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Semiosis of Self: Meaning Making in a High School Spanish for Native Speakers Class

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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, SEMIOSIS OF SELF: MEANING MAKING IN A HIGH SCHOOL SPANISH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS CLASS, by TAMMY GENNELL FREDERICK, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

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ABSTRACT
SEMISOSIS OF SELF: MEANING MAKING IN A HIGH SCHOOL SPANISH FOR
NATIVE SPEAKERS CLASS

by
Tammy Gennell Frederick

Located in social semiotics (Hodge & Kress, 1988), theories of identity (Goffman, 1959; Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998), and third space (Gutierrez, Baquedano, & Turner, 1997; Rowe & Leander, 2005), this dissertation presents the findings from a year long, field-based qualitative study with a high school class of nine Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS) students and their teacher. The study used an arts-infused multimodal curriculum exploring Spanish language texts and cultures from around the world. The following questions guided this study: (a) What factors were considered as the teacher and the researcher co-planned this arts-infused multimodal curriculum, and how did the consideration of those factors shape the curriculum?, (b) How did students enrolled in this SNS class negotiate meaning and identity as they worked within this class?, and (c) What discourses around students' meaning making practices and identities emerged within their visual texts over time and across texts?

Data sources included interviews, observations, student-generated visual texts, photographs from class sessions, student journals, and audio and videotapes of portions of class discussions and activities. Visual texts were coded for elements of visual design and apparent discourses with which the text-maker identifies (Albers, 2007b; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Five themes emerged from the data: 1) The teacher participant and researcher co-created the curriculum using critical-care pedagogy; 2) Actual participation in and creation of visual and multimodal texts shaped the classroom community; (3) Negotiation and meaning making occurred through the flexible use of sign systems; 4)

Participants worked through understandings of self; and 5) Personally relevant discourses emerged within individual and group texts. The study suggested that heritage language courses like this one can teach more than language. Such courses deserve attention as havens where students' complex meaning making of themselves, their worlds, and their places in them are freely explored.

SEMIOSIS OF SELF: MEANING MAKING IN A HIGH SCHOOL
SPANISH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS CLASS

by
Tammy Gennell Frederick

A Dissertation

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in
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in
the College of Education
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|------|--|
| ECA | Effective Center of Attention |
| EL | English learners |
| ELA | English Language Arts |
| ESOL | English to Speakers of Other Languages |
| DOE | Department of Education |
| HL | Heritage Language |
| SFL | Spanish Foreign Language |
| SHL | Spanish Heritage Language |
| SNS | Spanish for Native Speakers |
| VNP | Video News Project |

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION



Figure 1 Fabiola's personal mural

“It will be weird because I’ll be in a class, like I have all advanced classes, and there will be no Hispanic people in there. So, I’ll be there by myself, and they’ll call on me, and they’ll be like “Answer this question.” And I know how to answer it, but I know how to answer it in Spanish and not in English [laughing]. I can’t translate it. And so I just start talking in Spanish, and they’re like, “What in the world are you saying?” And I try to explain it, but it’s hard to explain it to someone who doesn’t know Spanish than to somebody who knows Spanish and English....They start laughing at me. They’re like “Fabiola, we’re in America.” I’m like “I don’t care. I’m in Mexico in my world.” –Fabiola, 10th grade SNS student

What do you see? What do you notice? How do you notice? What draws your attention to certain things in the image? What sense does Fabiola make of herself at the moment of this textmaking? How does Fabiola position, you, the reader? How do you interact with Fabiola as you transact with her text? What sense do you make of Fabiola

as you transact with her text? What sense do you make of Fabiola's world? What sense do you make of your own world through the intertextual nature of meaning making and your engagement with this text?

This is the story of nine Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS) students, their teacher, and my own as we journeyed together for a year making and negotiating meaning in multiple communication systems, exploring complex issues related to our cultures, languages, and identities. The image you see here, Figure 1, is one of over 100 visual texts (Albers, 2007b) created over the 2008-2009 academic year, and one that helped me understand the academic, social, and emotional nature and needs of this SNS class, needs that may be similar to those in classes like this one across the nation. I use the term "visual texts" rather than the commonly used ELA (English Language Arts) term "artworks" to describe texts that are created in ELA classes using visual media (paint, collage, drawing, clay, photographs, and so on). Questions as the ones posed in the opening are ones that I asked myself as I worked to understand the discourses that were present in the images created as part of meaning and identity negotiation which occurred in this SNS class.

Fabiola, a bilingual SNS student, in the opening offered a small glimpse into the complexity involved as she negotiated meaning with monolinguals of dominant American society about the dual nature of her existence-that of being a bilingual Mexican-American. First, in her visual text, she drew a flag that was half the Mexican flag and half the American flag split by one of the bars of the peace sign. Fabiola described the "weirdness" of being "the only Hispanic in advance classes." When asked questions, she stated that she knew how to answer questions "in Spanish and not in

English” and that she couldn’t “translate” her answer. As a result, she opted to just state the answer in Spanish knowing that her classmates would not understand her. She continued to indicate how she “tried to explain it” but “it’s hard to explain it to someone who doesn’t know Spanish than to somebody who knows Spanish and English.” Her classmates laughed at her and informed her that “we’re in America.” However, she told them that she “was in Mexico in her world.” Fabiola is positioned to speak only English by her classmates, which she tried to do. However, Fabiola also positioned herself as a bilingual speaker of English and Spanish and as someone who, while residing physically in the U.S., has strong emotional and linguistic ties to Mexico. This positioning was the result of the politics around language and identity that has existed for centuries in this nation.

Since the birth of the United States, English-only has been the predominant political ideology that guided the instruction of new immigrants (Macedo, 2000). With acculturation and assimilation as one of the main goals for immigrant students (Crawford, 1991; Delgado-Gaitán & Trueba, 1999), schools have failed to effectively incorporate the language and cultures of minority students (Godina, 2003). Similarly, written language has been the predominant mode of communication in modern society (Chandler, 2002) and has been given a privileged position as the dominant tool of thought in American schools. As a result, schools have failed to significantly integrate other communication systems, such as the visual arts, as tools of thought and often relegate it to the periphery of the curriculum despite its cognitive potential (Efland, 2002; Eisner, 2002, 1998; Gardner, 1982, 1980; Greene, 1995; Perkins & Leondar, 1977). Since language and literacy curricula and approaches mostly limit expression to a single communication

system-language, teachers of multilingual learners must critically examine how their curriculum and pedagogical approaches promote or inhibit the academic and personal development of the students they teach (Schwarzer & Petrón, 2005).

Though many teachers of bilingual learners and English learners are beginning to reflect on their practices by exploring the use of culturally relevant pedagogy and multimodal literacy with their students (Carger, 2004; Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri 2001; Gay, 2000; Godina, 2003; Ladson-Billings & Gilborn, 2004; Short, 2000; Shreefter, 2001; Styles & Arzipe, 2001; Walsh, 2000; Willis, Garcia, Barrera, & Harris, 2003; Wolfenbarger & Sipe, 2007), written and oral language continues to be the dominant communication systems. As a result, bilingual learners and English learners (ELs) are limited and often must express their knowledge, ideas, and selves in writing or in speaking in the majority of American language and literacy classes. More importantly, teachers of this student population continue to rely on written or spoken language as the primary communication system that can inform them about their students' language and literacy practices, social practices, and subjectivities. We, as teachers, fail culturally and linguistically diverse students when we do not provide them with multiple ways to respond and represent. Greene (1995) suggested that "becoming literate is also a matter of transcending the given, of entering a field of possible" (p. 111). As there are few, if any, studies or literature that examine native Spanish speakers learning Spanish with multiple communication systems, the primary purpose of this study was to explore, in particular, how the visual arts could be used as a tool of thought and as a communicative system by bilingual learners, particularly in relation to meaning making and the

negotiation of identity in a SNS class, thereby *transcending* traditional notions of language and literacy instruction and learning.

Background to the Study

Achievement Gap

As closing the achievement gap of minority students continues to be a national priority, Latinos, in particular, are an increasing concern due to their rapid rate of growth in this country (Colombi & Roca, 2003; Lynch, 2003; Carreira, 2003) along with their high drop-out rates (U. S. Census Bureau, 2006; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007), or as many Latino education scholars and researchers (Antrop-González, 2006; Portes, 2009; Valenzuela, 2009) term “push-out” rates. The United States Census Bureau (2006) released a statement in 2005 indicating that the total minority population equaled 98 million people, one-third of the total 296.4 million people in the U. S. Of the 98 million, 42.7 million were Latinos or Hispanics. They were the fastest growing group in the U.S. From July 1, 2004 to July 1, 2005, Hispanics made up nearly half of the national population growth with an increase of 1.3 million. Of this 1.3 million, 800,000 were born in the U.S. and 500,000 were immigrants.

In 1989, Hispanics had the highest dropout rates (33%) of any subgroup. In 2005, the same trend was noted with Hispanics still at the top of the list having almost two times the drop-out rate of African Americans. As significant, the National Center for Educational Statistics (2006) found that foreign born Hispanics had nearly three times the drop-out rate (38%) of their native born counterparts (13%). Research by Portes (2009) indicated that within all minority groups, Mexican immigrants were the least likely to be successful in the United States. Over the past twenty years, researchers have cited a

variety of reasons for the high push-out rates and achievement gaps for diverse students including discrimination, linguistic differences, cultural differences, schooling inequalities and student perceptions about schooling (Au & Mason, 1981; D'Amato, 1987; Kozol, 1991; Moll & Diaz, 1985; Nieto, 2002; Ogbu, 1981; Portes, 2009; Strickland & Ascher, 1992; Valenzuela, 1999, 2009).

Latino/Hispanics as a Complex Ethnic Group

Within the Latino/Hispanic subgroup, Spanish and English language and literacy proficiency levels, cultures, language variations, academic experiences, personal experiences, social experiences, historical experiences, and socioeconomic levels vary widely (Carreira, 2003). For example, where one Latino student may have been born in the U.S. to fourth generation Americans of Cuban descent who speak Spanish casually but do not read or write it formally, another Latino student may have been born in Mexico and immigrated to the U.S. at the age of thirteen with no English. In both cases, students may claim Spanish as an ancestral or heritage language, but each has varying degrees of knowledge of the language in addition to speaking different varieties of the language (Valdés, 2001). In the latter example, the student from Mexico may have had schooling in a rural area or in a large urban center, may come from a wealthy family or an impoverished one. Depending on the varying situations, the knowledge of Spanish may be colloquial or formal. Both students in the original example could be participants in a SNS class.

Need for Re-Conceptualizing Literacy Curriculum

The challenge for U.S. schools is to provide meaningful and relevant curricula which offer students the hope that they can transform themselves and their lives (Freire,

1970, 1994; Greene, 1995) and become critically literate human beings through the reading, writing, and interpreting of a range of texts (New London Group, 1996). To be literate means to be able to negotiate meaning with others in one's context or situation and to understand the political and ideological implications associated with the use of language and literacy in different contexts (Gee, 1990; Street, 1984). In addition, needing redefinition is the concept of text to include anything that carries two or more signs and constitutes a message (Hodge & Kress, 1988). Under this semiotic definition, texts can include any of the following: advertising billboards, T-shirts, videogames, films, manga, tattoos, gestures, PowerPoint presentations, student artworks, etc. (Albers, 2007a, 2007b; Berghoff, 1995; Gee, 2003; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Mackey, 2002; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). More importantly, one's concept of text has to expand from the notion of one single inscribed product, or media, with a beginning and ending to "an intertextual constellation" (Lemke, 2005, p. n/a) where we are allowed to socially, culturally, and experientially make, link, and extend meaning across media.

These expanded definitions of text are especially relevant and critical for native Spanish speaking students who are attempting to gain deeper insights into their own cultures, language, and histories (Carreira, 2003). First, being able to move beyond grammar worksheets and print texts is critical to develop not only biliteracy and bilingualism but multiliteracies and multilingualism in a globally wired world (Lynch, 2003). Second, notions of what constitutes literacy acts must evolve (Kern & Schultz, 2005). The act of reading and writing can no longer be limited to how we make sense of and communicate via the printed page, but how we make sense of the messages conveyed in any communication system and how we become actors in the meaning making process.

Thus, rather than be limited by the traditional notions associated with the term “literacy,” we “enter the field of possibility” (Greene, 1995, p. 111) by adopting a semiotic meaning-making model. In a semiotic meaning-making model, we present, take a stance, and integrate meanings in our messages all at the same time. We make sense of our world this way as we draw on cultural conventions, contexts, genres, and intertextual connections to do this (Aiello & Thurlow, 2006; Albers 2007b; Albers & Frederick, 2009, Albers, Frederick, & K. Cowan, 2009, in press; P. Cowan, 1999, 2005; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Lemke, 2005).

If culturally and linguistically diverse students are to gain access to the discourse of power (the language of technology, visual media, and multiliteracies) that now exists globally, approaches that teach them how to use the cueing systems (pragmatic, syntactic, graphic, semantic, tactile) unique to multiple modes of communication, especially the visual must be used. Rather than thinking about “writing” as message in words on a page, educators should think about “composing” messages using multiple semiotic systems such as the visual arts, dance, drama, music, graphic design, and in the media of hypertext, podcasts, PowerPoint, the body, video, etc. (Albers, 2006). By embracing these multiliteracies within heritage language (HL) curriculums such as the SNS curriculum, students may empower themselves to communicate with confidence their ideas in multiple formats and across communities to which they belong.

We have also moved far beyond analyzing meanings in one multimodal text or genre; we are now making meaning along traversals moving our eyes and minds across the web, television, books, magazines, game playing, conversations, etc. (Lemke, 2005). Our native Spanish speaking students who take heritage language courses are also

participating in these multiple formats and modes of expression outside of the school context (Carreira, 2003); therefore, we must begin to think in new ways about how heritage language courses, and SNS courses in particular, are developed (Lynch, 2003).

Creating learning environments that promote multiple paths to meaning and knowledge construction is critical to providing possibilities for transformative education for Latino students. In some studies of English language arts classes and ESOL classes, bilingual students' success was reported when learning environments incorporated multimodalities and incorporated the visual arts as tools of thought (Carger, 2004; Gay; 2000; Igoa, 1995, 1997). However, limited research exists exploring such approaches in heritage language courses, or SNS courses in particular.

Need for Re-conceptualizing Curriculum for Bilingual Learners

The aim of language and literacy education for bilingual students in the U.S. predominantly has been to teach English as a way of acculturating and assimilating minority language students into the dominant society (Crawford, 1991, 1999; Delgado-Gaitán & Trueba, 1999). However, there has been a recent call to recognize students' heritage languages as cultural, economic, and linguistic resources which have been a catalyst for offering courses designed to teach students their heritage languages (Colombi & Roca, 2003; Leeman, 2005; Moll & Gonzalez, 2001; Peale, 1991; Potowski & Carreira, 2004; Schwarzer & Petró, 2005; Valdés, Fishman, Chavéz, & Pérez, 2006). Heritage languages are languages that individuals claim as their ancestral language, and these languages are linked to identity whether an individual is proficient (able to communicate in varied situations in reading, writing, and speaking) in it or not (Fishman, 2001; Schwarzer & Petró, 2005; Valdés, 2001; Wiley, 2001). Spanish, the second most

widely spoken language in the United States, is also the language most often offered in heritage language courses (Colombi & Roca, 2003; Roca, 1997). For students who are native speakers, courses may be designed specifically for them and are typically referred to as Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS) courses.

SNS courses for such students are often taught from a foreign language framework rather than from a language arts framework (Potowski & Carreira, 2004, Roca, 1997). Teaching Spanish from a foreign language framework implies that the learner has little or no prior knowledge of the language, culture, or history of Spanish. Typically, language is taught through memorization, a focus on conjugations, grammar, etc. Teaching from a foreign language framework is considered a weakness in SNS courses and programs as they primarily focus on the linguistic needs of the student at the expense of developing the needs of the whole child. In their review of the literature and within their own qualitative study, Schwarzer and Petrón (2005) noted that “there appears to be a need for more extensive heritage language programs as well as a need for the development of curriculum guidelines and teacher training” (p. 569). With regard to the present study, Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS) was a heritage language course constructed from a humanities framework which acknowledged the students’ background knowledge in Spanish, the cultures, the language/dialects, and the histories and experiences they brought with them to the learning situation. A focus in this course was given to meaning making and critically engaging with multiple modes of expression.

My Interest in SNS Courses

I became interested in the heritage language programs and specific courses within them when the school system under study began to offer foreign language credit for SNS

courses three years ago. Many of my middle school ELs were placed in these courses once they moved to the high school, and I wondered why they simply were not placed in mainstream Spanish courses if the goal was to improve their formal Spanish language skills.

One bilingual Latina EL teacher, Esperanza (pseudonym), who had been a colleague of mine for many years, was recruited to teach two SNS courses- one that focused on Spanish grammar and one that focused on Spanish literature for native speakers of Spanish exclusively. During informal conversations with Esperanza, I learned that she had not had access to a formal published curriculum to support the SNS courses she taught, and therefore, had to develop her own curriculum. However, by the time this study began, the state department of education had issued standards and a framework for this course. Nevertheless, she continued to struggle to develop meaningful curriculum in part due to the limited access to materials, another critique of heritage language programs (Lynch, 2003). As a literacy specialist and the former EL teacher of many of Esperanza's students, she asked me for support and ideas in developing strong engagements that addressed the needs of her SNSs.

Esperanza's need for a more thoughtful and concrete curriculum became more imperative. Several of her students had dropped out in the past and returned to school when they heard that they would be able to take the SNS course with her. She was very active in their community and in their lives and embodied a pedagogy of care (Gay, 2000; Noddings, 1992, 1993; Valenzuela, 1999). Pedagogy of care extends beyond simple feelings of concern and involves teachers incorporating instructional practices which use

their knowledge of students' experiences to foster effort, achievement, action, and self-determination.

Over the past few years, Esperanza and I had talked about lessons that would be more engaging and meaningful for her students. She expressed often the desire to create a curriculum that would have a transforming effect on her students whom she said struggled to see the relevance of a high school education in their lives. We discussed the possibilities of an arts-infused curriculum. From our conversations and my previous successful experiences incorporating the visual arts as a significant communication system in my own EL classes as well as experience analyzing the content and thoughts that underpin visual texts (Albers & Frederick, 2009), I began to wonder how we could collaborate to create a transformative experience for her students.

As I began exploring possibilities for such a curriculum and for this study, I also theoretically contemplated how the intersections of social semiotics, identity work, and third space theories would inform my work in this potential site of study. I will present the theoretical framework and define key terms and concepts used in the study after providing an overview of the study.

Overview of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to understand how SNS students negotiated meaning and identity within an arts-infused multimodal SNS curriculum where the use of multiple communication (sign) systems was encouraged. Further, this study also examined the discourses that emerged within students' visual texts over time to more fully understand how they made sense of their lives at the time of text making

and across the year (Albers, 2007a, 2007b; Albers & Frederick, 2009; Albers, Frederick & Cowan, 2009, in press; Rowsell & Pahl, 2007).

Research questions guiding this study were the following: (1) What factors were considered as the teacher and the researcher co-planned this arts-infused multimodal curriculum, and how did the consideration of those factors shape the curriculum?; (2) How did students enrolled in this SNS class make and negotiate meaning and identity as they worked within this arts-infused multimodal SNS curriculum?, and (3) What discourses around students' meaning making practices and identities emerged within their visual texts over time and across texts?

Participants in this study were nine multi-age, multi-grade level Latino high school students enrolled in a SNS course and their teacher. Data collection occurred during the 2008-2009 academic year. Data included audio-taped and written documents from collaborative curriculum planning sessions, initial questionnaires, interviews with participants, informal conversations with participants, selected audio and videotaped class discussions, student participant journals and work samples, photographs, teacher participant journal, researcher journal and fieldnotes, and member checks. Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method to determine categories and themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) in addition to visual discourse analysis (Aiello & Thurlow, 2006; Albers, 2007b; Albers & Frederick, 2009; Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009, in press; Albers & Murphy, 2000; Bang, 2000; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Significance of the Study

A consideration of how multiple communication (sign) systems, including the visual arts, may be used as significant tools of thought for meaning making and identity

negotiation within a SNS course is significant and relevant to literacy and language education because the visual arts may offer significant ways of representing and communicating thought, knowledge, and self, and may offer possibilities for educators to more fully understand and help their bilingual learners. While I was able to locate research on the use of multiple sign systems in English Language Arts classes (Albers, 2006; Siegel, 2006; Whitin, 2006) and in French foreign language courses (Kern & Schultz, 2005), I did not find any that specifically addressed this topic with SNS students as participants. Furthermore, Potowski and Carreira (2004) explained that many SNS courses are taught from a foreign language framework, and therefore, they do not adequately meet the needs of SNS students. As such, this study fills a gap in the literature by examining how a SNS class taught from a humanities framework utilizing an arts-infused multimodal curriculum provided multiple paths to meaning making.

Theoretical Framework

As a result of my growing understanding of social semiotics, I became acutely aware that if culturally and linguistically diverse students were to be given enhanced opportunities to develop their cognitive potential, a critical awareness of themselves and the worlds in which they live, then their teachers must provide them with multiple paths for meaning making. Therefore, I chose critical pedagogy, theories of identity, social semiotics, and theoretical concepts of third space as my theoretical framework. Taken together, these theoretical constructs provided a comprehensive lens for examining and understanding meaning making and identity construction across sign systems in the SNS class.

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy is most often linked to Paulo Freire (1970, 1994) who envisioned literacy as a path to liberation for the illiterate peasants of Brazil. Out of this vision and experience, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) was born. Later, Freire revisited this 1970 work and explored the need for hope within such pedagogy. The result was *Pedagogy of Hope* (Freire, 1994). Freire insisted that, “hope, as an ontological need, demands an anchoring in practice. As an ontological need, hope needs practice in order to become historical concreteness. . . . Without a minimum of hope, we cannot so much as start the struggle” (1994, p. 9). I grounded my own work for this study on his insistence on hope.

Other educational philosophers and theorists have taken up Freire’s work and continue to elaborate on it. For me, the importance of education is its liberating potential.

Giroux and McLaren (1991) explained:

Fundamental to the principles that inform critical pedagogy is the conviction that schooling for self- and social empowerment is *ethically prior to questions of epistemology or to a mastery of technical or social skills* that are primarily tied to the logic of the marketplace (p. 153-154, italics in original).

Many of my former middle school ELs dropped out of high school citing the lack of relevance of the curriculum to their lives. Many of them believed that they already had the skills they needed to get the factory, landscaping, carpentry, stone-masonry, or painting jobs readily available to them. Therefore, school for them held little promise. They did not experience a school curriculum that provided a vision of transformation or one of hope.

Importantly, Giroux and McLaren (1991) posed the following question: “How does one redefine the purpose of public schooling and rethink the role of teaching and learning in emancipatory terms?” (p. 156). Giroux and McLaren challenged critical educators to move beyond “a language of critique to a language of possibility” (p. 156). I undertook this study as a partial response to this challenge in the *hope* (from the Freirian sense) that the participants as co-collaborators would find means for transforming their lived realities by gaining access to the power and potential that multiple literacies promise.

Theories of Identity

Theories of identity evolved from the work of sociocultural theorists whose ideas originated with anthropology, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, literary studies and education (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998). Debate on identity ranges from the essentialist theorizing of anthropologists such as Margaret Mead who believe that identity is stable and “internally homogeneous” to postmodern theorizing that negates identity as a meaningful construct altogether (Moya, 2000). The construct of identity is widely studied in education with foci on general identity theory, identity and narrative, identity and race, identity and response to literature, identity and class, and identity and gender/sexual diversity (Beach, Thein, & Parks, 2007).

In an attempt to reclaim identity as a meaningful concept that can be used to understand how people situate themselves and others in their worlds, postpositivist realists have offered a “realist theory of identity” (Moya, 2000, p. 17). This theory is consistent with a “practice theory of self and identity” as posed by Holland et al.’s (1998)

and to a degree Goffman's (1959) theory of the presentation of self in everyday life. The tenets of these theories of identity include the following:

1. Identities are subjective and particular, and as such we need to interact with them and understand them rather than "to transcend or subvert" them (Moya, 2000, p. 17);
2. Identities are plural, multiple and may be referred to as *selves* or *subjectivities* (Holland et al., 1998; Moya, 2000);
3. Identities are constructed through the relationship between social, cultural, and historical location and experience. Our interpretations of our experiences are continuously being refined as we are involved in daily practice, activity, and performance of ourselves with others (Goffman, 1959; Holland et al., 1998, Moya, 2000);
4. Knowledge is generated as we live and act in the world and depends on our cognitive, historical, and social locations (Moya, 2000, p. 18);
5. Individual agency comes before and provides a sound foundation for collective agency (Moya, 2000, p. 19);
6. Subjectivities shift as we are positioned by the discourses in which we participate (Holland et al., 1998, p. 26).

Three theoretical texts, in particular, helped me think about how identities are negotiated during attempts at meaning making of ourselves and of others from semiotic resources available that are used to compose a variety of texts, and specifically visual texts created in the SNS class. They are Goffman's (1959) *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Holland et al.'s (1998) *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*, and

Rowse and Pahl's (2007) "Sedimented Identities in Texts: Instances of Practice." I will briefly explain the first two and how they helped me theoretically frame this interpretive study. I will present the third text as a potential bridge between theories of identity and social semiotics as a way of understanding the use of visual texts in the SNS class.

Identities are negotiated through the relationship between social, cultural, and historical location and experience. Humans' interpretations of their experiences are continuously being refined as they make meaning in daily practice, activity, and during the performance of ourselves with others. Goffman (1959) in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* employed the metaphor of theatrical performance to explore how individuals make choices about the ways in which they present themselves or perform their subjectivities to others depending on the social context of the moment. As they interact with others, they not only seek information about them, they also attempt to control the kinds of information they give to others about themselves. Their motives influence the ways in which they attempt to control the information they give, which in turn affects their performances through the various techniques they use to manipulate their audience or the others with whom they interact. Among the techniques used during their performances are "maintenance of expressive control," "misrepresentation," and "mystification" (p. 51-70). All three of these techniques allow individuals to present themselves as they wish others to see them even if that means presenting themselves as more of who they are not rather than who they are. In projecting who they are, they can act alone or in a team; however, they lose control of their performance once they have to negotiate their role within the team and its view of reality.

Goffman's idea of performance of selves can be applied to a SNS class where students may be asked to respond in multiple modes such as an essay, a visual artwork, a poster, a PowerPoint, a play, etc. When students are involved in those kinds of activities, they make choices based on how they wish others to see them. In visual texts, the textmakers may use techniques such as gaze or vectors to attempt to control the viewer by directing where the viewer attends to the canvas. In painting, one may vary brushstrokes to convey more or less detail, etc. If the learner works in a group and is seeking affiliation with the group, she may choose to use similar techniques or themes in her own visual texts (Albers, Frederick & Cowan, in press). In these ways, Goffman's idea of performance can be translated into the performance that surrounds the creation of any text, especially visual texts, in the SNS class.

Identities are plural, multiple and may be referred to as *selves or subjectivities*. Holland et al. (1998) provided a framework within which to situate the performance of visual texts as representations of selves. Visual texts created within language classrooms are created in what they call a figured world, which is similar to Goffman's (1959) theater metaphor. They based their theory of "identity in practice" on the works of Bakhtin (1981), Bordieu (1985), Vygotsky (1978), and on the findings from their own ethnographic studies from around the world. Identity is formed in process; it is improvised, and it is continuously created. Thus, identity is not singular but plural and best termed *subjectivities* as we negotiate the worlds we inhabit. They call this process "identity in practice" and outline four contexts of activity of which "practiced identities" can be constructed: 1) the figured world, 2) positionality, 3) space of authoring, and 4) making worlds. First, the context of the *figured world* relates to the worlds that people

create in and through their participation. People come to figured worlds by invitation of others, become involved stakeholders in these worlds, and form understandings of themselves through their participation. The members of these worlds create the figures which shape and determine the meanings associated with their roles and participation. *Positionality* is the second context of identities in practice and is determined by power. Hierarchies are formed based on the prestige given to markers such as gender, beauty, race, wealth, language, etc. as determined by the members of the figured worlds and is often related to the context of a larger figured world in which it is contained. Third, *space of authoring* refers to the world that we must all face and answer. Authorship involves calling on the resources one has (social discourses, voices, histories, etc.) to respond to others within the given time and context. Holland et al. calls this "the art of improvisation" (p. 272), and it makes human agency possible. The fourth context of identities in practice is the *making of worlds*. As members interact and begin to take new directions in their interactions and imagine new possibilities for their lives either individually or collectively, they may form new figured worlds. Therefore, identities are constantly being formed and reformed as the self moves fluidly between worlds.

Several researchers in the field of literacy education have utilized this concept of figured worlds or examined positionality within the literacy classroom to better understand how students negotiate literacy practices in the social worlds of classrooms and schools (Dagenais, Day, & Toohey, 2006; Fairbanks & Broughton, 2003; Hawkins, 2005; Luttrell & Parker, 2001). The findings of these studies and this concept apply to learners creating visual texts in a language classroom because they make choices and use them in their visual texts based on the narratives that are created in the figured world of

the classroom. So, if teachers convey the message that stick figures are fine because they themselves feel they cannot draw, then learners read that narrative, internalize it, and may appropriate it to their own artworks. They may then become positioned and/or position themselves through such discourses as artists or non-artists. Either way, when visual texts are offered as significant ways to communicate together with other communication systems such as written texts, then multiple spaces for authoring become available. Educators must learn how to enter those worlds and how to read and compose in them. Finally, as learners move in and out of the worlds of home, school, web spaces, etc., they bring to their visual texts integrations, understandings, and even possibly resistances to those worlds. The visual text becomes a space for re-figuring, re-imagining, and re-conceptualizing their worlds.

Visual texts have a grammar and design and serve ideational and functional purposes in ways similar to yet different from written text (Albers, 2007a, 2007b). To fully understand the messages communicated, one has to have a more comprehensive analytic framework so as to be able to move beyond a psychological or aesthetic reading of the visual. For this reason, I will present and consider the potential that social semiotics offers as a theoretical lens for reading and understanding the discourses present in visual texts created in the SNS class.

Social Semiotics

Social semiotics evolved from semiotics which can be traced to the two founding fathers, the French linguist Ferdinand Saussure and the American pragmatist Charles Peirce (Chandler, 2002; Hodge & Kress, 1988). While semiotics, the study of signs, is used in fields such as linguistics, social semiotics is found most often as a framework in

communication studies. Literacy studies using social semiotics or semiotics as a frame are few in number and often explore either a single communication system such as drama (Medina & Campano, 2006), the visual arts (Albers, 1996, 1997, 2007a, 2007b), or two or more sign systems such as drama, dance, movement or visual language and art (Berghoff, 1995; Sipe, 1998). Most often literacy studies that consider multiple sign systems are referred to as multimodal (Hull & Nelson, 2005; Jewitt & Kress, 2003).

Mainstream semiotics offers a frame for studying communication as a whole, but the theory has been criticized for its emphasis on structures and codes and ignoring the social practices that support and drive them (Hodge & Kress, 1988). By placing the study of signs within the realm of the sociocultural, sociopolitical landscape, social semiotics becomes a more powerful theory and lens for understanding how meaning and communication happen. Social semiotics offers the researcher a critical lens from which to view meaning-making. The major tenets of social semiotics as propounded by Hodge and Kress (1988) include the following:

1. Communication is a process;
2. Humans use material resources to produce and reproduce meaning;
3. Meaning has to be studied in relation to actual people and things in society;
4. Meaning is negotiated in the material world with others whose views, motives, and goals vary and as such is often ambiguous.

First, communication is a process. Sign systems are bounded systems which allow for infinite combinations within that system as signs are combined in new and endless ways. All sign systems have at least three cueing systems: semantic, syntactic, graphophonic, and pragmatic in the case of language (Albers, 2007a, 2007b; Berghoff, 1994; Goodman,

1986; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Each semiotic system (written language, visual language, drama, etc.) serves to express an individual's inner world and to enable her to interact with others in unique ways as each system offers "differing media, structure, and appeal and have developed in different areas of human experience and thought" (Berghoff, 1994, p. 201).

Humans use material resources to produce and reproduce meaning, and meaning has to be studied in relation to actual people and things in society. People use those material resources available to them in their unique environments (Jewitt & Kress, 2003). These resources are signs. Signs act both as the carrier of meaning (the signifier) and as the concept or meaning intended (signifieds) (Hodge & Kress, 1988). The degree of interest and importance the sign-maker attaches to the carrier and concept at a particular moment influences what is chosen and is then represented in a form that will most faithfully express the intended meaning of the sign-maker (Jewitt & Kress, 2003).

Meaning is negotiated in the material world with others whose views, motives, and goals vary and as such is often ambiguous (Vannini, 2007). Meaning is necessarily caught up in the ideological and political nature of signs. Therefore, social semiotics provides an appropriate lens for examining and understanding visual texts produced in SNS classrooms which are places laden with multiple cultural, political, linguistic, and ideological beliefs. Social semiotics acknowledges the power in multiple sign systems to convey meaning. In literacy classrooms, the meaning generated in the process, product, and reading of visual texts is often not considered for anything other than their aesthetic appeal (Albers, 2007a).

Multimodal theory (Jewitt & Kress, 2003) explains the set of resources within a given sign-system and how those resources (modes) are used to express meaning. A multimodal approach implies that language is not the only meaning mode or message carrier and others such as the visual mode are equally significant in its meaning making potential. Every mode is limited by the extent that meaning can be represented through its use. Since some modes are better able to convey certain aspects of meaning, it is important for people to have various modes to draw upon to communicate the messages, depending on the social and cultural contexts at the time of meaning representation. Some of these modes may include speech, image, or gesture (Jewitt & Kress, 2003).

Visual Discourse Analysis

Visual Discourse Analysis (VDA) is both a theory and a framework located in social semiotics. This approach draws on discourse analysis (Gee, 2003) and grammar of visual design (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) and provides a framework for analysis of learners' visual texts (often pictures) (Albers, 2007b). VDA use four principles to guide analysis:

1. "Visual language is reflexive" (Albers, 2007b, p. 85). Visual texts and written texts are used intertextually in literacy classrooms where each text influences the interpretation of the other. As a result, visual text makers may represent and reflect the environment simultaneously;
2. Context and previous experiences prompt particular kinds of texts to be created which are tied to the social histories of how texts are created in schools;

3. “Language is composed of many different social languages” (Albers, 2007b, p. 85). As a result, visual texts reflect those languages. Our positions as expert or learner influence how we can convey our messages visually;
4. Visual texts can be analyzed structurally, semantically, artistically, tactilely, and visually.

Most importantly, VDA offers a critical lens to view the beliefs, ideologies, and power structures internal to the text-maker and also those created within the context of the classroom or school.

Visual texts may be structurally analyzed along six dimensions: 1) underpinning systems, or the cueing systems, 2) disciplinary knowledge such as space and composition elements, 3) intertextuality amongst communication systems and other personally meaningful texts, 4) conversations surrounding what constitutes visual texts and the place of visual texts in schools, 5) social acceptability of styles, techniques, and materials, and 6) apparent discourses which the text-maker identifies (Albers, 2007b, p. 87). These six dimensions represent the multiple layers of meaning that are interwoven in a visual text. By structurally reading a visual text across all six dimensions, a thorough and reliable reading can take place.

Because visual texts are rich with complex meanings and are often ignored or treated superficially in schools (Albers, 2007b; Albers, Frederick & Cowan, 2009, in press), having a systematic approach to analyzing them increases the validity and value of studying them. By studying visual texts in literacy and language classrooms, a wealth of information can be mined ranging from the meaning-making practices of the individual text-makers to groups of text-makers, from the individual ideologies brought to the social

context and reflected in the visual text to the ideologies of groups within the classroom or school environment, from individual constructions of selves to group constructions of figured worlds.

Framing this interpretive study with theories of social semiotics in conjunction with theories of identity, deeper understandings may be gained. Hodge and Kress (1988) addressed this concern as well by suggesting that for those who view a museum piece without the disciplinary knowledge of history, religion, politics, or art, their readings or interpretations may yield a reading which is not consistent with the text's creation in a given historic, political, social, cultural, religious context. As we read students' visual texts, our readings will be influenced by our own beliefs, experiences, and knowledge of ourselves and our knowledge of the students (Albers, 2007b).

Sedimented Identities in Texts

My purpose in studying visual texts in literacy classrooms is to gain an understanding of the range of meaning making practices that are used and demonstrated in multiple communication systems along with an understanding of how identities are negotiated through those practices in multiple communication systems. Rowsell and Pahl (2007) used the term "sedimented identities in texts" to describe the traces of identity which become residually left behind over time as individuals interact intertextually across spaces (p. 392). Texts as artifacts hold historical clues about the text-maker's identities as they become embedded and habituated. These texts then become artifacts of the social and historical contexts themselves. Kress's (1997 as cited in Rowsell and Pahl, 2007) concept of *interest* is argued to be identities in practice. Preferences which are formed as identities are practiced in various worlds such as home, school, and so on, become part of

the text. As the interest or identities of practice become located in the visual text, a sort of history of the text-maker is being documented. The visual texts when collected over time become traces of the text-maker's development as a literate individual and as a social individual.

The benefit of considering the concept of sedimented identities in texts is that it allows the viewer of the text to understand the classroom or school site where the text is created and the preferences that develop in those contexts and how they are carried over into her text-making processes. Rowsell and Pahl's (2007) work also raises two essential questions: How does text-making change the space, and how does the space change the text-making? While the latter is often addressed, the former is not. Examining how text-making changes the space of the classroom provides another angle from which to view visual texts and their significance in language and literacy classrooms. As children are involved in the creation of texts, the very act of composing, creating, and making choices is an enactment of identities in practice and possibly in transformation.

By using and understanding theories of identity to better inform my readings and interpretations gained from a social semiotic lens (Rowsell & Pahl, 2007), I was better equipped to create a sound design for investigating visual texts within language and literacy classrooms. As each of these theories reciprocally inform the other, more nuanced interpretations of my findings were possible and a more significant, credible study produced.

Third Space Theory

While the theories of social semiotics and identity provide a solid frame and lens for understanding the creation, readings, and implications of visual texts and multimodal

interactions in the SNS class, theoretical concepts of third space help to locate hybridized occurrences of meaning making within the space of a SNS course being held in the space of an English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classroom where the official and unofficial curriculums of each course and space mix to create a unique third space of learning and interactions. Cultural studies, cultural geography, and general education studies (Rowe & Leander, 2005) have led the way in theorizing third space. Although there are a limited number of literacy studies in which third space is explored (Dyson, 1997; Gutierrez, Baquedano, & Turner, 1997; Leander, 2002; Rowe & Leander, 2005; Sheehy, 2002), the Arts Education Partnership (2005) have also explored the concept of third space which is relevant to this study and is described in more detail below. The major tenets of third space theory are listed below:

1. Third space represents a place for the coming together and remixing of binaries (Bhabha, 1994; Moje, et al., 2004; Soja, 1996);
2. Hybridity is essential for third space (Moje et al., 2004);
3. Third space represents “borderlands” (Anzaldúa, 1987; Wilson, 2000) or “in-between space” (Bhabha, 1994);
4. Third spaces represent sites of tension, struggle, and contestation (Bhabha, 1994; Sheehy, 2002; Soja, 1996; Wilson, 2000);
5. Third space has the potential for transformation (Gutierrez et al., 1997; Gutierrez et al., 2000).

