

MANUSCRIPT ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

**The Hierarchy of Voice Framework:**

**The Dynamic Relationship between Employee Voice and Social Hierarchy**

Julian Pfrombeck

Columbia Business School, Columbia University,

665 West 130th Street, Kravis Hall 382, New York, NY 10027, email: [jp4175@columbia.edu](mailto:jp4175@columbia.edu)

Chloe Levin

Columbia Business School, Columbia University

Derek D. Rucker

Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University

Adam D. Galinsky

Columbia Business School, Columbia University

Please cite as: Pfrombeck, J., Levin, C., Rucker, D. D., & Galinsky, A. D. (2022). The hierarchy of voice framework: The dynamic relationship between employee voice and social hierarchy.

*Research in Organizational Behavior*, 42, 100179. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2022.100179>

© 2022. This manuscript version is made available under the CC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 license

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

**Acknowledgements:** We thank Beth Wang, Josephine Ward, and Jacob Geil for their support in reviewing the literature. The first author was supported by a Postdoc Mobility fellowship of the Swiss National Science Foundation [grant number: P500PS\_202984].

**Declaration of interest statement:** The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

### Abstract

Speaking up is critical for organizational and individual success. Yet, while some employees speak up, others hesitate to voice their concerns and needs. Why? We propose the answer is found in a single word: Hierarchy. In the current article, we review the employee voice literature and the role that the power and status of both the voicer and the voice target play in the decision to speak up, as well as the communication, appraisals, attributions, and reactions to that voice. Identifying the vital role hierarchy plays in the voice process, including the desire to ascend a hierarchy, led us to offer a new, broader definition of voice that acknowledges both prosocial and self-interested motivations. We define employee voice as *any voluntary, internal, and upward communication intended to achieve one or several goals related to a person's work, position, or needs within their organization; the work, position, or needs of other organizational stakeholders; and/or the functioning of their organization*. To synthesize past findings and offer a generative theoretical lens, we introduce the Hierarchy of Voice framework. This framework extends prior perspectives by offering a dyadic approach that incorporates the perspective of the voice target. In doing so, our framework also captures the dynamic relationship between voice and hierarchy, where voice can reinforce or alter the standing of the voicer and the target. We use the Hierarchy of Voice framework to offer avenues for future research that can deepen our understanding of the dynamic role that hierarchy plays in employee voice.

Employee voice is essential for the healthy functioning of any organization. When less powerful members speak up and share their perspectives, organizations can reduce errors, increase innovation, improve performance, and limit the self-serving behaviors of those in power (Bashshur & Oc, 2015; Bienefeld & Grote, 2014; Detert et al., 2013; Li & Tangirala, 2022; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006; Oc et al., 2015). Beyond the benefits of voice for organizations, voice is a critical tool for employees to assert their own needs and desires in the workplace (Klaas et al., 2012; Klaas & Ward, 2015; Lin et al., 2020). For example, employees may speak up to improve their own situation by asking for promotions and salary increases, as well as to advocate for better work conditions and fair treatment (Babalola et al., 2022; Bowles et al., 2019), which can also benefit their coworkers (Ashford et al., 1998; Lebel & Patil, 2018; Mayer et al., 2019). Moreover, employees may speak up to demonstrate competence and to gain resources, status, and influence (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Morrison, 2014).

Given that speaking up is impactful in so many different ways, why do employees often hesitate to express their concerns or needs? We propose an answer to this conundrum can be found in a single word: Hierarchy. Merely introducing a hierarchical structure into a group impedes open communication, especially concerns and criticisms made by lower-ranked members directed towards higher-ranked members (i.e., those with greater power and/or status; Cohen, 1958; Festinger, 1950). Steeper and more centralized hierarchies can intensify the hesitation and reluctance to convey negative information to those in higher-rank positions (Anderson & Brown, 2010; Athanassiades, 1973) or to ask for resources (Rucker et al., 2018; Sivanathan et al., 2008). This reluctance is understandable given that those in positions of power have the ability to withhold rewards or administer punishments. Employees with less power may also fear that their voice will not be effective or they will be labeled as a troublemaker (Burriss et

al., 2013; Milliken et al., 2003; Milliken & Lam, 2009). Overall, hierarchy presents a multitude of challenges for lower-ranked employees that can inhibit their tendencies to share their perspectives or push their interests (Morrison, 2011, 2014; Morrison & Rothman, 2009). At the same time, hierarchy fulfills important functions in organizations (Anderson & Brown, 2010; Magee & Galinsky, 2008) and managers with greater power and status can facilitate the successful implementation of employees' suggestions (Detert & Treviño, 2010).

Because voice is a form of upward communication from a lower-ranked person to a higher-ranked person, hierarchy is embedded in the very definition of voice. However, prior reviews of employee voice do not fully acknowledge or incorporate the dynamic interplay between the rank of the voicer (the employee speaking up) and the voice target (i.e., the manager to which the voice behavior is directed) (Bashshur & Oc, 2015; Klaas et al., 2012; Morrison, 2011, 2014, in press; Mowbray et al., 2015; Sherf et al., 2021). In contrast, the present review offers a dyadic and dynamic framework to understand the role hierarchy plays in forming an employee's decision to speak up as well as their managers' reaction to voice. This framework considers the rank (i.e., organizational position), the status (i.e., the extent to which one is respected and admired by others; Blader & Chen, 2014), and the power (i.e., the asymmetric control over socially valued resources; Magee & Galinsky, 2008) of the potential voicer and the voice target. By recognizing that people are motivated to ascend to and maintain higher ranks in groups and organizations (Anderson et al., 2015; Magee & Galinsky, 2008), our framework also treats hierarchy as a catalyzing force of the voice process.

### **Overview and Contribution**

This article is structured as follows. We first provide an overview of how employee voice and social hierarchy have been defined and operationalized in prior research. We then offer an

updated and integrative definition of voice. Next, we introduce the Hierarchy of Voice framework based on our synthesis of empirical research on voice and hierarchy. The Hierarchy of Voice framework articulates how the hierarchical rank of the voicer and the voice target shape the decision to speak up as well as the appraisals, attributions, and reactions to that voice. We also discuss how the voicer communicates (i.e., the content, style, and context of their voice) shapes both the perceived risk and impact of speaking up and the target's appraisals and attributions of that voice. Finally, based on our review of the literature, we outline critical gaps in the current voice literature and offer avenues for future research.

This article complements prior reviews on employee voice in four ways. First, our review spotlights and integrates the role of hierarchy (i.e., the rank, power, and status of the voicer and the target) in employee voice. In doing so, we introduce the Hierarchy of Voice framework, which integrates existing research while offering additional theoretical propositions. Second, where prior reviews have typically focused on the voicer's perspective, we take a dyadic perspective by also incorporating the perspective of the target of voice. Drawing on the basic principles of appraisal and attribution theories (Heider, 1958; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Sutton & Kahn, 1986; Weiner, 1985), we explain and organize the target's reaction to the voice they receive. Third, our review explores the role that the communication content, style, and context play for both the voicer's decision to speak up and the reactions to that voice. Finally, our framework highlights the dynamic relationship between the power and status of voicers and voice targets by integrating feedback loops from reaction to voice back to potential upward or downward movements along the hierarchy of both the voicer and the target.

### **Employee Voice**

#### **Definition of employee voice in organizational behavior research**

In the Organizational Behavior (OB) literature, employee voice is commonly conceptualized as the behavior of one or several employees to speak up informally (i.e., outside of a formal reporting mechanism) (Morrison, 2011, 2014). In this way, employee voice is a form of extra-role behavior that goes beyond one's required and regular job tasks (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998, 2001). Morrison (2011; see also 2014, in press) provided the prevailing definition of employee voice in OB as the "discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, concerns, or opinions about work-related issues with the intent to improve organizational or unit functioning" (p. 375).<sup>1</sup> Implicit in this definition is that voice involves speaking up to someone who holds a higher organizational position than the voicer. Another defining feature of employee voice in OB is that it is a prosocial behavior, intended to improve organizational functioning and achieve organizational goals (Morrison, 2014, in press).

### **Measurement of employee voice**

In the OB literature, two measures have primarily been used to examine employee voice. Van Dyne and LePine (1998) developed and validated a six-item measure to capture the frequency or extent to which employees speak up with ideas or suggestions that affect their workgroup. Sample items include "Develops and makes recommendations concerning issues that affect this workgroup" and "Speaks up and encourages others in this group to get involved in issues that affect the group." Although this measure aims to measure voice, it has been criticized with respect to content validity (Morrison, 2011; Organ et al., 2006). For example, one item

---

<sup>1</sup> The absence of voice has been conceptualized as "silence" in the literature. Employee silence is defined as the conscious withholding of ideas, information about problems, questions, or opinions on work-related issues (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009; Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001). An ongoing debate concerns whether voice and silence are distinct constructs or endpoints along a continuum. For instance, while some might view them as existing on a continuum, meta-analytic evidence suggests that voice and silence underlie different regulatory systems (Sherf et al., 2021). Nevertheless, of importance to us, both voice and silence arise from an individual's decision to speak up or not. Since a conceptual distinction between voice and silence does not facilitate our theoretical goals or lead to divergent conclusions, we focus on voice in this article.

refers to staying well informed about issues where one's opinion might be useful to the work group; this item does not appear to reflect voice but a proximal antecedent of voice.

Liang et al. (2012) introduced a measure of voice that distinguishes between promotive and prohibitive voice. Promotive voice is solution-oriented—it points to a problem and provides suggestions on how to solve the issue. A sample item is “Proactively develop and make suggestions for issues that may influence the work unit.” Prohibitive voice is problem-focused—it criticizes the situation without proposing solutions. A sample item is “Speak up honestly with problems that might cause serious loss to the work unit, even when/through dissenting.” This measure has been increasingly applied in voice research in recent years (Morrison, in press; Sherf et al., 2021).

Both the Van Dyne and LePine (1998) and the Liang et al. (2012) voice measures have been used with frequency and agreement anchors. Meta-analytic results indicate that the frequency anchors result in more consistent effects (Sherf et al., 2021). Both measures have been used to measure voice by self-ratings of employees, or other ratings by supervisors or peers.

### **Criticism of the definition and measurement of voice in OB**

The fact that OB defines employee voice as inherently *prosocial* has received criticism from the industrial relations/employment relations (IR/ER) and human resource management (HRM) literatures. These literatures highlight how conceptualizing voice as prosocial omits the fundamental importance of voice for employees themselves (Barry & Wilkinson, 2016, 2022; Kaufman, 2015; Nechanska et al., 2020). The IR/ER and HRM literatures recognize voice as a means to express employee dissatisfaction and defend their interests in the workplace (Freeman et al., 2007; Freeman & Medoff, 1984; Mowbray et al., 2015)—an idea which originated from Hirschman's (1970) seminal exit, voice, and loyalty framework. Scholars in both fields have



attempted to address these criticisms via their definition of employee voice. For example, Wilkinson, Barry, and Morrison (2020) proposed that voice should include “all of the ways and means through which employees attempt to have a say about, and influence, their work and the functioning of their organization” (p. 1). In addition, Morrison (in press) changed the ending of her 2011 definition from “...with the intent to improve organizational or unit functioning” to “...with the intent to bring about improvement or change.”

Empirical evidence suggests that voice can and does emerge from *self-interest* as well. For example, voice can be motivated by self-interest to express dissatisfaction with one’s situation (e.g., low job satisfaction, job control, or unfair treatment) as well as the basic human desire to increase one’s status and power (Anderson et al., 2015; Klaas et al., 2012; Lin et al., 2020; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008). When targets are receptive to voice, it can help employees improve their situation and gain respect, control, and leadership status (Lin et al., 2020; McClean et al., 2018; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008; Weiss & Morrison, 2019). Although the voice literature acknowledges that self-interested motives exist, it continues to elevate prosocial motivations as the primary driver of voice (see Morrison, 2014, in press).

Conceptualizing voice as prosocial in nature also does not align with the most common measurement practices for assessing employee voice. The Van Dyne and LePine (1998) and the Liang et al. (2012) measures focus on employee voice behaviors “affecting the work group/unit.” These measures do not examine whether the actual motives are prosocial; that is, the items may be receptive to employees motivated by prosocial motives, self-interest, or both. Consistent with this observation, empirical evidence indicates only moderate correlations between prosocial

motivation at work and employee voice (Lebel, 2016; Lebel & Patil, 2018; Lin et al., 2020).

These findings suggest that a prosocial focus may be unnecessarily limiting.

In short, we believe that including prosocial motivation as a core definitional feature is problematic for three reasons. First, it provokes theoretical divergence across the OB, IR/ER, and HRM literatures. Second, the voicing employee may sometimes be primarily self-interested and focused on oneself as a potential beneficiary of their voice. Third, the current measures of voice do not capture whether voice truly arises from prosocial motivation. For these reasons, we were motivated to propose a new definition of employee voice.

