
assume the role of writers. It changes and fuses the role of the writer and
reader, "[u]sing hypertext, people are neither solely readers nor solely
writers — users take the two roles simultaneously and visibly" (Johnson-
Eilola 1994, 206). Unlike traditional readers, who are conceived as only
the recipients of a message, hypertext readers are creators and manipulators
of the message. Likewise, unlike the 'writer-controlled' traditional text,
hypertext is also 'reader-controlled', which, in turn, problematizes the
notion of messages and texts as well. Hypertext requires both the readers
and writers to participate in making the text, and, thus, to become "co-

learners" (Joyce 1988, 12) who influence each other to make the text, and derive meaning from it. In this way, new media technology problematizes the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation by collapsing the lines between authors and readers, empowering the readers, unlike the way they are perceived in the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, and allowing them to access the text in any way they like. This situation creates the possibilities of the existence of not only plural rhetorical discourses, but also of multiple messages and readers and writers, hence revision of the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation.

New media and technology has, thus, used hypertext "as a means to liberate readers (as well as writers) from the constraints of text boundaries, freeing them to wander through an array of connected texts, graphics, and commentary, to explore and create topical paths of association at will" (Charney 1994, 240), thereby making it an open-ended text in true sense of the term, where readers, text, and writers, engage in multiple mutual interaction constantly. Allen (2000) powerfully expresses this multiple author-text-reader interaction while concluding his theories of intertextuality, "hypertext makes author, text, and reader into joint participation of a plural, intertextual network of significations and potential significations" (202). While so doing, hypertext breaks the linear relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation and, thus, impacts the traditional notion.

While talking about why hypertext is a fundamentally different form of text, Dryden (1994) makes an interesting point about the authorship of hypertext. He believes that the authorship is fundamentally different in hypertext because "the reader chooses how to navigate through the text; in some hypertext, the reader can also choose to add to the text, perhaps in a way that makes his or her additions indistinguishable from the original" (309). The writers and the readers both affect each other, and are affected by the text, hence symbiotic relationships between writers, readers, and texts occur, unlike the discrete relationships between the constituents of the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. In this context, Johnson-Eilola (1997) believes writing and reading activities are affected by the concerned community's ideology: "Hypertext provides vivid examples of the ways in which the activities of writing and reading are transformed and appropriated by widely divergent communities, each of which reconstructs the general characteristics of hypertexts in relationship to that community's goal" (7). Hypertext has transformed/revolutionized writing and reading spaces in such a way that it "allows writers and readers the capability for productive, purposeful, empowering, action in a range of text types and social situations" (25). Here, readers can assume

the role of a writer, which, thus, problematizes the linear relationships between them, hence questioning the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Because hypertext allows readers to assume the role of writers, when students are allowed to build hypertexts, it "demonstrate[s] that composition is a process of recognizing multiple perspectives and building probable contexts from that multiplicity by selecting which bits of information occur in what order" (S. D. Williams 2001, 128), which, in turn, helps them reconfigure the whole idea of the rhetorical situation.

To borrow Delueze and Guattari's (1987) notion of rhizome, hypertext is like a "rhizome as an ever-shifting organism that challenges the 'root-book'" (Johnson-Eilola and Kimme Hea 2003, 422). Rhizomatic tropes define hypertext in terms of its "connections, heterogeneity, multiplicity, asignifying rupture" (423) which acknowledge that no writers or readers are in control of meaning of a text, which is rather determined by rhizomatic relationships between readers, writers, and the text, as Johnson-Eilola (2003) says:

> In this trope, hypertext is about a constant making and remaking […]. In the play of the rhizomatic, we are asked to hold all our sacred beliefs about readers and writers, text and meaning against the larger systems that reify traditional power dynamics. Without a rigid structure to reject, deny, or even hold on to, we read rhizomatic hypertext as a means to challenge binary logics that separate ways of living in language, that occlude other connections and multiplicities (423).

Baetens and Truyen (2013) further make use of the notion of rhizomatic text while defining hypertext theory. For them, hypertextual writing can be understood in terms of fragments connected as rhizomatic texts, and showing the connection between hypertext and rhizomatic texts, they assert:

> Hypertext theory rightly emphasizes the role of the fragment while also stressing the decentering of the rhizomatic text. Yet in this approach, the fragmentary aspects of writing are overshadowed by the very dynamics of the text's endless and borderless expansion, so that the most essential aspect of the fragment, i.e. the resistance to completion, proves eclipsed by the Dionysian creative possibilities of the new writing spaces (480).

Hypertext, thus, provides new writing spaces for endless and borderless expansion of texts, where readers and writers endlessly interact and recreate texts and meanings, and engage in exuberant proliferation of texts and meanings, thereby reconfiguring the notion of the rhetorical situation in new light.

By summing up what hypertext contributes to literary theories, poetry and creative writing, technical writing, and our perception about writing and reading, Johnson-Eilola and Kimme Hea (2003) say:

> For literary theorists, hypertext provided the true weapon for assassinating the author: Readers wrestled control of the text away, kicked the author in the head a few times for good measure, and skipped off into the dawn of a new day. For poets and creative writers, hypertext provided the foundation for erecting a space for free exploration and innovation, unburdened by the repressive limits of the line. For technical writers, hypertext provided a method for dealing with individual users in varying situations — rather than force users to tediously thumb through manuals, hypertextual online help would bring the right information (and *only* the right information) directly to the user, when the user needed it, and not a moment sooner or later. And, for a few bold writing instructors, hypertext provided the means to challenge the preferred genre of the first-year composition course: the traditional, linear, 'logical' print-based essay. From its most conservative to its more iconoclastic enactments, hypertext set about shifting our perceptions of writing and reading (416-417).

By the same token, hypertext in particular and new media technology in general change our conceptions about the notions of the rhetorical situation by breaking the traditional meanings of reader, writer, and text. We can, thus, describe hypertext as breaking the lines or jamming code, or whatever it does; it primarily frees "the word from the page, the text from the line, the writer and reader from their separateness" (Johnson-Eilola and Kimme Hea 2003, 417). Hypertext recontextualizes codes through hyperlinks, thereby recontextualizing the constituents of the rhetorical situation from site to site, depending on the subject matter displayed, because "[a] hyperlink can function as a device for setting up a table of content, for enforcing linearity, for breaking linearity, or for creating a multimodal experience" (J. Rice 2003, 232). Thus, hypertext provides different reading paths allowing readers to have a different sense of the

text and meaning (Grigar 2005a), thereby creating multiple constituents of the rhetorical situation.

Carnegie (2009) elaborates on hypertext's ability to empower users in order to create their own paths to effect meaning and texts: "Through the linking afforded by hypertextuality, users gain more control over how they discover, view, and connect the discrete units available in the network. Users can create their own paths and organizational structures" (167), which increases variability of new media texts. Thus, it enables hypertext readers to expand their reading beyond what has been inscribed by the author. In this process, intertextuality of hypertext allows them not only to navigate texts but also to broaden their reading experience. So, "instead of limiting one's reading of a text based on its author and literary tradition alone, hypertext readers can open up their reading to an apparently boundless play of relationships through by intertextuality" (Modir, Guan, and Aziz 2014, 4), which empowers readers to create texts and meanings. Multivocality is another feature of hypertext that is created by hyperlinks and multilinear narrative technique, which allows authors to compose texts from different positions and voices. Here, "texts are no longer bound by the physical limitations of print which foster the tyranny of a univocal voice. Indeed, making relevant and incidental determinations in a quite impressive, changeable, and unpredictably interactive structured medium is quite challenging. This matter points to an important quality of multivocality in hypertext" (4). Multivocality in hypertext, thus, "allows multilinear and recursive reading experience of readers, so multilinearity emphasizes reader's freedom and, by offering various paths, persuades users towards further exploration" (Modir, Guan, and Aziz 2014, 6). However, "[h]ypertext can be challenging, as readers continually shift their attention each time they come across a new text" (6). Yet, "[t]his could be a benefit in the sense that readers determine their center of investigation without any restriction from the author" (6). Thus, hypertextual texts offers many possibilities for recreating texts for authors, and liberates readers from their traditional role, as conceived in the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, hence the revision of the rhetorical situation.

Hyperfiction is a type of hypertextual text. In this context, Evans and Po (2007) explain what hyperfiction is: "hypertext fiction presents a number of challenges to readers and what they have come to associate with reading printed texts. We lose the visual cues — the length of a page, the boundaries, even the ability to flip the page over — which enable us to get a sense of what are reading" (58). Hyperfiction, thus, provides a labyrinthine reading experience to readers which might sometimes cause

the loss of reading track, while also offering multiple reading possibilities. Saemmer (2013) expresses the reading experience caused by hypertext in this way:

> Hypertext is a powerful generator of imaginary worlds because it holds out on the reader. Before it is activated, the reader often has no concrete idea of what will happen. After it has been activated, the reader certainly notices that most hypertexts invariably link a text to another text. The original text — that I propose to call the 'parent text' — has, however, at least temporarily disappeared from the screen. That is how hypertext plays with our expectations, before and after its activation (28).

In so doing, it makes the readers active participants in creating the text and meaning, thereby breaking the traditional notions of the audience. Hypertext, thus, can not only empower the readers, but also manipulate constant dialogues between two texts: the parent text and the new texts created by hypertext reading, hence plurality of texts. Saemmer (2013) further elaborates on the manipulable ability of hypertext that engages readers and writers in interaction with each other and with the texts: "Hypertext not only establishes a relation between a parent and a related text, it is also an interactive, 'manipulable' element that combines at least two different semiotic systems through the same active support: a text and a 'manipulation gesture'" (31). While this interaction liberates readers in understanding and navigating the texts and meanings , it constraints the authors a bit more than in print to impose texts and meanings of the texts on readers. Modir, Guan, and Aziz (2014) clarify this when they say: "when authoring in hypertext or hyperfiction, the author has to surrender some degree of control to the readers. Unlike print, the hypertext allows readers to have more liberation in the textual selections through electronic links" (5). In this way, "[h]ypertext challenges all these ideas that a work is strictly the sole property of the author, mainly because of the freedom of reading selection and direction" (5), thereby challenging the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation.

What interests me most in hypertext here is its ability to free the writer and reader from their separateness. The traditional notions of the rhetorical situation clearly separate the writer and reader by drawing a demarcation line between them, perhaps keeping them in two different watertight compartments, thereby assigning two different sets of roles to them. Very interestingly, hypertext, guided by postmodernist tendencies, has broken this modernist containment in defining the constituents of the

rhetorical situation, and has freed the writer and reader from their separateness, thereby allowing them to cross the border. I will discuss a postmodernist reading of how new media and technology dismantled the linear relationship between readers, writers, and text, later in this chapter. Now, I will examine how interactivity as a product of new media and technology in general and hypertext in particular has impacted the changes in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation.

III.II. IV. Impact of interactivity

By making new media technology a truly collaborative site, where both readers and writers collaborate via writing and reading the text to manipulate it in their own way, interactivity, as one of the qualifying features of new media technology, has also contributed to the change in the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. While so doing, interactivity allows change in the role of writers and readers and performers and viewers in such a way that the boundaries between them collapse. Here is an example of how new media and technology have dismantled the traditional linear relationship between performer and viewers, two of the constituents of rhetorical situations by extension:

> Families in test communities in California are playing *Jeopardy!* via computer in simultaneous competition with the competitors seen on television each evening. Viewers in Montreal, Canada, are selecting stories of their own choice each evening on nightly newscasts and playing armchair director during the telecasts of Montreal Canadian hockey games, choosing camera angles and instant replays as they desire (Pavlik, 1998, xii).

In this context, Pavlik (1998) says: "These new technologies are radically transforming almost every aspect of how we communicate, and with whom, as well as just about any other dimension of our lives, from dating, to making money, to healthcare" (1). New media and technology are revolutionizing some aspects of human communications in one way or the other, and, thus, extending communications well beyond text-based communication, and transforming all forms of human communication, thereby blurring the lines between the writer and reader.

The internet as a legitimate product of new media and technology, has given birth to Web 2.0 tools which are so fundamentally social and interactive that "[e]ven aspects of the internet that do not seem particularly social, such as business sites, online magazines and

information services, have integrated social opportunities such as chat spaces and bulletin boards into their sites" (Baym 2002, 62), and this has made them synchronously and asynchronously interactive. This highly interactive feature of the internet blurs the traditional relationships between the writer and reader which can be characterized as fluid and slippery because they change their roles so quickly that we cannot perceive them as static. As Sally J. McMillan (2002) has identified three types of online interactivity - user-to-user, user-to-system, and user-to-document - enabling analysts to identify communication patterns in online exchanges (174), we can see the users in the center of all these online exchanges having a kind of crucial role in making the interactivity that overpowers the readers possible, unlike in print media. For example, in user-to-system interactivity, "the user activates a technical capacity of the system, and the system responds" (Warnick and Heineman 2012, 56). While user-to-user interactivity naturally focuses on users because they have a very prominent role in making communication possible, Warnick and Heineman argue that the users' role is crucial, and equally important, in user-to-document interactivity, because:

> …users become active co-creators of the messages when they customize site content, vote in online polls, submit questions to be answered on the site, or post messages and photos that become part of the website text. In this sort of exchange, the website invites users to submit content; users send in materials; and then those materials are posted to the site for others to read. An even more frequent form of user-contributed cross-reference is when respondents on political blog posts include hyperlinks that can be further pursued by those readers who are interested in viewing the recommended content (Warnick and Heineman 2012, 56).

Intertextuality also allows some sort of interactivity, not simply by making readers partake actively in the design of the text in new media, but by allowing them to become "complicit in constructing the meanings of the texts they encounter", thereby offering "a wide repertoire of ways to engage attention, such as the use of embedded hyperlinks to external resources" (Warnick and Heineman 2012, 77). Interactivity created in this way makes readers prominent by allowing them to create text, construct the meanings, and collaborate with writers and other readers in full potential, hence, assuming the author-like role. Interactivity is also enhanced and exemplified by defining new media as a virtual space, which I will talk about in the part to follow.

New media technology enables us to create interactive narrative by organizing multimedia materials in an effective way. In so doing, "it is still necessary for the artist/designer to set up one or more subjective positions for the audience/viewer to assume. Again, the artist/designer needs to implement his or her ideas with skills to make the narrative appealing" (Wei and Wei 2006, 485). In this kind of interactive space, the audiences have a great position, because the authors must consider providing agency and voice to their audiences by offering subjective positions. The interface is the means and place of interaction in new media, which is very thoughtfully designed to allow the authors and audiences to interact freely. So, "the interface functions rhetorically by creating interactivity. In other words, the modes of interactivity are the rhetorical modes of the interface. New media, of course, relies heavily on the interface with interactivity commonly defined as new media's distinguishing characteristic" (Carnegie 2009, 166). The rhetorical modes of the interface thus designed by using the modularity of digital media "place the user in a more active relationship" (166) than in print because "[u]sers have more opportunities to intervene by manipulating objects" (166) through hyperlinks, which allow them to "choose paths that they want to follow and create alternate organization of information and objects" (166). The interactive affordances of new media enable them to explore the interface by some actions like clicking, scrolling, dragging, typing, sending, receiving, downloading and so on. As Carnegie (2009) says, "[b]y converting these actions to interactions, new media actively involves and engages the user in using, playing, exploring, experimenting, discovering, and sharing" (166), hence making users active participants in the creation of texts and meanings.

The multi-directional features of new media also make the interface truly interactive and, thus, dismantle the traditional relationships between the authors and readers. What the multi-directional features of new media do to users, and how they contribute to revise the meaning of the constituents of the rhetorical situation are well explained in the following lines of Carnegie (2009):

> The multi-directional nature of new media means that the user is no longer limited to the role of receiver. The degree to which the user can exploit this multi-directional communication determines the level of interactivity. At the lowest level of interactivity, the user is limited to the role of receiver, gaining access to the message or information but unable to send information or messages back to the sender […]. Higher levels of interactivity occur when users can function as both sender

> and receiver […]. Multi-directionality applies not just to the roles users can play in a network (receiver, sender, or both), but also to the messages they communicate (167).

Thus, the multi-directionality of new media texts impacts all the constituents of the rhetorical situation in one way or another, which compels the revision of traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. As Porter (2009) says: "Interaction, or interactivity, refers to how users engage interfaces and each other in digital environments" (217); levels of interactivity, from the least to the most, have direct correspondence from the least access to the most access, in which the least access makes the users merely passive receivers of the message, and the most access makes them co-producers. So, as the levels of interactivity increase, users move up from being receivers, to users, to critical participants, to co-producers, thereby empowering them more and more. Web 2.0 sites offer users opportunities to critically engage, co-produce, and become writers. Then "the distinction between audience and writer blurs" and it "actively invites the audience to become a co-producer of content" (218). This audience involvement through the interactivity affordances of digital texts liberates audiences from being passive recipients of messages, as conceived in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. As Monea (2020) says, "one way of better understanding the role of human-computer interaction (HCI) within online writing communities is to adopt an analytic approach that understands interface-level interactions as part of a dialogic digital landscape" (2) because interfaces are zones of dialogic engagement, where human-computer interactions build on conversational, dialogic relationships, thereby allowing the development of dialogic and recursive relationships between the author and reader.

III.II.V. Impact of virtual space

The web as a legitimate product of new media technology has created a virtual space as an interactive site, where users and writers interact in such a way that the line between the constituents of the rhetorical situation is blurring, and the sense of location as perceived in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation is lost. In *Nostalgic Angels,* Johnson-Eilola (1997) states: "In online information systems, users inhabit and navigate a virtual space" and "the concept of location becomes less physical and more mental […]. As they move from 'place' to 'place' electronically, they see and manipulate information, in, and as, a space that spans the entire earth" (93). New media creates the illusion of space within a machine through its navigational commands, which blur our notion of

space, and supplant it with 'cyberspace'; "it is so fundamental to the way we experience the world, and so desirable a means of representing the world, that we have to think about it as a property in itself" (Murray 2003, 6), thereby blurring the distinction between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. As Manovich (2003) believes, "it [new technology] will destroy the 'natural relationship between humans and the world' by 'eliminating the distance' between the observer and the observed" (19); new media technology has ruptured the linear notions of the rhetorical situation. The idea of blurring the writer/reader boundary is more vividly expressed in Costanzo's (1994) example of *interactive fiction* as a fascinating instance of collaboration between the user and the computer, where readers can manipulate the story so much that:

> Everything depends on the reader. Readers move through the story by typing in commands or questions from the keyboard […]. Much of the appeal of interactive prose lies in readers' learning about their fictional characters, discovering the characters' goals, overcoming conflicts, and exploring imaginary worlds […]. The story is a collaborative creation of the author and the reader (16-17).

The notion of cyberspace and the virtual world, as mentioned in the first part of this chapter interests me here, because it also contributes to change the traditional notions of the authors, readers, discourses, and narrative production. As Alexander (2006) clearly points out, while defining cyberspace as "a textual artifact of immense size" that includes "a rich variety of audiences, authors, discourses, and narrative production" (27), it reconceptualizes the notion of plural authors, audiences, discourses, and narrative production by interrogating the traditional notions of constituents of the rhetorical situation that is inherently singular. The notions of cyberspace, as perceived above, actually breaks the border between the writers and readers because it allows readers to play the role of writers, and also makes writers act like readers sometimes, hence diminishing the authorship of writers and increasing the writer-like role of readers. Cyberspace, and its contribution to changing the role of readers and writers speak to the notion of the rhetorical location I will argue in Chapter V while proposing my theory of the rhetorical situation. Likewise, virtuality makes users very powerful in modifying the virtual world. In the virtual world, "the material affordances of the computer and screen allow these users to see, to inhabit, and often to modify that world — and in doing so, they become material" (Gillen and Merchant 2013, 11). The notions of hypertext, cyberspace, and the virtual world, as discussed

above, can be seen as postmodern concepts because they enhance the notions of plural authors (or the death of the author), multiple audiences in the author's voice, participatory discourses (texts), and petit narratives, which essentially blur the boundaries between them. First, I will talk about the impact of algorithms on effecting revisions of the traditional notions of rhetorical situations in the following part, then I will do a postmodern reading of what the prominent qualifying features of new media technology have to offer in relation to the notions of the rhetorical situation, and how they do so.