Specifically, I draw from Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez and Tejeda’s (2000) conceptualization of third space “in which alternative and competing discourses and positioning transform conflict and difference into rich zones of collaboration and

learning” (p. 286-287). According to Gutierrez et al., “learning contexts are immanently hybrid, that is, polycontextual, multivoiced, and multiscripted. Thus conflict, tension, and diversity are intrinsic to learning spaces.” (p. 287). Key to understanding third space is the concept of *activity system* defined as: “social practice(s) that includes the norms, values, division of labor, the goals of community, and its participants’ enduring dispositions toward the social practice” (Gutierrez et al., 2000, p. 287). In the context of this SNS course, there exists:

purposeful use of hybridity and diversity[which]stimulates the transformation of activities into robust contexts of development. Diversity here not only includes racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and linguistic diversity, but also diversity in the meditational tools, roles, and the activity systems themselves...Hybridity and diversity serve as the building blocks of Third Spaces. (Gutierrez et al., 2000, p. 287)

For the researchers at the Arts Education Partnership (2005), third space means all of the above with the added emphasis on the community building involved when all members of a class or group gather around artworks created for the purpose of building meaning and understanding of one another. Similarly, for the purpose of the current study, the community building that surrounded the creation of visual texts deepened the awareness and understanding of each unique contributor to the figured world of the SNS class.

Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

I use the term “visual texts” (Albers, 2007b, Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009, in press) to denote texts created in the SNS class using art rather than the more common “artworks,” because the term artwork suggests a knowledge and experience of fine art, and/or training in processes and techniques associated with an art form (Efland, 1965), as well as familiarity with the function and value of art (K. Berger, 2000).

Heritage languages are languages that individuals claim as their ancestral language, and these languages are linked to cultural, linguistic, and historical identities (Fishman, 2001; Schwarzer & Petró, 2005; Valdés, 2001, 2003; Wiley, 2001). SNS courses are heritage language courses developed specifically for heritage speakers of Spanish. For the purpose of this study, the two terms heritage languages and Spanish for Native Speakers may be interchanged.

Student-generated texts include oral discourse (conversations, videodrama, etc.), written texts (essays, blogs, emails, etc.), and visual texts (artwork, posters, etc.) or any semiotic text which contains two or more of these texts (PowerPoint presentations, videos, etc.).

Semiotic resources refer to the materials in one's environment that can be used to make meaning with others (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

Although different connotations are usually associated with the terms "identities," "subjectivities," and "selves" as described in the theoretical framework section, for the purpose of this study, they will be used interchangeably.

The participants in this study were native speakers of Spanish. They were asked to self-identify. The identifications were varied; however, Latin, Hispanic and Latino were commonly accepted and used interchangeably by the participants and in the writing up of this study.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

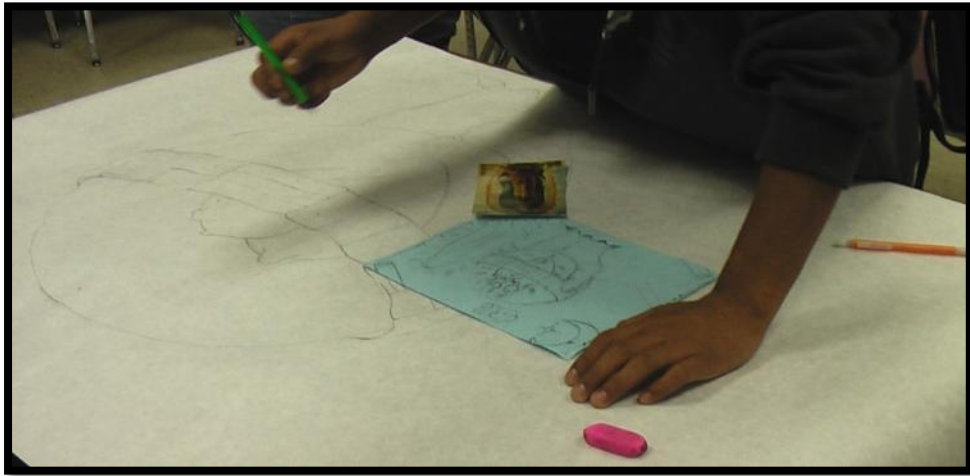


Figure 2 Miguel working on final draft of class mural

“What of the vulgar limitations of language?” (Castillo, 1994, p. 165)

According to Viadero (2005), the National Latino Education Research Agenda Project became interested in increasing research efforts in the area of the arts and achievement for Latino students because evidence indicated that schools with large Latino populations enjoyed higher achievement when they emphasized the arts. Harste (2000; 2003), a renowned advocate of the arts and inquiry-based curriculum, insisted that a good language arts program should provide opportunities for students to explore communication and thought in a variety of sign systems. Students who do not possess linguistic strength can develop their ideas through other systems, and students who are linguistically strong need to develop flexibility in thought by using other sign systems as

tools of thoughts. Although Harste was referring to an English language arts program, the same could be argued for a Spanish language arts program, especially as viewed in a SNS course, the focus of this study. Keeping these assertions in mind, I present in this chapter the relevant literature to support my undertaking of this study and to provide a backdrop against which to place this study.

First, I begin by exploring empirical studies detailing the use of multiple sign systems in English literacy classes. Secondly, I explore empirical studies that detail the cognitive requirements necessary to respond in visual formats such as drawing (a form of visual response often used in literacy classes which is typically viewed from an aesthetic stance); and thirdly, I explore the tangentially related topic of Spanish heritage language courses as it relates to the context of the study. Finally, I discuss the gap that currently exists in the literature with regard to this study and how this study attempted to fill that gap.

Exploring Multiple Sign Systems in English Literacy Classes

Much of the research on semiotics in the K-12 classroom focuses on the positive results that occur in all students' learning when given the opportunity to learn in multiple modes (Albers, 2006; Carger, 2004; Igoa, 1997; Shreefter, 2001; Styles & Arzipe, 2001; Walsh, 2000, 2003). I want to distinguish between what I call arts-based studies and studies with a semiotic framework. The literature mainly focused on arts-based approaches where the arts are integrated for the purpose of developing stronger written and oral literacy (Piro, 2002; Short, Kauffman, & Khan, 2000). Studies with a semiotic framework locate literacy as more than just better reading, writing, comprehension or analysis (Albers, 1996; Berghoff, 1995; Tseng, 1994). They understand that literacy is

developed through the knowledge that multiple sign systems carry parts of meanings, and all parts must be considered when reading, composing and interpreting texts. I first discuss arts-based literacy studies, and follow with semiotically-framed studies that have been conducted in English literacy classes.

Arts-based literacy studies

In many arts-based literacy studies, researchers examined how the use of the visual arts, the performing arts, and music influenced the development of reading, writing, and speaking (Carger, 2004). In the arts-based studies I found, there were three themes: visual art as a catalyst for speaking and writing, visual art as a discipline used to encourage reading, writing, and speaking, and visual art used in picture books to encourage critical thinking. In these studies, the visual arts were not used by the teacher or researcher for better understanding the meaning making processes of the student participants or for understanding their identities. Rather, they were used as activities to help students produce thought in the dominant modes of written and oral language.

In many arts-based studies with English learners or bilingual learners, visual art was explored as a catalyst for increased oral conversation and writing in the target language, English. One such example was Carger's (2004) four month qualitative study of literature circles which involved the reading of culturally relevant picture books and the creating of artworks surrounding those readings with small groups of bilingual learners. She analyzed student responses for 17 read-alouds and categorized 1841 spontaneous student responses into 12 types: artistic response activity comments/inquiries, illustration/inquiries, personal experience comments, text comments/inquiries, cultural identifications, tangential remarks, written response

comments/inquiries, exclamations, metalinguistic comments, instructional suggestions, book connections, and social/political comments. She found that when students could “talk and think through and with art” (p. 284) they were able to apply their culture and personal life to their surroundings by tapping into funds of knowledge. She also found that they often used their second language to participate in authentic conversations about the readings (books) or the art techniques being used in a meaning-making process.

Similarly, a qualitative study conducted by Short, Kauffman, and Khan (2000) investigated students who were encouraged to explore their responses to literature first in art. The researchers found that conversations about the books were richer and more focused. The student participants in the study explained that art allowed them to better able to express ideas and emotions, learn more about the context and characters, and to make connections to the characters lives in the books. Short et al. suggested that the use of multiple sign systems be employed throughout a unit of study rather than at the end of the unit, as is often the case. The process of accessing literacy in multiple signs was as important as the final product in multiple signs.

Other researchers have examined how studying art influenced literacy development across disciplines and gender. In one such study, Piro (2002) described how students in his classroom used judgmental, descriptive, and interpretive language to analyze visual images and how this skill enhanced literacy learning. In another qualitative study using art slides to explore children’s constructive processes, Frei (1999) found that art images freed children to make meanings beyond those of literal interpretation. Because art as a text is whole, children could use a variety of strategies and prior experiences to make sense of what they saw. Frei wrote that “Children’s meanings, then,

illuminate the strategies and processes children use when engaged with print or non-print text. The degree to which children employ specific strategies may be attributable to the symbols they see in nonprint text” (1999, p. 390).

Saurino (2004) studied art and expressive language skills of ESL students. They viewed, discussed, and wrote about digital photographs of interesting artworks they had taken on a fieldtrip to a museum. She called this process Digital Language Experience Approach (DLEA), and concluded that DLEA advanced the students’ writing, speaking, listening, and reading skills.

Taken together, these studies (Carger, 2004; Frei, 1999; Piro, 2002; Saurino, 2004; Short, Kauffman, & Khan, 2000) indicated that incorporating the visual arts within English language arts class had positive effects on literacy development by providing multiple means of mediating thought.

Many of the studies investigating the use of art in language arts classrooms focused on picture books and the reading of art within this genre (Carger, 2004; Styles & Arzipe, 2001; Walsh, 2000; Wolfenbarger & Sipe, 2007). Walsh (2000) conducted a study that examined how first and second grade students responded orally to two narrative picture books, specifically the beginning reading behavior of young second language learners compared to native speakers. Reader-related variables were compared with reading behavior and analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Text-related variables were used to examine the oral responses to picture books. Walsh (2000) found that “Children’s multi-varied responses demonstrate the activation of a range of cognitive and affective processes so that the act of reading a pictorial text is paralleled with, though not the same as, reading words” (p. 129). For second language (L2) students in particular,

pictures offered support for conceptual understanding while the text offered support for language development.

Styles and Arzipe (2001) conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with 84 students in seven U. K. schools to determine how children interpreted the artwork of Anthony Browne's (1992) picture book *Zoo*. After individual interviews, the children participated in focus groups. Children also drew a picture in response to the text. Transcripts and interviews were analyzed qualitatively and coded. One of the key findings was that "children who were not experienced readers of print could make deep and insightful interpretations of visual texts" (p. 266). Therefore, levels of complex thought were not tied specifically to the dominant mode of print-based language.

These studies (Carger, 2004; Styles & Arzipe, 2001; Walsh, 2000; Wolfenbarger & Sipe, 2007) support the notion that reading and literate practices refer to not only written texts, but visual texts as well. Learners who could read and respond in a variety of modes and sign systems had opportunities to extend their own thinking and move from functional literacy to critical literacy. These findings are relevant to the current study; the current study sought to understand how students respond in multiple sign systems and how they responded to multiple sign systems as they considered their own visual work and the visual work of others.

An important theme to emerge from the study of arts in literacy classes was the writing of the self through multimodal texts. In many instances, bilingual/EL learners have been afforded opportunities to create stories about themselves through the visual mode in addition to written or spoken language. The multimodal texts created powerfully told the stories of students who would have otherwise struggled in the sign system of

language only. The studies below exemplified this theme and supported the value of an approach using multiple sign systems in a SNS course, such as the one in this study.

Igoa's (1995) ethnographic work with immigrant children found a symbiotic relationship between the development of written and oral language skills and visual arts skills. Art allowed her ESL students to contextualize their personal experiences and express their inner lives:

Through art, immigrant children can communicate in more expressive and expansive ways than their oral and written language skills permit. The artwork lets the teacher become a keen observer of the children's aural silence and an active "listener" for what the child has to say through his or her drawings and paintings" (p. 9).

Igoa recognized that art is a conduit for the children's voices.

Shreefter's (2001) six-week ethnographic study, using the theme of border crossing and art with migrant youth to create their autobiographies, revealed that working in the sign system of visual arts pushed students to more critical thought and writing about the many barriers they experience daily. After students completed schematic drawings, they chose one to explore in collage. Shreefter explained that the act of choosing colors, textures, and symbols for their collages occupied the youths in making art and was a "catalyst for finding dimension, meaning, and complexity for the narratives that they would write to accompany their collages" (p. A2). The students created books that contained their original artwork with bilingual copies of their texts. Importantly, the creation of these multimodal texts provided a space for these bilingual students to explore their experiences of trying to learn a new language in places where barriers worked against their attempts. The findings of this study and Igoa's (1995) are similar; they both

reveal what the students are able to express through art and what the teacher can learn from the students' creations of semiotic texts.

Like Igoa (1995) and Shreefter (2001), Millard and Marsh (2001) discovered much about the sociocultural development of their students through their process of creating visual texts in relation to written texts. They reported that the art making process and the art created were different for boys and girls. Boys verbalized while they drew, painted from personal choice, accompanied their work with action, and made noises and running commentaries while working. Girls, on the other hand, drew children, houses, and flowers that were used repetitively, regardless of the text they were writing. Also, girls tended to view art as decoration. Despite gender differences in the kinds of art produced, all the children preferred to draw before they had to write; it aided thinking during the writing process. Millard and Marsh (2001) advised that students need time to think about content, and options other than writing as a means of expressing thought.

The studies that explore the theme of writing the self through multimodal texts demonstrate that when multiple sign systems are used in literacy classes, the visual texts created are usually created first and then used as catalysts for written texts. Although the researchers gleaned insight into students' lives and understandings of social structures, the visual texts were not read as stand-alone texts nor were they read with an informed eye, and therefore, the potential that these texts had as visual narratives were ignored.

Semiotically Framed Studies

Unlike arts-based literacy studies, there were relatively few semiotically framed studies in literacy classrooms. The following studies represented how the use of multiple systems of communication such as the visual arts, music, and drama were used not as

catalysts for further reading, writing, and speaking in the communication system of language, but were used as unique and significant communication systems in their own right and in ways that language would not allow the participants. Additionally, semiotically framed studies in literacy classrooms often explored how teachers come to know more about their students' identities and meaning making processes through examining and reading texts created by students in various communication systems.

Indiana University produced a number of dissertations in which semiotics framed researchers' investigations. Tseng (1994) studied the role of semiotics in Chinese students' poetry writing. Berghoff (1995) studied the implications of the belief that curriculum should include multiple sign systems. She discovered that when students engaged in multiple sign systems, their use of these systems was immediate and visible in their learning. With her study located in sixth grade art classes, Albers (1996) examined, from feminist and semiotic lenses, the literacy process of art students. She found 1) the teacher's own feminist stance engaged students in critical analysis of masterpieces; 2) students engaged in four distinct stages in composing in art; and 3) students' artwork made visible their social and ideological beliefs, often masked in language. From her dissertation study, Albers (2005; 2007b) then studied how artworks of urban students revealed their understandings of a text. Her work suggested that choices made during the creation of art reveals deeper meanings about how young people form their identities and understandings of their place within society.

Similarly, data from Begoray's (2001) study showed that teachers who used viewing and representing approaches to assessment and learning with students who had difficulty expressing themselves through language increased opportunities for students to

express themselves through viewing and representing activities. In addition, this study concluded that when all students learned to think and represent their thoughts in multiple sign systems, more possibilities for understanding, discovery, and critical thought were created.

Berghoff's, Borgmann's, and Parr's (2003) collaboration to incorporate music, dance, art, and language into cycles of inquiry with higher education students revealed similar results to Begoray's (2001) study. When students used different sign systems to express meaning, they were able to formulate insightful questions for inquiry. Also, the students began to see issues as more complex than originally believed, and the meanings found in one sign system gave insight into their work in another sign system. Most importantly, students became impassioned about learning as they experienced the process of inquiry through realized dominant modes.

Two top tiered journals considered the study of multimodality and its significance in literacy learning so important that they devoted entire issues to the topic. In 2006, *Language Arts* journal devoted an issue to multimodality. Mahiri (2006) studied the development of multi-textual, digital projects created by the students in an 8th grade math class. The children attended a low performing school in a high poverty area of a Midwestern city. Mahiri conducted semi-structured and informal interviews with the teacher, students, school technology coordinator, technology coordinator for the nonprofit funding agency sponsoring the project, and the school's principal. Mahiri found that students were "utilizing technological resources to sample, cut and paste, and re-mix multimedia texts for replay in new configurations, just as hip-hop DJs reconfigure images, words, and sounds, and play them anew" (p. 58). Students were able to

participate in authentic inquiry with peers which led to “youth agency” (p. 61). Mahiri explained that the students were able to work as a “social-critical team using ‘digital DJ-ing’” to explore the topic of homelessness through genres such as hip-hop that were relevant in the lives of these youth. Connections were made between traditional print based literacies and computer-mediated literacies.

Damico (2006) reported how a first year teacher of fifth grade students in an ethnically and economically diverse mid-sized school district in the Midwestern United States implemented a social justice curriculum with her students using a multimodal approach. Damico found that students were able to develop deep understandings of topics such as racial profiling, child slavery, and discrimination when they were allowed to “engage[e] in the social practices of posing and pursuing investigative questions, analyzing and evaluating a variety of information sources..., and creating, performing and filming digital texts...” (p. 43). Participating in the creation of a multimodal text, a CD which documented their investigations, propelled the students towards a critical stance.

Ware’s (2006) case study of two nine-year-old story-tellers and movie-makers “who told stories and created multimodal movies at Digital Underground Storytelling for Youth (DUSTY), a literacy and technology program located in a low-income community in a large northern California urban area” (45), that children used “different oral, written, visual, and digital modes as resources to create meaning and to position themselves socially through such multimodal stories” (p. 45). Whereas one student became very involved with the digital technology of moviemaking as a platform for storytelling, another student became disengaged and preferred oral story telling for its real-time shared interactivity with the audience. Therefore, Ware concluded that digital technologies and

various forms of multimodal media do not necessarily provide the same meaning making affordances for all students.

The results of Wolf's (2006) exploration of the effect of the interaction between a resident artist and the multimodal works of young children over a period of two years, found that "the arts provide powerful opportunities for cognitive work as well as imaginative play" (p. 19). Children were taught how to observe for long periods of time objects of interest in their environment and created poetry and art from their consideration of these objects. This kind of attention and work side by side with artists made students aware of the various tools of thought that they possessed and allowed them to make meaning across sign systems and modes.

In 2009, the international journal, the *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy* also designated a special issue for multimodal literacy in elementary learning. Topics including play and technology (Wohlwend, 2009), multimodality and semiotic work within content learning (Mavers, 2009) and schema analysis of elementary students' texts were among those examined (Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009). Wohlwend (2009), in her three year ethnographic study of kindergarten students' play and drawing, discovered that young children "transformed paper and pencil resources into artifacts for enacting cell phone conversations and animating video games, using new technologies and the collaborative nature of new literacies to perform literate identities and to strengthen the cohesiveness of play groups" (p. 117). Even at very young ages, children are learning how to enact social literacies through technologies that they encounter in their everyday lives.

Mavers (2009) observed that even in seemingly simple drawings and classroom responses completed on individual dry-erase boards, also known as white boards, students were involved in serious and complex semiotic work. According to Mavericks, young learners are required to process multiple meanings and make many interpretations of expectations of the teacher as they respond to content area lessons:

Requisitioning which meanings will be needed from all that has been seen and heard demands reflection on, analysis of and judgments with regard to the complex interweaving of multimodal communication and representation as students select what they deem pertinent to the task of recording. Their responses derived from the objects subject to scientific inquiry, and the experimental conditions and methods modeled by their teacher in the context of his preceding introduction, and not forgetting the students' prior knowledge and experience. Traces of their meaning-making reside in the (re)design of their drawing and writing. (p. 147)

Pahl (2009) conducted a two year ethnographic study of children's talk and its relation to the creation of 3D environmental boxes (dioramas) that "the multimodal text and the talk contained within it, is steeped with everyday meanings....By focusing on the production of meaning across the talk and the multimodal text it was possible to gain access to the social histories of the children" (p. 208). As students played out their home and school lives through the creatures and characters they were creating, those lives became habituated and even sedimented within the dioramas.

Albers, Frederick, and Cowan (2009) explained the visual texts of 23 third grade students using visual discourse analysis and scheme analysis. They reported that schemes indicated interests specific to girls and boys. Girls were more comfortable than boys visually representing from the viewpoint of the opposite sex; and "visual texts indicated a highly complex interplay between and among elements that pointed both to personal discourses and larger societal discourses around gender" (p. 245). As a result, Albers,

Frederick, and Cowan argued that by carefully examining and paying attention to visual texts as significant windows into students' understandings about concepts of gender, teachers can then begin to disrupt dangerously held misconceptions and stereotypes.

Visual Media Studies and Visual Discourse Analysis in Language and Literacy

Semiotics grew out of linguistics. Although the field of semiotics dates back a hundred years, a shift to the social nature of semiosis has occurred within the past thirty years, and a move towards visual discourse analysis over the last fifteen years, with an increasing interest in the field of literacy within the past ten years. Since this study relied on visual discourse analysis (Albers, 2007b) as both a method and a theory, it was necessary to explore relevant studies in the fields of language and literacy which utilized visual discourse analysis. Visual discourse and visual discourse analysis have been defined in different and unique ways drawing upon particular elements of visual design and discourse analysis. Aiello and Thurlow (2006) explained why the study of visual discourse should be an important consideration for linguists:

- 1) No semiotic mode exists in isolation of other meaning-making practices. Language is only ever made truly meaningful and/or understandable in the context of paralinguistic and other nonverbal codes; in fact, in many instances written and spoken language are themselves the contextual 'background'. (148)
- 2) In addition, so much in the way of intercultural exchange simply occurs outside of language. By this we mean in no way to diminish the power and politics of language/s in intercultural communication- we too recognise how intercultural scholarship has for too long problematically assumed English to be the *de facto* medium of intercultural encounter. Nonetheless, many of the means, by which intercultural communication takes place are often material, affective and, of course, visual. (p. 149)

As Aiello and Thurlow pointed out, meaning is complex and relies on the combination of multiple codes and modes. To better understand meaning, especially during intercultural exchanges, such as in this study, drawing upon multiple semiotic systems is a must.

P. Cowan (2005) interviewed Latino adolescents about their visual texts. He observed that the students employed a “Latino visual discourse.” The phrase referred to drawings characterized by icons and visual codes common to and recognized in Latino communities. Participants in Cowan’s ethnographic study indicated that they were often better able to express meaning visually than through writing. Cowan emphasized the importance of the visual in students’ meaning making practices and the unique way that Latino students in his study drew upon cultural icons to tell their stories. However, by naming this visual discourse “Latino visual discourse,” he may have overgeneralized. The varied discourses of Latinos in the south, north, or Midwest may be distinctly different than the discourses of urban California Latinos, students in his study. Cowan may have overlooked the complexity of visual discourse used by various Latino ethnic groups across the country.

Aiello and Thurlow (2006) discussed visual discourse’s potential as a “cross-culturally strategic form of communication, thanks in part to its perceptual and iconic availability” (p. 148). In their study, Aiello and Thurlow (2006) examined the official promotional texts of 30 cities which had competed for the title of *European Capital of Culture*. Specifically, they looked at how each country exploited “the intercultural meaning potentials of visual discourse” (p. 148) in relation to perceptions of pan-European identity. They defined visual discourse as “the deployment of *resources* (rather than codes) for social action.” The “meaning *potentials* (rather than meanings) [of these resources] may be exploited for political, economic, and ideological ends” (p. 150). Aiello and Thurlow concluded that countries were able to promote a visual representation

of “Europeanness” (p. 159) by repeating certain visual resources, or icons, and the uniform manner in which they were used across texts.

The current study drew upon definitions of visual discourse analysis as propounded by Albers (2007b) and presented in the previous chapter. It also used definitions from studies (Albers & Frederick, 2009; Albers, Frederick & Cowan, 2009, in press) implementing visual discourse analysis as a method of data analysis. Albers and Frederick (2009) examined the autobiographical texts of seven teachers who were studying visual discourse analysis in a graduate course in literacy. They found that teachers re-marked their identities through the repetition of elements within their visual texts over time. A re-mark is an element (color, line, icon, etc.) whose repeated use associates it with the user, and reflects the discourses with which the user identifies and by which others identify the user. In addition, this use of re-marking became a signature of sorts. A second finding of the study was that teachers became more engaged and positive in their attitudes incorporating the visual arts within their own literacy teaching as they learned about visual discourse analysis.

Albers, Frederick and Cowan (2009, in press) studied the visual texts of third and fifth grade students and found that children embed larger societal discourses surrounding gender within their own visual texts. Boys had a more difficult time viewing and representing girls in non-static activities. Some fifth grade boys took on leadership roles through their visual conversations in which they influenced those around them to take on discourses of romance.

The current study picked up where these researchers stopped. It considered visual texts as meaningful stand-alone texts and not as prompts to writing. In addition, this study

considered meaning making contexts other than English language arts and ESOL classrooms. It took place in a SNS course.

Cognitive Requirements Necessary to Respond in Visual Formats

My exploration of cognition and visual formats is significant to this study because the visual arts are often viewed as representations of our emotive sides and hence given little value in schools (Efland, 2002; Eisner, 2002). Albers, (2007b) strongly asserted, too many researchers view visual texts of children as unworthy of study. I found it necessary to explore how the creation of visual texts such as drawing, often used in literacy classrooms only in response to literature or as catalysts for writing, actually requires complex thought processes that are on par with the processes involved in reading and writing and, therefore, worthy of study.

Eisner (2002) posited that cognition involves processes of awareness of self or the environment. He explained, “It includes the most sophisticated forms of problem-solving imaginable through the loftiest flights of the imagination” (p.9). Cognitively speaking, work in the arts helps us to notice the world, explore new possibilities and uncertainty, and inscribe our ideas (Eisner, 2002).

In the landscape of the English language arts classrooms and other literacy classrooms, children are often asked to draw as responses to literature and as forms of prewriting. Therefore, examination of what studies of children’s drawings tell us about their cognition is vital. Goodnow (1977) described the power of drawings as windows into our inner-selves:

Drawings are indications of more general phenomenon of human life. They may be regarded as expressions of our search for order in a complex world, as examples of communication, as indices of the type of society we

live in, as signs of intellectual development, as reminders of our own lost innocence and verve. (p. 2)

In contrast to these optimistic expressions of the value of art, is the idea (the legacy, perhaps, of an era of tight budgets and high stakes testing in schools) that art and especially children's drawings are less important in society and in schools than the core academic subjects such as mathematics, science, and language arts. To underscore the last point, some states provide bonuses or increase salaries for math and science teachers who are better able, governments think, to prepare future technologically proficient workers to compete with the rest of the world. To establish the significance of art as a cognitively demanding pursuit, a project called Harvard Zero was begun in the 1970s. Perkins and Leonard (1977), two researchers involved in this project, believed a cognitive approach to the arts involved certain assumptions. They thought our experiences are influenced by a "*knowledge base*" or what we know (p.2). The *knowledge* base impacts and in turn is impacted by how we come to know the world, whether through perception, action or a reaction. Thinking, in their view, is both process and knowledge. They suggested that art provides alternative routes and representations and creates pathways for blending the emotive and cognitive. Efland (2002) explained that "Reality is neither objective nor wholly a social construction. It is an individual construction of one's own making and is guided by individual needs, interests, and the internalization of social norms and purposes" (p. 80-81). Individuals learn about their interior world and the external world by using the tools they have acquired in a social context. Factors that influence the knowledge a learner constructs include the learner's purpose and interests; the cultural tools used (language, numbers, and artworks); scaffolding support; and metacognitive strategies.

Theorists such as Rudolf Arnheim (1954/1974) and Howard Gardner (1980) suggested that a preference for the visual is evident in some individuals, and researchers such as Silver (2001) concluded that “expression through visual art forms” (p. 11) could aid people who have a hard time understanding language or translating thought into words. Consideration of how art may be used as a tool of thought is significant and relevant to education because it offers significant means of representing thought and knowledge.

Studies of children’s drawings as a particular kind of art form revealed that many cognitive demands are placed on the child as he attempts to represent what he sees, knows, and thinks. Studies of how children represented what they see revealed that there was some validity to a stage approach in the development of drawing and in the cognitive processes that attend that development (Kellogg, 1970). In other words, the level of children’s cognition influenced and accounted for the variability in performance noted by Efland (1965). There was also evidence (Cherney, Seiwert, Dickey, & Flichtbeil, 2006; Salome, 1964) that factors outside the individual, such as training, played a role in that development.

Problem solving studies describe the cognitive demands placed on children as they attend to issues of spatial patterns, sequencing, developing equivalents, and developing viewpoint (Goodnow, 1977). With the sophistication of age, problems associated with egocentrism (Korzenik, 1977), memory (Akshoomoff & Stiles, 1995) and media (Golomb, 2007) are resolved. Studies of communication conclude that children must make use of the conventions of drawing to communicate their messages (Krampen, 1991). Drawing allowed language impaired students to demonstrate their cognitive

development and conceptual understandings when language would have failed them (Silver, 1978). Finally, Alland's (1983), cross-cultural study of children's drawing development revealed that cultural values and experiences with art vary across Western and non-Western cultures, and that there may be more to communication through art than meets the eye.

The next section discusses some of the most striking of the studies which emphasize the cognitive demands that are placed on representation in visual modes, especially children's drawings, the primary forms of visual representation created in language arts classrooms. The discussion is integrally connected to this study since this study seeks to answer the question: What discourses emerge within students' visual texts across time? We do ourselves and children a disservice by reading children's artworks solely for emotional and social content when the creation of visual texts by children involves cognitively demanding challenges. Therefore, educators must begin to recognize the value in understanding how to read such creations by their students from more than an aesthetic stance.

Representation

The following studies demonstrate the variation present in representational development and explore the various factors that impact that development. Children's representations as presented in their drawings are affected by a number of factors including maturation, training, enculturation, and media effects. Other factors such as socioeconomic status are less understood and require further investigation.

Studies of representation (Cherney, Seiwert, Dickey & Flichtbeil, 2006; Kellogg, 1970; Seidman & Beilin, 1984) reveal that students' schemas and their socio-cultural

understandings of the world are revealed in their visual texts. If the visual texts are ignored, the opportunity to fully understanding how children view the world will be missed. Kellogg (1970) collected and examined about a million children's drawings and charted their drawing development. The children were enrolled in the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association's nursery schools in San Francisco. Over 200,000 of these children's artworks have been catalogued by name, date, sequence number, and age. She found that by age two, twenty kinds of basic scribbles and seventeen placement patterns are used. She contended that by the age three, children make Diagram shapes which can be analyzed in terms of six diagrams. Children then proceed to combine the Diagrams which then form Aggregates (units of three or more Diagrams). These Aggregates represent most children's art between ages of three to five. Children progress in their drawing development by creating more complex works using these basics as a foundation for future representations.

Cherney, Seiwert, Dickey and Flichtbeil (2006) examined two drawings each (one of family and one of school) from 109 five-to thirteen-year old subjects and found that age and gender significantly influenced the number of details, stereotypical images, proportionality and clothing used in the drawings. All the children's family drawings indicated they had schema for understanding family relationships and roles as indicated by placement and size of figures in the drawings. This study demonstrated that conceptual understanding, as evident by family drawings and stereotypical depictions of gender, began as early as five despite the lack of realism in the drawing.

Seidman and Beilin (1984) examined the role played by media (photo or drawing) in preschoolers, school-aged children, and young adults' approach to photographic or

drawing tasks. Subjects verbalized their thoughts as they made pictures. The youngest children characterized photos as real representations of real objects. School-aged children and adults thought of photography as a way to manipulate objects. The experimenters discovered that all age groups felt drawing gave them control of the end result.

Problem-Solving

As Eisner (2002) pointed out, problem-solving is one of the cognitive pursuits of the arts. One significant study that explored problem-solving in children's drawings was that of Goodnow (1977) who reported that readers can look at the following aspects of problem-solving: spatial patterns, sequencing, developing equivalents, and developing viewpoint. She wrote, "Drawings are equivalents: they contain only some properties of the original, and convention frequently determines which properties should be included and in what way." (p. 16-17). For example, in one drawing a child may choose a dot to represent eyes and in a second drawing he may use dots to represent rain. Often the same child will use many different techniques at any given time. As the child learns and begins to use new techniques, new problems are encountered which the child must solve as she draws.

We can learn about children's problem solving processes by examining both their drawings and the context in which they create those drawings. In a study of eighty-two boys and girls between the ages of five and seven from kindergarten to second grade, Korzenik (1977) hypothesized that the "ambiguity of a young child's drawings results from his egocentrism, his inability to decontextualize his work" (p. 194). One child was asked to draw for another child in his class. His task was to draw what he thought when he heard one of the following words: *bridge*, *sidewalk*, and *jumping*. Afterwards, the

researcher asked the child if he thought his friend would be able to guess the word from the drawing. If he did not think his friend would guess, he was asked to try again. The friend came in and attempted to guess the word from the drawing. If the friend could not guess, the child drew again. This procedure was repeated until the word was guessed or the children did not want to continue the activity. Children's pictures, observations of their actions, and taped recordings were analyzed. The results showed that younger children learned that for a picture to serve a specific purpose (i.e., send a certain message) it has to contain all elements necessary for the viewer to get the message.

Korzenik (1977) and Goodnow (1977) indicated that drawing required problem-solving skills for the purpose of communication. In language arts classes, the teachers do not use students' drawings to understand how the child composes her message and how choices made through those attempts at communicating become very significant. The next section explores this point and communication in studies of children's drawings.

Communication

Gombrich (1982) proposed that "The real value of the image, however, is its capacity to convey information that cannot be coded in any other way" (p. 143). Alland, (1983), Butler, Gross, and Hayne (1995), Krampen (1991) and Silver (1978), reported that drawings offer significant vehicles for expressing cultural concepts, memory, and information that are not always easily coded into verbal language.

Visual art can help in organizing and representing experiences, left and right hemisphere thinking, establishing patterns for language to follow, learning new words, activating or reinforcing language, transfer of learning, imaginary play, abstract thinking,

and recall (Silver, 1978). Silver examined the role of art in language-impaired children.

Her premise was:

The child with inadequate language is handicapped in representing his thoughts effectively, but even though his capacity for language may be impaired, his capacity for symbolizing may be intact, and he may be able to represent his thoughts nonverbally by drawing them. (p. 6)

In one study, Silver tested 68 non-impaired students' ability to associate and represent concepts through drawing from imagination with hearing impaired children and found that the non-impaired children had higher scores before the art program, but the impaired children had significantly higher scores after the art program. Art is another sign system that offers the opportunity for communication. Language impaired students were able to demonstrate cognitive development and communication skills on a par with non-impaired students.

When considering cross-cultural drawings and cross-cultural analysis of those drawings, understanding of the culture and location of the participant is prerequisite since the participant will incorporate features of his environment that are culturally relevant to him. Krampen (1991) studied the semiotics involved in Turkish and German children's drawings of buildings, with a focus on architecture because it is difficult to describe it verbally. Buildings of certain types such as places of worship tend to vary from culture to culture and are not as "stereotyped" as other images (p. 75). He asked this question: "What is nature (common to all children) and what is culture (common only to specific groups of children) in children's drawings" (p.6). All participants were asked to draw an office building, a factory, a religious building, school, an apartment building, and a house. The children used pencils to draw all six buildings on one sheet of paper subdivided into six equal parts. The drawings were scored and subjected to complex data

analysis including loglinear models (p. 153). Krampen found that there was no significant difference in the drawing development between the two cultures. He also concluded that differences in the two cultural groups' representations were related to the development of their visual perception based on age. He asserted, "It appears that drawings are used by the children for representing to themselves and to others features present in the environment of their material culture" (p. 198). Thus, the children chose signs that would carry meaning about the building type to the viewer. This study is significant because it demonstrates that drawing development is not different for children from two different cultures, but the cultural environment decides what gets represented. Said differently, children's drawings will contain what they notice from their unique environments and will be influenced by the cultural relevance of aspects of that environment.

Alland (1983) studied the impact of culture on drawing development. He wanted "to see how current generalization about the development of drawing skills in children hold up under cross-cultural examination, and to understand how children in different cultures put pictures together as a step-by-step process" (p. 1). Alland filmed children from Bali, Ponape, Taiwan, Japan, France, and the United States making pictures using standardized materials and instructions. The children were of various ages, schooling, and various experiences in art. There was variation in setting from culture to culture. All children drew a picture of their choice. Some children were asked to produce a second, and the children who were unhappy with their drawings created a second. Children created their pictures on a blank page with felt-tipped pens. They could choose from red, blue, yellow, green, brown, or black pens. Children's comments as they worked were recorded, and they were asked for information about the picture after its completion.

Alland found that “Children are often content to play with form and need not imbue this form with meaning” (p. 211). There were variations with how the children from the different cultures organized their drawings on the page, what colors were used, and content. One key finding of this study was that children who had no previous experience with art did not demonstrate the stage idea of development as posed by Kellogg (1970). One implication of this study is that what gets communicated through children’s drawings depends highly on the cultural context of the child. As Gombrich (1982) reminded us

Interpretation on the part of the image maker must always be matched by the interpretation of the viewer. . . . Here as always we need a jolt to remind us of what I have called the ‘beholder’s share’, the contribution we make to any representation from the stock of images stored in our mind” (p. 145)

This is a transaction of sorts, similar to those described by Rosenblatt (1978) and Dewey (1934).

Butler, Gross, and Hayne (1995) examined how drawing aided sixteen 5- to 6-year-old children’s recall of an event. One day after the event sixteen children drew their memory of the event and talked about it. The other sixteen only provided a verbal retelling of their memory of the event. The participants in the draw group provided more details than the tell group. This study concluded that memory may be stored symbolically and best recalled through symbolic representation (pictures in this case).

Summary of Art-Based, Semiotically Framed, Cognition, and VDA Studies

The studies presented revealed that the arts have been used successfully with culturally and linguistically diverse students in English literacy classes to help them develop stronger reading, writing, and speaking skills in English. However, when studies have examined the potential that each unique communication system offers to students as

unique modes of expression through a semiotic lens, a more nuanced understanding of the individual and her meaning making process is revealed. By adding the understandings gained from the cognitive studies of children's drawings, it becomes evident that communication through the composition of visual texts may also reveal much about the student's problem-solving processes. The in-depth study of students' visual texts require the reader of those texts to have an understanding of the cognitive demands and challenges placed on the student as she attempts to visually represent, problem-solve, and communicate her inner world so that the reader may understand the complex nature of the message being conveyed. Understanding these demands also helps the reader move away from a primarily aesthetic reading often associated with the visual arts and towards one informed more by the lens of social semiotics. These studies seem to suggest a gap in the literature. I did not discover any studies that explored from either an arts-based or semiotic framework the use of multiple sign systems in a class designed for heritage language learners such as SNS students. A study such as the current one fills a gap in the literature since the curricula designed for SNS courses often do not meet the unique needs of the heritage language learner of Spanish. The following section delineates some of the critiques of current SNS curriculum.