### **A new definition of employee voice**

To integrate and address concerns with prior definitions, we define employee voice as:

*Any voluntary, internal, upward communication intended to achieve one or several goals related to a person's work, position, or needs within their organization; the work, position, or needs of other organizational stakeholders; and/or the functioning of their organization.*

Each word of this definition was selected with precision. The word “*upward*” reflects that voice is directed towards or is expressed in the presence of someone who holds a higher position within the organization. We use “*voluntary*” in line with prior definitions (Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014; Morrison, 2014) to reflect the discretionary nature of voice. We use the word “*communication*” to differentiate voice from other means designed to achieve one's goals (e.g., sabotage, starting a rumor). The word “*internal*” distinguishes voice from outward communication (e.g., external whistleblowing). We use the word “*intended*” as it represents the goal-oriented, motivational nature of voice. We use the phrase “*achieve one or several goals*” instead of “attempt to have an influence” or “focused on influencing” as used in past definitions (e.g., Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014; Wilkinson et al., 2020) because an employee can have the goal of being heard without a desire to influence. We use “*related to their work, their position, or*

*their needs within their organization*” because the communication can be intended to affect an employee’s organizational situation, from changing how one works, one’s position in the organization, to one’s needs related to security, belongingness, and status. We use “*work, positions, or needs of other organizational stakeholders*” because the communication can be intended to affect only others (e.g., one’s colleagues), with no implications for the self. We use “*functioning of the organization*” because the communication can be intended to reinforce or change organizational practices or policies.

We also consciously excluded several expressions from our definition. The most important term we omitted from our definition is “prosocial”. This omission allows us to reintegrate the different silos of voice research across fields and leads to a better alignment with the prevalent voice measures used in OB where no specific underlying motive is assumed or required. Most importantly, the omission of prosocial allows for the inclusion of voice motivated by self-interest, from getting better material outcomes (e.g., raises, promotions, better assignments) to receiving fair treatment and securing better working conditions.

We also omitted “*challenge the status quo*” or “*change-oriented*” because employees may use voice to argue against a proposed change (Detert & Burris, 2007; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). We omitted “*open*” used in prior definitions (e.g., Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014) because voice can be expressed in various ways and settings, ranging from private conversations to group discussions (Isaakyan et al., 2021), verbally or written, and with varying degrees of personal disclosure. Finally, we omitted the word “*unsolicited*” because we do not see it as a necessary precondition of voice. Employees have the choice to speak up or remain silent even when their opinion is directly or indirectly solicited, e.g., when a manager asks their employees in a group

meeting if anyone has a different perspective. Empirical research examining voice solicited from managers is consistent with our reasoning (e.g., Fast et al., 2014; Park et al., in press).

### **Employee voice as an overarching umbrella for related constructs**

Our definition of voice relates to a number of constructs, each of which can be a form of voice to the extent it fulfills the criteria of our novel definition. *Issue selling* (Ashford et al., 1998; Dutton & Ashford, 1993) refers to individual efforts to get managers to pay attention to an issue an employee perceives as important. We agree with Morrison (2011) who argues that issue selling is as a subset of voice as employees are trying to achieve the goal of gaining their manager's attention. *Whistleblowing* (Miceli et al., 2008; Near & Miceli, 1986), or the reporting of illegal or illegitimate practices via formal channels, can be broader than voice if it includes communication beyond organizational borders but also a subset of voice if it only focuses on inappropriate activities (Morrison, 2011). *Principled dissent* (Graham, 1986), which describes efforts to protest and/or change the organizational status quo due to an objection to a current policy and practice, can be seen as voice with a specific object or target. *Upward communication* (Athanassiades, 1973; Cohen, 1958; Read, 1962) involves transferring information from lower level to higher level members in an organizational hierarchy; this behavior is a form of voice if it relates to one of the goals mentioned in our definition, however, it can be distinct from voice if it only includes the transfer of information (Morrison, 2011). *Upward feedback* (Atwater et al., 2000; Tourish & Robson, 2003) can also be considered as voice as long as the feedback is intended to serve a goal of the voicer. Given our definition includes self-interest, we also consider *initiating a negotiation* as a form of voice (e.g., to obtain a raise, promotion) (Bowles et al., 2019). Prosocial organizational behavior, constructive deviance, and proactive work behavior are umbrella terms that include voice as one specific operationalization of the broader construct.

In our review, we draw on these literature streams to advance our understanding of voice and its relation to social hierarchy.

## **Social Hierarchy**

### **Definition of social hierarchy**

Social hierarchy is “an implicit or explicit rank order of individuals or groups with respect to a valued social dimension” (Magee & Galinsky, 2008, p. 354). Status and power are two of the fundamental bases of hierarchical differentiation (Anderson & Brown, 2010; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Status, the extent to which one is respected and admired by others (Berger et al., 1986; Gould, 2002; Ridgeway & Walker, 1995), is bestowed upon an individual by others and depends on voluntary and collective social conferral processes (Blader & Chen, 2014; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Power is defined as asymmetric control over valued resources in social relations (Blau, 1964; Dépret & Fiske, 1993; Emerson, 1962; Keltner et al., 2003; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Although status and power are distinct, both conceptually and empirically (Magee & Galinsky, 2008), most organizational hierarchies represent a constellation of status and power (Anderson & Brown, 2010; Tost, 2015), with both associated with higher rank and sources of influence (Berger et al., 1972; Kennedy & Anderson, 2017; Yu et al., 2019). Individuals are motivated to obtain higher rank because greater status and power satisfy material and psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1987; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; McClelland, 1975; Rucker et al., 2018). Thus, the mere presence of hierarchy is a driving motivational force of voice because voice can open up opportunities to ascend the hierarchy.

### **Operationalization of hierarchical rank, power, and status**

In the voice literature, hierarchical rank is typically based in professional roles or occupations in a specific context (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006; Weiss et al., 2017), or positions in the organizational hierarchy (Detert et al., 2013; Fuller et al., 2006; MacMillan et al., 2020). Hierarchical rank has been experimentally manipulated by putting participants in high vs. low prestige roles (status) and/or varying who has control over important resources (power) (Bracq et al., 2021; Cohen, 1958; Harlos, 2010; Islam & Zyphur, 2005). Both status and power have been manipulated by having people recall prior experiences (Blader et al., 2016; Morrison et al., 2015; Yang et al., 2021; see Galinsky et al., 2003).

In addition to manipulations, the power of voicers has been measured using the sense of power scale (Anderson et al., 2012) or the psychological empowerment scale (Spreitzer, 1995), both of which capture one's sense of influence and perceived level of control. The power of voice targets has been measured with the leader power measure developed by Hinkin and Schriesheim (1989). The status of voicers has been measured by asking about the respect and admiration they receive, either through self-report or by asking their peers, supervisors, or uninformed observers (Anderson et al., 2001; Kilduff & Galinsky, 2013; Pettit et al., 2010, 2013; Singh-Manoux et al., 2005; Tyler & Blader, 2002; Weiss & Morrison, 2019). Other papers have used ascribed and associated status cues, such as gender, race, tenure, or network centrality (Howell et al., 2015; McClean et al., 2018). Regarding the status of the target, multiple articles have measured the perceived status of the supervisor with Eisenberger et al.'s (2002) measure.

### **The Hierarchy of Voice Framework**

To understand the role of hierarchy in voice, we conducted a systematic review of research on voice and hierarchy. Specifically, we reviewed abstracts across multiple journals and searched for key words related to both voice and hierarchy. Across 546 abstracts, we examined

whether the article operationalized voice and hierarchy in some form. This search resulted in a total of 113 articles that we examined in greater detail. The culmination of this effort was the formation of the Hierarchy of Voice Framework, which we developed to structure, inform, and extend our understanding of the role of hierarchy in voice.

Our Hierarchy of Voice framework is a dyadic process model which highlights the influence that the hierarchical rank of the voicer and the voice target has on the voicer's decision to speak up, the communication of that voice, and the target's reactions to that voice. The model, presented in Figure 1 and explained in the note, integrates both individual indices of hierarchy—the power and status of the voicer and the target—as well as the structural properties of the hierarchy—the distance, steepness, centrality, and mobility—in which they are embedded.

We begin with the voicer in our model. Given that voice is a form of motivated behavior, the Hierarchy of Voice framework draws on decision-making theories (Ashford et al., 1998; Milliken et al., 2003; Morrison, 2011, 2014; Sherf et al., 2021; Vroom, 1964). The incipient condition for voice is an initial motivation to speak up for achieving a self-interested or prosocial goal. This motivation initiates a decision calculus that integrates the pros and cons of speaking up. Past research has identified *perceived impact* and *perceived risk* as two key factors in this decision calculus (Ashford et al., 1998; Milliken et al., 2003; Morrison, 2011, 2014; Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Sherf et al., 2021). Perceived impact captures the potential to be heard and make a meaningful difference by speaking up. Perceived risk identifies the potential risks or harm of speaking up. The result of this assessment drives one's decision to speak up or remain silent. The Hierarchy of Voice framework recognizes that the absolute and relative ranks of the voicer and the target influence this decision calculus through perceived impact and risk. Hierarchy also influences how employees communicate—the content, style, and context of their voice.

Turing to the right side of the model, we incorporate the perspective of the voice target. We borrow from basic principles of appraisal and attribution theories to identify the processes through which targets perceive and react to voice (Heider, 1958; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Sutton & Kahn, 1986; Weiner, 1985). We propose the target appraises voice as either a threat or an opportunity. In addition, we propose the target attributes either a self-interested or prosocial motive to the voicer for speaking up. We outline how the hierarchical rank of both the voicer and the target influence the target's appraisal, attribution, and reaction to voice and address how communication framing, as chosen by the voicer, affects the target's appraisal and attribution.

Overall, the Hierarchy of Voice framework is dynamic and embedded. In terms of its dynamic nature, we discuss how the target's reaction to voice affects their own and the voicer's hierarchical rank (depicted by two feedback loops). In terms of embeddedness, we explore how the ranks of the voicer and target, which are determined in part by the structural properties of the hierarchy, impact the probability and communication of voice, as well as the reactions to that voice.

The next section unpacks how hierarchy affects the voicer's decision calculus and communication of voice. The subsequent section delineates our framework from the perspective of the voice target and explores their appraisals, attributions, and reactions to the voice.

### **The voicer: Hierarchical rank and the motivation and decision to speak up**

The decision to speak up in the workplace is driven by an initial motivation to “to have something to say” (Morrison, 2014). Given our broader definition of voice, our model recognizes that these latent voice opportunities can be driven by a spectrum of motives from self-interest, prosocial interests, or a combination of both. This initial motivation leads to an assessment of the perceived impact and perceived risk of speaking up (illustrated by the gray dotted line within the



left rectangle of our figure). A self-interested motivation is likely to be perceived as riskier and less effective by the potential voicer than a prosocial motivation because prosocial motivations are typically more socially acceptable (Grant et al., 2009; Halbesleben et al., 2010).

The voicer's rank and the target's rank influence the decision to speak up through both the *perceived impact* and *perceived risk* of the potential voice (illustrated by the gray solid arrows from the voicer's rank and the target's rank to the left rectangle in our figure). In addition, the absolute and relative ranks of the voicer-target dyad influence how employees consider communicating their voice (content, style, context) to enhance its impact and mitigate the risks (illustrated by the gray solid arrows from the ranks to the center rectangle and the gray dotted line from the center to the left rectangle). We elaborate on each of these points next.

### ***Hierarchical rank influences the perceived impact of speaking up***

**Voicer's hierarchical rank and impact.** A number of empirical findings demonstrate that employees speak up more frequently when they have a higher rank position (Fuller et al., 2006; Harlos, 2010; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006; Schwappach, 2016), more power (Jeung & Yoon, 2018; T. H. Kim et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2019; Y. Liu et al., 2021; Morrison et al., 2015; Scrimshire et al., 2021; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012; Wang et al., 2016), and more status in a team or the organization (Bienefeld & Grote, 2014; Chen et al., 2020; Fuller et al., 2006; S. Kim et al., 2022; McClean et al., 2018; Xiao et al., 2021; Y. Zhang et al., 2015). High-status individuals are afforded more opportunities to shape group discussions and influence decision-making as they often occupy a central position in the team's network and are sought out for advice (Howell et al., 2015; Janssen & Gao, 2015; S. Kim et al., 2022; Ridgeway & Berger, 1986; Ridgeway & Diekema, 1989). Employee centrality in formal networks has been found to enhance perceived personal influence, which in turn promotes speaking up (Venkataramani et

al., 2016; Venkataramani & Tangirala, 2010). The combination of more opportunities to speak up and a general sense of deference toward high-status individuals produces feelings of efficacy, which increase one's perceived impact (Rucker et al., 2018).

Employees' psychological sense of power is often equated in the literature with perceived impact (Sherf et al., 2021). Psychological empowerment (Jeung & Yoon, 2018; Scrimshire et al., 2021; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012; Wang et al., 2016) and personal sense of power are positively related to the decision to speaking up (T. H. Kim et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2019; Y. Liu et al., 2021; Morrison et al., 2015). Power increases the perceived impact of voice because of its association with a general sense of optimism and control (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006; Berdahl & Martorana, 2006; Fast et al., 2009; Guinote, 2007) and with a greater sense of autonomy and a decreased dependency on others (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Galinsky et al., 2003; Lammers et al., 2016; Tost, 2015). Thus, power can increase the propensity to pursue the positive outcomes that may follow from voice (Carver & White, 1994; Elliot & Thrash, 2002; Sherf et al., 2021). Overall, the evidence shows that the voicer's rank, power, and status positively affect the perceived impact of their potential voice and the propensity to speak up.