III.II.VI. Impact of algorithms

In new media texts, a search engine algorithm plays a vital role to impact audiences and writers. As discussed above in the first part of this chapter, a search engine algorithm has direct connection with the users because it identifies, codes, and decodes, data collected through user engagement in the search, in which users interact with the algorithm. This is known as algorithmic interaction, or the algorithmic audience, by doing computational calculations as to how these platforms process information, and how the algorithm interacts with authors and audiences. Thus, users' algorithmic interaction with new media is rhetorical because the way the users interact with it determines the topics and content they are looking for. In this context, Gallagher (2017) argues that "algorithms may form a critical component of a writer's audience" (25) which helps to understand algorithmic audiences, i.e., search engines, databases, and rich site summary (RSS) newsfeeds. Of three different types of audiences, "algorithms add to the perspective of participatory audiences by incorporating audience response — i.e., comments, call-and-response writing, discussion forums, and 'qualitative affordances' of social media platforms such as likes, shares, and retweets — into elements that writers might anticipate and predict" (30). Because the participatory audiences play a vital role in the creation of content, while writing for algorithmic audiences, one has to pay close attention to integrating the production and dissemination of algorithmic texts, because they directly interact with the participatory audiences. As Gallagher (2017) says: "Writing for algorithmic audiences powerfully integrates production, distribution, and circulation, while developing an ongoing sense of managing those aspects and updating one's writing accordingly" (30). It demands audiences' active participation to create the texts and meanings, hence changing the traditional notion of audiences. Extending on his (2017) work, Gallagher (2020) argues "for understanding algorithms, not only as tools we use to communicate, but

also as audiences to communicate with" (2). Though the algorithmic audience means a search engine, it has a close connection with humans, and has human qualities, because "[a]lgorithmic audiences take their forms from the builders and makers, as well as the social systems out of which those people produce their algorithms" (2). In this human-computer interaction, "[g]litches and unintended consequences are still possible, thereby allowing algorithms to become audiences themselves" (2), hence attributing human qualities to algorithms.

As mentioned above, algorithms impact some constituents of the rhetorical situation — writers, readers, texts, and messages (argument) — to a large extent, which compels digital writers to follow the procedures as their audiences. When they compose algorithms, they must think about their audiences, because their algorithmic texts can be meaningful and effective only through the perception of their audiences. Gallagher (2020) rightly observes: "When digital writers consider algorithms, they are in many ways considering the procedures as their audiences. If the writers fulfill these procedures, then they are likely to be rewarded by these audiences within the context of the writer-audience relationship" (4). Needing to place audiences on a high pedestal, digital writers always have to make rhetorical choices that befit their audiences in order to effectively communicate the information through systematically manipulating an algorithm. For example, digital writers, or the creators of YouTube, "produce content with an algorithm in mind, understanding that even though humans have decided on the multiplicative weights used in an algorithm, the output of the procedures themselves becomes a primary audience. The content creator does not use clever or artistic titles, but rather responds to the reward system in place, e.g., appearing in search results" (4). However, the creator of algorithmic texts makes rhetorical use of sorting algorithms, it is fundamentally meant for reaching out to a larger audience through designing an argument effectively, meaning that audiences are at the center of all algorithmic designs. As Shepherd (2020) says: "Rhetorical use of sorting algorithms can change arguments, putting those arguments in front of a larger audience than would have seen them otherwise" (2). Digital writers interested in designing algorithmic texts should be able to analyze how algorithms are used rhetorically, and how rhetorical use of algorithms may affect the way arguments are made and disseminated, because "[t]he ways that platforms are designed by programmers and how users interact with those platforms changes the ways that users can make arguments, and which other users will see them" (2). As in a traditional argument that uses rhetorical strategies of rhetorical appeals (logos, ethos, pathos, and the questions of the audience) in order to

communicate argument effectively, social media also makes use of these strategies, as "the sorting algorithms partially operate based on user interactions" (9). More than this, digital writers need to pay attention to another component as well: "understanding the algorithm and how content will be sorted will change how the argument can be made" (9). When digital writers lack an understanding of this technicality to know how content in the space will be sorted, they will fail to persuade the users, because "[u]sers may not see content, but they also may perceive content as lesser quality, because the user does not fully understand the space in which they are posting" (9). Though algorithms do not recognize all users, they "construct their users on multiple levels" (Eatman 2020, 2). While rhetorically unaware users can have limited understanding of algorithmic audiences and messages, even being damaging sometimes, rhetorically aware users understand how algorithms function, and how they convey algorithmic texts and meanings more effectively. In this context, Koenig (2020) asserts:

> A rhetorically aware user, then, is able to verbalize (on some level) how the machine influences them and may even become further aware of how they can act to influence the machine. A rhetorically aware user also understands the persuasive elements of algorithmic outputs and the ways they can become active agents in their own algorithmic entanglements by making rhetorical moves to affect the algorithmic outputs, personally and socially (7).

Thus, in this human-computer interaction, algorithms play a vital role to activate users, digital writers, and algorithmic audiences to interact with each other, thereby influencing each other recursively, which redefines the relationships between the constituents of the traditional rhetorical situation.

III.II.VII. Impact of context collapse

As an ever-increasing impact of new media technology in human life, the shift from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 has not only tremendously impacted the way we communicate, but it has also compelled us to respond based on the demand of the new rhetorical situation Web 2.0 has created. Killoran (2015) anticipates the legacy of the rhetorical situation and argues that "Web 2.0 social media should encourage us not only to respond to, but to compose further such rhetorical situations" (283) because this shift from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 has created context collapse (a

new rhetorical situation), thereby impacting the revision of traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Context collapse has created a space where an infinite number of audiences interact online, as opposed to the limited groups a person normally interacts with in face-to-face situations. While a person can constantly adjust their tone and presentation in a limited group in normal face-to-face interaction, context collapse creates a situation where this kind of adjustment is not possible. Moreover, behaviors and materials intended for a limited audience can suddenly clash when wider audiences are addressed, because of social convergence and information overloads. It creates a situation known as context collapse, which compels the revision of the traditional notion of audience in particular and the constituents of the rhetorical situation in general. Or, to put it another way, context collapse functions as a new version of the rhetorical situation that fits into our networked culture today. At the root of the very idea of context collapse, there is the existence of an online imagined audience that conceives every participant in Web 2.0 communication as an imagined audience, who are not discrete, unlike the way audiences are perceived in the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Because of increasingly networked situations, there is presence of context collapse even in our daily communicative activities, including face-to-face interaction, because networked social media and technologies have impacted our daily communicative activities. These discussions above show how context collapse has impacted the traditional notions of the audience by breaking the lines between discrete audiences, hence creating a networked public instead. The shift from Web 1.0 to the social web, has thus broken the linear and discrete relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, where the context collapses into a situation known as 'context collapse', which builds the foundation for defining the rhetorical situation from a new perspective.

III.II. VIII. Postmodern reading

"What does new media offer rhetoric? Well, from the standpoint of postmodern, postcolonial, transdisciplinary thinking, a new way of seeing, a new way of defining, a new way of knowing — of *loving* text" (Grigar 2007, 216). By the same token, new media offers a postmodern perspective to define the notions of the rhetorical situation. As I have mentioned above, new media technology has the tendency to blur the lines between the reader, writer, text, and their relationship, which is verisimilitude with postmodern rupture. New media technology in general, and the web in particular have helped hypertext accelerate its postmodernist

tendencies to blur the distinction between the writer and reader by "turning the reader into a voracious, consuming mouseclick" (Johnson-Eilola and Kimme Hea 2003, 417). Hocks (2003) extends this argument to include digital text that contributes to making new media inherently postmodern, when she says: "Interactive digital texts can blend words and visuals, talk and text, and authors and audiences, in ways that are recognizably postmodern" (629-30). In postmodernist perspectives, hypertext ruptures the boundaries between the writer, reader, and society, as it totalizes and fragments them on computer screen. In this connection, Johnson-Eilola (1997) argues:

> …hypertext may end by affording only a postmodernist forum, in which everything (writer, reader, and society) becomes simultaneously totalized and fragmented, simulated on the computer screen and in magnetic memory. We should not be surprised at this condensation of agents, objects, and subjects: The collapse of subject, method, object, and interpretation is immanent from a poststructuralist standpoint (137).

Hypertext, as a multifaceted space, thus, fosters intertextuality (multi-textuality); problematizes the social construction of knowledge and the roles of the readers and writers; and enhances indeterminacy of context and meaning and the formation of subjectivity, and the multiplicity of discourses, which, in turn, breaks down the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Johnson-Eilola's (1997) views, in this connection, are worth-mentioning:

> One of the most striking features of space and subject hypertext is the way in which the technology apparently breaks down the distinctions between writer and reader, especially the commonsense notions of these roles as polar opposites. Theorists see the blurring of the line between writer and reader as extending recent theoretical positions in literary theory— hypertext, in this articulation, makes visible something that has long been theorized (143).

This explicit postmodern blurring of the lines of responsibility between the reader and writer is expressed by Landow (1992): "Hypertext blurs the boundaries between reader and writer" (5). The postmodern rupture of the notions of texts, message, and interpretation, in hypertext opens up the possibility to theorize the rhetorical situation from a new thread, because hypertext complicates traditional notions of authorship and texts' authority: "the original author or text's authority seems to evaporate

under the force of the readers' movements: Readers not only choose among the options offered by the original text, but may also add their own paths or even texts" (145). Though some websites still characterize the modernist notions of space as linear and hierarchical, apparent as in the ordered list of information, "information-rich screens", as pointed out by Johnson-Eilola (1998), which is enriched by a hypertext, "asks users to understand things in multiple, contingent spatial structures rather than in serial and chronological order" (Reynolds 2004, 67). The creation of postmodern spaces in hypertext allows readers more freedom to perceive the meaning in any way they like, and thus assigns them authorship of meaning, thereby empowering them over the authors themselves. These postmodern spaces created by hypertexts get more clearly characterized in Johnson-Eilola's (1998) lines:

> …these spaces can be navigated and negotiated from a simultaneous, surface perspective that does not attempt to find single facts or linear structures but has learned to process information along parallel lines without relying on a single focal point or goal […]. In learning to understand communication in terms of simultaneous, contingent, streams and structures, users also lose the ability to anchor themselves anywhere with certainty (205).

The increasingly widespread integration of new media and technology in any communicative practice today has made the writers and communicators "anticipate reader control with modular hypertext that can support multiple interpretive pathways and that can invite textual transformations and revision" (Selber 2010, 2).

Snoddy (2003) anticipated the pervasiveness of new media and technology, and its impact in bringing up the world, together, by dismantling the notion of distance: "Technology will one day be so pervasive and so inexpensive that everyone […] will have the ability to call up on the move every image and text to a portable device that will combine the characteristics of a computer, television set, and telephone. This will of course amount to "The Death of Distance" (18). Brooke (2009) expresses a similar idea about new media, and technology's ability to break the spatial conception of geography. But while asserting this fact, he also mentions that new media and technology both connect and separate us: they connect us with the world at distance, while they separate us from more immediate, local connection. In this context, he says: "Online networking might enable us to forge new connections with concern for geography, but those connections may come at the cost of our

more immediate, local connections" (xv). Thus, new media and technology complicate the notion of distance by providing us with connections with the world around us, and also distancing us from the more immediate world, which, in turn, problematizes and breaks the linear notion of the constituent of the rhetorical situation: audience, constraints, and exigence. The conception of audience, constraints, and exigence is based on the idea of immediacy and urgency. Audience, by and large, is associated with the immediacy of the targeted people whom the message is intended to address. But new media and technology distance the immediate audience around the author and connect with the audience far and beyond. Likewise, constraints are loaded with urgency and immediacy that are defined as some hurdles that influence the decision and action of the rhetor and expectation of the audience. New media and technology dilute the immediacy and urgency of constraints by distancing the rhetor and audience. So is the case with exigence. Bitzer (1968) defines exigence as "an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" (6). However, new media and technology divert the rhetor's attention from the immediate urgency, imperfection, and a defect, which need to be solved. For example, you might be donating and helping to make the lives of the poor people better somewhere in the world, without paying attention to the poverty immediately around you.

III.III. Conclusion

Though there are many socio-political implications of new media and technology both as a motoring agent to gear up economic, scientific, and educational, advancement, and as a debacle of social values and humanity, my concern here is to discuss it as a tool, an approach, an insight, a pedagogy, a philosophy, and an overall guiding principle in relation to Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies, which significantly prioritize the use of new media and technology. When Murray (2003) smartly points out, "[w]e are drawn to this medium because we need it to understand the world and our place in it" (11), by 'we', she is referring to Rhetoric and Writing Studies, and it means a great deal to me, because, in my concluding chapter, I will talk about how the changed notions of the rhetorical situation contribute to our discipline.

Given this plan, and multifarious readings of new media and technology, I want to conclude this chapter only by talking about what new media and technology are, and how they have changed the notions of the rhetorical situation and literacy. To sum up the points I have already

made, as an ever-burgeoning use of new media and technology in any communicative practice, new media and technology are redefining both how we write, think, and read, and the older notions of the rhetorical situation, and so they are subtly changing the way we conceive the linear and distinct constituents of the rhetorical situation. Its contribution to writing is vividly expressed in Zoetewey and Staggers's (2003) lines: "new media writing affords students new opportunities to reassemble the world outside the linear constraints of the print paradigm and make things fit in new ways" (135). While they particularly talk about the impact of new media and technology in writing practice, Haas and Neuwirth (1994) relate it to the overall literacy practices: "The new media technologies for literacy are such a powerful force that simply introducing them to writers, or in writing classrooms, will change writing and reading for the better, supplanting completely the old pen-and-book technologies" (323).

Because of its powerful force to affect all, and to effect change in literacy practices, new media and technology are so omnipresent (and perhaps omnipotent?) in our lives that we have interfaces everywhere. Brooke (2009) rightly expresses this phenomenon when he says: "We encounter interfaces as a part of our individual media ecologies, and those interfaces each serve as ecology of rhetorical practice, where canons shift, overlap, intermingle, and combine, sometimes as a direct result of our choices and sometimes despite them" (xiii). By being so ubiquitously present, especially in our rhetorical practices, as ecologies, new media challenges the structuralist binary oppositions and boundaries that we have inherited from the classical canons. Brooke's (2009) view in this regard is pertinent to mention: "new media occupies an increasingly relevant focus within the disciplinary ecology of rhetoric, challenging traditional binaries and boundaries, some of which we have retained since rhetoric's inception" (xiii).

However, new media technology's unequivocal emphasis on 'the medium is the message' is sometimes problematic because it diverts its focus from audience and purpose, which are some of the most important concerns of all rhetorics, including new media rhetorics. While the new media text's singular focus on the medium is said to have ignored the audience and purpose to some extent, "we now must deal with the fact that choice of medium influences audience expectation" (Rabkin 2006, 136). I argue that new media does not ignore audience and purpose; it only changes the way audience and purpose are treated, by offering new possibilities to examine author, audience, purpose, discourse, and interactivity, between them. Nevertheless, it is true that "the set of expectations an audience has about any of these new media is necessarily

more contingent than those raised by book culture" (136). Here, I would argue that an expectation of an audience of new media is more contingent upon the medium than the expectation of an audience of print media. As Rabkin (2006) suggests, digital media often breaks down the boundaries between "the finality of composition, the identity of the author, the role of the audience, and the unity of purpose" (137), new media and technology contribute to the changes in the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, because now "we live and work in an inherently collaborative infosphere" (137).

The underlying structure of new media and technology hitherto discussed is its user-centered quality which separates it from the traditional text, making it an inherently collaborative infosphere, where, as R. E. Rice (2013) says, "[u]sers not only can create, but also (re)distribute, recommend, and evaluate content" (1). However, the absence of skill provides a bleak image because it pushes users into the conundrum of definitions, from where no solution can be obtained, and, thus, there is no way to get out from the labyrinth of knowledge. In this context, Murray (2003) provides an optimistic note, when she says: "We will not be mere prisoners of the labyrinth, nor even trail-blazers: we will be the makers of the labyrinth, the gods of our own machine" (11). As the lack of skills makes us lost in labyrinthine knowledge, the lack of a new theory on the notions of the rhetorical situation will make it 'incomplete'. So, suggestive of Murray's optimistic line, in Chapter V, I will propose a new theory on the rhetorical situation that will make the notions of the rhetorical situation 'complete'. In order to do so, in the next chapter, I will first do a theoretical discussion to lay the foundation for suggesting a new theory of the rhetorical situation. I conclude this chapter with Withrow's (2004) pragmatic lines: "The challenge is to use the right technology at the right time. Technology should never be used just for the sake of technology. Technology should increase the learning experience for the learner" (42).

CHAPTER IV

ANALYZING THEORIES
OF THE RHETORICAL SITUATION:
WHERE ARE WE NOW?

While Chapter III provided the basis, and advocated, for the exigence of a new theory of the rhetorical situation based on how new media technology has impacted the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, this chapter lays a theoretical foundation for suggesting a new theory of the rhetorical situation in Chapter V. Here, by bringing together the theories of critical geography, critical theory of technology, and rhetoric and language theory, as mentioned in Chapter I, I will discuss how the notions of language, rhetoric, technology, and space/place/territory revise the concepts of the rhetorical situation. All these discussions will help me theorize the rhetorical situation from postmodern perspectives, which I will bring in as a theoretical underpinning to argue for my dissonance with the existing notions of the rhetorical situation, and exigence of a new theory, in Chapter V. The notions of the rhetorical situation can be better understood and discussed in relation to some theories on rhetoric and language, technology, and space/place/territory, because treating the rhetorical situation in isolation from these theories, based only on classical rhetorical theories, does not provide a complete picture of the rhetorical situation. I argue that besides new media and technology, a postmodern approach to rhetoric and language theory, critical theory of technology, and theories of critical geography, provide critical tools to revise the notions of the rhetorical situation. In the parts that follow, I will analyze and discuss what theories can help the revision of our notions of the rhetorical situation.

IV.I. Theories of critical geography

As with the rebirth of scholarship in geography, "other disciplines have increasingly come to regard space as an important dimension of their own areas of inquiry" (Warf and Arias 2009, 1), I find the notions of space

and territory, as used in the theories of critical geography, very useful in theorizing the rhetorical situation. My narrative is based on what Edward Soja (2009) says, "spatial thinking is central to the production of knowledge, and so driven by the need to inform others of the epistemological power of a critical spatial perspective" (11). By using the lenses of critical geography, I attempt to show how space and place are both connected and differentiated, and how these relationships speak to the rhetorical situation. Though in general use, space and place are viewed as synonymous, from the perspective of critical geography they are perceived quite differently, but as related concepts. Understanding the nuances between these concepts can help us understand how traditional notions of the rhetorical situation limit the physical context only as a place, thus ignoring the possibility of a space. In the following part, I explore the differences between space, place, and territory, by bringing in the theory of critical geography, and argue how traditional notions of the rhetorical situation only conceive the concept of place in the speculation of context as locality, and how it can be seen differently when it includes the notions of space and territory as a defining framework for physical context. This paradigm shift in defining the rhetorical situation makes the picture that incorporates the changing/changed notions of the rhetorical situation new.

Foucault and Miskowiec (1986) highlight heterogeneity of space when they say: "The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and gnaws at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space" (23). While Tuan (1978) sees space and place in dialectical relation, and defines space as a complex set of ideas, Soja (1980, 1987) conceptualizes space in terms of socio-spatial dialectics, and differentiates space from place by relating them to spatiality (social construction) and territoriality (physical construction), respectively. In the dialectical relationship between place and space, Tuan (1978) defines place as a concrete thing, and space as an abstract, formless notion. In common sense definition, 'place' denotes "all spaces which people have made meaningful" (Creswell 2004, 7). As in Creswell's, and Tuan's definition of place as "any locality that has significance for a person or a group of persons" (7), the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation perceive place as a physical construction ignoring the concept of space — its spatiality (social and ideological construction) as a material product of the relationship between social and spatial structure. The constituents of the rhetorical situation are not only physically related in a place; rather, as Soja (1980) believes, in "The Socio-Spatial Dialectic", socio-spatial dialectical relationships better define their relationships. Soja's (1980)

definition of space as "a dialectically defined component of the general relations of production, relations which are simultaneously social and spatial" (208) truly defines the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, which is inherently spatial. Instead of modernist linearity as conceived in place, the postmodern, formless, and complex, sets of ideas are what truly define the relationships between them.

By making a distinction between contextual and created space, Soja (1980) believes that a created space is a social product:

> Space itself may be primordially given, but the organization, use, and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation and experience. Socially produced space is a created structure comparable to other social constructions resulting from the transformation of given conditions inherent in life-on-earth, in much the same way that human history represents a social transformation of time and temporality (210).

Soja (1980) further elaborates on his notion of space by quoting Lefebvre in the support of his idea about the socially constructed nature of space: "Space is not a scientific object removed from ideology and politics; […]. Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies" (cited in 210). I find Soja's idea about space significant to argue for redefining the notions of the rhetorical situation. In the conception of the rhetorical situation, space as a social, political, and ideological, product is completely ignored for defining the relationships between the constituents. Reconceiving the rhetorical situation by incorporating the notions of space defines the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in different ways, and, thus, makes the picture of the rhetorical situation fundamentally different, thereby making the constituents polyvocal. Soja's (1987) argument on the notion of space continues through the cocoons of postmodernization of geography. His position on space is succinctly expressed by his belief that, "space and place make a critical difference" (289) in meaning, which can be fruitfully used to redefine the notions of the rhetorical situation. Agnew's (2005) lucid explanation of the conceptual differences between place and space can help in reconceiving the notions of the rhetorical situation. She distinguishes place and space in simple terms:

> In the simplest sense, space refers to location somewhere and place to the occupation of that location. Space is about having an address and place is about living at that address. Sometimes this distinction is pushed further to separate the physical place

> from the phenomenal space in which the place is located. Thus,
> place becomes a particular or lived space. Space then refers to
> the fact that places cannot but be located somewhere. Place is
> specific and space is general (82).