Spanish for Native Speakers Instruction

An overview of the research on teaching Spanish to Native Speakers helps provide some context for the current study which attempted to reconsider how curricula and pedagogy should be adapted to better meet the needs of a specific group of high school Spanish heritage language students. Research on Spanish for Native Speakers has been increasing because of the explosive growth of the Latino population in this country

(Colombi & Roca, 2003). This optimistic statement contrasts starkly with past states of language instruction. Second language teaching in the U.S. suffered because of negative attitudes and poorly planned methods and curriculum. Valdés (2003, p. 11) mentioned those people who thought it was “un-American and divisive” to teach a second language.

Unfortunately, educational practices surrounding Spanish heritage language curriculum have continued to emphasize grammar rules, drills, and Spanish-English contrasts. Schwarzer and Petró (2005) provided a good example of a poorly planned and funded program. They revealed that at a public university located in the southwest U.S. there was only one heritage language class for Spanish students even though there was a large Spanish heritage language population. The researchers were troubled because the same professor, syllabi, texts, and materials were used in this class and in a Spanish foreign language course. Research has shown that heritage language students have different needs and abilities. All three of the heritage language students were highly motivated but found their heritage language class experiences boring. The professor did not take into account their prior knowledge of Spanish and its use within their families.

From their findings, Schwarzer and Petró (2005) outlined eight theoretical principles needed to provide a “whole language heritage language class” (p. 575-577). These principles are similar to the ones found in whole language philosophy in English language arts classes. Teaching language through critical pedagogy was considered to be necessary so that heritage language users could begin to understand the politics and power surrounding language in the U.S.

In addition, a number of researchers and theorists (Krashen, 1981; Lynch, 2003, Schwarzer & Petró, 2005) have advocated teaching using a communicative and content

approach to heritage language development. Learning should be focused on themes like immigration, social movement, and politics. Lynch proposed discourse activities “based on a particular content and the expression of experiences, feelings, opinions, or arguments, be they academic or personal, formal or informal,” and he continued that “grammar must be at the service of these sorts of communicative activities, not vice versa” (p. 42).

Despite these recommendations and the incredible increase in the Spanish heritage language population, Colombi and Roca (2003) indicated that “schools of education-almost without exception-do not require their majors to take courses in the field of heritage language learning and teaching as part of graduation requirements” (p. 6). Too often, the political nature of language learning has been ignored in this field.

Leeman (2005) proclaimed, “There is still a pressing need to critically examine existing heritage language curricula” (p. 35). Colombi and Roca (2003) echoed these sentiments when they asked: “What approaches have been used in the past and what could we be doing today to encourage the best practices possible based on research and experience” (p. 5)? Potowski and Carreira (2004) suggested that in SNS instruction, Latino students must be considered in light of leveled language texts, structures of texts, and multiple modes for expression:

1. SNS materials must be carefully calibrated not just to the linguistic level of Latino students, but also to their academic abilities and background...
2. Similarly, SNS instruction must focus on filling the educational gaps of Latinos, particularly in the areas of prose and document literacy, explicitly teaching reading and writing strategies, and developing habits that may have not been developed in the childhood years.
3. The SNS classroom should provide students with the opportunity and the tools to explore cultural notions and practices that may encumber the academic progress of Latinos. Some of these include the tendency to postpone college and to marry and start a family early in life. (p. 430)

According to Potowski and Carreira, the affective, social, academic, and linguistic needs of SNS students are not being fully addressed by the current foreign language standards. They also indicated that the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) standards better align with the needs of the SNS learner as they address all four components previously mentioned. Too, they argued that teaching SNS courses through a language arts framework rather than a foreign language framework is more appropriate for the needs of SNS students.

Furthermore, Carreira (2003) argued that as a result of the wide range of diverse attitudes towards their heritage and ancestral languages across the nation, a local approach must be used. SNS students need to be given opportunities to become aware of language variations in Spanish and consider the role that each variation plays in identity and politics. Rather than strive to teach a standard Spanish, educators must focus on teaching the whole student and consider the role of culture, family, identity, politics, and language in educating the SNS student. Specifically, teachers of SNS and SHL students must approach the curriculum based upon the needs of their unique students in their unique locale. A one-size fits all approach should not be used across the country in these courses.

Based on the recommendations of these leading language acquisition researchers, the current study used communicative approaches focusing on the process of meaning making around social issues that were relevant to the students enrolled in the class. As part of their meaning making practices, students were encouraged to use multimodal forms of expression such as print and oral Spanish and English language along with work

in the visual arts and technological forms of media. Students in this study were encouraged to do critical semiotic work within the space of the SNS class.

Further Exploration

My review of the literature uncovered a lack of research in three distinct areas: 1) use of multiple sign systems in heritage language courses for SNS; 2) heritage language classes that address the holistic needs of heritage language learners; and 3) close readings of bilingual learners' visual texts as a means of better understanding their complex meaning making processes and identities surrounding those processes. This study attempted to address these gaps by examining more closely how students in a SNS course made meaning in a whole language approach that incorporated multiple sign systems as tools of thought and how applying visual discourse analysis to closely read students' visual texts produced insights into their meaning making practices and subjectivities.

First, although research has demonstrated the value and success of an approach which focuses on the use of multiple sign systems within English Language Arts classes, research is scarce exploring the use of multiple sign systems in heritage language courses such as the SNS course similar to the one in the current study. Second, although there is research on heritage language classes for Spanish Speakers, it is limited because it primarily explores these courses from a foreign language framework which has been considered inadequate for addressing the needs of heritage language learners. Third, little research has been conducted on applying visual discourse analysis to multilingual learners' visual texts as a means of better understanding their complex meaning making practices. This study attempted to address these gaps by examining more closely how students in a SNS course negotiated meaning and identity as they worked in multiple sign

systems within an arts-infused multimodal curriculum. This study also used visual discourse analysis as a method to glean insights from students' visual texts about the discourses surrounding these practices.

In the next chapter, I present my methodology. The context, the participants, data collection, the procedures, and determination of the sample selected for study are described. In addition, I describe my analytic techniques.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

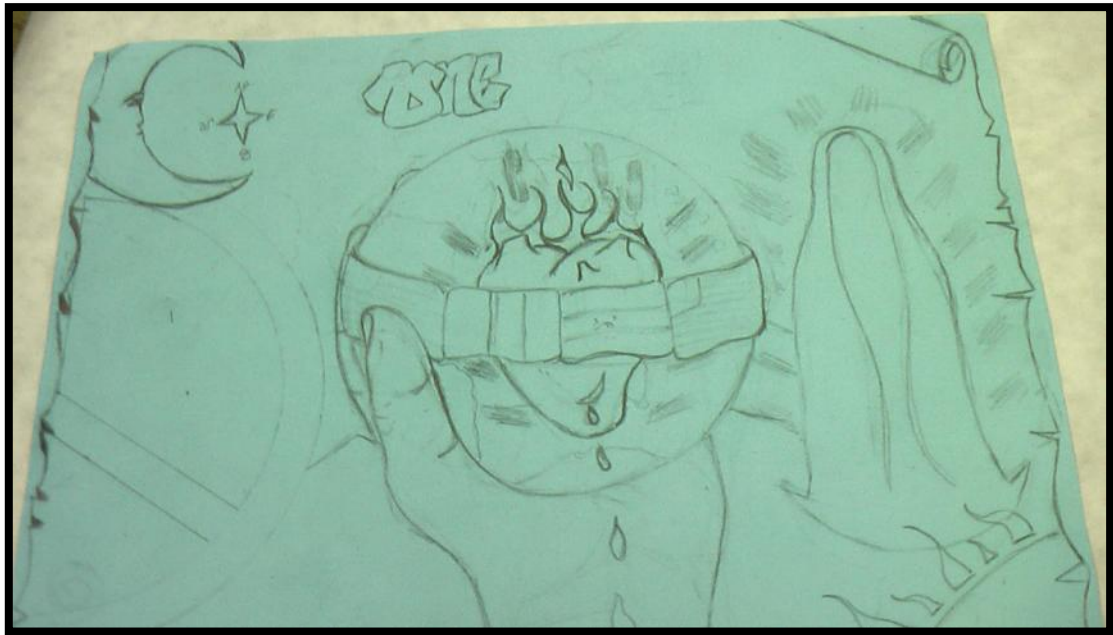


Figure 3 Second draft of class mural [sketched by Miguel]

What is the text-maker doing? How is he doing it? What discourses are present? What choices were made in creating the text, the message, the relationship with the viewer? What was important at the time of the text making? What aspects of self were represented? How is the whole redistributed back to the parts? What elements in this text are present in previous texts? How did interactions between community members influence the composition of this text?

In the previous chapter, I discussed the relevant studies that provided a backdrop for understanding my proposed study. In this chapter, I will discuss and describe the details of my study. In this interpretive study, I sought to understand how SNS students made and negotiated meaning and identities in a classroom landscape that included various cultures, socioeconomic levels, patterns of socialization and interaction, and semiotic resources. In addition, I sought to understand how the visual arts could be used as a tool of thought and as a significant communication system in a SNS class. Data sources were collected from varied sources, and data analysis reflected a recursive process that began with data collection (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Guiding this study were the following questions:

1. What factors were considered as the teacher and the researcher co-planned this arts-infused multimodal curriculum, and how did the consideration of those factors shape the curriculum?
2. How did students enrolled in this SNS class negotiate meaning and identity as they worked within this arts-infused multimodal SNS curriculum?
3. What discourses around students' meaning making practices and identities emerged within their visual texts over time and across texts?

In the following section, I will explain the methodological orientation of the study. Next, I will discuss my role as researcher, the context of the study, data collection methods, data analysis, timeline for the study, trustworthiness of the study, and writing up the study. In the data analysis section, I will provide a detailed explanation of how both written and visual data were analyzed, specifically the details of visual discourse analysis

and how I read and examined students' visual texts in this study along with cross analysis of transcribed written data.

Methodological Orientation

Consistent with a social semiotic perspective, an interpretivist design (Schwandt, 2000) was employed to allow me to more richly describe meaning making and identity negotiation in the SNS class. Interpretivism begins with the premise that the social world is meaningful. Reality is subjective; people respond to others through their interpretations of reality (Schwandt, 2000). Reality is constructed and is changeable as people move in and out of various social, cultural, political, and ideological landscapes and contexts (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Interpretivism sees the researcher and the participant as “interactively linked.” Together they construct, interpret, and refine meaning until a consensus is achieved (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p. 207). In other words, interpretivism is an appropriate methodology as it allows for multiple layers of analysis and understanding which is reflective of reality.

As the current study sought to understand how students responded to a SNS curriculum in which they were afforded options for using multiple sign systems for meaning-making, it was in essence representing these participants' lived semiotic experiences in the *figured world* of an SNS class. As this *figured world* was wrought with ideological, social, cultural, and political tensions, the interpretive researcher had to “actively engage with the interpretation of the various texts and performances in which they manifest themselves” (Vannini, 2007, p. 126). As a result, claims of objectivity could not be made, but rather multiple interpretations were possible (Rose, 2001). I sought to understand in this study how semiotic resources were used in the lived

experiences of participants in this SNS class. How this analysis was conducted will be further addressed later in this chapter.

Entering and Establishing My Role in the Field

Negotiating Entre

Because I was an employee of the Landings School District, entry was not an issue. The Landings School District was generally encouraging and open to their educators pursuing advanced degrees and encouraged such work. Taking nothing for granted, however, I attempted to make a smooth entry into the research site by first contacting the Director of Research of the Landings School District to request approval to conduct the study. I submitted a letter outlining the study and my approved prospectus to him for review. After reviewing my materials and requiring me to gain permission from the principal of Landings High School, I was granted permission to conduct the study. I then contacted the principal with the study and provided assurances that my presence would not disrupt the flow of the ordinary school day and described the possible benefits that could ultimately come from the study such as a better understanding of how literacy practices are developed in a SNS class.

After gaining permission to conduct the study at Landings High School, I then contacted the potential teacher participant, Esperanza (pseudonym), and requested an informal meeting with her to discuss the outline of the research study. I answered any questions or concerns about what I would actually be doing, what I would do with the data, why her class, and the potential benefits for her and her students. As I had known Esperanza as a colleague for nearly fifteen years, and we had previously discussed informally various approaches for teaching ELs, she eagerly agreed to participate in the

study. In order to have this research sanctioned by university requirements, I then submitted a proposal to IRB for its approval. Permission was granted to begin the study on August 12, 2008.

Establishing My Role

On the first day, students were waiting in the square formed by the desks that would be the general seating arrangement for the entire study (See Appendix F for room arrangement). Esperanza welcomed me to the class and said, “This is Mrs. Frederick, and she will be working with us and teaching us about reading art” (Researcher Journal, 08.13.08). I introduced myself to the students and handed out the consent forms (minor assent forms and parent forms in English and Spanish) to read and discuss. I read them to the students in English, and Esperanza read them in Spanish. As I looked across the room, I identified faces of students’ that I had known when they attended the middle school in which I had previously taught. I also thought about students whose brothers or sisters I had taught and now would be engaging with this year in the forum of the SNS class. I wondered about what they were thinking and whether they would choose to participate, how they would interact with me as a teacher, researcher, etc, and how our negotiations of meaning would evolve over the course of the year in multiple sign systems.

Over time, though, they accepted me as a member of their learning community and valued the work that I brought to their class sessions (End of the year student reflections, 05.09). At the same time, I sometimes felt distanced from them, a little on the periphery as I was an outsider, learner of Spanish, white, teacher/researcher, adult, etc. Barr (2001) examined how studies undertaken by outsiders can inform educational

practices. She reflected, “Although we often think about gaining access in terms of others letting us in, most of the major obstacles were within me” (p. 85). Like Barr, I negotiated meaning and relationships by participating in code switching, interchanging one language to another, relying on students and teacher to translate for me when I or they felt it necessary, using multiple semiotic resources, and in carefully observing and listening in the environment. Overall, though, I felt that my relationship with the participants was good during the entire year and generally encountered an easiness and willingness on their parts to be honest and open about their personal, cultural, societal, and political experiences.

My interactions with the students varied throughout the year. At times, I participated in the art engagements. At times, I was more observer than participant. During these times I felt the most uncomfortable as I felt the students’ eyes on me wondering what I was recording in my journal, wondering to what I was paying attention. The majority of the time, I worked as co-teacher with Esperanza, modeling questioning strategies for her and “pushing” the students to go deeper in their analyses of issues at hand, either in the class discussions, the artworks they were studying, or in the texts they were reading. I was positioned as the expert by Esperanza with respect to the reading and analyzing of visual texts, so I most often had a primary role when it came to talking and discussing artists’ work-be it professional ones or the students. When it came to knowledge of the various cultures being studied, I was positioned as novice and learner by the students and by myself. Although Esperanza, named herself as artist, she did not chose to teach art techniques to the students, and thus, the use of visual texts and projects that were multimodal were used as a form of exploration and expression of self with

respect to the lessons and themes that were taking place in the various units of study in a manner that is consistent with arts-integration approaches (Cornett, 2007).

In the first semester of the research, my interest lay with understanding the negotiation of meaning across communication systems which included English, Spanish, and Spanglish (Faltis, 2009). He discussed the joy of Spanglish and the desire to intertwine two cultural worlds as part of the interaction of those worlds and art. In the second semester of the research, my interest was co-shaped with Esperanza and the students' desire to learn more about the reading and the meaning within visual texts, both professionally created and their own. As students continued to create visual texts and engage in multimodal projects such as the video news project, my attention turned to the interactions among groups of students, interactions among these groups, and how their identities were negotiated as a result of shifts in a kaleidoscopic view of their realities.

Transparency of My Own Limitations as Researcher

As a participant observer, I continuously reflected on my own cultural, political, and ideological perspectives as well as those of my participants. As a veteran teacher with fifteen years of teaching experience, I brought an understanding of the political nature of education to this study and a critical stance towards educational policy and believed that education needed to be pragmatic and transformative (Dewey, 1916; Freire, 1970; Mezirow, 1990, 1991). Since my beliefs necessarily informed my interpretations of the meaning making practices and negotiations of identity that occurred in this study, I have attempted to be transparent by revealing these perspectives to my readers.

Like many mainstream qualitative researchers, I recognized the need to build a relationship with my participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) and worked from the

beginning to establish a positive and supportive rapport with the participants that allowed them to respond openly and honestly. Although I worked hard to accomplish this, my positions as researcher, observer, teacher, adult, and outsider could have limited the complete openness or willingness of some participants to always provide full and complete answers to my questions.

I openly acknowledge that being a white, native English speaking and native born American with advanced degrees provided me with privileges and power that my participants did not share. However, after eight years of closely working with and building relationships with Spanish speaking Latino students, families, and educators, I had developed a connection to this community and a passion for Latin cultures and languages. Despite these connections and passions, I had to work to ensure that my potential power and privilege, derived from being a member of the dominant society, did not prevent me from adequately telling their stories. I did this through informal and formal member checking.

I was the principal investigator. As a researcher of social semiotics (Hodge & Kress, 1988) and of visual discourse analysis (Albers, 2007b; Albers & Frederick, 2009; Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009, in press; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), I brought expertise to the reading of visual modes of communication. As I attempted to interpret and construct with my participants' their meaning making practices, I was especially concerned with multimodal engagements and with students' visual texts in particular. Through my member checking processes, I worked diligently to ensure our co-construction of reality in this SNS landscape.

As I worked with the student participants and offered them my analyses and readings of their work, I regularly would encourage them to give me their readings and openly encouraged them to offer their own perspectives even if they differed from mine. I did this informally and formally in their final interview which served the purpose for me to conduct member checks of my readings and interpretations of their visual texts. I used a form of stimulated recall (Gass & Mackey, 2000) and had students bring their art journals with them to this session so that we could go back to each text and discuss it. I encouraged them to discuss their own visual texts with me first, and then I offered my readings to them. We discussed our readings together. Much of the research that has been conducted using visual discourse analysis has been criticized because of the failure of the investigator to return to the textmaker for input. I have attempted to remedy this criticism by offering my own understandings triangulated with the textmakers' stated intentions when at all possible.

Timeline for the Study

The data collection of the study began August 13, 2008 and ended June 2, 2009. Final analysis, member checks, peer debriefing, write-up of results and presentation occurred from April, 2009 to June 2010. Table 1 presents the timeline of my study.

Table 1 *Timeline for Study*

| <u>Dates</u> | <u>Activities</u> |
|--------------|--|
| 6/08 | Prospectus defense |
| 6/08 | School district approval |
| 7/08 | GSU IRB submission |
| 8/08 | GSU IRB approval |
| 7/08 | Identify and invite teacher to participate |
| 8/08 | Study commences |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 8/08, 1/09, 6/09 | Teacher interviews (N=3, for 45 minutes to 2 hours each) |
| 8/08-3/09 | Curriculum planning sessions (N=7 for 1-2 hours each) |
| 8/08-5/09 | Weekly class observations (N =45 for 1 hour each session) |
| 9/08, 4-5/09 | Student interviews (Total N=16; for 45minutes to 75 minutes, each) |
| 8/08-11/09 | Ongoing Data Analysis |
| 8/08-5/09 | Informal Member Checks |
| 4/09-6/09 | Final Formal Member Checks |
| 11/09-5/10 | Write-up results |
| 6/10 | Dissertation defense |

Context of the Study

Community of Research Site: Landings, USA

Landings is located in a large metropolitan area of the southeast. The population of Landings was a little more than 77,000 in 2005. According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, the population consists of the following demographic groups: White (75%), Black or African American (18%), Hispanic or Latino (6%), and Asian (2%). The median household income was nearly \$54,000. Since this data is roughly ten years old, the 2010 census most likely will reveal different numbers as there has been an influx of African Americans into Landings County over the past five years. Renter occupied housing accounted for 24% of the total housing in Landings County, and seventy-one percent of the total housing was accounted for by owner occupied housing. From 2000 to 2004,

there was nearly a 9.5% population growth but was still ranked 46th in fastest growing counties in this southeastern state (<http://www.epodunk.com>)

School Research Site: Landings High School, Landings USA.

This suburban high school, which I called Landings High School, was racially and economically diverse and had an enrollment of approximately 1600 students (with district enrollment at 15,000). Out of those 1,600, the Department of Education (DOE) reports that 30% are economically disadvantaged and 4% EL (<http://www.doe.k12.us>). Latinos comprised approximately 10% of the total school population. This high school was one of four in a district that included 46% African American, 41% Caucasian, 9% Hispanic, and 2% Asian. Forty-five percent of the students in this district were eligible for free and reduced lunch.

SNS Classroom, Landings High School

This study was conducted in a SNS classroom in Landings High School (pseudonym) in a small suburban school district in a large metropolitan area in the Southeast, U.S. This class was composed of ten students who claimed Spanish as their heritage language and/or Spanish was their native language of which nine consented to participate in the study. All were either currently ELs or had been in the past. SNS courses had been offered in this high school for two years prior to the study. A single teacher, Esperanza, taught the two course series. Both courses were offered to students in grades 9-12; therefore, the class was a multi-age class. The research was conducted in the second course of the series, SNS II, which was focused more on literature instruction.

The SNS class was conducted within the space of one of the ESOL classrooms which was housed in one of the back corner hallways which also housed several special

education classrooms and one of the assistant principals' offices. On my first day going to the class, I was escorted by a former ESOL student as he happened to intercept my departure from the front office after I had signed in. As we walked to this back corner of the building, I immediately felt as though the ESOL/SNS and special education classes were being physically marginalized in the building as they were separated from other academic wings and hallways (Researcher's Journal, 08.13.2009). I had previously experienced this sense of physical marginalization at the middle school level when the ESOL classes were relegated to the mobile classrooms behind the building.

Upon entering the classroom, I was greeted by Esperanza and her students. A small computer lab was present in the room with several computers lining the right front and back walls of the classroom and the rectangular arrangement of the desks rather than the traditional arrangement of rows (See Appendix F for classroom layout). Students were smiling and seemed to be enjoying the class session as I entered. A map of Mexico and a poster flag of Mexico hung on the left front side of the classroom. In front was the whiteboard with a list of the ESOL standards printed on a poster hanging to the left of the board. Since the space of the SNS class was primarily that of the ESOL teacher, the design and layout was created by her rather than by Esperanza. Over the year, however, the space took on more of the SNS characteristics and feelings as the visual texts were displayed and stored within this classroom.

The ESOL teacher was often present, as it was her planning period and she worked within her own space. She often interacted with the class and interjected compliments and thoughts to different activities, conversations, and interactions. Students

were familiar with her as many of them also were in this space for ESOL instruction with her.

Participants

Students participating in this study included one male and eight females, from multiple Spanish-speaking countries, and they ranged in age from 14 to 19 years old and were in grades 10-12. The participants' Spanish language proficiencies ranged from socially communicative to academically proficient with similar English proficiency levels present. In addition, a variety of dialects of Spanish were spoken. They all claimed Spanish as their heritage language. The students' and teacher's participation was voluntary. Participation in this study did not affect students' grades in any way.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling as the chosen participants met the required needs of the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). I invited the selected teacher to participate in the study. I did not encounter any difficulty obtaining her willingness to participate. I assured her that I was not there to judge her in any way, and while we already had excellent rapport with one another, I immediately began the work of establishing a routine by beginning our first planning session as soon as I had received IRB approval. In our first meeting, I interviewed her and we then began the task of planning. We shared our vision for the arts-integrated curriculum, what would best meet the needs of her and her students, and we discussed our backgrounds and strengths with one another in order to begin to establish what each of our roles might look like. Once this commitment to participate was obtained, I presented the research study to her students and solicited their willingness to volunteer for the study. Once the students agreed to participate, I sought the consent of their parents as previously described.

To better understand the findings of this study, it is necessary to offer a brief description of the participants. Because each student in the study was unique and brought a particular way of being and enacting SNS identity, I chose to study closely all of the participants as individuals and how they interacted in their small groups and within the context of the whole group. Rather than rely on a few focal students as some researchers have done in the past (Albers, 1996; Williams, 2009), I did not feel that three or four students could adequately speak to the range of variability that existed and could not be representative of the class members. My decision concerning this matter was important and relevant as marginalized groups are often stereotyped or overgeneralized. I wanted to respect the diversity that existed within this class.

To protect the identities of the participants, I asked them to select a pseudonym, and I also assigned a pseudonym to the school and school district under study. The teacher participant chose Esperanza. The student participants chose the following names: Miguel, Lluvia, Monserat, Nanette, Fabiola, Marely, Natalia, Rosa, and Pastry. During the course of the year, two affinity groups formed. The first group was that of the seniors which consisted of Miguel, Lluvia, Monserat, and Nanette. The second group consisted of students who were not seniors and were in tenth and eleventh grades and consisted of Fabiola, Marely, Natalia, Rosa, and Pastry. Because many of the interactions in the class were affected by the creation, maintenance, and affiliation found within these groups, I will present the participants as individuals and actors within these groups. Because the findings reflect meaning and identity negotiation, the participants will be described within the findings through their words, texts, and interactions with others.

Table 2 *SNS Participant Summary*

| Name | Birth Country | Grade level | ESOL | Affinity Group | Years in the U.S. |
|-----------|---------------|------------------|------|----------------|-------------------|
| Esperanza | Venezuela | N/A | N/A | N/A | 20 |
| Fabiola | U. S. | 10 th | no | Non-senior | life |
| Lluvia | Mexico | 12th | yes | Senior | 2 |
| Marely | Mexico | 11th | no | Non-senior | 10 |
| Miguel | Mexico | 12th | yes | Senior | 2 |
| Monserat | Uruguay | 12th | yes | Senior | 2 |
| Nanette | Mexico | 12th | yes | Senior | 8 |
| Natalia | Mexico | 11th | no | Non-senior | 6 |
| Pastry | U. S. | 10th | no | Non-senior | life |
| Rosa | Mexico | 10th | yes | Non-senior | <1 |

Collecting Data

Participant observation was the largest part of my fieldwork. My role as observer, as participant, and participant as observer (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), was more like an ebb and flow. I was “pulled” into a more active role as participant by Esperanza as she desired support from me in this “new” kind of curriculum. Her desire to do it “right” prompted me to take the role as support and model in various aspects of class sessions. Students, on the other hand, often treated me as a student because of my limited Spanish proficiency, and often interpreted for me whether I asked or not. At times I made conscious decisions to remove myself from the events of the class to record fieldnotes, record conversations, and videotape class sessions. As participant observer in the class, I engaged in the class activities and observed particular phenomenon related to the study: (a) our co-created lessons; (b) negotiations of meaning as we discussed texts (visual and written) and negotiations of meaning as visual texts were created; (c) how students were responding to the curriculum; (d) students’ talk and interactions with each other as they

participated in the various class events; (e) students' talk and interactions with Esperanza; and (g) my talk and interaction with Esperanza and the student participants.

Data sources included three individual interviews with the teacher participant: one at the beginning (21 minutes) , middle (60 minutes), and end of the study (171 minutes); an initial student questionnaire that addressed students' experiences with and attitudes about reading, writing, language and multimodal literacy; two individual interviews with seven student participants: one at the beginning (8-21minutes) and one at the end of the study (30-63 minutes), one individual interview (30 minutes) with one student participant (at the end of the study due to absences at the beginning of the study). In addition to the interviews and questionnaire, I maintained a researcher notebook, created transcriptions of class sessions that were either audio and/or video-recorded, collected student-generated texts by photographing and/or photocopying (including individual visual texts and projects, individual written and multimodal texts, class newspaper, group video projects, class yearbook, and class mural), took photographs of students' processes, and created transcriptions of all participant journals. See Appendix A for the connectedness between data sources and research questions. In the following sections, I will describe where and how these data sources were collected.

Procedures

Creating the curriculum

To investigate research question 1, I worked with the teacher participant seven times throughout the study and at least once a quarter or more to plan a curriculum in which arts-integration and multimodal engagements were used to generate thinking about exploration of self, language, culture, community, and world in conjunction with a whole

language humanities approach to a SNS course. The teacher participant had many novels, but only one copy of each. As a result, student participants worked independently and rarely had interactions around the readings of these independent reading novels. To create opportunities for literacy development in student participants' native language, we originally planned to purchase class sets of two novels for use during each semester of the 2008-2009 school year. Together, Esperanza and I purchased a class set of Sandra Cisneros (1984) *House on Mango Street* (in Spanish) to begin. In addition, we purchased art supplies and a hard back bound art journal for every student participant so that supplies for making meaning in a variety of sign systems would be possible and to encourage the student participants to see their work as valuable and significant enough to document and be maintained in an actual book. I encouraged student participants to create their visual responses and any other student-generated texts in this journal and to use it as a place to document their meaning-making over time. As we met and collaborated, units began to be developed around country units of study with emphasis to all students' countries of origin and to Spain and the U. S. as the uniting countries of study. Units were developed with an emphasis on allowing for student participant talk, writing, and creating of visual texts in response to historical, current events, and literature-based readings in the textbook and outside sources. Attention was given to the incorporation of the study of visual analysis and interpretation throughout the year with a more focused study of it beginning second semester. A summary of the units and abbreviated lesson plans are included in Appendix C.

These planning sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed and constituted the primary source of data for answering question one. In addition, prior to working on this

curriculum, I began with an initial interview with the teacher to better understand how she viewed the possibilities of a curriculum in which multiple communication systems were used and to allow her a forum to discuss her needs as they related to her participation in this study and the design of this curriculum.

Initial Questionnaire

To explore all three research questions, student participants completed the initial questionnaire (See Appendix B) during the first week of the study. I designed this questionnaire to provide students the opportunity to respond in English and/or Spanish and through image to describe how they came to be enrolled in the SNS class and how they felt about reading and writing in Spanish and English (and in general) and through communication systems other than language. Understanding what kinds of experiences the SNS students had in their in-school and out-of-school lives was important in order to more effectively plan for experiences that allowed students the opportunity to express themselves in a wide variety of communication systems and modes.

Individual Participant Interviews

To investigate all three research questions, I interviewed seven student participants twice during the research period (at the beginning and at the end of the study), one student once during the research period (at the end of the study due to absences at the beginning of the study) and the teacher participant three times during the research period (at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the study). One student, Rosa, was not interviewed as a result of late entry into the study and absences during the second interview period. The interviews were open-ended in format (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003) and provided participants an opportunity to discuss their feelings about literacy in general

and in relation to their SNS class and schooling overall. Interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Students were encouraged to answer in Spanish, English, or switching between the two as they felt comfortable. These individual interviews also allowed opportunity for getting to know the participants and for beginning to build rapport. See Appendices D and E for a sample of interview questions with teacher participant and student participants, respectively.

Class visits, observations and researcher's notebook

Each week beginning August 13, 2008 through the week of May 25, 2009, I visited one to three periods and observed/participated in the class sessions to investigate Research Questions 1, 2, and 3. I either audio-taped, video-taped, or recorded fieldnotes in my researcher journal depending on the content of the class session. I chose to audiotape and/or video tape several class sessions so that I could later return to them and study them closer after translating and transcribing. To complete this task, I worked side by side with a Spanish bilingual translator recommended to me by Esperanza to transcribe and translate the recorded sessions. I then studied the transcriptions of the audiotapes and videotapes of class sessions in order to analyze the participants' and my own involvement in the meaning making practices which took place, their discussions in small and large group activities, and the social dynamics of the class that inhibited or promoted the participation of particular participants.

During the study, I kept a researcher journal to document my impressions about class sessions and conversations with participants. As this journal helped me reflect on the research process, I used multiple modes such as photographs of student work and of students in action, sketches of interactions, diagrams, and notes to record my impressions.

All of these data sources provided me with the raw material necessary to understand the meaning making processes at work in responding to and with others as identities were negotiated and authored in the multiple communication systems in the SNS class.

Artifacts

Student-generated texts and/or photographs of those texts were collected and analyzed to provide insight into how students made and negotiated meaning and identities across sign systems and over time. These artifacts provided answers to research questions 2 and 3. In other words, the texts were also examined to provide insight into students' meaning making as they used various linguistic, cultural, social and multimedia resources available to them.

Within this year-long course, each student maintained a journal where s/he documented her/his thinking over the course of the year. Journals housed students' visual texts, readings and interpretations of texts read as part of the class assignments, reflections of about their participation in the different activities and about their products. Specifically, students participated in creating 13 visual/multimodal texts along with reading and responding to the visual texts presented as part of the unit. Students also wrote an essay discussing the role and value of the woman, a friendship poem, a fantasy fiction story, a column for the class newspaper, a piece for the class yearbook, and an end of the year final reflection. When and how these texts were initiated and created are summarized in the Lesson Plans Appendix C. During second semester, I began presenting Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) concepts for identifying and analyzing visual texts (e.g., orientation of canvas and meanings associated within the four quadrants), and initiated practice reading and

analyzing this concept in a range of examples. Students were invited to respond and participate in these readings and encouraged to use them as they read and responded to the visual texts presented within the units during second semester. Students created and generated visual and multimodal texts as responses to the texts being discussed in class.

Figure 4 is an example of Rosa's autobiographical text using Picasso's technique of cubism as presented and discussed early in the year during the study of



Figure 4 Rosa's Picassoesque text

Spain. Students worked on projects during class sessions and rarely took them home unless they were impassioned with a particular technique to complete it. Students shared their finished texts with class members and discussed choices made in the text. Their classmates were often encouraged to ask questions of each other about their work.

Portions of selected class sessions were video-recorded or audio-recorded to more closely study interactions occurring around the creating and reading of the variety of texts that were being used to study Spanish language and cultures in this course, shifts in perceptions, and their evolving understanding and comfort with visual analysis and reflection of their work within this class.

Member Checking

As we worked together collaboratively throughout the year, I presented my readings, understandings, and findings informally to participants and provided opportunities for the participants to give feedback and to talk to me about their own

understandings of their own work and how they viewed or understood my interpretations of their work. Formally, at the end of the year during the last interview with the student participants, I used their journals as a variation of stimulated recall (Gass & Mackey, 2000) and an opportunity for reflection by them about their work. In addition, I shared my interpretations and understandings of their work with them. I encouraged them to add to or to critique my observations/readings and interpretations of their visual texts. All of the participants, except for Rosa due to absence, provided feedback to my findings which have been incorporated and cited within the findings chapter.

I began sessions by asking students about the choices they made about each visual text. A sample list of general questions that I asked during the member checking interviews at the end of the year is included in Appendix G. I will use a section from my session with Fabiola to demonstrate more closely how I conducted these sessions. Fabiola and I discussed her mural as one of her significant pieces. I began by asking her about her choices and she discussed them:

Tammy: What about this? Why the choices that you've made here?
 What is this mural? And for the murals, we specifically
 talked about them meaning and representing you, so?

Fabiola: Well, I guess what I was trying to say is when you try to
 get peace, you're going to get war.... And like there is, I
 put music as an example. I put rock because I like rock and
 I also like romantic music..... But those don't really go
 together as a person's personality....So, you've got to be
 either one or the other....So, I'm both. And uh, I, let' see, I
 did it down here, too, because I was born in the United
 States, but I don't think I'm an American. I consider myself
 a Mexican.... And then right here, I just had empty space
 so I just put hearts. (Fabiola, Member Checking Interview
 Part 2, 05.11.09, 327-344).

In this portion of our session, I began by asking about the “choices” she made and reminded her of how we discussed the murals in class at the time of textmaking, particularly, the “meaning and representing.” I left it open-ended. Fabiola then described what her symbols meant as we both looked at her text (Figure 5) in her journal. Fabiola went beyond simply telling me what was in

the text, but she actually told me how the icons metaphorically represented aspects of her cultural and personal identity. Specifically, she indicated the struggle between dual aspects of herself: “I put rock because I like rock and I also like romantic music. But those don’t



Figure 5 Fabiola's personal mural

really go together as a person’s personality....So, you’ve got to be one or the other.” As she continued, however, she tried to resolve the conflict, by stating, “So, I’m both.” She then went on to discuss her binational flag at the bottom of her text. Continuing to focus on the dichotomies that existed in her mind about herself in this text, of which she was aware, she said, “Let’s see, I did it down here, too, because I was born in the United States, but I don’t think I’m an American. I consider myself a Mexican.” The word, “too” indicated that she was aware that she emphasized this duality and the conflict between it more than once and was the overall theme of her text.

As I listened to Fabiola, I thought about her statement at the beginning, that to get peace there had to be war, and wondered about some of the figures of people she included in her text but which she did not discuss in her explanation of choices.

Therefore, I probed for more information about the figures and also commented on what I noticed so that we could examine these details more carefully together:

- Tammy: What about all these little figures of people?
- Fabiola: Those are supposed to be people holding hands, but it didn't work out....Like we've got to unite to be peaceful.
- Tammy: Hmm. Hmm. But somehow your hands aren't really touching.
- Fabiola: Yeah. 'Cause I don't know why. Everybody has a separate mind. It's not only what I think.
- Tammy: I think it is interesting because like over here closest to this idea of rock, almost, you do have two people holding hands.
- Fabiola: Well, yeah. Some people do think alike.
- Tammy: But just two out of all of these. I think that's interesting that you have that here based on what you said. And what is this?
- Fabiola: Hmm. It's kind of like division between a clash of people.
- Tammy: Like you said before, I'm kind of wondering, this rock music, is it reflective of American culture? And this is romantic music of Mexico? Or any romantic music, like pop romantic music?
- Fabiola: I only listen to romantic music in Spanish. But I listen to rock music in English and in Spanish.
- Tammy: But the romantic music is only in what?
- Together: Spanish. (Fabiola, Member Checking Interview Part 2, 05.11.09, 345-368).

As Fabiola provided information about the figures, I made comments about small details such as two of the figures out of all of the ones in the outer ring of the peace symbol holding hands. So, she just responded back to me that, "some people do agree." At times

like these, our analysis was more like a conversation with the participant and me just talking about the images. The fact that Fabiola used two forms of music, rock and romantic, made me think of them being representative of her two cultures. I sought clarity by asking her specifically about this, so I could understand better her choices and how even the music that she listened to represented two aspects of her cultural identity. During these member checking sessions, I worked to co-analyze the piece with the textmaker with each of us providing our own understandings of what we noticed. In some instances, I would provide my reading of the visual and have the textmaker respond to my reading if he/she was hesitant to analyze his/her image.

In informal conversations, I shared my interpretations and initial findings with the teacher participant and solicited her understandings and interpretations of class events. Formally, I provided my formative understandings and interpretations of events and engagements during our collaborative planning sessions and during the final teacher interview which was divided into three parts, with one part being a member checking of my interpretations/ and reading of student participants visual texts, as well, as a discussion about her participation in the study.

Data Management

I organized and analyzed data as I collected it. I created and maintained separate digital folders for each of my data sources: initial questionnaires, transcripts of audio/video-recordings of class sessions, researcher notes/fieldnotes, interviews, photographs, and student-generated texts. I primarily worked from digital files (which were password protected) in all stages of the research maintaining back-ups regularly. In addition, I photocopied student journals and maintained them in separate folders by

student and filed them chronologically to allow them to take their completed work home at the end of the year. I also, printed out the curriculum planning sessions and interviews with Esperanza and organized them chronologically by date within a separate notebook. In addition, I maintained each of these by date and filed them chronologically. Collected at the start of the study, research artifacts such as consent forms and initial questionnaires were kept in a separate binder. To ensure the protection and anonymity of the participants, the notebooks, audio/video tapes, and all documents and artifacts were locked in the researcher's cabinet with an unmarked key carried by the researcher.

