**Reflections on Bartholomae’s “Awareness of the Codes”   
and Benjamin Bloom’s “Taxonomy of Thinking Skills”**Richard Jewell *(7 Nov. '11)*

**A. Benjamin Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking Skills:**

Evaluation

Synthesis

Analysis

Application

Comprehension

Recall

**B. Traits in Bloom's Taxonomy That Also Exist in Bartholomae's Stages:**

1. They form a hierarchical taxonomy.
2. They also show, from bottom to top, a movement from internal self to outward reality.
3. They also are writing skills. (See also "Appendix 1.")
4. Both taxonomies largely reflect good reading practices.
5. Both tend to be recursive.

**C. David Bartholomae's "awareness of the codes . . . within a discourse" (521)**

(Please note that for better or worse, placement of Bartholomae’s elements in a list divided by specific years of high school and college is my own invention. I also have taken the liberty of attaching typical high school and college levels.)

* **Graduate/professional writer**, who "can both define a position of privilege . . . against 'common' discourse, and . . . work self-consciously, critically, against not only the 'common' code but his own" (521)
* **Advanced college writer**, who is "consistently and dramatically conscious of herself forming something to say" (521)
* **Intermediate college writer** performing "an 'objective' analysis or a 'close' reading" (519)
* **Beginning college writer,** who, as "Shaughnessy says, . . . can hear the 'melody of formal English'" (523)
* **Advanced high school writer** imagining "the privilege of being [an] 'insider'" (516) who can begin to "establish authority" (523) using "the voice of the [academic or technical] community" (521)
* **Beginning high school writer** offering "a Lesson on Life" (513) with "the articulation of the commonplace" (519)

**D. Notes about Bartholomae's "awareness of the codes":**

1. Note that Bartholomae calls them "awareness of the codes," not stages of writing. Thus they are similar to Bloom's Taxonomy, which describes the awareness of "thinking."
2. Though I have arranged Bartholomae's stages, they clearly imply a hierarchical taxonomy.
3. The steps probably are recursive in new writing situations.
4. While approximate h.s.-college levels are attached, any individual may be far above—or below—his or her peers' levels, depending on a wide variety of factors.
5. It is possible to see the movement from bottom to top as a parallel movement in the inner self to the external social even more so in Bartholomae's stages than in Bloom's. Bartholomae portrays this movement of self to other as a very important trait of maturing as a writer: the discovery of an audience and the learning of its voice, tone, and concerns.
6. Bartholomae's steps, like Bloom's, also imply the stages of becoming a critical reader.

**E.** (See next page.)

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**E. Table of Thinking and Writing Taxonomies Using Bloom’s Traditional “Taxonomy of Thinking Skills”:**

The following are taxonomic lists of thinking and writing that are roughly comparable to Bloom's Taxonomy of Thinking Skills (on the left). I certainly do not intend it to be strictly accurate: for example, I could just as easily have represented Bloom's six Thinking Skills as occurring in each single stage of the writing process in a recursive process. However, the following lists may be useful for consideration of writing and thinking patterns. *(7 Nov. '11)*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bloom’s**  **Taxonomy of Thinking Skills** | **Three mental activities and their questions** | **Related thinking skills** | **Rhetorical skills** | **Writing process (rhetorical intent/need)** | **Metacognitive dialogic/textual (socially constructive) questions** |
| **recall**  **comprehension**  **application** | Seeing: What do you observe? | Observation, intuition, sensation | Description,  summary, narration, directions | Expressing,  freewriting, thinking (purpose) | What are your/ the text's   viewpoints and those of others? |
| **analysis**  **synthesis** | Determining patterns: What are new parts and wholes? | Deduction, induction, oppositions, similarities | Classification,  analysis,  comp./contrast,  definition,  cause-effect | Macro-organizing/ revising (audience) | How do these viewpoints con- trast, compare, operate, and/or interact? |
| **evaluation** | Judging: What are evaluations of the possible proof sets? | Negotiation, balance,  resolution | Argument,  pros/cons,  dialectic/  dialogue | Macro- & micro-organizing/ revising, editing (style) | What are compromises and higher resolutions, and why? |

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**Stages of College Writing in Lee Ann Carroll’s *How College Students Develop as Writers***Richard Jewell *(29 Nov. '08)*

According to Lee Ann Carroll in *How College Students Develop as Writers*, the following descriptions apply to the four stages of advanced, intermediate, beginning, and advanced high school:

* **Advanced college/graduate/professional writers**: "students . . . aware of the disciplinary conventions in their major . . . fields" (89) who have "spent . . . time in the academic 'subcommunities' of their major disciplines" in "interpreting relevant sources, applying concepts from a discipline, developing evidence . . . , and organizing all . . . within a single coherent text" (90)—often using "'hands-on' experiences and internships" (105) and "apprenticeships" (106)—producing "texts . . . intended to do work in the 'real' world" (126)
* **Intermediate college writers**: "English I" students with a "growing rhetorical sophistication" and "metacognitive awareness" (78); ability to "accommodate the often unarticulated expectations of . . . professor readers" and "imitate disciplinary discourse" (23); and knowledge of "rewriting" (73) and "writing strategies . . . related to research, style, audience, organization, and analysis" (74).
* **Beginning college writers**: new students "in college" learning "new 'basic skills'" (119) with a "perception of . . . conventions of 'college writing,' . . . desire to produce writing . . . 'good enough' for success . . . , fear of losing . . . own beliefs and voices, . . . growing awareness of different types of writing . . . (85), and, often, resistance to a "critical stance," to reading "'abstruse essays,'" and to "'forming and supporting interpretations of . . . surprisingly complex issues'" (67)
* **Advanced "high school" writers**: "students who "have mastered a 'one-size-fits-all' five-paragraph essay" (65) that is "supported by general, often personal, reasons and examples" (119)

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