

Fall 1999

Thinking through performance: Children make sense of characters and social relationships through a gesture-based theatre convention (Tableau)

Georgia Patricia Wilson
University of New Hampshire, Durham

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation>

Recommended Citation

Wilson, Georgia Patricia, "Thinking through performance: Children make sense of characters and social relationships through a gesture-based theatre convention (Tableau)" (1999). *Doctoral Dissertations*. 2101.
<https://scholars.unh.edu/dissertation/2101>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Dissertations by an authorized administrator of University of New Hampshire Scholars' Repository. For more information, please contact nicole.hentz@unh.edu.

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI[®]

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

THINKING THROUGH PERFORMANCE:
CHILDREN MAKE SENSE OF CHARACTERS AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS
THROUGH A GESTURE BASED THEATRE CONVENTION (TABLEAU)

By

Georgia Patricia Wilson

B.S., Saint Joseph College, CT 1977

M.Ed., University of New Hampshire, 1991

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire

in Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Reading and Writing Instruction

September 1999

UMI Number: 9944004

**Copyright 1999 by
Wilson, Georgia Patricia**

All rights reserved.

**UMI Microform 9944004
Copyright 1999, by UMI Company. All rights reserved.**

**This microform edition is protected against unauthorized
copying under Title 17, United States Code.**

UMI
300 North Zeeb Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

1999

Georgia Patricia Wilson

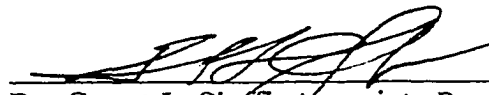
This dissertation has been examined and approved.



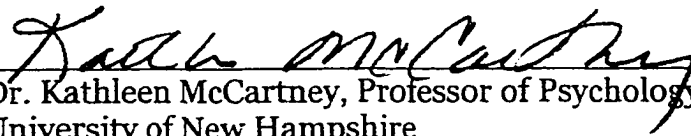
Dissertation Co-Director, Dr. Paula M. Salvio, Associate
Professor of Education, University of New Hampshire



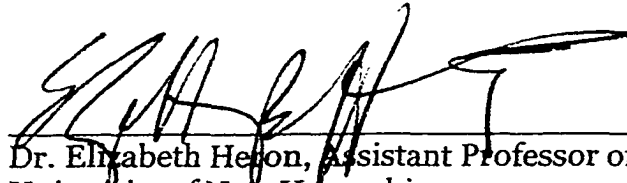
Dissertation Co-Director, Dr. William L. Wansart, Associate
Professor of Education, University of New Hampshire



Dr. Grant L. Cioffi, Associate Professor of Education,
University of New Hampshire



Dr. Kathleen McCartney, Professor of Psychology,
University of New Hampshire



Dr. Elizabeth Helton, Assistant Professor of Education,
University of New Hampshire

July 27, 1999
(date)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Conversations and experiences converge within this dissertation to form its body. Whether you passed a comment, engaged me in discussion, or let me observe, you helped build this inquiry. This is one of the times that words are inadequate and the simplest are best, thank you.

My thanks to the children who reminded me of how much they know. I also thank Susan and Andrea for letting me share their children and for their help navigating early childhood education. My thanks to the school community, particularly Jerry and Wes for supporting my work and to the school board for giving me permission to do this work in their school.

My thanks to my colleagues for the continual encouragement and idea-bouncing. There were times you kept me afloat. Thank you.

My thanks to my dissertation team. Kathy, thank you for your careful readings and comments that helped me see this as would an outside reader. Liz, thank you for reminding me to remain a teacher and to keep the children in focus. Grant, thank you for continual, steady words and humor as well as for insight (and resources) in language and pragmatics. Bill, you have not only been a long-term advisor, but also encouraged my interest in cognitive action, helping me see a world beyond tradition. Paula, I am ever grateful to have learned the value of performance through your influence. You also broadened the world of education and linked my ideas to broader theoretical considerations.

And Ken, thank you. You help me define and actualize my dreams.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
ABSTRACT.....	xi

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. TABLEAU: A WAY TO THINK.....	1
What is Tableau?.....	1
Why Should Tableau Matter?.....	2
Performance Recasts Students.....	5
The Value of Invention.....	9
Invention is Interpretation and Symbols Are the Tools.....	12
Mediating Learning and Pedagogical Practices.....	15
Potential of Tableau.....	17
II. METHODOLOGY.....	19
Action Theory.....	20
A Teacher-Researcher in an Instrumental Case Study.....	21
Case Study.....	22
The Action-Event of Tableau: Identifying the Relationships Therein.....	23

Grounded Theory: A Study of Concepts.....	24
Conceptual Analysis.....	25
Conceptual Study.....	26
Teacher-Research.....	26
Implications of My Role.....	28
Setting Up the Instrumental Case Study.....	28
Inviting and Involving Children.....	30
One Session.....	32
Method of Analysis.....	34
Thinking Through Tableau.....	36
Performative Gesture.....	36
Tableau as a Means of Interpretation.....	37
Positioning and Negotiation.....	38
Interviews.....	39
Verification and Validity.....	40
III. PERFORMATIVE GESTURE AS A WAY OF THINKING.....	44
Model Cases of Performative Gesture.....	45
Borderline Case.....	54
Related Case: Language.....	55
Qualities of Language and of Gesture.....	57
Signs.....	63
Defining Performative Gesture as Cognitive Action.....	67
IV. EMOTION BASED THINKING IN TABLEAU.....	73

Emotion to Gather Information, to Make Sense Subjectively..	74
Emotion to Determine Intention.....	80
The Relationship of Emotion to Cognitive Action.....	81
Secondary Emotions, Window to Cultural Values.....	85
Expression of Emotion in Tableau.....	90
Uses of Emotion.....	93
Theory of Mind: Perspective Taking through Role	
Assignments.....	94
V. POSITION TO APPREHEND THROUGH TABLEAU.....	101
Space, Position and Self-definition.....	103
Self-definition.....	107
Positioned to Apprehend.....	110
Difference in Perspective Taking.....	111
Negotiation for Control of Meaning.....	121
Collaborative Negotiation.....	128
VI. THINKING THROUGH TABLEAU: A SUMMARY.....	131
Review and Summary.....	132
Review.....	133
Summary of Determinations.....	135
Teaching and Tableau.....	138
Tableau in the Early Childhood Language Arts	
Classroom.....	138
Limits of Tableau.....	142

Current Instructional Concerns.....	143
Research Implications.....	146
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	148
APPENDICES	160
A. Internal Review Board Approval.....	161
B. Draft of Riding Story.....	162
C. High School Student's Tableau of Prejudice.....	165
D. Additional Citations.....	167

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 1. Writing Lab Tableau.....	1
Figure 2. Use of Body Posture.....	45
Figure 3. Two Hand-focused Gestures.....	46
Figure 4. Facial Expression Performative Gesture.....	47
Figure 5. Positioning Relative to Others.....	48
Figure 6. Tableau with Four Foci	49
Figure 7. Symbolic, Culturally Standardized Gestures.....	50
Figure 8. Imitative Gesture.....	51
Figure 9. Whole Body Shows Intention.....	53
Figure 10. Differences in Intention.....	54
Figure 11. Each Focal Point Contributes Meaning.....	59
Figure 12. Reading Use of Space and Gesture.....	60
Figure 13. Examples of Performative Gestures as Signs.....	63
Figure 14. Peace Symbol.....	64
Figure 15. Begging Gesture.....	67
Figure 16. Role of Teacher.....	76
Figure 17. Projection in Tableau.....	79
Figure 18. Emotional Content of Tableau.....	88
Figure 19. Tableau of Anger and Sadness.....	91

Figure 20. Tableau of Troll's Attitudes.....	92
Figure 21. Excerpts from a Tableau Show Roles and Emotions.....	96
Figure 22. Lilly as Mad and Sad.....	104
Figure 23. Different Perspectives in Tableau.....	105
Figure 24. Different Positions in Tableau.....	112
Figure 25. Tableau from a Story Children Created.....	114
Figure 26. Power Differences.....	119
Figure 27. Disagreements During Negotiations.....	125

ABSTRACT

THINKING THROUGH PERFORMANCE: CHILDREN MAKE SENSE OF CHARACTERS AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH A GESTURE BASED THEATRE CONVENTION (TABLEAU)

By

Georgia Patricia Wilson

University of New Hampshire, September 1999

This inquiry considers a gesture-based theatre convention called tableau as used by first and second graders during language arts instruction. I argue that tableau acts as a medium of thinking, used to make sense of literary text and of social relationships. Tableau is largely non-language-based; it augments instructional practices that are primarily language-based. Tableau reveals sophisticated understandings children cannot yet put into language. As such, tableau offers educators a means to cast children as capable analysts of literature.

Qualitatively oriented, this inquiry uses instrumental case study methods of observation and data analysis coupled with a concurrent conceptual study of the implications of the children's actions. However, unlike many case studies, I took the role of teacher-researcher to bring first hand experience using tableau pedagogically. The data collected and analyzed included videotapes, audiotapes and still photographs of the children's planning, enactment and follow-up

discussion about each tableau. Inductive analyses identified patterns while taking into account the mutually shaping influences within the study environment. Established related theories were studied and modified based on the data collected, thereby grounding the theories in children's actions.

This inquiry suggests three ways tableau acts as a means of thinking. First, through tableau, children think through the non-language-based sign system of performative gesture. Secondly, children use emotion-based cognitive systems to interpret the point of view of characters as well as relationships between characters. Thirdly, to create a tableau, children negotiate meaning and control with their peers and through the sociocultural environment, employing intellectual, emotional and social labor. In addition, tableau reveals personal beliefs and underlying sociocultural values about social relationships and provides occasion to discuss multiple perspective taking, positioning and negotiation.

Tableau acts as a microcosm reflecting the tensions of the larger social world. Within this microcosm, children use tableau to think through relationships written into literary text and to negotiate a position in the immediate social world. Children use the space of tableau as a three-dimensional canvass that bridges reasoning non-verbally and reasoning through language.

CHAPTER I

TABLEAU: A WAY TO THINK

In making central to our teaching the arts and the symbol systems that present them, we may render conscious the process of making meaning, a process that has much to do with the shaping of identity, the development of a sense of agency, and a commitment to a certain mode of praxis (Greene, 1997).

Why would a theatre performance convention such as tableau, that is largely non-language-based, be a way of thinking? To answer that question, I engaged in an instrumental case study of first and second graders' use of tableau. My goal was to understand tableau as a means of learning, of thinking, and as an instrument of pedagogy. As a teacher-researcher, I asked children in two classrooms to create tableaux associated with literature while I engaged in a concurrent conceptual study of the implications of the children's actions.

What is Tableau?

During this inquiry, first and second graders created tableaux, frozen slices of action, connected with literature. These tableaux are still (no movement,



Figure 1. Writing lab tableau

no sound, and no props) interpretations of literature. For example, with the book, *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996), four children picked a scene wherein Lilly writes a story about her teacher that depicts him as mean and evil (see Figure 1). Through the tableau, the children create a visual, dimensional text. The tableau depicts relationships between characters and attitudes of characters (one student is 'shocked,' another is unaware or ignoring the act and the teacher observes all). Tableau freezes the interpretation for analysis.

Why Would Tableau Matter?

Use of tableau with reading literature attracted my attention because it couples a non-language-based form (performative gesture) with language (reading and discussion). Such a coupling is called transmediation (Leland & Harste, 1994; Siegel, 1995; Siegel, 1984; Suhor & Little, 1988). Transmediation engages two or more sign systems in a dialogic-type action to generate understanding about a concept or phenomenon. "Transmediation, the act of translating meaning from one sign system to another...increases students' opportunities to engage in generative and reflective thinking because learners must invent connections between the two signs systems" (Siegel, 1995, p. 455). Marjorie Siegel studied transmediation using a sketching activity in conjunction with reading literary text. She drew on theorists in the field of semiotics (the study of signs) to show how transmediation generated understanding (1995). Semiotics theory relates that signs do not transmit meaning. *Signification* is required and that is achieved through an *interpretant* (Hausman, 1993/1997; Peirce, 1985; Siegel, 1995; Siegel, 1984). Signification requires work on the part

of the reader who exerts intellectual, emotional and social labor to determine meaning. In my inquiry, tableau acts as a non-language-based symbol system. Similar to Siegel's use of sketching, tableau works with literature to create a transmediary relationship. The children who participated in my study were interpretants who made sense of literature with language-based signs and non-language-based signs.

Although there is an emphasis on language and mathematics in our school systems (Gallas, 1994; Gardner, 1991), I recognize the importance of non-language-based thinking. I've come to agree with John Dewey's assessment that thinking effectively in terms of relationship of qualities (i.e., relational thinking) places as severe a demand on the intellect as does thinking in terms of verbal and mathematical symbols (1934, p. 46). Relational thinking involves conceiving the whole and the relations between its constituents. It is synchronic in nature and requires apprehension of underlying relationships. An arts-based convention such as tableau calls for relational thinking. It calls for readers to look at a whole visual display. The display includes character stances and the relationships between characters. The reader gives significance to these 'parts' and to how they mesh to form a whole meaning-filled event.

In ancient Greece, art was part of everyday life. Through time it became separated, compartmentalized into an elite status of "fine art" (Dewey, 1934). Dewey sees this separation as having a profound effect on society because the aesthetic dropped from ordinary life. Aesthetic thinking is no longer as valuable to ordinary, daily living. It belongs to a few artists, and the product of their work

belongs to a few members of society. Crafts are common. Art has been elite, and thereby less accessible, despite its cognitive properties.

Currently there are movements in the United States educational system to emphasize the arts. *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, includes the arts on equal ground as a core subject with English, mathematics, history, civics and government, science, foreign language, and geography (1994). The *Consortium of National Arts Education Associations* (1994) developed national standards in the arts. Based on my experience as a teacher, I appreciate why education needs an emphasis toward art. As a novice professional twenty years ago, my understanding of education was verbocentric with a psycholinguistic orientation. I did not recognize the potential of art mediums as modes of thinking.

Despite the current movements to recognize the value of art as more than a cultural artifact of the elite, the consideration of performance as a way to think is secondary in schools. There remains the threat to cut such programs during budget crisis. Consideration of thinking through artistic conventions is especially limited in the field of special education and remedial education. The premise that children with disabilities require “specially designed instruction to meet [their] unique needs” grounds special education. Written documentation must be maintained and include statements about the “present level of performance, annual goals and short term objectives, appropriate objective criteria and evaluation procedures and schedule for determining, on at least an annual basis, whether instructional objectives are being achieved” (IDEA, 1991). There is little room in the daily life of special education for the ambiguity evoked by ‘aesthetic’ relational thinking.

The focus of special education is primarily on areas of deficit. Language development is usually involved, effecting reading, speaking, listening and writing. Language impairments are often cited when deciding a child is handicapped. For example, in 1989, the state of Maine reported that of all the students determined as educationally handicapped, 28% had a primary handicap in speech and language¹ (Kierstead & Gray-Hanc, 1991). In addition, 29.24% of those coded with other primary handicaps had a secondary speech/language handicap (Kierstead & Gray-Hanc, 1991).

Language and language related academics are a focus of remediation. Some of the specially designed programs to improve language related academics such as reading, are highly sequential and rely on building a knowledge base of, for example, sound/symbol correspondence and syllabication rules. Sound/symbol correspondence is crucial and not to be underestimated in terms of importance, but such programs do not need to take the place of complex engagement in using other mediums of reasoning along with the language arts. Part of what I hope to accomplish in this inquiry is to make the case for promoting children's use of non-language-based reasoning as well as language-based reasoning.

Performance Recasts Students

The term performance recurs through this discussion. I turn to the concept performance for strategies, techniques and conventions drawn from theatre. Theatre is a performance art, kin and complementary to the language

¹ A code as speech/language impaired is often used with children below age 5 because of the

arts. Tableau is an example of performance. Dance, readers' theatre and music are other examples. In academic education, I believe we can *use the tools of artists for thinking even if we are not accomplished in their use to create artistic products*. The *use* of the artists' mediums can change how we see ourselves as teachers, how we see our students, and how students see themselves.

Shelby Wolf's (1993) research with readers' theatre offers an example of reasoning evoked by dramatic performance and the effect of recasting. Readers' theatre recasts children from the role of student (i.e., someone who does not know) to performer (i.e., someone who knows). In her readers' theatre, children convert literary text into a script. Wolf noted that "although reading in this framework [of readers' theatre] is active, analytical, socially negotiated, and interpreted through both verbal and nonverbal means, it is often set aside until children master the basics" (p. 541). Wolf did not delay thinking through the dramatic arts until her students mastered the basics. The "analytical aspects of text interpretation" were emphasized as students critiqued their texts, highlighted words to emphasize and figured out how to use voice and gesture to represent their analysis (Wolf, 1993). In other words, the children used language and performance to engage in what are called higher order thinking skills. The children negotiated (discussed, considered and reconsidered) what to emphasize in their performance. They set standards as they analyzed the text and fine-tuned their product, with close attention to detail, until satisfied with the level of completeness. The quality of their reading was complex as they sought and

difficulty in determining other, more specific handicapping conditions. Language difficulties are an early indicator of learning handicaps.

analyzed evidence about the characters for their interpretation. They read outside the role of student. They read as performers.

Performance has the capacity to recast people out of the role of student, servant, or citizen, into the role of vital, self-actualized performer. Dewey spoke of the historical assumption that the arts present a sort of danger. He reports that Plato recognized the power of ideas created by the citizen-recast-as-artist and felt it would be necessary to censor poets, dramatists and musicians in order to maintain an ordered Republic (Dewey, 1934 p. 7-8). In *The Republic*, Plato refers to the emotions evoked by poets and dramatists and these artists' capacity to "corrupt even the best" citizens (1987). Performance is not a matter of copying events and objects in the social and physical environment; performance is a matter of thinking through a medium about objects and events. It is a matter of re-presenting the world, of interpreting the world. Performance brings to bear a broad array of cognitive modes. In performance, the self and society converge in one space. Performance reflects the constituents of self and society; it mediates how we understand the world and our place in it. The performer, in order to interpret a scene from literature, for example, draws on her understanding of her sociocultural environment as well as her own personal experience. She makes decisions to don a particular perspective in order to present the scene. Reflecting on the choice can jar assumptions held by the performer and the audience.

When children move out of the role of student and into the role of performer, they may feel less vulnerable to the exposure of judgement and outside evaluation. They may be more likely to consider reading as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. Madeleine Grumet points out that when in

the role of student, there is someone there to witness and judge the reading, “to receive or repudiate the reader’s interpretation. Even when reading is a refuge from society, from friends, from parents, they are there, hovering on the other side of the door” (Grumet, 1988, p. 136). This is especially true for the child having difficulty reading or using language fluently. When ‘asked’ to read publicly in school, there is a subtle and powerful play of roles. The reader is under public judgement.

There are expectations as to what reading involves that become incorporated into children’s assumptions about reading. Pam Mueller tells of a high school student who said:

The last time I read aloud was in second grade. I brought in *Green Eggs and Ham* and asked my teacher if I could read it to the class. I sat in a big chair with all my classmates around me, and I felt so proud as I turned each page. When I finished my teacher said to me, ‘You didn’t read that, Joe.² You memorized it.’ I never read aloud again (Mueller, 1998).

Cast in the role of student, Joe’s teacher judged him as not fulfilling the requirement of reading. It may be he had memorized the story (thereby performed the story), but this was not judged as reading. Joe subsequently limited his own chances to read. To get Joe to read eight years later takes extraordinary effort. One way to get him to practice reading may be to shift his role back to performer. As performers, children *use* language, including reading, as a means to reason and accomplish tasks. As James Moffett (1968/1983) points out in *Teaching the Universe of Discourse*, it is in *using* language that we learn it.

² All children’s names within this document are pseudonyms, used in consideration of the children’s right to privacy.

Cast as performer, the focus is on using reading; performance offers a bridge to improving language through using it.

In drama, the imagination, emotion and intellect combine to allow children to take on roles, roles other than of the self-as-student (Warren, 1993). Such taking on of roles other than the self-as-student changes the focus for readers. Performance mediums such as tableau offer to recast the individual from role of student into the role of performer; students become children allowed to draw on their resources, their opinions and interpretation as experienced, living persons. As such, teachers foster respect for children's reasoning through performance and inventive nature. Children may use reading as a tool in performance. Thus, performance works as a bridge toward reading improvement.

The Value of Invention

As a teacher, I see much of education cast in what I call a problem solving orientation, i.e., there are problems set forth for children to solve. These problems have specific answers. I have observed some teachers to structure their classes in a right/wrong orientation with a reliance on worksheets, workbooks and manuals with specific answers for their learning activities. I also see other teachers inviting ambiguity with little need to continuously control the direction of children's thinking. In their classes, I have observed reliance on discussion and other modes of expression over prefabricated work. I see a range, no one completely orients herself toward one or the other; problem solving and invention merge and overlap in practice (i.e., real-life problem solving calls for

inventive practices). Despite the range I see, I sense a distinction in approach and attitude of some teachers toward one or the other of these orientations. It has been enough of a distinction to evoke questions on my part about how to delineate an invention process versus a problem solving process.

In *Dimensions of Learning* (Marzano et al., 1992), the authors wrote about an invention process. They include the following phases in their example model (Marzano et al., 1992). First, identify the situation to improve and determine a purpose. Look at the situation and purpose from different angles. Rehearse, using some identified standards (how well do you want this to work?) and make a model, sketch or outline. As the product is developed, look for alternatives and ever better ways of creating the product and revise, with attention to detail. Finally, stop at a level of completeness that satisfies the purpose. Inventing is a *shaping process*. The outcome cannot be predetermined and may vary a great deal depending upon the standards (qualities) sought. As mentioned earlier, I see basic problem solving dominating some classrooms and this orientation is limiting to children's reasoning abilities. I see the idea of invention as a reminder to keep open-ended response in the classroom.

I have presented inventing and problem solving as having two different orientations. In the extreme, problem solving focuses on specified outcomes, and on overcoming constraints to those outcomes. Invention stands as a recursive shaping process toward a *non-specified but qualified outcome*. I do not understand this to mean we think in two different ways, problem solving and inventive, but rather we respond and adjust to the constraints and demands of the situation. My point in this discussion is that I would like to see greater use of

inventing orientations. Such an orientation aligns with learning theories that illuminate learning as *reinvention* (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988) wherein learners *build* their understanding, reinventing the wheel, so to speak.

Considering learning to be an act of invention/reinvention, casts the learner as active. Learning occurs through doing. The learner ‘reinvents’ understandings (theories) with guidance (Rogoff, 1990). Guided reinvention is the joining of the Piagetian concept that to understand is to reconstruct, and the social learning theorist’s insight of social guidance shaping learning (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). According to this theory, it is human nature to invent, often reconstructing that which is known to others. Reinvention shows up in “inventive” spelling and in math. Students who use *invented* algorithms, versus use *standard* algorithms (taught formulas), demonstrate greater conceptual understanding, and therefore flexibility, in mathematics (Fennema, Carpenter, Jacobs, Franke, & Levi, 1998). Good teaching practices include an orientation toward inventive processes.

Writing a narrative can be an inventing process, a creating-understanding-process. In writing *instruction*, it is easy to fall back to rules, to fall into a problem-solving mode involving steps in how to draft and revise. Writers at work have been observed, and patterns found (Emig, 1983). Instructors often rely on teaching the patterns as orthodoxy, not the underlying principles of invention, and of construction of understanding. As an expressive action, writing happens to have a product others can read, and that authors can continuously craft to make more presentable. Writing is so familiar standards are set that define it structurally and grammatically. Often, when I hear people refer to the process of

writing, they speak of the process of making a product. The product making is only part of what is going on. In actuality, writing can mediate learning (Zebrowski, 1994); thought can be manifested through this form. The form of writing gives thought a particular shape. Writers can 'write to learn' (Murray, 1987; Murray, 1996; Zinsser, 1988); they can write to discover what they know, though I would phrase it, they can write to construct what they will know.

Writing is one kind of thinking. It is both process and product and the process of writing itself can be part of a reasoning process. Performance such as tableau is also part of a process of reasoning, but its product is fleeting.

Given a tendency to turn patterns into rules and instruct on these rules presents a barrier to using a performance convention such as tableau. Many of us in education do not know performance; it is easy to think it has rules of usage just as English has rules of usage. Though there are standards the artist uses, these need not stand in the way of using artistic modes as tools of learning. Even at the novice level, we can reason through performance mediums. There is room in education to realize performance mediates learning, that is, that performance conventions such as tableau offer another way to reason and change our understanding.