Data Analysis





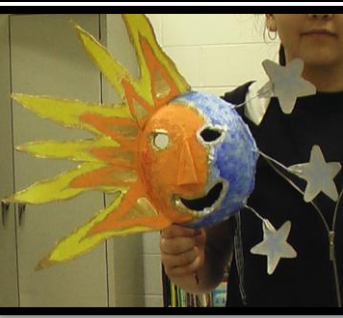

Data analysis was complex, multi-faceted, and layered. As such, I will describe in-depth. In general, I used methods of visual analysis (Aiello & Thurlow, 2006; Albers & Frederick, 2009; Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009, in press; Bang 2000; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), visual discourse analysis (VDA) (Albers, 2007b), and constant comparison (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss, 1987). Specifically, several semiotic principles guided analysis as I read students' visual, written, and multimodal texts: 1) intentionality (the textmaker chooses specific elements deliberately); 2) sufficiency and completeness (the textmaker determines what makes his representation complete); 3) experimentation and hypothesis testing (the textmaker controls materials and makes choices about use); 4) repetition and generativity (the textmaker uses formulas and rituals regarding details in visual texts); 5) the display of informational competence (the textmaker decides what information to include and how to do it); 6) recursiveness (the textmaker revisits techniques); and 7) ideological positioning (the textmaker creates texts within a given cultural context and that context plays an important role in the way the

textmaker makes meaning) (Albers & Murphy, 2000). Each of the methods of analysis are described below and contextualized through student-generated visual texts.

Methods of Visual Analysis

To allow the reader to fully understand the methods and the procedures which I used, I will describe my process by drawing upon six of Lluvia's visual texts as examples. Her texts are organized in Table 3.

Table 3 *Lluvia's Dualistic Notions of Self*

| | | |
|---|---|--|
|  |  |  |
| <p>Lluvia's initial visual representation of self</p> | <p>Lluvia's Picassoesque text [top layer]</p> | <p>Lluvia's personal mural</p> |
|  |  |  |
| <p>Lluvia's sculpture</p> | <p>Lluvia's mask</p> | <p>Lluvia's surrealist text</p> |

I used the concept of visual design to code the graphic, syntactic (structural) organization, semantics, and pragmatics of each visual text, using Kress and van Leeuwen's identification and analysis of areas of a canvas, classification types (narrative, analytical, conceptual), colors, size, and volume (Bang, 2000; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), gaze of the persons in text, modality (how realistically the message is expressed), and the affordance each medium allowed. I took a structuralist approach to reading images using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) grammar of visual design. I identified and analyzed size and volume of objects (to show interest), placement of object on the paper, clay, or paper mache canvas (four quadrants, Effective Center of Attention, or ECA), colors used and the intensity with which color was laid onto the canvas (light pastel lines vs. thick dark lines), orientation of the canvas (vertical/horizontal), repetition (to show emphasis), and representational conveyance to objects (likeness to real objects) or collections of objects that act as symbols or metaphors of abstract concepts (hearts as love/religion; flags as cultural identity/struggle; sun/moon as joy/depression; stars as dreams/hope). For each individual text, I examined the



Figure 6 Lluvia's initial visual representation of self

visual design using the elements mentioned. As an example, I describe this process using Lluvia's initial visual representation of self, Figure 6.

To begin, a visual text can be read according to the basic areas of the canvas shown in Figure 7. There are four quadrants that can be read

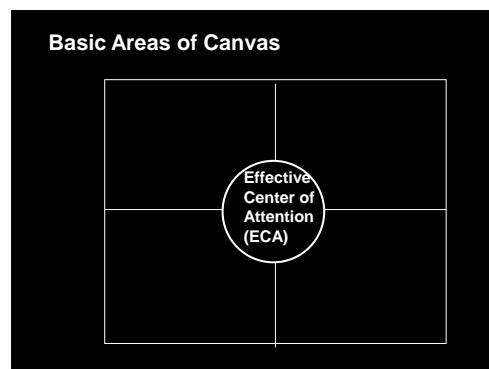


Figure 7 Basic Areas of Canvas

along their locations in the horizontal and vertical axes. The readers' eyes are first drawn to the Effective Center of Attention (ECA). In Figure 6, Lluvia created a sun and moon, both of which are combined to create the effective center of attention. She used nearly all the space on the page to create this sun/moon combination.

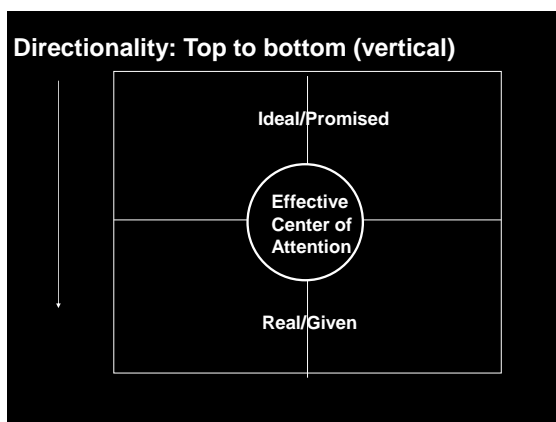


Figure 8 Vertical Directionality

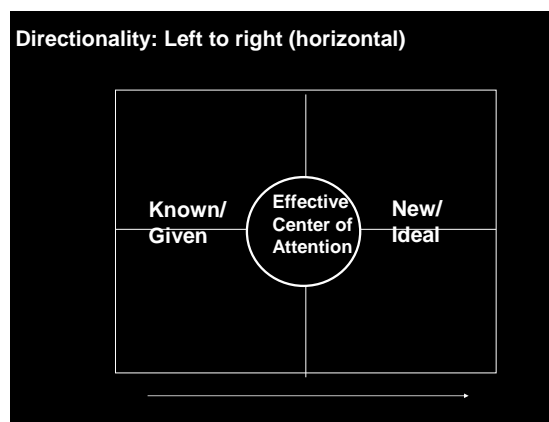


Figure 9 Horizontal Directionality

Next, visual texts can be read according to directionality, Figures 8 and 9. A top to bottom reading is referred to as a vertical reading and a left to right reading is referred to as a horizontal reading. When examining a visual text vertically, one reads the ideal or promised in the top half of the canvas and the real or given in the bottom half of the canvas. When examining a visual text horizontally, one reads the known or given on the left side of the canvas and the new or ideal on the right side of the canvas.

The orientation of Lluvia's initial text is horizontal, and thus, it is read from left to right. On the left side of the canvas, she drew the moon and colored it blue and gave it a face with a frown. Because it is on the left side, the moon represented Lluvia's given. At the time of textmaking, this given was sadness or depression which was signified by the darkness of the moon and the frown. On the right side of the canvas, she drew the sun and colored it vibrant shades of orange and red and gave it a face with a smile. Because it is on the right side, the sun represented Lluvia's new or ideal, also referred to as the

possible or the future. At the time of textmaking, this possible or new was joy, happiness, and life signified by the light of the sun and the smile on its face. Therefore, this combinatory image conveyed current sadness with the hope of happiness at the time of textmaking. This was Lluvia's first text, and this was her state of being at the beginning of the study, in the middle of August.

Along with orientation to the canvas, the reader may be positioned by the text maker through the use of gaze. When actors in the visual image look directly at the viewer or reader of the image, a demand to interact with the actor is created. A demand positions the reader in a particular way that forces the viewer to look and engage with the actor. If the gaze is turned off to the side or away from the viewer, an invitation to interact is offered rather than a demand. Lluvia drew the eyes of both the moon and sun so that they looked directly at the viewer, thus creating a demand for the viewer to interact. She forced the viewer to see both sides to her "personality," as she often called it. From the beginning of the study and throughout the study, she positioned the reader to interact with these two sides of self that she visually represented.

In addition to the orientation of the canvas and gaze, objects' size and volume can be considered along with the location of those objects in the canvas. Color, line, and shape provide additional elements that can be read for meaning. In Figure 6, Lluvia utilized nearly all of the space for this sun/moon combination. Her use of space gave the entire image considerable volume on the page. When I examined the two parts of the image, however, I noticed that the moon was actually smaller than the sun because of the huge rays that were drawn. The embellished rays of the sun symbolically represented life usually associated with the brightness and force of the light. The size and volume of the

sun compared to the moon suggested that Lluvia's hope for this joy and happiness was deep. The power of this light may one day overshadow the darkness she felt at the moment represented by the moon. The intensity of color that she used for both objects and the completeness of each suggested the significance that they both had for her.

Using the grammar of visual design, I was able to analyze each text for elements of significance to the textmaker and also for the meanings associated with those elements as they were located within individual texts. As I looked across texts, I was able to then document how certain elements may have been repeated across a person's texts or contained within others' texts. In addition, I was also able to determine whether or not a given element moved within the composition of the text and how that element, or semiotic resource, changed meaning for the textmaker over time.

Visual Discourse Analysis

In general, I used visual discourse analysis (VDA), Figure 10, which is both a theory and a method. As a method, VDA enables researchers to study the grammar of visual design, organization of elements within the visual text, the discourses that guide the intention and choices made by the textmakers. It distinctly enabled me to examine the discourses around which textmakers identified (Gee, 2003), how language was used to communicate (use of technique, design, color, and so on), how viewers could or did respond to the context of the text (composition), and

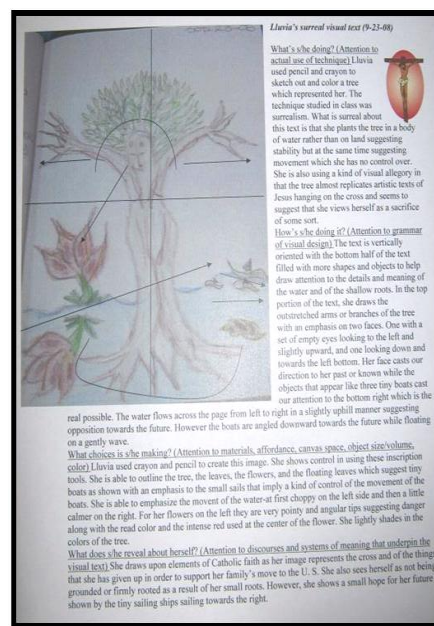


Figure 10 Visual Discourse Analysis of Lluvia's surrealism text

how art acted as a force on viewers to encourage particular actions or beliefs (use and organization of image). Said differently, VDA enabled me to analyze multiple communication and ideological systems at work within and across each participant's texts (N = 13) and across all 117 texts.

To get at the meanings within an individuals' set of texts across time and at the meanings within groups' sets of texts across time, I used the following questions to guide my analysis: What's s/he doing? (Attention to actual use of technique); How's s/he doing it? (Attention to grammar of visual design); What choices is s/he making? (Attention to materials, affordance, canvas space, object size/volume, color); How does s/he organize visual information? (Quadrants of information); How does s/he use the canvas? (Use of space, size and placement of objects, position of viewer); What does s/he reveal about herself? (Attention to discourses and systems of meaning that underpin the visual text).

For example, when I read Lluvia's surrealist visual text (Figure 11), the concept being studied in the class at the time, I noted that she used pencil and crayon to sketch out and color a tree which represented her. She showed control in using these inscription tools. These tools allowed her to outline the tree, the leaves, the flowers, and the floating



Figure 11 Lluvia's surrealism text

leaves, or tiny sailboats. She heavily outlined in pencil the sails of the leaf boats to imply that she had some control of the direction and movement of the boats, and that they were not simply floating or drifting aimlessly towards the unknown.

What was surreal about this text was the way she planted the tree in a body of water rather than on land. This choice suggested stability but at the same time suggested movement which she had no control over, such as her move from Mexico to the U.S. The text was vertically oriented with the bottom half of the text filled with more shapes and objects to help draw attention to the details and meaning of the water and of the shallow roots. The vectors from her downcast face directed the reader's attention to her past or known while the vectors of the objects that appeared like three tiny boats directed the reader's attention to the bottom right which is the real possible. The water flowed across the page from left to right in a slightly uphill manner which suggested opposition towards the future. However, the boats were angled downward towards the future while floating gently on a wave.

She used a vertical orientation of the canvas. In the top portion of the text, she drew the outstretched arms or branches of the tree with an emphasis on two faces, one with a set of empty eyes looking to the left and slightly upward, and one looking down and towards the left bottom. I interpreted this as a visual allegory in that the physical representation of the tree with outstretched arms and head hanging towards the left bottom of the canvas replicated artistic texts of Christ hanging on the cross. To check this interpretation, I checked online for images of crucifixes and found one in Microsoft clipart. I attached the Microsoft clipart image to my analysis page (see Figure 10) to view her image beside this typical crucifix image. She drew upon elements of Catholic faith and the emphasis on the symbolic meaning of the cross as sacrifice. Her image represented the things that she had given up in order to support her family's move to the U. S. She also saw herself and represented herself as not being grounded or firmly rooted

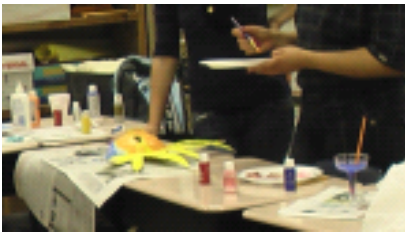


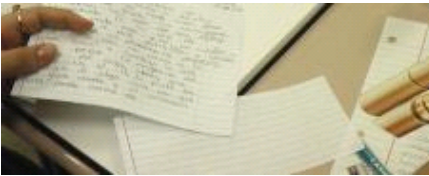
as represented by her small roots. However, she conveyed a small hope for her future signified by the tiny sailing ships moving towards the right, into the unknown.

In the manner that I have described and shown in Figure 10, I conducted visual discourse analysis for all of the students' individual texts. Afterwards, I was able to then compare an individual's texts across time and compare all students' texts across technique and time. Within this process, I also triangulated my findings with written and oral evidence from the participants' journals and transcripts of class sessions and interviews. In the next section, I describe my procedures for constant comparison.

Constant Comparison

Procedures in the analysis of visual data. In the previous section, I discussed how I analyzed each text. In this section, I talk about how I examined each participant's texts over time, and across genres of texts (Picasso, masks, and so on). First, I studied all texts that each participant created chronologically (first to last text created), and photos taken of their processes (Table 4).

Table 4 *Students' Processes*

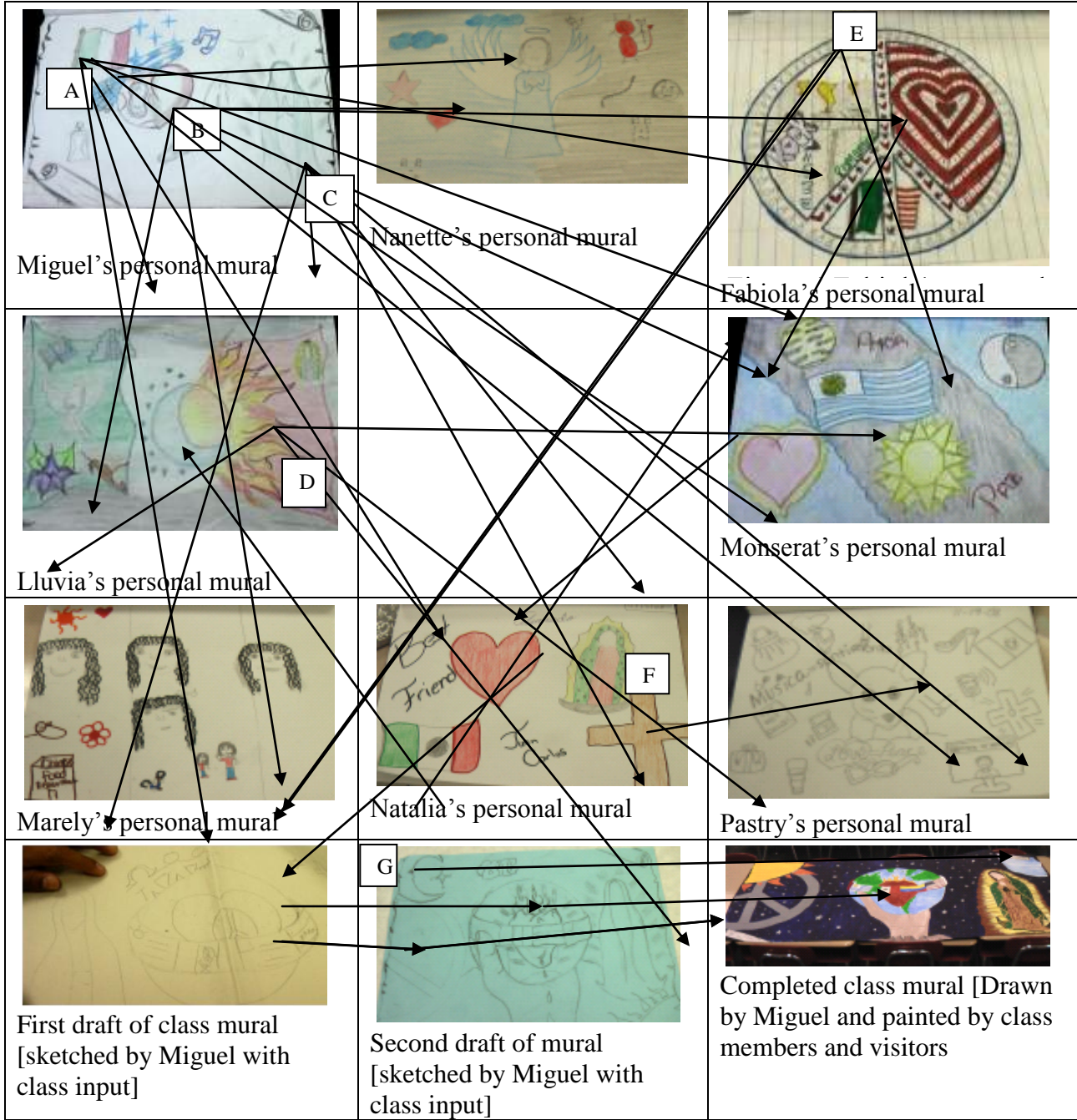
| | |
|---|--|
|  |  |
| Students working on masks | Student working on sculpture |
|  |  |
| Miguel working on class mural | Student placing work in journal |

I studied each participant's texts together and made notes on what I noticed about their use of visual elements in terms of the grammar of visual design (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) and visual discourse analysis (Albers, 2007b) as previously described. After I analyzed individual participant's texts chronologically, I then placed all of the texts created by an individual participant and placed them alongside each other, and looked specifically for visual information included within and across texts. Specifically, I looked for elements that cut across texts. In this way, I could see how identities became "sedimented" within texts. As the interest or identities of practice became located in the visual text, a sort of history of the text-maker was documented. The visual texts when collected over time became traces of the text-maker's development as a literate individual and as a social individual (Rowell & Pahl, 2007). In essence, these elements became signatures of a sort through their re-marking (Albers & Frederick, 2009). The questions which I asked allowed me to code for performance and negotiation of identity and meaning.

Following each individual participant's analysis of visual texts, I took one type of text created (Picasso, for example) and studied this genre across all nine students. From previous work (Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, in press), I analyzed each set of texts for visual conversations that may have taken place. Visual conversations occur when students share visual elements, including objects, color, directionality of objects, orientation of objects, size, shape, and so on. Specifically, they draw from each others' texts and integrate shared elements into their own texts (Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, in press). Koch's concept of "recurrent pictorial elements" (cited in Sonneson, 1988, p. 38) helped me understand the cultural information associated with objects and understand the individual and collective

discourses that emerged within and across texts, within and across groups, and within and across techniques.

Table 5 *Visual Conversations of Personal and Class Murals*



To do this, I inserted photos of the texts into a table which represented the seating arrangements present when the texts were created when I had access to that information. (On occasion, I was not present when the texts were begun or created.) I first coded the texts for schemes that were present across texts and then made note of where elements were repeated and how they were linked across all of the texts if at all. I used arrows to show how recurrent pictorial elements, or specific icons, were linked across the set of texts. Table 5 is an example of this process.

Following the scheme and visual conversation analysis across all students within a particular genre, I divided the images by genre into the two groupings that had evolved over the course of the year—those of the seniors and those of the non-seniors to code what kinds of interactions were taking place within each of these groupings. I studied this complex set of notes across each type of text created, and generated themes that cut across participants' texts, including their use of art technique across texts, use of colors, comfort with technique, visual presentation of self, conversations, schemes, and discourses, among others.

Finally, I examined, specifically the mural genre (See Table 5 and Figure 12) as a unique and specific analysis because all students created personal murals in which they were supposed to identify a cause with which they identified or would want to work to create change.



Figure 12 Lluvia's personal mural

After creating and sharing their individual murals, they discussed things that were important to them as a group of young Latins and established one issue that they could unite to effect change. The issue that they agreed upon was unification of Latin groups across the world. A class mural was created where one student, Miguel, drew drafts of the

mural and then the final mural with input from the other students in the class. Then, all students in the class and a few visitors worked together to paint the various parts of the mural which corresponded to things which were of interest to them. Therefore, this activity was an example of third space, the space between experience, community, and school. Individual ideas from individual murals necessarily crossed over into the group mural and where the final text was actually created by the entire class. In addition, unlike other texts created throughout the year, three drafts of the group mural were created, including the final. To note how these texts changed and to what extent the individual murals affected the creation of this text was worthy of special attention.

In my coding of the mural texts, I asked myself questions such as: What aspects of individual identities documented in the individual murals factored into the final mural? How did students' critiques of world, society, community, others, and self manifest in the individual and group murals? What communication systems were noted and given value to communicate their causes? What discourses were evident in individual and group murals? How were students' interactions in the world, society, and communities reflected in the individual and group murals? From these questions, I coded the texts in a manner similar to the process described previously.

Procedures in the analysis of written data. To analyze written data (participants' journal reflections, audio and video transcripts from curriculum planning sessions and selected class sessions, transcripts of interviews, initial questionnaires, participants' essays, poems, fiction stories, class newspaper articles, and final reflection papers), I again, as with the visual data, was recursive in my approach, using constant comparison. I first listened to the audio and video files and then created transcripts from them. With files that were in

Spanish, I worked side by side with a bilingual translator to transcribe and translate for accuracy of participant expression. I then used open coding to code them. For example, “visual conversations” was Category 16, and I used a separate page to document the sub-categories that appeared within this category and where in the data it appeared. Table 6 shows this portion of the coding from transcripts with Esperanza which confirmed codes in my visual analysis.

Table 6 *Codes for Category 16 “Visual Conversation” from Esperanza’s Data*

| |
|---|
| Visual Conversation (I3, 128-1834) (I3, 2298-2300) (ECPS3, 379-388) |
| /What prompts the visual conversations: self-esteem (I3, 1855-1859) |
| / Visual conversations Lluvia (I3, 1923-1926) |
| /Duality in identity/Two parts of self (I3, 2048) (I3, 2002-2012) |
| / Senior group (I3, 1049-1055) (I3, 1870-1871)/ /Non-senior group (I3, 1056-1066) (I3, 1875-1876) Rosa-group connections (I3, 2096-2100) |

I then returned to the video and audiotapes to view the videotapes with the transcripts in front of me to note moments of interest, collaborative talk about process, reflection and analysis of their own and others’ visual texts (both professional and those of class members), and interactions of class members during meaning making and paying attention to positioning and power relations. I confirmed themes generated in my initial written analysis, as well as expanded on themes noted through students’ physical and vocal expressions on the

videotapes. This viewing enabled me to confirm or discard themes I found in the written data.

After this, I studied both written and visual data sets together, confirming (or not) the analysis in the visual data with the statements made by the participants. To do this, I inserted portions of transcripts and reflections from journals alongside digital photographs of participants' visual texts. I worked within these digital, multimodal transcripts to examine and record patterns in their visual representations, oral representations, and written representations. Once this data was analyzed, I compared these findings with those generated from visual data. When I could confirm a finding based on this analysis, I recorded it. There are multiple interpretations possible (Albers, 2007b), and my analysis represents but one of many readings dependent on multiple schemas brought to the reading by the reader.

Confidentiality and Ethics

To ensure confidentiality, participants chose pseudonyms, and my researcher's journal and other sensitive data were not left in the research site for anyone to find. In addition, my interactions with participants and at the research site were discussed only with the participants and peer debriefers. I used discretion with regard to the events that occurred during the study.

With regard to ethics, I provided participants who volunteered for the study with an informed consent form that outlined what would occur during the study, potential risks and benefits to them, time involved in participating in the study, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. As this is an interpretive study, participants collaborated with me to construct findings. As a result, the participants were not exposed

to any harmful risks and were encouraged to voice their views through member checking discussed in the following section (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness is judged on four criteria: credibility, transferability dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I will next discuss these four criteria and how they were utilized in this study.

Credibility

Credibility refers to whether the participant's construction of reality is reflected by the researcher's representation of that construction (Schwandt, 2001). It is the nature of qualitative research to yield multiple interpretations of an event because reality is constructed as events are interpreted and responded to by participants. The following procedures increased the credibility of the study and were used in this study: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing (Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Prolonged engagement. Prolonged engagement requires a researcher to spend an extensive amount of time in the setting being studied in order to properly account for effects such as researcher bias and the desire of the participants to please the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). With prolonged engagement, trust and rapport can be developed so that a richer description of the context may emerge. This ten-month study conducted over the course of an academic year from August 2008- June 2009 provided enough time to fully develop an understanding of my participants, their meaning making practices, and their negotiations of identity and to be able to provide a rich description of those practices and negotiations for my reader.

Persistent observation. Persistent observation prompts a researcher to focus on specific relevant issues and examine them deeply (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process allows the researcher to decide what is most important in addressing the research problem and to focus on those things. In this study, I collected and analyzed data simultaneously. Data was collected and analyzed weekly. As categories and themes emerged, I checked and refined my findings by allowing my participants to collaborate and provide perspectives that helped me to fine tune my observations throughout the study. As themes were confirmed or refined, I documented them in the researcher's journal. (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Triangulation. Triangulation involves examining information from several sources. Using triangulation helps the researcher make more accurate determinations about themes that emerge from the data. To confirm findings, multiple methods, data sources, or researchers should be used (Merriam, 1998). For this study, triangulation was achieved by first the collection and analysis of multiple sources of data which were collected multiple times (as previously described) and also by using methods of visual discourse analysis alongside the constant comparison method often used in interpretive work.

Member Checking. To provide the most significant means of demonstrating credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the interpretations I drew were shared with participants so that they could provide feedback on the findings. Member checks occurred in this study informally and formally to encourage participants' to voice their own understandings of reality and to co-construct their realities with me throughout the

study. Informal checking occurred weekly in the form of informal discussions; formal checking occurred at the end of the study as previously described.

Transferability

In qualitative research, the goal is to describe with clarity and great detail the findings of the study so that rather than generalize to the larger population the reader is able to understand clearly how the findings were derived (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The reader will then be able to determine if the findings of this study may apply to their own. To enhance the transferability of this study, I only inserted relevant and supporting quotations from and visual images created by the participants to support my findings. As a model for my own work, Albers (1996) provided a galleria of visual images in her dissertation study which enabled me to recognize how her work was transferable to my own.

Dependability

Dependability is linked to accountability and can be documented by keeping an audit trail. This audit trail tracks the researcher's decisions and techniques (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I maintained an audit trail in the form of a researcher's journal that contained memos, data sources, and fieldnotes along with records of decisions I made and the rationale for those decisions. Coding statements were created as well.

Confirmability

In this qualitative study, confirmability, the degree to which the findings can be derived from the data, was achieved through the audit trail, triangulation, and member checking. These approaches, as previously described, were used in this study.

Writing Up of the Study

As other feminist researchers (Albers, 1996; Lather, 1991, 1992; Reinharz & Davidman, 1992) before me, I, too, struggled with the notion that those with whom I develop rapport and relationships as I go about my inquiry may also at times be held as objects of study so that I may eventually accomplish my goal of completing the dissertation. In writing up the study, I acknowledge that ultimately I have the last word in telling the stories of my participants' lived experiences, and by stating this, I make clear and visible the power and privilege that my degree affords me. With this power and privilege, I become responsible to those who have shared their lives, their time, and their stories with me. My goal is to convey the co-constructions of our shared meanings of their lives.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS:

THE SHAPING OF AN ARTS-INFUSED MULTIMODAL SPANISH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS CURRICULUM

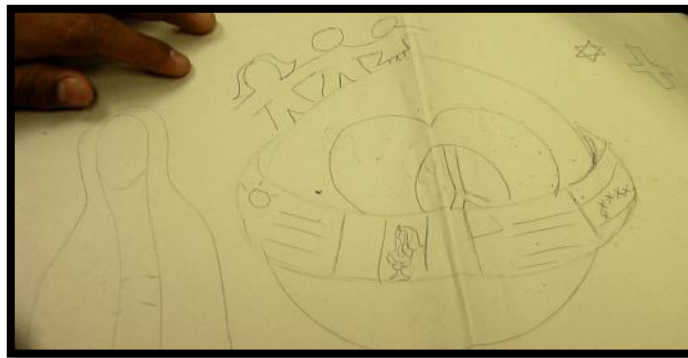


Figure 13 First draft of class mural

“To conceive the arts in relation to curriculum is to think of a deepening and expanding mode of tuning-in. There have to be disciplines, yes, and a growing acquaintance with the structures of knowledge, but at the same time, there have to be the kinds of grounded interpretations possible only to those willing to abandon already constituted reason, willing to feel and to imagine, to open the windows and go in search.” (Greene, 1995, p.104)

This dissertation study aimed to understand how an arts-infused multimodal curriculum could be co-designed by the researcher and teacher participant of an SNS class to provide multiple paths to making meaning and negotiating identity. A second purpose was to examine the discourses around meaning making and identity which emerged within the visual texts across the course of the year. Greene’s opening quote echoes another purpose: an exploration of how the inclusion of the arts in a SNS curriculum would *deepen* and *expand* our *mode of tuning-in*. In other words, what more

could the SNS curriculum offer students than simply instruction in grammar?

In this chapter and the next, I present my findings related to these research questions:

1. What factors were considered as the teacher participant and the researcher co-planned this arts-infused multimodal curriculum, and how did the consideration of those factors shape the curriculum?
2. How did student participants enrolled in this SNS class negotiate meaning and identity as they worked within this arts-infused multimodal SNS curriculum?
3. What discourses around students' meaning making practices and identities emerged within their visual texts over time and across texts?

Five key findings emerged from the data: 1) The teacher participant and researcher negotiated a critical-care pedagogy as they co-designed and implemented an arts-infused multimodal SNS curriculum; 2) actual participation in and creation of visual and multimodal texts shaped the classroom community; (3) negotiating and making meaning occurred through the flexible use of sign systems; 4) students worked through understandings of self; and 5) personally relevant discourses emerged within individual and group texts.

In this chapter, I answer my first research question by describing the SNS curriculum that Esperanza and I co-designed, how we co-designed the curriculum, and the first finding. The intent is to provide context for the study and for the findings which answer the second and third research questions.

Esperanza and I considered teacher needs, student needs, materials, time, and general State DOE standards. As co-designers, we were able to draw upon each other's unique backgrounds, philosophies, beliefs, and understandings of language and literacy curriculum. This negotiation occurred through a symbiotic relationship. We each contributed our "distinctive and complementary abilities" (Eisner, 2002, p. 7). Specifically, Esperanza brought prior experience teaching SNS courses, strong pedagogy of care, and cultural and linguistic identification with and an understanding of her SNS students. I brought prior experience designing and implementing an arts-infused, multimodal ESOL curriculum, expertise in visual discourse analysis, and a critical literacy perspective. Together, we negotiated a critical-care pedagogy as we designed and implemented an arts-infused, multimodal SNS curriculum.

Overview of Co-Designing an Arts-Infused, Multimodal SNS Curriculum

We usually conducted our curriculum planning sessions in one of our classrooms after school. We used the following materials: student text, teacher's edition, set of art transparencies, and guide to the transparencies. When needed, we used the internet for content to support the units of study. In general, together, we discussed the units that we wanted to study first, and then discussed ideas about the content, the presentation, the activities, and how we were going to integrate the arts within the lessons and units. We had seven planning sessions. We worked closely on the class layout to ensure that I would be present during the arts-integration component of the lessons. Esperanza and I agreed that it was important for me to support the teaching of visual discourse analysis and demonstrate effective questioning strategies when students read professional artists' works and each other's visual texts. Esperanza had little knowledge of these methods.

During our first planning session, we went through the entire textbook and organized the units based on the class membership. Esperanza stressed the need to include every student's home country, and the need to link all Latin histories to Spain and to the United States. Esperanza thought it would be best to begin with a study of Spain since Spain influenced many Latin countries and the Spanish language originated in Spain. Next, we studied Latinos in the United States to situate the students' understandings of their own lives with their moves or their families' moves to the U.S. We then moved to the individual countries of study. Table 7 is an overview of the units and the arts-integration projects that were used to teach the concepts studied in each unit. In addition, abbreviated lesson plans for each unit appear in Appendix C.

Over the school year, we met to plan the units of study. While focusing on content and engagements that would support content learning, I worked with Esperanza on learning the language of visual design and we often rehearsed the reading of visual texts and the kinds of questions she could ask to get students to move towards deeper analyses of visual, written, and spoken texts. The details and data supporting this process are presented in the following section.

Table 7 Overview of Units of Study and Related Projects

| Unit | Literature Connection | Concepts/Content | Arts-integration activities/techniques/projects |
|-------|--|---|--|
| Spain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Don Quixote” • “Picasso” • “Goya” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idealism • Realism • Surrealism • Cubism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inkblot • Picasso • Surrealist • Realist • Culminating Project: Poster project focusing on an economic, social, political, cultural, aspect of the country |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| | | | accompanied by a report and oral presentation |
| United States | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Cesar Chavez” • “El Movimiento Chicano” • “La Ofrenda” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicano Movement • Labor Movements • Political Activism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Murals • Culminating Project: Class Mural focusing on a cause which the class members would like to support |
| Mexico and Guatemala | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Gente del Mundo y “Mexico: Tierra de contrastes” • “Diego Rivera” • “Frida Khalo” • “Guatemala” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Issues • Economic Issues • Racism • Visual Design • Analyzing Visual Discourse | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culminating Project: Students work in groups to create a morning news show video and a newspaper reporting on the awards ceremony for best morning news show |
| Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jose Marti’s poetry • Eliseo Diego’s poetry • Histories of Cuba, Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poetry elements • Sensory images • Multimodal texts • Continue developing visual discourse analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culminating Project: Students create an autobiographical Sculpture and Poetry using techniques from artists and poets in Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico |
| Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Chile | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Histories of Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Chile • Online reading of “Quino” and “Mafalda” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drama • Political cartoons • Metaphor • Dialogue • Social critique | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culminating Project: Students create a caricature of themselves using the <i>Mafalda</i> cartoon as technique. Draw a comic strip with themselves interacting with <i>Mafalda</i> |
| Colombia, Panamá, and Venezuela | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Histories of Colombia, Panamá, and Venezuela • Online research for Los Diablos | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Issues • Social Issues • Visual Design | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culminating Project: Students create an autobiographical mask |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|--|
| | de Yare festival | | |
|--|---------------------|--|--|

By the second planning session, I had interviewed the students as follow up on their initial responses to the questionnaire. I wanted to understand what the students' expected to get out of the course, what their backgrounds were with language and literacy, and what experiences they had had with new literacies the better to respond to their needs. I also asked them about the length of their stay and the length of schooling in Spanish in their native countries. They held three expectations for the class. The first was to co-develop Spanish and English for academic purposes. For example, Fabiola explained:

To better help you on your Spanish and English skills 'cause I mean it is one thing to be a native Spanish speaker and be better in Spanish but then again since we are in the United States we have to be better in English too.... See 'cause in Spanish, I don't know the history, the science, I don't know the explanations to those in Spanish, but I know them in English so I can translate them, so I understand them both....I can read, well, not like super well...I can read and write pretty well in Spanish. In English I can write the same. But sometimes I get confused. I don't know where I'll start reading in Spanish, but it's really in English. So, I get confused at times. (Fabiola, Interview 1, 09.19.08, 72-105)

Here, Fabiola acknowledged the importance of both Spanish and English, "since we are in the United States." She gets "confused at times" when she is trying to find the right word, and sometimes she "won't find the word for this one, so [she'll] have to think about them in Spanish or in English." Her statement stressed just how intertwined the two languages are for her. Therefore, they both need to be developed.

Another student, Natalia, expressed the desire to learn more about the mechanics of writing standard Spanish. Natalia suggested that the Spanish she used is not the "real"

Spanish and devalued the colloquial form of Spanish used in her everyday interactions at home. She indicated that she wanted to write better in Spanish and said that it was important to her “Because I really...I really don’t write the real Spanish we use. Like I don’t use the correct words....Just the one we use at home. Like I don’t write it, I don’t write it the right way (Natalia, Interview 1, 09.29.08, 43-53). Natalia’s encounters in American schools with students from a wide range of Latin cultures made her aware that she did not speak standard Spanish at home. For her, the SNS class should and did provide her with a curriculum centered on the development of standard written Spanish.

The second expectation was to learn about Spanish cultures and histories. For some students, they believed that the SNS curriculum should revolve more around Spanish culture and history rather than on Spanish language development. This view was most often shared by students who had most recently left their native countries, were further along in their education in their native language Spanish, and already felt confident in their Spanish language abilities. Miguel explained, “I think it’s to get involved with everybody and for the problems of the Hispanic people. To show all the cultures they are, that’s it’s not just one culture around the world, that there are different kinds and different traditions. And like different kinds of religions” (Miguel, Interview 1, 09.19.08, 52-56). Similarly, Monserat also suggested that a primary aspect of the class should be to understand more about the variety of cultures:

Asa cada sobre la cultura Hispana que no sé mucho. Sobre cultura Española sobre cosas como por ejemplo examen...ahora de los pinturas de los cultura Española, simplemente. [About the Hispanic culture that I don’t know a lot. About Spain’s culture, about things like, for example, examine now the paintings of the, of the Spanish culture, simply.] (Monserat, Interview 1, 09.28.08, 20-25)

However, what influenced Monserat's view is how she saw herself as a fluent Spanish speaker and writer. She had confidence in her writing ability in Spanish and preferred to communicate in writing rather than in speaking, "Creo que me expreso mejor en escribiendo que hablando" [I think that I can express myself better in writing than speaking] (Monserat, Interview, 09.28.09, 98-99). She was not very representative of the other students. She believed she would learn more about culture and the arts than language in the class.

Like Miguel and Monserat, Lluvia had recently arrived in the United States and was more advanced in her education and in the development of her academic Spanish. She also expected to learn more about different Spanish cultures: "Principalmente, conocer un poco más diferentes culturas. [Principally, to know a little more about different cultures.] (Lluvia, Interview 1, 09.29.08, 8-16). All three of these students were part of the senior affinity group and were more interested in learning more about the variety of Spanish cultures and the histories of those countries than in working on language development.

The third expectation was to maintain Spanish language and a connection to Spanish heritage. Students who had been in the U.S. for a long time and viewed themselves as more proficient in English than in Spanish wanted to develop their Spanish language more fully. They did not want to lose their Spanish heritage. Pastry expected this of the SNS curriculum. In the excerpt from my interview with her, she expressed a deep desire to maintain a connection to her Spanish heritage by developing and maintaining her Spanish language proficiency:

[Maintaining Spanish is important] because I want to talk fluently, and also when I have my children, I want them to be able to speak,

too...Because I feel we should keep talking like the language we were supposed to speak. And it's also good for them because in the future they would know two languages. (Pastry, Interview 1, 10.01.08, 31-64)

Pastry did not simply want to develop her Spanish purely for personal gain; she envisioned that she would be able to pass this knowledge to her children so that they could maintain their cultural ties. Marely, similarly, emphasized developing her reading and writing skills in Spanish while learning about Spanish cultures:

I expect to write better and read better and to learn stuff about other countries and cultures.... I think it's important for you to learn how other people from other countries live, and like it's going to help me in the future to write better and to read better in Spanish. (Marely, Interview 1, 09.29.08, 31-50)

Marely wanted to develop her literacy skills in Spanish and her knowledge of Spanish heritage and cultures. She, too, believed that the development of this knowledge would somehow help her in the future.