The physical location conceived in the notions of the rhetorical situation is a specific place occupied physically that is located at a definite place. This conception does not necessarily include the meaning of space.

While Tuan (1978), Soja (1980, 1987) and Agnew (1987, 2005) conceive place and space in dialectical relations, Sack (1993, 1997) connects them in terms of their interdependence. Interdependence is the key factor that defines space and place, and "place and space are constitutive of nature, social relations, and meaning" (Sack 1993, 328). In fact, they are so much interdependent of each other to exert power and meaning for each other that "the ideas 'space' and 'place' require each other for definition" (Tuan 1977, 6). In *Homo Geographicus,* Sack (1997) further develops the constitutive and interdependent nature of space and place and provides a sophisticated theory of how space and place are related from a broadly humanist perspective, emphasizing the roles of human awareness and moral concern, as well as more conventional social and environmental dimensions of experience. The idea of interdependence and constitutive nature of place and space (Sack 1993, 1997; Tuan 1977) makes revision of the rhetorical situation rich and complete, because it is lacking in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Traditional notions of the rhetorical situation conceive location only as a place, a physical locality having a physical address, where we actually live and perform communicative practices, and ignores the meaning of space in location. This tendency limits the scope of location and discounts the interdependence and constitutive nature of place and space. When the location is perceived by including the notions of space and validating the interdependence and constitutive nature of space and place, while conceiving or defining the rhetorical situation, it essentially helps revising it from a new perspective that inherently broadens its scope, because it incorporates the changed meaning of the rhetorical situation.

Soja (1996) further makes a distinction between two shades of meaning of space, which are verisimilitudes to place and space broadly defined: "We traditionally tend to think about space in two ways, one as concrete material forms, empirically expressed geographies; and the other as a more mental construct, as imagined geographies. Stated differently, the first involves *things* in space, the second *thoughts* about space" (1426). Soja's subtle distinction between two shades of meaning of space, in fact, defines place and space very succinctly. So, by borrowing his definition,

we can argue that place is defined as concrete material form, whereas space is a mental construct, an imagined geography. While Soja shows the polarization of positions on space and place, and Sack argues for how space and place are related, Agnew (2005) combines both arguments. While so doing, Agnew (2005) extends Soja's concept further, and argues that space is a controlled (constructed) notion, whereas place is lived or experienced: "Space is the abstraction of places into a grid or coordinate system as if the observer or controller is outside of, or looking down on, the places that constitute it" (81). However, Agnew is not happy with this polarizing tendency, as she believes that "adequate understanding of either term requires that each be related theoretically to the other" (81). She very clearly asserts: "There is a need to reconnect the two concepts, space and place. As conceptual twins, they offer more together than the use of either does separately. Only when related to the other does either reach its full potential" (82). Agnew might be arguing for conceptualizing space and place interdependently for a number of reasons, because polarization can problematize and complicate their relations and define them as antithetical concepts. Defined in this sense, place might stand for the local and traditional, whereas space represents the global and the modern. As an extension of this distinction, "[p]lace is often associated with the world of the past and space with the world of the present and future […] place is therefore nostalgic, regressive or even reactionary, and space is progressive and radical" (83). These progressive and radical aspects of space are what interest me, because these aspects will help me revise the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation from a postmodern perspective in Chapter V.

Sibley (1995) takes a different approach to dealing with space, in terms of its relationship with society for the construction of the boundaries of the self. For him, there is a reciprocal relationship between personal space and social space, and private spaces are integral elements of social space. He asserts that "private spaces have a relationship with the public spaces of geography — they are reciprocally conditioned, and it is the process of reciprocal conditioning which requires illumination if we are to understand problems like the rejection of difference in localities" (77). Sibley's argument for conceiving space in terms of its relationship with society, and seeking connection between personal space and social space, broadens the scope of space and, thus, helps revise notions of the rhetorical situation. When notions of space are conceived in terms of space's relation with society, and when personal space is connected to social space, it automatically revises the way we perceive location, because location conceived in this way broadens the scope of location that

includes social impact while interpreting the location. This phenomenon helps revise notions of the rhetorical situation. In the part that follows, I explore notions of territory, like I did for space, above, and briefly examine, reserving the details for Chapter V, how notions of territory can be linked and analyzed to redefine and reconceptualize notions of the rhetorical situation.

Like space, territory is always a socially or humanly constructed notion, but it is more a spatial strategy to show power relations. Sack (1986) defines territoriality in humans as "a spatial strategy to affect, influence, or control resources and people, by controlling area; and, as a strategy, territoriality can be turned on and off" (1-2). As a tool to show power relations that is rather socially and geographically rooted than biologically motivated, the use of territoriality:

> …depends on who is influencing and controlling whom and on the geographical contexts of place, space and time. Territoriality is intimately related to how people use the land, how they organize themselves in space, and how they give meaning to place. Clearly these relationships change, and the best means of studying them is to reveal their changing character over time (Sack 1986, 2).

Primarily as a site of a geographical expression of social power, territoriality shows how space and society are related, and how power relations change in a society based on spatio-temporal phenomena. By bringing in the notions of territoriality as a geographical expression of social power, I argue that understanding the rhetorical situation in a better way demands an understanding of the rhetorical territoriality which involves knowledge about how interlocutors organize themselves in a space to influence and affect others by controlling language as a rhetorical strategy. I will elaborate more about what I mean by rhetorical territoriality in Chapter V. Now, I explore more about territoriality.

As I mentioned above, territory is a social product that is "commonly understood as a device for simplifying and clarifying something else, such as political authority, cultural identity, individual autonomy, or rights" (Delaney, 2005, 9). However, as Delaney (2005) opines, "it [territory] is an extremely complex, and often highly ambiguous, element of social life, relationships, and interactions" (9). Territory, thus, can be understood as a complicated notion that has close association with space and language. Delaney (2005) rightly captures this notion when he elaborates:

> Territories are human social creations. Although territoriality, like language, may, in some very general sense, be a human

> universal, also like language, the specific forms that it takes are enormously varied. Territoriality is an important element of how human association — cultures, societies, smaller collectives - and institutions organize themselves in space. It is an aspect of how individual humans as embodied beings organize themselves with respect to the social and material world. Territories, then, are significant cultural artifacts of a rather special kind. As with any artifacts […] territories reflect and incorporate features of the social order that creates them (10).

The existence and furtherance of territories are contingent upon the existence and furtherance of certain power and politics that make it contingent, socially constructed, and ideologically informed, and, thus, commonly contested because it is not a primordial concept. It is territoriality that creates space, or territorializations of institutions which happens in space. However, territoriality is not just a strategy for control of space; it is much more than this — it is something that shapes identity of any kind. Delaney (2005) rightly observes this fact about territory when he says: "It is better understood as implicating, and being implicated in, ways of thinking, acting, and being in the world — ways of world-making informed by beliefs, desires, and culturally and historically contingent ways of knowing" (12). I see territoriality perceived as an identity-shaping agent which relates to the rhetorical territoriality inherently found in the notions of the rhetorical situation, which contributes to the revision of traditional notions from a new perspective.

What is a crucial thing for me in the discussion above is how the notions of the key terms — space, place, and territory — in the theories of critical geography speak to the revision of notions of the rhetorical situation. These traditional notions of the rhetorical situation conceive a location as a place, a concrete location, where you actually live, and experience in communicative practice, and ignore the meaning of space and territoriality. But I argue that the concept of space and territoriality can be more fruitfully used to revise the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. In the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, a place is conceived as a concrete, formed, and structured space; it is conceptualized as a particular locality having significance for a person or group of people, which does not, in fact, convey the abstract, formless, and complex set of idea associated with space, thereby limiting the notions of context as something physical and concrete. When a physical situation is conceived as a space, an ideological construct created as a material product of the relations between social and spatial structure, the scope of the rhetorical situation broadens, and it includes the notions of territoriality,

which deals with the way human situations and institutions organize
themselves in space with respect to the social and material world, where
power relations shape identity of any kind. When the power relation
changes, it also changes the relationship between the author and reader. In
this way, inclusion of space and territoriality as defining concepts of
context helps redefine the concepts of the rhetorical situation. I will
explore this issue in theorizing new theory on the rhetorical situation in
Chapter V. In the following part, I explore critical theory of technology,
and briefly examine how it could be used to revise the notions of the
rhetorical situation.

IV.II. Critical theory of technology

In the theory of technology, technology is primarily conceived
through the lenses of instrumental and substantive theory. In this connection,
Feenberg (1991) says instrumental theory "treats technology as subservient
to values established in other social spheres (e.g., politics or culture),
while the latter [substantive theory] attributes an autonomous cultural
force to technology that overrides all traditional or competing values" (5).
The fundamental notion associated with the instrumental theory is that
technologies are just tools ready to serve the purpose of the users without
affecting the values of the society. This means it is neutral without having
valuative content — ideology and politics — to manipulate the society in
the interest of the users. This instrumentalist philosophy of technology
exists because of unreflective assumptions by most people as a spontaneous
product of our civilization. This philosophy treats nature "as raw material,
not as a world that emerges out of itself, a *physis,* but rather as passive
stuff awaiting transformation into whatever we desire" (Feenberg 2006, 9).
The world in this sense exists there to be controlled and used without any
inner purpose. On the contrary, the substantive theory sees technology
beyond the realm of mere tools; as Feenberg (1991) argues, "technology
constitutes a new type of cultural system that restructures the entire social
world as an object of control" (7). In this sense, technology is the means of
not only developing the society but also primarily a vehicle for cultural
and political domination because "the values embodied by technology are
the pursuit of power and domination" (Feenberg 2006, 11). Technology, in
this sense, reflects the values and power structure of a particular industrial
civilization that, according to Feenberg (2002), should be judged in a
cultural critique of technology. Feenberg (2002) explains how modern
technology is not neutral: "Modern technology as we know it is no more
neutral than medieval cathedrals or the Great Wall of China; it embodies

the value of a particular industrial civilization, and especially those of elites that rest their claims to hegemony on technical mastery" (v).

The distinction between the instrumental and substantive theory of technology helps in understanding notions of the rhetorical situation. Traditional notions of the rhetorical situation are conceived assuming that language used by authors is just an instrument, and an author uses language only as a rhetorical tool to do something in the interest of the users, irrespective of the valuative content in it. This instrumental theory is questioned when a discourse is seen from the perspective of the substantive theory, and, thus, the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation can be revised because the text embodies the value of a particular ideology. By extension, the reading of that text also embodies the value of the reader, thus inherently making plural readings/meanings. Unlike the modernist linear relationships perceived between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in traditional notions, this phenomenon clearly suggests plural and multiple relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, and, thus, portrays a different picture of the rhetorical situation. When a rhetorical discourse is conceived as having valuative content in it, as guided by the substantive theory of technology, a text or a rhetorical discourse is always seen as a site of plural ideologies, unlike the way it is perceived by Bitzer, who sees a singular and linear relationship between the exigence and a rhetorical discourse. This situation not only redefines the rhetorical discourses, but also helps to reconceive the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in particular and the notions of the rhetorical situation in general.

While Feenberg talks about the one-way influence of technology on society, Arthur (2009), by carrying on the substantive view of technology, believes that technology and society shape each other: technology shapes and is shaped by society. More than just as a tool, technology makes a great difference in creating our world, and our identity that separates us from the past. In this connection, Arthur (2009) argues: "Technology is what separates us from the Middle Ages; indeed it is what separates us from the way we lived 50,000 or more years ago. More than anything else, technology creates our world. It creates our wealth, our economy, our very way of being" (10). Arthur's view of how technology and society shape each other, and shape the way technology, more than just a tool, creates our identity. As seen in Johnson's (1998) view of rhetoric as a technology, it creates a different picture of the rhetorical situation, which conceives rhetoric as a substantive agent to create the identity of the rhetor. This notion echoes Berlin's notion of rhetoric and ideology, which I will discuss later in this chapter. Unlike Feenberg and

Arthur, Ihde's (1993) approach is broader and more critical, because he sees a kind of automatic transition from instrumentalism to substantivism, and to critical theory of technology. Technology used primarily as a tool "becomes the means of the experience itself" (40) and a way of life that "implies a kind of world or environment […] a systematic way of seeing the world" (41). Here, Ihde (1993) argues for critical theory of technology because he believes that technology is important in understanding the human world. What can be derived from his argument is that even instrumental theory of technology fosters the birth of substantivism and critical theory, because as we use technology as a tool, it becomes a way of life and our identity. By extension, the use of rhetoric as a tool is itself an ideology, because it carries values of the users which are primarily plural, hence the multiple relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

Substantive theory of technology gives birth to critical theory of technology. Technology as a means for a cultural and political domination, so to speak, creates a condition for new forms of exploitation, oppression, and domination. Critical theory of technology, in this context, "analyzes the new forms of oppression associated with modern industrialism and argues that they are subject to new challenges" (Feenberg 1991, 13). While so doing, critical theory of technology explains how technology is used for ideological purposes, and then it looks for how modern technology can be designed to adapt to the needs of a freer society. Feenberg (2006) rightly summarizes critical theory in this way:

> Critical theory agrees with substantivism that technology is not the unmixed blessing welcomed by instrumentalists and determinists. It recognizes the catastrophic consequences of technological development but still sees a promise of greater freedom in a possible future. The problem is not with technology as such but with our failure so far to devise appropriate institutions for exercising human control over it. We could tame technology by submitting it to a more democratic process of design and development (12).

Critical theory of technology, thus, sees "a relation between the technologies and the humans who use, design, make, or modify the technologies in question" (Ihde 1993, 47). Unlike instrumental theory, while the substantive theory believes that use of technology is value embodied, critical theory of technology, recognizing the value-laden use of technology as done by the substantive theory, analyzes how technology as a means of cultural and political domination creates a condition for new

forms of oppression and argues for democratization of technology that creates a participatory space. In this sense, critical theory of technology is one step forward from substantive theory. By bringing in critical theory's argument for participatory and democratic use of technology, I argue for the rhetorical text in the rhetorical situation as a participatory space, where the readers, like the authors, have control over the creation, design, and meaning of the rhetorical text. This new situation allows both readers and authors to engage more democratically in the construction and meaning of the rhetorical discourse than ever before, though the readers' position may not be ideally equal to that of the writers. Looked from this perspective, the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation and its constituents are perceived differently from that of instrumentalism, which helps revise the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation in such a way that frees readers from their subservient role as conceived in traditional notions.

From the discussion above, we can see that critical theory of technology shares some characteristics with both instrumental and substantive theory: "Like instrumentalism, critical theory argues that technology is in some sense controllable, but it also agrees with substantivism that technology is value-laden" (Feenberg 2006, 13). Though it seems a contradictory position to own the fundamental but contradictory traits of instrumentalism and substantivism, critical theory of technology does not see technologies as mere tools, but sees them as frameworks for ways of life. Feenberg (2010) further explains this notion by saying that critical theory of technology shows "technology is not merely instrumental to specific goals but shapes a way of life" (67), and while technologies create ways of life, "they should do so democratically with an eye toward the rights not only of women, the poor, and the people of color, but of future generations" (Leitch 2004, 212). Users' active participation and democratization of technology, as discussed by the scholars above, also echo C. L. Selfe (1999), Johnson (1998), and Banks (2006). Selfe suggests that teachers of composition, English studies, and language arts, should see technological literacy from its cultural aspect. Her suggestion is that technological literacy needs not only to provide technological knowledge to users but should also enhance a critical awareness of how technological literacy can impact society. In like manner, Selfe suggests that the social and economic inequities caused by the technological literacy movement in American society exist because of its inability to facilitate the users as active participants, producers, and practitioners. Banks (2006) intensifies this phenomenon, and argues that technologies, as we use them, with their existing designs and programs,

have enforced and maintained racism in American society. He has the firm belief that:

> Racism is enforced and maintained through our technologies and the assumptions we design and program into them — and our uses of them. Without systematic study of our relationships with technologies and technological issues, we remain subject to those technologies and the larger patterns of racism and racial exclusion that still govern American society (10).

The discussion above opens up the possibilities of reflecting on how we choose to use or control technologies for more democratic purpose. In order to achieve this purpose, "[c]ritical theory of technology detects a trend toward greater participation in decision about design and development" (Feenberg 2006, 15) of technology based on users' interest. This idea of democratic participation reflects Johnson's (1998) idea of user-centered technology. User knowledge is always situated in time and space and, thus, changes every time. So, "technologies are constantly tested and refigured by those who use them" (Johnson 1998, 10) in order to fit them in changed contexts and users. The ancient Greeks also "treated technology as an art whose end was in the use of the product, not in the design or making of the product itself" (11). Thus, user-centered design focuses on contextualized and situated interpretations of technology and its use. Moreover, the use of, or design of, technology is situated in a specific historical and cultural context which limits what we do with technology. But the end of all activities associated with technology from the user-centered perspective is not who designs technology or how it is designed, but its use by the users. The user-centered model of technology places the user at the center of the model, as the users actively participate in the design, development, implementation, and maintenance of technology, thus refiguring the place of the user in particular and technology as such in general. This redefinition of technology from the perspective of users "forces a rethinking and potential revaluing of material, social, and political relations in radical ways" (Johnson 1998, 46).

We can see affinity between what Johnson attributes to users as practitioners, as producers, and as participatory citizens (but not as consumers or passive receivers of technology) in user-centered modality, and Selfe's suggestion that technological literacy need not only provide technological knowledge to users, but also should enhance critical awareness of how technological literacy can impact the society. While explaining user-centered approaches, Johnson (1998) says:

> [u]ser-centered approaches should rethink the user as being an active participant in the social order that designs, develops, and implements technologies. Users as producers have the knowledge to play an important role in the making of technologies; users as practitioners actually use the technologies, and thus have a knowledge of the technologies in action; users citizens carry user knowledge into an arena of socio-technological decision making (64).

In like manner, as Selfe has suggested that the social and economic inequities are caused by the technological literacy movement in American society because of its inability to facilitate the users as active participants, producers and practitioners, Banks (2006) also expresses a kind of user-centered philosophy when he relates meaningful access to technology to its use; "[t]he first, and perhaps most important element of a meaningful access is use — more than merely owning, or being close to, some particular technology, people must actually use it, and develop the skills and approaches to using it that are relevant to their lives" (68). While so doing, he stresses the fact that digital divide exists because of lack of opportunity to use technologies to develop skills and abilities.

The instrumental theory of technology can be likened to modern technological rationality which has "desire for order, control, domination, security; its mastery, willfulness, utilitarianism; its dedication to calculation, objectification, representation; its frantic transformation of everything including nature and human beings into efficient machines and resources" (Leitch 2004, 210). But technology, in essence, as Feenberg (1995) says, "is not just the rational control of nature; both its development and impact are intrinsically social" (4) and, thus, inherently political, because democratization of our society requires democratization of technology. In this sense, technology can be seen as a restructuring agent of our society. Because of an ever-increasing reliance on technology for the operation of society, increasing technological power is proved to be a valuable asset in liberal democratic societies, which, in turn, "has been perceived to create a number of straightforwardly political problems and publicly recognized controversies" (Pippin 1995, 43). This ever-increasing reliance generates another subtle, but more severe, problem — an ideological problem. Technology perceived as an ideology, as a means of belief formation, and a form of consciousness, shapes people's perspective on the nature of reality, the significance of a social practice, and the origin and legitimacy of an institution, and leaves catholic and perennial imprints. Pippin (1995) believes that it is already ideological to argue about technology as a value-

neutral tool, because it "already hides, distorts, renders impossible to discuss as an option" (46) while mediating false consciousness about it.

Unlike the conventional reading of technology that endorses instrumental theory, critical reading of technology sees it as a human, contextual, and social affair. Kaplan (2009) explains the critical reading of technology in this way: "Technologies are socially constructed realities with meanings and functions intelligible in relation to human contexts, not ahistorical notions of scientific reason and technical efficiency" (91). According to Kaplan (2009), critical theory of technology can be summarized in the following features:

> [Q]uestioning authority; challenging taken-for-granted attitudes; diagnosing and explaining current conditions; uncovering hidden origins, hidden actors, hidden consequences; uncovering overlooked or forgotten victims; exposing failures and omission; identifying vested interest; placing things in relation to power and authority; attributing responsibility to crucial decision makers, exposing their histories, identities, and roles they play; revealing alternative possibilities; showing now seeming universals are in fact historical; imagining more desirable futures (92).