**Voice target's hierarchical rank and impact.** Our dyadic model also highlights how the target's rank affects the voicer's perceived impact. The rank of the target affects the perceived effectiveness of voice because their power and status place them in a better position to address the issues expressed in the received voice (Detert et al., 2013; Detert & Treviño, 2010; Kamal Kumar & Kumar Mishra, 2017; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012). One qualitative study found, for example, that employees perceive speaking up to higher-ranked leaders to be more impactful than speaking up to their immediate leader (Detert & Treviño, 2010).

*Hierarchical rank influences the perceived risk of speaking up*

**Voicer's hierarchical rank and risk.** Higher-ranked employees perceive less risk from speaking up because status conveys a sense of safety and power conveys a sense of independence (Bienefeld & Grote, 2014; Leroy et al., 2012; W. Liu et al., 2015; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). For example, the contributions of high-status individuals are more likely to be accepted and complimented, even when they express controversial opinions (Aquino et al., 1999; Berger et al., 1980; Chattopadhyay et al., 2010; Galinsky, 2017; Ridgeway & Johnson, 1990). Higher-status individuals also expect targets to react positively to their contributions and even hear and see more positive reactions to their voice (Pettit & Sivanathan, 2012). Social status has been found to reduce the perceived risks to one's reputation from speaking up (S. Kim et al., 2022). In contrast, lower-status voicers are more sensitive to situational cues and the target's mood (W. Liu et al., 2015). Power also lowers the perceived risk of voice because reduced dependency lowers awareness of negative reactions to one's voice (Galinsky et al., 2008; Lammers et al., 2011; X. Liu et al., in press; Y. Liu et al., 2021; Pitesa & Thau, 2013; Schmid & Schmid Mast, 2013; Whitson et al., 2013). Whereas high-power individuals are less likely to attend to or even notice others' feedback, low-power voicers are more sensitive to the potential social risks of their actions (Galinsky et al., 2008; Keltner et al., 2003).

**Voice target's hierarchical rank and risk.** The target's rank also affects the perceived risk involved in speaking up. Research indicates that employees become more hesitant to speak up when the target is higher up in the hierarchy because they are more concerned about potential negative reactions (Beament & Mercer, 2016; Bracq et al., 2021; Detert et al., 2013; Detert & Treviño, 2010; Klaas et al., 2012). Instead of speaking up, employees tend to conform to the opinions of those with greater power (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008).

One observation that follows from our framework is that the high power and status of the voicer increase a sense of impact while decreasing a sense of risk. Thus, greater rank fuels separate processes that reinforce speaking up. In contrast, the power and status of the target produce countervailing forces. Expressing voice to more powerful targets increases the perceived impact of speaking up but also increases the risk of doing so.

***Hierarchical rank and communication framing as a means of managing impact and risk***

To enhance the impact and hedge the risk of their voice, employees can vary aspects of the content, style, and context of their communication. Research shows that the rank of the voicer in relation to the rank of the target—i.e., the relative rank or hierarchical distance—shapes the communication between employees. Early research found that communication from low to high-rank individuals is friendlier, more optimistic, and more task-oriented (Athanassiades, 1973; Bradley, 1978; Cohen, 1958; C. Johnson et al., 2000; Kelley, 1951; Read, 1962). More recent research finds that lower-ranked individuals use less prohibitive voice (MacMillan et al., 2020) and use more rational persuasion to exert upward influence (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). When targets have the power to promote voicers, voicers communicate in a way that protects and enhances their dyadic relationship (Athanassiades, 1973; Cohen, 1958; Kelley, 1951).

One frequently studied mechanism for increasing the perceived impact and hedging the potential risk of voice is to frame one's voice communally by emphasizing the benefits of the voiced issue for the organization, the target, or others. In fact, psychologically lower-ranked individuals are oriented toward *communion* in their behavior (Rucker et al., 2018). Even when voice is motivated by self-interest, it can be framed as driven by prosocial motives. In line with this reasoning, research finds a greater discrepancy exists between private reasons and public justifications when the voicer has less power than the target (Sonenshein, 2006). Similarly,

negotiators with lower ascribed power (e.g., women) feel more comfortable speaking up and asking for resources when they frame their requests as also benefitting others (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Bowles et al., 2007; Bowles & Babcock, 2013).

Finally, communication context that offers privacy or anonymity allows voicers to reduce the perceived risk of speaking up. For example, speaking up in private decreases the likelihood of a target interpreting voice as a threat to their status and image (Isaakyan et al., 2021). Similarly, anonymous whistleblowing is designed to dramatically decrease the risks of speaking up. Anonymity can be especially helpful when hierarchical power and status differences are large, and the voice is critical and challenging.

Overall, research demonstrates that the absolute and relative ranks of both the voicer and target shape the perceived impact and risk of voice directly, and also indirectly through the content, style, and context of the voicer's communication.

### **The target: Hierarchical rank and the appraisals, attributions, and reactions to voice**

Compared to past reviews on voice, one unique aspect of our Hierarchy of Voice framework is that it incorporates the perspective of the target of voice. We propose the target appraises the received voice, when relevant, for threat vs. opportunity, and attributes a motive to the voicer for speaking up, before reacting to the voice. In this section, we summarize empirical findings on how the rank of both the voicer and target influence a target's appraisals and attributions directly, and indirectly through how the voice is communicated. Building on and extending these findings, our model is dynamic, capturing how the reactions to voice contribute to a feedback loop that can impact the hierarchical position of both the voicer and the target.

#### ***Hierarchical rank influences appraisals of voice as opportunity versus threat***

In many cases, voice can be an opportunity for the target (Burris, 2012; Detert et al., 2013). When employees speak up for themselves (their work, position, needs) as well as for others or the organization, it can be an important indicator of resource concerns, malfunctions, exhaustion, or intentions to quit. Receiving this information allows the target to improve and affect change within their organization. However, because voice is an extra-role behavior and is often critical in content, it can also be perceived as a threat, especially when outcomes are uncertain (Burris, 2012; Fast et al., 2014). We next offer theory and evidence on how the rank of the target and voicer influence whether voice is appraised as an opportunity or a threat.

**Hierarchical rank of the target and voice appraisal.** The responsibility and resources conferred by the target's rank affect the appraisal process. We propose that voice is more likely to be appraised as relevant, and therefore as opportunity or threat, if it falls under the target's area of responsibility. Voice targets are frequently line managers and responsible for carrying out operational goals and disseminating directions from higher level leaders (Burris, 2012; Fenton-O'Creevy, 1998). If the target is not involved in an issue and not responsible for the voiced concern, the voice may be appraised as irrelevant to them; in this case, the goal of the voicer may simply be to be heard. In contrast, if the target has responsibility for the voiced issue, the voice is likely to be directly relevant; for example, when the voice may highlight long-existing problems that the target was not aware of, especially when the hierarchical distance is larger and the target is not as involved in the details of a work process (Burris, 2012; Detert & Burris, 2007). These relevant complaints or suggestions could be perceived as an opportunity as they help managers obtain better performance, achieve their work goals, and become more successful. However, targets with responsibility for a voiced issue could also see that voice as a threat. Dissenting voice is particularly likely to be viewed as a threat, and even as a personal attack, when the

criticized procedure was initiated by the target themselves (Burris, 2012; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

The target's rank not only predicts the level of responsibility but also offers greater power and status that give one greater access to the financial and operational resources necessary for addressing the voiced issues (McClellan et al., 2013). The psychological experience of resource control activates the behavioral approach system, boosting a focus on opportunities and goal orientation, while feeding self-efficacy and optimism (Carver & White, 1994; Keltner et al., 2003). Research indicates that managerial self-efficacy is associated with more managerial voice solicitation and fewer rejections of voice, suggesting that this approach may facilitate an opportunity appraisal of voice (Fast et al., 2014; J. Li et al., 2019). By having the psychological and organizational resources to manage voice and the consequential uncertainty, ambiguity, and resistance resulting from it, targets with more power and status are more likely to see the potential benefits of voice and subsequently appraise it as an opportunity.

However, even though targets have higher rank than voicers, it does not guarantee they will have sufficient access to the financial and operational resources necessary for addressing the voiced issue. In many instances, targets are middle managers, who tend to face scarce resources, conflicting interests and pressure, and an unstable position in the hierarchy (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017; Yang et al., 2021). These conditions can activate the behavioral inhibition system which increases a focus on threats, negative affect, and norms and conventions (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017). A threat appraisal is more prone to occur when a target perceives that the voice requires the use of scarce resources without the guarantee of a payoff. Consistent with this reasoning, research finds that middle managers are less supportive and more resistant towards employee involvement in decision making compared to top management (Fenton-O'Creevy, 1998, 2001).

Thus, opportunity appraisals are more likely when the target has sufficient resources, whereas threat appraisals are more likely when the target has insufficient resources.

**Hierarchical rank of the voicer and voice appraisal.** The rank of the voicer also affects the target's appraisals. Research shows that employees at a higher organizational rank receive more positive appraisals of their voice; e.g., they gain more attention and spark more interest, even when their comments are criticizing (MacMillan et al., 2020). In addition, employees with higher ascribed (e.g., gender, ethnicity, social class), associated (e.g., newcomer vs. incumbent), and achieved social status (e.g., expertise) benefit from more positive appraisals of their voice (Howell et al., 2015; S. Kim et al., 2022; J. Li et al., 2019; Martin & Harrison, 2022; McClean et al., 2018; Z. Zhang et al., 2019). Because targets tend to associate higher rank with competence and knowledge (Berger et al., 1980; Bunderson, 2003; Phillips et al., 2013), superiors are more open to suggestions from subordinates that are higher-ranked (e.g., middle managers) than lower-ranked (e.g., an entry level employee) because they anticipate more valuable input and potential opportunities in the voice. In contrast, when criticism comes from a lower-ranked individual within the organization, targets tend to be less open and more likely to dismiss the voice as being inaccurate and invalid (Ilgen et al., 1979; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996).

We note that we did not find any empirical study that examined the role of voicer's power in target's appraisal of voice, which offers an interesting opportunity for future research.

### ***Hierarchical rank influences the attributed motives of voice<sup>2</sup>***

People possess an inherent tendency to search for motives for the behavior of others and relevant events (Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1973). Voice and organizational citizenship research commonly differentiate between prosocial and self-interested motives—the latter are often

---

<sup>2</sup> Because we did not find any empirical studies that examined the role of voicer's rank, power, or status on the target's attribution of voice, this section focuses on voice targets.



labeled as impression management motives (Bolino, 1999; Grant & Ashford, 2008). Empirical evidence clearly demonstrates that targets vary in the attributions they make to voice (J. Cheng et al., 2013; Choi & Moon, 2017; Su et al., 2017; Whiting et al., 2012). In Whiting et al. (2012), the attribution to prosocial motives ranged from 3.78 to 5.44 (on a 7-point agreement scale) across different experimental conditions. In Cheng et al. (2013), participants' attributed self-interested motive had a mean of 3.28 ( $SD = 1.32$ ) and attributed prosocial motive had a mean of 5.59 ( $SD = .92$ ) on a 7-point agreement scale. Notably, in Cheng et al. (2013) the attributions to self and other interest did not correlate and in Choi and Moon (2017) they correlated weakly and positively ( $r = .16, p < .05$ ), implying that motive attributions are not mutually exclusive.

Research also finds that hierarchical rank can affect the motives attributed to voice. Choi and Moon (2017) found that high-ranked targets at the executive level attributed more self-interested motives to a voicer compared to middle-ranked target at the senior level. Research also finds that relatively powerful targets attribute more self-interested motives to voicers. For example, power leads to cynicism towards others' motives, attributing the behavior of others as more self-interested than genuinely prosocial (Inesi et al., 2012). Furthermore, high-power recipients of help attribute more self-seeking motives to the helper (Thompson et al., 1971). This tendency may be intensified by the fact that lower-rank individuals are more likely to be viewed as less trustworthy (Blue et al., 2020).

### ***The effect of communication on voice appraisals and attributions***

We previously discussed how the hierarchical distance between the voicer and the target affects employees' communication content, style, and context of voice. This section addresses how this communication influences the target's appraisals and attributions of voice.

**The how of communication and voice appraisals.** How the voicer communicates, which is intended to enhance the impact and mitigate the risk of voice, impacts the appraisal of that voice by targets. Research shows that promotive voice is perceived as more constructive by targets, leading to greater receptivity, compared to prohibitive problem-focused voice (Burris, 2012; X. Huang et al., 2018; Whiting et al., 2012; Z. Zhang et al., 2019). Further, voice directness (i.e., candidly expressing one's thoughts) is positively related to managers' appraisal of voice as an opportunity, suggesting that being direct helps the target to quickly understand what the voicer wants (C. F. Lam et al., 2019). Moreover, the quality (i.e., rationale, feasibility, and accuracy) of voice affects the target's appraisal of voice (Brykman & Raver, 2021). Communication intended to minimize the risk of voice also likely prevents a threat appraisal. For example, voice politeness (i.e., the use of mannerly, courteous, and respectful language when voicing; C. F. Lam et al., 2019) signals deference to the target (Lee et al., 2021). Receiving voice in private is also less threatening to targets because social evaluation concerns are less likely to emerge without an audience (Isaakyan et al., 2021; Leary et al., 2009).