I shared the interview results with Esperanza, and we made sure to include lessons that directly reflected the students' stated expectations and needs. The curriculum was shaped as much by the formal planning sessions as it was by the informal day-to-day enactment, revisions, and negotiations during the class sessions. This curriculum was not simply a document, a plan, or a set of standards, but actually was a lived and embodied real-time creation. In other words, the SNS curriculum was ultimately responsive to the immediate needs of the students and was shaped as much by them as by us. Each student's ideas of the purpose of the course influenced his or her participation and performance in the class.

Teacher Participant and Researcher Negotiated a Critical-Care Pedagogy as They Co-Designed and Implemented an Arts-infused Multimodal SNS Curriculum

Three sub-themes emerged as Esperanza and I negotiated a critical-care pedagogy during the co-construction and implementation of the arts-infused, multimodal SNS curriculum: 1) Esperanza's enactment of care pedagogy 2) Tammy's enactment of critical pedagogy, and 3) the releasing of tensions and weaving of the two pedagogies.

Esperanza's Enactment of Care Pedagogy



Figure 14 Side 1 of Esperanza's Pyramid Sculpture



Figure 15 Side 2 of Esperanza's Pyramid Sculpture



Figure 16 Side 3 of Esperanza's Pyramid Sculpture



Figure 17 Side 4 of Esperanza's Pyramid Sculpture

To understand why and how Esperanza enacted a pedagogy of care, one needs only understand her background. A window into how Esperanza viewed herself and how she wanted others to see her is represented in her pyramid sculpture she created in April along with the students. She chose a pyramid to represent herself and included specific symbols and icons that represent her personality and what was important to her in her life at the time. Figures 14, 15, 16, and 17 are the four sides to Esperanza's sculpture. In Figure 14, Esperanza created the Eye of Horus which was a powerful Egyptian symbol used to protect the wearer from evil. Using this eye signified a positive perspective and outlook for Esperanza. In Figure 15, Esperanza painted a beach scene with palm tree and

blue ocean along with an artist's palette and paintbrush. Esperanza dreamed of retiring and living near the ocean. She saw herself pursuing the visual arts. In Figure 16, Esperanza drew four symbols which represented things about her. She used a smiley face, a heart, flower, and Chinese symbol. Together, these symbols represented her as a loving, happy person. In Figure 17, Esperanza included three symbols—a snake, a letter M, and a yin yang symbol. Both the snake and the yin yang symbol represent duality and the search for balance which is her ultimate quest.

Esperanza was a middle-aged Venezuelan-born Latin American who had lived in the United States for nearly twenty years. Her husband was a monolingual English speaking American, and her children were American and also bilingual. She had either taught Spanish or ESOL in the U.S. because cultural differences made her think she could not work with monolingual American students. She most identified with second language learners because of her own experiences as an immigrant.

She first came to the U.S., to complete her studies in Physics at Middle Tennessee State University. Esperanza recalled how moving to the U.S. affected her and why she was able to relate to ESOL students,

I think I can relate well with the ESOL students because I was in their shoes once. I took an intensive English course in Venezuela before coming to the United States, and I felt that I was proficient in the English language. However, I found myself in a small town in Tennessee with no language. I was unable to understand most of what people were telling me, and the few things I was able to understand required a great amount of mental energy to process. Sometimes I just smiled and said, “Yes” to avoid looking dumb. Even a simple task like ordering food at a restaurant became a tiring chore. I remember times when my head hurt from trying to understand and speak. I felt that I could cry if I heard another word in English. You see? I was an adult, I was motivated, and it was my choice to come to the United States... So, if I felt like that, I could only guess how my students feel (Personal communication, 08.15.08).

In this statement, Esperanza expressed the “tiring chore” of “understand[ing] and speak[ing]” in her second language, English, and how she tried to avoid “looking dumb.” These aspects of second language acquisition and Esperanza’s firsthand experience of them as an adult learner opened a window into her students’ struggles as they, too, attempted to learn English. Esperanza implied that the journey for these students is even more arduous given the fact that they may be more unprepared than she was for culture- and linguistic shock since she had “choice.”

After graduating, she got married and started to work as a bilingual assistant in a local school system in Tennessee. She fell in love with the teaching profession and decided to become a teacher. Esperanza taught in Tennessee for six years and then moved to Georgia where she began working in Landings Public Schools.

Over the past fourteen years with Landings Public Schools, she worked primarily as an ESOL teacher, and has developed extensive connections to the local Latin community; she has taught many of its sons and daughters. The families had come to trust her.

Esperanza was also a spiritually oriented individual drawing upon an eclectic mix of beliefs including Catholicism and new age philosophies. Consequently, she was very accepting of other people’s beliefs and particularly focused on positive thinking and quick resolution of conflict. Esperanza was also a perfectionist, yet she did not expect this same perfectionism in others.

Esperanza was also a self-proclaimed artist. She had an art studio in her home where she painted replicas of famous paintings. She had always incorporated a crafts-

oriented approach in her classes because of her artistic interest. Until this study, however, she had not fully integrated the arts into literacy learning.

Esperanza's vision of the SNS curriculum was clear. She wanted to respect the knowledge, the language, the culture, and the experiences her students brought with them. She wanted to build upon these assets while helping them to overcome their day-to-day hardships by offering a sanctuary where they could be themselves. Esperanza's vision included space for (a) recognizing and responding to the unique needs of her SNS students, (b) offering sanctuary, and (c) honoring students.

Recognizing and Responding to the Unique Needs of SNS students. From the outset of the project, Esperanza discussed the importance of having this SNS course for Latino students at Landings High School. Many of the students from the relatively small Latino population were new immigrants or first generation Americans. There was a need for a course that would help them develop their academic Spanish and engage them fully. Prior to instituting the SNS course, most Spanish speaking ESOL students were funneled into a Spanish foreign language (SFL) class and often grouped together. This usually led to conflict because the SFL class was geared more towards developing oral and written beginning Spanish with very little attention to literacy or to developing a broad cultural knowledge of Latin countries. Esperanza explained why the SFL course was not really appropriate for her students:

In a foreign language class, students are learning how to conjugate verbs and learning basic vocabulary. These kids have that. They have that because they are native speakers. The thing that they need is the literature, the grammar, and other skills. So, they don't read literature in those other foreign language classes. So, a class for them would include these things. (Esperanza, Initial Interview, 08.14.08, 20-24)

Esperanza thought that SFL courses were not designed with the native Spanish speaker in mind because the courses operated on the assumption that the student is an empty vessel waiting to be filled. Esperanza believed the native Spanish speaking students had many experiences and were ready for different learning. They needed interactions which expanded the language, knowledge, experiences, and culture they already possessed.

Esperanza believed that the SFL courses did not meet the needs of the SNS students for social reasons as well. In many academic classes throughout the day, she stated, Latino students experienced marginalization when they attempted to speak Spanish. For example, Fabiola's statement that opened this dissertation, addressed her desire to express her knowledge in Spanish. However, Spanish was not encouraged in other classes. Noteworthy was her classmates' statement to her, "Fabiola, we're in America" (Fabiola, Member Checking Interview, 04.15.09, 89-103). Tensions arose from this marginalization when native Spanish speaking students were placed into the SFL classes. The native Spanish speaking students became bored and ended up disrupting classes. According to Esperanza, "They didn't feel like they were learning in the foreign class. They were just having fun. Making fun of the way the Americans would pronounce. But they were not getting anything out of it" (Initial Interview, 08.14.08, 211-214). Esperanza suggested that it was a matter of "kind of get even. You laugh at me in English. I'll laugh at you in Spanish. I think it was part of it" (Initial Interview, 08.14.08, 218-220).

By offering the SNS courses, many of the previously discussed issues were resolved and Esperanza suggested that "this native speaker's class is going to give them a

sense of culture and who they are. Something that they left” (Esperanza, Initial Interview, 8.14.08, 26-39). She also added that she wanted them to gain an appreciation of “the literature and the beauty of our language. The love for reading” (28-32). With so many students leaving their home countries at early ages, they had little opportunity to develop a thorough understanding of their histories. Esperanza wanted them to develop that knowledge and connection to the places they had left.

Esperanza also did more than recognize the unique needs of her students; she responded to their needs by supporting the development of their language and literacy skills, providing a curriculum that focused on a variety of Hispanic cultures, and by emphasizing student success over grades. She also allowed for freedom and choice in the projects and assignments that were offered because there had not been an established curriculum and also because she believed that students created their best work when allowed to “run with it.” In describing her curricular approach from the previous years, she indicated:

We do it all. Writings. We’re doing discussion writings. Journals. We do a lot of readings. Mostly in the classroom. We have poetry. We read poetry. We have discussions. We have book discussions. They don’t like big books because some of them came from Mexico and were second, third grade, maybe sixth grade, and their reading levels are not that high in their own language. So, we’re trying to develop that and include short books and short stories that they can get into. (Esperanza, Initial Interview, 08.14.08, 68-75)

She was able to plan for their success by knowing what would work for them, understanding their skill levels, and realizing that it would take time to help them develop the skills they needed. Esperanza also understood where her students were on the continuum of bilingualism and biliteracy, and as a result, she was able to meet each one of them where they were. At the same time, she planned for the group as a whole.

Esperanza was more concerned with authentic learning and did not believe much in grades, and searched for ways to develop skills without applying the pressure or penalty that may surround grades and grading. During our curriculum planning sessions, we often discussed such dilemmas:

- Esperanza: Now, let me ask you a question. Most of these kids have horrible spelling in Spanish....Okay, but how do I do...
- Tammy: You want to incorporate it?
- Esperanza: I don't want to grade it because if I grade it, everybody is going to have a horrible grade. How do I make them conscious of the spelling?
- Tammy: Do little mini-lessons....Every week add one.... then at the end of the unit say "Let's look back and see if you've made progress."
- Esperanza: Oh, okay.
- Tammy: That way it's not as intimidating.
- Esperanza: Yeah. That's what I don't want- to make it intimidating. (Esperanza, Curriculum Planning Session 2, 08.28.08, 711-721).

This conversation fragment showed that Esperanza struggled with ways of integrating skills development like spelling into teaching Spanish. Our collaborative construction of curriculum allowed me to share ideas that helped her. She was concerned about the students' spelling and grammar, and she wanted them to improve their academic Spanish because she believed that it would lead to a better understanding and development of their English as well. She indicated, "This will also help them in getting their academic...in getting their English because it has been proven that...you become proficient in a foreign language when you have a good base in your own language (Initial Interview, 08.14.08, 29-32).

While wanting to help students develop their language and literacy skills, she also had realistic expectations when it came to homework. Homework was never assigned in the class. Esperanza declared:

You can assess the kid...or [they] can call [each other] on the phone and say, "Give me the answer to number 3." I used to do that, so I know exactly what the homework is going to do. So, I didn't think the homework is important for them. The only time they have something to do is like for example if they didn't finish their mask, some of them chose to take it home: "Can I take it home and finish it there?" And it was okay because it was something they already had pride....They were not going to let anybody tell them what to do because they already had their own idea....It was when they chose to take it and wanted to develop more give more time to the project is when they did it. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 228-255)

Based on her own experiences and her knowledge of her students, she did not believe that assigning homework would yield positive outcomes unless students had explicit choice in taking work home to complete. She recognized that many of the students were involved in jobs and helping their families after school. They had little time to devote to homework. She reasoned that her students' pride and personal connection to the work resulted in increased effort and time on task.

Esperanza believed students should have a voice in choosing assignments. Freedom of expression was particularly important to Esperanza. Students generally have little to no input in curricular matters-content and delivery. Esperanza felt her SNS students had even less input in their overall school experience. She saw her class as a space where they could be themselves and enjoy learning with few constraints. She indicated, "I let them do whatever they want. I give them a lot of freedom to the way they want to present their projects" (Esperanza, Initial Interview, 8.14.08, 126-128).

Esperanza's planning and execution of the Video Project exemplified her belief in students' freedom of choice. We were unable to plan the Video Project together, so Esperanza did. She chose a video project because she had had some success with a similar project with her SNS I course. She told me about her decision-making and the freedom she gave the students:

Esperanza: They took the idea of a program like *Good Morning America*. Or *Good Morning Mexico* or whatever. And they chose five areas in the program in which each kid would be the main character so we would have like news, cooking, entertainment, and different areas like that.

Tammy: Now, did they have to tie in something from Mexico or Guatemala or pretend like they were there? Or how did that work out?

Esperanza: Some of them did. It was kind of free. I like to leave them freedom because I noticed some of the kids become more creative when you give them a lot of freedom. In my opinion. Some people like structure. I like what the kids can come up with when you let them go. (Curriculum Planning Session 6, 02.25.09, 34-64).

She believed in planning a full curriculum that provided many and varied opportunities for learning the content required, but she did not impose structure on projects. She realized, as an artist, students needed space to be creative. Esperanza's easy approach to structure did not mean she accepted subpar work. Her attitude reflected her confidence in the students to produce when given freedom.

Finally, Esperanza recognized that Latino students should know more about the variety of Latin cultures and dialects of Spanish. She did not take a hegemonic stand that only a particular dialect of Spanish should be taught or that the only culture worth knowing was Spain's. Rather, she wanted her students to learn about their heritage

language from their own perspective. She wanted them to understand their relationship and positioning to the U.S., to Spain, and to the home countries.

Instead of trying to cover every country in the book, she preferred to give more depth to the study of countries that directly affected the students' lives and made sure that every student's home culture was part of the course. By April 13, 2009, during our last planning session, Esperanza was still discussing the need to do a unit on Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Chile because one of the students was from Uruguay.

Unfortunately, the textbook, which had been the primary resource used in the class, did not devote much space to Uruguay. Esperanza proclaimed, "Somebody's going to be mad" (Curriculum Planning Session, 04.13.09, 44), and I knew that this concerned her. She did not want to appear to give less time to one country, so we decided to have students take a virtual tour of Uruguay via the internet and share their discoveries with the class. By the end of the year, every student was able to contribute his/her knowledge to the community and have his/her home country highlighted.

Providing Sanctuary. Esperanza saw her class and the space in the class as a safe haven for Latino students at Landings High School. She created a space where students could have a home away from home, a place to seek guidance and find solutions to their problems, and a place where they would always be welcome and feel safe.

The Latino population at Landings High School was relatively small (9% of the total population), so there were few places in the school where Latino students felt comfortable to be themselves. Esperanza was acutely aware of her students' feelings and had experienced vicariously her students' marginalization. When asked what her class did for her students, Esperanza responded:

Well, it makes them feel special. Not special in the sense special. But in the sense that they are important because when they went to the other Spanish class, the foreign language class, the other Spanish class didn't have any meaning for them. They would just "Esto es un perro." [That is a dog.] You know? Yeah, right! That did not make any sense to them. It was not speaking to them. They thought it was a waste of their time. They were not being appreciated. They were not being...their culture and their uniqueness was not appreciated. The language...they were teaching language to other people as a foreign language. And it's not foreign for them. So, this class is what it does to them. What it does to them is that they feel appreciated. Their culture is being is thought as important. They're not being put down. So, it just does great for them. It's their home. It's like a piece of their country is here. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 581-683)

It was important that her students feel at home in her class. She insisted that culture, language, and her students' uniqueness had to be valued and appreciated. Although Esperanza was focused on developing academic Spanish language skills, it became clear that this SNS course offered something much more than academics for her students. It offered a home away from home.

As part of the home-like environment, Esperanza viewed herself as more than a teacher. She viewed herself as confidante, friend, and mother figure, "Mama Esperanza":

Esperanza: I'm there for them. It's whatever their issues are, is my main thing... because they sometimes, they don't get that support from home. It's not that the parents don't love them. It's not that the parents don't care. It's just that the parents are working over time. They're working 20 hours a day...And when they go home, they just go to sleep. They don't have the time to just listen at them.

Tammy: So, how do you view your relationship with them, to them? What do you expect of yourself?

Esperanza: I'm Mama Esperanza.

Tammy: You're Mama Esperanza?

Esperanza: I'm Mama Esperanza. And, and they know I'm a safe adult. They can come and talk to me. I'm not going to steer them

wrong. I'm not going to tell them I was perfect. They know I was not perfect. They know I'm not the kind of person that will tell them "Well, I went to school with snow up to my knees." They know I made mistakes in school that I cheated in school that I skipped school. They know that whatever they're doing, I did it before. So, they kind of relate to me in that area, and they come and talk to me when they don't feel comfortable talking to their parents. And I like it like that. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 581-683)

Students did go to Esperanza with their problems, and they discussed personal issues, especially relationships. Often Esperanza's ex-students came to visit. For example, a couple who had been in Esperanza's class chose to drop out when the girl became pregnant. After the baby's birth, they brought the baby to Esperanza at school as though she were the baby's godmother (Researcher's Journal, November 2008). Another example involved the move of one of Esperanza's student's families. This student believed that if he/she moved, it might end his/her high school career. This student shared this concern and asked if he/she could stay with Esperanza until the end of the school year so that he/she could graduate with the class. Esperanza agreed and worked with the family to ensure that this student had a stable ending to the year (Researcher's Journal, September 2008).

Another important way that Esperanza helped students work through issues and problems was by devoting class time to this work. "Circle" was an important component of the class. Circle was a form of group counseling. The circle offered opportunities for students to give positive affirmations to each other and to support each other in finding solutions to their day-to-day problems. Esperanza explained that the circle was private and essential. She enforced strict confidentiality; what was discussed in the circle stayed in the circle. The students were primarily concerned with the prevalence of girls in their

community eloping with boyfriends and quitting school (Esperanza, Member Checking Interview, 06.02.09). This concern hit home when a student became pregnant and dropped out in early fall to have her baby (audiotape, class session, 09.05.08). “Circles” allowed the students to discuss and work through their feelings about the boyfriend/father’s rumored infidelity (Researcher’s Notebook, 09.05.08). Topics often included issues such as dating, pregnancy, and eloping. Esperanza explained the circles like this:

Circles are something that I have done for several years. The children, well the students get in a circle. We start saying something nice about someone else, and that is to help with their self-esteem and to help them feel comfortable in the circle. And then we talk about an issue that is important to them or that bothers them. We have talked about sex, about girls leaving with their boyfriends, about boys cheating. We had a student that got pregnant at the beginning of the year, and the guy was cheating on her and the kids were very upset and needed to talk about that. So, we devoted several times talking about that....And they coming up with their own solutions to the problems....One of the rules is that whatever we talk there doesn’t go out of the circle. So, they, they have the trust....And they feel confident talking about those issues. Because they know no one is going to go blabber it to other people. So, it has worked for a while. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 196-221)

The use of Circle was a way to discuss issues that they couldn’t or didn’t want to with their parents. Esperanza observed that many of the immigrant parents of many of her students did not know how to deal with changes caused by living in a different culture. Dating is a good example. Once a girl became pregnant, she usually was either kicked out of the house or expected to live with the boy. Many of the students felt upset by the numbers of girls that got pregnant and wanted to find other options for their own lives. Topics such as dating and sex were generally taboo with their parents. By providing opportunities for students to sort through these issues in their Circle conversations, the

students were able to release feelings of tension, anger, frustration, and sadness and to become empowered to help themselves out of the situations that troubled them.

Esperanza provided sanctuary to the students in her class and to many Latino students in the school not enrolled in her class. She did this essentially by maintaining an open-door policy. I often found visiting students in her classes (Fieldnotes, 01.09.09). These students were often students who had dropped out, or had graduated and returned to visit, or ESOL students working and studying at the computer stations in the classroom. Latino students were never turned away from the class, and often students who visited were expected to participate in the class activities (Videotaped class session, 01.22.09). Interestingly, one of the participants in the study was a study hall student who was not enrolled in the course itself, but who participated and completed the class as though she were an enrolled student in the class. Because of this open-door policy, many Latino students were able to participate and contribute to many of the activities that occurred in the class. In most of the class sessions, art transparencies from the textbook series were used to activate prior knowledge and to build background knowledge before reading the literature selection that accompanied the lesson. In one situation, three visiting students sat with the class and participated as though they were members of the class. In response to one of the classmate's comments, one of the visitors added his detailed reading and understanding of the Diego Rivera mural (Researcher's Notebook, 01.22.09).

There were many examples of this open-door policy, and the expectation was that you participated if you came to this class. During the painting of the mural, three visitors helped (Lluvia, Final Interview Part 2, 04.17.09, 230). Almost all the ESOL students in

the school were invited to view the final video projects and voted for the best video. The students also were allowed to invite one special friend to come to the video awards ceremony (Video class session, 03.06.09).

Honoring Students. Esperanza always honored her students by acknowledging and celebrating individual and group assets, as well as, taking time to celebrate their accomplishments and special events. She said, “We were all the time busy, but yes, we had time to have the parties, and to have circle and talk about personal issues...” (Final Interview, 06.02.09, 156-157). Esperanza explained how curriculum should provide opportunities for the celebration of accomplishments:

We will have the award ceremony because I think it’s good for the kids, and they love to party. They love to party, and it’s so nice. I like the way that they invited somebody, and everybody was dressed up very nicely. I liked that. And it gave us an opportunity to interview as a prelude to the newspaper. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 556-561).

The Awards Ceremony was the students’ Oscars or Golden Globe awards. Here again, Esperanza provided opportunities for students to envision themselves as winners and rehearse winning. She did not lose sight of the academic component of the activity; she linked it to the follow-up activity which required students to write an article of the awards ceremony for the class newspaper. She positioned her students as potential award-winning journalists.

The excerpt which follows this sentence shows how she planned for the Video Award Ceremony, how much she wanted the students to feel important and proud of their accomplishments, and how important it was to instill in them the belief that success in any arena was possible:

The way we’re doing it is like the Academy Awards. Each person is inviting one person, and one person only....They’re going to dress up

nicely. We're going to put like red paper. It will be the red carpet. I will take pictures of them and their guest...In the thing, and then we make a banner that say "Premios de Ya Tú Sabes." [Awards for *Now You Know*] And Miguel is going to make a drawing of the award....So, they are going to get a picture there, and at the beginning of the class, we are going to set the class and the chairs and everything, the class. So, the guests cannot arrive until 2 o'clock. (Curriculum Planning Session 6, 02.25.08, 147-172)

Attention to details showed that the students were worth the effort. Setting up the room to actually resemble other award ceremonies, which students may have seen on television, allowed them to envision themselves walking down the red carpet. The red carpet symbolized the road to success and the journey down that red carpet enabled students to embody the act of winning.

Summary. Esperanza enacted a care pedagogy by recognizing and responding to the unique needs of her SNS students, offering them sanctuary, and by honoring them. As a result, the SNS students were fully supported as they tried out new ways of thinking and as they worked through personal, social, cultural, and linguistic understandings of self during the class sessions.

Tammy's Enactment of a Critical Pedagogy

My previous work as an EL teacher had taught me that working from an ethic of care was important but not enough. To overcome the extreme hardships faced by many of the Latino immigrant students with whom I worked, they needed to increase their knowledge and begin to read, write, compose, and think about the world with a critical eye. I believe that power to shape their worlds came with understanding their worlds. My past experiences and beliefs as an EL teacher and reading specialist carried over into my approaches and roles in the research classroom and in the curriculum planning session with Esperanza. What was present and evident in my vision and enactment of this SNS

curriculum was the need to develop a critical social semiotic perspective. My presentation and performance of critical pedagogy included (a) questioning as a technique for critical, cultural exploration and examination and (b) representing and examining meaning in multiple sign systems.

Questioning as a Technique for Critical Cultural Exploration and Examination.

In working to incorporate questioning as a technique for critical cultural exploration and examination, I provided scaffolding to Esperanza to help her develop her questioning techniques. These mini-workshops were part of the conversations during our planning sessions. They took place as we previewed various lessons in the book we intended to teach. We paid particular attention to the images. For example, during our third curriculum planning session, we began planning the unit on Latinos in the United States and the mural project. We examined and discussed some of the murals presented in the textbook, and I helped Esperanza with the kinds of questions she could use with the students:

They read about the movement; then they can start linking those things. What's the significance of each image in this larger image? What's significant about it? Who are these people? What is this? Her? You know, what's all of this about? What's going on here? Why did they choose those things? You can talk about things that are really concrete, but then you're talking about things that are kind of abstract, too. (Curriculum planning session, 10.16.08, 254-266)

I worked to help her see questioning as a way to move students from “concrete” observations about an image to more “abstract” concepts represented by “each image in th[e] larger image.” In addition, as I worked with Esperanza on questioning and coached her, I also provided student scaffolding as they learned how to ask questions of each

other. Esperanza and the students became better questioners because of the coaching. I worked to “push through boundaries” and limitations expressed in conversations.

From the outset of our curriculum planning sessions, Esperanza and I decided to incorporate the viewing, reading, and composing of visual and multimodal texts within the units and lessons. Students participated in creating visual texts as an exploration of self and in response to the various literacy activities, and beginning with the first class sessions, viewed visual texts and documented and discussed what they had seen in the texts. In the first semester, we encouraged students to observe and become comfortable visually documenting what they saw and what they thought of what they saw. For example, Monserat wrote in her journal (08.26.08) about her observations of a transparency of an important figure in Spanish history:

Es un rey. Está leyendo. Es un chinito. Tiene una capa roja. Vive en un palacio. Está hablando con alguien acerca de el papel que tiene en las manos mientras se lo señala. Tiene el pelo ni muy corto ni muy largo. Es de color negro y encima lleva una corona... Tiene educación. [He is a king. He is reading. He is a servant. He has a red cape. He lives in a palace. He is talking with someone about the paper that he has in his hands while pointing to it. He has neither very short nor very long hair. It is black and he wears a crown on top...He has education.]

While Monserat documented her observations in her journal, I circulated and talked to students. I asked Monserat, “What conclusions can you make about this person based on what you have noticed” (Researcher’s Journal, 08.26.08)? After her last sentence in her journal, “he wears a crown on top,” she told me and then wrote, “He has education.” By asking her this question, she moved from simple observations to drawing conclusions from her observations.

In the second semester, these general conversations and discussions became more focused after I fully introduced the metalanguage for visual discourse analysis (VDA) to

the students when I read the group mural using VDA (Video class session, 01.15.09). Students' journal sketches showed that the students understood and knew how to use the language of VDA. Figure 18 shows how Pastry documented her hunches

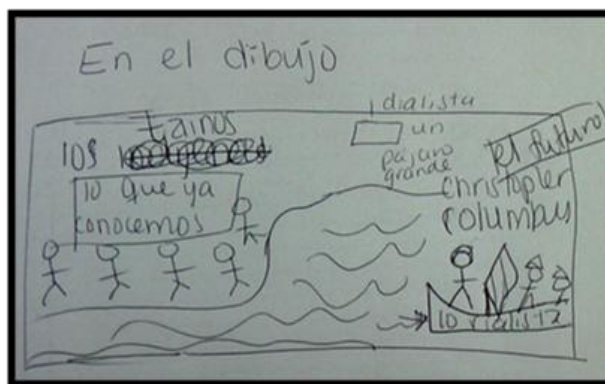


Figure 18 Pastry's sketch using VDA

using visual discourse analysis. On the left side of the text, she drew “los tainos,” the Native Americans Christopher Columbus met. She labeled the right side of the drawing “El futuro” or the future. In this drawing, she represented the original inhabitants of this island, los tainos, as the known or given and Columbus and his men as the unknown. The unknown or future is always on the right. Pastry made sense of how Columbus’s arrival affected and would forever change the future of the Tainos Indians.

When I recruited Esperanza to participate in this study, she asked me to teach her more about the “hows” of doing an arts-integrated curriculum which focused on critical thinking. Early in the year and throughout the year, Esperanza revealed that she was a little nervous about implementing parts of the curriculum that required the reading and discussion of visual texts. At the end of the year, she reflected: “I keep coming to the Picassos, I’d never done that before and wanted you to be there to make sure I gave the right instructions. I didn’t want to mess it up” (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 186-188). Esperanza did not want to “mess it up.” Her desire to “make sure [she gave] the right instructions” demonstrated that she was interested in learning about and effectively implementing methods and techniques which were new to her. Because she “had never

done [the Picassos] before,” she asked for help and wanted me “to be there.” She wanted to create experiences that would have the most benefit for the students. Her statement revealed the need for scaffolding.

Another example of how important scaffolding was to her occurred during a discussion of the necessity to conduct student interviews. During interview sessions, I would be unable to attend the class session. Esperanza expressed that she would feel more comfortable if I was there as she was first learning how to implement the new curriculum we were planning. I decided to postpone the interviews until we had taught a few sessions where I could work with her. She was happy and exclaimed, “Yes! And that way you can help me make, ask the questions” (Curriculum Planning Session 2, 08.20.08, 805). Asking questions about the art transparencies and images that we decided to use made Esperanza a little nervous and she asked for help with this.

Often during our planning sessions, I shared questioning strategies, questions, and phrasing that she could use to get the students to move into deep conversations about various issues which faced them. For example, we discussed how to talk critically and meaningfully about the Chicano movement and relate it to the current lives and experiences of the students. I emphasized talking about the Chicano movement from both a historical perspective and a critical perspective:

Pulling from spirituality, politics, all kinds of stuff...it can help them think critically about their own situation here, and that's what you want to move them towards...What is their situation right now? You know, you can even tie it into the political movement that's going on here and look at the two candidates. Obama's talking about change. And this issue of change keeps coming up. So for them...that's what that was. It was a political movement. They had a need for their people... What is the need for them? What is their need as a group of young people who are immigrants to this country, who will probably make their lives in this country, what are their needs? What would their movement be? Get them

to start thinking about that. (Curriculum planning session, 10.16.08, 268-289)

Conversations such as this one occurred during planning sessions and demonstrated how I tried to have Esperanza invite critical conversations with her students. I encouraged her to “pull from spirituality, politics” to get the students to “think about their situations here.” I offered prompts for discussion. I suggested she use a current affairs topic. The discussion of the presidential campaign could provide a point of reference for thinking about the history of political and social movements in this country. The goal was to help link the presidential campaign and the changes the various outcomes may have on her students’ lives.

I encouraged Esperanza to help her students “push” through the socially ascribed gender attributes and come out of political comfort zones. Part of the approach that I tried to encourage during the designing process of the units was to maintain interconnectedness between the units of study and to the experiences of the SNS students.

Below is an example of how I tried to encourage this connection:

Tammy: Get them thinking about issues so that this semester no matter what unit you’re looking at, you’re looking at the culture, the art, the literature, but you’re also looking at the...

Esperanza: Social and cultural.

Tammy : The social issues. Because that’s going to help them take a more critical stance. A critical look at their world. A critical look at where they come from. (Curriculum Planning Session 4, 01.06.09, 130-144)

In this conversation, I emphasized the core of the curriculum (culture, art, literature), and helped her see interconnectedness among these areas as well as the social. I felt we had to look at every unit through a “social issues” lens. By focusing on the social issues that

were significant in each country, students would be able to compare/contrast each country's issues and understand from a critical perspective "their world" and "where they come from."

During a conversation about how the grouping of students could potentially affect the direction of conversations in this class, I discussed with Esperanza how some of the girls in the non-senior group were less willing to share their thoughts out loud in class.

Esperanza and I discussed ways to encourage them to talk in class:

Tammy: They're less willing to assert, I think, their thoughts to the class out loud.

Esperanza: Yeah.

Tammy: So, by doing this mural, on their own independently,

Esperanza: They need, yeah. (Curriculum Planning Session 3, 10.16.08, 366-378)

Esperanza acknowledged the girls' unwillingness to express themselves sometimes in the presence of the male student. She encouraged the girls to share more of what they were thinking and supported them in their efforts. She provided scaffolding for them and used some of the questioning techniques I taught her with the girls. A glimpse into this redirected effort can be seen in the following excerpt (Class Session, February 9, 2009)

where the students were learning about the Major Temple in Mexico:

Esperanza: Okay. Esa es la ciudad de México donde están excavando y encontraron eso. ¿Qué más encontraron allá? [This is Mexico City where they were excavating and found that. What else did they find there?]

Marely: Dicen que encontraron otros objetos valiosos pero no decían... [They said that they found other valuable objects but they did not say...]

Pastry: Pero no dicen exactamente [But they did not say exactly.]

- Marely: Aha.
- Pastry: Nada más decían que cada vez que encontraban uno diferente lo decían en las noticias. [Nothing more was said that each time a different one was found they said it in the news].
- Rosa: Y luego lo pusieron en un museo. [And later they put it in a museum.]
- Marely: Hicieron un museo cerca del lugar donde encontraron. [They made a museum near where they found it.]
- Fabiola: A unos pasos. [A few steps away.]
- Esperanza: O sea que eso es parte de Tenochtitlan que era la capital de los Aztecas lo que fue el templo mayor... como se llama Tenochtitlan. [So that's part of Tenochtitlan which was the capital of the Aztec temple which was the most... it is called Tenochtitlan.]
- Marely: Sí porque dijeron que de la diosa Azteca eso representaba la luna. [Yes, because they said that the Aztec goddess that represented the moon.]
- Esperanza: ¿Dónde estaba la capital de los Aztecas? [Where was the capital of the Aztecs?]
- Pastry: Tenochtitlan.
- Esperanza: Aha... Ustedes no se saben la historia del cactus y en la culebra y el... Ustedes no se saben eso? [You don't know the story of the cactus and the snake and the... You don't know that?]
- Pastry: Que los Aztecas tenían la ciudad como en medio de un lago o algo así y que ahí había un nopal. [That the Aztecs had the city in the middle of a lake or something and that there had been a cactus.]
- Esperanza: Habían un nopal y una culebra y una... [There had been a cactus and a snake and a...]
- Pastry: Una aguila... [An eagle...]

Esperanza: Y una aguila y ahí fue donde ellos construyeron su ciudad que es ahora la que djimos la ciudad de México. Pero se acuerda la canción que dice que Guadalajara es un llano y la ciudad de México una laguna? Ok.[And an eagle and there was where they built their city that is now the one we call Mexico City. But remember the song that says that Guadalajara is a plain and Mexico City is a lake?]
(Video class session, 02.09.09, 4-70).

Esperanza supported this non-senior group in a post reading discussion. She asked questions such as “What else did they find there?” to generate more information. She also supplied background information and historical folklore that they may not have known, by asking them if they remember the song that says, “Guadalajara es un llano y la ciudad de México una laguna?” [Guadalajara is a plain and Mexico City is a lake?]. Over the year, the questioning techniques that I shared and rehearsed with Esperanza helped generate more information and deeper understandings during class discussions.

Examining Meaning in Multiple Sign Systems. To build a critical multimodal curriculum such as this, I had to guide Esperanza in how to integrate art engagements, and to offer insights into art as a language system. I often acted as her coach. Although Esperanza was a self-identified artist, and in particular a painter, she had not approached art from a social semiotic perspective. She demonstrated knowledge of the discipline of art during the curriculum planning sessions. In the following conversation, she discussed her replicas of famous paintings in her house:

Esperanza: You know what I’m going to do with this one? I’m going to copy this one because I paint things in my house, and [laughing], this is one of my favorite people in the world. I’m going to copy that one and have a transparency or overhead at my house. We bought it for twenty bucks.

Tammy: That’s cool.

Esperanza: I'll copy this one. That's *Guernica*. (Esperanza, Curriculum Planning Session 2, 08.20.08, 881-887)

Despite her knowledge of visual art and her experience and practice as an artist, she required a great deal of support in implementing a curriculum where visual discourse was a goal because that was an area in which she had not had prior experience:

Tammy: Okay. If you wanted to do the very best job in teaching the course and you wanted to accomplish everything you want to accomplish, what do you need to help you do that?

Esperanza: I need the knowledge I am going to learn from this study. To know how to include the art and the different forms of art into my class. Because I know my kids. They are very artistic and if it can be something I can take and develop that creativity, then it will be awesome. It will be incredible. (Esperanza, Initial Interview, 08.14.08, 181-185).

Esperanza was ready to learn about art as a language system from a literacy perspective. She often asked me to review the procedures for the activities involving the integration of reading and discussing visual texts, which is then followed by then responding and writing about them in their journals. She wanted to make sure that she understood and had written the questions she would ask and the visual metalanguage she would use with the students. She was especially conscientious if she knew I would be absent. She wanted to make sure that she effectively delivered the lessons:

Esperanza: Okay. So they can... Let me see if I got you.

Tammy: Okay.

Esperanza: 'Cause I want to make sure this is going good. Yeah, I don't want to mess it up.

Tammy: You're not going to mess it up.

Esperanza: [laughing] Well, I'm just so excited, I just want it to be perfect.

Tammy: It's going to be good. (Esperanza, Curriculum Planning Session 2, 8.20.08, 456-462)

In spite of the fact that Esperanza was about to embark on a teaching experience new to her, she did not allow her doubts to dampen her enthusiasm. For her, it was essential that she do a good job, and it was important for her to be supported in implementing this new approach.

We practiced and rehearsed VDA prior to classroom delivery. In the curriculum planning sessions, we read the visual texts together. I taught Esperanza how to apply visual discourse analysis to visual artworks. I also taught her the kinds of questions to use with students to get them to move beyond a surface level reading of professional and student-created visual texts. One of our conversations clearly illustrates:

Tammy: Then, you come back and say, "Well, now what do we really know? Do we have any ideas now of why they [refers to Isabel de Castilla and Fernando de Aragon] were presented the way they were? Very strict, controlled society. Very religion oriented....That's what all of these people basically represent. And at that time I guess Spain was...Does that make sense?"

Esperanza: One thing about them too is that they were the only queens and kings; she had the same power as he did.

Tammy: At that time?

Esperanza: At that time. Yeah...When they put the marriage together, she had enough land, that's what I know about Spain, they had enough land, and they didn't want the king to have more power than the queen, so they make an agreement that they both have the same power.

Tammy: And you know what's interesting is that you say that is because they are almost the same identical height. And this is almost like an equation. But the potential still rests in her. Because what is her power here that really isn't his?

Esperanza: She's the one that gave the money to Columbus to discover America.

Tammy: So, you know the potential rests in her. So, you can talk about some of those things. Why does she represent potential (Curriculum Planning Session 2, 08.20.08, 463-550)

The painting referred to in the discussion is *Los Reyes Católicos* or *The Catholic Rulers*.

It shows Queen Isabel de Castilla standing on the right side of the canvas regally dressed and wearing a golden crown. She is turned slightly to her right and King Fernando de Aragon. He stands on the left also regally dressed and turned slightly to his left. A short altar boy bearing a golden chalice and a cross stands between the King and Queen facing the King. Esperanza understood the power sharing and equality between the King and Queen: "she [the Queen] had enough land...and they didn't want the king to have more power than the queen." She also recognized the queen as forward looking-"she's the one who gave the money to Columbus to discover America." Esperanza had learned these historical facts. A quick visual discourse analysis of the artwork supported the historical. Isabel was on the right side of the canvas, the future, and represented the creative, the feminine, new life and possibilities of the New World. The king on the left is the Old World, the known. The king and queen's equality and power sharing are reflected in the stature, size, texture and richness of dress, color, and placement. All these elements are the same for both figures except placements-left for the king and right for the queen.