Critical theory of technology, thus, perceives technology as a socially constructed reality that helps humans create meaning in relation to context. By extension, this notion of technology and Kaplan's (2009) summarizing points of critical theory of technology revise the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, because they question the authority of the author and challenge the taken-for-granted attitudes toward the relationships between the author and reader. To be precise, they challenge the authority of an author, as conceived in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, and free readers from their subservient positions, thereby placing both on the same level of authority, if any. Redefining the relationships between the writers and readers, and restructuring their roles in this way, help revise traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, which I will explore in Chapter V as a background analysis for suggesting a new theory of the rhetorical situation. In the following part, I examine some features of technology in general, and how these features particularly contribute to revising the meaning of authority, and the relationships between the author and reader.

IV.II.I. Technology and the end of authority

Drawing on the notions of critical theory of technology, I argue that technology's overarching effect on society has also had an overall impact on literacy in general and has broken the structuralist binaries between the author and reader in particular, significantly changing the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. By digitizing the media, technology has liberated the reader from the subservient position. As long as the print media remained the primary medium of literacy, the author as an authority of message was the sole authority, and the reader was merely a passive recipient of the message with no say in it, and the text was a neutral instrument designed and used in the sole interest of the author to effect a change in society. The traditional print media created a binary relation between the author and reader, thereby privileging the author and othering the reader, in the writing space: "An author is a person whose words are faithfully copied and sent around the literary world, whereas readers are merely the audience for those words" (Bolter 2001, 163). This instrumental theory is questioned with the advent of new media and technology in the design of a text, as Bolter (1991) says: "The electronic medium […] threatens to bring down the whole edifice at once. It complicates our understanding of literature as either mimesis or expression, it denies the fixity of the text, and it questions the authority of the author. The author is no longer an intimidating figure, not a prophet […]" (153). In this way, digital technology has reduced "the distance between author and reader by turning the reader into an author herself" (Bolter 2001, 4), thereby questioning the monumental image of author.

By questioning and rejecting the authority of the author, as Bolter mentions above, it also suggests the reader's participation in the making of the text. Here, we can sense the application of the critical theory of technology, as discussed above, in new media and technology to create a participatory space for both the author and the reader. As a result, [t]he text is not simply an expression of the author's emotions, for the reader helps to make the text" (Bolter 1991, 153). Critical theory of technology perceives new media and technology as a restructuring agent of a society. By the same token, new media and technology have restructured the traditional concept of the rhetorical situation, thereby resituating the author, reader, and text in a new democratic space where they can interact and communicate with democratic say. Accordingly, unlike the way an author perceived in instrumental theory, who is free to use rhetoric (technology) as a tool, "[t]he electronic author assumes once again the role of a craftsman, working with defined materials and limited goals […]

provided by their computer systems" (Bolter 1991, 153), thereby limiting the author's role and providing participatory space for the reader as well.

Computer systems not only restrict the author's role, but also impose some limitations upon readers within which they are free to play, hence ironically liberating them. In this way, computer systems allow readers to become the author's adversaries, and make contest between them possible, which inherently makes new media text participatory and democratic. Bolter's (1991) observation rightly expresses what makes the writing space truly participatory: "The computer makes concrete the act of reading (or misreading) as interpretation, and challenges the reader to engage the author for control of the writing space" (154). While talking about the future of print, Ray Kurzweil (1999) explains how, and why, new media is more participatory, and thus creates a democratic space, "[…] electronic books will have enormous advantages, with pictures that can move and interact with the user, increasingly intelligent search paradigms, simulated environments that the user can enter and explore, and vast quantities of accessible materials" (297). New media thus perceived as a more participatory and democratic space helps to revise the notions of the rhetorical situation that construe democratic relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. To be particular, the participatory and democratic space created in new media provides a space, not only for authors, but also for readers to interact with each other and text with equal say. As a result, it gives agency to readers as well, to influence both the author and the text. Before I move to address this issue in Chapter V, I plan to discuss below how hypertext, as a fundamental defining quality of new media, creates a new space, and how it problematizes the traditional relationships between author and reader, thereby giving a different picture of the rhetorical situation.

IV.II. II. Hypertext and new space for the author and reader

New media, as I discussed above, creates a participatory space, where author and reader can fully participate in democratic manner in the construction of the text and meaning. This interaction and participation between the author and reader is possible because of the hypertextual quality of new media writing. Johnson-Eilola's (1997) idea of hypertext as 'a social technology' reflects and resembles the democratization of technology as perceived in the theory of critical technology. Hypertext as a social technology creates a space for divergent communities (of authors and readers) fostering democratic participation. Johnson-Eilola (1997) expresses how hypertext fosters democratic space for all the participants

involved in communication: "Hypertext provides vivid examples of the ways in which the activities of writing and reading are transformed and appropriated by widely divergent communities, each of which reconstructs general characteristics of hypertext in relation to that community's goals" (7). This democratic participation of the authors and readers, with equal say, redefines and restructures traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. As a result, the linear relationship between the writer, reader, and text, as perceived in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, is broken and changed into recursive relationships because the writers and readers both affect and are affected by the text. In this sense, the writers and readers both write, and are written by each other, through text. This recursive and mutually constructing relationship primarily, because of hypertext, forms an ecological relationship between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, which I will discuss in depth in Chapter V.

The idea of ecology is also fostered by the collaborative hypertext environment, which encourages the ideas of intertextuality and, thus, revises the notions of authority attached to the author in the traditional notion of the rhetorical situation. Johnson-Eilola's (1997) critique of instrumental theory echoes critical theory of technology when he says: "Hypertext (or any technology) is never neutral or transparent to our intentions. At the same time, we are never completely written by the technology. Technological changes open at least the potential for productive change" (14). Like Foucault, Johnson-Eilola argues for the ambivalent nature of hypertext that allows use of objects or concepts in various ways depending on the social conditions in which they are constructed and reconstructed. For him, this ambivalence "does not connote neutrality but multiplicity, contingency, and tendencies of varying strength" (23). Hypertext as a social technology contributes to the creation of a new space; hyperspace (virtual space), which Johnson-Eilola calls digital colony, which breaks the notion of location and place perceived generally as a physical location in the conception of the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. In virtual space, "the concept of location becomes less physical and more mental, as users inhabit information space, as they move from 'place' to 'place' electronically, they see and manipulate information, in, and as, a space that spans the entire earth" (Johnson-Eilola 1997, 93). Very interestingly, the users' ability to inhabit and navigate virtual space redefines the traditional author/reader relation in the exploration of information (message), because in these spaces, "information is not merely transported by compact virtual machines from sender to receiver, but appears as a new world of exploration, inhabitation, development, sale, and circulation" (Johnson-Eilola 1997, 93-94), thereby

not only spatializing the information but also allowing an active and full play of sender-receiver interaction in the exploration and development of information, hence the democratization of technology. Johnson-Eilola (1997) very rightly connects this spatializing tendency of hypertext with information space: "Information is becoming a space, one in which we increasingly work, teach, and live" (95).

This new space created by hypertext can be termed as a postmodern space, because it breaks the hierarchies between the author and reader and provides multiple and plural spaces for them to have free exploration of information. Johnson-Eilola's (1997) explanation of the postmodern space very truly expresses the liberating traits of postmodern space:

> The normal hierarchical arrangement of reading time regulating spatial movement becomes inverted in this articulation of postmodern space, with space portioning out time, regulating time. Thinking about hypertext in this way, readers are no longer reliant on the writer to lead them temporally from border to border in the span of a tale; readers walk around, deconstruct and build, move over and under, exterior and interior (136).

This postmodern space encourages deconstruction and dispersal of meaning that orchestrates the reader and writer movement more effectively by allowing them to have a free play of meaning. Hypertext, while so doing, "may end by affording only a postmodernist forum in which everything (writer, reader, society) becomes simultaneously totalized and fragmented, simulated on the computer screen and in magnetic memory" (Johnson-Eilola 1997, 136), thereby collapsing the agents/objects/subjects' binaries. However, postmodern space also allows collaboration between the writer and reader through intertextual, networked, space by making both the readers and writers "co-learners" (Joyce 1988, 12). Though a reader always negotiates with text, writer, society, and the self while interacting with a text, hypertext makes the interaction special by creating postmodern space, because "the original author or text's authority seems to evaporate under the force of the reader's movements: Readers not only choose among the options offered by the original text, but may also add their own paths or even texts" (Johnson-Eilola 1997, 145). Consequently, hypertext makes the text inherently postmodern: "The text is no longer a linear or hierarchical string of words (an object connoting isolation and self-unity) but now an explicitly open space of text that can apparently be entered, navigated, deconstructed, reconstructed, and exited in nearly infinite ways" (Johnson-

Eilola 1997, 147). The postmodern qualities of hypertext promote plural relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation and allow the reader to navigate the text in many ways, thus reconstructing/deconstructing the meaning, thereby significantly helping to revise the traditional notions of rhetorical situation. In readers' abilities of entering, navigating, deconstructing, reconstructing, and exiting in innumerable ways, multiple relationships with authors are established, and the authors' authority is questioned. All these phenomena potentially give birth to multiple meanings and texts, inherently breaking the traditional relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

IV.II.III. Information age and networked culture

Apart from talking about hypertext as a product of overall democratization of technology and the postmodern space it inherently created, Johnson-Eilola (2005) details how technology contributed to the creation of the information age and its fundamentally defining quality — networked culture. The information age, as the sole product of new media and technology, is a departure from the industrial age, which was the sole product of science and technology. The advent of new media and technology brought change in the epoch from the industrial age to the information age, thereby shifting their focus: "Whereas the industrial age focused on the production of concrete objects, the information age focuses on the production of information. In this epoch, information workers do not merely use information, they *inhabit* it" (Johnson-Eilola 2005, 3). This shift in focus has also brought a paradigm shift in how we think, write, interact, communicate, and live, and how we conceive the rhetorical situation. Johnson-Eilola's (2005) concept of datacloud, which is a product of the information age, helps us understand how the notion of creation of text (message) changes. It is no longer a creative act of genius; rather, it is an act of assembling the information from the datacloud. He believes that:

> We live in a cloud of data, the *datacloud*—a shifting and only slightly contingently structured information space. In that space, we work with information, rearranging, filtering, breaking down, and combining. We are not looking for simplicity, but interesting juxtapositions and commentaries. This is the vague shape and erratic trajectory of the coming revolution (4).

While, in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, the message (text) is taken for granted as a creative act of genius, and the writer as

authoritative, the users in the information age are simply manipulators of preexisting data. Johnson-Eilola (2005) further explains how the users in the information age create text and see information: "Rather than understanding creativity as the inspired production of solitary genius, these users manipulate preexisting data, filtering, cutting, pasting, and moving. Rather than seeing information as something they need to master and contain, they see information as a rich field in which to work" (3). Johnson-Eilola's notion of datacloud results in a new culture — networked culture — a cultural shift that increasingly requires a different approach to understand how concepts, objects, and subjects, are constructed, and how communication takes place in the information age. As Johnson-Eilola (2005) says: "We are in a networked culture, both in the sense of communication networks and concepts, objects, and subjects, being constructed by interconnected social and technical forces" (9), we are so much exposed to information, and our communication and relation to the world around us are so networked that we have simultaneous access to multiple channels. In this networked culture, "we need to reconstruct — rearticulate — what we mean when we talk about communicating and working" (10). By extension, we need to reconstruct the traditional linear relationships between the author and the reader, because the relationships between them are now networked and, thus, recursive, which I will explore more in Chapter V.

Johnson-Eilola's theory of technology that works well in networked culture echoes Feenberg's critical theory of technology because he also talks about how the use of technology is political, and how its use is contingent upon contexts, users, political motives, and whole technical systems. In this context, Johnson-Eilola (2005) observes:

> Technologies are taken up and, functionally speaking, reconstructed by users within specific contexts. Numerous forces come together within that moment of use, structure and determine the specific nature of uses: Technology uses are articulations involving not simply isolated devices, but also specific users and contexts, political concerns, and whole technical systems (20).

Johnson-Eilola's idea about the datacloud is verisimilitude with information overload, which Morville (2005) talks about in *Ambient Findability,* in which he tries to answer two fundamental questions of this information age: How do people find their way through the information overload, and how can people combine streams of complex information to filter out only the parts they want? The fundamental trait of the information overload of

this information age is that it lets us find anyone or anything, from anywhere, at any time, because the information so pervasively and ubiquitously surrounds us. What interests me here, is how the relationships between the author, the reader, and the text, are constructed and reconstructed in the process of finding the right information an individual is seeking for. In this process, the linear relationships between them are broken, because the process shifts the attention and authority from the traditional author to multiple authors, which includes readers as well. But I will discuss this issue in more depth in Chapter V. For now, let me talk about how this findability of information works.

With the increasing power of ubiquitous computing systems, Morville (2005) argues that we can make any information findable, from anywhere, at any time: "We're at an inflection point in the evolution of findability. We're creating all sorts of new interfaces and devices to access information, and we're simultaneously importing tremendous volumes of information about people, places, products, and possessions into our ubiquitous digital networks" (2). New media and technology have enabled us to find information in ambience; in other words, the information we look for is here and there in our immediate surroundings and can be reached with the movement of our fingertips anytime, anywhere. More significantly, this has given more freedom to individual users, not only to choose the information they want, but also to create information according to their interests. It has empowered users (readers) more than ever before. Morville (2005) observes this fact when he says:

> Ambient findability describes a fast-emerging world where we can find anyone or anything from anywhere at any time. We're not there yet, but we're headed in the right direction. Information is in the air, literally. And it changes our minds, physically. Most importantly, findability invests freedom in the individual. As the web challenges mass media with a media of the masses, we will enjoy an unprecedented ability to select our sources and choose our news. In my opinion, findability is going ambient, just in time (6-7).

The notions of ambient findability which has empowered users with the freedom to find any information they like within the reach of their fingertips at any moment and any place, challenge the authority of the author in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, thereby liberating and empowering users (readers) to access the information. The ambient findability of information thus contributes to accessing information in multiple ways and revises the conventional meaning of the author as the

sole authority of meaning and message. By challenging the author, in this way, it redefines the relationships between the author and reader, hence revising traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. While intending to explore this more in Chapter V, I plan to discuss rhetoric and language theory below, and examine how rhetoric and language theory help revise traditional notions of the rhetorical situation in general, and the traditional relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in particular.

IV.III. Rhetoric and language theory

Rhetoric and language theory, as conceived by Nietzsche and Berlin, can be a useful theory to argue for the revision of traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, because it has a close association with the rhetorical situation as it primarily involves rhetoric and language use in a context. In the part that follows, I will discuss the connection of rhetoric with ideology, postmodernism, and language, and examine individually how its connection with ideology, postmodernism, and language, can contribute to the revision of traditional notions of the rhetorical situation.

IV.III. I. Rhetoric and ideology

I would like to begin this part with Berlin's (1988) famous statement: "A rhetoric can never be innocent, can never be a disinterested arbiter of the ideological claims of others because it is always already serving certain ideological claims" (477). To make this statement simpler, even the discourse we use in our daily practice carries ideology of certain types, forces, and amount, because it always brings with it strong social and cultural reinforcement that prescribes us or others to act this way, and not the other, thereby reflecting power relations between the speaker and listener. Since a discourse carries ideology, it is always plural, and thus conflicted. Berlin (2003) observes it very appropriately when he says, "ideology is minutely inscribed in the discourse of daily practice, where it emerges as pluralistic and conflicted" (84). In the process of subject formation, language use is imbricated with ideology, and it defines the subject (the self), other subjects, the material world, and the relations of all of these to each other from a certain perspective of an ideology that is plural, and thus contested. While so doing, the subject negotiates with the conflicting ideologies.

Ideology exists in all rhetorical acts (e.g., language use) because the rhetorical acts are the results of communicators, audiences, and

formulations of reality, which inherently carry some sorts of ideologies. In this sense, rhetoric cannot do away with ideology. Ideology is so imbricate and ingrained in any signifying practice that the discourse that talks about it (rhetoric) is itself ideological. Arguing for how rhetoric, as such, is ideological, Berlin (2003) says: "Of course, rhetorics have historically been concerned with the power of signification in public discourses of power, that is, in the provisional and probable realms of politics, law, and social ceremony. At present, however, no inquiry can be regarded as unquestionably outside the sphere of the provisional and probable" (72-73). Since, rhetoric is an ideology, and ideology refers to "the pluralistic conceptions of social and political arrangements that are present in a society at any given time" (Berlin 1987, 4), we can easily notice plural ideological relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation that inherently make them fluid. Berlin (1987) argues that there are close, plural, and ideological relationships between the elements of the rhetorical triangle: reality, interlocutor, audience, and language. Unlike in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, this pluralistic notion frees the reader from the structuralist binary relationship between author and reader that privileges the author and makes him/her able to engage in the dialectical process of (re)interpretation and (re)construction of message in a text. Berlin (2003) explains this phenomenon: "The reader must also engage in this dialectical process, involving coded conceptions of the writer, the matter under consideration, and the role of the receiver, in arriving at an interpretation of the message. Writing and reading are, thus, both acts of textual interpretation and construction, and both are central to social-epistemic rhetoric" (91). By dividing theories of rhetoric into three epistemological categories: the objective, the subjective, and the transactional, Berlin (1987) briefly sums up their function and relations: "Objective theories locate reality in the external world, in the material objects of experience. Subjective theories place truth within the subject, to be discovered through an act of internal apprehension. And the transactional theories locate reality at the point of interaction of subject and object, with audience and language as mediating agencies" (6).

While objective theories see meaning in the external world, abandoning social, psychological, and historical perceptions that might affect the meaning located in the material world, subjective theories abandon both the empirically verifiable sensory world and socio-historical perception to see meaning "within the realm that is accessible only through the individual's internal apprehension" (Berlin 1987, 10). Unlike the objective and subjective theories, transactional theory "sees truth as arising out of the interaction of the elements of the rhetorical situation: an

interaction of subject and object, or of subject and audience, or even all of the elements — subject, object, audience, and language — operating simultaneously" (Berlin 1987, 15). This distinction is what interests me here for numerous reasons. First, I see the connection of the objective and subjective theories of rhetoric with traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. This nexus, on the one hand, gives me tools to show my dissonance with traditional notions of the rhetorical situation, because it ignores the networked and transactional relationship between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. On the other, it leads me to argue for the existence of a new theory that is supported by the transactional theories which see all elements of the rhetorical situation — interlocutor, audience, material reality, and language — as ecology. I will explore this in more detail in Chapter V. Now, I further explain the notions of transactional theories by connecting them with Berlin's concept of social-epistemic rhetoric. In this context, I borrow Berlin's (1987) argument about truth that resonates how the transactional theories of rhetoric perceive truth: "Truth is never simply 'out there' in the material world or the social realm, or simply 'in here' in a private and personal world. It emerges only as the three — the material, the social, and the personal — interact, and the agent of mediation is language" (17).

Like the transactional theory of rhetoric, social-epistemic rhetoric sees the real "located in a relationship that involves the dialectical interaction of the observer, the discursive community (social group) in which the observer is functioning, and the material conditions of existence" (Berlin 1988, 488). The affinity between transactional theory and social-epistemic rhetoric is seen vividly by the fact that both negate the transcendental truth and believe that the truth is contingent upon how the stakeholders of communications interact and negotiate, based on the material conditions. When Berlin (2003) says "[s]ocial-epistemic rhetoric enables senders and receivers to arrive at a rich formulation of the rhetorical context in any given discourse situation through an analysis of the signifying practices operating within it" (90), in this process, there is a transaction of ideologies between the sender, receiver, and text, given the socio-political context. In this transaction of ideologies in seeking a truth, the constituents of the rhetorical situation have postmodern relationships that are inherently multiple and conflicted, hence the fluid subject of the rhetorical act. Berlin (2003) rightly captures this notion when he says, "the subject of the rhetorical act is not the unified, coherent, autonomous, transcendent, subject of liberal humanism. The subject is instead, multiple and conflicted, composed of numerous subject formations and positions" (88). Apart from seeing the subject and the message as multiple rhetorical

formations, social-epistemic rhetoric also believes that "the subject is itself a social construct that emerges through the linguistically-circumscribed interaction of the individual, the community, and the material world" (Berlin 1988, 489), which fundamentally reflects the transactional relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situations, as professed by transactional theories. Based on its discursive constitution and limitation, social-epistemic rhetoric self-reflectively analyzes the subject formations and the transactional relationships between the elements of the rhetorical situation, based on discursively constituted socio-historical conditions. From what I have stated above, we can see the convergence of social-epistemic rhetoric with postmodern conclusions about language and culture. In the following part, I first discuss how rhetoric and postmodernism converge in general, and how these convergences can be seen particularly, in discussing the elements of the rhetorical situation — interlocutor, conceptions of the real, audiences, and language — because they are conceived in social-epistemic rhetoric informed by poststructuralism.