**The how of communication and voice attributions.** Communication content, style, and context also influence the motives attributed to voice. We conceptualize voice as agentic behavior because it requires individuals to be assertive, especially when focused on the benefits for the self rather than others, suggesting the attribution to self-interested motives as the default. However, by highlighting collective benefits of voice, a communal component is integrated, which makes voice more likely to be attributed to prosocial motives. The communicated benefits of voice can influence motive attribution. For example, research has found that when voice highlights how the voiced issue would benefit others, the voicer is perceived as benevolent and acting under prosocial motives (McClellan et al., 2022). Similarly, if voice is framed as intended

to improve a task, project, or the organization and offers potential solutions to a problem, targets tend to attribute a prosocial motive for the voice (McClean et al., 2022; Whiting et al., 2012).

### *The target's reaction to voice*

The previous subsections outlined how the power, status, and hierarchical rank of the voicer and target influence the appraisal and attribution of voice. As illustrated in our figure, these voice appraisals and attributions then affect the target's reaction to voice.

**Voice reactions are influenced by appraisals.** We propose that opportunity appraisals lead to more positive reactions than threat appraisals. Specifically, when targets appraise an instance of voice as an opportunity, they exhibit more receptive behaviors, from endorsing the voice (J. Li et al., 2019; McClean et al., 2022) to implementing it (Fast et al., 2014; MacMillan et al., 2020; Sijbom et al., 2016). In contrast, a threat appraisal leads to negative reactions that refuse to accept or endorse the voiced suggestions, even if the ideas proposed have actual merit (Burriss, 2012; Isaakyan et al., 2021; Menon et al., 2006; Popelnukha et al., 2022). This logic also applies to reactions toward the voicer. Opportunity appraisals lead to better performance evaluations (Brykman & Raver, 2021; Burriss, 2012; Howell et al., 2015; Su et al., 2017) and promotability ratings (Brykman & Raver, 2021; X. Huang et al., 2018). In contrast, when targets perceive voice as threatening, they may punish voicers by rating them as worse performers (Burriss, 2012; Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014).

**Voice reactions are influenced by attributions.** The attributions targets make to the voicer's motive influence their reactions to the voice and the voicer. In line with organizational citizenship research (Allen & Rush, 1998; Grant & Mayer, 2009; D. E. Johnson et al., 2002), research on attributed voice motives consistently finds that attributed prosocial motives generate more positive reactions compared to attributed self-interested motives (Choi & Moon, 2017;

Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014; Su et al., 2017; Urbach & Fay, 2021; Whiting et al., 2012). More positive reactions to prosocially attributed voice occur because this attribution signals that voicers care about others and/or their organization and that they have devoted extra time and energy to address relevant issues (Bolino et al., 2006; J. Cheng et al., 2013). If a voiced issue relates to a problem and/or a potential solution relevant to the target, prosocial attributed voice has instrumental value for those targets.

**Voice can lead to self-reflection in targets.** In addition to target reactions to voice and the voicer, their appraisal and attribution can also lead to self-reflective behavior. Research finds that when employees point out self-serving resource allocations by the target, this voice can lead to a threat appraisal and induce feelings of guilt that regulate future resource allocations (Oc et al., 2015, 2019). In another study, ethical voice led leaders to reflect on their actions, which reduced abusive leadership behaviors (L. Huang & Paterson, 2017). These findings show that threat appraisals, albeit riskier for the voicer, have an important regulatory function that controls the behavior of the powerful.

### **Feedback loops to the hierarchical ranks of voicers and targets**

The target's reaction to voice can have important consequences for both their own and the voicer's future power and status. These feedback loops represent the dynamic relationship between voice and hierarchy.

#### ***Voice reaction and the voicer's future hierarchical rank***

Positive reactions by the target (e.g., voice endorsement, positive job performance and promotability evaluations) are likely to facilitate the voicer's ascension in an organizational hierarchy (Brykman & Raver, 2021; Burris, 2012; Howell et al., 2015; X. Huang et al., 2018; Su et al., 2017). These favorable evaluations bolster the voicer's status and power and enhance the

likelihood that voicers emerge as leaders within their group (McClellan et al., 2018; Weiss & Morrison, 2019). In contrast, negative reactions to voice can deteriorate an individual's reputation and status by signaling that their input is not wanted or valued. Negative voice reactions also reduce employees' future engagement in voice, thereby eliminating opportunities to gain additional status and ascend an organization's hierarchy (Y. J. Kim et al., in press).

### ***Voice reaction and the voice target's future hierarchical rank***

The reaction of targets to voice also has consequences for their own standing in the organizational hierarchy. Indeed, when lower-ranked employees speak up, it can alter a target's rank. For example, if the target implements the voiced suggestions and it leads to process or performance improvements, the resulting progress can enhance their reputation and status (Bain et al., 2021; Burris, 2012; Detert et al., 2013; Detert & Burris, 2007). In contrast, ineffective reactions can have negative effects for the target's power and status because such reactions reveal a lack of influence.

Targets may sometimes choose to forcefully reject voice to demonstrate their power and reinforce their rank. However, voice rejection can also backfire and reduce the power and status of the target when the voicer overcomes resistance, for example, by speaking up to leaders above the target's hierarchy level or when the voicer creates coalitions. In contrast, more supportive rejections of voice, e.g., by expressing gratitude (Belkin & Kong, 2018) and showing respect and concern (King et al., 2019), might benefit the target.

### **Directions for future research on voice and hierarchy**

The aim of the present article was to review, synthesize, and offer new directions for voice research by exploring the pervasive role of social hierarchy. As we noted, hierarchy is implicit in the very definition of voice. Our goal has been to move hierarchy from the

background to the foreground of the voice literature. Our dyadic and dynamic model highlights how the hierarchical rank of both the voicer and the target affect the voicer's perceived impact and risk of speaking up, how the voicer communicates their voice, as well as the target's appraisals, attributions, and reactions to the received voice. Our Hierarchy of Voice framework not only integrates existing empirical research, but it also offers numerous opportunities for future research. Below, we identify promising paths voice research can take moving forwards.

### **Advancing research on voice motives and motive attributions**

#### ***Alignment of the definition and the measurement of voice***

We have proposed a new and broader definition of employee voice, one that acknowledges that voice can not only be prosocial in nature but also driven by self-interest. To substantiate our reasoning, we reviewed empirical evidence showing that not all employees speak up with prosocial motivations. Our hierarchical lens required broadening the definition of voice because this lens makes clear that the self-interested desire to ascend a social hierarchy is a motive of speaking up. Another reason is current voice measures are both vague and restrictive in terms of motive, often referring only to the “work unit” in Liang et al. (2012) or “work group” in Van Dyne et al. (2003). We advocate that future research omit the assumption that the underlying motive of voice is prosocial when using these measures because other motives or a mix of motives may be operating. Moreover, a promising avenue for future research is to develop new measures that directly capture the underlying motives of voice. These measures should also recognize that voice can be self-interested but framed prosocially.

#### ***Hierarchical rank and the motives and attributions for voice***

Using a broader definition of voice and acknowledging the varying and mixed motives of voicers—and how hierarchy shapes these motives—offers many opportunities for future

research. For example, research reveals that power shifts one's focus from others towards the self (Kraus et al., 2012; Rucker et al., 2012, 2018). This finding suggests that the power of a voicer can impact the motivation for speaking up. In contrast, research suggests that status shifts one's focus from independence towards interdependence, increasing perspective taking and concern with justice (Blader & Chen, 2012, 2014). Thus, the power and status of the voicer likely affects one's motives, but the effects of power and status may go in opposite directions.

Our review also highlights the role of motive attribution in the target's evaluation of voice. Results show that powerful targets tend to attribute more self-interested motives to voicers, which leads to less favorable evaluations compared to prosocial attributions (Choi & Moon, 2017; Maynes & Podsakoff, 2014; Su et al., 2017; Whiting et al., 2012). We could not find any empirical research investigating how the voicer's power and status affect this attribution process. Since higher-status employees are judged more favorably (Howell et al., 2015), they may benefit from more prosocial motive attributions. Future research should directly explore how the power and status of voicers shape the motives attributed to them.

### ***The goal compatibility between voicers and targets***

In our review, we reasoned that the psychological orientation of powerful and high-ranking targets would facilitate an opportunity appraisal (Galinsky et al., 2015). However, this is likely only the case when that voice is compatible with the target's own goals. When the voice conflicts with the target's goals, powerful targets may be less open to voice, even if the suggestion might be objectively beneficial for the organization (Burriss, 2012; Isaakyan et al., 2021; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Instead, they may be more likely to silence their employees (Kennedy & Anderson, 2017; Morrison et al., 2015; Morrison & Rothman, 2009; Sijbom & Parker, 2020), a phenomenon Galinsky (2022) has called the "Power Silencing Effect". Other

research suggests that when the powerful feel insecure, they are less likely to acknowledge the contributions of others (Hoff, Rucker, & Galinsky, 2022).

We have mentioned that explicitly highlighting prosocial needs when speaking up leads to more favorable reactions, especially for low-power voicers (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Bowles et al., 2019; J. Cheng et al., 2013; Halbesleben et al., 2010; Su et al., 2017). A corollary of this idea is that voicers will be more effective when they explicitly frame their suggestions in terms of the goals of the target. Future research could investigate whether knowing the goals of one's manager allows employees to frame their voice more effectively, thereby increasing the impact *and* mitigating the risk of voice.

#### **Advancing research on the voice target's psychological experience of power and status**

Our dyadic Hierarchy of Voice framework integrates the target's perspective by using the principles of appraisal and attribution theories to understand their evaluation of and reaction to voice (Heider, 1958; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Sutton & Kahn, 1986; Weiner, 1985). Overall, our review reveals that theory and empirical research on the target's psychological experience are scarce. While the target's status and power have often been assessed from the voicer's perspective, the target's sense of status and sense of power have received relatively little attention in the voice literature. Since power and status have profound psychological consequences, gaining better insight into their role in the target's appraisals, attributions, and reactions to voice is an important avenue for future research.

#### **Advancing research on voice and structural properties of the hierarchy**

Based on our literature review, we note that the current voice literature mostly investigates individual rank but rarely explores structural characteristics of hierarchies (e.g., their steepness, centralization). However, voice researchers have examined power distance orientation



(i.e., the extent to which status, authority, and power differences are accepted by individuals; Hofstede et al., 2010), which is connected to hierarchical steepness and centrality. Being higher on power distance orientation increases support for steeper and more centralized power (Daniels & Greguras, 2014). Similarly, in cultures that support greater power distance, the relative rank difference between the voicer and the target is likely greater, which—as earlier established—shapes the perceived impact and risk of voice, as well as how that voice is communicated.

Power distance and voice have mostly been examined in relation to leader behaviors. Some research has found a strengthening effect on voice; i.e., having a high power distance orientation sensitizes employees to situational and contextual cues, including the behavior by leaders and other potential targets; Duan et al., 2018; Jeung & Yoon, 2018; L. W. Lam & Xu, 2019; X. Li & Xing, 2021; Y. Li & Sun, 2015; Wei et al., 2015). In contrast, other research reports a weakening effect of power distance on voice; i.e., high power distance oriented employees feel less responsible and are less willing to engage in voice regardless of leader behavior; Duan et al., 2022; Guo et al., 2022; Jada & Mukhopadhyay, 2019; Lin et al., 2019; Raub & Robert, 2013). Thus, the extent to which encouraging behavior by a leader is effective in promoting voice depends on employees' orientations toward power distance. However, the literature lacks consensus on whether power distance strengthens or weakens the effect of leader behaviors on the likelihood of speaking up. We next discuss future research opportunities to investigate the structural elements of hierarchy in which the voicer and the target are embedded.

### ***Steepness and centrality of hierarchy***

The steeper and more centralized the hierarchy, the more impactful the reactions of leaders (Anderson & Brown, 2010). When voice is centralized around a few team members who are lower on reflectiveness and higher on social dominance, this has a negative impact on team

performance (Sherf et al., 2018). On the other extreme, diffusion of responsibility reduces one's likelihood to speak up (Hussain et al., 2019; Milliken et al., 2003). Consistent with such diffusion of responsibility, a qualitative study found that 70% of employees were silent about problems they believed colleagues had knowledge of and could choose to speak up about (Milliken et al., 2003; Milliken & Lam, 2009). Other research finds that it is harder to communicate with peers because hierarchy offers explicit norms of communication (Fragale et al., 2012). These findings suggest that there is an optimal level of hierarchy, not too steep or too central but also not too flat, that is needed for employees to feel comfortable speaking up.