Callow (2006) talked about the need for a metalanguage for understanding and talking about visual images. I agree and think that such a metalanguage should apply to any artwork or visual text studied or created in language, literacy, and humanities classrooms. In the beginning, Esperanza was eager yet apprehensive about what to say

and ask the students. I scaffolded the visual discourse process by modeling the kinds of questions she could ask to get kids to think about the images they studied. Questions helped the students consider the images as text with grammar and imbued with meaning from the text maker. Another example of how I scaffolded her knowledge about visual design especially as it concerned vectors, angles, and directionality follows:

Esperanza: And how do I interpret this thing? I mean what do I do?
Just...

Tammy: Is to just get them started talking about it and reading it, and what do they notice? What was important? What are these...what do we notice about Alfonso? What did the artist want to tell us here? What's on the left side of the canvas? What's on the right side? How is the guy's head angled? What is he looking to? There are things like vectors, so his head is angled in such a way that we have no choice but to look at the book. The same with his hand. His head and his hand form this line that points us to this book. What's in this book? The book is on the side of the unknown....So, if I had to make a determination about Alfonso the Tenth from this picture, what do you see, what do you notice? And they may start off in general: "I see a guy with a crown on his head. He may be a king." Then, keep pushing them. What colors do you notice? Where is his head angled? Where is he pointing? What are we forced to look at in this image? (Esperanza, Curriculum Planning Session 2, 08.20.08, 344-439)

Over time, Esperanza gained confidence and began participating in the analyses and discussions of the various art transparencies that were used in class. I continued to encourage her to learn the vocabulary of art as well as visual design, and visual discourse:

Tammy: And have them really read the murals. Tell what they notice. What do they think some of these things represent?

Esperanza: They have a lot of things in this one. These people crying.

Tammy: Hmm. Hmm. Even the direction that she's looking. Her face is really kind of looking up to the past not to the

- Esperanza: Future.
- Tammy: Future. Normally, that would be the way it is, but interestingly on the right side you really have...
- Esperanza: The type of work that they're doing?
- Tammy: Well, you kind of have a lot of spiritual stuff going on. Ideals. That's up here in the upper area of the canvas. The center of the canvas. And then you have the words. So, the words actually anchor the picture. Between four directions, common...
- Esperanza: Common points.
(Esperanza, Curriculum Planning Session 3, 10.16.08, 24-49)

These rehearsals during our curriculum planning sessions provided her with the support necessary to try out the VDA questions on her own. For example, by the end of January, she was asking questions and prompting students to go a little deeper with their readings and analyses. The following excerpt from one class discussion of a Diego Rivera mural showed Esperanza taking over the VDA and guiding a student through it as well:

- Esperanza: ¿Qué está a la derecha? ¿Qué está a la izquierda? ¿Qué están arriba? ¿Qué están abajo? [What is on the right? What is on the left? What is on the top? What is on the bottom?]
- Fabiola: A la izquierda están los Españoles. Quieren que sea el pasado o el presente y los mexicanos ahí...pues significa como están a la derecha quieren...
[To the left are the Spaniards. They want to be the past or the present and the Mexicans there ... because it means they are right to want ...]
- Pastry: Yo iba a decir otra cosa. [I was going to say something else.]
- Fabiola: Yo sé. [I know.]
- Esperanza: ¿Qué quieren? [What do they want?] (Videotape, class session, 01.22.09)

Esperanza was confident enough to take over the basic elements of VDA to get students to discuss in complex detail the history of the Mexican revolution by examining carefully the mural of Diego Rivera. She demonstrated this confidence by her guiding the students using the questioning techniques we had rehearsed in our planning sessions. Compared to her fear of “messaging it up” in the beginning, she was sure of herself. During this session, she prompted Fabiola to discuss the Diego Rivera mural by attending to the four quadrants of the canvas: the right, left, top, and bottom. When Fabiola was interrupted, she continued to prompt her for more, “¿Qué quieren? [What do they want?].”

Esperanza saw me as the expert in VDA and wanted me to share my readings with students, especially of their work. However, I believed she needed to take over the reading as soon as possible because she was ultimately the teacher of the class and the one who would remain with them long after I was gone. I also hoped these demonstration sessions would prompt her to continue this curriculum the next year with both of her SNS courses. In essence, I worked to provide a way for the students to critically examine their world, but also for Esperanza to acquire another tool for teaching critical literacy. This exchange revealed Esperanza understood my intention:

- Tammy: I'll share my reading with them after they talk so then that's when you can jump into this new unit. And still ask them those critical questions.
- Esperanza: [laughing]
- Tammy: I'm here to support you through all of this...
- Esperanza: Yes.
- Tammy: But the goal is that even by the end of the year that next year, that even if I'm not there...
- Esperanza: That I can do this same...yeah.

Tammy: That you're going through this again and you can take a next group of kids and continue pushing them in a more...like you said, they're getting more in-depth. They're thinking a little more deeply. They're reflecting. They're reflecting on their lives. And who they are. And how they can change their world. (Curriculum Planning Session 4, 01.06.09, 169-189)

Esperanza became more critical in her approach. Ultimately, her role as co-creator of curriculum made her think that she could continue this curriculum and move forward with a critical stance during this year and in years to come. We both saw the need to carry on this critical approach. Esperanza acknowledged that she should be able to carry on and build this curriculum in the coming years.

Summary. I envisioned and enacted a critical pedagogy by providing teacher and students scaffolding in the use of questioning as a technique for critical cultural exploration and examination. I taught Esperanza and her students how to incorporate visual discourse analysis into class activities so that they could critically examine meaning in multiple sign systems. During the curriculum planning sessions, Esperanza learned and rehearsed the language of VDA with my support. She deployed this critical analysis tool within the arts-integrated units so that her students would truly have multiple ways to make meaning of ourselves, each other, and society. The best ways of preparing her to add an element of critical pedagogy and critical literacy to the curriculum were through teacher scaffolding of questioning techniques and visual discourse analysis.

Releasing Tensions between Discourses of Critical Literacy and Care Pedagogy

During the planning session where we co-designed this arts-integrated curriculum, Esperanza and I shared our passions and backgrounds with each other so that we could

offer more to the students as they worked in multiple sign systems. Our differing visions and pedagogies produced tensions. If we expected to achieve a combined critical-care pedagogy, it was necessary to release tensions between the discourses of critical literacy and care pedagogy and how we each enacted those pedagogies. We were able to do this by respecting each other's positions. In addition, we reflected on what worked and what needed revamping for each of us. This helped us respect each other's standpoints.

Respecting positions. I did not want to push my critical stance onto Esperanza but rather to support her efforts. I indicated that her work had been critical in nature even though she might not have been aware of it or described it as such. When I asked her what she wanted this arts-integrated curriculum to do for her students, she replied, “something that is going to make a difference to the kids. Something that is going to make them grow as human beings and as Latin, as Hispanics. That is what I am looking for” (Esperanza, Initial Interview, 8.14.08, 57-60). Esperanza's statement showed that she thought of teaching and curriculum in terms generally used to describe critical pedagogy. Education that creates changes in the learner, provides learners the tools to make informed choices, allows learners to marshal cognitive skills to solve problems, and prepares learners to actualize their full potential, is critical pedagogy. Within her great care for her students, Esperanza also wanted her curriculum to act on her students, “to make a difference;” for students to be able to achieve great things; “make them grow as human beings;” and to be actors in their own lives, “as Latins as Hispanics.” Esperanza wanted her students to have agency which is the ultimate goal of critical pedagogy.

More important than the curriculum itself were the students. The students' lives often became the curriculum, but it usually was from the perspective of their more

immediate needs than a larger awareness of the world. For example, in the mural unit, students designed, developed, and constructed an extended image in which they represented a cause for which they wanted to work. Esperanza noted the critical conversations that occurred during the mural/movements unit, and contrasted them with the critical conversations around pressing student issues:

Well, [pauses] I think when we got the most out of it was when the mural, when they were discussing about their mural, and what would be their cause. That's when those conversations came. Yes. The other times it was not there that much.... Well, first of all they are teenagers. I don't know. It was just... there were always more personal things at that time. More, just kind of what is in my life at this moment. And all of them had their own personal issues. One had a good friend that died. Other broke up with a girlfriend. Another, the girl didn't want him. A lot of personal issues that interfered with more awareness of the world. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 585-599)

Esperanza didn't characterize conversations about teenagers' issues, "personal things," critical. She often did not realize the critical nature of those discussions which happened in circles or at other times when students talked through tough issues such as disrupting gender roles, making hard choices concerning relationships and sex, or in dealing with depression. Esperanza was more willing to call discussions around the units (e.g. the mural) critical. The teacher and the students "got the most out of it...."

One reason why Esperanza did not view these more personal topics and conversations as critical was because of the connotative meanings associated with the word "critical." She thought it was negative and felt that it was somewhat uncomfortable-uncomfortable because critical implied approaches and lines of thought that are upsetting to cherished beliefs. She reacted the same way to the word "push." I often used the word "push" to mean to get students to think a little more deeply and to move out of comfort

zones. The following conversation excerpt demonstrated this negotiation of terms as we discussed incorporating critical literacy with a care pedagogy:

- Esperanza: Yes. ‘Cause I really want your input on this because you are good at asking those questions.
- Tammy: Okay...eventually, in the beginning it might be easier to hear it from somebody else.
- Esperanza: Yeah.
- Tammy: Like a stranger pushing them to think that way....But then the goal is for you to take over that....caring is one part of it, but you have to push, you know not push, but...
- Esperanza: Yeah, I know.
- Tammy: But you have to support and help move people and whatever to that stance where they can start questioning or start thinking about their situation or how things are going to change or what they’re going to do about it. (Curriculum Planning Session 3, 10.16.08, 452-485)

In this example, I had to explain back track over my use of the word “push” again to show that I was not using it negatively. Esperanza acknowledged that she understood my meaning. However, I had to remind myself to avoid using the word “push” throughout the year because I respected Esperanza’s viewpoint. She explained in more detail how these terms were related to her past experiences and to her personality:

- Tammy: What do you think the relationship is for you, if there is one, for you between that idea of not wanting to push and the critical part of it?
- Esperanza: I guess it’s part of my personality. I am guess, I’m very controlling of myself. I don’t like people to control me. So, I don’t like people to push me. [laughing] That’s the best I can think of, I guess..... So, I don’t like to push people. Because I feel like I’m controlling them....I don’t feel comfortable with that. That’s the way it makes me feel when someone tries controlling me. And I have to realize

not this kind of questions is not controlling....It's not the same connotation or...

Tammy: Right. Because this is not personal, it's academic.

Esperanza: Yeah. It's different. But for some reason, I kind of relate it. The pushing, and that's why...(Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 841-860)

Esperanza's ideas of freedom and control influenced the way she reacted to the word "push." "Push" meant control and she could not see herself controlling other people since she did not like being controlled herself: "I don't like people to control me. So, I don't like people to push me." She had a difficult time posing difficult questions to students and probing them for further thinking. Although Esperanza created safe havens where students could discuss difficult topics, these conversations were student led and she allowed space for them to ask the questions of each other. She functioned more as listener, confidante, and advisor, in short, a counselor.

She said that by asking questions, one might find out stuff one didn't want to know:

"My philosophy is 'Don't ask questions because sometimes you don't want the answers.' So, I don't ask too many questions. But these were safe questions you could answer, mostly. So, I felt more comfortable, a little more comfortable about asking them questions." (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 818-822)

Esperanza, however, did acknowledge that because these questions were academic in nature and "safe", students would feel more at ease answering them, and possibly, that she herself would feel more at ease in answering them. This comment was intricately linked to her care philosophy and pedagogy and the manner in which she enacted it. Esperanza provided a safe environment for her students and part of that safety was not asking questions that people may not want to answer. Putting students on the spot was not

linked to Esperanza's concept of safety. Therefore, we had to negotiate the meaning of words like "push," "critical," and "questioning."

Reflecting. Along with our negotiations of terms associated with critical literacy and critical pedagogy, opportunities to discuss in-depth how questioning and how activities were developing allowed Esperanza to see herself as someone who could incorporate aspects of critical literacy such as questioning and VDA into her care pedagogy. For example, by the end of the year, Esperanza exclaimed,

I became an expert!! [laughing out loud] Not really. I became so much more "Wow! I can do that!" At the beginning, I don't know if you remember, you would say "You have to ask a question." And I was like "Oh... what do I ask? What do I ask?" It was very "Oh my God! I am going to mess it up." I was very nervous, and now I'm like "Sure" because we practiced asking them [students] questions. I think I can do more practice about it. But I feel more confident in it. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 770-777).

Esperanza demonstrated growth in the area of questioning, was "Sure" that she could ask good questions. At the same time, she demonstrated a critical awareness that time and practice led to confidence. Because she felt more confident, she was open about suggesting the need to continue practicing the technique.

Esperanza also reflected on specific activities that could be revamped for the next year. In particular, she thought about how to revise the video projects created during the Mexico and Guatemala unit to further explore students' identities and to teach techniques in creating effective videodramas as a literacy activity. Students were allowed to work in groups of their choosing to create a Morning News Video in which they each took on a role as a journalist covering a particular area of interest, such as sports, current events, topics of interest, guests, etc. Students were given freedom to create their productions as long as they kept to the topic of news show and included a variety of segments. Students

were given time in class to research and work on the layout and scripts of the segments. They finished up the projects outside of school and then held a viewing of the two videos. The SNS students invited their friends from other classes to attend the viewing. Esperanza had previously decided that the viewers would vote on the best video, the best journalist for the different kinds of segments such as best Sports commentator, etc. She created ballots and passed them out during the viewing. She did not provide them with a rubric for judging which resulted in students judging for their friends. Thus, fractures in the whole class community occurred.

In the beginning of the year, she gave her students total freedom. Later in the year, she reflected that adding some structure would make the projects more meaningful. She wanted change because she realized that total freedom and the lack of structure produced a split after poor student judging of student work during the video viewing:

They're going to go and vote for their own thing and analyze it. For example, how's the lighting?....How is the conversation? What are they saying? I will do like a rubric....And they will evaluate themselves on the video. That way they will improve the quality of their video for next time if they ever do that. (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 464-470)

Esperanza believed in this case for the video, they may have done a better job if they had had a rubric that would have guided them in both the creation of and in judging particular elements of the video such as “lighting” and “conversation.” Adding structure to the project and to the awards ceremony that went along with it could have prevented the kind of negative “competition” that happened and “that created more tension between [the students]” (Esperanza, Final Interview, 06.02.09, 458-459). Esperanza cared about all her students. She also hoped to have future students improve the quality of their projects while reducing if not avoiding conflicts.

Summary. By openly discussing terms that were at odds with our personal viewpoints and respecting each other's positions, we were able to negotiate the tensions that existed between the stances of care and critical pedagogies and specifically, with respect to how we enacted these pedagogies. We further reduced these tensions through reflection about how the two pedagogies could be interwoven to create more opportunities for students to grow in their meaning making potentials.

As Esperanza and I worked to weave our individual stances into a cohesive pedagogy and approach for implementing an arts-integrated multimodal curriculum, we were able to actualize a critical-care pedagogy where the unique needs of the SNS students could be met while simultaneously having them take a critical view of their lives and their worlds and their positions and positionings within those worlds.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS:

NEGOTIATING MEANING AND IDENTITY IN AN ARTS-INFUSED MULTIMODAL SPANISH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS CLASS



Figure 19 Pastry's surreal text

“Well, I like to hang out with my friends and talk to them and stuff. But... like personal stuff about me, I don't really like people knowing.” (Pastry, Interview 2, 05.26.09, 174-176)

In the previous chapter, I addressed how Esperanza and I co-constructed an arts-infused multimodal curriculum. I also presented the context of the study, the pedagogical standpoints of the researcher and teacher participant, and how we negotiated a critical-care pedagogy. In this chapter, I present the findings which answer the last two research questions: 1) How did student participants enrolled in this SNS class negotiate meaning and identity as they worked within this arts-infused multimodal SNS curriculum? and

2) What discourses around students' meaning making practices and identities emerged within their visual texts over time and across texts?

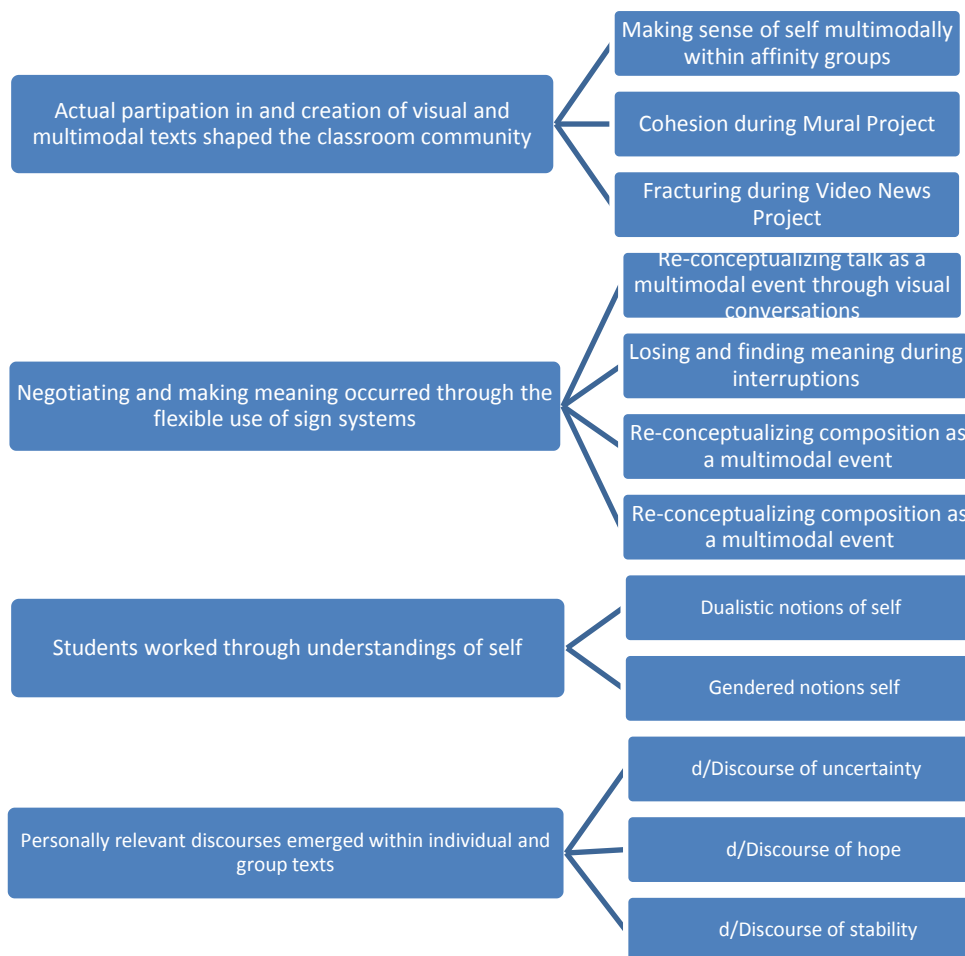


Figure 20 Chapter 5 Overview

The key findings which answered these two questions included the following: 1) actual participation in and creation of visual and multimodal texts shaped the classroom community; 2) negotiating and making meaning occurred through the flexible use of sign systems 3) students worked through understandings of self; and 4) personally relevant discourses emerged within individual and group texts. Figure 20 provides a visual layout of the chapter, and a similar visual layout will be provided at the beginning of each section. Next, I discuss the first finding for this chapter.

Actual Participation in and Creation of Visual and Multimodal Texts Shaped the Classroom Community

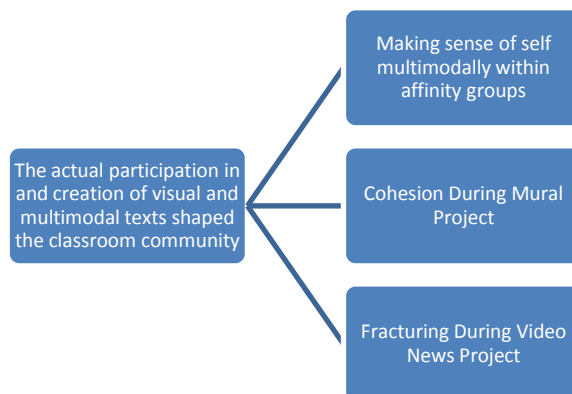


Figure 21 Section Overview: Actual participation in and creation of visual and multimodal texts shaped the classroom community

The SNS classroom was a place where multimodality occurred. By multimodality, I mean that there was more than one mode of representation being used and available at a time. Enciso et al. (2006) explained that “ways of signing-images, print, voices, maps, and 3D sculpture-are selected and used to animate social life and social actions” (p. 8). Bringing in such work created space for students to express ideas in ways that they may not have been able to through language (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In this study, the ways in which students participated in the art-making shaped the community. Two affinity groups emerged because of the ways multimodal expression *animated social life and social actions* within the classroom.

Making Sense of Self Multimodally within the Affinity Groups

The kinds of materials used, the number of engagements, and the engagements in which they participated influenced how the community members interacted with one another and the way they made meaning of themselves in the whole class community and within their affinity groups. In addition, where students sat and the composition of their

visual texts shaped the types of conversations that they wanted to have. Table 8 provides an overview of the engagements planned in the units and in which the students participated over the year.

Table 8 *Overview of Art/Multimodal Engagements during Units of Study*

| Unit | Engagement | Description |
|---------------|----------------|---|
| Spain | inkblot | Prereading activity to consider concepts of idealism and realism. Students created an inkblot on a piece of white paper by choosing paint colors and squeezing paint drops out onto one side of the paper. Students folded paper to make a symmetrical design. Students then shared images and thought about what they saw in the inkblot. They discussed whether what they saw in their inkblots revealed that they were an “idealist” or “realist.” |
| Spain | Picasso | Postreading activity after a study of Picasso and the cubist movement. Students created an autobiographical image by using Picasso’s technique of cubism. They drew two views of their faces and then cut one view into various pieces (eyes, nose, hair strands, etc.) and placed them onto the other view. They then colored using markers, colored pencils, or crayons. |
| Spain | Surrealism | Postreading activity after a study of Dali and his surrealism. Students created an autobiographical image by using Dali’s technique of surrealism. Students could create their image by using magazine cutouts to form a collage, using colored pencils, markers, or crayons to draw and color a picture. |
| Spain | Realism | Postreading activity after a study of Velázquez and his realism. Students created an autobiographical image using Velázquez’s technique of realism. Students created their image by using colored pencils, markers, graphite pencil, and crayons to draw an event that happened to them. The students drew their images in their journals and wrote about the event to accompany the image. |
| Spain | Poster Project | As a culminating activity for the unit on Spain, students created a poster about a particular topic such as architecture, food, dance, culture, art, etc. and presented their posters and information they learned to the class. |
| United States | Personal mural | As part of an in-depth study of social and economic movements, students created a personal mural in which they represented themselves and things that stood for them and what they believed in. They created their image by using colored pencils, markers, graphite pencil, and crayons. They created their images in their journals and shared with the class prior to discussing a cause for which they together wanted to work. |
| United States | Class mural | As part of an in-depth study of social and economic movements, students discussed issues that were important |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| | | to them and their communities. Issues such as racism, poverty, immigration, domestic violence and abuse, etc. were discussed. The students agreed upon the “unification” of Latino cultures. Class members elected Miguel to sketch out drafts of their ideas. Miguel composed two drafts and then a final draft on a wall size sheet of butcher paper. Students in the class chose areas and icons to paint. Those areas were correlated to things that were significant to them and which had been included in their own personal murals. This project was done as an entire class. |
| Mexico and Guatemala | Video News Show | Included in a study of Mexico were famous journalists. Students created a video news show, “Ya Tú Sabes” [Now You Know]. Students worked in two groups (senior group and non-senior group) to create their videos. Students had to take on different reporting roles, such as current events, sports, entertainment, etc. The groups wrote their scripts, chose locations outside of school to tape their show, selected costumes, etc. Students had complete choice as long as they kept to a morning news show and included a variety of segments. Students used small hand held video cameras to film. |
| Mexico and Guatemala | Video News Show Awards Ceremony | After the videos, one class period was devoted to students inviting friends from across the school to come to a viewing and voting of the videos. Students voted for best reporter of the different segments and best videos. |
| Mexico and Guatemala | Class Newspaper Discussing Awards Ceremony | After the viewing and voting of the videos, the teacher collected the ballots to count. An Awards Ceremony such as the Oscars was planned. Students dressed up and were allowed to invite one friend to attend the awards with them. A “red carpet” was created. Students came up and read from the envelopes who won which awards. Students received their awards and delivered “thank you” speeches they had composed in their journals. After the awards were given out, there was a party. The two videos were set up on computers in the classroom for people to watch at their leisure. After the event, each student had to then write a column for the class newspaper to report on the events of the Awards Ceremony. |
| Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico | Sculpture | After reading about and viewing sculptures and portraits of José Martí, a national hero of Cuba, students created autobiographical sculptures made of clay. Students then painted their sculptures. Students could create multiple sculptures. Students shared their sculptures with the class and wrote about them in their journals. |
| Cuba, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico | Tools of a Woman/Man Multimodal Text | After reading about and studying Eliseo Diego’s poetry, students created an autobiographical multimodal text in which they wrote a poem entitled “Tools of a Woman/Man” in the style of Diego. They used magazine cut-outs to add to their poetry in the manner of Diego. |

| | | |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile | <i>Mafalda</i> cartoon | After students studied Argentina's Quino's (Joaquín Salvador Lavado) famous comic strip, "Mafalda," students created a caricature of themselves to fit into the Mafalda comic strip. They then created a comic strip in which their character interacted with Mafalda and other characters within the famous comic strip. |
| Colombia, Panamá, Venezuela | Mask | As a culminating activity for this unit, students researched the Los Diablos de Yare festival of Venezuela and created autobiographical masks. |

Affinity groups formed pretty quickly in the beginning, and they continued to develop and intensify their bonds over the course of the study. How these groups played out and negotiated position and positioned themselves and others within the class activities, discussion, during class celebrations and parties influenced the overall classroom community. Students made sense of themselves within the context of these affinity groups. I call these two groups, the senior group and the non-senior group. I will describe each group's membership and how the groups interacted during particular engagements and interactions within the class. Despite the fact that there were two strong groups at play within the larger class community, one student, Fabiola, most often walked the path between these two worlds. For that reason, I will also discuss how her interactions with both groups and outside of the groups influenced the larger class community.

Students in the same affinity group often sat together in the class which informed how they participated in class, engaged in art projects, and how they interacted with each other. As they created visual texts, students indicated what was on their minds at the moment through the composition and visual design. Members of the senior group included Lluvia, Miguel, Monserat, and Nanette. Out of this group, Lluvia and Miguel most often influenced the direction of class conversations and interactions. These two

leadership roles in the larger class community made them the alpha male and female. Of the four seniors, three of them, Lluvia, Miguel, and Monserat had only been in the U.S. for two or fewer years. Although Nanette had been in the U.S. for several years more, she had close bonds with Miguel, and they were much like best friends in the class. Nanette was also the oldest member of the class at 19. The students in this group struggled the most with the fact that this was their last year in school, and that afterwards, they would be facing the adult world where they were not quite sure what was in store for them. The evidence in their final interviews showed each of them to be ambivalent about this transition. For example, Miguel told me: “I don’t have those kind of options for my future now” (Miguel, Member Checking Interview, Part 2, 04.23.09, 92-93). He referred to the need for him to help out his family by going to work rather than going to college. Lluvia also indicated that she would have to put off college for at least a year, “I want to take a break. One year or one semester, and then I start to go to college...Working this time, and then go to college” (Lluvia, Member Checking Interview, Part 1, 04.15.09, 331-338). Nanette was also worried because she wasn’t sure if she was going to graduate and talked about being nervous, “I’m nervous....I need to pass two classes, and I need to take the exam, but I didn’t know” (Nanette, Member Checking Interview, Part 2, 05.11.09). Monserat explained the joy and her ambivalence, “Sé que lo tengo que hacer. Tengo que salir. Me siento contenta que me voy a graduar pero a la vez no quiero” [I know what I have to do. I have to leave. I am happy that I am going to graduate, but at the same time, I don’t want to.] (Monserat, Member Checking Interview, Part 2, 04.27.09).

Although these students always chose to work together when projects were assigned and migrated towards one another during parties or free time, Monserat did

attempt to have some ties with the non-senior group. She sat to the left of Fabiola and close to the non-senior group. Monserat did not share the Mexican heritage that the other students shared; she was from Uruguay. Her tie to this group was her status as a senior. A second affinity group emerged within the class. The students in this group were all eleventh graders. For that reason, I called this group the non-senior group. Members of the non-senior group also indicated what was on their minds at the moment through their compositions and visual design. The members of this group included Marely, Natalia, Pastry, and Rosa. Of the members of this group, Marely and Natalia shared the closest bonds and always sat directly beside each other. All of the girls were juniors.



Figure 22 Natalia's initial visual text of self



Figure 23 Natalia's personal mural



Figure 24 Natalia's sculpture

Natalia, was the only student in the class engaged to be married. She used her visual texts to compose and present to others her identity as an engaged young women. The majority of her visual texts revolved around love, marriage, and her engaged status. Figure 22 is Natalia's initial visual text created as part of the initial questionnaire in which students were asked to create a visual text which represented them. They had a choice among the following materials: magazines, crayons, markers, pencils, and paint. Natalia chose to work with magazine cut outs to form a collage. She created a vertically

oriented text which was read top to bottom. In the top part of the canvas is located the ideal. Natalia included an image of a large furnished living room and pair of wedding rings. The large furnished living room was placed on the left side of the canvas which represented the ideal known. In this case, the large living room represented the ideal known, a large living area and/or space which could hold many people and which could also represent financial stability and wealth. The pair of wedding rings was placed on the right side of the canvas. Their placement represented the ideal future. In this case, the pair of interlocking wedding rings signified the ideal future of marriage and the infinite love represented by the interlocking circles. A row of smaller bedrooms physically cut the picture in half. These bedrooms signified both the marriage bed as associated with the marriage rings and also the hope that there would be many children associated with the large living space on the top left. In the bottom half of the text on the left side, Natalia placed a magnolia flower. The bottom left quadrant represents the known real, and in this case, the flower represented Natalia as a beautiful young woman. The bottom right quadrant represented the ideal real, and in this case, the large, two-story home represented Natalia's desire for such a house in her future. This particular diagonal placement worked to strengthen her understanding of what her possible ideal, wedding rings (or marriage), would provide for her which was materialistic stability. Figure 23, Natalia's personal mural created in November also contained themes of love signified by the large heart which floated in the top half of the canvas. This heart represented love as her ideal. She anchored the meaning of the heart with the name of her boyfriend in the bottom center of the canvas which represented her known. Finally, Figure 24, Natalia's sculpture of a heart (created in April) made from clay and painted with bright pink and

red also signified her status of being in love and her primary interest of marriage throughout the year.

Marely emphasized traditional notions of family as valued in her Mexican home. Marely and Natalia sat beside each other in this class. Figure 25 was



Figure 25 Marely's initial visual text of self



Figure 26 Marely's sculpture

Marely's initial visual text, a collage, created as part of the initial questionnaire. She also created a vertically oriented text which was read top to bottom. In the top part of the canvas was located the ideal. Here, she placed a symbolic couple (Shrek and Princess) together on a blanket. At the time, Marely did not have a boyfriend, but she used this fantasy couple to represent the ideal of being in love. This image was placed on top of another that was originally placed on the canvas. The top part of an ice cream cone peeks out from under the Shrek cut out. This was a modification to the original text. The bottom left quadrant represented the known real. In this area, she placed a magazine cut-out of an infant. Her fascination with babies was part of her real known. Overall, her image was a classificatory one in which the textmaker placed a variety of objects that were associated with the subject of the picture (in this case, Marely) that, when taken together, defined the subject (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The objects Marely chose, pretty clothes, make-up, flowers, detergent to keep herself and clothes clean, and a family, revealed all the things, which in her mind, would make her a traditional girl. Finally, Figure 26 Marely's

sculpture of a baby girl, teddy bear, heart and flower, (created in April) made from clay and painted with bright colors of red and yellow and pastel colors of pink and lavender, also echoed her primary interests of family, marriage, and traditional notions of womanhood throughout the year.



Figure 27 Pastry's surrealism text

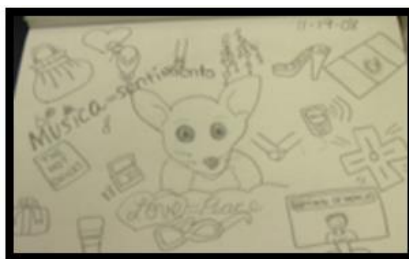


Figure 28 Pastry's personal mural



Figure 29 Pastry's Tools of a Woman multimodal text

Pastry emphasized the importance of beauty in her images. Figure 27 was Pastry's surrealism text which was created as part of the first unit on Spain during their study of Salvador Dali and his technique of surrealism. She chose to do a collage of magazine cut-outs. She used the entire text to create a self-portrait. She used cut-outs of legs of designer jeans to create her hair. The cut-outs contained the Designer name and the price of the jeans. The left eye was a real eye, but the right eye was a CD showing her interest in music. One of the nostrils was a diamond. She created cheeks by using cut-outs of nail polish smears. In this text, Pastry signified the importance of physical beauty; this she associated with expensive clothing, make-up, and jewels. It also signified her need to hide behind it as only one eye was real and quite sad. Figure 28, her personal mural composed during the United States unit, was made with pencil sketches of items that, when taken together, represented her as a whole subject. The effective center of attention

(ECA) was her Chihuahua, which she referred to as her “mascot” (Video class session, Pastry sharing personal mural, 11.19.08, 137). She created a horizontal text which first positioned the reader to move from left to right after paying attention to the ECA. In the upper left quadrant, she drew a heart and a purse and she wrote the words “Musica Sentimiento” along with musical notes to emphasize that she liked a specific kind of music, sentimental Latin music. The heart was also associated with her love of this kind of music which was all about feelings. It represented her known and her higher self. In the bottom left quadrant, she drew a gift and a computer, which both represented her social connection and aspects of her current life. On the bottom center of the text below her dog, she wrote in adorned cursive lettering “Love = Peace” which signified what was real or important to her. The right side of the text represented the possible or future in her life. In the upper right quadrant, she drew a Mexican flag. Pastry was born in the U.S. The Mexican flag represented her heritage as the ideal she will carry into her future. Similarly, she drew a cross which represented her identification with Christianity; something that she would also take with her into the future. Towards the center of the right side, she drew a pair of shaking hands which also represented the “peace” she had mentioned at the bottom right of the text. Scattered all over her text are objects which she enjoyed using and wearing, things that are usually associated with being a contemporary teen-age girl: clothes, accessories, perfume, friendship, communication, music, and television. However, missing in her images was the direct connection to any romantic relationships. In Pastry’s multimodal text, *Tools of a Woman*, Figure 29, she combined poetry with a large image of a beautiful model lying on top of a perfume bottle. She drew an arrow towards the high heel sandals of the model and wrote: “Los zapatos los uso para

mostrar mi personalidad asi la sociedad” [The shoes I use them to show my personality to society]. She also included on the bottom left of the canvas a pair of dangling earrings. She wrote: “Estos arêtes me adornan la vida” [These earrings adorn my life]. Finally, to the right of the perfume bottle on the bottom right quadrant, she wrote, “Este es el perfume que esconde mis tristezas” [This is the perfume that hides my sadness]. The images associated with physical beauty are all used by Pastry as a mask behind which she can “hide.” Therefore, while identifying with some of the traditional notions of womanhood such as the importance of beauty, Pastry did not participate in conversations associated with traditional roles for women such as wife, girlfriend, etc.

Rosa, while associating with the non-senior group was very shy, and often got lost in the creation of her visual texts, focusing more on her personality or inner characteristics than outer characteristics.



Her sculpture, Figure 30, showed her contemplation of her beautiful exterior, that of the beautiful butterfly and smiling face, alongside the snake that was hidden on the inside if crossed the wrong way. Rosa reflected on the meaning of her sculpture in her journal on March 9, 2009:

Bueno yo dibuje una vivora por que cuando me enojo soy un poco mala, si te portas bien conmigo soy buena contigo, te trato como me trates. Y la mariposa la puse porque cuando yo tengo amigas me porto muy bien con ellas y soy muy comprensible y la carito la puse porque soy muy alegre y casi siempre me estoy riendo y en la parte de abajo puse el signo de la paz porque a mi no me gusta estarme peleando me gusta que todos seamos amigos y que nadie se este enojando ni trajandose. [Well, I draw a viper when I'm angry that I am a little bad. If you are good with me, I'm good with you. I treat you like you treat me. And I put the butterfly that when I have friends I behave well with them and I'm very understanding, and I

put a smiley face because I am very happy and I'm almost always laughing, and I put at the bottom the peace sign. I do not like to be fighting; I like that we are all friends and no one is angry.]

Rosa also expressed how she interacted with her friends and also with the members of her small group, the nonsenior group. She also indicated how she would interact with the larger community of the group. Her final comment about her disdain for fighting



Figure 31 Rosa's *Mafalda* cartoon text

hinted at the conflicts which arose in the class between the two groups and the fracturing that took place during the video project. Rosa's *Mafalda* cartoon (Figure 31) shows her interacting with others. Interestingly, she did not draw faces on her characters in the cartoon which echoed her standoffish nature demonstrated in her other texts.

Overall, the non-senior group worked at securing and building a common discourse with one another as they shared and participated in both their spoken and visual conversations surrounding their commonly held romantic notions about their futures as wives, girlfriends, and friends. Struggles about the future were not particularly present in their compositions or meaning making attempts, and they demonstrated more stable notions of self than did the seniors. Within the class interactions, however, they also expressed their individual understandings less willingly as they were somewhat dominated by Miguel and Lluvia.

As a member of both groups, Fabiola, uniquely, negotiated her own space between the two groups and her two heritages/cultural identities. Fabiola was a 10th

grader and an American born SNS student. She held an interesting place in the class. Like the older students who were ready to graduate, she struggled between dual selves such as between her identification as Mexican and as American, between Spanish and English, and between individuality and conformity. In the class set up (See Table 9), Fabiola physically placed herself between the two distinct groups which had emerged. She could easily fit into either group and maintained good relationships with members of each group, but primarily kept to herself. In situations where she did have to participate with a group, such as in class presentations and the video project, she chose to work with the non-senior group.

Table 9 *Typical Class Seating Arrangement*

| | | | | |
|---------|----------|----------------|--------|---------|
| Natalia | Rosa | Empty Space | Lluvia | Miguel |
| Marely | | | | Nanette |
| Pastry | Monserat | Fabiola | | |

She also described friendship from a dualistic perspective in the first stanza of her “Poema de la Amistad” [Friendship poem]:

La amistad es azul. Porque a
Veces es muy claro como el
Cielo pero muy triste como la
Lluvia.

[Friendship is blue. Because
Sometimes it is very clear like the
Sky but very dreary like the
Rain.]

(Fabiola, Journal, Friendship Poem, 03.27.09)



Figure 32 Fabiola's initial visual text of self



Figure 33 Fabiola's first sculpture



Figure 34 Fabiola's mask

Fabiola made sense of herself as an American (Figure 32), a Mexican (Figure 33), and as an individual (Figure 34). In Figure 32, Fabiola's initial visual text, she used magazine cut-outs to create a collage about herself. She used a vertical layout in which she placed items that she liked and felt represented herself. As a vertical text it is read from top to bottom. However, Fabiola pasted the words "Rock & Roll" diagonally across the page from the top left quadrant to the bottom right quadrant. The effective center of attention (ECA) is the "&" symbol. This symbol iconically always signals to the viewer or reader that there are at least two parts. Unlike her later images, Fabiola only included items that would be associated with American culture in her text. In this first text, she did not include any items associated with the Mexican part of her heritage. For example, "Rock & Roll" is an American iconic phrase. On the left side, she included an African American rapper and then scattered throughout her text items associated with American capitalism such as McDonald's french fries, Starbucks, M & M's, bottled water, COACH, etc. She also included a few personal care products, such as shampoo, hair dryer, and conditioner that she would use to take care of her appearance, most notably her

hair. Fabiola began the year more closely identifying with the American aspect of herself which was represented by the consumerism and icons associated with American capitalism. Later in the year, however, she moved towards a closer identification with the Mexican students and more with her Spanish language heritage.