Invention is Interpretation and Symbols Are the Tools

I know teachers who worry about loss of the author's intent. "Every time a text is drawn into performance, it is the reading of the text and never the text that is performed" (Grumet, 1988, p. 148). For some, this is a problem. Yet, in performance such as tableau, the text anchors the interpretation. In order to

understand a text, performers align with the text such that they comprehend what the text is saying (Ellsworth, 1997), though their actual performance may not strictly align with the author's intention. As in Wolf's work with readers' theatre, evidence in the text supports interpretation. Performers discuss and reconsider the text, but they also move beyond the text, beyond "textual knowledge (Ellsworth, 1997) and into their own reasoning and meaning making. The reader/performer reinvents a text as she crosses boundaries, moving between text and self.

[W]hat people do not always understand about drama and reading is the constant layering of self upon self that occurs in the interpretation of character. Actors and readers slip back and forth between multiple selves – between self and character, other actors, characters, and audience members. These shifts require much interpretation and negotiation (Wolf & Enciso, 1994, p. 351).

Text is but one part of an *action-space*, a space that is alive with negotiation, interpretation, decisions, imagination (image-making), reasoning, analysis, and understanding.

The first and second grade children I worked with who created tableau talked and gestured about how to represent a scene. In order to represent a scene, they analyzed relationships and intentions of characters although they would not say they did. This type of analysis takes place over time.

Apprehension grows over time. Apprehension can evolve through consideration and reconsideration, discussion and changes in understanding. It includes making connections between self and text and world (Keene & Zimmermann, 1997) as performers re-invent the text through their assimilative

base (Gallagher & Wansart, 1991), ingesting the words of others in order to make sense of them. This can take place over a span of time.

Signs, particularly the more ambiguous performative gestures that children create, can shift understanding toward unexpected directions, creating further cognitive labor and change in understanding. The process of learning through sign, of creating understanding, is well described by Peter Smagorinsky and Cindy O'Donnell-Allen in their article, *Reading As Mediated and Mediating Action* (1998) as they talk about articulating understanding:

[articulating understanding is] an exploratory process through which the act of articulation provides for tentative meaning-making efforts that result in some material product (including oral speech) that can serve as signs to mediate further thinking and changes in consciousness. These expressive functions of speech can be further mediated by the responses of others who listen and contribute to the development of expressed thoughts and feelings...provide basis for reflection and further mediation of thinking and often further reformulation of the signs (p. 201).

According to Smagorinsky and O'Donnell-Allen, ideas grow and evolve through discussion, becoming more complex as the participants reconsider ideas given what others say. However, the authors take this idea further by emphasizing the mediating power of speech as a sign. A sign is a product that influences thinking further. Words are signs – they stand for ideas and we use these ideas as tools of thinking. Each statement is a product. This product can be reviewed, possibly evoking a re-consideration of the statement itself. This idea of the word-as-product gives great power to written reflection. The sentence just written (and now a product) evokes further consideration (reflection) as the author decides if it really says what he meant or even expected. Smagorinsky and O'Donnell-Allen's description speaks of the process of building meaning, in

whatever medium. Tableau used in conjunction with reading literature, involves the creation of a whole still scene. This whole still scene, like a statement, mediates learning. It changes understanding. Within the tableau are performative gestures that, similar to words, are signs. They, too, are doorways to ideas and act as tools in thinking – a concept that is discussed in Chapter III.

Performance, as an artistic convention, belongs to us as a medium of interpretation, of sense making, of reasoning. Tableau is an artist's medium that offers a mode of thinking commonly undervalued and underused. When Dewey, in *Art as Experience* (1934), discussed the ancient Greek attitude toward art, he noted that that “the idea of ‘art for art’s sake’ would not have been understood” (p. 7-8). Since the time of ancient Greece, art has gradually moved out of the realm of everyday life. It moved into the enclaves of the church and later as an object of the elite. Art does not need to remain an object of the elite. We can appropriate art as a valued way of thinking.

Mediating Learning and Pedagogical Practices

Performance, such as tableau, is *useful* to education – and performance is *powerful* to education. Performance conventions such as tableau provide occasions in the language arts classroom to move students out of a perceived *role* of non-knower into the role of knower and creator. Moving some of this authority to children can appear to be a risk to teacher control because performance promotes ambiguity. Yet, performance can act as a bridge that promotes children's use of the language arts and other mediums as tools through which to think. Performance conventions such as tableau are useful in teaching.

Limited acceptance of non-verbal cognitive processes places some students at severe disadvantage. Verbocentric classrooms (Fueyo, 1991; Leland & Harste, 1994; Siegel, 1995) marginalize and limit the growth of students when they limit the use of other symbol mediums. This is not to say that the use of language is not crucial. It is to say that the intellect has available resources beyond words and children are being limited in accessing these resources.

Performance places value on non-discursive reasoning, making use of mediums that illuminate qualities it is not possible to illuminate if only working (thinking) within linear, discursive, diachronic forms. The philosopher W. George Turski (1994) says, “to experience something, to have a consciousness of it in the sense of being clear about what that something is, requires a medium of expression” (p. 47). Tableau is a medium of expression that makes us conscious of what we know. It gives shape to thought that is forming.

Tableau can *show* sociocultural assumptions not articulated in language and can tap emotional knowing. Seeing and feeling cultural assumptions can interrupt us, interrupt our sense of the norm. Puzzlement can result and we then look at the world a little differently (Gallagher & Wansart, 1991). If we change our position, even slightly, we adjust our understanding. We change, implying we learn.

In the space of performance, the text, the self, the group, and the socio-cultural environment converge; they intersect. The performance is not a copy of the text. In this performance space, the performer invents. Using the text and subsequent actions as mediating tools, the performer learns and shows at the same time. Performers may present their products to others and that may jar the

viewers, interrupting their sense of normalcy. Performance can create moments of wide-awakeness that “bring us into contact...as we make and remake ourselves” (Salvio, 1998) and develop our identity as literate persons (Castell, 1996). The cascade effect is of learning by educators as well as by students, and perhaps change in schooling.

Potential of Tableau

As a performance convention, I see great potential in tableau. It uses two modes of expression to mediate understanding. Tableau engages thinking on a non-language level as well as a language level. Signs use and invention generate layers of connections in an intricate web of apprehension. Tableau itself is an inventive process, a shaping an understanding process by reasoning through ambiguity. Tableau calls for relational thinking, including consideration of the self's position in the world. As a performance convention, tableau can recast students and position them as negotiators of meanings who tap subjective cognitive processes such as emotion. Furthermore, tableau calls out to others to read it, and like any reading, we look at the surface, or delve more deeply to apprehend what is implied in the tableau. The deeper reading invites interruption of our personal status quo.

In the following chapters, I make the case that tableau is a means of thinking in three ways. The first of these chapters, Chapter III, is an analysis of performative gesture as a means of thinking. Performative gesture is defined through *conceptual analysis* and is conceptualized as a medium of expression and as a sign system. As a *medium*, performative gesture carries specific

characteristics that shape thinking according to these characteristics. For example, gesture shows the whole at once wherein language unfolds in a sequence – these characteristics affect the shape and form of thought. A sign system with its constituent signs mediates understanding through the use of signs as tools of thinking (Vygotsky, 1987; Wertsch, 1991).

In the second way tableau acts as a means of thinking in the manner that tableau taps emotion-based ways of knowing that are used to interpret the intentions and relationships of characters in literature. In Chapter IV, I analyze the relationship between emotion-based cognition and tableau.

In Chapter V, the third way tableau acts as a means of thinking is analyzed – positioning of self and negotiation. Meaning and sense making is affected by the position of the viewer apprehending the three-dimensional phenomenological “text.” The concepts of space, positioning and the role of each of these in relational thinking are discussed. Furthermore, since groups often create tableaux, they call for negotiation of position and meaning. In addition, children negotiate meaning against a backdrop of sociocultural assumptions that are readily apparent in the performative gestures they used to represent relationships. The children negotiate meaning negotiated through a sociocultural lens, and the tableau shows much about how children apprehend their social world as well as the literary text.

Before delving into these ways tableau acts as a means of thinking, I discuss the way I made this inquiry into tableau. The methodologies employed are the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Through this inquiry, I sought to understand tableau as a means of learning, of thinking, and as an instrument of pedagogy. To do so, I asked children in two classrooms to create tableaux associated with literature while I concurrently engaged in a conceptual study of the implications of the children's actions. Given the descriptive and analytical nature of the inquiry, I used qualitative methodology. This chapter focuses on how this inquiry proceeded, including the methodologies that guided my inquiry.

In this chapter I explain what I drew from naturalistic inquiry (qualitative) methodologies (often associated with ethnographic study) to frame this inquiry as a case study. I also explain how I deviated from the structure of most naturalistic inquiries by taking on the role of teacher-researcher, not participant-observer. In keeping with naturalistic inquiry, I use the idea of *grounded theory*, which includes the “grounding” of established theory through comparison and analysis relative to “field” data. I extend grounded theory by using *conceptual analysis* from the discipline of philosophy along with more common methods of conceptual study, i.e., analysis of themes across various theories for usefulness to this inquiry. The chapters that follow this one contain the analysis of different ways tableau acts as a means of thinking.

Action Theory

I make extensive use of the term “action.” It is a prominent feature of this inquiry and holds a particular meaning. Action is a *systems-oriented* concept. Thomas Bidell and Kurt Fischer (1997) make the point that people, physically and socially, are composed of and compose systems – active, self-organizing systems. These systems evolved and evolve (change) together. One system is not a “privileged system standing outside of and directing the activity and development of the others” (Bidell & Fischer, 1997, p. 196-7). Systems do not develop linearly (nor neatly), and their joint activity is simultaneous and dynamic (p. 198). The self and the environment, physical and sociocultural) are both engaged, acting together. Brent Davis and Dennis Sumara (1997) use the term *enactivism* to conceptualize the agent(s) as part of the context such that if the context changes, so does the agent. This concept of action shifts the focus of inquiry from the agents, objects and places individually, to “the relations that bind these elements together in action” (Davis & Sumara, 1997, p. 111). The study of tableau is not so much the study of the children as it is the study of the *relations* between children, tableau and the sociocultural environment; therein lies answers to how tableau acts as a means of thinking. Tableau generates consideration of relations, including those between text and children, children and their social world, and children with each other.

The word action differs from the word *interaction*. The term ‘action’ clarifies a focused on a phenomenon and the relationships therein. The term interaction can imply a focus on distinct variables. Louise Rosenblatt notes the term interaction is problematic for it implies a dualistic stance and infers

separate, self-contained “entities acting on one another” (1978, p. 17). Similarly, Barbara Rogoff (1990), a sociocultural cognitive scholar, points out that the term interaction assumes that interacting entities are separable (p. 27).

This inquiry is into the action of tableau as cognition. Action encompasses the external and internal, groups or individuals (Wertsch, del Rio, & Alvarez, 1995). Its principles align with the principles of case study, naturalistic inquiry and teacher research, all of which play roles in this inquiry.

A Teacher-Researcher in an Instrumental Case Study

A crucial portion of this inquiry was children’s *use* of tableau because their work shaped and grounded the conceptual study of tableau as a means of thinking. Teaching the use of tableau, and working in a school setting allowed me to develop my understanding of how tableau could mediate learning, act as a thinking medium, and act in pedagogical practice. I could consider the complexity of tableau as it mediated learning by studying the action of tableau as well as studying the theoretical implications of their actions.

Recognizing the complexity of phenomenon is part of the paradigm of naturalistic inquiry. Naturalistic inquiry recognizes that “all entities are in a state of mutual simultaneous shaping so that it is impossible to separate causes from effects” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 37). The study of an *action*, of an event like tableau, is not a study of cause and effect, but rather an attempt to understand the underlying complexity as demonstrated through the *relationships* that simultaneously shape the involved parties. It is the study of a case of tableau as a thinking action. However, to study complex acts calls for ways to identify the

relationships. Action theory holds that relationships are formed between the agent(s), act(s), agency or means employed and purpose(s) (Gusfield, 1989; Wertsch et al., 1995). These delineations are helpful to this inquiry. To study children engaged in tableau is to study the relationships between the children (agents) and the tableaux they use as a means to learn, and the setting of a classroom (including peers within the classroom) and the socio-historical environment.

Case Study

This is an instrumental case study. Case study is the study of an integrated system and the relationships therein (Stake, 1995). Instrumental case study means I studied children using tableau in order to understand something else, that is, in order to understand tableau as a means of thinking (Stake, 1995). I worked with the group, not for a better understanding of the children as a group per se, but for a better understanding of tableau used by the group as a means of learning. Although I learned much about the children, I did not focus the inquiry on the children's growth and development. I focused on their use of tableau as a way of learning and the relationships that tie the action event of tableau to cognitive action.

The case study of tableau includes both the actions of the children and the study of related theoretical constructs. I studied the case of tableau as a means of thinking, drawing on the specifics of children's use of tableau and on the theoretical to explain implications for their actions.

The Action-Event of Tableau: Identifying Relationships Therein

To study the children's use of tableau, I first determined the borders of the tableau. In deciding how to define this border, I drew on Anne Haas Dyson's work. Dyson studied *literacy* events in her research of children writing. For Dyson, a literacy event was "an activity engaged in by at least one person (the focal child) involving the use of graphic media (print, drawing) for some purpose and viewed by the child as a "reading" or "writing" activity (even if an adult might consider it 'drawing" or "playing'). The event ended when the child changed the topic or purpose of the activity" (Dyson, 1993, p. 27). For the purposes of this inquiry, the action of tableau includes planning, implementing and talking about tableau by the children. I exclude the time I read to the children because I was the focal point, not the children.

I appreciate how, in her literacy events, Dyson studied the complexity of relationships between the children, their writing, talking, classroom environment and home environment. Dyson determined that the children navigated the social worlds using literacy events as a means to negotiate their various worlds. In terms of time and space, the tableau action-events began when the children identified the topic of their tableau, either because they chose a particular scene out of a story or because I assigned a concept to them. It ended after the tableau was enacted and after any subsequent discussion. If I later referred to a particular tableau during an interview or other discussion, I linked that data as part of the tableau action-event. This determination of what constituted a tableau action-event provided a boundary and frame that centered my inquiry. It

allowed me to focus on the relationships directly tied to tableau as a means of learning.

As noted, relationships are the crucial focus. Early in the study, I could not predetermine the relationships that would become salient through this inquiry. The information I gathered, described, and analyzed through my study lead me to focus on three layers of relationship.

1. The relationship between the children's use of *performative gesture* and use of language as mediums of expression.
2. The children's relationship with the characters of literary text as the children *interpreted* the intentions of these characters using tableau.
3. The relationships between individual children as well as their relationships to their sociocultural history as they *negotiated meaning* by positioning selves.

Each of these layers of relationship exists in concert and connects to cognitive action. They are actually inseparable except for the purpose of explanation. Through direct study of the children using tableau and conceptual study to consider the why behind their actions, I determined that these relationships are important in mediating learning and as means of thinking. All three, taken together, explain the strength of tableau as a thinking action.

Grounded Theory: A Study of Concepts

Grounded theory, a characteristic of naturalistic inquiry, is a general methodology involving constant comparative analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). According to Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, this methodology does not limit itself to the use of theory generated from the data, but can also include the use of existing theories that are elaborated and modified as data are played against them (p. 159). I gathered and analyzed information on children's engagement

with tableau, and I analyzed existing theory and modified it against the data. The concept of grounded theory explains the idea of constant comparison or what I call dialogic action that occurs between theory and data, with the subsequent emergence of grounded theory. Dialogic action describes the back and forth, mutually shaping action that occurs as what I learn from the children influences how I understand established theory, and visa-versa. Each grows like a conversation with back and forth talk.

I think of grounded theory as a shaping process. Data and established theory shape the grounded theory. Grounded theories are plausible relationships between theory and data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 168). The theory I developed about the three layers of relationships evolved through such dialogic exchanges between the data collected of the children's actions and established theory. The data and theoretical constructs both informed aspects of each other, bringing to the foreground aspects that would be shadowed if the two were studied apart. Yet, I did need to analyze theories and concepts for their own sake, as well as in relation to the data. I used two methods.

Conceptual Analysis. When the theory involved a concept that needed clarification, such as the concept of *performative gesture* relative to language, I used the formal methodology of *conceptual analysis*. I drew from John Wilson's work as presented in *Thinking With Concepts* (1963). *Conceptual analysis* includes determining when a question of concept is involved; determining model cases, contrary cases, related cases and borderline cases; and considering social context (1963). It means thinking through the properties of a concept to develop

a reasonable map of that concept. The map is created by establishing a model case of a concept (this is an example of the concept), a borderline case, a related case and a “not a case” (this is not an example of the concept). *Conceptual analysis* comes from the discipline of philosophy. This was used to define performative gesture.

Conceptual Study. When the related theory involved analysis of established theories, I used a less formal method. As I would with field-collected data, I attended to themes and patterns in the theories and how they connected to the children’s actions. I analyzed underlying assumptions about learning and compared these to what I was learning through the children. For example, Ronald de Sousa’s (1987) theories about learning through subjective information tied with underlying assumptions in theories about theory of mind as well as psychological theories about interpretation. Relative to the data, the children appeared to rely on subjective information gathering as they inferred the intentions of characters from stories in order to enact their understanding of scenes from literature.

Teacher-Research

Teacher-research is systematic, intentional inquiry carried out by teachers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). Teacher research first grew out of the field of sociology and action research. Action research first appeared in the 1940’s and involved research for social action, social change (Oja & Smulyan, 1989). Action research was rejected for a while as being unscientific, but re-emerged in the 1970’s and 1980’s when it met the need of researchers and practitioners who

sought ways to contribute to knowledge and improve practice through self-reflexivity (Oja & Smulyan, 1989).

As a teacher-researcher, I act as a perceiving, active instrument of research (Eisner, 1991). I use my own perceptions to *develop* an assimilated base of understanding while at the same time *using* that assimilated base through which to perceive and analyze (Gallagher & Wansart, 1991). As a teacher-researcher, I immersed myself as a teacher. With more than twenty years of experience as an educator, I drew on my own tacit knowledge of teaching and used this to help me understanding this performance convention as a means of thinking and as a pedagogic tool.

The role of teacher-researcher also suited me personally. I wanted to be actively involved and not passively observing. I wanted to feel the pedagogical aspect of working with children using tableau. I knew I needed to understand decisions from the inside, as a teacher. As Frederick Erickson explains...

In research by a visiting outsider, knowledge about teaching is gained by observational records and reporting that, whether qualitative or quantitative, usually take the form of statements such as, 'The teacher did/said/attempted...' But when the teacher and teaching itself are in the foreground of research attention, then what is usual are statements of the form, 'I did...I wondered...I was trying to...' The teacher comes to know teaching from the action of it (Erickson, 1993).

Through teaching, I immersed myself in the action of engaging children with tableau. I could teach children about this mediary tool while they taught me more about what it meant.

The Implications of My Role

My role as a teacher-researcher is somewhat problematic to the concept of naturalistic inquiry. Most naturalistic inquiry has an anthropological feel to it. The participant-observer enters an event, and records and analyzes as she participates in the event itself. Yet, in this situation, I *imposed* the activity. I entered as a *teacher-researcher*, not as a participant observer. I asked the children to participate in activities that I *provided* as a teacher.

In this inquiry, I sought an understanding of how tableau acted to mediate learning and, therefore, how it worked as a pedagogical tool. My role as a teacher-researcher was important to this for it immersed me in the teaching aspects and in the actual activity. I entered the classroom world. In the following section, I detail my entrance into the classroom, paying particular attention to my relationship with the two classroom teachers with whom I worked. I then proceed to what I did, as a teacher, with the children.

Setting Up the Instrumental Case Study

In October (1997), I met with Susan and Andrea, the teachers of the two multi-grade first/second grade classrooms. We met during a time of day they often met to plan, about an hour before the school day officially begins. I came to ask them again, for help in learning about children's literacy. Susan and Andrea, exemplary teachers, have been gracious before about letting me feel a part of their world when I engaged in a previous study of children writing.

I talked with them about using performance with their students, focusing on tableau as a way for children to engage literature. I noted that tableau seems

to emphasize relationships between characters and emotions of those characters. Tableau seems to provide children a way of reasoning and showing their reasoning using non-language as well as language-based thinking.

I sought either a cooperative or a collaborative relationship with Susan and Andrea for this study. Carole Edelsky and Chris Boyd (1993) differentiate cooperative research and collaborative research. Cooperative research does not call for the elimination of differences in power whereas collaborative research does (Edelsky & Boyd, 1993). Several researchers point out complications due to perceived power differences in research relationships, a problem glossed over in images of collaboration (Durst & Stanforth, 1996; Edelsky & Boyd, 1993; Mangiola & Pease-Alvarez, 1993; Moje, 1998). To hold a truly collaborative relationship, Edelsky and Boyd (1993) refer to the importance of an 'overriding relationship,' that is, a relationship that exists prior to the research and extends beyond the boundaries of the research. As Edelsky notes,

Unless I think the individual is an excellent classroom teacher, I will want to change either the classroom or the teacher. Much outstanding classroom research works in this way, both researcher and teacher work on some kind of change (which implies improvement). For me, however, if the teacher and I are suppose to be peers – co-researchers – then I cannot be in a position to want to improve her practice (p. 8).

Susan, Andrea and I had known each other professionally for over fifteen years. Our relationship has ranged from Susan's supervision of me during my student teaching over twenty years ago, to one of professional educators working in the same school district. My respect for both Susan and Andrea runs deep. I did not want to improve their practice. I did want their support. This was not a study of them. This was a case study of tableau used with literature.

When we met, Susan and Andrea talked about their goals for the year, which included increasing the ways they used multiple intelligence theory. Andrea also noted how it was hard to tell from children's writing how their characters felt. "Perhaps," said Andrea, "this work with tableau will show up in their writing." Perhaps they will include the emotions of characters in their stories. Susan wondered if we might see some changes in some of the students' social interaction skill, particularly of children having difficulty reading people and social cues.

I felt this to be a cooperative venture, that is, Susan and Andrea would cooperate with me, but did not intend to be co-researchers though they set some goals of their own. There was a collaborative layer within a cooperative venture.

Inviting and Involving Children

In early January, I talked with the children about what we were going to do. I was there to prepare the consent forms to go home and Susan suggested we tell children more about tableau and these permissions. We did an impromptu series of tableaux with the story *The Three Little Pigs*. Children depicted the pigs as brothers and sisters happy with each other and grumpy with each other. They depicted a hungry wolf. They easily showed a variety of emotions when given words.

From late January through May, I met with children twice a week, for about forty-five minutes per session. I would spend one week in one classroom, then the next week in the second, implementing roughly the same plan. Any

changes were pedagogical adjustments based on the experience in the first class and Susan, Andrea and my subsequent discussion.

All together, I used four books (*My Many Colored Days* (Geisel, 1996), *Babushka's Doll* (Polocco, 1990/1995), *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) and *Yo!Yes?* (Raschka, 1993). Each class worked with each story, spending a week with each. In addition, each class re-composed *The Three Billie Goats Gruff*. Finally, with two different small groups, I asked the children to use tableau as a means to compose a story. Except for the last activity with small groups, all members of each classroom participated. I selected books that offered either some cultural diversity (*Babushka's Doll* and *Yo!Yes?*), work with emotions (*My Many Colored Days*) or work with a story (*Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* and *The Three Billie Goats Gruff*).

During the first two weeks, I used *My Many Colored Days* (Geisel, 1996) to develop the idea of expressing an attitude through gesture. I then used *Babushka's Doll* (Polocco, 1990/1995) to introduce the idea of using tableau to show the meaning (the concepts) of words before reading a story. In this segment, the children enacted the words Babushka, impatient, frightened, naughty and hungry. Students not in a tableau read the tableau by saying or writing down words evoked by the tableau. We then used the books *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) and *Yo!Yes?* (Raschka, 1993), and created tableau associated with scenes from the books. We re-wrote the tale *The Three Billie Goats Gruff*, using tableau in the construction of the story as well to enact final scenes. Finally, I worked with a few small groups. One group created their own

story and used tableau in the composing process. Another group took characters from three books and combined them into their own series of tableaux.

During the last few days, I interviewed children in small groups of four to six. I chose to meet with the children in small groups so that the children's responses would stimulate more response from others than if I interviewed children one on one. I sought conversations about tableau. It is one thing to look at the tableaux, listen and re-read transcripts, read established theory and develop a theory as to how learning was mediated – it is another to look at the meaning these tableau events held for the children themselves. I asked the children what they learned about tableau. I also showed them pictures of several of the tableaux created over the course of the inquiry and asked them to read them, that is, to tell me what they saw.