IV.III. II. Rhetoric and postmodernism

As I have stated above, social-epistemic rhetoric fundamentally uses postmodern perspectives to analyze subject relations against the backdrop of discursive socio-political conditions that make rhetoric a pluralistic ideology to interpret a use of discourse. By extension, we can see a close relationship between rhetoric and postmodernism, because, like postmodernism, rhetoric tries to analyze discursive formations of ideology in language. Here, I argue that there is a symbiotic relationship between rhetoric and postmodernism. While rhetoric uses multiple perspectives to analyze subject and ideology formation of any text based on material condition that generates a postmodern tendency, "the postmodern theoretical turn is an attempt to recover the services of rhetoric, the study of the effects of language in the conduct of human affairs" (Berlin 2003, 72). Berlin further says that "postmodern discussions have put rhetoric back on the agenda of virtually all of the human sciences" (72). More particularly, which is my concern here, postmodern rhetoric totally changes the traditional relationships between the elements of the rhetorical situation. In traditional notions, the relationships between them are pre-given and destined as producer and receiver of a message, whereas postmodern rhetoric construes it as a construction that is inherently plural. In this context, Berlin (2003) argues "[f]or a postmodern rhetoric, the writer and reader, or the speaker and listener, must likewise be aware that

the subject, or producer, of discourse is construction, a fabrication, established through the devices of signifying practices" (88).

Social-epistemic rhetoric ingrained in postmodernist philosophy frees the audience from being just the receivers of the message; they are never completely in the control of the sender of a coded message because they can have a range of possible responses to any message. Engaging in a process of negotiation, they can decode the message through engaging in a measure of both accommodation with, and resistance to, the sender. Berlin (1992) observes how social-epistemic rhetoric analyzes the transactional interaction between the elements of the rhetorical situation:

> …social-epistemic rhetoric will enable senders and receivers to arrive at a formulation of the conception of the entire rhetorical context in any given discourse situation, and this will be done through an analysis of the signifying practices operating with it. Thus, in composing a text, a writer will engage in an analysis of the cultural codes operating in defining her role, the roles of the audience, and the constructions of the matter to be considered (22).

Social-epistemic rhetoric treats both signifying practices and the material conditions as constructs, which are the prime constituents of the message of the discourse, and in the process of making meaning of the text, "the reader of the text must also engage in a dialectical process involving coded conceptions of the writer, the matter under consideration, and the role of the receiver of the text in arriving at an interpretation of the text" (Berlin 1992, 22). This dialectical process of seeking meaning as an act of interpretation is based on the transaction between writer and reader with the text. So, "[w]riting and reading are thus both acts of textual interpretation and construction, and both are central to social-epistemic rhetoric" (Berlin 1992, 22), hence plural and conflicted. Social-epistemic rhetoric, thus, redefines the traditional writer and reader relationship as Berlin (1992) says: "The opposition between the active writer and the passive reader is displaced, since both reading and writing are considered constructive" (25).

IV.III.III. Rhetoric and language

A language is by nature, and by birth, rhetorical. It is not just a vehicle of thought or means of communication; it constructs 'reality,' and so it is ideological. Since there are no absolute truths, and they are simply constructed by how we use a language, they are partial, and thus

provisional. Our experience and knowledge are only our linguistic habit as to how we use language in a certain situation, rather than in another. Nietzsche (1989) argues that full and essential knowledge of the world cannot be grasped, and it is grasped, not as a thing, but as a sign perceived partially only through language:

> The full essence of things will never be grasped. Our utterances by no means wait until our perception and experience have provided us with a many-sided, somehow respectable knowledge of things; they result immediately when the impulse is perceived. Instead of one thing, the sensation takes in only a *sign.* That is the *first* aspect: *language is rhetoric,* because it desires to convey only a *doxa* [opinion], not an *episteme* [knowledge] (23).

Explaining how Nietzsche believes in language as a rhetorical act in itself, and how language is a partial representation of things, and thus perspectival, Gilman, Blair and Parent (1989) say:

> Consciousness does not grasp things, but impulses or imperfect copies of things, and these impulses are represented only in images. The images are not the things but 'the manner in which we stand toward them'. Furthermore, the impulses gained through sensation and experience themselves are signs. Because of that, 'language is rhetoric', for it conveys an attitude or opinion, a partial view rather than an essential knowledge of the thing. So, for Nietzsche, the partial or partisan nature of rhetoric is a further, conscious refinement of that quality as it already exists in natural language. Language, the very material of perception and experience, is inherently partial, and therefore perspectival (xiii).

The use of a language structures experiences, rather than simply recording them, because our experiences, ethics, and knowledge, are grounded on how we use language. This quality of language makes it inherently rhetorical. In this regard, Nietzsche (1989) argues: "There is obviously no unrhetorical 'naturalness' of language to which one could appeal; language itself is the result of purely rhetorical arts" (21). Apart from these, even "[h]uman thought is inherently limited by the capacities and constraints of language" (Gilman, Blair, and Parent 1989, xv). Berlin (1987) also, sees no division between experience and language: "All experiences, even the scientific and the logical, are grounded in language, and language determines their content and structure. And just as language structures our response to social and political issues, language structures

our response to the material world" (16). Like Nietzsche, Berlin also observes a deep connection between language and rhetoric, and their nexus is "pluralistic and complex system of signifying practices that construct realities, rather than simply presenting or re-presenting them" (Berlin 1992, 19). In the construction of realities, language is not innocent; rather, it is ideologically imbricated that serves for "the arena of struggle for determining the meaning of key signifiers, signifiers which then operate in the formation and maintenance of economic and political conditions as well, as in the construction of social subjects" (Berlin 2003, 80). Here, Berlin sees a dialectical relationship between language and the invention and meaning formation activities in which language is involved. The process of invention of meaning, or meaning formation, that language fundamentally does, is ingrained in the economic and political conditions that seek to perpetuate an ideology. This structuring of ideology is never unified, coherent, and sovereign because it is always already plural.

However, a language use is always ideological; one who uses it attempts to use it in their interests. Expressing a similar opinion, Berlin (2003) rightly states: "There are no strictly disinterested uses of language, since all signifying practices — both in writing and reading — are imbricated in ideological predispositions" (93-94). The users then try to manipulate language in such a way that it promotes or communicates their ideologies. By the same token, the audience decodes the language to do the same. This dialectical process of encoding and decoding fundamentally involves multiple transactions, plural meanings, and thus multiple and recursive relationships between the author and the audience (I will explore this relationship more in Chapter V). However, "[n]o single person is in control of language. Language is a social construction that shapes us as much as we shape it. In other words, language is a product of social relations, and so is ineluctably involved in power and politics" (Berlin 2003, 92). This symbiotic relationship between language and its users is also contingent upon the material conditions and mass consciousness, which are constantly in conflict, that generate different groups of people carrying different signifying practices. Because a language use is, thus, ideological and polyvocal in itself, it fosters multiple messages and plural relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, thereby contributing to the revision of notions of the rhetorical situation in particular, which I will primarily focus on in the next chapter, along with how the theories on rhetoric and language, technology, and space/place/territory can help me revise the existing notion and retheorize the rhetorical situation, thereby incorporating the changing/changed notions of the rhetorical situation given the impact of new media and technology.

CHAPTER V

RHETORICAL SITUATION AS TRANS-SITUATIONAL NETWORKED ECOLOGY

In this chapter, I offer a theory of the rhetorical situation that has more explanatory power than any theory presently available, and that is more relevant to current communication practices. The existing theories of rhetorical situations conceive communicative events as inherently meaningful or objectively real, and so are the rhetorical situations. These theories define rhetorical situations as something 'real' or 'genuine', based on historic reality. I believe that this modernist containment to perceive the rhetorical situation in this way can be detrimental to understanding it in a broader sense, because it cannot capture the changed meaning of the rhetorical situation given the impact of new media and technology. Consequently, it limits the scope of the rhetorical situation. I argue that this confining tendency of existing theories has the potential to make these theories obsolete, because these theories cannot incorporate the changed notions, and, thus, makes our understanding of the rhetorical situation 'incomplete'. To do so, I discuss my dissonance with some of the existing notions of rhetorical situations, and analyze why these notions do not work, and thus need to be revised, why some (if any) can be developed to propose a new theory, and what needs to be (re)theorized, relative to the rhetorical situation, to make it a viable concept for our contemporary moment. To extend and 'complete' the meaning of the rhetorical situation, I will propose a new theory that captures the changed/changing notion of the rhetorical situation, particularly given the impact of new media and technologies.

V.I. Examining the existing notions of the rhetorical situation

I revisit the mapping done in Chapter II and show my dissonance with the some of the notions of the rhetorical situation. I also examine why these notions are not appropriate to today's communication, and, thus,

need to be revised, as well as why some others (if any) can be developed to propose a new theory. I do this in the following four broad headings that cover the time period from 1968 to 2020, which are both historic and thematic topics at the same time: Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny and more debate from 1968 to 1974; a departure from the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate from 1975 to 2003; a networked complex system from 2004 to 2015, and context collapse as the rhetorical situation from 2008 to 2020.

V.I.I. Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny and more debate from 1968 to 1974

Though the debate on the rhetorical situation began with Bitzer (1968), three theories of the rhetorical situation as articulated by Lloyd Bitzer (1968), Richard Vatz (1973), and Scott Consigny (1974), in fact, lay the foundation of the theories on the rhetorical situation. Underlying each theory of the rhetorical situation is a different theory of meaning, and a different focus that conceive different disciplinary conceptions of rhetoric. Ultimately, Consigny's theory of rhetoric as an art of topics attempts to resolve the opposition of Bitzer's and Vatz's theories of the rhetorical situation. The Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate, and some other debates associated with it, cover a period from 1968 to 1974, which I explore in this part with my dissonance as to why these theories cannot incorporate the present issues.

Bitzer's theory of the rhetorical situation

Bitzer's (1968) theory on the rhetorical situation is based on the belief that "the presence of rhetorical discourse obviously indicates the presence of a rhetorical situation" (2). Here, he makes quite explicit that the rhetorical situation is antecedent to, and 'invites' rhetorical discourse: "it is the situation which calls the discourse into existence" (2). Similarly, the rhetorical situation 'dictates' the responses, and 'constrains the words which are uttered' (5). For Bitzer, then, a rhetorical discourse is secondary — a response to the "demands imposed by the situation" (5). Thus, he takes as a given that "rhetoric is situational" (3). By this he means that rhetoric "obtain[s] its character-as-rhetorical from the situation which generates it" (3) — rhetoric responds to, and is essentially related to, a rhetorical situation, because "[a] particular discourse comes into existence because of some specific condition or situation which invites utterance" (4). Treating the rhetorical situation as a dictating antecedent to a rhetorical discourse, and treating a rhetorical discourse as a secondary thing, raise several problems. While it over-emphasizes the exigencies of

the fitting rhetorical discourses, thereby giving less agency to the rhetors, it also relieves the rhetors of moral responsibility for the discourse. The rhetorical discourses are determined entirely by the exigence of the rhetorical situation, but not by the rhetors. In his theory, rhetors are 'obliged to speak', or 'required by the situation', to create discourse (5), and the "speaker's intentions [are] determined by the situation," which 'invites' and "prescribes" a specific, fitting response (9-10). Bitzer demonstrates that rhetoric is situational to some extent, but this is not always the case. More importantly, his treatment of authors as passive producers of a rhetorical discourse is problematic, because it does not rightly capture the sense that an author can create infinite numbers of rhetorical discourses based on the same exigencies, and thus it ignores the possibility of plural responses.

Bitzer (1968) describes three constituents of any rhetorical situation necessary prior to discourse — exigence, audience, and constraints — which "comprise everything relevant in a rhetorical situation" (8). He defines exigence as "an imperfection marked by urgency; a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done" (6). To be rhetorical, an exigence must be "capable of positive modification […] [requiring] discourse" (7). For Bitzer, any rhetorical situation has "one controlling exigence […] [which] functions as the organizing principle: it specifies the audience […] and the change to be effected" (7). In addition, rhetorical situations always require audiences, as a rhetorical discourse "produces change by influencing the decision and action of persons who function as mediators of change" (7). Similarly, every rhetorical situation contains a set of constraints made up of persons, events, objects, and relations that are parts of the situation; these can be "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, [or] motives" (8).

As discussed above, Bitzer conceives the rhetorical situation in such a way that it reflects his realist view of an objective, external reality, which is a set of publicly observable historical facts. In this sense, rhetorical situations are 'real' or 'genuine' based on historic reality and independent of rhetorical discourses. For Bitzer, events are inherently meaningful, because events (i.e., rhetorical discourses) have logical connection with the rhetorical situation. They have a cause-and-effect relationship, as the rhetorical situation causes the birth of rhetorical discourses. Here, I argue that Bitzer's modernist approach to treat the rhetorical situation as an objective or historic reality, and as a genuine or real fact, does not necessarily address fluid, postmodern reality. The postmodern human condition is so fluid that there is no logical singular connection between rhetorical discourses and rhetorical situations. The

cause-and-effect relationships between them do not work, because their relationships are postmodern, crisscross, plural, and infinitely producing multiple relationships, which is missing in Bitzer's notions of the rhetorical situation. However, his theory conceives rhetoric as a practical discipline — one which responds to an exigence through discourse that urges an audience to action.

Treatment of exigencies: Bitzer and Miller

Though, like Bitzer, Arthur B. Miller (1972) treats exigence as the most important of all constituents of rhetorical situations, he sees a different type of relationship between a rhetor and exigence, in which he liberates a rhetor from producing a fixed response as demanded by the situation. In this connection, he says that "the rhetor has creative latitude to interpret the significance of the exigence" (111) within the limits specified by each exigence. I have both agreement and dissonance with Miller's position about the notion of exigence and the relationship between a rhetor and exigence. While I have disagreement with his treatment of exigence as the most important constituents of the rhetorical situation, I like the way he sees the relationship between a rhetor and exigence. Here, I argue that treating exigence as the most important constituent devalues other constituents of the rhetorical situation, because I believe other constituents of the rhetorical situation are also equally important to create a rhetorical discourse. However, I like the way Miller sees plural relationships between a rhetor and exigence. While Bitzer limits a rhetorical discourse only as a response to the exigence as a fixed entity, Miller makes it more flexible within the limits based on the rhetor's 'creative latitude' which opens up possibilities for multiple responses. It is, in fact, the freedom of opinion inherent in a rhetor that makes the difference in the ultimate or perceived nature of the exigence which depends on the constraints of the perceiver. I buy Miller's position on the renewed relationship between a rhetor and exigence and use it to argue for the exigency of a new theory of the rhetorical situation in the second part of this chapter.

A discourse is rhetorical: Larson and Wilkerson

Likewise, I borrow from Richard L. Larson (1970) and K. E. Wilkerson (1970), who problematize Bitzer's classification of discourse into two binaries — rhetorical and non-rhetorical — and argue that any discourse is rhetorical. To Larson, the distinction between the rhetorical

and non-rhetorical discourses, as made by Bitzer, is tricky and problematic, as, upon close observation, all discourses are rhetorical because they are produced in response to an ongoing rhetorical situation whether those be 'scientific' or 'poetic'. All the discourses, Larson (1970) believes, have the power to modify the existing beliefs, and to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the world. Wilkerson (1970) also disagrees with Bitzer's classification of the rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourses, as he finds the distinction arbitrary, because the discourse Bitzer labeled as non-rhetorical could be rhetorical in its essence. In order to argue for the exigence of a new theory on the rhetorical situation, while I show my dissonance with Bitzer's classification of the rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourse, I develop Larson and Wilkerson's argument further, combining it with Nietzsche's theory of rhetoric and language, in which, he argues for language as rhetoric theory.

The Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate

Richard E. Vatz (1973) in "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation" (1973) critiques Bitzer's realist conception of rhetorical situations as objective and historic facts, suggesting instead an opposing perspective based on a different philosophy of meaning, providing a contrary view of the relationships between rhetoric and situations. Whereas Bitzer argued for the rhetorical situation as antecedent to, and determining of, rhetoric, Vatz instead argues that rhetoric is antecedent to, and determining of, the rhetorical situation (157) — "a *cause* not an *effect* of meaning" (160). When Vatz says "events become meaningful only through their linguistic depiction" (157), he believes that 'events' do not exist objectively in reality but are instead 'created' by choosing facts and translating meaning in the rhetorical discourse. In other words, the reality of the rhetorical situation does not exist externally, but is instead created by, and through, rhetoric. In Vatz's view, the rhetor is morally responsible for selectively choosing to create — through rhetoric — one reality or situation instead of another. Contrary to Bitzer, Vatz argues that "situations are rhetorical", that "utterance invites exigence", that "rhetoric controls the situational response", and that "situations obtain their character from the rhetoric which surrounds […] or creates them" (159). Vatz's notions that "situations are rhetorical" and "utterance invites exigence" ignore the importance of the contribution of exigence to generate rhetorical discourses. I, however, agree with his argument that rhetorical discourse gives meaning to events, and a rhetor is responsible for creating a discourse. Giving agency to a rhetor as a construct of social relations in the creation of discourse and

giving meaning to events opens up possibilities for multiple responses to an exigence. This phenomenon helps me to explore multiple layers of relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in the next part of this chapter. However, what I find lacking in his theory, just as in that of Bitzer, is a fair treatment of the role of the audience in affecting the rhetorical responses. To be more specific, this model ignores the audiences' agency in shaping the rhetorical discourse.

Attempting to resolve the antithetical theories of Bitzer and Vatz, Consigny in "Rhetoric and Its Situations" (1974) proposes a more complete view of the rhetorical act by building upon, and integrating, the theories of both Bitzer and Vatz that attempt to characterize how a rhetor effectively functions in a rhetorical situation. Consigny argues that the rhetorical situation exists independently of the rhetoric, and rhetors have some control over the discourse, but not sole control over the situation. He believes that a situation includes particularities which require a rhetor to shape them and formulate concrete problems to be solved rhetorically, which he calls "rhetoric as an 'art'" (176). In his view, these situational particularities act as real constraints on the rhetor if the rhetoric is to be effective (178). His view of rhetoric as an 'art' explained how a rhetor can engage and make sense of novel and indeterminate situations (179). Consigny proposes a rhetorical 'art' as the essential power by which rhetors make sense of situations and effectively formulate and address problems to an audience (180). I find Consigny's theory of the rhetorical situation more practical and, thus, more useful than those of Bitzer and Vatz, when he conceives the independent existence of exigence, the rhetor's considerable control over the rhetorical discourse, and the lack of rhetor's sole control over the situation. While I develop Consigny's practical notions of rhetoric to argue for a new theory, I have some dissonance with him. Consigny attaches too much importance to a rhetor in finding strategies for shaping the indeterminate situation. For him, a rhetor must be able to "enter into an indeterminate situation and disclose or formulate problems […] [and] present the problems in such a way as to facilitate their resolution by the audience engaged with him in the rhetorical process" (179). Thus, the art of rhetoric allows a rhetor to face novel situations and receptively engage them to determine and resolve problems (181). In this way, whereas he so much highlights the role of a rhetor, he does not mention at all how an audience can contribute to the resolution of the problem.

Jamieson's generic constraints and the rhetorical situation

Kathleen M. Hall Jamieson (1973) extends Bitzer's notion of the connection between a rhetorical discourse and the rhetorical situation by arguing that genres constrain the rhetorical situation. She asserts that "perception of the proper response to an unprecedented rhetorical situation grows *not merely from the situation* but also from antecedent rhetorical forms" (author's emphasis), because "[t]he chromosomal imprint of ancestral genres is evident at the conception of new genre" (163). But while so doing, she also admits how the audience and situation constrain genres: "Genres are shaped in response to a rhetor's perception of the expectations of the audience and the demands of the situation" (163). Going one step further, Jamieson (1973) argues that genres should not have procrustean function to constrain new rhetorical discourses in the traditional frame of genre, but should liberate them based on changing contexts, because she also believes that genres should be viewed as evolving phenomena, and rhetors involved in modification of genres. I find Jamieson's view about the connection between a genre and the rhetorical situation ambivalent: while, on the one hand, she argues that a new response to a rhetorical situation is guided by antecedent rhetorical form (genre), because there is "chromosomal imprint of ancestral genres" in a conception of new response to a rhetorical situation, on the other hand, she also gives agency to the rhetors, audience, and the demands of the situation. Likewise, she conceives the genres both as a fixed entity and evolving phenomena. Her ambivalent attitudes naturally generate my ambivalent attitudes toward her notion of the connection between a genre and the rhetorical situation. Her treatment of a genre as a fixed, objective, and historical, entity is dated, and inapplicable to current communication situations, given the impact of new media and technology. However, I agree with her when she says genres are evolving phenomena, and rhetors contribute to the modification of genre based on audience expectation and the demands of the rhetorical situation. Writing is now so multimodal and hypertextual that it has dismantled the modernist and archaic notion about a genre as an objective reality. Showing my dissonance with her belief of generic constraints, in proposing a new theory on the rhetorical situation, I further develop her idea about genres as evolving phenomena, and rhetors' role in the modification of a genre and creation of a new fitting response on the basis of audience and the rhetorical situation. I like her second argument about the connection between a genre and the rhetorical situation, because she gives agency to all the constituents of the rhetorical situation, namely, rhetors, audience, and context. She is one step ahead in

expanding the notions of the rhetorical situation, because, unlike her predecessors, she gives agency to the audience as well, when she talks about its role in affecting the construction of a rhetorical discourse.