### ***Mobility across the hierarchy***

Opportunities for mobility across a hierarchy may also affect the propensity to speak up and the target's reactions to that voice (Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974). Employees are more engaged in establishing positive relationships with those in power positions when there is the potential to ascend a hierarchy (Cohen, 1958; Kelley, 1951; Read, 1962). However, greater opportunity for upward mobility can motivate competitive behaviors that maximize self-interested desire to advance one's rank in a status hierarchy (Hays & Bendersky, 2015). With regard to higher-rank targets, they may be less prone to threat appraisals if their place within a hierarchy is stable (Anicich & Hirsh, 2017; Kelley, 1951). Similar to hierarchical centrality and steepness, there is likely an optimum level of mobility for employee voice to be most effective.

### **Finding the optimal hierarchy for employee voice**

Our review of the voice literature revealed that research has investigated hierarchy as either beneficial *or* detrimental to the voicer or the organization. Our synthesis reveals a pattern of findings pointing to *countervailing* effects of the voicer's and target's rank—some positive and some negative—on the likelihood to speak up and on the appraisal of voice. For example,

the greater the target's power and status relative to the voicer are, the greater the voicer's perceived impact is because the target is better able to address the voiced issues (Detert et al., 2013; Detert & Treviño, 2010; Kamal Kumar & Kumar Mishra, 2017; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012). However, a larger hierarchical distance from the targets also increases the voicer's perceived risk of speaking up (Beament & Mercer, 2016; Bracq et al., 2021; Detert & Treviño, 2010; Klaas & Ward, 2015; Morrison & Rothman, 2009; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008).

We mentioned earlier that there is likely an optimum level of hierarchical steepness, centrality, and mobility to maximize the probability and effectiveness of speaking up. Future research should identify the conditions that enhance the positive effects and mitigate the negative effects of social hierarchy on voice. With regard to the heightened perceived risk of speaking up to higher-rank targets, one qualitative study found that the psychological safety that promotes voice can be established by allowing for more informal interactions between employees and higher-rank leaders (Detert & Treviño, 2010). Moreover, a strong relationship between the voicer and the target reduces the perceived risk of speaking up (Duan et al., 2018).

In addition, an implicit assumption of prior research has been that more voice is always better. Our review suggests the possibility of an optimal equilibrium of hierarchical forces and voice for ensuring efficient communication, effective coordination, and the ability to address voice. Consistent with this idea, a study by X. Huang et al. (2018) found that the relation between voice frequency and manager voice recognition follows an inverted U-shape. States of high power and status can make voicers overconfident and overestimate the actual value of their suggestions (Burriss et al., 2013; S. Kim et al., 2022; Ma & McLean Parks, 2012). It appears that there is a saturation point where targets are overwhelmed by and not able to absorb and react to all the voice they have received from employees (Detert et al., 2013). Because constructive

reactions to voice can be demanding for managers, voice that is too frequent can prevent targets from recognizing the most important issues. Thus, an appropriate risk level for speaking up might lead employees to reflect on which concerns should be voiced. This insight recognizes that the coordination benefits of hierarchy can lead to positive outcomes, whereas the denial of voice can lead to negative organizational outcomes (Galinsky & Schweitzer, 2015; Halevy et al., 2011). That is, there needs to be a balance between employee participatory needs with organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Anderson & Brown, 2010; Detert et al., 2013; Sherf et al., 2018). Future research is needed to move from asking *whether* more power and status are beneficial or detrimental for voice to examining the *optimal* hierarchical structure and relative levels of power and status for voice to be effective and efficient.

### **Regulating the dynamic relationship between hierarchy and voice**

The feedback loops in our Hierarchy of Voice framework emphasize the reciprocal and reinforcing effects between voice and hierarchical rank (Howell et al., 2015; Janssen & Gao, 2015; S. Kim et al., 2022; H. Li et al., 2016; McClean et al., 2018; Weiss & Morrison, 2019). Research shows that higher-ranked employees speak up more frequently and their voice receives more positive appraisals and attributions, resulting in better performance ratings that further increase their status and power. In contrast, lower-ranked employees rarely speak up, and when they do, their voice tends to receive more negative appraisals and attributions, which result in worse performance ratings that keep them in their low-ranked place. Yet, lower-ranked individuals do occasionally speak up and successfully ascend hierarchies.

We suggest that expanding the parameters of how voice is communicated provides opportunities for future research to investigate when and how lower-ranked employees can break the vicious dynamics between voice and hierarchy. By strategically choosing the content, style

and context of their communication, voicers can influence the reaction and effectiveness of voice to increase its impact and mitigate the risks of negative reactions. While we have observed that lower-ranked employees are more likely to be evaluated positively by offering promotive voice and highlighting prosocial motivations (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Bowles & Babcock, 2013; X. Huang et al., 2018; C. F. Lam et al., 2019; Sonenshein, 2006; Whiting et al., 2012), in some cases, more assertive voice may lead to desired outcomes. For example, using counter-stereotypical task-oriented forms of voice can help women be seen as more competent (McClellan et al., 2022). We have argued that voice is agentic in nature but can vary in the extent to which it is implicitly or explicitly communal. We have already seen an increasing interest in studying the style (e.g., polite, direct, assertive), content (e.g., task or relational) and context (e.g., private vs. public) of voice (Brykman & Raver, 2021; Isaakyan et al., 2021; C. F. Lam et al., 2019; McClellan et al., 2022). By extending the parameters of how employees speak up, future research can offer insights to help lower-rank employees mitigate the risks and maximize the impact when communicating to achieve their goals. These parameters also include group voice (e.g., through allyship), which can be a strategy to minimize the risks for individual employees and to enhance the impact of voice by appearing as a united front (Satterstrom et al., 2021).

### **Conclusion**

The current review, synthesis, and extension of the literature demonstrate that hierarchy and voice are intimately intertwined—definitionally, conceptually, and practically. Given hierarchy is ubiquitous in organizations, its effect on voice is relevant to most social and organizational settings. Our dyadic and dynamic Hierarchy of Voice framework captures how hierarchy informs the decision to speak up and influences the appraisals, attributions, and reactions to that voice. In addition, our framework highlights how hierarchy and voice are reciprocally linked through

feedback loops that affect the hierarchical positions of the voicer and the target. In our review, we also identified critical gaps in the voice literature and offered suggestions for how future research could fill those gaps. Our hope is that the Hierarchy of Voice framework motivates scholars to better understand how hierarchy and voice influence each other in dynamic ways.

### References

- Allen, T. D., & Rush, M. C. (1998). The effects of organizational citizenship behavior on performance judgments: A field study and a laboratory experiment. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 83*(2), 247–260. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.83.2.247>
- Amanatullah, E. T., & Morris, M. W. (2010). Negotiating gender roles: Gender differences in assertive negotiating are mediated by women's fear of backlash and attenuated when negotiating on behalf of others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 98*(2), 256. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017094>
- Anderson, C., & Berdahl, J. L. (2002). The experience of power: Examining the effects of power on approach and inhibition tendencies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(6), 1362. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.83.6.1362>
- Anderson, C., & Brown, C. E. (2010). The functions and dysfunctions of hierarchy. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 30*, 55–89. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2010.08.002>
- Anderson, C., & Galinsky, A. D. (2006). Power, optimism, and risk-taking. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 36*(4), 511–536. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.324>
- Anderson, C., Hildreth, J. A. D., & Howland, L. (2015). Is the desire for status a fundamental human motive? A review of the empirical literature. *Psychological Bulletin, 141*, 574–601. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038781>
- Anderson, C., John, O. P., & Keltner, D. (2012). The personal sense of power. *Journal of Personality, 80*(2), 313–344. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2011.00734.x>
- Anderson, C., John, O. P., Keltner, D., & Kring, A. M. (2001). Who attains social status? Effects of personality and physical attractiveness in social groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 81*(1), 116–132. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.81.1.116>
- Anicich, E. M., & Hirsh, J. B. (2017). The psychology of middle power: Vertical code-switching, role conflict, and behavioral inhibition. *The Academy of Management Review, 42*, 659–682. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2016.0002>
- Aquino, K., Grover, S. L., Bradfield, M., & Allen, D. G. (1999). The effects of negative affectivity, hierarchical status, and self-determination on workplace victimization. *The Academy of Management Journal, 42*(3), 260–272. <https://doi.org/10.2307/256918>
- Ashford, S. J., Rothbard, N. P., Piderit, S. K., & Dutton, J. E. (1998). Out on a limb: The role of context and impression management in selling gender-equity issues. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 43*(1), 23–57. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2393590>

- Athanassiades, J. C. (1973). The distortion of upward communication in hierarchical organizations. *Academy of Management Journal*, *16*(2), 207–226. <https://doi.org/10.5465/255323>
- Atwater, L. E., Waldman, D. A., Atwater, D., & Cartier, P. (2000). An upward feedback field experiment: Supervisors' cynicism, reactions, and commitment to subordinates. *Personnel Psychology*, *53*(2), 275–297. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2000.tb00202.x>
- Babalola, M. T., Garcia, P. R. J. M., Ren, S., Ogunfowora, B., & Gok, K. (2022). Stronger together: Understanding when and why group ethical voice inhibits group abusive supervision. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *43*(3), 386–409. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2582>
- Bain, K., Kreps, T. A., Meikle, N. L., & Tenney, E. R. (2021). Amplifying voice in organizations. *Academy of Management Journal*, *64*(4), 1288–1312. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.0621>
- Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2016). Pro-social or pro-management? A critique of the conception of employee voice as a pro-social behaviour within organizational behaviour. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, *54*(2), 261–284. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjir.12114>
- Barry, M., & Wilkinson, A. (2022). Employee voice, psychologisation and human resource management (HRM). *Human Resource Management Journal*, *32*(3), 631–646. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12415>
- Bashshur, M. R., & Oc, B. (2015). When voice matters: A multilevel review of the impact of voice in organizations. *Journal of Management*, *41*(5), 1530–1554. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314558302>
- Beament, T., & Mercer, S. J. (2016). Speak up! Barriers to challenging erroneous decisions of seniors in anaesthesia. *Anaesthesia*, *71*(11), 1332–1340. <https://doi.org/10.1111/anae.13546>
- Belkin, L. Y., & Kong, D. T. (2018). Implications of advice rejection in repeated exchanges: Advisor responses and advisee gratitude expression as a buffer. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *78*, 181–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2018.03.012>
- Berdahl, J. L., & Martorana, P. (2006). Effects of power on emotion and expression during a controversial group discussion. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *36*(4), 497–509. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.354>
- Berger, J., Cohen, B. P., & Zelditch, M. (1972). Status characteristics and social interaction. *American Sociological Review*, *37*(3), 241–255. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2093465>



- Berger, J., Rosenholtz, S. J., & Zelditch, M. (1980). Status organizing processes. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 6(1), 479–508. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.06.080180.002403>
- Berger, J., Webster, M., Ridgeway, C. L., & Rosenholz, S. (1986). Status cues, expectations, and behaviors. In E. Lawler (Ed.), *Advances in group processes* (pp. 1–22). JAI.
- Bienefeld, N., & Grote, G. (2014). Speaking up in ad hoc multiteam systems: Individual-level effects of psychological safety, status, and leadership within and across teams. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 23(6), 930–945. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2013.808398>
- Blader, S. L., & Chen, Y.-R. (2012). Differentiating the effects of status and power: A justice perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 102(5), 994–1014. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026651>
- Blader, S. L., & Chen, Y.-R. (2014). What's in a name? Status, power, and other forms of social hierarchy. In J. T. Cheng, J. L. Tracy, & C. Anderson (Eds.), *The Psychology of Social Status* (pp. 71–95). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-0867-7\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-0867-7_4)
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. John Wiley.
- Blue, P. R., Hu, J., Peng, L., Yu, H., Liu, H., & Zhou, X. (2020). Whose promises are worth more? How social status affects trust in promises. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 50(1), 189–206. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2596>
- Bolino, M. C. (1999). Citizenship and impression management: Good soldiers or good actors? *The Academy of Management Review*, 24(1), 82–98. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259038>
- Bolino, M. C., Varela, J. A., Bande, B., & Turnley, W. H. (2006). The impact of impression-management tactics on supervisor ratings of organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27(3), 281–297. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.379>
- Bowles, H. R., & Babcock, L. (2013). How can women escape the compensation negotiation dilemma? Relational accounts are one answer. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 37(1), 80–96. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0361684312455524>
- Bowles, H. R., Babcock, L., & Lai, L. (2007). Social incentives for gender differences in the propensity to initiate negotiations: Sometimes it does hurt to ask. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 103(1), 84–103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2006.09.001>
- Bowles, H. R., Thomason, B., & Bear, J. B. (2019). Reconceptualizing what and how women negotiate for career advancement. *Academy of Management Journal*, 62(6), 1645–1671. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2017.1497>