I maintained records of each session, transcribed from videotapes, any artifacts created by the children, and from personal notes written after the sessions. The following section provides a detailed description of one session, February 24.

One Session

First, we warmed up. The children gathered around me in a group, sitting on the floor while I sat in a chair, an arrangement they used regularly with Susan. I gave them emotion words to show me: worried, shocked, peaceful, melancholy and confused. I gave them the word “worried” first. I commented on their enactments, and asked one child to come up and show the others. I then asked the children to note her hands, her eyes. As we did others, I commented on the

differences between each portrayal. When we came to melancholy, I found the children did not know what it meant. I said it was sort of like “sad” and showed them what I thought through my own tableau. We also talked about the book, *My Many Colored Days* (Geisel, 1996), and the dinosaur in that book who didn’t feel like being around anyone (“I’m sad. I groan. I drag my tail. I walk alone”).

I then introduced the story, *Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996). I told the children I would not show them the illustrations. I also said that as I read the story, we would make a chart (on white board) and write some notes for each scene. My purpose was to start children identifying and evaluating which scenes would be good to use for tableau. I read the first two pages and asked whether it would be good for a tableau. Many of the children said yes, but I asked why. The response from the students focused on *how* it could be done. For them, if they could envision doing it, it was a good scene for tableau. Struggling with language, I sought a word to help develop criterion that was more stringent and came up with ‘exciting,’ as in, “Would this be an exciting scene?” I realized, though, that the idea of what makes an effective tableau would develop as the children experience more. I adjusted to their perspective, continued reading, and together we labeled the scenes that were ‘doable.’ Occasionally, the children asked me the meaning of a word (diva, pupil).

I ended by asking each child to choose a scene to do. Tableaux would be made of the most popular. Susan and I moved some children from single voted scenes to more popular ones. I then gave the groups time to plan theirs, for implementation the next day. Susan videotaped the entire session for me, including the planning by each group.

Methods of Analysis

In this section, the actual process of working with the sources of information from my work with the children is described. I drew much from the recorded visual images of tableau and transcribed talk about tableau. Throughout, I videotaped the sessions and took still photographs of the tableaux. I audio-taped the interviews. I also kept notes on my plans, my reflections, field notes, and of meetings with the teachers. I transcribed the videos and audio-tapes and kept anything the children wrote in conjunction with the tableaux.

I taught two full classrooms of children for ten sessions each and taught with two small groups (one from each classroom) for two sessions each. The sessions were forty-five minutes in length, and on consecutive afternoons so there would not be a large break in-between. I would meet one week with one class and the next week with the other, implementing the same basic lesson. The actions of the children prompted conceptual studies of established theory in the areas of gesture, emotion and negotiation. The study of the action of the children and the established theory worked dialogically, like a conversation, with each source modifying my understanding of tableau.

The analysis the transcribed video and audio-tapes, and the photographs, called for the type of analysis that customarily accompanies qualitative study fieldwork. The first step is to reduce the data by finding what is interesting, drawing on personal judgement (Seidman, 1991, p. 89). Irv Seidman advises that the qualitative researcher trust her ability to recognize meaningful chunks through close reading and judgement (1991). I did. I read closely, and began to make sense of what I was seeing. I began to identify salient features. I did this

with both the written material (transcripts) and visual material (videos and still photographs) but the process for each differed a bit.

To analyze the written data, I put all the transcripts (of videotaped sessions and interviews) on a grid, using a word processor, so that I had two columns. One column had the transcribed material. The second held the labels and comments I applied as I continuously read the material and identified themes. I noted repeating themes and patterns. Through the transcribed materials, I gained information about how the children planned their tableaux, and why they did what they did.

These data were organized into a notebook by event, so that I had clustered, for example, all the transcribed material and photographs relative to the tableau events for *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) in Susan's room. Each cluster held the planning, implementation and after-discussion of various groups. I had six clusters, which accounted for six weeks of work with tableaux. Within each cluster were five to six tableau events because the children usually worked in small groups. I kept the interviews in a separate section, but linked comments in them back to any event to which the children referred.

Although the tableau events included planning and after-talk, I was drawn to the tableaux themselves. The transcribed talk helped me understand how and why the children did what they did, but it was through studying the *visual images* of the tableaux themselves that I *learned to read the tableaux* themselves more deeply. For me, the pictures of the tableaux were the most fascinating part of the study as I learned to apprehend instead of just look.

I loaded the visual images (photographs and videos) on my computer for ease in viewing. From the videos, I cut out parts such as the children gathering on the rug. Eventually, I also cut the parts of me reading stories to the children, having decided that though this was useful for analysis of my teacherly moves, it was not pertinent to my inquiry at this point. I focused on the *images* of the tableaux. In the following section, I continue this discussion of the use of the images of the tableau, but with an orientation toward my evolving understanding of three themes, the three relationships through which tableau acts as a way of thinking and mediating understanding. These relationships, i.e. ways of thinking through tableau, evolved from both the data of what the children did and the conceptual studies of related theory. They are the result of a dialogic action between the two sources.

Thinking through Tableau

As I studied the transcripts, visual images and related theory, I found three broad relational themes that suggest how it is that tableau mediates thinking. In this section, I walk through the rough evolution of these three as they became apparent to me. They are each the topic of analysis in the chapters that follow.

Performative Gesture. In my early reviews of the videos and photographs, my lens was physical; I sought information about *what* the children did. I focused on the physical attributes of the tableau. Eventually it dawned on me to identify the types of gestures the children used. Based on the part of the body involved, I identified four focal areas of performative gesture in the tableaux the children created. This is not to say that children used only one body-focused

gesture at a time. Actually, all four were involved in performative gesture, but for analysis, I found it helpful to focus on particular parts of the gesture. I then realized that each of these types manifested either as an imitative sign or as a socioculturally construed symbol (though this terminology evolved through study of theoretical constructs).

What I learned to see in the images lead to study of related theoretical constructs. For example, to understand the use of performative gesture as *sign*, I turned to semiotics. To learn more about gesture itself, I considered research on gesture and on gesture's relationship to language. I eventually used *conceptual analysis* to identify the boundaries of the concept of performative gesture (gesture in tableau). To understand the borders of gesture was more than a matter of defining the word; it called for exploring the territory in order to establish the borders. It called for an analysis of the concept of gesture and, to some extent, language. These considerations, identifying types of performative gesture, defining performative gesture and its characteristics as a means of expression, and understanding the use of sign and symbols made of gesture are discussed in Chapter III.

Tableau as a Means of Interpretation. The second relationship studied developed through reading the transcripts, looking at the visual images of tableau and considering established theories of how children interpret the state of mind of others. From the visual images, I could see that children use performative gestures to show relationships between characters, and emotions of the characters. From the transcripts, I found they often identified roles and inferred

emotions and intentions. I studied theories about theory of mind to explain how children understand the perceptions of another. I became increasingly interested in the role of *emotion*. The children readily expressed emotion in their tableaux and these emotions seemed key in their understanding of their characters. From the visual data, I studied *how* they showed emotion, and represented relationships through gesture. From theoretical constructs, I examined the cognitive role of emotion and the use of emotion in tableau.

Positioning and Negotiation. The third theme developed late in my analysis, as I understood some gestures as socioculturally imbued symbols. Although I tie how performative gesture is sign use (thereby mediating learning) in the first theme, I did not read the *whole* of the tableaux with a sociocultural mind-set until later in my analysis. I began to look at the photographs and videos of the tableaux with a sociocultural mindset, reading underlying sociocultural *assumptions*. I realized that negotiation of meaning occurs in the micro-sense as these small groups determined meaning, and in the macro-sense as children drew on their own socio-history to make sense of the text. I learned to read the tableaux socioculturally and to understand how the children were indicating their understanding of their culture through their performative gestures. Furthermore, recognition of tableau as a three dimensional text led to exploration of the concept of space. The position taken in space affects the “reading” of space and the relationships therein. In this section, I take a theoretical excursion into the concept of space and self.

Interviews

I interviewed the children in groups of four to six at the end of the study. The information I gathered from asking children to “read” pictures of tableau was used in the analysis of the tableau to which they referred. However, there was other information from the interviews that focused on what the children thought about performance through tableau. I decided to construct a portrait of their voiced thoughts about tableau by combining their words and voices into a composite conversation.

I crafted the portrait by combining similar responses and topic foci. These formed a larger conversation. The process was similar to that of Robert Donmoyer and June Yennie-Donmoyer (1995) as they created readers’ theaters in order to display qualitative data. In their work, concepts or categories are linked across different interviews and pulled together to form a composite thread that became representative of a particular point of view. In my process, I did not change the children’s words nor create a composite point of view; rather I moved their responses around so that similar responses from across the various interviews were juxtaposed, and placed side by side, like an ongoing conversation. The benefit to crafting a larger conversation is that this form includes the children’s voices – their words. Their words hold understandings that are not mine (Kirsch, 1997). Nevertheless, the text is mediated (Kirsch, 1997). I lifted these particular quotes from their particular context and ordered them in a manner of my choosing because *I* felt them important and felt this order reflective of children’s understandings (Seidman, 1991). This composite conversation is woven into my final chapter because the words of the children

truly ground this inquiry into their perspective. The children saw tableau as a simple act – easy to do. Yet, through my analysis (with related theory), I learned of the complexity of this act of thinking.

Across these analyses is a common procedure. The identification of themes and determination of patterns is called inductive data analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Such analysis takes into account the context and seeks to identify the mutually shaping or mediating influences that act together (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The method I described to review the data is domain analysis. Domain analysis is the search for salient themes, recurring ideas or language (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 114-115). The analysis set up a dialogic layering effect wherein what was understood in the data lead to theoretical exploration which lead back to re-viewing the data, then back to theory...

Verification and Validity

Triangulation is a term that comes up in conversations about the validity of qualitative research. This is usually thought of as the convergence of points of view into a single perspective (Mathison, 1988). The idea is that agreement across different sources eliminates individual bias. Sandra Mathison brings a more realistic point of view. She suggests triangulation as a strategy that provides the researcher evidence that the researcher must make sense of. That evidence may include points that converge on one proposition or evidence that may indicate inconsistency or even contradiction (Mathison, 1988). The researcher must construct meaningful propositions as to why each occurs and end up with a rich picture of the complexity of social phenomenon. This

construction is an act of interpretation and the qualitative researcher is an interpreter.

In my inquiry, I actively interpreted the relationships of the tableau action-event, using theoretical constructs in the process. The key in use of theory is how useful it is to understanding what is going on, recognizing that any theory will illuminate some aspects while shielding others. I made sense of tableau and constructed meaningful propositions to explain how tableau acts as a means of thinking. I interpreted the information; interpretation is a part of analysis.

In qualitative research, the self is an instrument of research and must be well developed. The researcher interprets information through her cognitive systems, through her own understandings. Therefore, she must be well informed. In law, there is a phrase, “a reasonable person.” It is used in considering the validity of actions. A reasonable person would act within certain parameters. The researcher must have faith in her interpretation as a reasoning person and scholar. What I did to do to earn that faith included being systematic, honest (as I could) about biases, checking interpretations with others, verifying through multiple sources, being reflective and being thorough.

Patti Lather (1986) discusses validity in terms of openly ideological research, i.e., *critical qualitative* research. I do not consider this inquiry critical qualitative, but I do draw on some of critical qualitative research’s assumptions about research. I also find some of its assumptions about validity pertinent to this inquiry. One of her structures for determining validity is construct validity, that is, how the emerging theory differs from the theory with which the researcher walked in. This was something that concerned me, because I walked

into the study believing tableau mediated learning. However, I directed my question for this inquiry toward young children's use and how their use of it was a means of thinking. One of the most important things I learned in this inquiry was how to read the gestural sign in tableau and how these signs reflected sociocultural values. My primary change in expectation was from the idea that young children used tableau to interpret the text literally, to the realization that young children used tableau to interpret life. In terms of construct validity, I can trace threads of the beginning of this understanding back to before the study – and the growth of this thread as it came to the foreground of my realization. I moved from a simple understanding to a similar, but complex understanding of the implications of tableau.

There is a recursive, spiral nature in research as well as movement forward. The inquirer starts with an idea. She refines that idea into a set of questions and frames a way to learn. Learning involves physical data collection and consideration of theory. These two lines inform each other, as do other conversations, sharing of data and writing. Eventually, out of the complex network of ideas, refined concepts evolve and are fine-tuned. The original idea may still be there, but it has changed, as has the inquirer. She has learned. Her task is to then communicate what she has learned.

In this inquiry, I make a reasonable case that tableau does mediate learning, is a means of thinking and is useful in pedagogical practice. I saw three ways tableau acts as a way of thinking. First, as will be discussed in Chapter III, tableaux use *performative gestures* imbued with sociocultural symbols. Symbols are signs, and sign use mediates learning – sign use is cognitive action.

Furthermore, performative gestures hold the characteristic of being non-language-based. The nature of gesture itself shapes the form of thinking toward focus on the whole and the relations between the parts. Secondly, as will be discussed in Chapter IV, tableau as a whole action requires the user to *interpret the intentions of characters and the relationships between characters*, drawing on her own emotion-based information gathering and processing. Thirdly, as discussed in Chapter V, tableau calls for *negotiated meaning* – negotiated at the local level in group action and through sociocultural assumptions. Both meaning and control are negotiated in the action-space of tableau. I analyze and support these claims in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER III

PERFORMATIVE GESTURE AS A WAY OF THINKING

There are no 'neutral' words and forms – words and forms that can belong to 'no one': language has been completely taken over, shot through with intentions and actions...for any individual consciousness living in it, language is not an abstract system of normative forms but rather a concrete heteroglot conception of the world. All words have the 'taste' of a profession, a genre, a tendency, a party, a particular work, particular person, a generation, an age group, the day and hour. Each word tastes of the contexts and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions (Bakhtin, 1981/1996, p. 293).

In this chapter, I make the case that performative gesture in tableau is a way of thinking. As part of making the case, I first face the question, *What is performative gesture?* In several different tableaux, one first grader stood and smiled. He looked the same in different scenes, on different days. Was he performing? Was he using gesture to express an understanding, to mediate learning? Was he standing simply or simply standing?

Gesture is common; one would not think it necessary to define it, yet it is necessary. Like any concept, there is no singular definition of gesture and in this chapter I draw from *conceptual analysis* methodologies to outline the borders of performative gesture. In keeping with the methodology of conceptual analysis, I consider *model cases*, *borderline cases*, and *related cases*. Because I use language as a related case, I explore language and compare its characteristics to

those of performative gesture. In fact, it is in the comparison between language and gesture that the qualities of gesture become clear. The conceptual analysis indicates that performative gesture is a sign system. Sign systems make the case that tableau is a way of thinking. Signs are the tools of thinking.

Model Cases of Performative Gesture

I start the conceptual analysis with examples (model cases) of performative gesture taken from the tableaux of the first and second graders. To help identify salient features, and to help in subsequent discussion, I identified four focal points of performative gestures. I use these as identifying labels and



Figure 2. Use of body posture as a performative gesture.

describe each, providing examples. These gestures amount to the performers use of their body and the space around them.

The first type of performative gesture is *body posture* such as crossing arms, swinging out the hip. This amounts to how one uses personal space. Figure 2 illustrates body posture relative to self. The two girls enacted two different emotions through their posture (and facial expression). On the left, Adrianna shows anger. She stands ridged and tense, and uses her whole body to show this tenseness by containing herself tightly. Near her is Meg, enacting sadness. She makes her body small, close to the ground, folded in on herself, almost listless. Both children position their bodies in space to enact an emotion. The focus of the gesture is the posture of the body as a whole.

The second focal area of gestures, *hand focused* gestures, includes gestures such as pointing or raising the hand to indicate “stop,” illustrated in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Two examples of hand focused performative gestures.

Facial expression gestures form the third type. These focus on the head – facial muscles in particular. Facial expression had been evident in each tableau shown, but the one in Figure 4 is particularly illustrative. She is worried,



Figure 4. An example of facial expression as performative gesture.

concerned about a friend who has fallen. Her eyes are downcast with her head (and shoulders) tilted forward.

The fourth focal area is *body positioning relative to others* and refers to the use of space relative to others. In the scene depicted in Figure 5, from a remake of *The Three Billie Goats Gruff*, the children have positioned themselves carefully – the two girls together to the right are representing a dependent relationship – Marcie is “inside” Kate. The boy is separated, off to the side looking as though he trying to get away, while the girl who is distanced, looks mischievous. Their use of space is important to the relationships they enact.



Figure 5. A tableau that illustrates positioning relative to others to show relationships between characters.

The tableaux pictured in Figure 6, shows all four types of gesture. Here, the girls each enact a different aspect of one character, Lilly, from the book *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996). The boy acts the teacher. In this scene, Lilly gives the teacher different items as part of an apology. Three girls use hand-focused gestures, facial expression, posture and positioning as they convey emotions and actions. The girls align themselves in opposition to and apart from the boy.

Notice also that Kari (in the smiley shirt) is set apart (positioning) and uses her whole body posture. She enacts an emotion, a feeling of sadness. The other three enact both an emotion and an action. Leigh, the furthest left of the three girls who stand together, is at ease with teachers and likes to give things – she is reaching into her pocket to give him something. Lisa, in the middle, says

she is apprehensive (“a little scared”) and Mary says she feels “she has to” give him something as she gives him a note.



Figure 6. This tableau illustrates all four focal points of performative gesture.

In addition to the four focal points of performative gestures, I identified two categories of function. Some gestures in tableau look to be literal representations of the *actions* of the characters. The sense is that the children are re-creating the action-text (such as the three girls above handing items to the teacher). These are imitative. The second category of meaning, one that overlaps with the first, formed based on the observation that children use culturally established *symbolic* focused gestures; gestures that are somewhat standardized in our culture to communicate a concept.³

³ The term ‘culturally established symbolic gestures is taken from Laura Ann Petitto (Petitto, 1993). These are also called emblems, a nonverbal action that is clearly understood by most members of a culture (Matlin, 1995, p. 285).



Figure 7. These two tableaux illustrate use of symbolic, culturally standardized gestures.

For example, in Figure 7, the photograph on the left depicts a tableau in which Mary held the role of “leader” in a scene of five students. The scene, drawn from an oral text they created, depicted the children riding horses lost in the woods being led by Mary. To show herself as the leader, to symbolize the leadership role, Mary turned back to the others and put out her hand, palm out – a gesture of command (refer to Figure 7, photograph on left). Another example is found in a tableaux created in conjunction with reading Kevin Henkes’ *Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse*(1996). Suzie, as Lilly, pointed to her colleague, Maggie, who portrayed Lilly’s little brother to convey the idea of, ‘Listen up, I am your teacher’ (see figure 7, photograph on the right). Both of these hand-focused gestures, the arm stretched and palm out toward others, and the pointing gesture, are fairly conventional symbolic gestures that indicated a command.



Figure 8. A tableau detail that shows gesture that imitates action.

In representing a command, these symbolic gestures indicate a relationship between characters wherein one character is the “leader” while the others are to “follow.” These culturally established gestures, though mediated by the context, are easier to “read” and understand than gestures that imitate an action from the story, such as children pretending to ride horses through the woods (see Figure 8). The imitative stances (these riding stances happen to be full body gestures) appear more context dependent. Cultural symbols can be “read” as text themselves, independent of the literary text. When children use culturally established gestures, readers who share an understanding of the culture can interpret the gestures. Readers interpret these gestures beyond the literature text inspiring them because they hold meaning personal and culturally constituted.

Performative gestures involve the whole body although I place emphasis on particular parts of the body in this inquiry. The labels I use on performative gestures parallel those devised through other research on gesture. I briefly review alternate labels to illustrate the similarities.

David McNeill (1992) studied gestures used in *conjunction with talk*. These were hand-focused. He identified the following types, or classes, of gesture. *Iconics* were pictorial, illustrative and representative of a concrete meaning (a gesture that imitates an action). *Metaphoric* gestures created images of abstractions. *Beats* looked like “beating musical time.” *Cohesives* tied together elements, such as a listing or separated elements in a story line by creating a place for them in the gesture space; and *Deictics* were the pointing gestures that indicated concrete objects and abstracts as when pointing during conversations (p. 18). Pierre Feyereisen and Jacques-Dominique de Lannoy’s (1991) review of research showed support that several studies converge on these or similar classifications of gestures.

Laura Ann Petitto (1993) determined six kinds of gesture demonstrated by infants. The classifications she developed based on her observation included: *motoric hand activity* (e.g. banging), *pointing* (indexical gesture, corresponding to McNeill’s deictics), *social gestures* (waving hello, goodbye – routine gestures), actions with objects in hand (e.g. brushing with a brush), *instrumental gestures* (e.g., raising arms to be picked up) and *symbolic gestures* (‘empty-handed instrumental gestures’ such as pretending to twist the lid of a jar to indicate the desire for the contents of the jar, or to pretend to talk into a telephone without the presence of a phone).

These two examples of research indicate that others, who have studied gesture in communication, found similar classifications as I did. However, their research focused on use of hands. Performative gestures use the *whole body* in the space of tableau. The body shows intention, emotion and relationship to others through performative gesture. The gestures present ideas – they are an expressive act. The picture in Figure 9 shows how much performative gesture is whole body, as this child shows a “mud monster” – a character who is oozy. She uses her body to express this character, even creating a sense of movement while being still.



Figure 9. A detail from a tableau to illustrate how performative gesture involves the whole body to show intention.

Borderline Case

As mentioned earlier, there was a case wherein a boy stood and smiled in each tableau. There were others similar to this. It was unclear whether the child was using his body to convey an understanding. There was little he provided to evidence his interpretation, or he did it so well I could not tell a difference from his usual way of being. This happened a couple of times with different children. In each incidence, the child participated in the tableaux and had an assigned role (determined with the group who planned the tableau). I concluded that these are borderline performative gestures. From viewing them, it was difficult to determine the *performer's intent* – that is, it was difficult to read their gestures. My difficulty in reading them did not mean the child was not engaged in or attempting to enact a character.



Figure 10. The two photographs reflect differences in intention. On the left, Samantha wants to show she loves school. Todd, on the right, I suspect, posed for the photograph.

To determine the difference between the two requires talking with the children rather than reading the tableau. It is a difference of intention.

Samantha, on the left in Figure 10, told me her intention – to show that she loved school. In fact she wanted to use a marker to symbolize school, and had planned this tableau the night before. Todd, on the right in Figure 10, had missed the previous day's activities, when the group planned the tableau. He was not sure what his part was and appears to pose for the tableau as one might pose for a portrait. Since he was portraying a child in school, this worked for the tableau, but I am still unsure whether he intended this simple pose, or whether he simply posed for a picture.

Related Case: Language

A related case is similar or in some way connected to the concept under analysis (Wilson, 1963). Gestures have a communicative function and are often used with language. Gesture and language are related.

David Armstrong, William Stokoe and Sherman Wilcox proposed that *language is gesture*, that is, "bodily movement to which human beings attach meaning" (1995). Their point was that language was movement (muscle) based and that before vocal language existed there was gesture, a form a sign language. They said that speech is gesture. Articulatory gestures, defined as purposeful movement to communicate an intent (to have a purpose - to achieve something), result in verbal (acoustic) output or in sign (visual) output (Armstrong et al., 1995). Intentions are communicated through the movement of muscles, whether acoustically or visually interpreted (Armstrong et al., 1995).

Armstrong, Stokoe and Wilcox's look at the muscular system in communication points to the complexity of the body system. Minute synchronized movements are necessary for vocal language production. The coordination and timing it takes to utter one word of three sounds, not to mention a stream of sounds of a sentence that constitute a sentence reflects a complex interplay of systems. A stream of sounds (a sentence, without punctuation, is one continuous stream of sound) requires timing and coordination of the lungs, larynx, nasal and oral cavity, tongue and velum, teeth, jaw and pharynx. The movements and the resulting sound are flowing, muscular and complex.

Armstrong, Stokoe and Wilcox took an evolutionary stance regarding the relationship between gesture and language in their book, *Gesture and the Nature of Language* (1995). They considered gesture an umbrella genus that included sign language. Their driving argument was that gesture, as a genus, was broad and inclusive of sign language, vocal language and gesture. Gesture, they proposed, was the forerunner of language. Their argument was that gesture was not there to augment speech, but had its own explicit referential communicative function (p. 7).