V.I. II. A departure from Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate from 1975 to 2003

While the writers discussed above primarily argue around the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate in some way or another, some scholars from 1975 to 2003 focus on the departure from the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate. For example, whereas Jamieson argues along the line of Bitzer's concept of rhetorical situations by bringing in the issue of genres as rhetorical constraints in the discussion of rhetorical situations, Baxter and Kennedy (1975) complicate and problematize the linear and singular notion of rhetorical situations. In this part, I examine how the scholars in this period discuss the notions of the rhetorical situation as a departure from previous debate, and then I show my dissonance and agreement with their departures to argue for the exigency of a new theory.

A departure from Bitzer

As a departure from Bitzer, Baxter and Kennedy (1975) argue for indeterminacy of a rhetorical situation to elicit a single response, because they believe that multiplicity of existence of a rhetorical situation fosters indeterminate and various responses, which make a rhetorical situation a complex thing, "[t]he rhetor, audience, subject, occasion, and speech […] can be said to be the members of a multiplicity which, at the outset of a speech, have a disjunctive relationship" (160). Unlike Bitzer, who conceived the rhetorical situation as a finality, they conceive it "as a process" (161) and "as an epochal whole of becoming" (162), hence deconstructing the established conception and providing another view of the rhetorical situation. I find Baxter and Kennedy's deconstructive picture of the rhetorical situation useful, especially when they conceive indeterminacy of a rhetorical situation to produce a single response. This idea is helpful for me to argue for the exigency of a new theory because it breaks the structuralist notion of seeking one-to-one relationship between the rhetorical discourse and exigence and, thus, fosters a postmodern plural relationship between them. They perceive a rhetorical situation as a complex thing, as it involves the rhetor, audience, subject, occasion, and speech, in disjunctive relationship. I further develop this notion of complex and disjunctive relationships between the constituents of the

rhetorical situation while proposing a new theory on the rhetorical situation in the next section to come.

Like Baxter and Kennedy, John H. Patton (1979) also argues for the indeterminate nature of the rhetorical situations to cause a rhetorical discourse, thereby attaching much importance to the rhetors' interest to create the discourse, while equally focusing on rhetorical exigences as necessary, but not sufficient, conditions to cause rhetorical discourses (44). Similarly, Charles W. Kneupper (1980) argues "[t]he material conditions are necessary but not sufficient conditions for rhetoric" (162) and, thus, attaches significance to the role of the person as a definer of a situation. The person makes a choice to communicate, and how to communicate, based on "an intricate meshing of definitions" of self, exigence, audience, constraints, purpose, and probabilities. Thus, to him, rhetorical response is very complex phenomenon. Even Bitzer (1980b) later gives credit to the role of the interest of the rhetors and their environment as the fundamental factors causing a rhetorical discourse. Bitzer (1980b) admits that, because the rhetors have different perspectives toward the existence of the exigence, they bring different rhetorical discourses in response to the same exigence. As a departure from Bitzer, William L. Benoit (1994), and Smith and Lybarger (1996) critique Bitzer's objective nature of exigence and argue for its revision. Benoit (1994) believes that a rhetorical exigence is epistemic, as it is perceived in different ways by different rhetors. This epistemological assumption is related to the rhetor and the rhetor's purpose. Depending on the purposes of the rhetors, the same situation generates different rhetorics, and the nature of a rhetor also influences the discourse produced in response to a certain situation. Likewise, Smith and Lybarger (1996) also critique Bitzer's definition that locates exigencies in the external conditions of material and social circumstances and treats it as a singular phenomenon. By revising Bitzer's relatively autonomous notion of exigence, they argue that rhetorical situation involves a plurality of exigencies and complex relations between the audience and rhetorician's interests, thereby making it more interactive with other elements of the situation.

In the discussion above, I agree with their unanimous argument for the indeterminate nature of the rhetorical situation to generate many rhetorical discourses, because rhetorical discourses are based on the rhetors' ability to understand, and interest in understanding, rhetorical exigencies, which makes a rhetorical response inherently a plural and complex phenomenon. While I agree with their argument about the rhetors' power to define the situation in their own terms, in order to create multiple responses based on the same exigence and develop this argument

further to propose a new theory of the rhetorical situation, I have dissonance with their dismissal of the audience's role in shaping the rhetorical discourse because they imply a passive role of the audience in their theories of the rhetorical situation, thereby privileging authors as the sole designers of rhetorical discourses.

Intending to modify Bitzer's definition of the rhetorical situation, Grant-Davie (1997) develops her model, in which the exigence demands more comprehensive analysis; all the constituents are plural; and the rhetors, like audiences, are part of rhetorical situations. In her model, rhetors as a constituent of the rhetorical situation mean those people, real or imagined, who are responsible for the discourse and its authorial voice, and the audience means those people, real or imagined, with whom the rhetors negotiate through a discourse to achieve the rhetorical objectives, and the constraints are factors in the situation's context which may affect the achievement of the rhetorical objectives. Donna Gorrell (1997) also reviews Bitzer's theory along with the modifications suggested by Richard Vatz and Scott Consigny and proposes a dynamic interaction of the situational components. Her model suggests that the more the components come towards closure in a dynamic play, the better the rhetorically 'fitting' response they generate, and the less they join in this process, the more chance of adversarial, mere, and failed rhetoric. The crux of her argument is that "the fitting response to any rhetorical situation results from the interactions of all its components — rhetor, audience, and reality. Anything less is not a true rhetorical situation" (411). Besides this, her model suggests the synthesis of the components and its responsiveness to the variety of situations.

I buy most of the ideas of Grant-Davie and Gorrell. Grant-Davie's model is useful because it expands the scope of the rhetorical situation by allowing more comprehensive analysis of exigence, by treating all the constituents as plural, and by including rhetors as a constituent of the rhetorical situation. While I agree with her notion of audience because she conceives the audience as having agency with whom the rhetors negotiate through a discourse, her portrayal of the rhetors as people with authorial voice is problematic. She seems to have a very traditional notion about the author, while having a postmodern attitude towards the audience. By showing my dissonance with her notion about the author, I develop her position about the audience as someone with whom an author has to negotiate to create a rhetorical discourse, because it gives agency to the audience and, thus, broadens the scope of the rhetorical situation. Similarly, Gorrell's model is productive, as it proposes a dynamic interaction between the constituents of the rhetorical situation

to generate rhetorically fitting responses and develop her idea to suggest a new theory on the rhetorical situation. Gorrell gives agency to all the constituents of the rhetorical situation, which I further develop to support my argument for the exigency of a new theory.

A deconstructive approach to the rhetorical situation

Developing a deconstructive approach to the rhetorical situation, Barbara A. Biesecker (1989) calls for the appropriation of deconstructive insights and deconstructs the relationships between the rhetorical discourse and the audience in order to rethink the rhetorical situation. Accordingly, Biesecker (1989) argues that a rhetorical discourse also influences the constituent elements of the situation. For her, the relationships between a rhetorical discourse and its situation are discursive and thus indeterminate, "neither the text's immediate rhetorical situation nor its author can be taken as simple origin or generative agent, since both are underwritten by a series of historically produced displacement" (Biesecker 1989, 121). The discursivity and indeterminacy of the connection between a rhetorical discourse and its situation are more evident in the reception of the rhetorical texts because they are received differently by different audiences. Since my approach to the revision of the rhetorical situation is a postmodernist and deconstructionist one, I concur with Biesecker's deconstructive take in conceiving the relationships between a rhetorical discourse and audience, and a rhetorical discourse and the constituents of the rhetorical situation. The influence of a rhetorical discourse on the constituents of the rhetorical situation has been hitherto ignored, and their relationship was conceived as one-way traffic. Biesecker's deconstructive approach, in this context, opens up a possibility of a new relationship that can be useful to revise notions of the rhetorical situation. Likewise, I buy her notions of discursive and indeterminate connection between the rhetorical discourse and its situation, and further develop it to argue for the exigency of a new theory in the next section of this chapter.

V.I.III. A networked complex system from 2004 to 2015

The scholarship written on the notions of the rhetorical situations during this period reflect how the notions of rhetorical situations have changed with the advent of new media and technology, and its integration into all forms of communication in particular and human life in general. In this part, I discuss how some essays written on the rhetorical situation treat notions of the rhetorical situation, particularly given the impact of new

media and technology, and how I plan to develop their notions to propose
a new theory of the rhetorical situation.

Byron Hawk (2004) defines the rhetorical situation as a complex
adaptive system where there is a dynamic interplay between the polarity of
situation and discourse in the networked (media) culture. In this way,
Hawk perceives the rhetorical situation as a complex adaptive system
which "remain[s] open to the environment and adapt[s] accordingly […]
produce[s] strange loops among (their) individual parts that create" (835-
836). I agree with Hawk's notion of the rhetorical situation as a complex
adaptive system, and by borrowing complexity theory as an explanatory
framework, I develop Hawk's argument further to argue for the exigency
of a new theory. In this connection, I argue that the constituents of the
rhetorical situation as a complex adaptive system are linked to other
networks. Bringing in complexity theory as an explanatory framework
defines the constituents of the rhetorical situation not as discrete entities;
they are, rather, interconnected, networked; an entity linked with a range
of linked concepts can, thus, be better understood as an ecology. No entity
alone is prominent to cause the other; rather, all the constituents of
rhetorical situation are connected as a web, at least partially or mutually
constituting each other. Like Hawk, Jenny Edbauer (2005) advances a new
debate on the rhetorical situation. By borrowing Phelps's (1988) notion of
ecology, Edbauer places the rhetorical elements within the wider context
of ecology that destabilizes the discrete borders of a rhetorical situation,
and treats the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical
situation as ecology, but not as discrete entities, in which they are
perceived as a circulating ecology of effects, enactments, and events,
resulting in rhetorical ecologies, where all the elements are networked and
connected, which could be called "sites of complex network or networked
process" in Helen Foster's (2007) terminology. I buy Edbauer's notion of
the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation as an
ecology and develop it further by borrowing Foster's concept of networked
process. It helps me argue that the constituents of the rhetorical situations
have non-linear and recursive relationships, unlike the way their
relationships are conceived in the traditional notions.

Killoran (2009, 2015) discusses how the notions of the rhetorical
situation have changed because of the changes in genre and social web as
an impact of new media and technology. In so doing, Killoran (2009)
argues that new media and technology have changed genres by providing
new medium, new users, new technological features, and new rhetorical
situations (264). It will offer an insightful approach and context to revise
traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. By exploring the genre of

web resume, he illustrates how the web has created new rhetorical situations, and he asserts, "we should inquire not just into the new medium's technology, but also into the new situation's exigences, audiences, and constraints" (267). Building on this idea, I revise the traditional notions of exigences, audiences, and constraints, and theorize them from a new perspective of a changed notion of genre, given the impact of new media and technology. Killoran (2015) believes that Web 2.0, as an impact of new media and technology, has changed our daily rhetorical situations by inviting response to them, because "quotidian rhetorical situations are more readily perceived to invite our correspondingly unassuming quotidian postings" (280). Consequently, "[e]ach post potentially creates a new quotidian ongoing self-presentation as a mutually supportive collective project" (281). I argue that this situation has created a context for new rhetorical situations that are inherently fluid, transactional, and networked, and the shift from Web 1.0 to the social web has broken the linear and discrete relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

V.I. IV. Context collapse as the rhetorical situation from 2008 to 2020

Web 2.0 social media has created a new context known as context collapse and has impacted the revision of the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. Context collapse has created a new context (space) where infinite number of audiences interact online, hence creating networked public spaces of imagined audiences by breaking the lines between discrete audiences. I buy this idea of context collapse for proposing the rhetorical situation from a new perspective. Though the notion of context collapse compels the revision of the traditional notion of audience, it can be a helpful tool to revise the constituents of the rhetorical situation in general, as it functions as a new version of the rhetorical situation that fits into our networked culture today. However, I have some dissonance with the idea of context collapse that focuses only on audiences, because the scholarships on context collapse mainly treat audiences as the main constituents of contexts. I disagree with this line of argument as I believe the rhetorical contexts do not mean only audiences; the rhetorical contexts consist of writer, audiences, message, and text, and I develop the concept of the rhetorical contexts more on the backdrop of networked social media technologies. Building on the dissonance with the notions of context collapse, I extend the notions of context collapse, and develop networked rhetorical context that better captures the essence of contexts given the impact of new media and technologies, thereby collapsing the

traditional notions of all constituents of the rhetorical situation. Instead of just collapsing the context only in terms of audiences, networked rhetorical context sees contexts as a co-adaptive system in a networked ecology.

By bringing all these arguments together, I argue that rhetorical situations are not discrete, linear, and singular entities; rather they are a networked ecology of a complex system. To argue for the exigency of a new theory, I buy many scholars, primarily including Hawk and Edbauer's theories of rhetorical situations, and further develop them by bringing in complexity theory, Foucault's concept of discursive formation, Phelps's notion of ecology, Foster's concept of networked process, and, by extending the notion of context collapse, I propose a new theory, below, of rhetorical situations as trans-situational networked ecology. To this end, I bring in and revisit the discussion on how new media and technology have changed the notions of the rhetorical situation from Chapter III, and the theories of critical geography, critical theory of technology, and rhetoric and language theory from Chapter IV. Before I move to propose a new theory of the rhetorical situation, I first discuss the exigency of a new theory below.

V.II. Exigency for a new theory

The discussion above, especially the discussion about my dissonance with some of the theories presently available, very obviously suggests that there is exigency for a new theory of the rhetorical situation that incorporates the changed notions of the rhetorical situation, given the impact of new media and technology. I feel the exigency of a new theory for two reasons: first, the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation born primarily in the Bitzer-Vatz-Consigny debate, which is still dominant, do not, outright, address or incorporate the changed notions; second, because of new media and technology, our communicative practices and modes have changed so much that some of the existing notions of the rhetorical situation cannot fully work. So, the rhetorical situation needs to be retheorized and revised in such a way that the new theory could have more explanatory power. In the following part, I first briefly discuss the problems with some existing notions of the rhetorical situation, and why they cannot address the change, and then, I explain how new media and technology have contributed to the revision of the notions of the rhetorical situation.

The traditional notions conceive the rhetorical situation based on realist view of an objective, external reality, which is a publicly observable

historical fact, thereby treating the rhetorical situations as 'real' or 'genuine', that is, based on historic reality and independent of rhetorical discourse. A rhetorical discourse as an inherently meaningful event has logical connection with the rhetorical situation, and, thus, they have a causal relationship. This kind of modernist approach cannot address the fluid postmodern reality that sees plural and arbitrary connections between rhetorical discourses and rhetorical situations. The postmodern human condition seeks infinitely multiple relationships between any entities, including relationships between rhetorical discourses and rhetorical situations. There is a debate on the traditional notions as to which constituents of the rhetorical situation are antecedent to what. One opinion argues the rhetorical situation (exigence) is antecedent to the rhetorical discourse, while the other asserts vice versa. Both opinions privilege one over the other, thereby creating a structuralist binary, which is fundamentally a faulty assumption, because, whereas the first argument gives less agency to the rhetors by treating a rhetorical discourse as a secondary thing, the second view gives unnecessary, and too much, credit to the rhetors, and ignores the value of the rhetorical situation to cause rhetorical discourses. While one view treats authors as passive producers of a rhetorical discourse, ignoring the possibilities of plural responses, the other gives God-like image to them. Both arguments do not agree that all constituents of rhetorical situations are equally important to create rhetorical discourses. These structuralist views to privilege a constituent over the others do not address the postmodern reality of the collapse of binaries.

The traditional notions of rhetorical situations classify between the rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourse and treat non-rhetorical as subservient. This is a problematic classification, because all discourses are rhetorical, as a language is rhetoric *per se*, as '[s]uch distinctions between rhetorical and non-rhetorical discourse […] turn out to be slippery" (Larson 1970, 166). In traditional notions, there is much focus on the genre and generic constraints over the rhetorical discourse. They treat genre as a fixed, objective, and historic reality. This modernist argument, again, does not reflect the change new media and technology have brought in our writing practice, because writing is now so multimodal and hypertextual that it has dismantled the modernist and archaic notion about genre as an objective reality. I will discuss this issue more in the part that follows. In the discussion above, while I talked about some reasons why the existing theories of the rhetorical situation need to be revised, in the following part, as a continuation of the same argument, I concentrate on

how new media and technology compel us to revise traditional notions of
the rhetorical situation.

How do new media and technology foster the exigency of a new theory?

New media and technology have impacted our lives so much that
we write and read a text differently from ever before. More importantly,
they have changed our thinking and communicative process by changing
the nature and modes of texts and language in particular and literacy
practice in general because new media and technology always create a
new situation to effect crucial transformations in literacy practices, and,
thus, shape users' habits to practice literacy in a defined way. As a result,
they have affected the locus of reading, writing, and interpreting discourses
by introducing new interfaces through which most of the communications
are done these days. This change has encouraged scholars to interpret the
traditional canons of rhetoric in general and the traditional notions of the
rhetorical situations in particular to incorporate the changed literacy
practices. In the part that follows, I discuss how new media and
technology have fostered the exigency of a new theory of the rhetorical
situation by changing the way we conceive notions of the rhetorical
situation. To be precise, I examine how new media and technology have
created a new situation to argue for the exigency of a new theory of
rhetorical situations.

Digitization has played a crucial role in revolutionizing new
media, and has changed existing literacy practices in general, and the
nexus between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in particular. As
a result, digital composition has impacted not only the way we write and
read a text, but also the way we perceive the constituents of the rhetorical
situation — writers, readers, text — and their relationships. It has blurred
"the writer/reader boundary and […] broaden[ed] notions of 'composing'"
(Zoetewey and Staggers 2003, 135) by breaking the linear relationship
between writer and audience, performer and viewers, thereby fostering the
exigency of a new theory, because now rhetorical situations are no more
static, linear, real, genuine, and objective.

Multimodality in new media and technology demands multiple
literacies — seeing, listening, and writing — and even allows readers to
manipulate the information, which creates a situation which argues for the
exigency of a new theory of the rhetorical situation, because multimodality
creates a new site where writer, reader, and text crisscross. In this process,
new media changes the role of a reader, and dismantles the lines between

reader and writer, thereby breaking the linear notions of the rhetorical situation and fostering the exigency for a new theory. The use of visuals as a crucial element of multimodality has played a significant role in effecting crucial transformations in the meaning of the traditional notions of 'author' and 'reader' because they are changing or taking new meaning, of 'composer/designer' and 'viewer', respectively. More importantly, multimodal text places readers in the center of the meaning making process, by allowing active participation to make the sense of the text. It also allows two-way dialogues and negotiations among the constituents of the rhetorical situations — writers, audiences, and text — thereby making multiple meanings possible. The discussion made above, about the contribution of multimodality to shifting the roles of the reader and writer, empowering the readers unlike in traditional texts, allowing ongoing dialogue among the writers, readers, and text, and creating plural message, orchestrates how it is high time to revise the notions of the rhetorical situations, hence the exigency of a new theory.

Like multimodality, hypertextuality brings forth the readers in the center, thereby blurring the boundaries between the two constituents of the rhetorical situation — writers and readers — and complicating the linear notion of the writer and reader. Hypertext allows the readers to navigate the fundamentally fluid and nonsequential text in whatever way they like, thus making them pivotal in a meaning making process that fundamentally shifts the author-reader relationship as perceived in traditional text. Hyperfiction, as an example of hypertext, breaks the spatio-temporal concept of the beginning, middle, and end, of fiction. Writers, readers, and text have symbiotic relationships, because they mutually affect each other and are affected by the text at the same time, unlike discrete relationships between the constituents of the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. The reversal of the author-reader role in making meaning allows users to collaborate more substantially in the act of writing and making meaning that complicates the traditional notions of authorship, and, thus, fosters the exigency of a new theory of the rhetorical situation that better represents the changed notions of writer and reader relations.

Synchronous and asynchronous interactivity as one of the defining features of new media and technology creates a collaborative site, where both the readers and writers collaborate and manipulate the text through writing and reading. This quality of new media has altered the way we traditionally perceive the rhetorical situation, because it changes the role of writers and readers, or performers and viewers, in such a way that the boundaries between them collapse and, thus, fluid, and slippery relationships characterize their relationships. Since the traditional notions of the

rhetorical situations cannot reflect and address this, changed relationships resulted from highly interactive quality of new media, and there is an exigency of a new theory of the rhetorical situation.

Virtual space, as a simulated interactive site of the web, likewise, creates a space where the users and writers interact in such a way that it blurs the line between the constituents of the rhetorical situations and problematizes the sense of location, as perceived in traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. New media, thus, creates an illusion of space within a machine through its navigational commands, which blurs our notion of space and supplants it with 'cyberspace'. The notion of cyberspace and the virtual world, as mentioned here, changes the traditional notions of the authors, readers, discourses, and narrative production, because it perceives them as plural. These changed notions of the constituents of the rhetorical situations foster an exigency of a new theory of the rhetorical situation.