In her end of the year sculpture (Figure 33), she created a soccer jersey with her team's name, "Chivas" (Bad Girls) in Spanish. The jersey with team name indicated that Fabiola recognized herself as part of a team, both her soccer team and her Spanish heritage. Despite Fabiola's move over the year to identifying and presenting more her Mexican heritage, she still exhibited a need to be herself and to maintain her individuality. Her mask, (Figure 34) represented this need. Her mask was painted a light blue-typically a color associated with boys and in direct opposition of the non-senior girls who used pink and purple. While the girls in that group adorned and "decorated" their masks as self-portraits, Fabiola drew a silly face with a black marker and left it at that. Here, in her discussion of why she did not really finish her mask, Fabiola alluded to her need to be different than the others, and how she would rather maintain her unique status:

Yo hice mi mascara en una momia tipo fantasma. Lo hice porque ya no tuve tiempo para dibujarle una cara a la mascara. Le puse el color azul porque es unos de mis colores favoritos. No le puse cara porque queria ser algo diferente y ser unica de todos los demas. A mi no me gusto copiar a la gente y usar mi imaginacion. [I made my mask in a mummy type ghost. I did it because I had no time to draw a face on the mask. I put the color blue because it's one of my favorite colors. I did not put a face because I wanted it to be something different and to be unique from all the others. I do not like to copy people and use my imagination.]
(Fabiola, Journal, Response to mask, 05.19.09)

Being different and unique was something that Fabiola alluded to often throughout the year. Although she identified with each aspect of her cultural identity, she found it personally more important to maintain her own identity as an individual.

Unlike the other members of the non-senior group, Fabiola was much more assertive about standing up for herself and providing information about her viewpoints. In response to her Picasso (Figure 35), Fabiola wrote, “Yo siento que la cara representa mis sentimientos. Yo corte la photo de mi perfil porque soy muy franca. Puse el ojo junto la boca porque lo veo



Figure 35 Fabiola's Picassoesque text

lo que dicen las personas” [I feel that the face represents my feelings. I cut the photo of my profile because I am very blunt. I put the eye next to the mouth because I see what people say]. Fabiola indicated that even the physical act of cutting her profile and placing its components onto the frontward viewing face was symbolic of her bluntness with people. This bluntness was reflected often; she said only what was necessary to get her point across, and often did not sit around chatting with other students.

Another way that Fabiola did not completely align herself with the non-senior group was that she did not take up their “woman in the home” discourse. In her essay, about the role of the man and the woman (01.15.09), Fabiola wrote, “Yo pienso que las mujeres no se debe de quedar en casa todo el tiempo” [I think that women shouldn’t have to stay at home all the time]. Her images had little to do with notions of traditional female roles and aligned with her position taken in this essay. Rather, she composed herself as a

unique individual that could be friends with either group and could walk the line between the worlds.

Summary. Students made sense of themselves through their meaning making attempts with others and through their affiliations and unions. They were individuals who were also shaped by how they built discourses with others. As seniors, Miguel, Lluvia, Nanette, and Monserat faced challenges and ambiguities in their lives that the non-senior girls could put off for at least another year, and in the case of Fabiola, for two more years.

Cohesion During Mural Project

Although two different affinity groups existed within the class and were maintained over the year, during the first half of the year, the whole class was very cohesive. Much of this

cohesion came from the mural project. During the unit of study for the mural project, students studied murals created during the Civil Rights movement by

Chicano, Puerto Rican,

and Cuban activists. As a class, students were asked to discuss a cause around which they could unite and one that they felt that they could work on together to begin to make a change. They selected unification of Latin cultures. Each student created a mural of things that were significant in her/his own life before discussing a common cause. Figure 36 was representative of students' personal murals.

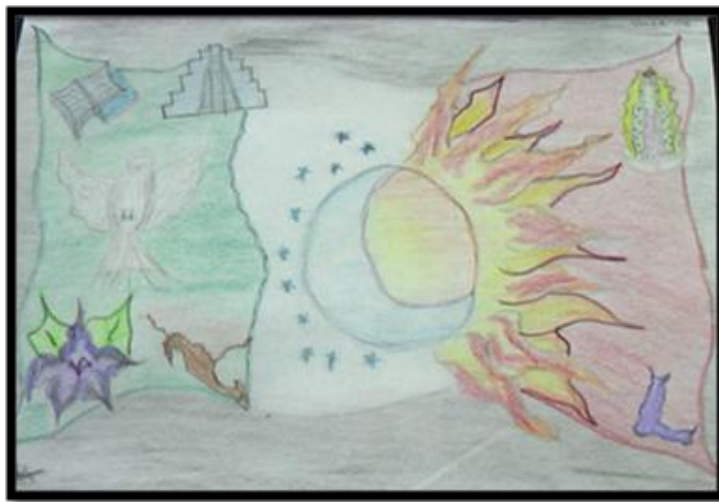


Figure 36 Lluvia's personal mural

After they shared their personal murals and decided that they wanted to work towards the unification of Latin cultures around the world and within their communities, students worked together to create a class mural. The students were proud of the end



Figure 37 Completed class mural

product, and they were at the height of cohesion as a large group at the end of this project. This occurred towards the end of the first semester. Many students noted in their final interviews the strength of this project to create cohesion amongst the class members.

For example, Lluvia emphasized teamwork:

But we tried to focus and work together... And it was a good experience. I think that one of the most important things is teamwork. If the team is not working, the project is not going to be good. So, we tried to work, and we tried to represent something about us. And I think the last thing to try to persuade the other people is hard because they have other priorities than us. So, for the class, I think it is the most important thing because it represents everything about us. But not for that race, but we tried to tell them something even if they do not care. But I think it was a good experience. I like it. (Lluvia, Interview 2, Part 2, 04.17.09, 163-180).

Lluvia thought that the creation of the mural was a “good experience” because of the “teamwork.” She pointed out that it would not have been as good as it turned out to be “if the team is not working.” Importantly, she noted that the mural specifically “represent[ed] everything about us.” Together they were able to come together to decide upon and work towards the creation of their message and cause, the unification of the

Latin cultures within their community. Monserat also noted and discussed how the mural represented possibility:

En mural significó trabajar en grupo significó el haber estado con tus amigos trabajando y que en grupos todo se puede lograr. Y eso de que si trabajas juntos cualquier cosa se puede lograr. [Hmm. In mural meant to work in the group meant being with friends and working in groups all can be achieved. And that if you work together anything is achievable.] (Monserat, Member Checking Interview, Part 2, 04.27.09)

Monserat pointed out that “all can be achieved” when they worked in groups and recognized each other as friends.

Fracturing During Video News Project

Although certain projects, such as the mural project, aided in community building of the whole group, other projects created feelings of competition which led to fractures within the larger community. This happened with the Video News project (VNP). The VNP was planned during the Mexico and Guatemala unit. When Esperanza and I met to plan the units, we did not originally discuss this project. During a brief time, we were not able to meet so Esperanza decided to do the VNP since she had previously conducted a similar project with her Spanish I class.

Students worked in groups of their choosing to create a Morning News Video. Each student worked as a journalist covering a particular area of interest, such as sports, current events, topics of interest, guests, etc. Students were given freedom to create their productions as long as they kept to the topic of news show and included a variety of segments. The students instantly divided themselves into the affinity groups which had been maintained over the year. Fabiola worked with the non-senior group as she usually did during group work.

Students did research in class and worked on the layout and scripts of the segments. They finished up the projects outside of school and then held a viewing of the two videos. The SNS students invited their friends from other classes to attend the viewing. Esperanza had previously decided that the viewers would vote on the best video, the best journalist for the different kinds of segments such as best Sports commentator, etc. She created ballots and passed them out during the viewing.

The VNP created fractures in the whole class community. Although two affinity groups existed, events that took place surrounding the viewing and critiquing of the videos caused the two groups to be at odds with each other. Miguel explained what happened:

Miguel: After we all did that video thing, both groups start to fight about all the rewards thing and all that.

Tammy: So, there was too much competition?

Miguel: No. There was not that much competition. They just start to fight 'cause we didn't finish watching their video. And they got kind of mad and all that....But it was too long....'Cause many people were saying that video was boring and all of that. I didn't fight, but I was like we were just playing with them and all of that....We were just having fun with them.

Tammy: And it kind of made a problem?

Miguel: Yeah. (Miguel, Interview 2, Part 2, 04.23.09, 212-230)

While the VNP allowed students to see themselves in interesting new ways and to experience an opportunity to enact multiple identities, the viewing and critiquing of the videos ended up creating a fracture in the cohesion of the overall class community.

As a result of the split that occurred from the video project, the interactions between the two affinity groups were strained. With nearly three months left in school,

attempts had to be made to ease the tensions and knit the fractures. In an effort not to create more animosity, Esperanza chose not to openly discuss the problems. Esperanza had everyone write a column in the class newspaper reporting on the events of the Video Awards Ceremony. Because everyone had to write something positive about the event, she believed that it would be enough to ease some of the bad feelings. She explained, “But I didn’t think we should go ahead and talk more about the videos and just let it rest” (Esperanza, Final Teacher Interview, 06.02.09, 511-512). Esperanza explained that once that fracture had been created, there was no way to completely mend it: “Later on, they started warming to each other again. It was never like it was with the mural.” (Final Interview, 06.02.09, 573-574).

Summary. Each participant brought his/her own unique perspective to the SNS curriculum and class community. How students perceived the purpose of the course affected how they participated in the class and what they valued. The two affinity groups formed within the first two months of the year and grew stronger as the year progressed. The senior group, consisting primarily of students who were recent immigrants, expected to gain a broader knowledge of Spanish cultures and histories. Because their primary purpose was not developing Spanish language skills and because they felt confident in their language skills, they were much more involved in the class discussions and asserted themselves more often. The non-senior group, consisting mainly of students who were either born in the United States or who had been in this country for a long time, viewed their Spanish language skills and their knowledge of Spanish history and cultures as weak. They sought to co-develop these skills, and were often shy in sharing their ideas.

However, as all students began exploring meaning making potentials in visual meaning systems, they came together as a united whole which peaked during the mural project.

The fracturing point occurred during the viewing and critiquing of the VNP. This was not one project that the entire class participated in like the mural project; students were allowed to choose groups and to create two group videos. Naturally, the students elected to work in their affinity groups, and the personalities of the members of the groups were reflected in the overall tone of the videos. The non-senior group's video took on a professional and more serious tone. All of the group members exuded confidence. The senior group's video was more playful in tone with group members trying on unusual roles. When many members of the Latino community within the school were invited to view the videos, comments were made that the non-senior group's video was boring. Coincidentally, the non-senior group's video was shown last and time ran out; not all of the video was shown. This created tensions as feelings were hurt. While the whole class worked on creating the group mural was a unifying experience that rallied the students' to take on a critical perspective, the group work from the videos was a fracturing event.

Negotiating and Making Meaning Occurred through the Flexible Use of Sign Systems

These multiple communication systems enabled them to more completely say what they wanted to say. Sub-findings included: (a) re-conceptualizing talk as a multimodal event through visual conversations, (b) losing and finding meaning during interruptions (c) re-conceptualizing composition as a multimodal event, and (d) dissolving linguistic boundaries and critically negotiating meaning in Spanish, English, and visual systems of communication.

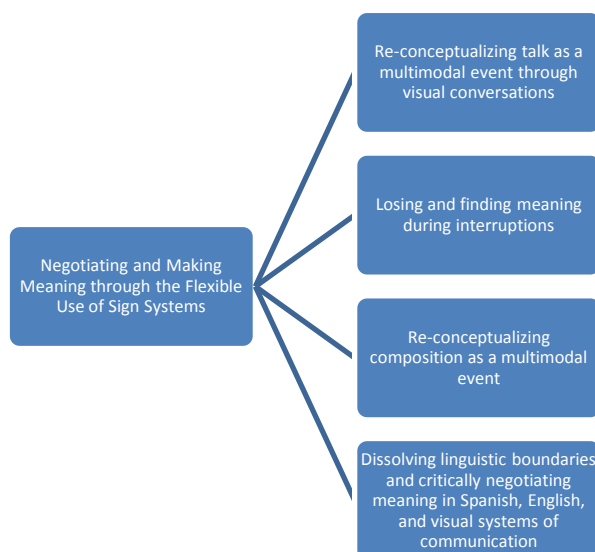


Figure 38 Section Overview: Negotiating and Making Meaning through the Flexible Use of Sign Systems

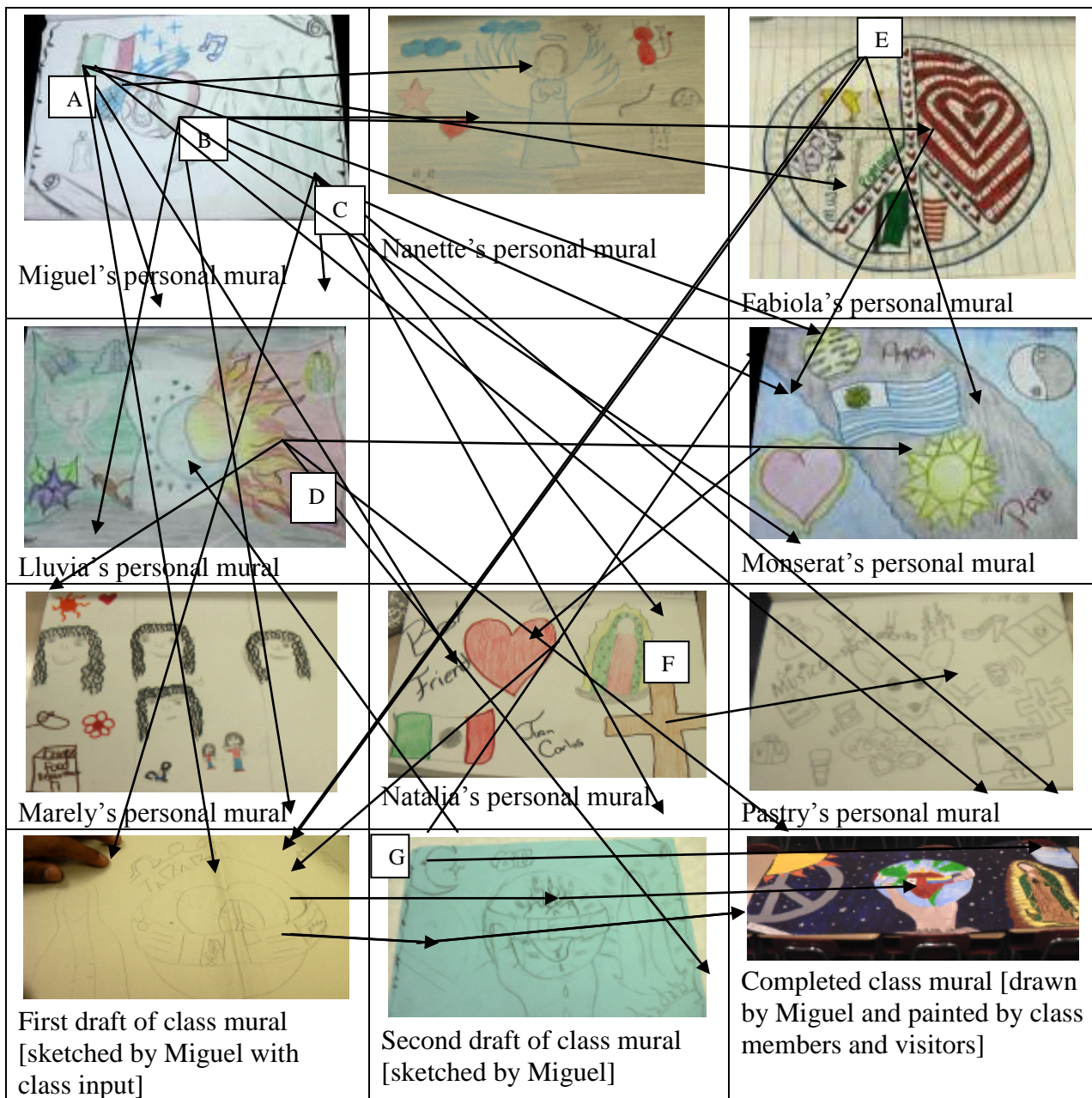
Re-conceptualizing talk as a multimodal event through visual conversations

Meaning is constructed across sign systems and constructed in multiple modes at the same time (Enciso et al., 2006; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In this study, Esperanza and I encouraged students to make meaning from the range of sign systems they had access to which included English, Spanish, and the visual arts. We also encouraged students to use modes such as verbal, gestural, written, visual, dramatic, etc. to best create their messages. As a result of our approach to meaning-making, talk was re-defined.

Talk implies conversation, and in this study, talk occurred through visual conversations which happened during the creation of texts. Visual conversations are exchanges of ideas or elements represented visually and which cut across more than one student text. When visual texts are studied as a group rather than individually, one can determine how students integrated elements from the visual texts of the student(s) sitting nearby or those with whom they identify or want to identify and how this action results in

visual conversations (Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009). Furthermore, what was important and relevant to students can be documented and analyzed for the discourses to which they identify (Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2010) as shown in Table 10.

Table 10 *Visual Conversations of Personal and Class Murals*



In this study, students participated in seven distinct visual conversations, and their visual texts showed how the conversation shifted as individuals applied different meaning potentials (Aiello & Thurlow, 2006) to the visual resources, or icons being used.

In the mural project, students viewed, discussed, and read about murals created during the Civil Rights Movement and the Chicano and Puerto Rican movements in particular. They then created their own murals, putting those things they thought significant into two drafts and the final version of the class mural. Miguel sketched two drafts of the group mural with his classmates' input. He created a first draft in which paper dolls representing children holding hands circled the top part of the globe with an iconic Valentine's Day heart at the center (See Table 10 for personal murals and class mural). After sharing the sketch with his classmates, they decided to change some of the elements, and Miguel sketched a second draft onto a blue paper using his classmates' input. He then discussed this second draft with his classmates, and they offered final feedback. He drew the final version of the mural onto a large sheet of butcher paper. The entire class then participated in painting parts of the mural with which they particularly identified. Elements from each of the individual's personal murals were used within the completed class mural.

In general, students participated in seven visual conversations: patriotism (A), love (B), cultural identity (C), peace (D), hope (E), religion (F), and uncertainty (G). Elements of significance were replicated across these 11 texts. Table 10 shows the personal murals students created and where they were sitting. The bottom row contains the two drafts and the completed group mural so that connections can be made from students' personal murals to the group mural. I have shown replicated elements which

carry meaning potentials of the community, and I have labeled them with letters to better represent those connections which I then discuss below. I have also numbered and labeled each text with the textmaker's name to more easily discuss the relationships between and among elements within and across texts.

The flag served as an icon representing students' desire to present their culture as important. In three of the texts, students specifically drew the Mexican flag which symbolized the pride and affinity in recognizing their Mexican national heritage. However, in one of the texts, Lluvia's personal mural, the Mexican flag is present, but she revised it to better express her individuality within that heritage as she replaced the emblem of the eagle which usually rested in the center, as in Natalia's personal mural, with a sun/moon logo. The latter had become her personal emblem representing her own struggles between joy and depression. Fabiola, in her personal mural, also used the icon of the flag to represent two perceived aspects of her cultural heritage- that of Mexico and that of America. The flag had been physically split by one of the bars of the peace symbol. For Fabiola, the meaning potential of the flag represented two sides of her cultural identity that were not quite unified at the time. Monserat's personal mural also contained the Uruguayan flag which symbolized her pride and affinity in her Uruguayan national heritage.

Students engaged in conversations about personal, religious, and patriotic love, represented by hearts drawn in their visual texts (Conversation B). In eight out of the ten texts, the heart icon was drawn in a manner associated with love familiar in Valentine's Day cards. One of these texts was the group's first effort, but it was later revised, depicted a more of realistic view of a beating heart that has been physically sliced with

blood dripping from it. The tone here was darker and more serious. Three of the texts showed the heart emphasized with a ring of fire surrounding it. In Monserat's personal mural, her heart is quite large and drawn much like a Valentine's Day heart. Hers, however, was drawn with fire around it emphasizing passion associated with this love. The heart was located on the left side of the canvas in the bottom. This suggested a current and real love interest. The other two texts, the second draft of the class mural and the completed class mural contained the beating heart with fire which is often associated with the sacred heart that many Latin cultures use to signify their great faith in the sacrifice which was made by Christ. The unification of the Latin cultures which were represented through the ring of flags around the globe was made possible by the love that Christ had for all people and through His sacrifice. Catholic religion is a unifying principle. In three of the texts, the heart icon was small and almost added as a decorative element associated with femininity. Finally, Miguel, in his personal mural, drew the heart in the typical Valentine style but re-conceptualized it to include half of which has been drawn like a soccer ball. He clearly wished to indicate his love for the sport. The heart icon was used in every text except that of Lluvia's personal mural. This heart icon had a variety of meaning potentials; it represented love, passion, sacrifice, and femininity and shifted meanings as they were incorporated into the texts of the community.

In conversation C, the Virgin of Guadalupe was a significant icon which was replicated in six of the texts. The Virgin of Guadalupe icon was associated most often with Mexican cultural heritage. It was included in the personal murals of three Mexican students and in the first, second, and completed drafts of the class mural. In five of the six murals, the Virgin was drawn without a face and with a halo, radiating light symbolizing

her heavenly nature. In the completed class mural, she was drawn with a face. This icon was not replicated in Monserat's personal mural, an Uruguayan, or in the personal murals of the two Mexican American students, Fabiola and Pastry, or in the Mexican heritage student, Marely, who had been in this country for nearly ten years. For these students, this icon was not personally significant. Despite that fact, the icon did make its way into the completed class mural. Its size and portion on the right of the text gave it a more significant meaning. The Virgin also took on a more human form with the face as it was angled in the direction of the globe. The flags of the class members circling the globe served the purpose of symbolizing the larger unification of Latin cultures around the world.

In conversation D, the sun served as an icon and represented hope, light, and life. The sun was represented in four of the texts created in the class. Lluvia, most likely, started this conversation as she incorporated this icon into the majority of her visual texts to represent her identity. The sun was also included in Monserat's personal mural but morphed into the appearance of a mate tea leaf, a significant icon in Uruguayan culture according to her. Although the sun only appeared in two of the girl's texts, its influence was strong as it became incorporated in the second draft and completed class mural. The sun, across many culture's histories, has taken on the meaning of light, hope, and life. This is true in many Latin culture's histories. For Lluvia, the sun represented all of these, and it was used in this manner in the completed class mural. Interestingly, the position of the sun changed in the second draft and completed mural. Originally, the sun was located in the bottom right corner of the canvas which represented the possible real, but in the completed class mural, the sun was repositioned to the upper left of the canvas. The

change in placement changed its meaning; the icon represented the ideal known. In the completed class mural, the sun indicated that the ideal of the life-giving, hopefulness of the sun was actually part of life at that moment rather than merely a possibility as it was in the second draft. Changing the position of these icons changes their meaning potentials. And so, even within drafts of text which may contain the same visual resources or icons, where and when these resources are moved and used within the text changes the conversation and meaning the textmaker is making with the community.

In conversation E, the peace symbol and its language equivalent in Spanish “paz” served as an icon and represented desire for peace, balance, and resolution. The peace icon is used in five of the visual texts. This icon began with Fabiola who used it as the entire backdrop for her personal mural. Monserat, who was sitting next to her, incorporated the meaning behind the symbol by writing the word “paz” rather than replicating the symbol indicating recognition of this symbol within their personal murals. It was so striking and had such meaning potential to the entire class that it was adopted as a major element in the completed class mural (as well as the drafts) and placed on the left side of the canvas signifying the peace that was wished for at that moment. Similar to the sun icon, the peace icon was moved from its original placement on the first draft of the class mural where it held a spot within the Valentine like heart icon connecting peace in our hearts to the left side of the canvas. Thus, it was changed from the effective center of attention from the known side of the canvas to something thought about and desired but not quite actualized. The peace symbol’s gray color indicated shadow.

In conversation E, the cross served as an icon that represented religions connected to Christianity and Catholicism. The cross icon was represented in two of the personal

murals and is worth noting for a few reasons. First, the two students who used this icon sat near each other and also belonged to the non-senior group. While Pastry used the cross in isolation from any other religious symbols, Natalia used it in conjunction with the Virgin of Guadalupe symbol. Pastry, a Mexican-American, represented the importance of Christianity in her life by choosing to use the cross to signify it. Unlike other students who used the Virgin of Guadalupe icon to represent both religious faith and cultural connections to Catholicism, Pastry did not. Her message indicated that religion itself outweighed the significance of connecting that religion to her heritage. In contrast, Natalia used both symbols together on the same side of the text as the possible/future ideal and real signifying the importance of Catholicism and its connection to Mexican heritage as part of her future and continuing life. In the conversation's surrounding religion affiliation, incorporating two or more religious icons or visual resources increased the weight and significance of the meaning potential.

In conversation G, the moon served as an icon and represented uncertainty, darkness, and depression. The moon icon appeared in four murals. The sun icon also appeared in the same four murals. These two icons used together signified duality in life and were personally important to two of the senior girls. They were incorporated into the class mural in the second draft and completed mural. Initially, the moon was in the upper left side of the mural and the sun on the bottom right side of the mural. They swapped positions in the completed class mural. This shift in position signified a shift in the meaning from dark outweighing the light to light outweighing the dark in the known region of the canvas.

Within this set of texts, the murals, visual talk and conversation became a multimodal event and took on the resourcefulness that visual icons lend to meaning making. What was being said visually was important and expressed in different and unique ways. This type of talk and conversation took place across the variety of visual genres that were created across the year. By intentionally choosing these icons, using them, sharing them repetitively within the group of texts, and then transferring them to the class mural, students understood that concepts of heritage, religion, country, and love cut across language and geography.

Losing and Finding Meaning during Interruptions

In this study, interruptions acted as a particular form of semiotic resource which uniquely affected talk in the class. When interruptions happened, a sort of losing and finding occurred during semiosis.

When students incorporated feedback in the form of translations and re-casting in various languages such as English, Spanish, and Spanglish used in the class, a “losing” and a “finding” occurred. For example, Fabiola explained what happened when she moved between Spanish to English and to Spanish again as she interacted with others in the SNS class: “I mean, it’s like I learn a phrase in English, and I can’t translate it to Spanish, so I have to say it in English because if I say it in Spanish, it’s going to sound totally different” (Fabiola, Member Checking Interview Part 2, 05.01.09, 43-52). As she moved between the two languages, she tried to convey exact meaning. Differences in connotations, slang, formalized language, and the variations of Spanish and English dialects caused her to lose some of her meaning. Fabiola explained the difficulty in negotiating meaning between the two languages:

I mean they know what it is because they'll try to speak Spanish and try to say it, but they don't know how to really say it, and they see how hard it is, but then again they don't understand it because they don't have to go home and speak it, speak Spanish and then come here and speak English. And then try to get people to understand you. (Fabiola, Member Checking Interview Part 1, 05.01.09, 104-112).

During one class session, students began class by reading a Diego Rivera mural about the history of the Mexican Revolution. Students were invited to read the mural using visual discourse analysis to get at the meanings and information contained in the text. In the following example, Fabiola was asked to provide information about the text.

- Esperanza: Okay. Fabiola. [Anything else?]
- Miguel: Hay Dios! [Oh, God!]
- Fabiola: Okay. Esas personas...[Those people...]
- Miguel: Di lo que hiciste. [Say what you did.]
- Fabiola: Pero son Españoles. [But they are Spanish.]
- Miguel: Oh!
- Fabiola: Y que atrás está un palacio. [And that behind is the palace.]
- Miguel: Se ven árboles, no? [Trees are seen, no?]
- Fabiola: I don't know.
- Esperanza: Tú viste cuando se presentaron el otro mural. ¿Qué tú explicarías de eso? [You saw when the other murals were presented. What did you explain about that?]
- Miguel: Oh...es Americano, verdad? [Oh. She is American, right?]
- Fabiola: Shut up! Que, que...I don't know. I forgot.
- Miguel: Un caballo. [A horse.]
- Esperanza: ¿Qué está a la derecha? ¿Qué está a la izquierda? ¿Qué están arriba? ¿Qué están abajo? [What is on the right? What is on the left? What is on the top? What is on the bottom?]

- Fabiola: A la izquierda están los Españoles. Quieren que sea el pasado o el presente y los mexicanos ahí...pues significa como están a la derecha quieren...[To the left are the Spaniards. They want to be the past or the present and the Mexicans there ... because it means that those on the right want ...]
- Pastry: Yo iba a decir otra cosa. [I was going to say something else.]
- Fabiola: Yo sé. [I know.]
- Esperanza: ¿Qué quieren? [What do they want?]
- Fabiola: No sé que quieren. [I don't know what they want.]
- Lluvia: Ya dale. [You already said it.]
- Fabiola: Es verdad, de verdad. [It's true. Really.] (Video class session, 01.22.09, 17-46).

The other students interrupted Fabiola several times as she tried to read the text. Pastry indicated that she, too, had been interrupted and had been unable to add to the conversation. First, Fabiola began to talk about the people, but before she could indicate to who she was referring, Miguel interrupted her prompting her to tell more. She continued and, again, Miguel interrupted her with a teasing remark. She next attempted to contribute more information about what she saw, and Miguel interrupted her yet again prompting her to give more details. His continuous interruption interfered with her meaning making attempts and most likely prevented her from fully expressing her knowledge. Also with each interruption, he asserted his dominance over her and showed a lack of patience with her attempts. The result was a halt to her meaning making attempts, and she gave up with a, "I don't know." Esperanza, then, encouraged her to go on with the reading. Miguel interrupted again before she had a chance to continue. This

time he took a dig at her, indicating since she was American, she couldn't possibly know anything. She yelled at him to shut up and again retorted with "I don't know. I forgot." These interruptions diverted attention away from the meaning making of the mural to Fabiola's identity and position in the group as a Mexican American who was being positioned, here, negatively, as more American than Mexican. Whatever Fabiola originally attempted to communicate was lost because of Miguel's interruptions and his use of these interruptions to shift attention onto Fabiola's knowledge or lack of knowledge of Mexican culture. Later in the conversation, Fabiola appeared to recover some of the meaning she originally tried to make and present; she volunteered more information about the top and bottom of the mural: "Es como la paz, y lo demas es como guerra. [It is like peace, and the rest is like war]."

This example demonstrated the kinds of interruptions that occurred during interchanges. Interruptions can aid in or detract from meaning making. As such interruptions occur, a sort of losing and finding occurs during semiosis. Interruptions acted as a particular form of semiotic resource which uniquely affected talk in the class.

Re-conceptualizing Composition as a Multimodal Event

Composition in language and literacy classes usually implies writing through language. Though the students of this SNS class loved this class, they did not like to write. Writing made them very aware of what they could not say. These students often found writing limiting and inadequate. In this SNS class, the focus was on meaning and communicating. Writing was one mode used to document ideas; other modes, such as the visual and gestural modes, were also used. In this study, the focus was on meaning conveyed within the composition of texts. Many students felt that, compared to writing,

composing in the visual arts helped them communicate their ideas better. Miguel explained how his working in the visual arts helped communication:

Miguel: It makes you more, like, secure in yourself. More sure that you can express yourself through feelings or through speaking; then you can really feel comfortable about people. It gives you like a really good thing to keep going, you know.

Tammy: So, it kind of helps you explain yourself more?

Miguel: More. And a little bit better. (Miguel, Member Checking Interview, 04.17.09, 51-56)

By re-conceptualizing composition as a multimodal event, the participants recognized the meaning potentials in a variety of sign systems. They were able to compose and author themselves and the world through image, gesture, talk, drama, music, writing, etc. For example, Miguel created emotional messages in his 3D mask (Figure 39). Visual composition often allowed the students to communicate more easily the difficult things they wanted to say about themselves; writing did not. Writing about their pieces was not always necessary. Miguel's mask, created at the end of the year in response to the Venezuelan unit, is a good example. In examining this mask, Miguel expressed a kind of anger and fear.



Figure 39 Miguel's mask

He used red and black colors together plus the scratched off paint used for the eyes and mouth to express anger and fear. Miguel wrote in his journal:

Bueno yo disfrute un poco creando mi mascara. Una de las razones porque la diseño asi era porque en mi vida y tenido vienos y malos momentos. Una cosa que me gusto fuen los colores que use. Bueno tambien no tengo mucho que decir porque ya casi todos conocer las razones de que por que use esos colores y tambien de la forma que la digene. [Well I enjoy creating my mask a little. One of the reasons why the design was so was because in my life bad times had come. One thing that I liked was the

colors that I used. Well I do not have too much to say because almost everyone already knows the reasons for why I used these colors and also the form that it took.]

Miguel indicated in his journal a little about how and why the mask took the form it did. He mainly emphasized the bad times in his life at that moment. He did not go into much detail about it and also indicated that he didn't have too much to say about it because he was sure everyone already knew the reasons why things were they way they were. The mask was a composition about himself and his subjectivity at the time of the mask making. To him, it was unnecessary to say more or write more about it. The mask carried the meaning itself.

Like Miguel, Nanette composed a public message about herself and her life through this Picasso multimodal image, Figure 40. On the left side of the text is the known. Here, Nanette wrote the word “desllucion” in Spanish, or *disolución* [dissolution], which means a dissolving of her known or her connections with her family and her heritage, represented by her use of Spanish in conjunction with the word “desllucion.”

On the right side of the text is the unknown or possible. Here, Nanette wrote the word “hope” in

English which means the hope she holds for her future here in the U.S. By representing this hope in English on the right side of the canvas (the possible), she directly showed opposition to the hopelessness represented through Spanish language on the left (the unknown). Nanette's choices conveyed a complex message about her struggles with her identity and her life at the time of text making. At the moment of text-making, she was



Figure 40 Nanette's
Picassoesque text

cutting off her Spanish identity and hoping for something better by identifying with the possibilities that America or English speaking society might offer her. In addition, Nanette demanded the viewer to interact with her and her message as her gaze is directed at the viewer of the text. She positioned the viewer to see how hard her struggles were, and asked the viewer to help recognize her problems and help her.

Nanette, in this composition, also conveyed her understanding of the meaning potential in the cubist style of Picasso. Nanette, like Picasso, worked to disaggregate a unified self or whole into its often competing parts. Therefore, Nanette's composition accomplished her goal of conveying her own difficult status through visual design and her ability to use the technique as discussed in class, demonstrating both the affective, social, and cognitive potential this medium affords.

As students worked in multiple sign systems to compose, they were able to communicate complex understandings of their worlds, their positions, and their subjectivities which they resisted doing in writing. By being offered multiple ways to compose, they participated more freely in negotiating meaning about complex issues that affected their lives.

Dissolving Linguistic Boundaries

Within the SNS curriculum, Esperanza and I planned for opportunities to move into critical discussions and engagements. During such discussions and engagements, language boundaries dissolved as the participants expressed themselves in the sign system which afforded them an easier way to communicate. When these boundaries dissolved, critical negotiation occurred as everyone worked to ensure their particular meanings were made and communicated to others. One of the most significant

experiences that occurred during the year was the study of the Chicano movement and the study of the murals that were created during the Civil Rights movement. Esperanza was excited about this unit because she believed that the students would be able to identify with the movements and with the images given many of the students' Mexican ancestry. The unit would be relevant to their lives (Esperanza, Curriculum Planning Session 3, 10.16.08, 91-137). After students read several murals and their accompanying articles, they created their own personal murals, and presented them to the class. They answered their classmates' questions, explaining their choices and the meanings behind those choices. They then had to discuss an area of concern in their world that they would like to work on as a group. In essence, they were to choose a cause for which they could work to create change. Negotiations of meaning occurred which revolved around particular words and meanings associated with them, as well as, at what social levels those areas could be addressed. Negotiations occurred between sets of concepts: unification/racism; change/helping; racism within Latin groups/racism within the society and world at large; and working at the school level, the community level, the world level. Negotiations of these concepts and the final decisions regarding their usage also demonstrated power relations in the class and whose meanings became valued over others.

The students discussed and negotiated specific terms to represent their cause and what kinds of images would be needed to represent those terms. One of the overarching debates surrounded the use of the words racism/racismo and unification/unificación and the levels (school, world, community, etc.) at which such an issue should be approached. This negotiation of terms and the connotations associated with them was well represented by the following excerpt (Video class session, 11.19.08, 256-525):

- Lluvia: Podemos dibujar un mural como un círculo con manos y a un al lado las diferentes banderas de países que hablan español. Eso era lo que había pensando ya. Las orillas, lo que piensen a la uno? [We can draw a mural like a circle with hands and on one side the different flags of countries that speak Spanish. That was what we were thinking already. The borders, what do you think of that one?]
- Esperanza: Hmm. Hmm.
- Pastry: En medio podemos poner un mundo y diferentes niños de todos lugares, no necesario tiene que ser latinos. Si uno quiere sacar el racismo tiene que todos.[In the middle we can put a world and different children of all places, not necessary has to be Latinos. If one wants to get rid of racism, it has to be all.]
- Esperanza: Las dos ideas fueron bien. ¿Qué piensan ustedes? [Both ideas were good. What do you think?]
- Tammy: So, have we agreed on an issue? What is the issue?
- Esperanza: ¿Qué es lo que queremos conseguir? Did we decide on the racism, el racismo?
- Tammy: Okay.
- Miguel: Como también se puede...[Like it can also...]
- Esperanza: ¿Cómo se puede hacer eso? [How do you do that?]
- Lluvia: Es un tema muy fuerte, la verdad, algo como sueña mayor que trabajar en algo negativo. Es más fácil representar la unión unida. [It is a very hard subject, actually, something like a great dream than to work on something negative. It is very easy to represent the united union.]
- Esperanza: Okay. Vamos a trabajaron la unión. Está bien. Estoy de acuerdo contigo es mayor trabajar en cosas positivas que en cosa negative. [Okay. Let's work on the union. Okay, I agree with you it is better that you work on positive things rather than something negative.]
- Lluvia: Porque si vamos a hablar de racismo, necesitamos buscar un símbolo que realmente represente eso en cambio si

ponemos lo que estaba pensando dibujar mi casa con manitas al rededor no solo de la comunidad de nosotros como grupo sino exteriormente de todos porque habemos personas de diferentes países. Nos podemos llevar con otras culturas y agarramos provecho y aprendemos de ellas eso era lo que estaba pensando. [Because if we're going to talk about racism, we need to find a symbol that really represents change if we put it in what I was thinking about my home draw with hands around the community not only to us as a group but because of all externally. We have people from different countries. We can bring other cultures and learn from them. That was what he was thinking.]

Esperanza: Me parece muy buena idea. ¿Quiénes están de acuerdo? ¿Qué piensan ustedes? ¿Todo el mundo está de acuerdo? [It seems like a very good idea. Who agrees? What do you think? Everyone agree?]