Laura Ann Petitto (1993) studied infants of hearing and non-hearing manual-language-using parents. Her study considered manual sign language that uses the medium of gesture. She determined gesture and manual language to be different. Manual language drew on language-based systems. Gesture, such as that which accompanies speech and likely performative gesture used in tableaux, did not draw on language systems. Let me explain more fully.

Petitto established that infants of non-hearing manual-language-using parent(s), “babble” in manual language, like infants of speaking parents babble in sounds (1993). Arguing for a language module and against a domain general model of the brain,⁴ she concluded “that all infants initially attend to and seek to discover very particular aspects of language structure at birth, irrespective of the modality of the input. Indeed, linguistically structured input – and not modality – is the critical factor required to trigger human language acquisition” (p. 96). Gesture did not fit the linguistic structure required of a language. Babies who learn manual language did not confuse sign language and gesture; infants differentiated manual language from gesture. Gestures “violate the structural requirements of the nascent structure-seeking mechanism... searching for a particular structure and no other” (p. 98).

Qualities of Language and of Gesture

One difference between gesture and language could be in the level of complexity. Petitto stated that gesture did not develop the complexity language did. Language offered infinite variation. There is an explosive growth in language sophistication that occurs as children begin to connect words. Gesture, too,

⁴ Petitto’s findings argue for a domain specific model of the brain, against claims that gesture and verbal language develop from the same source of cognitive capacity (a *domain general* perspective of brain development) (p. 104). Domain specificity can be understood as knowledge and development along a particular strand or in a particular category. The language specific domain is the unique domain of *language thought*, with its own pattern of development and use. Mathematics knowledge (mathematics thinking) is of another domain. What one learns in one domain does not necessarily transfer, or generalize to other domains, hence the concern about teaching skills in isolation; that what you teach in math will not show up in science. Modularity usually refers to “functional cognitive architecture” (structures) while domain specificity usually refers to knowledge (processes) (Hirschfeld & Gelman, 1994). How language is acquired, is a consideration of how the brain functions to allow language to develop (“cognitive architecture”).

becomes more sophisticated, more fine-tuned as one grows into the socio-cultural environment and as one learns more about the self. The early developmental trend of gesture Petitto found in infants (eight through twenty months of age) included early use of indexical gestures (pointing gestures, around nine months) that developed into the use of non-indexical, symbolic gestures (using an empty cup with drinking like motions, lifting arms to be picked up). Then came the use of “culturally established gestures” such as waving, nodding and shaking the head, and game gestures (e.g. patty-cake), around thirteen months (p. 101).

Petitto studied infants. It is reasonable to assume, that as children grow they continue to develop a repertoire of culturally established gestures, and that they develop more sophistication in their use of symbolic gestures. The domain of gesture may not undergo the explosion that language does, but it does become more complex.

Another level of difference between gesture and language could be in the manner of expression. McNeill (1992) stated that the gestures that accompany spoken language do not convey meaning in the same manner as language. Pierre Feyereisen and Jacques-Dominique de Lannoy, reporting on an array of research on language and gesture, note that “it is difficult to account for [the different] uses of language and gesture in a single framework, which implies that two independent systems, controlled by specific rules and aimed at their own objectives should be considered” (1991, p. 49).

McNeill explained that gestures were global; they synthesize and are never hierarchical. In language, parts combine into wholes, letters/sounds into

words, words into phrases, phrases into sentences and on and on. With gesture, the whole actively determines meaning of the parts (McNeill, 1992, p. 19).

Gestures do not combine to form larger gestures and gestures do not subordinate in combination as phrases do in language (McNeill, 1992). In the detail from a tableau (see Figure 11), each portion of her performative gesture contributes to a whole portrait – her hands, her facial expression and her body posture are all expressive as a “unit of meaning.”



Figure 11. Each portion of her gesture contributes to the meaning. The whole must be read to understand the meaning of the portions.

Gesture stands alone as a unit of meaning (McNeill, 1992), although Feyereisen and de Lannoy (1991) reported that some have attempted to break gesture down into kinesic levels of bound morphemes (p. 20). Because the whole gives meaning to the parts, when one reads gestures, one *interprets contextually*,

attending to the context, the relation between the parts. One needs to attend to values in order to judge levels of importance. The types of syntactic cues of language that say one idea is equal to (as in the use of 'and' to join phrases) or causal (as in the use of 'because') to another are not available in gesture. One has to read the whole, and interpret according to the context, according to what one knows and understands and according to the relationships between these 'parts.' In the example above, you know her gesture is part of a tableau – it is not a gesture of sorrow regarding an incident at recess. The location of the gesture is part of the meaning of the gesture – it is situated, and defined by its situatedness.

Gesture is *synchronous*; it shows simultaneously. Synchronic representations show everything at once – past, present, possible futures. Reading gesture is like reading a painting. To read a painting one considers color, sizes, shapes, context *in* the painting, historical context *of* the painting,

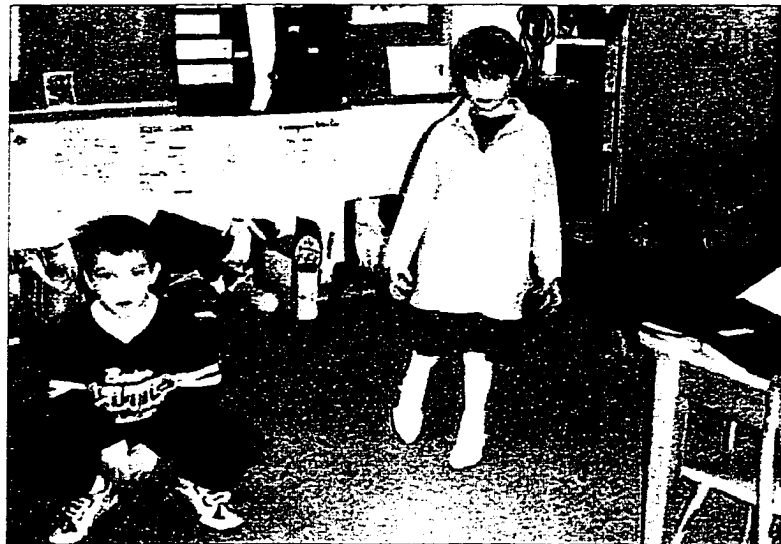


Figure 12. To read a tableau, one must think about the relations between the characters, how they use the space of the tableau as well as how the hands are used.

one's reaction, one's knowledge and the relationship between all of these.

Gestures with a synchronic quality are “multidimensional and present meaning complexes without undergoing segmentation in linearization” (McNeill, 1992).

As shown in the tableau of Figure 12, the reader needs to think relationally – why does one person stoop here, why are these others in the back and on their knees – why does she stand, what does she convey with her hands and her posture?

Language, particularly discursive expository language,⁵ has *diachronic* (unfolding over time) qualities. Language occurs over time and has a linear form that allows for infinite variation. Although structured by rules of order, infinite combinations are possible in language. Language can provide a sense of time unfolding, referencing past, present and future with relative ease. In addition, language easily refers to that which is not present. Language is discursive in nature (Langer, 1942/1979) with diachronic, linear qualities. Language segments and linearizes meaning to form a hierarchy; it is one-dimensional while meanings are multidimensional (McNeill, 1992).

A diachronic, linear quality is especially present in written language, with an emphasis on rules of order that compensate for loss of oral language's use of gestures and intonation. Oral communication, especially informal oral communication, makes use of synchronic modes as well as diachronic, linear language. D. R. Olsen (1977)⁶ argued “there is a transition from utterance to text

⁵ I question a flat statement of all language forms as diachronic. Although words are ‘strung like beads on a rosary (Langer, 1942/1979) and read in sequence, I am not sure that the image evoking qualities of metaphor and figurative language don't push language toward a synchronic quality. Like many polar dichotomies, a more complex understanding is found in between.

⁶ Olson notes: “Utterance is universal, text appears to have originated with Greek literacy.” Although “complex and extensive literature could exist in the absence of a written system” such as

both culturally and developmentally and that this transition can be described as one of increasing explicitness, with language increasingly able to stand as an unambiguous or autonomous representation of meaning” (258). He noted that written language, especially the formal essay and writing in the sciences and philosophy, relied on explicitness and language conventions to communicate meaning (Olson, 1977). This explicitness creates a strong diachronic and linear quality. Such written language is *text explicit*, with the writer intending to communicate a specific message through the medium of written text, and meaning for it to be read efferently, to borrow Louise Rosenblatt’s (1978) term. Not all writing genres are so explicit nor are all spoken genres. The employment of metaphor and figurative language evoke ambiguity and implicit relations. It is too simplistic to say all language is diachronic, but the qualities of language expression include a diachronic nature as words unfold.

demonstrated with the Iliad, Odyssey, and sections of the Bible, the "preserved verbal statements...would have to be biased in form and content toward mnemonic devices..." (263). "Language is thus shaped or biased to fit the requirements of oral communication and auditory memory" (263). These oral texts tended to not be explicit because of the need to bias the language and so they required prior knowledge for interpretation. The Greek alphabet met the criterion for an explicit writing system because it reduced ambiguousness. In the Greek culture, written language "became an instrument for the formulation and preservation of original statements" and "permitted differentiation of myth and history" (266). Written text could be analyzed and permitted logical procedures or rules to develop for using language consistently. (Olson, 1977). Lack of ambiguity was valued.

Signs



Figure 13. Performative gestures are signs that convey meaning. The children think through these signs.

Both gesture and language are systems of sign. Signs mediate. Lev Vygotsky used the term mediation when talking about mediated learning and the use of tools such as language to think *through*. Mediary tools such as language change one's understanding through their use. "Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them....It does not merely find expression in speech; it finds its reality and form (Vygotsky, 1985/1996, p. 219). This belief is echoed by Volosinov who says that expression gives experience form and specific direction (1985, p. 52). More recently, George Turski stated, "Strictly speaking, a gesture or expression does not *indicate* a meaning; it is meaning in all its diverse forms, that is embodied by and found *in* the expression, not separated from it" (1994, p. 48). Gesture, including performative gesture, is expression and as expression, it is thinking in action – an act of thinking.

Performative gestures, being signs, have three layers of meaning. A. A. Leont'ev pointed out that every sign has three contents, the object content, the ideal content and the subjective content (1979/1981a). The actual object or idea are the objective content – it is the system of connections and relations in reality



Figure 14. The peace sign has three layers of content, one of which it the 'ideal' and socially encoded content. Personal, subjective understanding fills another content.

(Leont'ev, 1979/1981b). The ideal content is socially encoded with the *ideals* of that object. Usually, the ideal content is perceived and used, blocking consideration of the objective and subjective contents (Leont'ev, 1979/1981b). Notice in the tableau pictured in Figure 14, that one of the children is using the “peace sign.” The objective content of this sign, that is, what it represents, is the idea of peace. The ideal content is what peace means to us a society – how we in our society interpret peace, the ideal of peace. In addition, the idea represented with this sign is laden with associations of the 1960's era. The personal, subjective content of the sign varies from reader to reader – I am not sure what

the performer in Figure 14 sees in the sign. My subjective content is closely linked to images of Woodstock.

The subjective content is based on the perceiver's experience and is projected onto the sign. All three contents are used in the reading of signs. Reading signs is an act of interpretation, and the reader makes choices and negotiates the possible routes of interpretation (Ellsworth, 1997). Whether the interpreter draws on the ideal content, or all three, depends on the depth of the reading.

Learners appropriate signs, adding their own personal (subjective) history to the ideal (socially encoded) content of the sign. Performative gestures, like words, are heteroglossic with "the 'taste' of a profession, genre...particular person, a generation" (Bakhtin, 1981/1996). The meanings of signs are built, layer upon layer, through social action. Learning to interpret gestures for their sociocultural meaning is part of thinking through signs.

Charles Sanders Peirce (1985) developed a logic of semiotics (the study of signs). In his model, the *interpretant* gives *signification* to signs (Hausman, 1993/1997; Peirce, 1985; Siegel, 1995; Siegel, 1984). The interpretant is in the mind of the person reading the sign and it mediates the understanding of the sign (signifies the sign). Peirce identified three types of signs: indexes, icons and symbols. Indexes indicate a sign, such as the way smoke indicates a fire. Indexes are "embodied and actuated in gestures, demonstratives and personal pronouns" (Innis, 1985). Icons are realistic images of objects, they resemble the object. Symbols are assigned. These are linked to A.A. Leont'ev's ideal content.

Symbols are culturally agreed upon representations of an object. A word is a symbol. Some gestures, as seen in earlier examples are symbols. These are the pointing gestures that can be read for some meaning even when separated from context (though context is required for understanding the nuances of use of the symbol). The “peace sign” shown earlier is another example of a symbol – a sign recognized in our society to stand for something much like a word stands for something. A symbol is a doorway to a vast maze of meaning that one learns to negotiate through apprenticeship to discourse communities.

Interpreting meaning is a dialogic action. The signs, particularly symbols, mediate the interpretation – they change the understanding. The understanding changes the interpretation of the next signs. Both gesture and word act as mediating signs. Their use is part of thinking.

Defining Performative Gesture as Cognitive Action



Figure 15. In this begging gesture, Marcie embodies her intention in the performative gesture.

In this conceptual analysis of performative gesture, I examined model cases and borderline cases drawn from the tableaux of first and second graders, and I looked into the related concept of language. I explored the qualities that differentiate gesture and language, and defined performative gesture.

Performative gesture involves the whole body expressing an intention, but one can focus on different areas for the purpose of description.

I illustrated four focus areas through model cases. These include hand-focused gestures, whole body postures, positioning of the body relative to others,

and facial expression. The performative gestures fall into two functions of meaning. General signs are imitative and invented by children to express a meaning, while others are culturally standardized symbols.

Performative gestures, especially in the stillness of tableaux, are synchronic examples of sign use that show the whole all at once. The culturally standardized signs in these gestures serve as symbols and help us understand the cognitive function of tableau, such as illustrated in the begging gesture used by Marcie in the Figure 15. Readers interpret the signs and symbols, using these to consider and construct meaning.

Expression in gesture is thinking manifested. Gesture is a medium of expression and expression is experience (Turski, 1994). Turski notes, “To claim that expression is essential for experience is of course to deny the modern view that it is a bodily movement from which we somehow infer intent. Strictly speaking, a gesture or expression does not *indicate* a meaning; it is meaning in all its diverse forms, that is embodied by and found *in* the expression, not separate from it” (p. 48).

When Marcie gestures ‘begging’ in the tableau in Figure 15, she uses her body to show this intention – the intention is embodied. The notion of gesture as embodied meaning, is a notion that performative gesture is cognitive action. Turski notes that, “it is because I see the sun and the shadows that I grasp the raised hand as a stance of shading one’s eyes as opposed to one of fending off a blow” (Turski, 1994). “We recognize a given physical configuration as a posture by virtue of the *intent* it embodies, its quality of aiming at some privileged (expressive) outcome and so of being an incipient action; no intent or body, no

posture...some are consciously adopted; others spontaneously, but still carrying intent” (p. 14). *A posture embodies intent*. Readers apprehend the intent through reading the body in the given situation.

Gesture is not a language and is not linguistically oriented. Gesture holds the quality of synchronicity. Context is required to apprehend the intent of others. That gesture embodies intent is one of the reasons Salvio’s (1994) work with teachers, connecting gesture and autobiography, is powerful. Gesture is the embodiment of desires, beliefs, emotions and intentions. Social events shape these desires, beliefs, emotions and intentions. Sociocultural factors shaped personal experience in social events. Reading the body is interpretation of desires, emotions, beliefs and intentions that exist within a sociocultural context. “The message cannot be divorced from its medium, because the latter organizes (serves as an organ for) the former” (Turski, 1994, p. 48). Acts of expression, be they linguistic or gestural, are acts of thinking. Language and gesture are not translation of thoughts, but rather the actualization and manifestation of thinking through these means of expression. The form and shape of thinking differs when expressed through gesture, but it is thinking nevertheless.

Given its synchronic nature, performative gesture shapes less precisely than does language – opening ambiguity. Ambiguity evokes thinking, the making of connections on a wide plain. “The body of the actor, like the body of the text, stumbles into ambiguity, insinuating more than words can say with gesture, movement and intonation” (Grumet, 1988). The tableau pictured at the beginning of this section insinuates meaning, even if the reader does not know the literature from which it is drawn. There are possibilities with which the

reader must grapple – what is the meaning of this gesture, this position, and this relationship? The performers themselves invented gestures, generating signs to use to insinuate meaning.

Some use gesture's ambiguity deliberately to provoke awareness. Bertolt Brecht (1964) used gesture, in the form of the social *gest*, as a theatrical tool to convey a message and to expose political (power) differences between peoples. The social *gest* is a particular kind of gesture that is not explanatory nor is it emphatic movement (Brecht, 1964, p. 104). "The social *gest* is the *gest* relevant to society, the *gest* that allows conclusions to be drawn about the social circumstances" (p. 105). *Gests* are political, that is the *gest* allows the viewer to critique the event. The social *gest* Brecht describes is a culturally established symbolic gesture used to arrest the reader from her everyday musing, to interrupt normalcy for a re-consideration of what is going on. The tableau pictured at the beginning of this section is an example of social *gest* – the gestures move beyond portrayal of a scene from *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) wherein a child, Lilly, is apologizing to her teacher. The stances of the children jarred this reader into reconsidering a relationship between child and teacher that puts a child in the position of beggar. This jarring happened to me as I came to read this tableau as presenting a relationship between teacher and child, not just between a particular child, Lilly, and a particular teacher.

Jeannette Gallagher and William Wansart use an assimilative base model of learning, drawn from the research of Jean Piaget (Gallagher & Wansart, 1991). A child's assimilative base is her active network of relations. She brings this to any learning. Learning is the dynamic engagement of the assimilative base with

any given task. The children, in creating the tableau pictured above, use their assimilative base of connections and understandings of relationships. Where they did not have standardized symbols to draw on, they invented performative gestures to present a meaning. As a reader, I too brought my assimilative base to read the relationships depicted. I became aware that the presentation was more than a presentation of the story scene – a sense of puzzlement lead to further exploration of the meaning in this tableau. As performers, children too puzzle out how to present an intention in through gesture. Puzzlement leads to a reorganization of the network of relationships and thus, learning (Gallagher & Wansart, 1991). Learning is a change in this network. The use of performative gestures can jar one’s sense of normalcy, evoking a sense of puzzlement and an active, dynamic process of reconstructing a base of understanding.

Madeline Grumet pointed out that “it is the function of art to reorganize experience so that it is perceived freshly” (1988). Tableau, with its use of performative gesture, is drawn from theatre. Performative gesture makes comprehension visible to the viewer, and can jar her assumptions. She can see the signs, including symbols, she is using and this can further mediate her understanding. In essence, she sees her thinking through her gestures as well as hears her thinking through her words. When she reads her own signs for underlying assumptions, a sense normalcy and status quo may be interrupted. When one is puzzled, learning can be the result. In other words, performative gesture in tableau is cognitive action.

Gesture taps the systems of the body that link to emotionally based understanding and memory (Damasio, 1994; Salvio, 1994). It is not surprising then, that tableau makes use of emotion-based thinking. The capacity of tableau as a whole event to use emotion as a means to gather information about the intention of characters and the relationships between them is the topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

EMOTION BASED THINKING IN TABLEAU

Even if emotions are biological phenomena, what exactly does that reductive account explain? ...the enterprise depends not just on identifying certain biological structures and properties but on correlating those with others that pertain to full development, or maturity. And here interpretation enters inescapably...it cannot be dispensed with (Turski, 1994, p. 13).

The tableaux of this study are composed in conjunction with reading literature and show strength as a way to interpret characters and their relationships. But, how does tableau accomplish this feat? The use of emotion is at least part of the answer. As shown through examples, the first and second grade children were adept in using emotion in tableau. I suspect emotion is part of their thinking through tableau. In the previous chapter, performative gesture, a non-language medium, is explained as a way of thinking through a sign system. Performative gestures are a tool of tableau, but tableau as a *whole* action-event mediates thinking as well. In this chapter, I make a case of tableau as a means to tap emotional-based cognitive systems. I theorize that these emotion-based systems are used to infer intentions of characters and thereby to interpret the relationships between characters and between ideas – relationships exhibited through performative gestures.

Interpretation means to perform according to one's understanding and to conceive significance (1992). Within this definition is the core of how the whole

tableau acts as a means of thinking. The performance of tableau is the performance of one's understanding and giving of meaning, i.e., sense making through action. The tableau is an act of signifying, an action of making sense of the text and, in doing so, of organizing the world. Emotion is one of the tools used in tableau to make sense of the characters and their relationships. Emotion is a means to understand other people's perceptions. As will be discussed, emotion is a means of *gathering* information as well as of *making sense of* information.

The children *showed* a range of emotion in their tableaux but it is their probable *use* of emotion as means a means to gather information that is described first, in the following pages about subjectivity. I discuss the theory and research about emotion's role in thinking. I use examples of children's work with emotion and a theory of emotion's role in the interpretation of literature-based characters through the medium of tableau is developed.

Emotion to Gather Information, to Make Sense Subjectively

Emotion played an important part in the children's interpretation of the intentions and relations of characters. I feel that its importance was not only in the interpretative expression of the feelings of the characters, but also in the children's use of emotion as an information gathering tool. Ronald de Sousa's (1987) philosophical based analysis supports this thesis. I share the results of his analysis below and use examples from the children's tableaux to illustrate how his theory and classifications fit tableau.

De Sousa (1987) considered the evolution of emotion as he ruminated on the rationality of emotions. He views emotions as emerging in a manner similar to other mental capacities, that is “out of biological roots that connect us to the world” (p. 113). De Sousa associates emotion with a meaningful representation of information that is both outside and inside the body; “emotions apprehend real properties of the world (p. 201). Emotions underlie rational processes and are integral to *subjective information* gathering (p. 201). De Sousa sees subjectivity, i.e., emotion, as a reliable means to gather information about the world. He differentiates four sources of emotional based subjectively gathered information. On the following pages, I relate de Sousa’s four sources, phenomenology, relativity, projection and perspective, to tableau.

Phenomenology refers to a basic property of emotions – that emotions cannot be reduced to parts for a causal explanation (de Sousa, 1987). Emotions have an *emergent* property, and this property provides information. I turn briefly to systems and chaos theory to explain “emergent” phenomenologically. Michael Waldrop (1992) theorized that when a structure, or system, *emerged* out of chaos, a self-organizing system emerged that did not exist before. It had not existed in an embryonic state. It was new. I consider this perspective of emotion to be referring to the feelings that emerge with a phenomenon, such as the feeling/emotion of terror that emerges with witnessing a violent act. The emerged emotion links with the phenomenon with which it emerges and it provides subjective information about the phenomenon.



Figure 16. Suzie takes on the role of teacher, feeling the power of telling her brother to ‘listen up.’

According to phenomenological subjectivity, the emotions that are provoked correspond to a real property (de Sousa, 1987, p. 29). These emotions provide information about the real properties of the phenomenon. When considering performative gesture in tableaux, the feelings or emotions evoked when enacting a character’s role speak to real properties of that role in that context. When Susie, pictured in Figure 16 in a tableau from *Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996), takes on the role of a teacher, she points to her classmate in the role of a student, and gestures, “Listen-up.” The feeling of power

that emerges in this situation gives her information about the relation between teacher and student in the story, and about relations in life. Power is a property attributed to the phenomenon of teacher-student relationships in Western culture. Susie gathered information, through emotion, evoked by her stance in the tableau, about the phenomenon of a power relationship.

The second type of subjectivity de Sousa described is *relativity*. “The properties attributed to the objects are produced *in the relations* between object and subject” (p. 146, emphasis added). This is a transactional relationship. The *relationship* between the person and the object provides information. De Sousa speaks in terms of person and object relationships, but I see this fitting person to person relations. This concept is useful in understanding how tableau, which shows synchronically, thereby emphasizing relationships, provides information about characters’ “properties,” including characters’ intentions and beliefs. Although I find this type of subjectivity very close in nature to phenomenological subjectivity, the attachment of emergent emotion differs. The emerging emotion in phenomenological subjectivity gives information about the whole phenomenon. With relativity, emotion gives information about the people (“objects”) themselves, through their relationships.

In the tableau discussed above (Figure 16), the character, Lilly, is pretending to be a teacher addressing a student. How information about the broad culturally defined relationship between student and teacher could be inferred (phenomenological subjectivity) has already been discussed. Relativity explains another layer of information provided subjectively about the *particular characters* and their *intentions*. In this relationship, Lilly intends to tell her

sibling what to do, and her sibling intends to imitate big sister. The two performers signify properties (intentions and affect) of the character's state of mind through the relationship they enact in the tableau. In other words, through this relationship enacted in tableau, performers extrapolate information about each character. The younger child is imitative; the older child pretends to be a teacher and believes teachers tell children to listen. The character intends to boss the sibling. Through the tableau, children learn about the text book characters.