To sum up, in the discussion above, while I primarily discussed the problems with existing notions of the rhetorical situation, and how new media and technology in general, and the notions of digitization, multimodality, interactivity, hypertext, cyberspace, and the virtual world in particular, have contributed to argue for the exigency of a new theory on the rhetorical situation, in the next section, I propose a new theory of rhetorical situations that has more explanatory power than existing notions. In so doing, I also argue how this theory can better incorporate and address the changed/changing notions of the rhetorical situation.

V.III. Proposition of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology

Given the situation discussed above, here, I propose a new theory of the rhetorical situation, which I call "rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology". The rhetorical situation as trans-situational networked ecology is fundamentally based on the belief that the constituents of the rhetorical situations are not discrete entities, and there are no linear relationships between them; rather the elements of the rhetorical situation have multiple layers of relationships, a networked system connected as an ecology. Below, I outline, explain, and discuss the defining features and components of the rhetorical situation as trans-situational networked ecology, which will help me theorize the new notion of the rhetorical situation.

V.III. I. Defining features of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology

The rhetorical situation as trans-situational networked ecology has some distinct defining features that make it different from traditional notions of the rhetorical situation. In the following part, I first explain the defining features of the rhetorical situation as trans-situational ecology, namely, ecology, networked, complex adaptive systems, and postmodern relations. Actually, ecology and postmodern relations are two fundamental defining features of the rhetorical situation as trans-situational networked ecology, and the networked and complex adaptive systems are defining qualities of the larger concept: ecology. However, I plan to discuss the networked and complex adaptive systems separately because they will have a complementary role to complete what I mean by ecology.

Ecology

The constituents of the rhetorical situations as a trans-situational networked ecology are characterized by networked relationships, which I will discuss below. These networked relationships place the rhetorical elements within the wider context of ecology that destabilizes the discrete borders of a rhetorical situation and provides "a framework of *affective ecologies* that recontextualizes rhetorics in their temporal, historic, and lived fluxes" (Edbauer 2005, 9). This situation treats the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation as an ecology, in which they are perceived as a circulating ecology of effects, enactments, and events, resulting in rhetorical ecologies. When a rhetorical situation is conceived as an ecology, the constituents of the rhetorical situation interact dynamically to form systems within the systems, in which they are constantly changing themselves and changing others. The systems are not given; instead, they are constructed and reconstructed in the act of interaction between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, in which every element is necessarily involved. The rhetorical situation conceived as an ecology resembles a web, in which the movement of an element causes vibration in the whole system. Through the dynamic and changing interaction within and beyond the internal elements, elements of the rhetorical situation organize and co-evolve, fostering no simple, cause-and-effect, linear relationships, but recursive relationships that are characterized by networked and complex adaptive systems, which I discuss next.

Networked

No entity alone is prominent to cause the other; rather, all the constituents of a rhetorical situation are connected as a web, at least partially or mutually constituting each other, where all the elements are networked and connected. As Foster (2007) believes, "networked process evokes both the growing number of sites and the relational loops" and thus it "encompasses a variety of sites" (xv), this networked relationship between the constituents of the rhetorical situation does not treat the rhetorical situation as a relatively closed system; rather, it perceives the elements as distributed acts, thereby placing the situation within an open network. Likewise, Jenny Edbauer (2005) believes that, "rhetorical situations operate within a network of lived practical consciousness or structure of feeling" (5). She also perceives the rhetorical situation as a process, when she says, "rhetorical situation is better conceptualized as a mixture of processes and encounters" (13), thereby making it fluid and networked. Her argument about the fluidity and networked relations of the rhetorical situations is expressed, when she says "[r]hetorical situations involve the amalgamation and mixture of many different events and happenings that are not properly segmented into audience, text, or rhetorician" (20). Thus, the rhetorical situations are trans-situational, networked, and open-ended processes with heterogeneous associations. These heterogeneous associations between the constituents of the rhetorical situation represent the mingling of various entities in complex assemblages of networked systems.

Complex adaptive systems

The constituents of the rhetorical situation are characterized by complex adaptive systems that are constantly changing and are linked to other networks. They are open to any influence from each other, and from the material conditions that influence them, and adapt accordingly to new systems. In this connection, Hawk's (2004) perception of the rhetorical situation remaining "open to their environments and adapt accordingly […] produce strange loops among their individual parts that create" (835-836) truly captures the notion of the complex adaptive systems. In the complex adaptive systems, the elements of the rhetorical situation interact with each other, form a system, and evolve co-adaptively. Complexity theory as an explanatory framework of this phenomenon defines the constituents of rhetorical situations as interconnected and networked entities, linked with a range of linked concepts and, thus, can be understood as an ecology. In other words, the constituents are so interdependently

networked that when one changes, the others are influenced by that change, and these components help each other co-adapt every time when there is change in one component, thereby influencing changes in the whole system. This is a constant process.

Postmodern relations

Postmodern relations truly define the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation that inherently suggest plural and fluid relationships between them. Postmodern relations free audiences from being just receivers of the message; they are never completely in the control of the sender of a coded message because they can have a range of possible responses to any message. Engaging in a process of negotiation, they can decode the message through engaging a measure of both accommodation with, and resistance to, the sender. New media and technology have the tendency to blur the lines between the reader, writer, text, and their relationship, which is verisimilitude with postmodern rupture. New media and technology in general and the web in particular accelerate their postmodern tendencies to rupture the distinction between the writer and reader, which totalize and fragment their relationships by altering the roles of readers and writers. This explicit postmodern blurring of the lines of responsibility between the reader and writer, and postmodern rupture of the notions of text, message, and interpretation, foster new notions of the rhetorical situation, because they provide the readers with more freedom to perceive the meaning in their own way and, thus, resituate the readers and author on the same level.

Postmodern relations exist between them also, because of new media and technology's ability to complicate the notion of distance between readers and writers. New media and technology both connect and separate readers and writers: they connect the authors with the readers in the world at distance, while separating them from more immediate, local connection. This kind of postmodern relation problematizes the notion of distance by connecting the authors with the wider world, and distancing them from the more immediate world, thus revising the notions of audience, constraints, and exigence. The conceptions about audience, constraints, and exigence, are based on the idea of immediacy and urgency. Audience, by and large, is associated with the immediate people whom the message is intended to address. But new media and technology foster postmodern relations between the author and audience by connecting with the audience, far and beyond. Likewise, there is a postmodern relationship between the constraints and urgency because new

media and technology dilute the immediacy and urgency of constraints by distancing the rhetors and audience. Foucault's (1986) postmodern notion about space that argues for inherent heterogeneous and relational nature of space also suggests postmodern relations between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. From this perspective, the constituents of the rhetorical situation have a network of relations in which one element is linked with all others, as in network. Cyberspace and hyperreality as postmodern notions of space also enhance postmodern relations between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, which challenge our understanding of the contemporary world and the relationship between the global and local. In so doing, they conceive postmodern relations between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

V.III. II. Components of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology

While I discussed above the conceptual framework that has explanatory power to define the features of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, below, I define different components of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, which are also defining features in a broader sense. Apart from defining the components of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, the outline elaborates the conceptual framework in general, and specific relationships of the components within the rhetorical situation in particular.

Authors-readers-texts relationships

In my theory of the rhetorical situation, all the constituents (authors/rhetors, readers/audiences, texts/rhetorical discourses, exigencies, etc.) are plural, and their relationships are based on transactional networked ecologies. In other words, the elements of the rhetorical situation are connected with each other, as in a networked ecology where they are characterized by their transactional relationships. They exist in their transactional relationships, both influencing others and being influenced by others. The rhetors are those real or imagined people who create rhetorical discourses, as per their understandings of the exigence of the situation by negotiating with their audiences through rhetorical discourses. Since a rhetorical discourse is a result of the rhetors' negotiation with other constituents of the rhetorical situation, the authors alone do not have authority over the message. Likewise, the audiences are those people, real

or imagined, who have transactional relationships with other constituents of the rhetorical situation, with whom the rhetors negotiate through rhetorical discourses to meet the rhetorical objectives. These transactional relationships give agency to all the constituents of the rhetorical situation in the creation, design and meaning making process of a rhetorical discourse, and, thus, broaden the scope of the rhetorical situation. Texts or rhetorical discourses will be discussed later, so now I move on to discuss the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

   As new media and technology have broken the structuralist binaries between the author and reader, the constituents of the rhetorical situation are viewed on equal status, having some authority to message. Now the readers are not just the audience of the message; they also are able to assume an author-like role to influence the message. As a result, the monumental image of the author, and the subservient concept of the readers which is assumed in the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation are gone, and they are craftsmen of the rhetorical discourses. In this way, new media and technology have restructured the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, and situated the author, reader, and text, in a new democratic space where they can interact and communicate with democratic say. There are dynamic relationships and interactions between the constituents of the rhetorical situation to create fitting rhetorical responses; close and harmonious relationships produce better fitting responses, and vice versa. In other words, if the components have a good synthesis, this synthesis rightly responds to the variety of situations. However, whatever the case, all the constituents of the rhetorical situation have agency to cause rhetorical responses; authors alone cannot be credited for it. So, there are recursive and ecological relationships between the authors, readers, and text, because the authors and readers recursively affect each other and are recursively affected by the text. In this recursive relationship, like the writers, the readers negotiate with the text, writer, society, and self, while interacting with a text. What type of relationships they have depend also on the readers' abilities to enter, navigate, deconstruct, reconstruct, and exit the text in innumerable ways. It inherently establishes multiple relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation that generates multiple meanings and texts. However, both the readers and writers are not creative geniuses; rather, they are simply manipulators of preexisting data.

   Because of information overload in this information age, which has created ambient findability of information, in the process of finding relevant information, the relationships between the author, reader, and text are constructed and reconstructed in multiple ways. This has empowered

readers to access the information they like and, thus, gain author-like status in making meaning and text. However, there are transactional relationships between the authors, readers, and texts in making meanings, because meanings arise out of the interaction of the constituents of the rhetorical situation. These connected and transactional relationships between them characterize the elements of the rhetorical situation as a networked ecology, which I will discuss below when talking about the defining features of the revised notions of the rhetorical situation. The transactional relationships involve the transaction of ideologies between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, which enhance postmodern relationships that are inherently multiple, conflicted, and fluid.

Exigences

Exigences, or the demands of the situation to generate fitting responses, are plural and fluid and, thus, do not invite only one definite rhetorical discourse. So, there is no one-to-one relationship between an exigence and a rhetorical discourse. That is why an exigence elicits multiple responses. Because potential rhetors have different perspectives toward the existence of the exigences, they bring different rhetorical discourses in response to the same exigence. This situation suggests rhetors' considerable control over the rhetorical discourses and the lack of rhetors' sole control over the exigences. Rhetorical exigences are, thus, epistemic as they are perceived in different ways based on the rhetors' purposes and nature. Depending on the purposes of the rhetors, the same exigence generates different rhetorical discourses.

Rhetorical discourses

Like exigences, rhetorical discourses, or texts in a broader sense, are not fixed entities: rhetorical discourses are inherently plural. For this reason, there are multiple responses to an exigence because of the indeterminacy of a rhetorical situation to produce a single response. It is the indeterminate nature of the rhetorical situation that causes multiple rhetorical discourses because the creation of rhetorical discourses is based on the rhetors' interest and ability to define the situation, and to understand rhetorical exigencies. This situation suggests that rhetorical exigences are necessary, but not sufficient, conditions to cause the rhetorical discourses. The discursivity and indeterminacy of the connection between rhetorical discourses and their situations are more evident also, in the reception of the rhetorical texts, because they are received differently

by different audiences. This makes a rhetorical response inherently a plural and complex phenomenon. Similarly, rhetorical discourses are not a fixed genre, because they keep on evolving and modifying depending on the rhetors' ability to negotiate with audiences, and to understand the demand of the situation. Rhetorical discourses are not an objective reality, and thus, they are fluid and indeterminate notions also, because of the multimodal and hypertextual nature of writing.

Rhetorical discourses are not just the outcome of the response to an exigence; they influence the constituents of the rhetorical situation. They directly influence the audiences by affecting their attitudes toward self, authors, exigence, constraints, purpose, and probabilities, because it is through the rhetorical discourse that audiences know about the authors, exigence, constraint, purpose, and many other factors related to rhetorical discourses. Audiences are so intricately and complexly related to the rhetorical discourses, that the rhetorical discourses help them define who the author is, and what the exigences and constraints are, thereby deconstructing the one-way relationship between the exigences and rhetorical discourses. Rhetorical discourses do not only help readers to know about other constituents of the rhetorical situation, but also contribute to revise their notions. Rhetorical response is, thus, a very complex phenomenon.

Unlike the instrumental theory suggests, the rhetorical discourses are not just language used by authors as a rhetorical tool in their own interests irrespective of the valuative content in it. By following substantive theory, rhetorical discourses carry an ideology and valuative content because they embody the value of a particular ideology. By extension, reading the rhetorical discourses also embodies the value of the reader, thus inherently making plural readings/meanings. These phenomena clearly suggest plural and multiple relationships between the rhetorical discourses, authors, and readers in particular and between the constituents of the rhetorical situation in general.

Rhetorical discourses also serve as participatory and democratic spaces for authors and readers, where they have democratic control over the creation, design, and meaning of the rhetorical text, thereby empowering the readers to have their say by placing both of them on the same level of authority. What contributes to make a rhetorical discourse a participatory space is new media, which enables the authors and readers to interact with each other, and with the text, with equal say, thereby giving agency to readers to influence both the author and text. A rhetorical discourse in this sense is an explicitly open space that can be explored, deconstructed, reconstructed, and contested in multiple ways.

Rhetorical discourses are always plural, and thus conflicted, because they carry ideology of certain types, forces, and amounts, and so they bring with them strong social and cultural prescriptions that reflect power relations between the writer and reader. Rhetorical discourses thus imbricated with ideology not only define the subject (the self), other subjects, the material world, and the relationships of all of these to each other from a certain perspective, but also explicate the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation that are plural, and, thus, contested. More than that, the rhetorical discourses are negotiations of conflicting ideologies of readers and authors. There are symbiotic relationships between the rhetorical discourses of their users, and they are contingent upon the material conditions and mass consciousness which are constantly in conflict. These dialectical relationships reflect different signifying practices of different group of people. Since the rhetorical discourses are ideological and polyvocal in themselves, they foster multiple messages and plural relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

Rhetorical location

While I revised the elements of the traditional rhetorical situation above to propose a new theory on the rhetorical situations, in this part and below, drawing from the theories of critical geography I discussed in Chapter IV, I propose two additional elements of the rhetorical situation, namely, rhetorical location and rhetorical territoriality. I argue that these elements will enrich the notions of the rhetorical situation and make it more complete. Rhetorical location is not just a place or physical context having physical address or locality, which is just a location as a place and a concrete location where you actually live and experience communicative practice. Rhetorical location is, rather, associated with notions of space and territory. The constituents of the rhetorical situation are not only located in a place; they are also situated in space that has spatiality as a material product of the relationships between a social and spatial structure. I believe that the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation are simultaneously social and spatial. The notion of space as a social, political, and ideological product helps define the concept of the rhetorical situation. Rhetorical location conceives the notions of space as a defining parameter, and thus configures the polyvocal relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. Instead of conceiving place in terms of modernist linearity, the rhetorical location makes a critical difference between place and space and incorporates space in

defining rhetorical location. In this way, the rhetorical location truly captures the essence of location in its postmodern, formless, and complex notion, which better defines the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

Rhetorical location conceived only as a place that is a concrete, formed, structured space, as a particular locality having significance for a person or group of people, does not, in fact, convey the abstract, formless, and complex set of ideas associated with space, thereby limiting the notions of rhetorical location as something physical and concrete. When the rhetorical location is conceived as a space, which is an ideological construct created as a material product of the relationships between a social and spatial structure, the scope of the rhetorical situation broadens. The rhetorical location defined only in the sense of place might limit its scope within local and traditional, thus ignoring the fluid, global, and postmodern notion of space. The rhetorical location that is conceived as the notion of space is a departure from the world of the past into the world of the present and future, and into the progressive and radical world, where location gets complete expression that truly defines the location where the rhetorical situation is situated. Conceiving the rhetorical location as a space automatically connects it with society, because the space is inherently connected with the society, and, thus, broadens its scope by extending the lenses to interpret the mechanism of the rhetorical situation as to who is involved, what is the social context, what ideology is governing, and what politics are in play.

Rhetorical location also connotes a postmodern space because it breaks the hierarchies between the author and the reader and provides multiple and plural spaces for them to have free exploration of information. As a postmodern space, the rhetorical location deconstructs and disperses the linear relationships between readers and writers, and, thus, allows a free play of meaning. While so doing, it totalizes and fragments the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation, thereby collapsing agents/objects/subjects binaries. Yet, the rhetorical location also allows collaboration between the writers and readers through intertextual and networked space, by making both the readers and writers co-learners.

Rhetorical territoriality

As territoriality deals with the way human situations and institutions organize themselves in a space with respect to the social and material world, rhetorical territoriality involves knowledge about how

interlocutors organize themselves in a space to influence and affect others by controlling language as a rhetorical strategy. Rhetorical territoriality helps us understand how power relations between the constituents of the rhetorical situation shape their identity, and when their power relation changes, how the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation also change. Understanding rhetorical territoriality helps us figure out how the constituents of the rhetorical situation shape their mutual identity in the transaction of the rhetorical discourses. Rhetorical territoriality, as an extremely complex, and often highly ambiguous, notion to understand the relationships and interaction between the elements the rhetorical situation, is related to space and language. It deals with the way components of the rhetorical situation organize themselves in a space using the rhetorical discourses as a strategy. So, rhetorical territoriality as a contingent, constructed, ideologically informed, and thus contested, notion, is a tool to study the complex relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation.

Networked rhetorical context

Unlike the scholarships on context collapse that treat audiences as the main consituents of context, and limit context to audiences, networked rhetorical context extends the rhetorical contexts to mean the writers, audiences, message, and text in networked relationships. Networked rhetorical context conceives the concept of rhetorical contexts on the backdrop of networked social media technologies that better capture the essence of contexts, given the impact of new media and technologies. It collapses the traditional notions of all constituents of the rhetorical situation, instead of just collapsing the context only in terms of audiences, and sees them as a co-adaptive system in a networked ecology. When all the constituents of the rhetorical situations are collapsed because of new media technologies, new constituents emerge by co-adaptively influencing each other. It offers multiple possibilities for the existence of the constituents of the rhetorical situation in multiple and volatile forms, with no discrete entity, in which they are fluid, but present, in diverse forms.

To sum up, the rhetorical situation involves a plurality of the constituents of the rhetorical situation with complex, recursive, and co-adaptive relations. The rhetorical situation as a complex thing involves the rhetor, audience, subject, occasion, and speech in disjunctive, but networked relationships in an ecology. These components are in recursive and dynamic relationships, mutually influencing each other, and, thus, co-

adaptive. All these defining features characterize the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology.

Chapter VI

Conclusion

The scholarships I discussed on the notions of the rhetorical situation, and the theory I proposed above, are not final; they are also provisional, because, as things change, they might also change with the passage of time. My theory on the rhetorical situation is more explanatory than previous theories because it incorporates the changes brought by new media and technology, and I believe that a theory of rhetorical situations must always evolve as communicative practices evolve. This chapter concludes this book by discussing the justification and significance of the new theory in Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies, and some pedagogical implications of this theory.

VI.I. Justification and significance of the new theory in RWS and Communication Studies

Though my theory is provisional, it has a number of contributions and significance in the discipline of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies in general, and scholars, writing instructors, and students in particular. In this part, I discuss the justification of my theory and its significance for scholars, writing instructors, students, and Rhetoric and Writing Studies. In other words, here, I discuss what the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology indicates for the discipline of RWS and Communication Studies.

Scholars

The rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology will encourage scholars in the discipline of RWS and Communication Studies to further build up theories of the rhetorical situation, as well as re-envisioning courses for RWS and Communication Studies majors. The scholars can benefit from its fundamental assumptions which encourage critical approaches to think, argue, and, if need be, challenge, the modernist and monocentric philosophy, to look at rhetorical theories in

general, and theories of the rhetorical situation in particular. Many composition textbooks that include the rhetorical situation use notions of the rhetorical situation closest to Bitzer's version, probably because of its simplicity, and also because this version is good enough to begin with when learning the basic information about the rhetorical situation. I still argue it is good idea to include it as a basic understanding of the rhetorical situation in first-year composition and communication courses, and save a more complex, updated, and nuanced version for upper-division courses, because first-year students are beginners, and the instructors who teach these courses often have minimal background in RWS and Communication Studies (graduate teaching assistants and part-time instructors, for example). While so doing, the scholars can enrich the basic information of the rhetorical situation with more sophisticated theory, so that it broadens their knowledge about the rhetorical situation and provides an avenue to explore more later. More importantly, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology broadens scholars' understanding about the rhetorical situation in particular and overall understanding of rhetoric and encourages them to explore more in this area that incorporates the impact of new media and technology as an unavoidable reality of today's life.