- Bracq, M.-S., Michinov, E., Duff, M. L., Arnaldi, B., Gouranton, V., & Jannin, P. (2021). "Doctor, please": Educating nurses to speak up with interactive digital simulation tablets. *Clinical Simulation in Nursing*, 54, 97–104. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecns.2021.01.007>
- Bradley, P. H. (1978). Power, status, and upward communication in small decision-making groups. *Communication Monographs*, 45(1), 33–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637757809375949>
- Brykman, K. M., & Raver, J. L. (2021). To speak up effectively or often? The effects of voice quality and voice frequency on peers' and managers' evaluations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 42(4), 504–526. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2509>
- Bunderson, J. S. (2003). Recognizing and utilizing expertise in work groups: A status characteristics perspective. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 48(4), 557–591. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3556637>
- Burris, E. R. (2012). The risks and rewards of speaking up: Managerial responses to employee voice. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(4), 851–875. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0562>
- Burris, E. R., Detert, J. R., & Romney, A. C. (2013). Speaking up vs. being heard: The disagreement around and outcomes of employee voice. *Organization Science*, 24(1), 22–38. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1110.0732>
- Carver, C. S., & White, T. L. (1994). Behavioral inhibition, behavioral activation, and affective responses to impending reward and punishment: The BIS/BAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67(2), 319–333. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.2.319>
- Chattopadhyay, P., Finn, C., & Ashkanasy, N. M. (2010). Affective responses to professional dissimilarity: A matter of status. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(4), 808–826. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.52814603>
- Chen, L., Li, M., Wu, Y. J., & Chen, C. (2020). The voicer's reactions to voice: An examination of employee voice on perceived organizational status and subsequent innovative behavior in the workplace. *Personnel Review*, 50(4), 1073–1092. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-07-2019-0399>
- Cheng, J., Lu, K., Chang, Y., & Johnstone, S. (2013). Voice behavior and work engagement: The moderating role of supervisor-attributed motives. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, 51, 81–102. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-7941.2012.00030.x>
- Choi, B. K., & Moon, H. K. (2017). Subordinates' helping, voice, and supervisors' evaluation of job performance: The moderating effects of supervisor-attributed motives. *Career Development International*, 22(3), 222–240. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-04-2016-0058>

- Cohen, A. R. (1958). Upward communication in experimentally created hierarchies. *Human Relations, 11*(1), 41–53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872675801100103>
- Daniels, M. A., & Greguras, G. J. (2014). Exploring the nature of power distance: Implications for micro- and macro-level theories, processes, and outcomes. *Journal of Management, 40*, 1202–1229. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314527131>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1987). The support of autonomy and the control of behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 53*, 1024–1037. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.53.6.1024>
- Dépret, E., & Fiske, S. T. (1993). Social cognition and power: Some cognitive consequences of social structure as a source of control deprivation. In G. Weary, F. Gleicher, & K. L. Marsh (Eds.), *Control Motivation and Social Cognition* (pp. 176–202). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-8309-3\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4613-8309-3_7)
- Detert, J. R., & Burris, E. R. (2007). Leadership behavior and employee voice: Is the door really open? *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(4), 869–884. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2007.26279183>
- Detert, J. R., Burris, E. R., Harrison, D. A., & Martin, S. R. (2013). Voice flows to and around leaders: Understanding when units are helped or hurt by employee voice. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 58*(4), 624–668. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839213510151>
- Detert, J. R., & Treviño, L. K. (2010). Speaking up to higher-ups: How supervisors and skip-level leaders influence employee voice. *Organization Science, 21*(1), 249–270. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1080.0405>
- Duan, J., Bao, C., Huang, C., & Brinsfield, C. T. (2018). Authoritarian leadership and employee silence in China. *Journal of Management & Organization, 24*(1), 62–80. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2016.61>
- Duan, J., Wang, X.-H. (Frank), Janssen, O., & Farh, J.-L. (2022). Transformational leadership and voice: When does felt obligation to the leader matter? *Journal of Business and Psychology, 37*(3), 543–555. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-021-09758-z>
- Dutton, J. E., & Ashford, S. J. (1993). Selling issues to top management. *The Academy of Management Review, 18*(3), 397–428. <https://doi.org/10.2307/258903>
- Eisenberger, R., Stinglhamber, F., Vandenberghe, C., Sucharski, I. L., & Rhoades, L. (2002). Perceived supervisor support: Contributions to perceived organizational support and employee retention. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*(3), 565–573. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.3.565>

- Elliot, A. J., & Thrash, T. M. (2002). Approach-avoidance motivation in personality: Approach and avoidance temperaments and goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(5), 804–818. <https://doi.org/10.1037//0022-3514.82.5.804>
- Emerson, R. M. (1962). Power-dependence relations. *American Sociological Review*, 27(1), 31–41. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2089716>
- Fast, N. J., Burris, E. R., & Bartel, C. A. (2014). Managing to stay in the dark: Managerial self-efficacy, ego defensiveness, and the aversion to employee voice. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57, 1013–1034. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2012.0393>
- Fast, N. J., Gruenfeld, D. H., Sivanathan, N., & Galinsky, A. D. (2009). Illusory control: A generative force behind power's far-reaching effects. *Psychological Science*, 20(4), 502–508. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2009.02311.x>
- Fenton-O'Creevy, M. (1998). Employee involvement and the middle manager: Evidence from a survey of organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 19(1), 67–84.
- Fenton-O'Creevy, M. (2001). Employee involvement and the middle manager: Saboteur or scapegoat? *Human Resource Management Journal*, 11(1), 24–40. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1748-8583.2001.tb00030.x>
- Festinger, L. (1950). Informal social communication. *Psychological Review*, 57(5), 271–282. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0056932>
- Fragale, A. R., Sumanth, J. J., Tiedens, L. Z., & Northcraft, G. B. (2012). Appeasing Equals: Lateral Deference in Organizational Communication. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 57(3), 373–406. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839212461439>
- Freeman, R. B., Boxall, P., & Haynes, P. (2007). *What workers say: Employee voice in the anglo-american workplace*. Cornell University Press.
- Freeman, R. B., & Medoff, J. L. (1984). *What do unions do?* Basic Books.
- Fuller, J. B., Marler, L. E., & Hester, K. (2006). Promoting felt responsibility for constructive change and proactive behavior: Exploring aspects of an elaborated model of work design. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27(8), 1089–1120. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.408>
- Galinsky, A. D. (2017, January 5). *Successful people use these techniques to speak up for themselves—And stay likable*. Quartz. <https://qz.com/878838/successful-people-use-these-techniques-to-speak-up-for-themselves-and-stay-likable/>
- Galinsky, A. D. (2022). *Manuscript in preparation*.

- Galinsky, A. D., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Magee, J. C. (2003). From power to action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *85*, 453–466. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.85.3.453>
- Galinsky, A. D., Magee, J. C., Gruenfeld, D. H., Whitson, J. A., & Liljenquist, K. A. (2008). Power reduces the press of the situation: Implications for creativity, conformity, and dissonance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *95*(6), 1450–1466. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0012633>
- Galinsky, A. D., & Schweitzer, M. (2015). *Friend and foe: When to cooperate, when to compete, and how to succeed at both*. Crown Business.
- Gould, R. V. (2002). The origins of status hierarchies: A formal theory and empirical test. *American Journal of Sociology*, *107*(5), 1143–1178. <https://doi.org/10.1086/341744>
- Graham, J. W. (1986). Principled organizational dissent: A theoretical essay. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *8*, 1–52.
- Grant, A. M., & Ashford, S. J. (2008). The dynamics of proactivity at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *28*, 3–34. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2008.04.002>
- Grant, A. M., & Mayer, D. M. (2009). Good soldiers and good actors: Prosocial and impression management motives as interactive predictors of affiliative citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *94*(4), 900. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013770>
- Grant, A. M., Parker, S., & Collins, C. (2009). Getting Credit for Proactive Behavior: supervisor Reactions Depend on What You Value and How You Feel. *Personnel Psychology*, *62*(1), 31–55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2008.01128.x>
- Guinote, A. (2007). Power and goal pursuit. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *33*(8), 1076–1087. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167207301011>
- Guo, Y., Zhu, Y., & Zhang, L. (2022). Inclusive leadership, leader identification and employee voice behavior: The moderating role of power distance. *Current Psychology*, *41*(3), 1301–1310. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-020-00647-x>
- Halbesleben, J. R. B., Bowler, Wm. M., Bolino, M. C., & Turnley, W. H. (2010). Organizational Concern, Prosocial Values, or Impression Management? How Supervisors Attribute Motives to Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *40*(6), 1450–1489. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2010.00625.x>
- Halevy, N., Y. Chou, E., & D. Galinsky, A. (2011). A functional model of hierarchy: Why, how, and when vertical differentiation enhances group performance. *Organizational Psychology Review*, *1*(1), 32–52. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2041386610380991>

- Harlos, K. (2010). If you build a remedial voice mechanism, will they come? Determinants of voicing interpersonal mistreatment at work. *Human Relations*, 63(3), 311–329. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726709348937>
- Hays, N. A., & Bendersky, C. (2015). Not all inequality is created equal: Effects of status versus power hierarchies on competition for upward mobility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 108, 867–882. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pspi0000017>
- Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. Wiley.
- Hinkin, T. R., & Schriesheim, C. A. (1989). Development and application of new scales to measure the French and Raven (1959) bases of social power. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 74(4), 561–567. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.74.4.561>
- Hirschman, A. O. (1970). *Exit, voice and loyalty, responses to decline in firms, organizations, and states*. Harvard University Press.
- Hofstede, G., Hofstede, G. J., & Minkov, M. (2010). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. McGraw Hill.
- Howell, T. M., Harrison, D. A., Burris, E. R., & Detert, J. R. (2015). Who gets credit for input? Demographic and structural status cues in voice recognition. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100(6), 1765–1784. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000025>
- Huang, L., & Paterson, T. A. (2017). Group ethical voice: Influence of ethical leadership and impact on ethical performance. *Journal of Management*, 43(4), 1157–1184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314546195>
- Huang, X., Xu, E., Huang, L., & Liu, W. (2018). Nonlinear consequences of promotive and prohibitive voice for managers' responses: The roles of voice frequency and LMX. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103(10), 1101–1120. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000326>
- Hussain, I., Shu, R., Tangirala, S., & Ekkirala, S. (2019). The voice bystander effect: How information redundancy inhibits employee voice. *Academy of Management Journal*, 62(3), 828–849. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2017.0245>
- Ilgen, D. R., Fisher, C. D., & Taylor, M. S. (1979). Consequences of individual feedback on behavior in organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 64(4), 349–371. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.64.4.349>
- Inesi, M. E., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Galinsky, A. D. (2012). How power corrupts relationships: Cynical attributions for others' generous acts. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48(4), 795–803. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2012.01.008>

- Isaakyan, S., Sherf, E. N., Tangirala, S., & Guenter, H. (2021). Keeping it between us: Managerial endorsement of public versus private voice. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 106*(7), 1049–1066. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000816>
- Islam, G., & Zyphur, M. J. (2005). Power, voice, and hierarchy: Exploring the antecedents of speaking up in groups. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice, 9*(2), 93–103. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2699.9.2.93>
- Jada, U. R., & Mukhopadhyay, S. (2019). Understanding the effects of empowering, transformational and ethical leadership on promotive and prohibitive voice: A moderated mediated examination. *Personnel Review, 48*(3), 707–730. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-11-2017-0365>
- Janssen, O., & Gao, L. (2015). Supervisory responsiveness and employee self-perceived status and voice behavior. *Journal of Management, 41*(7), 1854–1872. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206312471386>
- Jeung, C.-W., & Yoon, H. J. (2018). When leadership elicits voice: Evidence for a mediated moderation model. *Journal of Management & Organization, 24*(1), 40–61. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2017.42>
- Johnson, C., Ford, R., & Kaufman, J. (2000). Emotional reactions to conflict: Do dependence and legitimacy matter? *Social Forces, 79*(1), 107–137. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2675566>
- Johnson, D. E., Erez, A., Kiker, D. S., & Motowidlo, S. J. (2002). Liking and attributions of motives as mediators of the relationships between individuals' reputations, helpful behaviors and raters' reward decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*(4), 808–815. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.808>
- Kamal Kumar, K., & Kumar Mishra, S. (2017). Subordinate-superior upward communication: Power, politics, and political skill. *Human Resource Management, 56*(6), 1015–1037. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21814>
- Kaufman, B. E. (2015). Theorising determinants of employee voice: An integrative model across disciplines and levels of analysis. *Human Resource Management Journal, 25*(1), 19–40. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12056>
- Kelley, H. H. (1951). Communication in experimentally created hierarchies. *Human Relations, 4*(1), 39–56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872675100400102>
- Kelley, H. H. (1973). The processes of causal attribution. *American Psychologist, 28*(2), 107–128. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0034225>
- Keltner, D., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Anderson, C. (2003). Power, approach, and inhibition. *Psychological Review, 110*(2), 265. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.110.2.265>