Perceptual relativity is a type of relativity. Beliefs shade perceptions and perceptions will change if the beliefs change. *Perspective*, however, is a third type of subjectivity. It refers to the idea that people actively view anything from somewhere – a perspective. An issue in perspective is how much reliance is placed on an angle of perspective (de Sousa, 1987). To read a tableau, the reader views it from at least one perspective. Where the viewer stands effects understanding the tableau. This is true whether viewing the tableau from the inside, as a performer, or the outside, as an audience. Perspective comes further into play with the discussion of apprehending a three-dimensional text in a later chapter.

The fourth subjectivity is *projection*. A psychoanalyst uses projection (projective techniques) to analyze subjectively a patient's difficulty relative to a textbook category, e.g., Oedipal Complex (p. 201). Therapists use their own feelings as a source of information about their patients beliefs, desires and action (de Sousa, 1987, p. 203). In other words, the therapist attends to her own responsive feelings that provide information about what the patient is experiencing. As a teacher, I use projection to help me understand how a child

may be feeling in a given situation. Within tableau, the children use projection to infer the emotions of characters and to determine a character's intention and action.



Figure 17. To create this tableau, the children may have drawn on projection and perspective for information gathering.

Let us look to a tableau at how both projection and perspective might work. In the tableau pictured in Figure 17, Marcie and her group decide on a begging gesture in their scene. The scene is taken from *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) wherein Lilly is saying she is sorry to her teacher for her behavior. For her performative gesture, Marcie drew on her experience. Her experience likely pointed to the importance of maintaining stable relationships, and to the difference in power between a child and an adult (Brown & Gilligan, 1992). She *projected* these emotions onto Lilly, the character in the book and it gave her more information. She used this information to determine Lilly's intentions and beliefs as she enacted her understanding of a relationship between child and authority. In terms of perspective, the camera angle here is focused on Marcie – she is the center of attention. Her perspective is given priority, helping readers to perceive this begging point of view. One of the “students” however (second from the right), looks toward the teacher, awaiting his response. His point of view, his perspective differs from the camera angle and emphasizes his anticipation of perhaps a negative response from the teacher. The different points of view inform the interpretation differently – and as de Sousa points out, at issue is the weight given to any one perspective.

Emotion to Determine Intention

It seems to me that the use of one's own feelings contributes to the determination of intentions and relations between characters. I believe children infer, through the subjective information gathering system of emotions, the intention and relationships of characters. For the children who enact tableau, the

literary text anchors their interpretation, yet they infer based on subjective information gathering through emotion as they enact tableau as well. Their inferences are valid sources of information regarding the text and the world and are part of thinking through tableau.

Emotions help apprehend the world. They are a source of information. They help people weigh factors and help people attend to what is important. As de Sousa points out,

Emotions tell us things about the real world. To be sure, their mode of objectivity is relative to the characteristic inclinations and responses of human and individual nature. The biological function that makes them indispensable to complex intentional organisms [is] to take up the slack in rational determination of judgement and desire, by adjusting salience among objects of attention, lines of inquiry and preferred inference patterns (de Sousa, 1987, p. 203).

Emotions are not only a means to gather information, they are also integral to making sense of literary text and of the world. In the following section, I extend the conversation about emotion's role in the cognitive action of tableau. I focus on emotion's role in guiding thinking – how it is that emotions are not only part of our system of learning about the world, but also help guide us through the world. There are further implications for tableau in how it makes use of emotion.

The Relationship of Emotion to Cognitive Action

Tableau taps an emotional way of knowing the world. De Sousa's work points to emotions as a way to gather information, but what other cognitive labor is attributed to emotion? I draw on research from physical, philosophical and sociocultural disciplines to extend the discussion of emotion's role in thinking.

First, I turn to Antonio Damasio's work on the place of emotions in everyday cognitive life.

Damasio (1994), a neurologist, specifically studied the place of emotion in thinking. The case of Phineas Gage, a railroad construction foreman in 1848, attracted his attention. It led to an interest in contemporary people with similar situations – an inability to access and use their emotional systems to aid in evaluation and decision making. Gage presented a unique case of apparent full mental capacity but with an inability to make decisions that would result in his well being. Gage sustained injury when an iron spike (thirteen pounds, over three and a half feet long, one and one quarter inch in diameter) traversed his skull and brain when an explosive charge prematurely detonated.

Gage did not lose consciousness after the injury, nor did he lose his faculty with language or general reasoning. Yet, he wasn't quite right. Gage had been an admired, respected foreman with a reputation as an intelligent, responsible person, a thoughtful and considerate husband and father. After his injury he experienced difficulty in "the ability to anticipate the future and plan accordingly" and experienced the loss "of sense of responsibility toward self and others and the ability to orchestrate survival deliberately" (Damasio, 1994, p. 10). Language, perception, memory, attention, and intelligence were intact, but he could not *infer* based on emotional response. Emotion plays a role in the ability to infer, a hypothesis supported through de Sousa's analyses.

In his search for answers, Damasio found other, modern Phineas Gages who by medical standards were functioning without injury and were ineligible for treatment and care. They had tested as fine on cognitive and psychological tests.

Yet, they made poor decisions. Through ingenious assessments in actual decision making situations, Damasio determined that these people were *unable to access their emotions to guide their decisions*. Emotions play a pivotal role in decision making.

Tableau, like any act that involves decision making, draws on the emotional guides of the body. As the children created tableaux, some actions felt appropriate and the decisions to use these gestures probably occurred on a pre-conscious level tapping *acquired assumptions*. Emotions are closely tied to the body (Damasio, 1994). "What is played out in the body is constructed anew, moment by moment, and is not an exact replica of anything that happened before. I suspect...that the brain waits for the body to report what has actually transpired" (Damasio, 1994, p. 158). The body acts and the brain uses information from the body to determine (interpret) what is going on. Damasio further explains,

"feelings are just as cognitive as any other perceptual image, and just as dependent on cerebral-cortex processing as any other image...To be sure, feelings are about something different. But what makes them different is that they are first and foremost about the body, that they offer us the cognition of our visceral and musculoskeletal state as it becomes affected by preorganized mechanisms and by the cognitive structures we have developed under their influence. Feelings let us mind the body, attentively, as during an emotional state, or faintly, as during a background state. They let us mind the body 'live,' when they give us perceptual images of the body, or 'by rebroadcast,' when they give us recalled images of the body state appropriate to certain circumstances, in 'as if' feelings....because of their inextricable ties to the body, they come first in development and retain a primacy that subtly pervades our mental life" (Damasio, 1994, p. 159).

Tableaux use performative gesture – frozen movement, and movement is part of the emotion-cognition system of informing. The body is part of our

cognitive system and feelings are part of the connections, part of the awareness. Tableaux tap this cognitive awareness; these implicit and explicit memories show themselves in movement or frozen action (performative gesture). We are informed by this system – these memories form our assumptions – and we use this system to guide us – the feel of rightness or wrongness in an action guides us (Damasio, 1994) like a compass. The provoked feelings are not necessarily consciously processed.

The mind evaluates, perceives and acts (in parallel, that is simultaneously acting on the same ‘input’) in a preconscious process (Bargh, 1997). Before one is aware of a conscious decision, one has perceived, evaluated and determined an action. Through subjective information gathering, the mind has access to an array of information that is used in making pre-conscious decisions – in giving weight to particular actions. Even when we think we are consciously making a decision, we have preconsciously given some actions more weight than others. A time gap exists between our decision and our awareness of our decision (Nunn, 1996).⁷ Emotions are part of this process – a system of perception, evaluation and decision making that occurs before conscious consideration (the pre-conscious decision can be countered by conscious consideration). Emotions act as an internal compass that nudge us. This compass is mediated by experience and by sociocultural values.

⁷ There is a delay between when people begin to act (readiness) and when they are aware of their intent to act (p. 39). Although this is a matter of milliseconds (150-200), it is enough time “in which awareness might give a final veto or go-ahead to the action (p. 39). We are rarely ever *present*. It is during this gap that we can counter our decision, bringing Nunn to the point that perhaps it isn’t so much free will, as ‘free won’t.’ Chris Nunn reports on a study by B. Libet (1993, ‘The Neural time Factor in Conscious and unconscious Events’ in *Experimental and Theoretical*

Secondary Emotions, Window to Cultural Values

Implicit emotional systems store emotional memories unconsciously through the amygdala system. Initial experience mediates these memories, but sociocultural structures such as language do not. Implicit systems are used to evoke fight or flight response and are constantly monitoring situations for potential danger (LeDoux, 1996). They give the feel of unease or ease in a course of action (Damasio, 1994).

Explicit memories are conscious memories about an emotional situation – they are labeled and attached to the situation (LeDoux, 1996). These are mediated by language and thereby shaped by sociocultural values. Such emotions are called secondary emotions. They are the emotions we learn to label with words and expectations. These also come into play with tableau – and inform readers of sociocultural values.

Secondary emotions involve broader cognitive systems than do primary, implicit emotions. Secondary emotions are “tuned by experience, when subtler shades of cognitive states are connected to subtler variations of emotional body state” (Damasio, 1994, p. 249). Secondary emotions are mediated through sociocultural environments and experiences. Earlier, I noted that the children were unfamiliar with the term *melancholy*. The subsequent discussion of emotions that make *melancholy* and even my impromptu tableau of *melancholy* was part of their learning socioculturally about this emotion. It was part of the children’s apprenticeship to socioculturally based knowledge (Rogoff, 1990).

Studies of Consciousness, CIBA Foundation Symposium 174, Wiley: Chichester). (Nunn, 1996, pp.

Understandings of emotions are socioculturally based. W. George Turski (1994), a philosopher, contends that emotions are strongly tied to language, “essentially tied to the understanding of the medium of language” (p. 51). Language permeates emotion with sociocultural meaning. One’s interpretation of a body state is dependent on personal attitude and history; when standing at a great height, is it elation or fear running through the body? The answer probably relates to personal history – and the sociocultural environment that shapes much of interpretation of personal history. Turski notes that when angry, the Japanese smile, the EuroAmerican stamps a foot, but the Utka Eskimo doesn’t even have a word equivalent to angry (p. 59). “[O]nce we move beyond certain reflex responses...into the realm of language, interpretation and social convention, there are no universal expressions but only ones typical of a given culture (Turski, 1994, p. 59). Because understanding of emotion is socioculturally based, reading tableau is reading the values of a sociocultural environment as well as the literary text and personal experience of the performer. This reading occurs inside the tableau, by the performer, as well as outside the tableau, by the viewer.

Different cultural assumptions result in different understandings of emotions, and these play out in tableau. Western cultures, particularly EuroAmerican, tend to categorize into dualisms such as head and heart, conscious and unconscious, internal and external, self and other (Lutz, 1988). Catherine Lutz (1988) studied the cultural constituents of emotion through an ethnographic study with the people of Ifaluk, an island in the South Pacific. The underlying assumptions of the Ifaluk people organized experience toward each

39, 95). See also Bargh (1997)

other while the underlying dualistic assumptions of Westerners organize experience toward an inner and an outer world. Lutz points out that the Ifaluk people have words that would be characterized as emotion words, but that do not make a sharp distinction between thought and emotion. Emotion for the Ifaluk people is located somewhere between people; emotion for the Westerner tends to be located within the individual. The Ifaluk people seamlessly link will, thought and emotion (p. 92). Emotion is located somewhere between self and other and the sociocultural tapestry. Tableaux created by persons with different cultural values would reflect these values and open them for exploration by non-members of a cultural community as well as by members. Salvio does this in her work with teachers, to uncover their assumptions about teaching (1994). Tableaux are windows into sociocultural values about emotions and relations.

Let us look again at the tableau (Figure 18) from *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) of Marcie "begging" the teacher's forgiveness. In this tableau, emotion and sociocultural values converge – this tableau reflects socioculturally based understandings of emotions and power relations. Marcie has made herself small, in a humble, earnest petition for forgiveness from her teacher. In this tableau, the meaning of sorrow for a transgression is tied to a sense of owing something to another – power shifts from one to another. Marcie and her group learned, through their experience in their sociocultural environment, that saying "I'm sorry" has these implications, these values (sorrow, powerlessness). Her group is also showing, through the shocked look from the boy second from the right that her transgression was taboo – she acted inappropriately with someone in authority. The values exist in my reading, my

interpretations of the children's stances (though the children's interpretations support my reading).



Figure 18. A tableau that illustrates emotional content and likely use of emotions to apprehend the depicted relationships between characters.

Earlier, it was pointed out how Marcie (Figures 17 and 18) may have used subjectively gathered information through her emotions, to project her own emotions onto Lilly in order to understand the character. It was also pointed out how the perspective differed, depending on the reader's (whether performer or outside, audience-reader) point of view. Phenomenological subjectivity may have also been used because holding the emotions through gesture allows the body to feel this response (emerged emotion), giving the performers more insight into the phenomenon of child to teacher. Also, holding the emotion through the pose taps relativity – the learning about the properties of “objects” through the relationship between them. In this tableau (Figure 18), the performers learn about their characters – their intentions and beliefs.

The tableau of Figure 18 illustrates use of emotion to gather information, to understand the beliefs (perspective) of the characters and to understand the properties of the characters (e.g., intentions). Furthermore, readers of the tableau can apprehend how sociocultural values inform the emotions presented. The sociocultural values place constraints on (i.e., they define) the relationships.

I have been focused on tableau and the use of emotion, but now I would like to show some examples of the children's expression of emotion. These tableaux tell much about their understanding of emotions and the play of emotions in physical space.

Expressions of Emotions in Tableau

The first and second graders display ease in portraying a variety of emotions. If the word was in their vocabulary, they portrayed it. If the word was not in their vocabulary, they asked. As mentioned earlier, when I gave them the word 'melancholy' they were unable to respond – they did not know this word. We discussed it as a combination of emotions, like sad, angry, and hopeless. The children built on the emotions they knew (sad, angry and hopeless) in order to create a sense of melancholia. In this section, I want to show some of the emotions the children portrayed, and how they used their whole body, particularly body positioning, hand-focused gesture, and facial expression to show emotions. In these tableaux, the children focus on emotions – they are not portraying relationships between different characters. Their expression speaks to strong understandings of emotion.

Their use of space reflects attributes of the emotions they express. For example, those who show 'sad' consistently express it with a folding in of the body, a making small. 'Anger' includes stiffening the body and a taking of more space. The tableau of Figure 18, discussed in brief in Chapter III, is from a scene in *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Nunn, 1996, pp. 39, 95). The scene in the book is about how the child, Lilly, felt when Mr. Slinger, her teacher, took away her new purple plastic purse.



Figure 19. Children express forms of anger by stiffening the body and taking up more space. Children express sadness by folding in the body, by taking up less space.

Adrianna, on the left in Figure 19, shows Lilly as mad. She chose this emotion because “I’m always mad. I’m always mad at home, here, everywhere I am mad.” Further, she decides not to show mad by crying, “my regular way.” She draws from her experience, *projects* on to the character Lilly and *makes sense* of Lilly’s position and role as child. Adrianna stiffens her arms, stands rigid, and sets her face in anger. Adrianna glares to the camera, facing the camera, facing the threat. Meg, on the right in Figure 19, is Lilly sad. She is small, low to the ground, with contemplative facial expression. She also draws on her experience of the emotion, and on sociocultural assumptions about what this

emotion means. There is an inference that sad possesses the property of drained, without vitality. Meg's eyes are downcast and she seems folded in on herself.

The tableau in Figure 20 four shows different emotions of one character. The children did this while developing character portraits. The character portraits were part of an activity in which the children re-wrote *The Three Billie*



Figure 20. The children portray a troll who is curious, angry, stingy and grumpy.

Goats Gruff. Small groups made lists of physical and emotional attributes of a character. These four portray a troll (who is hairy, mean, ugly and hungry) with the emotions (left to right) of curious, angry, stingy, grumpy. Notice again that the whole body is used. Curious is open, soft. Angry is rigid and hard. Stingy is holding the self back, protecting the self. Grumpy is guarded but facing the camera directly, whereas stingy turns away as she protects the self.

Uses of Emotion

The use of emotion is common in the children's tableaux and it is evident that the children understand an array of emotion. In the quest for understanding how tableau is a means of thinking, it appears that emotion plays a part. Through theoretical constructs and the actual activity of the children, the discussion so far has included the use of emotion to gather information. Emotions are used to gather information about the properties of the situation- event being portrayed (phenomenological subjectivity) and about of the particular character's intentions and desires (through relativity). Perspective taking gives insight into the beliefs of the character. Furthermore, performer uses her emotion-based memories to project emotions onto characters, allowing greater understanding of the characters in their situation. The frozen movement of tableau provides bodily response to the 'feel' of the action, guiding the children in their enactments. The children use the information gathering and guidance features of emotion in the action of making sense of the characters, the literary text and the relationship of these to themselves and their lives.

It is evident through theoretical constructs that emotion has the cognitive properties of *information gathering*, *sense making* and *decision making*. Tableau appears to tap these emotional based ways of knowing. Reading, also a cognitive act of comprehension whether from inside the tableau as performer or outside as audience, calls to the reader to apprehend the emotional stances in the tableaux. Through reading the emotional stances, the reader can identify sociocultural values inherent in these stances.

It is evident that emotions are part of children's cognitive systems and that children use emotions in tableau. I would like to extend the investigation of perspective taking and the determining of intention by considering what children did during this inquiry to determine the intentions of characters and the relationships of the characters. In the following section, I turn to theory of mind to augment the discussion.

Theory of Mind: Perspective Taking through Role Assignment

The capacity to interpret the perspective of another develops as children get older and more experienced. Interpreting the intents, beliefs and emotions of story characters calls for an understanding of mental states, and a capacity to view a situation from another's perspective. Janet Astington (1994) calls this capacity *theory of mind*. Astington (1994) studies theory of mind and identifies three considerations (beliefs, desires and actions) used to identify the mental states of others, as well as one's own. She postulates that knowing two of the three allows prediction of the third. "We assume people will act in a way that will satisfy their desires, given their beliefs" (Astington, 1994, p. 74).

Astington found that three-year-olds did not understand the causal link between intention and action. They did not focus on the future-directedness of intention (p. 81). They did not understand the link between action and understanding, i.e., that one acts according to what one understands (Gallagher & Wansart, 1991). "[Three-year-olds] cannot predict action based on desire if they have to infer a desire that conflicts with their own desire....by age five children...understand the dependence of emotion on belief" (Astington, 1994, p.

81). The three-year-old could not put herself in another's place to see from that point of view. A child's ability to understand another's perspective develops over time. Although the ability to predict the action of another appears around age four, it continues to grow in application.

In studying the development of theory of mind and its impact on story telling, Anne McKeough and Alex Sanderson (1996) drew on Jerome Bruner's concept of two landscapes of narrative. They applied this concept to children's story telling. Bruner refers to one narrative landscape as that of action, the second as that of the consciousness of the agents – what they know, believe and feel (Bruner, 1986) – i.e., theory of mind. McKeough and Sanderson noted that four-year-olds tend to use the action layer in their story telling; rarely did they bring in the landscape of the characters' internal knowledge or beliefs. By first and second grade, children begin to bring together and coordinate these two landscapes in their story telling, but they are inconsistent (McKeough, 1995).

Story telling relies on language. Tableau creates a space that provokes the use of both of Bruner's landscapes (action and consciousness), but with performative gesture instead of through story telling. Through gesture (and language) the children use their theory of mind and ability to take multiple perspectives actively (physically) and affectively. As discussed, children use emotion and their bodies means to gather information about the characters, and draw on emotion in their expressive presentations of the characters. Emotions are associated with real properties of "objects" (de Sousa, 1987), and provide information about the intentions of the characters, that is, their affective stance. Converging on this is the perspective taking as the children assume the

perspective of characters, garnering further information about the beliefs of the character. By coming to an understanding about a character's beliefs and intentions, the children predict the action of the character. Astington's work explains the relationship between understanding beliefs, intentions and action of characters. The study of tableau contributes an explanation of how children may use emotion to infer the beliefs of characters, thereby reaching a determination of a character's likely action and stance.

Let us look at some examples of what the children do when they adopt a



Figure 21. On the left, Lilly points to her little brother, while on the right, her parents look on.

role and emotion. The two pictures in Figure 21 are of a tableau of a scene from *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996). In this part of a tableau, the parents

of 'Lilly' and her 'brother' (in detail to the right in Figure 21) stand in the distance, observing Lilly as she pretends to be a teacher. Lilly points to her little brother who points back (photograph to the left in Figure 21).

The text reads:

At home Lilly pretended to be Mr. Slinger.

"I am the teacher," she told her baby brother, Julius. "Listen up!"

Lilly even wanted her own set of deluxe picture encyclopedias.

"What's with Lilly?" asked her mother.

"I thought she wanted to be surgeon or an ambulance driver to a diva," said her father.

"It must be because of her new teacher, Mr. Slinger," said her mother.

"Wow," said her father.

(Henkes, 1996):

The parents stand separate from the children's play, observing and evaluating. Kathy, as Lilly's mother, clasps her hands in worry, while Shauna, as the father, looks on and smiles at his children. These two performers focus on the Bruner's consciousness landscape. Although this passage says nothing about the mother being worried, the mother is interpreted as worried and that worry is conveyed through facial expression, body posture, and clasped hands near the face. Shauna interprets the father as smiling and proud.

I suspect that determining a role for the character plays into the interpretation. Kathy's thinking about the role of "mother," evoked certain images. The *word* mother symbolizes a concept and carries three layers of content (Leont'ev, 1979/1981a). There are actual mothers, the personal understanding of mother and the sociocultural ideal (Leont'ev, 1979/1981a). Kathy wove an interpretation from these three layers of content, drawing on her own mother and her understanding of the socioculturally imbued concept of

mother. In the process, Kathy assigned emotion to this mother. Kathy became a *worried* mother. The role and emotion define the intention of the character and the relationship of the character to other characters in the tableau.

In another example, three children create a tableau based on a word (Babushka) from *Babushka's Doll* (Polacco, 1990/1995). In their tableau, the three stand side by side. Jeremy holds out one arm as though holding a cane. Cindy smiles in the middle and looks like she is doing something with her hands (an imitative gesture). Renee stands to her other side, bent over and holding her back.

I do not have a photograph of this tableau, but the audience's response is a reader's response and provides insight into this tableau. The audience recognize the familial relationship; they interpret intentions of the performers toward each other through reading the gestures, hand-focused, posture related and positional. Following are their responses, and subsequent explanations given after the performance of the tableau.

“Happy.”

“Family, because there was one like, there was, it looked like there was a father and there was a mother.”

“I thought, because Rachel was holding her back that she had broken her back or something.”

“Mad—Jeremy looked angry. He looked like this (demonstrated the hand out, tense and rigid).

“They're friends. Feeling of helping each other.

Jeremy explains the group's action. “We planned who was going to do it. I was going to be the *grandfather*. She was going to be the *kid*, and she the *grandmother*.” Sara added, “I was doing the dishes,” being *helpful*. Each child adopted a role – the old grandfather, helpful kid and old grandmother. The

children chose particular physical and affective characteristics they attached to the roles of these characters. The relationships were established (the helpful granddaughter with her grandparents to either side) based on the roles each took. Embedded in the roles, were the intentions of the characters and the relationship between them. In another tableau of the word naughty, discussed in a later chapter, the children also chose a role and affect. They decided on “naughty kitty” and centered their performative gestures (i.e., signs of intentions and relationships) on this naughty kitty.

The readers of the Babushka tableau apprehended the intentions and relationships in this tableau even if they did not accurately identify the roles. They recognized the familial relation between the characters. This familial relation is a crucial layer in the concept of Babushka (grandmother) to the children. The audience read it, but at the time, I did not. I knew the word they had and assumed they were each portraying an aspect of a grandmother. Given my perspective (and information), I read this tableau differently than those who did not know the word/concept portrayed.

In considering tableau as a way of thinking that involves emotional ways of knowing, I hypothesize that the children assign a role to the character they portray. Emotions are inferred either from this role, from the literary text and/or also projected onto the character based on the performer’s experience. With the role and emotion established, the children sense the intentions of the character in this situation. The intentions provide the performers information as to the likely action of the characters and of the relationship between characters. I do

not mean this to sound like a sequential process. I consider it a dialogic process with the overall effect of mediating understanding.