Given the ongoing debates on theory/practice binaries in rhetoric and composition, i.e., affiliating theory with rhetoric and practice with composition, by bringing in the insights from the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, scholars can argue for breaking the theory/practice binaries to further build scholarships on rhetorical theory from postmodern perspectives, because the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology encourages a postmodern perspective. Breaking the theory/practice binaries can have applications in the writing classroom, which I will explore in the second section of this chapter. The modernist tendency to associate theory with rhetoric, and practice with composition, limits the scope of both rhetoric and composition. In such a context, the postmodern approach in the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology facilitates scholars to argue for breaking the associations and proposing a more explanatory framework that analyzes their connections from postmodern perspectives, which will enrich rhetoric and composition by incorporating and inculcating theoretical and practical acumen.

Writing and communication instructors

As I mentioned above, on enriching even the first-year composition and communication courses with a more complex version of

the rhetorical situation, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology equips teachers to teach the enriched courses with a new insight into the rhetorical situation. It provides the teachers with tools to argue for plurality of approaches, against taken-for-granted notions about the writing and composition process in particular and life as such in general. To be precise, it enhances critical pedagogies for the teachers which causes them to feel that it is their responsibility to create and maintain an informed and thinking student body capable of critiquing, and, if need be, resisting anything taught or imposed to them. By using the insight derived from this theory, teachers can help their students be aware of possible manipulation, exploitation, and indoctrination by some dominant ideologies and dogmas, and to be informed, critical, readers and writers. As Lunsford (2007) believes, "writing teachers have had to reinvent themselves and their disciplines several times during my career, and more change is definitely in sight" (170), this theory of the rhetorical situation contributes to the teaching, to reinvent and maintain the changes.

Students

The rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology broadens students' understanding of what the rhetorical situation is in particular and their overall understanding of rhetoric as such because it talks about the impact of new media and technology, and how it should be incorporated in their daily lives. This theory will help students learn how to examine, discuss, debate, contest, and scrutinize, the ideologies which are causing disparities and inequalities among the classes and groups in a society. Thus, it equips the students with critical and analytical skills and insights so that they can discriminate and critique the ideologies or texts, pursue scholarly inquiry, and participate in knowledge formation and consumption as informed citizens. The rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology equips writing and communication students with rhetoric, and a body of knowledge that they perpetuate in their personal, professional, and civic lives, later. It thus provides them with disciplinary knowledge of RWS and Communication Studies, which they can use as a deterministic screen to understand the world and act accordingly.

Since the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology is informed by social-epistemic rhetoric, it encourages students to be self-critical and introspective, and allows self-correction. Moreover, it fosters a postmodern philosophy in students to be guided by the idea that none of the ideologies, theories, or sets of beliefs, is absolute truth, but more, a provisional outlook, and, therefore, they require a critical appraisal

and examination. Students informed by the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology understand rhetoric as a tool to create positive change. I believe teaching this theory has the potential to extend our students' vision beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom, and to change students' life from one governed by the discourse they read, to being the rhetors actively participating in the creation of knowledge. In this way, it has a strong influence on students and RWS and Communication Studies, which I will discuss below.

Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies

The rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology will transform not only our understanding of the rhetorical situation as such, but also it will, very importantly, contribute to enriching our understanding of RWS and Communication Studies. Given that "new media is the next logical step in the growth of our discipline" (Brooke 2009, 5), the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology endorses the significance of new media and technology to enrich our discipline, broadly speaking, because new media and technology have played a very big role to bring crucial transformations in the notions of the rhetorical situation, and effected a shift of concentration of our discipline. This theory of the rhetorical situation speaks to this situation and opens up more possibilities for the exploration of more avenues of scholarships in RSW and Communication Studies.

As the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology is a product of crucial transformations that new media and technology and postmodern thought brought in the revision of the notions of the rhetorical situation, it endorses the use of new media and technology and postmodern thought influencing RWS. In this sense, it promotes a postmodern philosophy and incorporation of new media studies and technology theory to enrich the discipline of Rhetoric and Writing Studies and Communication Studies, which will have a perennial influence in RWS and Communication Studies. By using the insight of critical theory of technology and new media studies, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational ecology encourages RWS and Communication Studies to incorporate new media and technology as a scholarship rather than just a tool, which will fundamentally democratize the use of technology, thereby freeing it from the province of a handful of experts.

The rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology has a significant contribution to bring RWS and Communication Studies up to date, ever ready to incorporate any changes, and welcoming to new

theories, perspectives, and insights that will always make it contemporary and new. It will help us break away from the legacies inherited from English departments, which has left us unprepared for the shift from paper to screen and build our discipline on our own on the strong bedrock that accepts change and new perspectives. As the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational, networked ecology is informed by theories of critical geography, new media studies, critical theory of technology, and rhetoric and language theory coupled with postmodern theory, it promotes transdisciplinarity in RWS and Communication Studies which cuts across the full range of activities and inquiries into epistemology, and, thus, provides a disciplinary status, hence freeing it from the English department, which treats it as a subdiscipline. From the standpoint of postmodern and transdisciplinary thinking, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, offers RWS and Communication Studies a new way of seeing, defining, and knowing its disciplinarity. Contributing to promote and maintain a disciplinary status, and, hopefully, a departmental status in the universities, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, rather than just examining the choices that others have already made, encourages us to make our own choices as a discipline.

The point here is not that the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology can bring change suddenly. What I am arguing here, is that this new theory on the rhetorical situation will require us to rethink our disciplinary habit of accepting the status quo, and uncritically accepting hitherto imposed subdisciplinary status. Likewise, it encourages us to engage in conversation about incorporating technology in our discipline, rather than running the risks of bracketing off technology as a specialty. This theory requires us to rethink what we mean by rhetoric, writing, and composition, and what they look like when furnished with new media and technology. It encourages us to use technology, not just as a tool uncritically, but rather as a critical philosophy, a way of looking into things, and as an approach to make our discipline ever relevant. As Johnson-Eilola (1997) says, "we must expand our definitions to gain broader influence and relevance" (7). For this reason, we must integrate new media and technology curricula in Master's and doctoral programs, rather than limiting it to special seminars.

As discussed above, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology makes RWS and Communication Studies robust disciplines, and by contributing to the design of the full writing studies curriculum, it ultimately helps RWS to have departmental status on its own, given the changing situation that writing majors are beginning to be developed in traditional English departments. While it regenerates notions

of the rhetorical situation that has a perennial impact on our discipline, it has a broad impact on changing our notions about writing which is still largely, reductively, conceived as a skill, thereby providing academic and disciplinary status to writing at present, and giving a fully-fledged future identity to RWS and Communication Studies. In this way, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology will transform our understandings of RWS and will help (re)design the rhetoric and writing major courses and communication courses. Because of lack of time and space in this book, I will test my theory on the rhetorical situation in my future research plan, namely, blending the theory/practice binaries as mentioned above, and (re)designing rhetoric and writing major courses. The concept of world rhetorics explores the relationships between Western and non-Western rhetorics. World rhetorics refers to an informed pedagogy that provides a theoretical framework that integrates world rhetorics, such as Eastern European, Western European, North American, Chinese, etc., into a shared dialogue in which they can be explored through classroom discussion, activities, and assignments. The incorporation of world rhetorics into the writing classroom gives students the opportunity to view how these rhetorics relate to one another, how those rhetorics reflect the cultures' means of communicating, and how those rhetorics operate within the diverse realm of communication and in creating and portraying knowledge in localized and globalized contexts. Saving this plan for a future project, in this book, I plan to propose a pedagogy that informs students of other rhetorics, and how they can apply those rhetorics in professional, personal, and scholastic, contexts. In the following part, I will discuss some pedagogical implications of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology.

VI.II. Pedagogical implications

While the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology is useful in understanding the rhetorical situation of print media as well, given the impact of new media and technology, some very crucial pedagogical implications of this theory can be manifested in networked pedagogy. Networked pedagogy challenges the traditional pedagogical assumptions about the teaching of writing and makes use of new media and technology in the teaching of writing and, in so doing, treats all the constituents of the traditional rhetorical situation as networked. In this pedagogy, writing is viewed as a networked activity, and "[b]y viewing writing as a networked activity, students focus on the connectivity and complexity of rhetorical situations rather than understanding writing as the

decontextualized product of a single, isolated worker" (Lundin 2008, 432). This theory of the rhetorical situation helps both the teachers and students focus on the connectivity and complexity of rhetorical situations, because it conceives the constituents of the rhetorical situation as a complex networked system. Similarly, in networked pedagogy, teaching is also viewed as a networked activity, in which teachers "focus on the collaborative nature of [their] professional work and on reciprocal relationships with our students" (432). As this theory of the rhetorical situation promotes collaboration and interaction between authors and readers, it helps the teachers and students understand their roles in networked pedagogy that sees teaching as a networked activity of teachers and students. While the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology can be fruitfully applied in networked pedagogy because it enriches networked pedagogy with its ability to see all the constituents of the rhetorical situation in networked relationships, networked pedagogy helps question traditional modes of authorship and classroom authority. By using the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, networked pedagogy, as Lundin says, will interpret and reevaluate the elements of writing situation in terms of connectivity and ecology:

> The increasing perception of a 'networked' pedagogy as a productive possibility can and should encourage us to reexamine the goals and beliefs under which we operate, even as we discuss how new technologies may help meet those goals. Such reexamination gives us an opportunity to make visible, and subsequently reevaluate, the received wisdom of our field concerning the definition of writing, models of authorship, classroom authority, and more (432).

When, in teaching and writing, networked pedagogy is informed by the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, it will enable teachers, and encourage the students to reexamine the rhetorical situation they need to think about, and new technology they need to use while teaching and learning writing.

As "wikis provide a completely user-editable environment and thus align closely with early hopes for hypertext, which envisioned a space in which the author and reader roles could merge" (433), use of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology helps networked pedagogy to be a smart move because it liberates readers from its traditionally conceived, subservient position. As a networked pedagogy, wikis can perform a useful job in breaking the traditional roles

of the author and reader, which can be more fruitfully and efficiently done by applying the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology:

> Wikis can more thoroughly integrate the roles of author and reader. Any reader of a wiki can create, change, or delete the content of a given page or network of pages. This is a significant adjustment of the rhetorical situation — one in which the division between a text's author and recipient begins to blur in literal and often dramatic ways – and thus calls into question traditional ideas about the authority of writers and readers. On wikis, collaborative authorship can be a given rather than an exception, and the relationship between participants in a wiki space can change accordingly (433-34).

Wikis' ability to create and modify the content calls for the adjustment of the rhetorical situation to fit in the changed context, given the impact of new media and technology. Bringing in the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology in this context, equips networked pedagogy to question the traditional notions about the authority of the writers and the roles of the readers.

Networked pedagogy in general and use of wiki as a pedagogical tool in particular challenge the traditional pedagogy, and an application of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology in networked pedagogy of teaching writing helps reexamine current composition pedagogy by incorporating new media writing, collaboration, critical interaction, and online authority. Because the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology is informed by new media and technology, and postmodern study of the rhetorical situation, it can be a useful tool in networked pedagogy. As informed by new media and technology, this theory of the rhetorical situation facilitates new media composition, thereby enabling it to challenge the traditional definitions of writing, because the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology breaks the traditional notions of the authors, readers, and texts. Networked pedagogy, thus, can make use of it, and teach the composition of new media writing. Different from traditional writing, "[c]reating a new wiki page might involve a multitude of composition practices, from the formalism of sentence and paragraph creation to web design and hypertext, possibly including other elements like images, audio, and video" (436). Because "[d]ue to their user-editable nature, wikis carry with them notions of authorship that confound composition's tendency to insist on, and assume, a single author" (438), networked pedagogy in general

and wikis in particular can benefit from the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology to create a collaborative space as this theory advocates for multiple authors and readers and challenges the notion of authorship. Networked pedagogy aims at enhancing critical interaction by encouraging students collectively examine and manipulate writing (e.g., wiki writing), in which "they not only give each other advice and criticism, but also provide a real audience for each other's work, paving the way for the critical interaction that serves as the central justification for much wiki use in composition classes" (440). At this juncture of promoting a critical interaction, networked pedagogy can benefit from the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, because it inherently dismantles the linear relationship between the authors and readers and brings them into dialogic relationships that promote critical interactions between the constituents of the rhetorical situation. Wikis' ability to facilitate interactions empowers both teachers and students with online authority, which offers them a space where they have "equal privileges to add, modify, or even erase content, the authority in that space can be more equally distributed between teacher and students than it would in a traditional classroom (or other online venue)" (443). Application of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, in this context, better facilitates their interactions, and provides both the teachers (authors) and students (readers) with equal online authority.

    Multimodal pedagogy (which is also a sub-type of networked pedagogy) is in vogue these days because of the impact of the use of new media and technology in the teaching and learning of writing. As Amicucci (2020) says: "In studying writing and offering writing education in a world where audiences are digital, public, and plural, composition studies has questioned what it means to attend to networked writing in teaching and research" (2), multimodal pedagogy is the answer that addresses the changed need and demand of students and teachers of writing. Multimodal pedagogy teaches students to make multimodal texts in order to make their writing effective, which entails incorporating multiple modes of texts, such as writing, audios, videos, images, graphs, charts, gestures, and space, work together to create complex multi-layered communicational ensembles. Because one of the potential abilities of multimodal pedagogy is to create more democratic and inclusive classrooms that enable marginalized students to bring in their histories, identities, languages, and discourses, thus making them visible, incorporation of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology in multimodal pedagogy facilitates the teachers and students of writing to do so, because the postmodernist approach of this theory of the

rhetorical situation breaks the distinction of privileged and unprivileged readers.

Multimodality has become a common social and textual practice in today's world because of the impact of new media and technology. So, Edwards-Groves (2011) opines: "These social and textual practices also demonstrate both creativity and a technical complexity which force traditional understandings of meaning making and communication to be revisited for their validity and relevance in today's classrooms" (49). In this context, an application of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology in multimodal pedagogy facilitates the revision of traditional understandings of the meaning making and communication process, because it projects interlocutors of the communication process in terms of postmodern relations. Multimodal pedagogy provides students with opportunities to design and produce multimodal texts, and, in so doing, use of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology helps them produce multimodal texts, because it frees them from their subservient position as conceived in those traditional understandings. Multimodal pedagogy focuses on creating writing that makes a creative use of technology and, thus, opens up possibilities for creativity in multimodal text construction and meaning making. Because the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology is informed by new media and technology, and creative and critical revisions of the traditional notions of the rhetorical situation given the impact of new media and technology, it offers multimodal writers a critical and creative acumen to create multimodal texts by considering the new theory of the rhetorical situation.

Multimodal pedagogy is situated within multimodality theory, and multimodality theory assumes that all meaning making is fundamentally multimodal, because of the impact of new media and technology. As Dalton (2012) says: "A multimodal framework acknowledges that modes offer certain affordances, and the interaction between modes is significant for communication" (334); an application of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology to multimodal pedagogy is useful to understand how the interactions between modes are significant for communication, because this theory of the rhetorical situation stresses the interactions between authors, readers and texts, in order to effectively communicate ideas. Some research has shown that L2 learners' employment of multimodal resources enhances presentation of the author voice and identity, and, in terms of their employment of multimodal resources, "it is found that during the process of multimodal authoring, L2 learners develop awareness and understanding about the synesthetic

relationship between multimodal resources (e.g. texts, images, videos, sound, etc.) for meaning-making" (Yang 2012, 222). This practice for finding their author voice and identity in the process of composing multimodal texts can be better supported by the application of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, because this theory of the rhetorical situation promotes both the author and reader voice and identity, thereby freeing the readers from their traditionally conceived subservient position. Talking about negotiating spaces of design in multimodal composition, Carpenter (2014) suggests: "Space design […] is always a negotiation about how students will compose in certain areas over other options, or, in some cases, an agreement as to how the space is intended to perform" (68). Use of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology, in this context, offers students a skill to negotiate the use of space design, because this theory of the rhetorical situation conceives the users/readers as having negotiating power with the authors in the creation of a text.

Some scholars who advocate for multimodal pedagogy argue:

> writers composing multimodally must still analyze an audience, choose a purpose, craft rhetorical appeals, and negotiate many of the same decision-making processes required in print-based writing situations. In addition, they argue that the stages of the alphabetic writing process are applicable to multimodal composition — students must invent, draft, revise, and edit when composing a multimodal text just like they do when composing a written essay (DePalma and Alexander 2015, 183).

However, some others argue differently, in that they believe that the writers of multimodal texts have to reimagine the text differently to suit the changed rhetorical situation of multimodal compositions. This need is clearly expressed by Kathleen Blake Yancey (2004): "If we are to value this new composition [...] we will need to invent a language that allows us to speak to these new values. Without a new language, we will be held hostage to the values informing print; values worth preserving for that medium, to be sure, but values incongruent with those informing the digital" (89–90). In this process of reimagining the text to suit multimodal composition situation, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology can be a valuable pedagogical tool as it helps conceiving the changed rhetorical situation of multimodal composition.

In a study on multimodal composition, DePalma and Alexander (2015) found that "students encountered a range of challenges related to

audience, ethics, composing processes, rhetorical constraints, technology, and collaboration" (191). They noticed that "students had difficulty conceptualizing a multidimensional audience when composing multimodally. As a result, they often resorted to defining their audience in broad and imprecise terms such as 'public', 'humans', 'the average person', and 'people generally'" (191-192). They had difficulty understanding the changed rhetorical situation of multimodal texts because of the impact of new media and technology, because their knowledge of the rhetorical situation was based on their prior knowledge of print-based academic audience and genre. In this context, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology helps them conceive the elements of the rhetorical situation of multimodal text different from the traditional one. As their findings "point to a need for more explicit discussion of and reflection on the relationships among students' genre knowledge and assumptions about audience in print-based composing and their genre knowledge and assumptions about composing multimodally" (192), incorporation of this theory of the rhetorical situation enables them to understand the relationships between the constituents of the rhetorical situation and genre knowledge, and analyze the audience, the purpose, and the rhetorical techniques of multimodal texts. While one of the challenges students face in learning to write multimodal composition is the rhetorical challenge to learn new genres, adapt to an unfamiliar audience, and navigating a novel context (DePalma and Alexander 2015, 192), the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology can facilitate them to overcome these challenges as it helps them understand new context, unfamiliar audiences, and new genres, because this theory of the rhetorical situation is situated in the new writing contexts given the impact of new media and technology, and it conceives the new notions of the constituents of the rhetorical situation that are relevant for multimodal composition.

As Doerr-Stevens (2016) says, "it is possible to see multimodal ensembles as polyphonic expressions, or media utterances that express a plurality of voices" (337), the use of the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology in multimodal composition can be fruitful, because it perceives texts and other constituents of the rhetorical situation in plurality. Multimodal composition pedagogy is designed to enhance authors' personal agency. Because "[t]he goal with multimodal composition [...] is for students to practice so that they can synthesize modes, genres, ideas, and skills, and become ever more fluid and flexible composers" (Kitalong and Miner 2017, 40), this theory of the rhetorical situation supports this goal of making fluid and flexible texts as it perceives texts,

authors, and audiences, in plurality. Multimodal pedagogy teaches students to make use of the material conditions and available designs in order to encourage them to develop their personal agency as composers, and, in this process, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology can be a helpful tool to enhance their subjectivity and agency, because it promotes agency of both the author and audience. Both facilitators and instructors can benefit from this theory of the rhetorical situation while teaching students to develop their personal agency in designing multimodal texts.

Multimodal pedagogy inherently intends to teach user-centered design, so "multimodality tends to position its makers/composers agentially within rhetorical situations" (Opel and Rhodes 2018, 77). In this process, the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology can be helpful in designing user-centered multimodal texts because it promotes users' agency. Because "multimodality offers students (and teachers) capacious ways to respond dynamically and flexibly to changing rhetorical situations through the use of video, audio, and text" (77), this theory of the rhetorical situation provides them with knowledge about the changing/changed rhetorical situation to figure out how to address the audience effectively, given the context of multimodal composition. As multimodal pedagogy emphasizes students' agency rather than treating them as subservient receptors of knowledge, teaching them this theory of the rhetorical situation supports them to conceive both the authors and audience on equal status in designing multimodal texts. Multimodal pedagogy enhances collaborations and interactions among students. B. E. Smith (2019), in this regard, says: "Multimodal collaborators are often exposed to their peers' alternative thinking processes, which in turn can allow for the adaptation of their own thinking processes" (2). It promotes collaborations and interactions among students. Because the rhetorical situation as a trans-situational networked ecology conceives the constituents of the rhetorical situation also in terms of collaborations and interactions between the authors and audiences, it can help students to collaborate on multimodal composition.

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