- Kennedy, J. A., & Anderson, C. (2017). Hierarchical rank and principled dissent: How holding higher rank suppresses objection to unethical practices. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *139*, 30–49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2017.01.002>
- Kilduff, G. J., & Galinsky, A. D. (2013). From the ephemeral to the enduring: How approach-oriented mindsets lead to greater status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *105*(5), 816–831. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033667>
- Kim, S., McClean, E. J., Doyle, S. P., Podsakoff, N. P., Lin, E., & Woodruff, T. (2022). The positive and negative effects of social status on ratings of voice behavior: A test of opposing structural and psychological pathways. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *107*(6), 951–967. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000945>
- Kim, T. H., Lee, S. S., Oh, J., & Lee, S. (2019). Too powerless to speak up: Effects of social rejection on sense of power and employee voice. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *49*(10), 655–667. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jasp.12625>
- Kim, Y. J., Fu Lam, C., Oh, J., & Sohn, W. (in press). Employee Constructive Voice: An Integrative Review and a Dyadic Approach. *Journal of Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063221108654>
- King, D. D., Ryan, A. M., & Van Dyne, L. (2019). Voice resilience: Fostering future voice after non-endorsement of suggestions. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *92*(3), 535–565. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12275>
- Kish-Gephart, J. J., Detert, J. R., Treviño, L. K., & Edmondson, A. C. (2009). Silenced by fear: The nature, sources, and consequences of fear at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *29*, 163–193. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2009.07.002>
- Klaas, B. S., Olson-Buchanan, J. B., & Ward, A.-K. (2012). The determinants of alternative forms of workplace voice: An integrative perspective. *Journal of Management*, *38*(1), 314–345. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206311423823>
- Klaas, B. S., & Ward, A.-K. (2015). Formal justice-oriented voice in the nonunion firm: Who speaks up and when? *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, *54*(2), 321–356. <https://doi.org/10.1111/irel.12088>
- Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, *119*(2), 254. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.119.2.254>
- Kraus, M. W., Piff, P. K., Mendoza-Denton, R., Rheinschmidt, M. L., & Keltner, D. (2012). Social class, solipsism, and contextualism: How the rich are different from the poor. *Psychological Review*, *119*, 546–572. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028756>



- Lam, C. F., Lee, C., & Sui, Y. (2019). Say it as it is: Consequences of voice directness, voice politeness, and voicer credibility on voice endorsement. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 104*(5), 642–658. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000358>
- Lam, L. W., & Xu, A. J. (2019). Power imbalance and employee silence: The role of abusive leadership, power distance orientation, and perceived organisational politics. *Applied Psychology, 68*(3), 513–546. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12170>
- Lammers, J., Galinsky, A. D., Gordijn, E. H., & Otten, S. (2011). Power increases social distance. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 3*(3), 282–290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1948550611418679>
- Lammers, J., Stoker, J. I., Rink, F., & Galinsky, A. D. (2016). To have control over or to be free from others? The desire for power reflects a need for autonomy. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 42*(4), 498–512. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167216634064>
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer.
- Leary, M. R., Terry, M. L., Batts Allen, A., & Tate, E. B. (2009). The concept of ego threat in social and personality psychology: Is ego threat a viable scientific construct? *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 13*(3), 151–164. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1088868309342595>
- Lebel, R. D. (2016). Overcoming the fear factor: How perceptions of supervisor openness lead employees to speak up when fearing external threat. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 135*, 10–21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2016.05.001>
- Lebel, R. D., & Patil, S. V. (2018). Proactivity despite discouraging supervisors: The powerful role of prosocial motivation. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 103*(7), 724–737. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000301>
- Lee, A. J., Mason, M. F., & Malcomb, C. S. (2021). Beyond cheap talk accounts: A theory of politeness in negotiations. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 41*, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2021.100154>
- Leroy, H., Dierynck, B., Anseel, F., Simons, T., Halbesleben, J. R. B., McCaughey, D., Savage, G. T., & Sels, L. (2012). Behavioral integrity for safety, priority of safety, psychological safety, and patient safety: A team-level study. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 97*(6), 1273–1281. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0030076>
- Li, A. N., & Tangirala, S. (2022). How employees' voice helps teams remain resilient in the face of exogenous change. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 107*(4), 668–692. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000874>

- Li, H., Chen, Y.-R., & Blader, S. L. (2016). Where is context? Advancing status research with a contextual value perspective. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 36, 185–198. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2016.10.003>
- Li, J., Barnes, C. M., Yam, K. C., Guarana, C. L., & Wang, L. (2019). Do not like it when you need it the most: Examining the effect of manager ego depletion on managerial voice endorsement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 40(8), 869–882. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2370>
- Li, X., & Xing, L. (2021). When does benevolent leadership inhibit silence? The joint moderating roles of perceived employee agreement and cultural value orientations. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 36(7), 562–575. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-07-2020-0412>
- Li, Y., & Sun, J.-M. (2015). Traditional Chinese leadership and employee voice behavior: A cross-level examination. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26(2), 172–189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.08.001>
- Liang, J., Farh, C. I. C., & Farh, J.-L. (2012). Psychological antecedents of promotive and prohibitive voice: A two-wave examination. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(1), 71–92. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0176>
- Lin, X., Chen, Z. X., Tse, H. H., Wei, W., & Ma, C. (2019). Why and when employees like to speak up more under humble leaders? The roles of personal sense of power and power distance. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 158(4), 937–950. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3704-2>
- Lin, X., Lam, L. W., & Zhang, L. L. (2020). The curvilinear relationship between job satisfaction and employee voice: Speaking up for the organization and the self. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 37(2), 587–607. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-018-9622-8>
- Liu, W., Tangirala, S., Lam, W., Chen, Z., Jia, R. T., & Huang, X. (2015). How and when peers' positive mood influences employees' voice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100(3), 976–989. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038066>
- Liu, X., Mao, J.-Y., Chiang, J. T.-J., Guo, L., & Zhang, S. (in press). When and why does voice sustain or stop? The roles of leader behaviours, power differential perception and psychological safety. *Applied Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12432>
- Liu, Y., Wang, W., Lu, H., & Yuan, P. (2021). The divergent effects of employees' sense of power on constructive and defensive voice behavior: A cross-level moderated mediation model. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10490-021-09765-x>

- Ma, L., & McLean Parks, J. (2012). Your good name: The relationship between perceived reputational risk and acceptability of negotiation tactics. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 106(2), 161–175. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0987-6>
- MacMillan, K., Hurst, C., Kelley, K., Howell, J., & Jung, Y. (2020). Who says there's a problem? Preferences on the sending and receiving of prohibitive voice. *Human Relations*, 73(8), 1049–1076. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726719850282>
- Magee, J. C., & Galinsky, A. D. (2008). Social hierarchy: The self-reinforcing nature of power and status. *Academy of Management Annals*, 2(1), 351–398. <https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520802211628>
- Martin, S. R., & Harrison, S. H. (2022). Upward mobility, the cleft habitus, and speaking up: How class transitions relate to individual and organizational antecedents of voice. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(3), 813–841. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2020.1550>
- Mayer, D. M., Ong, M., Sonenshein, S., & Ashford, S. J. (2019). The money or the morals? When moral language is more effective for selling social issues. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(8), 1058–1076. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000388>
- Maynes, T. D., & Podsakoff, P. M. (2014). Speaking more broadly: An examination of the nature, antecedents, and consequences of an expanded set of employee voice behaviors. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 99(1), 87–112. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0034284>
- McClellan, E. J., Burriss, E. R., & Detert, J. R. (2013). When does voice lead to exit? It depends on leadership. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(2), 525–548. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0041>
- McClellan, E. J., Kim, S., & Martinez, T. (2022). Which ideas for change are endorsed? How agentic and communal voice affects endorsement differently for men and for women. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(2), 634–655. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2019.0492>
- McClellan, E. J., Martin, S. R., Emich, K. J., & Woodruff, Col. T. (2018). The social consequences of voice: An examination of voice type and gender on status and subsequent leader emergence. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(5), 1869–1891. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2016.0148>
- McClelland, D. C. (1975). *Power: The inner experience*. Irvington.
- Menon, T., Thompson, L., & Choi, H.-S. (2006). Tainted knowledge vs. Tempting knowledge: People avoid knowledge from internal rivals and seek knowledge from external rivals. *Management Science*, 52(8), 1129–1144. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.1060.0525>

- Miceli, M. P., Near, J. P., & Dworkin, T. M. (2008). *Whistleblowing in organizations*. Routledge.
- Milliken, F. J., & Lam, N. (2009). Making the decision to speak up or to remain silent: Implications for organizational learning. In J. Greenberg & M. S. Edwards (Eds.), *Voice and silence in organizations* (pp. 225–244). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Milliken, F. J., Morrison, E. W., & Hewlin, P. F. (2003). An exploratory study of employee silence: Issues that employees don't communicate upward and why. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(6), 1453–1476. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00387>
- Morrison, E. W. (2011). Employee voice behavior: Integration and directions for future research. *Academy of Management Annals*, 5(1), 373–412. <https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2011.574506>
- Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1(1), 173–197. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091328>
- Morrison, E. W. (in press). Employee voice and silence: 10 years later. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-120920-054654>
- Morrison, E. W., & Milliken, F. J. (2000). Organizational silence: A barrier to change and development in a pluralistic world. *Academy of Management Review*, 25(4), 706–725. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2000.3707697>
- Morrison, E. W., & Rothman, N. B. (2009). Silence and the dynamics of power. In J. Greenberg & M. S. Edwards (Eds.), *Voice and silence in organizations* (Vol. 6, pp. 111–134). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
- Morrison, E. W., See, K. E., & Pan, C. (2015). An approach-inhibition model of employee silence: The joint effects of personal sense of power and target openness. *Personnel Psychology*, 68(3), 547–580. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12087>
- Mowbray, P. K., Wilkinson, A., & Tse, H. H. (2015). An integrative review of employee voice: Identifying a common conceptualization and research agenda. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 17(3), 382–400. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12045>
- Near, J. P., & Miceli, M. P. (1986). Retaliation against whistle blowers: Predictors and effects. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71(1), 137–145. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.71.1.137>
- Nechanska, E., Hughes, E., & Dundon, T. (2020). Towards an integration of employee voice and silence. *Human Resource Management Review*, 30(1), 100674. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmmr.2018.11.002>

- Nembhard, I. M., & Edmondson, A. C. (2006). Making it safe: The effects of leader inclusiveness and professional status on psychological safety and improvement efforts in health care teams. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 27(7), 941–966. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.413>
- Oc, B., Bashshur, M. R., & Moore, C. (2015). Speaking truth to power: The effect of candid feedback on how individuals with power allocate resources. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100(2), 450–463. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038138>
- Oc, B., Bashshur, M. R., & Moore, C. (2019). Head above the parapet: How minority subordinates influence group outcomes and the consequences they face for doing so. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(7), 929–945. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000376>
- Organ, D. W., Podsakoff, P. M., & MacKenzie, S. B. (2006). *Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Its Nature, Antecedents, and Consequences*. SAGE Publications.
- Park, H., Tangirala, S., Hussain, I., & Ekkirala, S. (in press). How and when managers reward employees' voice: The role of proactivity attributions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0001008>
- Pettit, N. C., & Sivanathan, N. (2012). The eyes and ears of status: How status colors perceptual judgment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(5), 570–582. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211431166>
- Pettit, N. C., Sivanathan, N., Gladstone, E., & Marr, J. C. (2013). Rising stars and sinking ships: Consequences of status momentum. *Psychological Science*, 24(8), 1579–1584. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612473120>
- Pettit, N. C., Yong, K., & Spataro, S. E. (2010). Holding your place: Reactions to the prospect of status gains and losses. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 46(2), 396–401. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2009.12.007>
- Pfeffer, J., & Salancik, G. (1978). *The external control of organizations: A resource dependence perspective*. Harper and Row.
- Phillips, K. W., Duguid, M., Thomas-Hunt, M., & Uparna, J. (2013). Diversity as knowledge exchange: The roles of information processing, expertise, and status. In Q. M. Roberson (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of diversity and work*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199736355.013.0009>
- Pinder, C. C., & Harlos, K. P. (2001). Employee silence: Quiescence and acquiescence as responses to perceived injustice. In *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management* (Vol. 20, pp. 331–369). Emerald Group Publishing Limited. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-7301\(01\)20007-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-7301(01)20007-3)

- Pitesa, M., & Thau, S. (2013). Compliant sinners, obstinate saints: How power and self-focus determine the effectiveness of social influences in ethical decision making. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56(3), 635–658. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.0891>
- Popelnukha, A., Almeida, S., Obaid, A., Sarwar, N., Atamba, C., Tariq, H., & Weng, Q. (Derek). (2022). Keep your mouth shut until I feel good: Testing the moderated mediation model of leader's threat to competence, self-defense tactics, and voice rejection. *Personnel Review*, 51(1), 394–431. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-09-2019-0508>
- Raub, S., & Robert, C. (2013). Empowerment, organizational commitment, and voice behavior in the hospitality industry: Evidence from a multinational sample. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 54(2), 136–148. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1938965512457240>
- Read, W. H. (1962). Upward communication in industrial hierarchies. *Human Relations*, 15(1), 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001872676201500101>
- Ridgeway, C. L., & Berger, J. (1986). Expectations, legitimation, and dominance behavior in task groups. *American Sociological Review*, 51(5), 603–617. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095487>
- Ridgeway, C. L., & Diekema, D. (1989). Dominance and collective hierarchy formation in male and female task groups. *American Sociological Review*, 54(1), 79–93. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2095663>
- Ridgeway, C. L., & Johnson, C. (1990). What is the relationship between socioemotional behavior and status in task groups? *American Journal of Sociology*, 95(5), 1189–1212. <https://doi.org/10.1086/229426>
- Ridgeway, C. L., & Walker, H. A. (1995). Status structures. In K. Cook, G. Fine, & J. House (Eds.), *Sociological perspectives on social psychology*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Roberts, K. H., & O'Reilly, C. A. (1974). Failures in upward communication in organizations: Three possible culprits. *Academy of Management Journal*, 17(2), 205–215. <https://doi.org/10.5465/254974>
- Rucker, D. D., Galinsky, A. D., & Dubois, D. (2012). Power and consumer behavior: How power shapes who and what consumers value. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 22(3), 352–368. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2011.06.001>
- Rucker, D. D., Galinsky, A. D., & Magee, J. C. (2018). The agentic–communal model of advantage and disadvantage: How inequality produces similarities in the psychology of power, social class, gender, and race. In J. M. Olson (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 58, pp. 71–125). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.aesp.2018.04.001>