In this chapter, I considered emotion as an information gathering, sense making and decision making cognitive tool of tableau. Through tableau, performers gather information by provoking emotions to determine the properties of the event itself (phenomenology) and properties of the particular characters in this event (relativity). They take on different points of view (perspective) and project emotions onto characters. Furthermore, emotion acts as a guide as performers make decisions about the intentions and actions of characters actions. Emotions help performers read their own, albeit frozen, movements to provide an emotional/feeling based feedback loop about this enactment. Through determining a character's role and emotion, a performer infers the intention of characters and gains insight into the relationships between the characters. These acts of sense making are embodied acts of sense making that manifest in the tableau. The tableau itself is an action of signifying, of conceiving meaning. Through tableau, children make sense of the literary text and of the self relative to the characters and ideas within the text. The tableau holds still layer upon layer of emotion-based cognitive action. Readers, inside and outside the tableau can read for these layers. Moreover, given the cultural mediation of secondary emotions, readers can apprehend sociocultural values – a topic of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

POSITION TO APPREHEND THROUGH TABLEAU

In using the notion of self, I am in no way suggesting that all the contents of our minds are inspected by a single central knower and owner, and even less that such an entity would reside in a single brain place. I am saying, though, that our experiences tend to have a consistent perspective, as if there were indeed an owner and knower for most, though not all, contents. I imagine this perspective to be rooted in a relatively stable, endlessly repeated biological state. The source of the stability is the predominately invariant structure and operation of the organism, and the slowly evolving elements of autobiographical data (Damasio, 1994, p. 238).

Antonio Damasio implies that a *sense* of stability in self-definition exists due to our ability to monitor the slow changes that take place in our lives. This monitoring forms a consistent perspective. Working with the three-dimensional action-event of tableau has helped me appreciate how multiple perspective-taking builds a complex web of understanding that contributes to our definition of self. Combine this concept of multiple perspectives with Damasio's concept of monitoring change, each perspective taken incorporates into one's self-definition as autobiographical data. The awareness of continual growth and change lends us the sense of stability of self. In actuality, we continually move and change perspectives, using various lenses and angles to apprehend the world around us.

Performers in tableaux present an intersection of themselves with the world. They incorporate their position into this intersection, having excavated a

particular route of apprehension – a route of possibilities followed or ignored (Ellsworth, 1997). The performer’s position dictates a perspective of the world, or as discussed in the last chapter with Ronald de Sousa’s terminology, a perceptual relativity (1987) and this position is *integral* to apprehension. “Reading” such positions can provoke an awareness of position within social worlds – provoking learning something about the self.

The position taken by performers, whether inside the tableau as a performer-reader or outside as audience-reader, is part of how tableau acts as a way of thinking about self and placement of self in the world. In tableau performers *position themselves* to see, show and understand (apprehend), but within parameters because they are also *positioned* by others and by sociocultural values.

In Chapter III, a case was made that tableau is a way of thinking due to the use of performative gesture as a sign system that mediates understanding. In Chapter IV, a case was made that tableau itself taps emotion-based cognitive action. In this chapter I make the case that tableau is a way of thinking about social and sociocultural relationships beyond the tableau as an action-event itself. The cognitive labor of tableau includes negotiation for position; that is, negotiation for meaning and/or for control. The position taken reveals the performer, and any reader who apprehends relationships in the tableau.

In this chapter, I discuss how, within the three-dimensional text of tableau, we *position ourselves in space*. I also discuss how definition of self contributes to the position taken. In addition, I show how positions regarding meaning and control are negotiated with peers and through the sociocultural

environment. I draw from Elizabeth Ellsworth's considerations of 'mode of address,' a concept from media studies. Ellsworth (1997) applies the concept of mode of address to education to ask questions about how people position others. Mode of address asks, How are you situated? How are you defined? Mode of address is about the dynamics of social positioning within power relations of race, gender and class (Ellsworth, 1997). I apply Ellsworth's ideas on positioning to consider how reading a three-dimensional text such as tableau says something about who the reader (whether performer-reader or audience-reader) is and what she understands about her position within social world systems.

Space, Position and Self-definition

The canvas of tableau is space – it is the same canvas as that of the social world. Similar to a painting, space is integral to signification; that is, necessary in order to apprehend relationships. Space encompasses, permeates and is not empty. Sociocultural and personally imbued meaning fill space. According to Margaret Wheatley (1992), who studied business organizations, the sciences of quantum physics, self-organizing systems and chaos theory inform organizational structures in a manner far different than did Newtonian physics. The research in quantum physics determined that what is between objects influences objects; objects, though distanced from each other, influence each other through the medium of space. Since the space between objects is actually filled with the influences of objects, the importance of relationships, these influences between objects, comes into focus. Wheatley transferred this concept to business organizations noting all organizations are systems. In essence, people within the

system are 'objects' of that system. Reading systems is apprehending the relations between 'objects.' Within a system or phenomenon, the space is as much a participant as the constituting objects (Salvio, 1995, p. 9). Tableaux are small systems that exist within larger sociocultural systems.

To read a tableau, the reader positions the self in space relative to the tableau. The audience-reader views the tableau from a certain perspective, or moves around for multiple perspectives, though the performer-reader has a set perspective once the tableau is enacted because she holds her position. The readers make sense of the relations between "objects," i.e., people and ideas. To do so, a reader perhaps casts herself into the text, into an imaginative space (Sumara, 1996). A reader perhaps tries different roles within this imaginative



Figure 22. Lilly is shown both as mad, and as sad.

space (Ritter, 1998). Through this imaginative space the reader positions herself within the system in order to apprehend the relations within the system. The reader of tableau, a three dimensional text, a small system, must position herself to read the relations within in order to apprehend the whole.

In the tableau pictured in Figure 22, Lilly is showed as mad and as sad. Consistently, the performative gestures that show anger (and variations of anger) take up more space – the performers dominate space. As audience-readers, we understand this – can apprehend this because we share a common sociocultural system. So too, we can understand the portrayals of sadness – listlessness,



Figure 23. Each performer takes a different perspective; a different angle of understanding is presented.

smallness. We share enough of the perspective to apprehend the message. When readers are aligned (positioned) with the children's social beliefs, they can understand this use of space.

In the tableau of Figure 23, each performer has taken on a different character – a different perspective on an event from the book *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996). They each position themselves in the space of the tableau relative to their role and perspective. As discussed in Chapter IV, information is gathered through the perspective taken. In this picture, the camera angle emphasizes Marcie giving the reader of this picture a focus on Marcie's perspective. The student in the back, who is looking at the teacher has a different perspective and is perhaps expecting a different response than does Marcie. The teacher's perspective differs dramatically from the children's, even in the enactment in tableau.

By positioning themselves in a role and in a place, they created a small social world – the tableau – within a larger social world. They could create this small world because they apprehended the social world represented in *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996). They drew on what they knew of their own social life and made connections to the world of Lilly. Their route of interpretation – and presentation in the tableau – was of their own trajectory, through their own history that took place within the larger sociocultural system. Apprehending the three-dimensional text of tableau, reading the space that connects these performers and thus reading the positions of the performers, constitutes an act of reading some of the performers' understandings about their position in the world.

The reader positions, i.e., aligns, the self with the system, even the small system of tableau, in order to apprehend it. The reader has enough common points of reference to recognize the perspective. Ellsworth notes that to understand, one needs to 'stand under' (1997), to be aligned, to line up and share a perspective. This is not a matter of fused identities or agreement with a point of view. It means that there are enough similar experiences to allow apprehension of another point of view. The reader, once she understands the perspective, makes decisions about it. Shared sociocultural context goes a long way toward the kind of alignment to which Ellsworth refers. The sharing of a culturally based point of view allows shared attention to aspects and objects of a system. There is agreement regarding salient features. If the system is too alien, the reader cannot align to it, cannot perceive it and will not apprehend it. Joint, aligned attention is pivotal in learning (Baldwin, 1993; Rogoff, 1990). Later, after considering self-definition, I return to discussion about the children's negotiating position of perspective (of meaning) and control.

Self-definition

Space holds meaning, but the reader's history, her assimilated base (Gallagher & Wansart, 1991) and immediate environment inform the direction of the reader's gaze. In other words, the reader's sense of self directs her gaze. Her sense of self allows her to interpret the ambiguity of space, to infer relations between objects. Readers are "unrecognized producers, poets of their own acts, silent discoverers of their own paths..., consumers [who] produce through their signifying practices something that might be considered similar to the wandering

line (“*linges d’erre*”) drawn by the autistic children studied by F. Deligny:⁸ “‘indirect’ or ‘errant’ trajectories obeying their own logic” (de Certeau, 1988, p. xviii). Readers, perhaps unrecognized as users of imagination, as poets, as inventors – as thinkers, compose their own paths to signify the world. Their interpretation is a passage through history, power, desire and language (Ellsworth, 1997). There are routes not taken that, ignored, resisted or prohibited that echo in the reading by their influence on the routes that are taken (Ellsworth, 1997).

Readings of tableau, whether by an outside audience or by inside performer, are wandering lines with trajectories (interpretations) drawn from the readers’ *own intentions, intentions shaped* by their experience, their sociocultural world, immediate persons, and signs and symbols. These shaped intentions define and position the self at the moment of interpretation. Self-definition influences the interpretation – the direction of the gaze and the routes taken toward understanding.

Definition of self at any one point contributes to the ability to negotiate and apprehend, but how are we aware of our self – how do we see our self? Antonio Damasio says that at each moment the self is constructed from the ground up (1994, p. 240). A sense of stability is created through “slowly evolving elements of autobiographical data” (p. 238). Two representations contribute to the autobiographical data. One representation is of key events in personal history from which one’s identity is reconstructed repeatedly, drawing on memories

⁸ Fernand Deligny, *Les Vagabonds efficaces* (Paris: Maspero, 1970); *Nous et l’innocent* (Paris: Maspero, 1977). Quoted in de Certeau (1988).

(Damasio, 1994). Another set is continuous representation of the body and the capacity to tell if something has changed (p. 239).

According to Damasio, the self is under continual reconstruction (p. 240) – reinvention. There is not one unifying view of the self (Epstein, 1995). One’s sense of self does not come from a static homunculus tracking the self, but rather from a moment by moment awareness of change (Damasio, 1994). Our awareness of *personal evolution* gives a sense of stability. In actuality, we constantly change and draw on multiple perspectives. The sense of self emerges with our experiences and perspectives.

The self evolves and we are aware of the evolution. Sumara (1996),⁹ drawing on Merleau-Ponty (1962), Heidegger (1966) and Gadamer (1990), interprets a thesis of phenomenological and hermeneutic studies. Knowledge, according to the thesis, emerges from ongoing interpretive action with the world (p. 102). “[W]e neither determine our world nor are determined by it; we co-emerge with a world” (p. 102). We define our sense of self *with* the sociocultural world. Our sense of self comes from an awareness of our action and change *with* the world. Learning is the incorporation of change, the personal evolution, as one co-emerges with the world.

We reconstruct our image of self relative to the world continuously, incorporating (embodying) change. But, how do we gain a sense of sameness in our self? Over time, one stabilizes a concept by identifying a pattern. Madeline Grumet refers to Husserl’s (1994) description of:

⁹ Please refer to Appendix D for citations of the authors to which Sumara refers.

immanent flow of now-points...he describes immanent objects achieving meaning in a temporal manifold...we experience a series of now-points, each carrying horizons of past and immanent nows, passing into phrases on retention and extending into phrases of protention. Elapsed now points are retained and are present as part of this temporal manifold (Grumet, 1992, p. 35).

Elapsed now-points shape the image of self. These points in memory are situated in a particular time and space (Wertsch, 1984). Using Mark Epstein's (1995) analysis, the self-image is an *image* of consistency and permanency created by the self. The patterns observed in life, including patterns of how one is defined by others, create the base of our sense of self as a stable being. This perception of self, this image of self, is, according to Epstein, an image only – it is not the real self. The real self extends over time and space, holding a multitude of potential positions.

Our self-definition is the pattern we identified, our collection of now-points of autobiographical data. At any one time, we further define our self by our position at that moment in time. That position is our point of view, our vantagepoint at a moment in time. Bakhtin argues that “we make sense of existence by defining our specific place in it, an operation performed in cognitive space and time” (Holquist, 1990, p. 35). Just as physical position is integral to reading the physical tableau, definition of self at a point in time is a position necessary to marking connections between the self and the larger social world. This is who we are at this point of our co-emergence with the world.

Positioned to Apprehend

Our definition of self is not our whole, real self. It is one angle, one moment of self. This singular position with its point of view and definition of self

relative to the rest of the world, is (somewhat) held still in the frozen action of tableau. The pause creates an occasion to take in the vista from this perspective and to inspect the network of connections that form this point of view. These connections develop through negotiation of meaning at the local level and sociocultural level. This section holds discussion of taking points of view through negotiation. I first discuss differences in perspective taking through tableau and then the involvement of sociocultural assumptions. This leads to discussion about negotiated meaning, on the local level (negotiating meaning with peers) and sociocultural level (negotiating meaning through socioculturally imbued symbols). Finally, I end this section with discussion of negotiation of control.

Difference in Perspective Taking. The tableau pictured in Figure 23 was discussed in Chapter III. The scene, from *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996), is of Lilly saying she is sorry to her teacher, and giving him various gifts she and her parents had made the night before: a letter, a cheese snack, and a picture. Each of the girls enacts Lilly. In this tableau, the children draw from their social experience and self-definition to take a point of view. Leigh, the furthest to the left of the three girls clustered together, is at ease with teachers. Her mother is a teacher in the same school she attends. Leigh spoke to me like a young adult would, with less the air of "student" and more the air of daughter-friend. She used this perspective, this definition of herself, in the tableau to interpret this scene. In the scene, Leigh is relaxed in her stance with a knowing, collegial smile to her teacher. This performative gesture, this definition of Leigh,

is not all of Leigh. It is a point of view from this perspective at this particular time that she used to make sense of this scene.



Figure 24. Each of the four girls enacts a different position, a different aspect of Lilly. Their perspective incorporates their own self-definition.

Mary (in Figure 24, on the end, in a white shirt) liked to be in control during activities. She wanted to be the leader in the story she and four other girls developed about riding horses and getting lost in the woods. In small groups, she voiced her opinion, exerting a strong influence on the group. In this tableau, she says she feels she *has* to give him the note – there is a sense of resistance to this position of subordination (whereas Leigh simply did not take on a subordinate position). Mary's stance reflects her definition of self in this situation and is drawn from her image of herself, developed over time and 'elapsed now-points.'

Imbedded in this tableau are *socioculturally mediated expectations* – meanings negotiated socioculturally. There are meanings about the relationship between child and adult held within this tableau. In this tableau, the children are separate; there is a feel of distance between them. In the manner the children stretch out their arms to the teacher, who keeps his to his side, there is the sense that the children are initiating the peacekeeping action in hostile territory – reaching halfway.

There are socioculturally mediated expectations in this tableau about emotion. Kari, in the smiley shirt, stands separated from all in the tableau as she makes herself small, reflecting sociocultural beliefs about sorrow. She bows her head before the person, her teacher, to whom she is asking forgiveness, placing herself in a submissive stance.

The routes of interpretation taken by the children in this tableau required cognitive labor on their part. Routes of interpretation require excavation – the sifting through possibilities, maneuvering obstacles and creating spans to handle gaps. Such excavation is a labor of cognitive action. It is not a labor tackled alone, but with and through others (Rogoff, 1990; Rogoff, 1995; Rogoff, Radziszewska, & Masiello, In press). The territory of excavation includes Ellsworth's passages through history, power, desire and language (1997). The territory includes sensing Bakhtin's coloring of words with sociocultural hues (1981/1996; Holquist, 1990). The action includes surveying the spans previously built that hold together an evolving understanding of the world and a position in it.

Cognitive labor involves handling gaps that occur when one's own understanding differs from others and meaning must be negotiated. To 'bridge the gap' is to construct an understanding. Following is a tableau to illustrate spanning a gap – it is not an exotic maneuver, just a simple seeking of understanding between two different perspectives about a gesture. As any tableau is held still, a product and perspective is visible – understandings are made manifest. The labor of the audience is to “read” this understanding – to interpret what is going on. Four girls created the tableau pictured in Figure 25. It is one of five tableaux that depict a story they created. In their story, five girls rode horses in the woods when one fell and hurt herself. They were lost, and Mary, as leader, tried to help them find their way home.

I had taken a photograph of this tableau (see Figure 25) and asked children to “read” the tableau during the interviews. The group that read this



Figure 25. One tableau out of a series of five that depict a story developed by the group.

tableau had already read the previous three of the story tableaux wherein the girls are riding, Hillary falls, and now they are lost. Following is part of their conversation as they tried to figure out what Mary (pictured on the right in Figure 25) was meaning with her arm forward, palm out gesture.

Voice one: "They might be saying good-bye," looking at Mary's arm, palm out gesture.

"Look at Hillary, she's like (proceeds to demonstrate Hillary's expression, capturing her feeling.

PW: "What do you think she is feeling?" (trying to evoke words).

Voice two, in a small, quiet voice with the tenor of fear, "Scared."

PW, referring to the Mary's arm and palm out gesture, "What does this gesture mean to you?"

Voice one: "It means she is saying stop, there is danger."

Another voice: "I'll bet it is! Why would Hillary be scared if they are saying good-bye."

Seeking to apprehend Mary's arm, palm out gesture, the readers first thought she might be saying "good-bye." They reconsidered that interpretation as they read the facial expression (facial gesture) of Hillary (Hillary is in the middle of the cluster of girls, being held up by her friends). To span the gap in understanding they had to attend to the relationship between Mary's and Hillary's performative gestures. They read the use of space between them.

For me, as a reader who positions herself differently, I also note the distance between Mary and the others – something I often think of regarding leaders. I see that the others are together, clustered to help Hillary, while Mary is separated with a different job – to lead the group out of the woods. This interpretation fits with my beliefs about leadership based on my experience in my sociocultural environment. My route of interpretation includes countless

discussions about the role of a leader – how there are differences in responsibility and tasks, but that these do not constitute a power over another. This route came through my experiences as a Special Education Director wherein I negotiated hierarchical structures and power-bases. I read the space between Mary and others because I have experienced a gap, a slight removal from others due to holding different responsibilities. Because I have experienced such a gap, I understood it; I aligned (to use Ellsworth's term) with Mary's perspective on that gap enough to make sense of it. It is not necessary that my understanding is the same as Mary's or someone else's. I brought ideas and relationships to this sense making that broaden apprehension. Although the sense I make is highly flavored by my personal experience, our shared cultural environment provides common links that ground my interpretation. I am able trace some of my route of interpretation; it is based on my position, my perspective, where I am and have been. It is my transaction with tableau.

Back when the group created the tableau, Mary was thinking how she wanted to present herself as a leader in this scene. I asked her what gesture a leader would use. Mary's own intention when she made this gesture was to show herself as leader. This gesture fit her perspective of leader. This is not exactly what this group read as they looked at the picture of the tableau. They interpreted it as meaning "stop, there is danger." From their perspective, this fit the relationship they saw. Their transaction with the text brought a reasonable explanation that still fit the theme of leadership, if not the specific intention of Mary. They saw the controlling gesture (arm up, palm out) and read it with the

rest of the tableau to give it a meaning – not only to stop, but to stop because there is some sort of danger.

Mary used a culturally standardized gesture, symbolic of leadership and command (arm, palm out). Like any symbol, there is ambiguity about its content (meaning). As A. A. Leont'ev (1979/1981a) noted, there are three layers of content (the object itself, personal-subjective content and ideal content that is socially construed) and the performer-reader as well as audience-reader negotiate these layers of meaning. Sociocultural meaning (ideal content) is negotiated in the tableau and shapes the tableau, constraining choices and thereby positioning performers. Mary's symbolic gesture points to an ideal content and this ideal content channels interpretation toward certain directions. This constrains interpretation, but also acts as a point of reference. Her palm out gesture gives important clues to the relationships in this scene. The ideal content of the palm-out gesture is command related. As such, this gesture positions Mary. The ideal content also connotes a wall up in front of her, further positioning her relative to the others.

The children negotiated and bridged a series of gaps. One gap was between the different interpretations by different members of the group. The other was in the meaning of Mary's socially standardized palm-out gesture. The second required negotiation of sociocultural ideal content. It is likely they negotiated their own history. I know that in my interpretation, my image of self (how I define myself), drawn from my experience, played a role in my constructed understanding of Mary's hand-focused gesture and the children's use of space (positioning relative to others).

Figure 22, discussed earlier and reproduced in Figure 26, also stands as an example of negotiated meaning with an emphasis on negotiating sociocultural context. This is the scene from *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* (Henkes, 1996) wherein Lilly is saying she is sorry to her teacher. The story, up to the point of their scene was that Lilly, angry that Mr. Slinger, her teacher, took her purple plastic purse away from her, drew a picture of him as a bad teacher (and ugly and mean). She left the picture in his book bag. At the end of the school day, through, he returned her purse to her and enclosed a note of encouragement as well as her missed snack. Lilly felt badly. She enlisted the help of her parents to write him a note and bake him a special snack. The text of the episode connected directly with the tableau reads,

The next morning Lilly got to school early. "These are for you," Lilly said to Mr. Slinger. "Because I'm really, really, really...sorry."

In the tableau of Figure 26, Marcie kneels on the floor as Lilly saying she is really sorry. She kneels before Mr. Slinger, hands clasped in front of her face, eyes downcast. One student looks on, aghast. Another portrays "the cool kid in the class." Another simply looks on. Marcie, as Lilly, is small compared to Joseph as Mr. Slinger, her teacher.



Figure 26. Embodied in these performative gestures are statements about power differences.

The symbolic gestures the children use in their tableaux are infused with social significance. The begging, supplication gesture is a culturally standardized gesture and emphasizes a type of relationship between child and adult. Embodied in this performative gesture are statements about power differences between child and teacher. Marcie is smaller than Mr. Slinger. She petitions

forgiveness. Her small posture suggests she is not threatening – he has control in this situation. She is submissive and ‘at his mercy.’ Marcie negotiated sociocultural assumptions about teachers and children. Perhaps a ‘stereotype’ shaped her interpretation of a relationship between student and teacher.

Marcie also draws on what she has learned through her history of social relations. While planning the scene, Marcie said that Mr. Slinger thinks Lilly does not like him because she called him bad. Marcie’s comment reminds that in Brown and Gilligan’s (Brown & Gilligan, 1992) study, they learned that girls of this age talked about the importance of attention to another person’s possible pain. Girls this age were cognizant of the power of adults to affect their lives, “to control them or support them or punish them, to love them or abandon them” (p. 47-48). Marcie draws on knowledge that relationships are important to her survival and that to be disliked is to be outcast from the social group.

The student who is drawn back is portraying “the cool kid” – the kid that is not going to be effected by this scenario. He took on a socially described role that puts him a bit outside the situation. Another student looks aghast, jaw open, staring at the teacher, waiting his response. He draws on expectations that there will be trouble although in the text the teacher responds positively to Marcie’s apology. The third student looks on – he is difficult to read because it is difficult to determine if he is using performative gesture, or if his is simply standing.

The power differences perceived and portrayed by the group were apparent to the group. When the group looked at this photograph a few weeks later, they described the scene as: “Please, please don’t get me in trouble; I’m so sorry, please forgive me.” This group’s interpretation of this scene reflects

meanings about child-adult relationships that are based on the power of one over another and negotiation by the 'weaker' with the one in power.

This is a tableau that can interrupt the reader from everyday musings to re-consider relationships between children and teachers. That a child is positioned as a beggar can jar a teacher-reader into the question, do we position children as beggars?

Negotiation for Control of Meaning

Not only are there gaps in understanding that are negotiated, there are gaps in how individuals are positioned. The gap occurs that between how one positions the self and how one is positioned by others manifests as an unconscious feeling that one must be more than the selves that culture, school, government demand one to be (Ellsworth, 1997, p. 44). In this statement, Ellsworth refers to the difference between positioning self and being positioned by others. Awareness of that gap can create a sense of agency (Ellsworth, 1997), of intention to maneuver the gap or span it with action. This action is a negotiation for control and self-definition. "It is this resistance to the banalities of normalization that makes agency possible...Indeed, if perfect fits were achievable between...our subjectivities and our social worlds" there would be no learning, no difference (Ellsworth, 1997, p. 44). Even if the 'banalities of normalization' come through the action of peers instead of larger social agencies such as schools or government, resistance can create a tension that can propel movement and change – i.e., learning. On the other hand, normalization can incorporate into the definition of self, without awareness, resulting in acceptance

of the positioning by others, and no conscious learning. Tension is a part of conscious learning. In this section, three tableau action-events illustrate negotiation of control of meaning and position.