- Satterstrom, P., Kerrissey, M., & DiBenigno, J. (2021). The voice cultivation process: How team members can help upward voice live on to implementation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 66(2), 380–425. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839220962795>
- Schmid, P. C., & Schmid Mast, M. (2013). Power increases performance in a social evaluation situation as a result of decreased stress responses. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43(3), 201–211. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1937>
- Schwappach, D. L. B. (2016). [When silence is dangerous: “Speaking-up” about safety concerns]. *Zeitschrift Für Evidenz, Fortbildung Und Qualität Im Gesundheitswesen*, 114, 5–12.
- Scrimshire, A. J., Lensges, M. L., Webster, B. D., & Crosby, D. H. (2021). Can we talk? Why employees fail to report negative events to their managers. *Career Development International*, 26(6), 749–765. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-03-2021-0083>
- Sherf, E. N., Parke, M. R., & Isaakyan, S. (2021). Distinguishing voice and silence at work: Unique relationships with perceived impact, psychological safety, and burnout. *Academy of Management Journal*, 64(1), 114–148. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.1428>
- Sherf, E. N., Sinha, R., Tangirala, S., & Awasty, N. (2018). Centralization of member voice in teams: Its effects on expertise utilization and team performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103(8), 813–827. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000305>
- Sijbom, R. B. L., Janssen, O., & Van Yperen, N. W. (2016). Leaders’ achievement goals and their integrative management of creative ideas voiced by subordinates or superiors. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 46(6), 732–745. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2223>
- Sijbom, R. B. L., & Parker, S. K. (2020). When Are Leaders Receptive to Voiced Creative Ideas? Joint Effects of Leaders’ Achievement Goals and Personal Sense of Power. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01527>
- Singh-Manoux, A., Marmot, M. G., & Adler, N. E. (2005). Does subjective social status predict health and change in health status better than objective status? *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 67(6), 855–861. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.psy.0000188434.52941.a0>
- Sivanathan, N., Pillutla, M. M., & Keith Murnighan, J. (2008). Power gained, power lost. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 105(2), 135–146. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2007.10.003>
- Sonenshein, S. (2006). Crafting Social Issues at Work. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 49(6), 1158–1172.

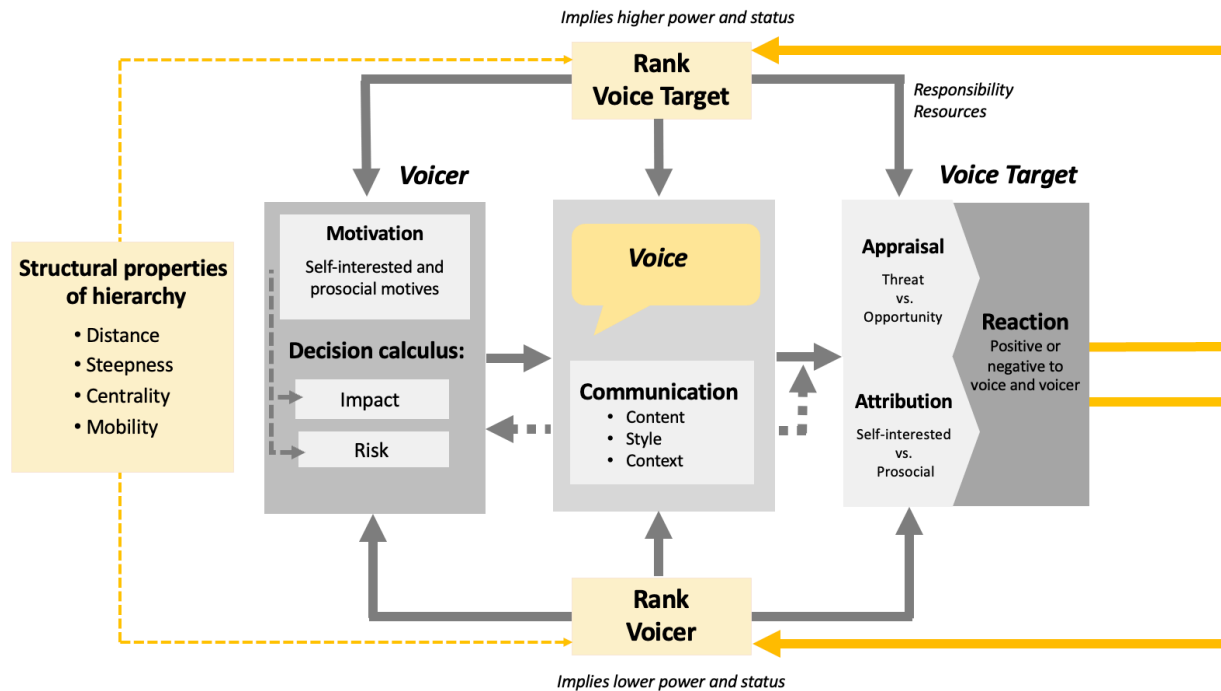
- Spreitzer, G. M. (1995). Psychological empowerment in the workplace: Dimensions, measurement, and validation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(5), 1442–1465. <https://doi.org/10.5465/256865>
- Su, X., Liu, Y., & Hanson-Rasmussen, N. (2017). Voice behavior, supervisor attribution and employee performance appraisal. *Sustainability*, 9(10), Article 10. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su9101829>
- Sutton, R., & Kahn, R. L. (1986). Prediction, understanding, and control as antidotes to organizational stress. In J. Lorsch (Ed.), *Handbook of organizational behavior* (pp. 272–285). Prentice-Hall.
- Tangirala, S., & Ramanujam, R. (2008). Exploring nonlinearity in employee voice: The effects of personal control and organizational identification. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 51(6), 1189–1203.
- Tangirala, S., & Ramanujam, R. (2012). Ask and you shall hear (but not always): Examining the relationship between manager consultation and employee voice. *Personnel Psychology*, 65(2), 251–282. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2012.01248.x>
- Thompson, V. D., Stroebe, W., & Schopler, J. (1971). Some situational determinants of the motives attributed to the person who performs a helping act. *Journal of Personality*, 39(3), 460–472. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1971.tb00055.x>
- Tost, L. P. (2015). When, why, and how do powerholders “feel the power”? Examining the links between structural and psychological power and reviving the connection between power and responsibility. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 35, 29–56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.riob.2015.10.004>
- Tourish, D., & Robson, P. (2003). Critical upward feedback in organisations: Processes, problems and implications for communication management. *Journal of Communication Management*, 8(2), 150–167. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13632540410807628>
- Tyler, T. R., & Blader, S. L. (2002). Autonomous vs. comparative status: Must we be better than others to feel good about ourselves? *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 89(1), 813–838. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-5978\(02\)00031-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0749-5978(02)00031-6)
- Urbach, T., & Fay, D. (2021). Leader-member exchange in leaders’ support for voice: Good relationships matter in situations of power threat. *Applied Psychology*, 70(2), 674–708. <https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12245>
- Van Dyne, L., Ang, S., & Botero, I. C. (2003). Conceptualizing employee silence and employee voice as multidimensional constructs. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(6), 1359–1392. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00384>



- Van Dyne, L., & LePine, J. A. (1998). Helping and voice extra-role behaviors: Evidence of construct and predictive validity. *The Academy of Management Journal*, *41*(1), 108–119. <https://doi.org/10.2307/256902>
- Venkataramani, V., & Tangirala, S. (2010). When and why do central employees speak up? An examination of mediating and moderating variables. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *95*(3), 582–591. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018315>
- Venkataramani, V., Zhou, L., Wang, M., Liao, H., & Shi, J. (2016). Social networks and employee voice: The influence of team members' and team leaders' social network positions on employee voice. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *132*, 37–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2015.12.001>
- Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. Wiley.
- Wang, D., Gan, C., & Wu, C. (2016). LMX and employee voice: A moderated mediation model of psychological empowerment and role clarity. *Personnel Review*, *45*(3), 605–615. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-11-2014-0255>
- Wei, X., Zhang, Z.-X., & Chen, X.-P. (2015). I will speak up if my voice is socially desirable: A moderated mediating process of promotive versus prohibitive voice. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, *100*(5), 1641–1652. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0039046>
- Weiner, B. (1985). An attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. *Psychological Review*, *92*(4), 548–573. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.92.4.548>
- Weiss, M., Kolbe, M., Grote, G., Spahn, D. R., & Grande, B. (2017). Why didn't you say something? Effects of after-event reviews on voice behaviour and hierarchy beliefs in multi-professional action teams. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *26*(1), 66–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2016.1208652>
- Weiss, M., & Morrison, E. W. (2019). Speaking up and moving up: How voice can enhance employees' social status. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *40*(1), 5–19. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2262>
- Whiting, S. W., Maynes, T. D., Podsakoff, N. P., & Podsakoff, P. M. (2012). Effects of message, source, and context on evaluations of employee voice behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *97*, 159–182. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024871>
- Whitson, J. A., Liljenquist, K. A., Galinsky, A. D., Magee, J. C., Gruenfeld, D. H., & Cadena, B. (2013). The blind leading: Power reduces awareness of constraints. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *49*(3), 579–582. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2012.10.009>

- Wilkinson, A., Barry, M., & Morrison, E. (2020). Toward an integration of research on employee voice. *Human Resource Management Review*, *30*(1), 100677. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hrmr.2018.12.001>
- Xiao, X., Zhou, Z., Yang, F., & Wang, S. (2021). I am not proactive but I want to speak up: A self-concept perspective. *Current Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02404-0>
- Yang, Y., Li, J., & Sekiguchi, T. (2021). How supervisors respond to employee voice: An experimental study in China and Japan. *Asian Business & Management*, *20*(1), 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41291-019-00075-1>
- Yu, A., Hays, N. A., & Zhao, E. Y. (2019). Development of a bipartite measure of social hierarchy: The perceived power and perceived status scales. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *152*, 84–104. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2019.03.011>
- Yukl, G., & Tracey, J. B. (1992). Consequences of influence tactics used with subordinates, peers, and the boss. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *77*, 525–535. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.77.4.525>
- Zhang, Y., Huai, M., & Xie, Y. (2015). Paternalistic leadership and employee voice in China: A dual process model. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *26*(1), 25–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.01.002>
- Zhang, Z., Liang, Q., & Li, J. (2019). Understanding managerial response to employee voice: A social persuasion perspective. *International Journal of Manpower*, *41*(3), 273–288. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-05-2018-0156>

**Figure 1.** The Hierarchy of Voice framework



Note: The Hierarchy of Voice framework is a dyadic process model which highlights the role of hierarchy in the voicer’s decision to speak up and the appraisals, attributions, and reactions to that voice by the target of the voice. The voicer’s motivation to speak up initiates and influences a decision calculus that analyzes the perceived impact and the risk of one’s possible voice (gray dotted arrows). Higher rank of the voicer enhances the perceived impact and reduces the perceived risks of voice. In contrast, higher rank of the voice target enhances the perceived impact but also the perceived risk of speaking up. Moreover, employees can manage the perceived impact and risk through how they communicate their voice, i.e., its content, style, and context, which is influenced by the absolute ranks (gray solid arrows) and relative hierarchical ranks (i.e., the hierarchical distance, yellow dotted arrows) of the voicer and the target.

Moving to the right side of the framework, where the voice is received by the voice target. The target’s own and the voicer’s hierarchical rank influence their appraisal of and the attributed motive behind the voice (gray solid arrows). Higher rank of the target increases the propensity to attribute self-interested motives to the voice. Further, both voice appraisals and attributions are shaped by how the voice is communicated (gray dotted arrow). The target’s appraisals and attributions then influence their reaction to voice: a threat appraisal and self-interested attribution lead to more negative reactions and an opportunity appraisal and a prosocial attribution lead to more positive reactions.

The model includes two feedback loops (solid yellow arrows) that travel from the reaction of the target back to their own and the voicer’s hierarchical rank. Positive reactions to voice will increase and negative reactions will decrease the status and power of voicers. How these reactions affect the target’s own power and status depends on further factors, e.g., the resources the target has to address the voiced issue.

The yellow rectangle with the yellow dotted arrows indicates the influence of structural properties of an organizational hierarchy (e.g., distance, steepness, centrality, mobility) on voice by affecting the absolute and relative ranks of the voicer and the target.