The first example includes children's planning and implementation of a tableau. Following is an excerpt from a group's planning of a tableau wherein they were given the word 'naughty' from *Babushka's Doll* (Polacco, 1990/1995). I asked them to work quietly so that the others in the class would not hear their word – so that the class, as audience, could guess the word afterward. As such, this group of four girls and a boy, acted like conspirators quietly negotiating. I had left a tape recorder with them, to capture their planning.

The children's voices overlap, at times several speak at once. Interestingly, throughout Daniel (the one boy) acts, well, naughty. He tips over the tape recorder, speaks loudly into it, taps it and tries to speak loudly enough to "give away" their word to the rest of the class. Within this event is negotiation of behavior, particularly Daniel's. Also within this event is the children's negotiation of the meaning of the word naughty as well as whose meaning will dominate and how to enact the word. One child tries to convince the others that she knows what naughty means, but she isn't heard (or acknowledged) by the others until she gets loud and they hear her example of "naughty kitty." With the establishment of the naughty kitty – a role and an affective attribute – the children are ready to enact the tableau. Following is their planning discussion.

"Be like mad."

"...if we confuse them, be sort of like a teacher, but..."

"I know how to do naughty!"

"Naughty is like..."

"I know!"

“Daniel, get back down.”
 “Like punching someone.”
 “No, that would be...no way.”
 “Listen, I know!”
 “Naughty is like a naughty kitty.”
 “Scratches.”
 “A naughty kitty is sort of a bad kitty.”
 “Yeah.”
 (Daniel), “Naughty guy punches you!” (shouted).
 “Shhhh!”
 (Daniel playing with tape recorder), “Hallelujah”
 “Daniel, don’t move your feet anymore.”
 (Daniel) “Naughty is like when somebody does something like this,” (tips over the tape recorder).
 “We could like, we could...”
 “I’ll be the kitty. I’ll be the kitty.”
 “Naughty kitty.”

After negotiating a meaning through the establishment of the role and affect of the character, the group does not have time to practice. They leave the planning to go enact the tableau with one child saying she would be the naughty kitty. At the count of three, the group center themselves around this character. Each reacts to the kitty that is poised to scratch the leg of another person in the tableau. I realize their planning continued into the act of implementing the tableau. However, implementing is not quite the right word. The children did more than implement a preplanned idea; the *children continued the action of thinking* “naughty” through the character of a naughty kitty. The expressive act of tableau is a continuation of that thinking, but once set up, one point of view holds for a moment, allowing analysis.

The rest of the class acts as an audience. I ask them to write down, then tell me, the words they thought of when they saw this tableau. Following are their written responses: mad, children, mad, angry, figuring something out, mad, funny, mad, angry, bad, strict, cat, mad. The audience readers note the emotions

depicted (mad, angry). They note characters (bad, cat, children, funny, strict). They make note of the particular gestures used (“she looks like she is trying to figure something out (looking at the tilt of the head and use of the hand by one character). Together, the audience captures the layers of ideal content within the word naughty. They join the negotiation of meaning started by the members of the group to give meaning to the idea of naughty.

In this tableau, negotiation for point of view registers as the children vied for a definition and presentation of “naughty.” One child kept repeating that she knew how to do this. The adage “knowledge is power” holds here – her point of view “won” – her perspective was adopted by the rest of the group. There was also a negotiation for control of behavior – Daniel’s. Several of the children were concerned about what Daniel was doing and wanted him to stop. They illustrate the negotiation of control and order as a group worked to align itself in one direction. From my perspective, it is curious that Daniel was “naughty” during the planning – I suspect he was *showing* the meaning of the word, though he may have had other motives.

The second and third tableaux that follow illustrate negotiation of control of position. Both of these involve a female subordinated by a male. They happened quickly – a brief blip in the course of the activity, but I captured these blips in my notes and on film.

In the following example, the class has re-written the story of the *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. In their re-write, the children add a character, a mud monster. One group develops a description of the physical and emotional characteristics of the mud monster. They decide he is slug-like, nasty, no-brain. This group

includes two boys and two girls. They were asked to create a tableau that shows the mud monster. I give them about five minutes to plan the tableau. When it came time to present, I move quickly through the groups, giving each a count of three to be in position. As the count progresses for the mud monster group, disagreement erupts. One of the boys insists that they all get on the floor. Suzie does not want to. By the time the count ends, Suzie stands. Distress and unhappiness are evident. The other children are on the floor. The separation between those on the floor and Suzie dominates the tableau.



Figure 27. Suzie disagreed with the form of the tableau, and appears marginalized.

In the tableau of the naughty kitty, a similar process occurred in terms of establishing the core action of the tableau. The children established the role and affect and then proceeded to enact the tableau. In the naughty kitty group, they fell into place around the naughty kitty; their ideas aligned. In this mud monster tableau, there is disagreement at the moment of creating the tableau – a rupture in the smooth rolling wheel of collaborative effort. One member disagrees, and time ran out before resolution.

In the third tableau, a boy and girl were partnered to plan the tableau of another character, one of the goats from the *Three Billy Goats Gruff*. This time, having learned from the mud monster group there could be a problem, I asked before they enacted the tableau to tell me what they had planned. At that point, Samantha shrugged her shoulders at me. “I don’t know” she said, “He wouldn’t plan with me.” Keith then told me that he did plan, but did not want to tell her. Keith then physically molded Samantha into his design for the tableau.

These two tableaux are uncomfortable for me. They interrupt my notion of creating tableau, of collaboration, but how so? Throughout the time I worked with first and second graders, the clear strong voices of the girls impressed me. I found they spoke their beliefs and held their ground, neither considering themselves dominating nor dominated. Their sense of self was striking. Yet, in the tableaux discussed above, girls were silenced and subordinated by the boys.

Michel de Certeau (1988) speaks to use of place and space. Place is a site of power that is established by authority. Organizations such as schools are places of power for they are established authorities (de Certeau, 1988). In de Certeau’s usage, people within places of authority who are not identified as

makers of that place of authority are *users* who appropriate space for their own intentions. The use of space subverts authority and subverts use of structures established by authority. In the tableaux described above, authority was subverted and appropriated. Social negotiation of life continues into the tableau. The tableau is a microcosm of the larger social macrocosm.

Children fit de Certeau's definition of users who appropriate space in school for their own intentions. They navigate social worlds, both the official sites and those unofficial sites created in school environments (Dyson, 1993). Timothy Lensmire (1994) found children used writing workshops to position themselves socially. They used the workshop to promote some relationships and to disenfranchise others. Similarly, children used tableau to continue their social work. Sites, with the expectations set forth by those in authority, do not stop social negotiation of control. Spaces are etched out of the sites wherein the work of negotiation of self and position continues.

In the performance space of tableau, children negotiate meaning not only of the relationships of the characters of the literary text, but they negotiate relationships with each other in terms of point of view (meaning) and in terms of power (control). Within the space of tableau, they continue to negotiate social worlds. They negotiate their place in the larger world as they negotiate the space of the tableau. Because the self is relational and a relation is "never static, but always in the process of being made or unmade (Holquist, 1990, p. 29), the action-event of tableau contributes to their self-definition. The dialogic process of negotiating meaning and power, is part of the process of creating the self – a

socially negotiated self (Holquist, 1990). Like any social experience, the tableau added its contribution to the member's self-definition.

Collaborative Negotiation

Collaboration is currently highly valued in our school systems. As we look toward a global economy and international relations, collaboration is seen as a crucial skill to develop. But, is the image of collaboration the reality of collaboration? Elizabeth Moje (1998) problematizes the idealistic image of collaboration as smooth, close, agreeable and friendly. Moje, in speaking about research relations asks a question pertinent to collaborative efforts with children. "Rather than only seeking happy, friendly, or close collaborations, we might also ask how positions and power relations are negotiated and contested..." (Moje, 1998, p. 2). As seen in the tableau action-events visited in this chapter, collaborative ventures involve negotiation for position of both point of view (meaning) and social power.

A collaborative relationship is a dialogic relation, a working together to invent and generate an understanding. It is *not without tension*. "Text-making" is interactive (Roen & Mittan, 1992), and the creating of tableau can be called text-making – an act of making sense through some form of expression. Given the use of symbol systems that are constituted of self and society, even when one thinks she is acting alone, text-making is polyphonic. The work can *never* be constituted of a single voice (Ede & Lunsford, 1990). *Sense making is collaborative*. It is also negotiated just as routes of interpretation are negotiated through mazes of possible meanings (Ellsworth, 1997). Meaning is negotiated in

a dialogic fashion with others in proximity and with historical others, i.e., the sociocultural environment.

Tableau is a collaborative text-making venture that calls for negotiation. In this chapter, I make the case that negotiation of position is cognitive action. In creating tableaux, several layers of negotiation of sense making and control occur simultaneously. Tableau, as a small social system, reflects the larger social systems in which it occurs.

There is negotiation at the local level, between children as they create tableaux. This negotiation includes a necessary tension. Necessary differences in members' understandings create gaps to bridge. Negotiating the gaps is a labor of cognitive action. Although one could argue that all negotiation, even of meaning, is control related, some negotiation seems *centered* on control and power.

The negotiation to create tableau is negotiation of a small social system within a larger sociocultural system. The negotiation of position, whether for meaning and or power, is part of the on-going social work of children (and adults). This social work includes the use of socioculturally construed symbols and draws on values learned through apprenticeship in society. Negotiation of meaning and position occurs at the sociocultural level as well as the local level. Tableau is an intersection between the local and larger social world.

In the tableaux, the children take on different perspectives at different times, sometimes negotiating position in terms of point of view (meaning), sometimes negotiating position in terms of power – control, but often it is a combination of both. Their self-definition influences their perspective and the

larger social world shapes their self-definition. Whatever their position, it is a position held for a moment in time, allowing a read on this position with the recognition that this is not the whole self being reflected, but rather one position, one now-point.

Thus far, I have analyzed tableau as a cognitive action from three perspectives. First, in Chapter III, I analyzed the use of performative gesture as a sign system that mediates learning. Then, in Chapter IV, I considered the use of emotion as a means to gather, process and act on information with subsequent interpretation of the relationships between characters. Finally, in this chapter, I analyzed the negotiation of position (meaning) and control both as cognitive labor (negotiating gaps in meaning) and as social work. This negotiation occurs at the local level, with peers, and at the sociocultural level.

In the next chapter, I review and summarize the work of this inquiry. Then, drawing on this work, I consider uses of tableau in language arts instruction. Finally, I share research questions that follow from this inquiry.

CHAPTER VI

THINKING THROUGH TABLEAU: A SUMMARY

Once, Miles Davis asked me, “How do you play from nothing?” And I said, “You know, you just do it.” And that actually is the answer. I wish there were a way to make “I don’t know” a positive thing, which it isn’t in our society. We feel that we need to “know” certain things, and we substitute that quest for the actual experience of things in all its complexity. When I play pure improvisation, any kind of intellectual handles are inappropriate because they get in the way of letting the river move where it’s suppose to move....I need to find a way to start the journey without creating the subject matter in my mind. In other words, I cannot have a melody or a motif in my head, because those things will protrude into the fabric. They will be too prominent...*I have to find a way for my hands to start the concert without me...*(Jarrett, 1997, p. 104, emphasis added).

I undertook this inquiry in order to explore how tableau, a theater convention, could be a means of learning, of thinking. To that end, first and second graders engaged in the creation of tableaux connected to literacy activities. The activities included making tableaux from scenes of stories, from concept vocabulary, and for story plans. By engaging the children in tableau activity, I anticipated learning what they did to create tableaux. By concurrently studying related concepts, I anticipated gaining insight into implications of their actions.

The inquiry was conceptualized as an instrumental case study, as study of tableau via study of children using tableau. Data analyzed included the children’s

planning, implementation and subsequent discussion of tableaux. These episodes comprised tableau action-events, the unit of analysis. From analysis of the action-events, common properties were determined, such as the children's use of gesture, emotion, negotiation and positioning. These properties of tableau indicated ways tableau could be a thinking action.

Each property was investigated and analyzed through conceptual study as well as through study of the action-events. Gesture was investigated through analysis of what the children did along with a conceptual analysis to define the borders of performative gesture. This analysis led to insight into the qualities of performative gesture that differentiate it from language. Similarly, tableaux evidenced work with emotions, leading to study of emotion that helped explain the children's use of emotion to both gather information and to make sense of information. In addition, tableau is a three-dimensional and social text; as such, it drew in consideration of the implications of positioning in space and the negotiation of this space with others as and with socio-historical influences.

The study of action and concept worked dialogically like a back and forth conversation strengthening my insight into how tableau acted as a means of thinking and learning. It helped me understand its value to teaching.

Review and Summary

In this section, I summarize the determinations of the inquiry into tableau in order to prepare for exploration of tableau in pedagogical practice. To review the study, I first turn to the children's discussion of what they learned. This composite discussion drawn from six interviews of small groups of children acts

as a review and refresher of the children's activity, but from the children's point of view. I then summarize the essential determinations of this inquiry.

Review

From the interviews, I composed the following quotes, snippets of conversations, into one conversation. This is the children's perspective on tableau, but the text is mediated (Kirsch, 1997). These particular quotes were ordered to reflect themes found in the children's discussion of tableau. Their conversation holds mention of three means by which tableau acts as ways of thinking: through performative gesture, emotion, and working with others. I opened the interviews by asking what was learned about tableau.

"You have to stay still."

"And you can't talk."

"And sometimes you have to hold your breath."

"I like them because they're fun, but sometimes they are sort of (stumbles on word) challenging."

"What makes them challenging, Kari?" I ask.

"You have to fall in mid-air sometimes." Kari refers to a tableau in which she played a troll pushed off a bridge – holding the pose of falling backwards had been physically difficult. Several more children bring in examples of tableaux that were hard.

"It's hard to stay still," says Marcie.

Kathy quickly adds, "Because sometimes you get tired of the position."

"I like it because, I like making weird faces and I kind of don't like it because, like if you are doing stopping, you can't really balance that good. If you are picking your arm up for a couple of minutes, it starts to hurt," adds Jay.

Marcie says, "The mud monster was really hard to do because the mud monster can be pretty hard to perform what it is."

Adding, Kathy notes, "You have to look like you're mud." She uses her body to show a moving, oozing like motion.

Sarah says, "They are kind of interesting. They are kind of different from other kinds of plays or something...especially different from dancing. You have to go up there in a tutu. Very embarrassing." She adds another advantage: "You can do them anywhere. Out there, on stage, you get scared. And that's why I like

tableaux. All you need to do, you can really do them at home. You don't have to do them on stage."

Mary chimes in, "You can do them at home or on stage. You can do them anywhere you want."

"I like them because you can make up what you want, and what you look like, and that's why," says Collin.

Jay affirms, "Me too, I like them for that reason, too."

Leigh says, "It gives me some ideas, too. Some things (pause).

"Helps you with some words?" I ask.

"Yeh, like Babushka." I think Leigh is referring to how we used tableau to define concept vocabulary – that she learned more words by creating tableau of words.

"You could make up your own book. From your tableaux you could make up your own book," she adds.

"And sometimes you have different kinds of feelings," says Niki.

"Tell me more about feelings." I prompt.

"Well, like, if you, a mad feeling, you could get like an angry feeling"

"Like in *Yo! Yes?*, to come up and do a tableau, you can either be sad or happy," Sara adds.

"Sometimes you have to be in groups. Sometimes you have three people in your group and sometimes you have four. Sometimes you don't even have groups," Niki informs.

"What do you do if you are in a group?" I ask.

"You all have different parts or sometimes you have the same parts."

"How did you decide what people would do what?" I ask.

"Well, we decided on paper," said Gloria.

"How did you do that?"

"I don't remember." Gloria does remember that one time I asked the children to write down different characteristics of the characters they would portray (physical and emotional). They then used these in planning tableaux, assigning people to show specific characteristics. "I was hungry and you put 'g.c.' down," adds Gloria.

"Daniel, what have you learned about tableaux and planning them?" I ask.

"Mmmm. I learned that they're pretty simple."

Daniel is right. Tableau is simple, just as it is complex. In this manner, it is a lot like language. Small children just do it and yet it is a marvelously complex

act. To Daniel, the act of making a tableau is easy, yet tableaux are rich, layered and intricate.

The children touched on the layers, richness and challenges of their work with tableau. There was challenge in figuring out how to present a concept, even an oozing mud monster. There was the physical challenge to hold the gestures they felt important to their enactment. The children made decisions about their poses, and they liked making these decisions; the locus of control was internal. Children saw that tableau could be used as a way to learn about words and as a tool to help them write. They knew tableau included emotion and that they could show different emotions.

What they learned about tableau points to the beginning of what tableau could represent as a pedagogical tool. Through this inquiry, much was learned about what the children do with tableau and how it mediated learning. There is more to learn about what teachers can do if they conceptualized tableau as a medium through which thinking and learning occurs. Some implications will be discussed later, after summarizing the determinations of ways tableau mediates learning.

Summary of Determinations

The inquiry into tableau as a means of thinking about literature considered ways tableau mediates learning. Three clusters of ways tableau mediates learning are summarized below.

1. The children used performative gesture as an expressive tool within tableau.

Expression is part of a continued process of coming to know. Performative

gesture is a sign system and children used both imitative signs and culturally imbued symbols of this system. Analysis of their gestures indicated four focal points useful for description. These were hand-focused gesture, body posture, facial expression and positioning relative to others. Although there are four focal points, in actuality the children used the whole body to incorporate a set of intentions. In other words, they signified with their bodies.

Tableau action-events engage both language-based and non-language-based sign systems. The two complement each other, bringing different qualities to illuminate connections to the text. The use of two sign systems creates a transmediary relationship wherein children translate understanding from one sign system into the other.

As a medium of expression, performative gesture tends to be a synchronic representation; it illuminates the whole at one time and emphasizes the relationships between the parts. Performative gesture is more ambiguous, less precise, than language. This ambiguity adds to the cognitive labor as children forge connections between language, images, gesture, text and experience. I also suggest that performative gesture provokes thinking with a synchronic quality that is focused on the whole and the relationships between the whole and parts.

2. Representing emotion was a common trait in the tableaux studied. Children not only used facial expression, but whole body posture to express attitudes of characters. The children used emotion in their construction of tableaux. They used emotion to gather information, to make sense of the relationships between characters and to guide their decisions in how to enact scenes. The

children usually established a role and emotion for characters, and this seemed to help them determine the intended action of the character. They assumed positions to reflect the role and emotion thereby portraying the relationships between characters.

The children were adept at showing emotions, and their interpretations reflected learned social attitudes about emotions. These attitudes could be read in the tableaux, giving insight into cultural, tacit meanings of emotions.

3. The children read the three-dimensional, synchronic text of tableau. To do so, they positioned themselves in the space of tableau, establishing a point of view. To establish a point of view, they negotiated meaning and control with their peers. They also negotiated meaning *through* their sociocultural history; their routes of interpretation passed through their cultural roots.

The tableaux evidenced sociocultural assumptions about relationships, suggesting that the sociocultural environment positions children by narrowing their interpretation. In other words, the tacit rules and definitions of society shape the tableaux having illuminated particular routes of interpretation. Reading the positions taken in tableau offers a doorway to understanding assumptions guiding the interpretation.

These three clusters summarize ways tableau, when used in conjunction with literacy activities, is a cognitive action. This premise forms groundwork for pedagogical implications. Ways to use tableau in literacy education is discussed next.

Teaching and Tableau

As an educator, I see tableau as a rich learning tool. The tableaux of this inquiry pointed to numerous occasions for talking about stories, about how stories are interpreted, how emotion is used, about how people work together, and about cultural assumptions. This inquiry showed what the children could do with tableaux, yet there is room for more exploration into how we, as educators, can use tableau in the early elementary classroom. The following discussion is about instructional events used during this inquiry, and some potential instructional events. Afterward, I make a few connections to current instructional interests and practices in order to refit this inquiry into the larger field of education.

Tableau in the Early Childhood Language Arts Classroom

During this inquiry, various tableau activities used as the focus of instructional events helped me gain a sense of what children could do with tableau. One instructional event was the use of tableau to develop story scenes before writing a story. I worked with a small group to use tableau to develop a story. First, the group discussed possible story lines and then chose three to develop. We made a storyboard for each. The storyboards consisted of four cartoon-like scenes. Stick figures depicted the action of the scene. Using icons (example in appendix), we labeled the emotional content of each scene.¹⁰ The children then chose one story to develop further. In this case, it was the story of five girls riding horses in the woods where one got hurt. The children then

¹⁰ This activity was adapted from McKeough and Sanderson (1996)

created tableaux for each of the four scenes from the storyboard, plus one for a scene they added. I took photographs of the tableaux and they used the photographs to write a story. I was pleased with how this activity placed emphasis on the inclusion of the emotional landscape, something often not included in the written stories of children in first and second grade. Please refer to Appendix B to see a draft of the story they wrote collaboratively.

We used tableau with concept words, a pre-reading activity. A key word was given to each of five small groups. The children planned a tableau for their word, then presented the tableau to the rest of the class. The class, as audience, “guessed” the word. The various words and phrases the children gave fit the concept of the word, opening discussion to the layers of meaning that comprise a concept. One example was the described tableau of the word “Babushka” enacted by three children who depicted a grandfather, granddaughter and grandmother (refer to Chapter IV for discussion of this tableau). The response words from the audience included happy, family and friends – important connotations to the *concept* of grandmother. The point could be emphasized in this activity that there are real grandmothers, and there is the ‘idea’ of grandmother. This idea holds many layers of meaning, such as the connotations of comfort and family.

We also made character portraits using tableau. Children created characters through words, listing physical characteristics and emotional/personality characteristics. They then enacted these. In one character portrait, each child enacted a different affective characteristic of one character, hence the depiction of a troll who was curious, angry, stingy and grumpy. This not only asked the children to consider how to present various attitudes, but to

consider how a character would react in various situations. This activity would combine well with story planning activities.

In another instructional event, I read three stories to a group and asked them to pick a character from each story. These three characters were then used in a story the children created. I recommend taking time with this event, having the children first create character portraits and then provide a scenario in which to put the three characters. I see potential in this activity as a way to develop characters to be used in writing. Characters reaction to different situations can be seen and described.

I also asked children to enact different scenes from stories. I was interested in how they chose scenes, in the criteria they used in picking scenes. It turned out that they tended to say a scene would be good for tableau if they could envision doing it – and they could envision doing almost all of them. In my limited time, we did not further explore how to judge scenes, but this would be worth pursuing. For me, the scenes with more than one character, an action and an emotional landscape were most interesting. These are the elements that make a good scene in literature. By talking about the elements of an interesting tableau, the elements of a good piece of writing can be envisioned.

Tableau can help children envision scenes from literature, allowing them to analyze scenes. If a scene is confusing or complex, tableau can expose the complexity and open it for discussion. Tableau is conducive to learning about characters, their attitudes, roles and relationships with each other. As such, tableau is conducive to learning about point of view, the donning of different perspectives and the effect of change in perspective. The children's portrayal of

Lilly in different scenes indicated Lilly's changes throughout the book, not only in attitude, but also in roles – as a student, a child and a child who pretended to be a teacher. Tableau offers a way to try different perspectives, to visualize the taking of different perspectives.

Tableau can be used to plan scenes children want to use in stories they are already writing. An author can direct others to form a tableau, and then describe what they have set up (Salvio, 1990). Such use can help children work through details or problems in their writing.

A tableau such as the one with Marcie kneeling on the floor in supplication provides an occasion to talk of perceptions about teachers and about assumptions about teachers. It provides time to talk about how teachers are portrayed in stories and how that portrayal compares and contrasts with actual experiences. Such tableaux create occasions to talk about being a child and a child's perspective on relationships with adults.

The incidences in which girl's voices were neglected and boys decided how the tableau would be provide occasion to explore gender issues and power issues. Such incidences can become an occasion to talk about negotiation and voice. Peer mediation is a current topic in education. The experience with creating tableau and negotiating control and meaning with others brings immediate meaning and reason to use peer negotiation techniques rather than reserving them for a crisis.

Tableau in the language arts classroom offers opportunity for inquiry by children and teachers. Tableaux can be analyzed and that analysis can provoke further discussion and extend learning.

Limits of Tableau

I have proposed that tableau mediates learning and have shown how tableaux can be analyzed in a systematic way by considering the performative gestures children use, the children's portrayal relationships between literary characters, and children's negotiation of meaning and control. If my observations had shown the children created very similar tableaux for the same scenes, or had a great deal of difficulty using their bodies to express meaning (i.e., if I had continuously directed their actions), I would suspect the strength of tableau to mediate learning. As it turned out, the tableaux of the same literary scenes varied (refer to Figures 23 and 24 for example), suggesting that the children moved beyond mirroring the literary text to interpretations that drew on their own personal and sociocultural history as well as the text of the story. Furthermore, the children readily engaged their bodies to express meaning.

Tableau appears to be a powerful pedagogical tool, yet I add some caution in its use. Tableau is only one example of a medium of expression that is non-language based yet works in conjunction with language. Its particular properties lend it to interpretation of literary characters and their relationships, and of social concepts (e.g., prejudice). Other mediums, such as drawing, dance and drama offer their own properties that illuminate aspects tableau could not. As a teacher, I recommend varying expressive mediums to fit the need at the time and caution that constant use of tableau could lead to a reduction in the effect of stopping us for a moment to analyze what is going on. I also recommend varying how tableau is used, such as through the ways discussed in this chapter.

I also wish to note that there is variation in children's skill with this medium. I do not suggest it as a strength for all. I suspect children will develop skill in using and reading performative gesture as they gain experience using tableau and as well as through discussions of tableaux. Teachers also vary in skill. I found I gained insight into reading tableau and feel more effective in guiding the use of tableau in the language arts classroom.

Current Instructional Concerns

Right now, there is concern about children's ability to read and understand visual images. National Public Radio ran a session recently about media literacy. The concern is whether children critically read images of the Internet, movies and television. Tableau is a visual image that children can explore from the inside and outside. It can be a part of media literacy as children learn to read relationships and underlying assumptions embedded in tableau. The way tableau is analyzed could be used as a way to analyze other visual media.

Another national educational issue centers on race, class and culture. Questions of equity, bilingual education, gender, culture, race, reconciliation and community filled a recent issue (April 1999) of *Educational Leadership*. Multicultural education seeks to examine the complexity of the relationships between race, class and culture. As discussed throughout this inquiry, tableau often shows sociocultural assumptions. Tableau is a tool for examining issues. For example, a colleague asked her freshman high school English class students to use tableau to show their understanding of the concept of prejudice.¹¹ Their

¹¹ See Appendix C for an example.

tableaux showed power differences and opened a way into discussing issues of power. Tableau, as a visual medium, offers children something they can see. It brings a way to discuss abstract ideas and ideals related to race, power, culture and gender. Tableau offers children a way to see angles of their own beliefs.

Questions about social organization of learning and the relationship between individual and social views of learning are currently being explored. Questions are being asked about whether the social views of learning have led to better, more useful or more thoughtful accounts of learning (Pearson & Iran-Nejad, 1998). Tableau presents an intersection of individual views of learning, such as signifying through sign systems, with social views of learning such as demonstrated through the negotiation of meaning with peers and through sociocultural assumptions. Tableau is a space in which the complementary nature of individual learning theory and social constructs of learning are in play. The effect of this relationship can be studied further. In addition, attention is being given to intentional, conceptually oriented instruction that mediates the learning of individuals and collectives (Salomon & Perkins, 1998). Tableau is conceptually oriented; it mediates learning of individuals and collectives, and can contribute to our understanding of the relationship between individual and collective learnings.

Another major topic in education is assessment, standards and the use of rubrics. When speaking with a group of teachers about the first and second graders' tableaux, one teacher asked me how to assess tableaux, how to decide if they are right or not in their portrayal of the text. He wanted to know how to use tableau as an assessment of children's understanding of literature and wondered

about using a rubric for it. Given concerns about standards and accountability and given that I had been talking about how tableau shows children's understanding, this was a reasonable question.

Tableau tells us much about what a child understands; however, tableau is an open-ended response. Tableau can be read to gain information about what is comprehended, but is not a precise measure of comprehension – it is an improvisational act that shows an interpretation, an understanding within the current context. As presented in this inquiry, tableau is a means of thinking. Tableau creates opportunity to *reason* through non-language-based and language-based mediums about literature. When observing children engaged in creating tableau, one observes a signifying, meaning making action. The observation is more of *how* children reason through this particular literary text than to what degree they manage to portray items from the literary text.

Tableau is an interpretation. The children demonstrated a variety of interpretations, suggesting that the use of tableau does not lead to a uniform, rote response. Even when interpreting the same scene, as in Lilly's apology to her teacher, different groups portrayed it differently, drawing on different strands of understanding. The interpretation of literature through tableau draws heavily on inference and the making of connections between the literature, personal history and sociocultural environment. There are no pure answers, no right and wrong, although children can identify what they used to make the interpretation, i.e., the interpretation is anchored to literature, even if allegorically.

Research Implications

This was an instrumental case study. As such, it focused on gathering information about tableau and its use by first and second graders in literature related activities. It focused on describing the cognitive aspects of tableau. There were questions that would not be answered by this design, but for which this research prepared a foundation. For example, this research was not designed to answer questions relative to *what extent* tableau makes a difference in children's learning. Nor does it account for differences due to culture, age or gender. Although much was learned about what children do with tableau, there is room to learn much more about tableau in the classroom.

Having laid a foundation that defines tableau as a signifying action, a point of departure for future research is prepared. Questions of interest to me include, how would tableaux look if based in different sociocultural environments? How would such tableaux compare to those observed in a rural, predominately Euro-American community? What differences would be observed in different age groups? Are there differences in gender perspective, and how would these play out with different age groups? Can learning to read tableaux help different cultural groups understand each other? Given the use of non-language-based reasoning, what is the benefit to children with language based learning disabilities? How much help does tableau give children in bridging their understanding into language-based expression? Would tableau, with its visual portrayal of emotions and relationships, be useful in helping children read pragmatic cues in real life situations? Given the potential of tableau as a medium of thinking, what would teachers do with tableau in their classroom?

These research questions point to a vast area of teaching using tableau that is open for exploration. These possibilities exist because tableau is an expressive, thinking action that mediates learning through non-language-based systems of thinking that are coupled with language-based systems. Tableau offers more than a useful little teaching technique. Tableau offers one example of the power of using non-language-based reasoning. Tableaux show the sophistication of children's understanding of literature with their connections of the literature to their individual lives and to their larger sociocultural environment.

At the beginning of this chapter stands a quote from Keith Jarrett, a Jazz pianist. He notes that there are times "intellectual handles" get in the way and of the need to find a way for his hands to start the concert without him. Likewise, words can get in the way. Sometimes we need a way to start thinking, or to become aware of our thinking, without the 'intellectual handles' of words. Tableau offers a bridge to language-based expression by bringing to the forefront understandings that are not yet put into words. These understandings can be developed and expressed through tableau, and then described through language. Tableau offers a way to think without letting words get in the way, a way to express without searching for words. Tableau offers a way to start a concert.

LIST OF REFERENCES

(1992). *The American heritage dictionary of the English language*. (Third ed.): InfoSoft International.

(1994). *National standards for arts education*. Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference.

Armstrong, D. F., Stokoe, W. C., & Wilcox, S. E. (1995). *Gesture and the nature of language*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Astington, J. W. (1994). Children's developing notions of other's minds. In J. F. Duchan, L. E. Hewitt, & R. M. Sonnenmeier (Eds.), *Pragmatics: From theory to practice* (pp. 72-87). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1981/1996). *The dialogic imagination: Four essays* (Emerson, Caryl

Holquist, Michael, Trans.). Austin: University of Texas Press.

Baldwin, D. A. (1993). Infant contributions to the achievement of joint reference. In P. Bloom (Ed.), *Language acquisition: Core readings* (pp. 129-153). New York: Harvester/Wheatsheaf.

Bargh. (1997). The automaticity of everyday life. In R. S. J. Weyer (Ed.), *The automaticity of everyday life* (Vol. X, pp. 2-11). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Bidell, T. R., & Fischer, K. (1997). Between nature and nurture: The role of human agency in the epigenesis of intelligence. In R. Sternberg & E. Grigorenko (Eds.), *Intelligence: Heredity and environment* (pp. 193-242). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brecht, B. (1964). *Brecht on theatre: The development of the aesthetic* (Willett, John, Trans.). New York: Hill and Wang.

Brown, L. M., & Gilligan, C. (1992). *Meeting at the crossroads*. New York: Ballantine Books.

- Bruner, J. S. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Castell, d. (1996). On finding one's place in the text. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 12(4), 27-31.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. (Eds.). (1993). *Inside, Outside: Teacher Research and Knowledge*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Damasio, A. R. (1994). *Descartes' error: Emotion, reason and the human brain*. New York: Avon.
- Davis, B., & Sumara, D. (1997). Cognition, complexity, and teacher education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 67(1), 105-125.
- de Certeau, M. (1988). *The practice of everyday life* (Rendall, Steven, Trans.). Berkeley: University of California Press.
- de Sousa, R. (1987). *The rationality of emotion*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT press.
- Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as experience*. New York: Perigee.
- Donmoyer, R., & Yennie-Donmoyer, J. (1995). Data As drama: Reflections on the use of readers theater as a mode of qualitative data display. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 1(4), 402-428.
- Durst, R. K., & Stanforth, S. C. (1996). "Everything's negotiable": Collaboration and conflict in composition research. In P. Mortensen & G. E. Kirsch (Eds.), *Ethics and prepresentation in qualitative studies of literacy* (pp. 58-76). Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Dyson, A. H. (1993). *Social worlds of children learning to write*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ede, L., & Lunsford, A. (1990). *Singular texts/plural authors: Perspectives on collaborative writing*.

- Edelsky, C., & Boyd, C. (1993). Collaborative research: More questions than answers. In S. J. Hudelson & J. W. Lindfors (Eds.), *Delicate balances: Collaborative research in language education* (pp. 4-20). Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Eisner, E. W. (1991). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co.
- Ellsworth, E. (1997). *Teaching positions: Difference, pedagogy, and the power of address*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Emig, J. (1983). *The web of meaning: Essays on writing, teaching, learning and thinking*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook-Heinemann.
- Epstein, M. (1995). *Thoughts without a thinker: Psychotherapy from a Buddhist perspective*. New York: BasicBooks of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.
- Erickson, F. (1993). Forward. In M. Cochran-Smith & S. L. Lytle (Eds.), *Inside/outside: Teacher research and knowledge* (pp. vii-ix). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Fennema, E., Carpenter, T. P., Jacobs, V. R., Franke, M., & Levi, L. W. (1998). A longitudinal study of gender differences in young children's mathematical thinking. *Educational Researcher*, 27(5), 6-11.
- Feyereisen, P., & de Lannoy, J.-D. (1991). *Gestures and speech: Psychological investigations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fueyo, J. A. (1991). Reading "literate sensibilities": Resisting a verbocentric writing classroom. *Language Arts*, 68(8), 641-648.
- Gallagher, J. M., & Wansart, W. L. (1991). An assimilative base model of strategy: Knowledge interactions. *Remedial and Special Education*, 12(3), 31-42.

- Gallas, K. (1994). *The languages of learning: How children talk, write, dance, draw and sing their understanding of the world*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gardner, H. (1991). *The unschooled mind: How children think and how schools should teach*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Geisel, T. S. (1996). *My many colored days*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Greene, M. (1997). Metaphors and multiples: Representation, the arts, and history. *Phi Delta Kappan*, January, 387-394.
- Grumet, M. R. (1988). *Bitter milk: women and teaching*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Grumet, M. R. (1992). Existential and phenomenological foundations of autobiographical methods. In W. F. Pinar & W. M. Reynolds (Eds.), *Understanding curriculum as phenomenological and deconstructed text* (pp. 28-43). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gusfield, J. R. B., Kenneth (Ed.). (1989). *Kenneth Burke: On symbols and society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hausman, C. R. (1993/1997). *Charles S. Peirce's evolutionary philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Henkes, K. (1996). *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse*. New York: Greenwillow Books.
- Hirschfeld, L. A., & Gelman, S. A. (1994). *Mapping the mind: Domain specificity in cognition and culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Holquist, M. (1990). *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world*. New York: Routledge.
- IDEA. (1991). *Individuals with disabilities education act of 1990*. Horsham, PA: LRP Publications.

- Innis, R. E. (Ed.). (1985). *Semiotics: An introductory anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Jarrett, K. (1997). How I create. *Utne Reader*, July-August 1997.
- Keene, E. O., & Zimmermann, S. (1997). *Mosaic of thought: Teaching comprehension in a reader's workshop*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Kierstead, J. T., & Gray-Hanc, D. M. (1991). *Maine special education data summary report*. Augusta, ME: Maine Department of Education.
- Kirsch, G. E. (1997). Multi-vocal texts and interpretive responsibility. *College English*, 59(2), 191-202.
- Langer, S. K. (1942/1979). *Philosophy in a new key: A study in the symbolism of reason, rite, and art*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lather, P. (1986). Issues of validity in openly ideological research: between a rock and a soft place. *Interchange*, 17(4), 63-84.
- LeDoux, J. (1996). *The emotional brain: The mysterious underpinnings of emotional life*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Leland, C. H., & Harste, J. C. (1994). Multiple ways of knowing: Curriculum in a new key. *Language Arts*, 71, 337-345.
- Lensmire, T. (1994). *When children write: Critical re-visions of the writing workshop*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Leont'ev, A. A. (1979/1981a). Sign and activity. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology* (pp. 241-255). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.
- Leont'ev, A. N. (1979/1981b). The problem of activity in Soviet psychology. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology* (pp. 37-71). Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.

- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Lutz, C. (1988). *Unnatural emotions: Everyday sentiments on a Micronesian atoll and their challenge to western theory*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Mangiola, L., & Pease-Alvarez, L. (1993). Learning and teaching together. In S. J. Hudelson & J. W. Lindfors (Eds.), *Delicate balances: Collaborative research in language education*. Urbana, Ill: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (1995). *Designing qualitative research*. (second ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Marzano, R., Pikerling, D., Arredondo, D. E., Blackburn, G., Brandt, R., & Moffett, C. A. (1992). *Dimensions of learning: Teachers' manual*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Mathison, S. (1988). Why triangulate. *Educational Researcher*(March 1988), 13-17.
- Matlin, M. W. (1995). *Psychology*. (Second ed.). New York: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- McKeough, A. (1995). Teaching narrative knowledge for transfer in the early school years. In A. McKeough, J. Lupart, & A. Marini (Eds.), *Teaching for transfer: Fostering generalization in learning* (pp. 153-176). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- McKeough, A., & Sanderson, A. (1996). Teaching storytelling: A microgenetic analysis of developing narrative competency. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 6(2), 157-192.
- McNeill, D. (1992). *Hand and mind: what gestures reveal about thought*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Moffett, J. (1968/1983). *Teaching the universe of discourse*. Portsmouth NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Moje, E. (1998). *Changing our minds, changing our bodies: Power as embodied in research relations*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, San Diego.
- Mueller, P. (1998). *Living and learning on the edge: A study of at-risk adolescent readers* (dissertation proposal). unpublished: University of New Hampshire.
- Murray, D. (1987). *Write to learn*. (Second ed.). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Murray, D. M. (1996). *Crafting a life*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook.
- Nunn, C. (1996). *Awareness: What it is, what it does*. New York: Routledge.
- Oja, S. N., & Smulyan, L. (1989). *Collaborative action research: A developmental process*. Philadelphia: The Falmer Press.
- Olson, D. R. (1977). From utterance to text: The bias of language in speech and writing. *Harvard Educational Review*, 47(3), 257-281.
- Pearson, P. D., & Iran-Nejad, A. (Eds.). (1998). *Review of research in education*. (Vol. 23). Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association.
- Peirce, C. S. (1985). Logic as semiotic: The theory of signs. In R. E. Innis (Ed.), *Semiotics: An introductory anthology* (pp. 1-23). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Petitto, L. A. (1993). Modularity and constraints in early lexical acquisition. In P. Bloom (Ed.), *Language acquisition* (pp. 95-126). New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Plato. (1987). *The Republic* (Lee, Desmond, Trans.). New York: Penguin.

- Polacco, P. (1990/1995). *Babushka's doll*. New York: First Aladdin Paperbacks.
- Raschka, C. (1993). *Yo! Yes?* New York: Orchard Books.
- Ritter, M. (1998). Finding a path in the forest: Tracing journeys and meeting in the common. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing, in-press*.
- Roen, D. H., & Mittan, R. K. (1992). Collaborative scholarship in composition: Some issues. In G. Kirsch & P. A. Sullivan (Eds.), *Methods and Methodology in Composition Research* (pp. 287-313). Carbondale and Edwardsville, Ill: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rogoff, B. (1995). Observing sociocultural activity on three planes: Participatory, appropriation, guided participation and apprenticeship. In J. V. Wertsch, P. del Rio, & A. Alvarez (Eds.), *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp. 139-164). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rogoff, B., Radziszewska, B., & Masiello, T. (In press). Analysis of developmental processes in sociocultural activity. In L. Martin, K. Nelson, & E. Toback (Eds.), *Cultural psychology and activity theory* (pp. 125-149). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Rosenblatt, L. M. (1978). *The reader, the text, the poem: The transactional theory of the literary work*. Carbondale and Edwardsville, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Salomon, G., & Perkins, D. N. (1998). Individual and social aspects of learning. In P. D. Pearson & A. Iran-Nejad (Eds.), *Review of research in education* (Vol. 23, pp. 1-24). Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association.
- Salvio, P. M. (1990). The world, the text, and the reader. In A. A. Lunsford, H. Moglen, & J. Slevin (Eds.), *The right to literacy* (pp. 269-275). New York: Modern Language Association of America.

- Salvio, P. M. (1994). What can a body know? Refiguring pedagogic intention into teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 45(1), 53-61.
- Salvio, P. M. (1995). On the forbidden pleasures and hidden dangers of covert reading. *English Quarterly*, 27(3), 8-15.
- Salvio, P. M. (1998). Maxine Green and the project of 'making the strange liberty of creation possible'. In W. F. Pinar (Ed.), *The passionate mind of Maxine Greene: 'I am...not yet'* (pp. 99-121). Philadelphia: Falmer Press.
- Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Siegel, M. (1995). More than words: The generative power of transmediation for learning. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 20(4), 455-475.
- Siegel, M. G. (1984). *Reading as signification*. Doctoral dissertation, Indiana University: UMI, 1984. 8429377.
- Smagorinsky, P., & O'Donnell-Allen, C. (1998). Reading as mediated and mediating action: Composing meaning for literature through multimedia interpretative text. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 33(2), 198-226.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). Grounded theory methodology: An overview. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (pp. 158-183). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publishers.
- Sumara, D. (1996). *Private readings in public*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1988). A theory of teaching as assisted performance, *Rousing minds to life: teaching, learning, and schooling in social context* (pp. 27-43). New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Turski, G. (1994). *Toward a rationality of emotions: An essay in the philosophy of mind*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Volosinov, V. N. (1985). Verbal interaction. In R. E. Innis (Ed.), *Semiotics: An introductory anthology* (pp. 50-65). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1985/1996). *Thought and Language* (Kozulin, Alex, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1987). Thinking and speech. In R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: Problems of General Psychology* (Vol. 1, pp. 201-214). New York: Plenum Press.
- Waldrop, M. M. (1992). *Complexity: The emerging science at the edge of order and chaos*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Warren, K. (1993). Empowering children through drama. *Early child Development and Care*, 90, 83-97.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1984). The zone of proximal development: Some conceptual issues. In B. Rogoff & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *Children's learning in the zone of proximal development* (pp. 7-18). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1991). *Voices of the mind: A sociocultural approach to mediated action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Wertsch, J. V., del Rio, P., & Alvarez, A. (1995). Sociocultural studies: History, action and mediation. In J. V. Wertsch, P. del Rio, & A. Alvarez (Eds.), *Sociocultural studies of mind* (pp. 1-34). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wheatley, M. L. (1992). *Leadership and the new science: Learning about organization from an orderly universe*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Wilson, J. (1963). *Thinking with concepts*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wolf, S. A. (1993). What's in a name? Labels and literacy in readers theatre. *The Reading Teacher*, 46(7), 540-545.

Wolf, S. A., & Enciso, P. E. (1994). Multiple selves in literacy interpretation: Engagement and the language of drama. In C. Kinzer & D. J. Leu (Eds.), *Multidimensional aspects of literacy research, theory, and practice* (pp. 351-360). Chicago: National Reading Conference, Inc.

Zebrowski, J. T. (1994). *Thinking through theory: Vygotskian perspectives on the teaching of writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Zinsser, W. (1988). *Writing to learn*. New York: Harper & Row.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERNAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of Sponsored Research
Service Building
51 College Road
Durham, New Hampshire 03824-3585
(603) 862-3564 FAX

LAST NAME	Wilson	FIRST NAME	Georgia Pat
DEPT	Education - Morrill Hall	APP'L DATE	2/18/99
OFF-CAMPUS ADDRESS (if applicable)		IRB #	1930
		REVIEW LEVEL	FULL

PROJECT TITLE First and Second Graders' Use of a Drama Technique in Conjunction with Reading

The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research has reviewed and approved your request for time extension for this protocol. Approval is granted for one year from the approval date above. At the end of the approval period you will be asked to submit a project report with regard to the involvement of human subjects. If your project is still active, you may apply for extension of IRB approval through this office.

The protection of human subjects in your study is an ongoing process for which you hold primary responsibility. Changes in your protocol must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to their implementation. If you have questions or concerns about your project or this approval, please feel free to contact me directly at 862-2003.

Please refer to the IRB # above in all correspondence related to this project. The IRB wishes you success with your research.

For the IRB,



Kara L. Eddy, MBA
Regulatory Compliance Officer

APPENDIX B

DRAFT OF RIDING STORY



After school, five friends went horseback riding on the nature trail. They were having fun until...they got lost.



While they were trying to find their way back, Hillary fell off her horse and broke her leg. Everybody was worried and scared about her.



All Hillary's friends helped her up. Hillary was in pain. They helped her up on her Quarter horse. The rest of her friends took their Quarter horses.



Mary stopped us from danger ahead, a swamp. Hillary looked scared. Anna held the horses.



Finally, they saw a house and they knocked on the door. A doctor answered. He helped Hillary with her broken leg.

APPENDIX C

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' TABLEAU OF PREJUDICE

Teachers can use performance to explore emotionally charged concepts, as Terry Moher did with her high school students regarding the concept of prejudice. Moher's high school freshman literature class had been reading books such as *NightJohn* (Paulsen, 1993) and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Harper, 1960) developing an understanding of prejudice. She wanted the students to define prejudice, their understanding of prejudice. She divided the class into groups of 3 to 6 students and gave them ten minutes to plan how they would depict prejudice in the form of tableaux, silent and still.

In one tableau, two girls held the braids of a third as they stood on either side of her. A girl in front hid a smirk or laugh behind her hand. Another girl looked on, her face shielded. Four girls focused on one, the one bowed her head and turned in her toes, exposed despite desperate efforts to minimize and hide her body. The students not in the tableau read it with the words: *scorn, humiliation, taunt, embarrassed, judgmental, ridicule.*

In another tableau, a boy wearing glasses stooped with a notebook in front of him held like a shield. A girl stood behind a tall male and stared intently, maliciously at the boy with the notebook. The tall male looked disdainful. Three other males stood in a semicircle looking, but not much was readable on their faces. The lack of message, the blank face, felt as uncompromising and

unsettling, perhaps more so, than the faces of disgust, of hatred. Students reading the tableau responded, *outnumbered, shooting daggers, glaring, low self-esteem, downcast, out-cast, egotistical, dominating*.

In both these tableaux, the students positioned themselves – as victims and therefore small, and as aggressors and therefore large. It was a powerful image, similar to that of Marcie and her group in the ‘Really Sorry’ scene discussed in the analyses. Through the stillness of tableau, the socio-cultural roots of this image were available to the students to explore critically. Students can critically appraise the message in their gesture, the political implications of their interpretation. Teachers can show students how to read for social assumptions.

APPENDIX D

Following is the complete citation for the references Dennis Sumara (1996) used.

Gadamer, Hans, -Georg. Truth and method (2nd revised edition). Translated by Joel Weinsheimer and Donald Marshall. New York: Crossroad, 1990.

Gadamer, Hans, -Georg. Philosophical Hermeneutics. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975.

Heidegger, Martin. Being and Time. New York: Harper and Row. 1966.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. Phenomenology of Perception. London: Routledge, 1962.