Miguel: Se puede dibujar un círculo, con una rayita así como círculo de prohibido, entiende? [Draws a circle in the air and a line through it with his fingers.] [You can draw a circle, with a line, like a prohibition circle, understand?]

Esperanza: Lo que pasa, yo les voy a decir una cosa, este a Madre Teresa la invitarón a una cosa contra la Guerra y ella dijo “Yo no voy a ir a ninguna marcha un contra de la Guerra, si ustedes quieren que yo haga una marcha por la paz yo voy.” Si tú te concentras creencia, si tú te concentras en racism crees en racism, si tú te concentras en union, amore eso crece y eso es lo que si buscamos algo positivo en nos a ya de no algo negativo porque atrae más gente. [What happens, I am going to tell one thing, they invited Mother Teresa to a thing against the War and she said "I am not going to go to any march against the War, if you want me to do a march for peace, I go." If you concentrate on your beliefs, if you concentrate on racism, you believe in racism, if you concentrate on union, love that grows and that is what if we seek somewhat positive in us to already of not something negative because attracts more people.]

During this negotiation of what exactly they wanted to represent and the connotations associated with them, the students struggled with how to visually represent ending

racism. Lluvia didn't want to represent racism per se or think of something to show racism. She wanted to use its complementary concept of unification of Latin cultures by showing the various Latin countries' flags and hands connected showing solidarity. Esperanza supported her. Esperanza believed, like Mother Theresa, that people should act from a positive perspective. Pastry suggested, however, that to end racism, they had to take on a broader perspective and include other people not only those from Latin countries. These two negotiations and perspectives occurred as a result of each of the girl's lived experiences. Lluvia, a recently arrived immigrant, felt more marginalization from members of her own culture and was much more aware of this marginalization than she did from the American society at large. One of her earlier comments as evidenced in her comment earlier during this class period seemed to support this idea. She exclaimed, "Es como [inaudible] Entre nuestras culturas nos estamos comiendo uno y otro. [It's like [inaudible] between our cultures, and we are eating one another]." Pastry, a Mexican-American, on the other hand, was conscious of racism from the perspective of the larger society and wanted to work more to resolve racial tensions across ethnic groups. She also wanted to see change happen in the world. She showed her concern for the larger society in this comment:

Yo pienso que la conversión de los estados, no, no, la de los países como en Africa, China, Mexico donde sea pues afecta las comunidades. [I think the conversion of the states, no, no, the countries in Africa, China, Mexico where it affects communities.]...Pues, como la gente tenga más ideas de las decisiones del gobierno, sobre sus presidents que voten así como en los Estados Unidos. Y que no sean tan corruptos. Ayudas a los países que ocupan, y ayuda a la gente también. [Then, as people have more understanding of the decisions of the government, about their presidents that they vote like in the United States. And so they are not so corrupt. You aid the countries that they occupy, and aid the people also.]

The students' experiences (level of marginalization) and perspectives affected what they thought about racism and how to represent it.

The students negotiated how the concepts of racism versus unification could be demonstrated visually and the implications of those visual meanings. While Lluvia wanted to see the flags of Latin countries in alignment with holding hands, Pastry suggested that the mural needed to contain a picture of the entire world with children holding hands around the world. Each of the images suggested by the students represented unification, but from the different perspectives of each student. On the other hand, Miguel argued that racism could be demonstrated by using a "Do not" or "No racism allowed" sign. He expressed his suggestions in words and by large hand movements in the air, drawing the circle with the slash through the circle, while asking, "Entiendes? [Understand?]. While Lluvia and Pastry emphasized the positive message they wanted to convey by focusing on unification, Miguel continued to suggest that racism could be represented visually. The products of these negotiations became a part of the final class mural. A combination of these ideas were used and resulted in the focus of unification (See Table 10).

Another important negotiation that took place was between the concepts of change and helping. In general, the SNS students in this class did not think that they could actually "change" anything. They opposed the word "change" which Esperanza and I both used as we questioned them to think about their cause. In English, I asked, "What is important to you as young people in your own communities? Things that you would like to see changed?" and in Spanish, Esperanza asked, "¿Si tú tuvieras una varita mágica que pudieras cambiar? Ustedes aquí como grupo. Toma la varita mágica. ¿Qué podrían

cambiar? [If you had a magic wand what could you change? You as a group here. Take the magic wand. What could you change?]. In response to these prompts using the word “change” in Spanish and English, Lluvia responded, “Yo pienso que más se trata no se puede cambiar, pero se puede ayudar, se puede ayudar.[I think that it is not possible to change, but you can help, we can help.]” Lluvia explained her position further and the complexity of the issue could be seen as others in the class responded to her:

- Lluvia: Es como dije tiene que ellos tienen que vivir la experiencia para que tomen conciencia. Ellos entre su misma cultura o sea cultura latina van creciendo o los nacidos aquí como los chicanos que no nos ven bien.[It is like I said, they [Latinos who are not recently immigrated] must live the experience so that they have consciousness. They amongst their same culture, that is, Latin culture are growing or the ones born here like the Mexican Americans that do not see us well.
- Fabiola: No lo diga por mí. [Don't speak for me.]
- Lluvia: La verdad que está malo quitate que ahí voy, eso no lo podemos cambiar.[Really, it is bad to reduce that here, I see. We cannot change that.]
- Esperanza: ¿Pero qué podemos hacer para que eso cambie?[But what can we do to change that?]
- Natalia: Ayudarnos los unos a los otros.[Help one another.]
- Tammy: Go around and name the one thing you personally want to work on and let's see what we come up with. What do you want to work on? The one you think you can make a difference with if you put your head to it.
- Miguel: There's nothing we can change, but...
- Tammy: There's many things you can change. If everybody felt that way, then nothing would ever change.
- Lluvia: It's not easy.

Tensions arose during this discussion as Lluvia discussed how she felt with regard to her treatment by Mexican Americans. Fabiola, a Mexican-American, spoke up and did not want to be included in this essentializing statement. Lluvia continued that these hostilities could not be changed. Natalia again used the word “ayudar” “help” to emphasize work on a personal level. As I continued to prompt, I replaced the word “change” to “work on” as I noticed the debate evolving from the idea of the word “change/cambiar.” Again, Miguel reiterated, “There’s nothing we can change, but...” The students could not see that by changing their own behavior and by “helping,” they were working towards change. Change for them meant something much larger, and something that they could not see themselves influencing. The short conversation which follows suggested one reason why students felt powerless to affect change:

Tammy: Is this hard for you guys to think about?

Miguel: Yes.

Tammy: Why?

Pastry: Because there are so many things.

Tammy: Because of what?

Pastry: There are so many things that are wrong that it is hard to choose.

Earlier in the conversation Monserat had talked about this feeling of being unable to choose something to change and beginning the change. She had said, “No sé. El racismo, maltrato, la guerra, muchas cosas. [I don’t know. Racism, abuse, the war, many things].” As students worked to discuss these tough issues, they moved fluidly between sign systems and acknowledged the contributions each made without hesitation. This allowed for the critical negotiation of meaning at the conceptual and discourse level rather than at

the linguistic word level. In other words, students were not focused on whether they were speaking Spanish or English or gesturing with their hands and faces, they were wrapped up in the critical conversation they were having. They dissolved the boundaries often created by language.

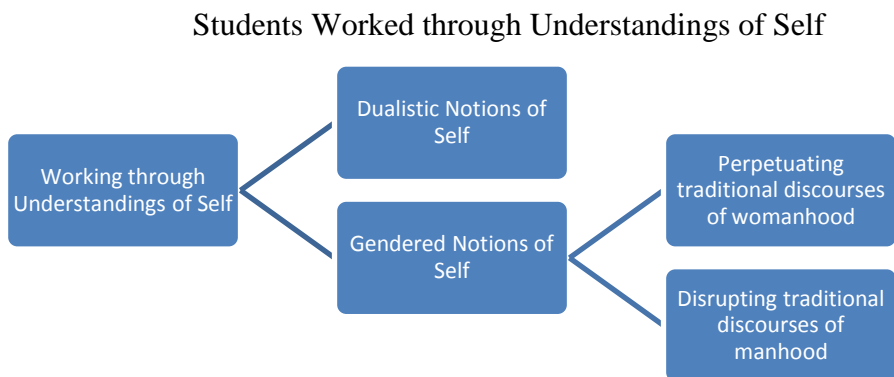


Figure 41 Section Overview: Working through Understandings of Self

The SNS students used the visual arts and the multimodal projects to work through understandings of self. As part of this work, students also tackled tough issues such as teen pregnancy, love and relationships, family issues, racism, sexually transmitted diseases, depression, and gender roles. With every image offering a visual retelling/revision of meaning and a sense of self, students worked to establish in their own minds who they were and how they would communicate their understandings of self to others. Constant revision and refinement of the use of sedimented aspects of identity often occurred as students played with form—often returning to original notions and ideas. During this play, they fine-tuned that which resonated with them. Two sub-themes emerged and will be discussed in this section. Gendered notions of self and dualistic notions of self were significant as students presented themselves in visual and multimodal texts.

Dualistic Notions of Self

Although students each worked within a given space and time and their interactions with others influenced the how and why of each expression of self, they, ultimately, were in constant meaning making with themselves. Students were in the process of semiosis of self. Theorists and researchers (Bourdieu, 1985; Rowsell & Pahl, 2007) explained that some aspects of our selves become *habituated* or *sedimented* over time. According to Rowsell and Pahl, meaning making involves the assemblage, negotiation, transformation, and materialization of Discourses into a text.

Within the visual texts of these SNS students, students conveyed themes that they had come to rely on as primary mechanisms in which to communicate and make sense of their own lives and stories. To make meaning of themselves, SNS students often imaged dualistic understandings of self across time. At the same time, they used signature icons and elements repetitively across texts as their subjectivities shifted day-to-day and over the year. During the course of the study, many of the students made meaning of themselves and their lives through the notion of duality. Although they were more on a continuum, their presentation of themselves was through motifs such as good/bad, light/dark; joy/depression; hope/defeat; and Mexican/American. The theme of good vs. bad became a predominant one in several students' texts over the year, and represented the personal struggles they faced. This theme of good and bad was strongly evident in three of the four senior texts but took on slightly different layers of meaning for each one.

Lluvia worked through depression and unhappiness in her texts throughout the study. In her realism text, Figure 42, from September, Lluvia composed the struggles she faced from her personal bouts of depression. Over the course of the year, Lluvia utilized several icons consistently. These elements were the



Figure 42 Lluvia's realism text

sun and moon icons, changes in facial expressions associated with these icons, yellow and blue colors, and hair. In only three of her texts (the surrealistic text, the inkblot, and the realism text) she did not use these. However, across her texts, her constant struggle between the joys and sorrows in her life became evident. The use of the moon and sun and how their positions on the canvas (they were moved from the left side to the right side and vice versa) caused a shift in the meaning of these icons. In addition, how Lluvia added facial expressions to the icons contributed to the shifts in meaning. Also, how she combined or kept the icons separated by space signified whether there was resolution between these two sides of her "personality" or emotions. Finally, volume and intensity of color contributed to the depth of meaning also associated with these elements. The fact that she had used these icons throughout the year and did not abandon their use suggested the importance of resolving this inner conflict between these two aspects of herself during this time in her life. In addition, the strength of these icons in representing and communicating to others this negotiation caused them to become habituated and ultimately sedimented within her texts during the academic year.

In her first visual text, Lluvia (Figure 43) presented what she called two sides of her personality. She made meaning of herself through negotiating between these two sides and what these two sides represented to her. Lluvia used the icons of the moon and the sun to represent the two sides of herself, the depressed and hidden self and the joyous and surface self.

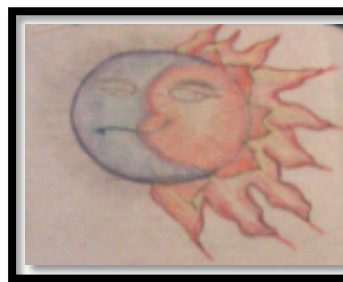


Figure 43 Lluvia's initial visual representation of self

In her third text, the Picasso, she continued to use these two icons in combination with a layering technique to physically represent the complexities of the meaning potentials that these two icons could represent.



Figure 44 Lluvia's Picassoesque text [top layer]



Figure 45 Lluvia's Picassoesque text [bottom layer]

In Figure 44, on the top layer, she used thick hair with the eye almost hidden within it and the moon and stars on the outside. Like her first text, the sun is on the left side of the canvas which represents the known part of herself. The moon is the dark, depressed, unhappy, uncertain self. In these first months of school and of the study, Lluvia was unhappy. In Figure 45 on the bottom layer, Lluvia's eye is clearly available to the viewer, and



Figure 46 Lluvia's surrealism text

she replaced the moon with a flower which should match the happiness of the sun on the right side of the canvas. This potential happiness was layered on the bottom or the physical underneath part of the image as well as the right side of the canvas which represents the possible. In being forced to interact with the demand of her gaze, Lluvia positioned the viewer to feel the depressed or unhappy real side that dominated her self-semiosis at the moment of text making.

Although Lluvia did not use the moon/sun icon combination in her fifth visual text of the year, the surrealism text (Figure 46), she did continue to use notions of dualism to make meaning of her life. By its very nature, surrealism would have required to create something that was other-worldly and not quite herself. She chose to use a tree as a metaphor for herself. She explained why she chose this icon:

Well...I think the tree is like something always right there. And see everyone passing before it. And it doesn't say nothing. But he lives and everything with the time fall, fall again with the spring. So, I think that's the way who I am. (Lluvia, Member Checking Interview, 04.15.09, 595-654)

Here, she indicated that she felt as though she was planted, unable to move, as she watched time pass her by. However, she drew two expressions in the face of the tree, one with the eyes closed downward and one with the eyes open looking upward. While not using the sun/moon signature, she did continue to convey understandings of herself from a dualistic perspective. In this case, she continued to communicate the idea of the inner aspect of herself that existed along with the surface aspect that people may see.

In Lluvia's final two visual texts for the class, the sculpture (Figure 47) and the mask (Figure 48), she



Figure 47 Lluvia's sculpture



Figure 48 Lluvia's mask

explored the sun/moon theme consistently and the two sides of her personality-the light and the dark sides. In both cases, the sun and moon are in balance and harmony with each other. In both images, the sun has now taken the right side of the image which signaled a change in the meaning of the sun icon; it now represented the joy that was present in her life at the time of text making rather than the depression or unhappiness. The sun and moon in the sculpture were not connected and the sun seems to be eating the moon- metaphorically gobbling up the depression or sadness. Balance was noted also by the addition of the butterfly which denotes transformation. The butterfly interestingly is also on the left side of the sculpture; Lluvia represented a transformation- which was occurring at the time of text making- of joy overcoming depression. The smile in the mask united both aspects of Lluvia's self which indicated that a happiness, or sort of joy, had been achieved at that moment in time. It was a part of the process of negotiating those two aspects of self with which Lluvia had struggled and come to make meaning throughout the year. In our member checking interview in April, she explained how she made sense of this dualistic notion:

I think that sometimes people have two faces. We try to represent to everybody the one. That we are happy. Or sometimes we are not. That face, it's hard to tell how you feel or how is your life really. But even when there are situations that you can't try or do something good, that face comes in. It is hard because people think you are other person. (Lluvia, Member Checking Interview, 04.15.09, 438-444)

By the end of the year, Lluvia, had ultimately, come to terms with these two sides. She recognized that the dark, unhappy, or hidden side was always there as a possibility. This was indicated, by the symbol of the sun on the right side of both of her last two visual texts, rather than the left side which she had used in the beginning of the year. However, she had within her the potential to overcome the strong forces of depression and become an integrated whole as her final smiling, united self showed.

Miguel layered notions of good and bad as he used several iconic combinations and color combinations. In his surrealistic text (Figure 49), created in September, he drew actual blood droplets coming from the heart. He represented the struggle between the dual aspects of



Figure 49 Miguel's surrealism text

self and life as he experienced it at that time of the text creation. In this single composition, he used three different dualistic combinations which intensified the communication of this struggle. First, the effective center of attention, the bleeding heart is flanked on the left side by bat wings, or devil wings, and on the right side by angel wings. This bleeding heart, both good and bad, is a metaphor for Miguel himself, as he saw himself at that moment. Second, he used the sun/moon combination, most likely adapted from Lluvia's texts because of its strong meaning potential, to represent the potential for sadness or potential for joy possibly awaiting him in the future. Third, he used the living and dying flower represented in the bottom real. The living flower reaches up to the ideal of the possibility of joy overcoming sadness, but his real possible is that

his life withers. This is represented by the two withering flowers, especially the one on the far right corner tip of the canvas. Miguel took up Lluvia's conversation of her struggle between joy and depression and the possibility of a unified happy whole and showed solidarity with her through the use of her signature icons. However, he used one of his own motifs, the bleeding heart, this time flanked with wings of good and evil to represent the conflict within himself. Like Lluvia, he began the year making meaning of his personal struggles, and like Lluvia, his struggles revolved around past events from which he attempted to break free. His second text, the Picassoesque text (Figure 50), was the first to use the heart and wings motif, and was present in combination in three of his texts. He positioned it in the forehead of the image which represented this struggle that was present in his mind at the time of textmaking.



Figure 50 Miguel's Picassoesque text [top half]

Unlike Lluvia, however, Miguel was unable to resolve this conflict. His final two images at the end of the year showed the internal conflict he felt; he was unsettled. For him, the impossibility of college, maintaining his friendships or relationships afterwards, and returning to work with his father haunted him. His first sculpture

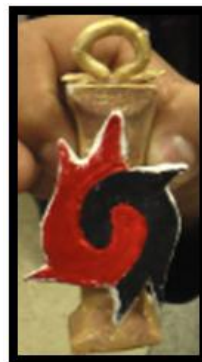


Figure 51 Miguel's first sculpture



Figure 52 Miguel's mask

(Figure 51) and his mask (Figure 52) shared common elements. The sculpture was a pillar with a large yin-yang symbol taking up almost the entire length of the front side

along with the sign of Aries, sitting atop. He also chose to use red, black, and white in the creation of the yin-yang. The typical yin-yang only has black and white. He explained his choices in this visual text:

El ying-yang lo hice un poco diferente a el original porque en cada momento que te no en la vida. Siempre deve de aver algo importante y por eso son los picos. Los colores son lo mas inportante. El negro nos significa sea malo sino es que es tristeza o malos momentos que e pasado. El rojo significa sangre y fuego para mi. El blanco signfica paz pero la forma en que lo puse significa mucho para mi porque esta al rededor de el ying-yang. Lo puse al rededor porque cuando hay dolor y tristeza siempre tiene que aber pas. (*sic*)

[The yin-yang I did a little different than the original because at every moment in life it [life] isn't [balanced]. You should always see something important and so are the peaks. The colors are the most important. The black is bad but we mean is that it is sad and bad times in the past. Red signifies blood and fire for me. White means peace but the way I put it means a lot for me because it is around the yin-yang. I put it around because when there is pain and sadness there always has to be peace and brown and gold because they signify the past]. (Miguel, Journal, Response to sculpture, n.d.g)

The black and the red signified the bad times and memories in Miguel's life which were connected to his brother's accident and his role in that event. It also represented the inner turmoil he was experiencing as a senior about to graduate without the hope of attending college. Interestingly, he said that the white surrounding the yin yang indicated peace, the peace that could be possible once this turmoil was resolved.

Miguel's mask (Figure 52), the last image he created, used the same color combinations as the sculpture, red/black/white, and the icon of the yin-yang. The yin-yang on the mask was not surrounded by the white which Miguel had indicated previously as offering hope. Rather the white was used in place of the eyes and mouth as a symbol of emptiness. When I arrived at class on the day of the mask sharing, Miguel really didn't want me see to his mask at first, but began to explain why his mask appeared

the way it did. He said that he had made a mistake on one of the eyes and tried to correct it by scratching it off. Once he did, he said that he liked the effect and used the same scratching technique on the other eye and mouth (Researcher Journal, 05.10.09). His journal entry told a little more about the making of the mask:

Bueno yo disfrute un poco creando mi mascara. Una de las razones porque la diseño asi era porque en mi vida y tenido vienos y malos momentos. Una cosa que me gusto fuen los colores que use. Bueno tambien no tengo mucho que decir porque ya casi todos conocer las razones de que porque use esos colores y tambien de la forma que la digene. (*sic*) [Well I enjoy creating my mask a little. One of the reasons why the design was so was because in my life had come bad times. One thing that I like the colors that I use. Well I do not have too much to say because almost all of the reasons for why I used these colors and also the form that it took, everyone knows.]. (Miguel, Journal, Response to mask, 05.13.09)

Miguel made meaning of himself and his life during this year through dualistic struggles between good and bad, light and dark, peace and turmoil, and hope and defeat. As he worked through uncertainties about his future, he repeatedly referred to the “bad times” in his life. In addition, he indicated that everyone (in the class) “already knew the reason why it took the form it did.” This statement demonstrated that he had habituated this conversation in his communications with the class. Within this habituation was the sedimentation of the elements of color (red/black), yin-yang, angel/devil wings, and the scroll unrolling and rolling up which represented consistently over the year how he was trying to make sense of this transitional point in his life.

Nanette used a variety of icons and words in her images which she used to represent her struggles with her family and the uncertainties facing her upon graduation from high school. She often used blue and red color, smiling and frowning faces, stars, moon, and clouds. Some of her texts contained elements also present in Lluvia’s and Miguel’s texts. Together, the texts of these three students demonstrated a particular visual

conversation which indicated their empathetic understandings of each other's conditions and feelings as they moved through the last year of high school.

Like Miguel's text, Nanette used the angel/devil motif (Figure 53), but in a different way. She used the angel as a metaphor for herself, but clearly showed that there were negative influences in her life which led to the possibility that she would be unhappy. She explained her choices in her personal mural and what she was communicating in this text:



Figure 53 Nanette's personal mural

Este los corazones y todo eso lo hice porque mi animo cambiaba ya puedo estar feliz pero a la vez estar triste pero siempre trato de no demostrarlo y no sé a veces puedo estar de las dos formas o primero puedo estar triste y al ratito estar contenta. [The hearts and all that I did because my mood can change and be happy, yet sad, but always try not to show and I do not know sometimes I can be of two forms or can be first and the little sad to be happy.] (Nanette, I2, 042709, 295-307)

She used the blue color of the day sky as her happy side, and the gray night sky, as her unhappy side. The devil on the shoulder icon and the dark colors used on the right side of the canvas pointed to a fear that she would be influenced or do something wrong.

This conflict was most notable in her Picasso image where she wrote “dissolution” in Spanish on the left side and “hope” written in English on the right side.

October 17, 2008, Nanette wrote in her journal about her thoughts while she was creating the Picasso text:

Cuando yo estaba haciendo el dibujo yo estaba pensando en mis tristezas y alegrías, pero también pensaba como serían todas las cosas si fueran diferentes. Yo puse otro ojo en la nariz porque yo creo que teniendo ese ojo emedio de mi cara puede ser más fácil ver todas las cosas más claras. [When I was making the drawing, I was thinking about my sadness and joys, but also thinking how things would be if they were different. I put

another eye on the nose because I believe that having that eye in the middle of my face can be easier to see all things more clearly.]

In our member checking interview, Nanette reflected on her Picassoesque text and further described what she was thinking the day she created the it:

When I was doing this, I was thinking...that day I was sad. So, I didn't know I was thinking about my problems. Y por eso le puse un ojo y una nariz porque no se pensaba que yo tenía otro ojo y que podía ver más allá de mis problemas. Y podría encontrar la solución. Y la boca se la puse allí porque a lo mejor teniendo otra podría decir muchas cosas que nunca he podido decirlas. No se me sentí bien haciendolo. [And so I gave it an eye and a nose because I thought that I had another eye and could see beyond my problems. I could find the solution. And his mouth was put there because maybe taking another might say many things that I could never tell. I was not doing well.] (Nanette, Member Checking Interview, 04.27.09, 103-120)

Nanette suggested that by creating an additional eye in her Picasso, she would have additional sight to find solutions to her problems. Similarly, she spoke of the extra mouth being able to say all the things that she had difficulty saying. In the creation of her text, she was working through her problems while she created this text.

Nanette emphasized both aspects of her life (the joys and sadness) and thought about what might be different

if her situation was “different.”

Nanette indicated that she

thought about her “sadness and joys” while making the text.

Her thinking about her future

came through her repetitive use



Figure 54 Nanette's sculpture



Figure 55 Nanette's mask

of elements such as the stars, clouds, and moon. She used stars more than any other element. The star icon became sedimented as it was repetitively used. Through its use, Nanette habituated the message to herself to hold onto her dreams.

Although she struggled with these two sides of self and her life, like Lluvia, she expressed resolution in her final two compositions, the sculpture (Figure 54) and the mask (Figure 55). Nanette used the motif of night sky and stars most often to symbolize her dreams and hopes, and worked near Lluvia when she created the statue. She adopted the sun icon from Lluvia add to her sculpture of night sky, moon, and clouds. In her journal, she wrote about her choices:

Las estrellas el sol y la luna que yo hice las his porque no se creo que las hice porque me gustan mucho las estrellas y todo lo que hice estan muy lejos de mi alcance y pues siento que es porque asi siento que estan mis sueños. [The stars, the sun, and the moon that I did was because I do not believe I did them because I like much stars and everything what I did was very far from my reach and because I feel that it is because thus I feel that my dreams are.] (Nanette journal, Response to statue, n.d.g.)

Like the stars in the night sky, Nanette felt that her dreams were out of reach. She added the element of the sun to represent the potential that she could reach those dreams thus adding balance.

For all three seniors, dualistic elements of good and bad represented by light and dark, sun and moon, night and day, angel and devil, and red and black played a significant role in how they negotiated understandings of their lives and made meaning of themselves to others. In addition to these dualistic notions and presentations, students also repetitively used signature elements to show shifts in subjectivities across time. Within visual texts, except for the class videos, students presented consistent ideas and concepts that they associated with their own identities and situations. Located in these

texts was also the idea of refinement of the use of particular icons students chose to use to signify themselves. Studying students' texts over time allowed me to see how students made sense of themselves and their lives through the specific elements and icons they repetitively used within their texts, and how those elements may have shifted meaning over time depending on where and how they were used within their texts.

By using these elements, students habituated discourses about themselves to themselves and others. In return, these habituated discourses became sedimented within their texts thus providing traces of who they were and how their subjectivities shifted. For example, Lluvia made sense of the depression she had experienced and resolved these feelings through her repeated use of the sun and the moon. In the beginning, she used the moon on the left side of the canvas, or the known, which signified sadness and depression at the time of text-making. Over the year, she switched the sun to the left (known) part of the canvas to signify the joy that she found by the end of the year. The moon remained part of her habituated conversation. She kept it on the right (the possible). Lluvia realized that life would always contain the ups and downs, the joys and heartaches.

Although elements may have cut across texts across the year, what they signified changed. Several of them transformed. These identities seemed to be fluid and dependent on the context and time in which they were created. The sun was shifted from left to right, white was used differently, etc. Students developed a set of elements that were particularly theirs, and offered a way to recognize their texts. The meaning behind them shifted with their experiences at the moment of making- from depression to hope (Lluvia), and from hope to depression (Miguel). Students carried their discourses across texts, but these discourses shifted in intensity at particular times. None of the participants

radically changed concepts, elements, or ideas throughout their visual texts. Next, I discuss the gendered notions of self presented by SNS students in their visual and multimodal texts.

Gendered Notions of Self

Students worked through gendered notions of self while they created visual and multimodal texts. Discourses surrounding traditional notions of womanhood emerged in the non-senior group's texts while discourses disrupting traditional notions of manhood emerged in Miguel's texts.

Traditional notions of womanhood revolved around idealized and physical beauty, romance, and materiality. Marely's discourse emerged from Mexican society's definition of womanhood. In Mexican society, women are commonly positioned to take on traditional roles such as motherhood, taking care of the family, and serving the



Figure 56 Marely's surrealism text

husband (Castillo, 1994). Figure 56 is Marely's surreal image created during first semester. In this text, Marely pasted photos of different objects to represent her dreams and interests. She portrayed herself as a soft-white rabbit. Rabbits are archetypes of femininity. According to Windling (2007), "they are also contradictory, paradoxical creatures: symbols of both cleverness and foolishness, of femininity and androgyny, of cowardice and courage, of rampant sexuality and virginal purity"

http://oldweb.uwp.edu/academic/english/martinez/Spring2007/167/symbolism_of_rabbit

[s_and_har.htm](#)). In the bunny's ear is a cell phone, which when combined with the large heart in the center, most likely represented the calls from a boyfriend. She placed a diamond on the left side within the angel feather and a diamond within a yellow rose situated in the center of the heart suggesting a marriage proposal. Above the heart she placed a strawberry topped with a pearl. In the upper right hand corner is a dog that many famous actresses have been portrayed as owning. The jewels, the cell phone, and the dog in combination suggested the desire for material goods associated with luxury and beauty. Most strikingly, she, herself, is represented as a soft white, beautiful rabbit that

needs caring. Marely's personal discourse of femininity emerged from the larger Discourse of womanhood and materialism associated with who (males) gives what to whom (females).



Figure 57 Pastry's Picassoesque text



Figure 58 Pastry's mask

This traditional Discourse of dating, engagement, and marriage was particularly strong within the Mexican community and its traditional notions of gender where women are expected to get married, have children, and be provided for by their husbands.

Pastry participated in this discourse of idealized and physical beauty (Figures 57, 58, 59). In all of her images she emphasized her physical beauty, especially highlighting her



Figure 59 Pastry's sculpture

eyes. However, rather than her physical beauty being emphasized as a gateway for increased socializing, she used physical beauty as a barrier between the outside world and

her inner world. As seen in her Picassoesque text (Figure 57) and in her mask (Figure 58), Pastry replaced a regular mouth with something unusual. In the Picasso, she put an eye over the mouth which she told me meant that she liked to think about what she was going to say before she actually said it. So, the eye indicated reflection before speaking. In her mask, she had virtually sewn the lips shut creating silence. She forced the viewer to look at her beauty, but viewers are shut out by her silence. Therefore, Pastry did not want anyone to truly know her. Similarly, in her sculpture (Figure 59), she created a physically beautiful box. She indicated that the box contained all the colors that she loved, and used these colors to decorate it. But this box represented more than just a beautiful trinket. Pastry indicated that this box was a place for keeping memories safe: “I had so many things, I decided to make a box and think of it as it could store a lot of different things that represent me instead of just choosing one of them” (Video Class Session, Sculpture presentations, 03.31.09, 68-70). Pastry participated in both the Discourse and discourse of womanhood. Her emphasis on outer beauty in order to hide her inner emotions was a personal discourse that emerged from the larger societal Discourse of physical beauty that is expected of women.

Although Natalia participated in d/Discourses of stability, she also participated in gendered discourses surrounding physical beauty. She often used flowers as representations of herself. The flowers conveyed the idea that they are planted and represent beauty and romantic notions of life. They were something to be admired and are silent. Natalia, like the flower, becomes objectified. Below is an excerpt from a fairy tale that Natalia wrote for class about herself being turned into a flower by her fairy godmother:

Cuando de pronto yo pensaba en que quería que ella me convirtiera. Cuando de pronto se callo su varita al piso y me convirtió en flor. Yo me decía y me preguntaba que iba pasar cuando mis papas se dieran cuenta que su hija adorado no estaba en su cuarto....En la mañanana yo me desparate y me vi que era yo Natalia la hijita adorada de mis padres y ya no era una flor. Y así fue como paso todo y al final todo pareció un sueño. Mis padres no se dieron cuenta yo avía sido una flor que adornaba mi cuarto en esa noche. [I was thinking on what I wanted when suddenly her wand fell to the floor and she turned me into a flower. I was wondering what would happen when my parents realized that their adored daughter was not in her room....The next morning I woke up and I saw that I was Natalia, my parents' adored daughter and that I was not a flower any more. That's how everything happened it seemed like a dream. My parents never knew that I've been a flower adorning my room the night before.](Natalia, Fiction Story, 02.11.09)

Natalia wrote of herself as losing her chance for a wish from her fairy godmother and instead was turned into a flower that simply adorned her room. She presented a similar depiction of herself in her surrealist image in Figure 60. In addition to the flower signifying her objectification, it also signifies her as a static object and one of inaction rather than an actor.



Figure 60 Natalia's surrealism text

Although no flowers were part of Natalia's Picasso (Figure 61), her focus on ideal physical beauty became apparent in her choices of eye and hair color that were distinctly opposite of her own natural colors. In her image to the right, Natalia changed very little of her face; she did not want to mar it in any way which would detract from her beauty. She did, however, give herself blue eyes and an



Figure 61 Natalia's Picassoesque text

extra green eye on her cheek. Natalia's natural eye color is brown. She covered much of her brown hair with blonde streaks or highlights. Even the brown that she used in the

image was much lighter than her natural black hair. Finally, her attention to a pale skin tone is worth noting because she had olive skin. In every physical characteristic, she changed her own to what might be considered the ideal, a Discourse of beauty that is salient in American culture. Natalia told me how she felt about her choices and her process in creating the Picasso during our member checking interview:

- Tammy: Was it hard for you to cut up your face or it didn't bother you?
- Natalia: Yeah, it was hard.
- Tammy: Why?
- Natalia: Because it was me...[further into the conversation]
- Tammy: You chose to make one eye green, and your two eyes, the color of your eyes blue. And you have brown eyes.
- Natalia: [laughs] Yeah.
- Tammy: Why blue and green?
- Natalia: Because I would like to have them blue or green.
- Tammy: Why?
- Natalia: Because I love people who have different, who have eyes that are blue or green. (Natalia, Member Checking Interview, 05.21.09, 213-299)

The Picasso technique was disturbing for Natalia because she did not want to destroy her physical beauty. She indicated that it was difficult to cut up the text because "it was me." In the actual picture, Figure 61, her face is in tact. Unless one looked very closely, it was difficult to tell what she had added to the image other than a change of hair and eye color. She said she wanted her features to be "different" from the typical brown hair and brown eyes. She wanted society's ideal of beauty: light complexions, hair and eyes.

Unlike the non-senior girls, Miguel, the only male student in this SNS class, disrupted traditional notions of manhood as he performed and presented notions of self in his visual and multimodal texts.

Rather than take on a machismo stance, a traditional notion of manhood within the Mexican community (Castillo, 1996), Miguel often played with other

possibilities within his texts. Throughout the year, he presented himself as a young man who easily fell in love and ended up getting his heart broken by the young ladies. Figures 62, 63, 64, and 65 reveal Miguel's

understandings of his own masculinity. In Miguel's initial visual representation of self, Figure 63, he divided his horizontally-oriented text into an upper and bottom half clearly delineating his ideal

from his real. In the upper left is a scene of a desert mountain landscape. In the upper right is a ginger bread house in which the bottom right corner is cut away and replaced with a heart-shape filled with candies. Taken together, Miguel's ideal is a romanticized,



Figure 62 Miguel's *Tools of a Man* multimodal text



Figure 63 Miguel's initial visual representation of self



Figure 64 Miguel's *Mafalda* cartoon character



Figure 65 Miguel's Picassoesque text

fairy-tale version of love. In the bottom portion of his text, he placed a car, watch, ring, and a lipstick imprint of a kiss. What Miguel understands to be real or expected in his life is to have material things. These material things will lead to the love of a woman as represented by the kiss on the bottom right corner of his text. His initial visual text created at the beginning of the year showed that Miguel struggled with traditional notions of manhood and suggested that to get the girl, a man has to provide things.

As the year went on, Miguel was willing to try on softer qualities usually not associated with the traditional masculine ideal of his culture and emphasized more his romanticized notions of love. In his *Mafalda* cartoon character of himself, he drew a big-eyed, smiling boy. Below his character, he wrote

Un niño simpatico se enamora de la primer niña que mira. Y se deja continuar con por las mujeres y no es machismo y ama el futbol. [A friendly boy who falls in love with the first girl that looks. And he lets himself continue with the women and he is not macho and loves soccer.]

In his description, he discusses both of these aspects of himself. He points out an almost hopeless pursuit of love while at the same time emphasizing that he is not “machismo.”

In his Picassoesque text, Figure 65, he showed heartache by the number of scars he placed on the left and right cheeks and in the head region. Rather than holding back or hiding this heartache, Miguel publicly within the space of the SNS class made known his feelings. In this text, he colored his hair purple. In our member checking interview, we discussed his use of purple in this text, pink in his inkblot, and his willingness to perform as a homosexual reporter in the video news project. He explained that he was not macho, “I’m not like that thing.” He further explained how he tried on this identity within his affinity group and what he thought about it:

- Miguel: ‘Cause there were like some parts that I didn’t think I can do it, but I couldn’t do it in the video, but they were there supporting me ‘cause actually in the video I’m being like Latin and like a gay like I did, so at first I was like “Why am I going to do this?” And then I started “I’m not like that” or something like that. I am not gay so it does not matter to me.... Yeah, to see how I can feel or how do people react about that.
- Tammy: So, within taking on that role, the video allowed you to do that whereas maybe you wouldn’t have done that in class?
- Miguel: I wouldn’t have done it in class. No.
- Tammy: So, what’s different about the video or that medium versus class?
- Miguel: It’s because of the video thing, we were just, we were just five. We were just playing. We didn’t have to be shy. You know, we just have more communication inside than if you do it in class, you just kind of wish what people will say and all that.

Miguel was willing to take on different personas and try out softer aspects of his masculinity in the safety of his affinity group and in the safety of the SNS class. He made public through his visual texts and multimodal texts that he was a hopeless romantic who was not “macho.” Miguel’s gendered notions of self presented and performed in his texts disrupted traditional discourses of masculinity within his Mexican culture.

Summary of gendered notions of self. Gendered notions of self emerged in the discourses that took shape as students either took on or resisted traditional notions of how gender should be performed. The non-senior group tended to participate in traditional notions of performing female gender through discourses of family, marriage, and beauty. Although many of the students in the class knew friends who had dropped out of school to run away and get married or to have babies, they continued to take up traditional

notions of female and male gender roles. Miguel, on the other hand, disrupted traditional notions of manhood by rejecting *machismo* ideals.

Personally Relevant Discourses Emerged in Visual Texts

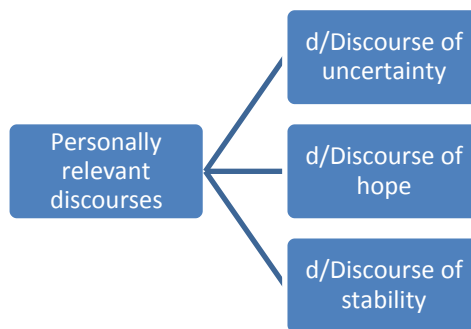


Figure 66 Section Overview: Personally relevant discourses

As the SNS students worked within the arts-infused, multimodal curriculum, they made meaning across sign systems about their understandings of their own lives within the larger contexts of their families, communities, and American society. Personal and collective discourses emerged within and across the senior group and the non-senior group participants' texts. The visual discourses around these understandings revealed students' constructions of their own power (or lack of) and positions (and/or positioning). Personally relevant discourses emerged for all nine students in the study. However, those discourses were also part of the larger Discourses (Gee, 2003) that were taken up by the two different groups, the senior and non-senior group, and took on varied personal meanings for each student. Discourses that were personally relevant included a d/Discourse of uncertainty, a d/Discourse of hope, and a d/Discourse of stability.

d/Discourse of Uncertainty

Within the many discussions, activities, and day-to-day events, students expressed feelings of uncertainty regarding the future. This Discourse appeared most often in the senior group as they grappled with what their lives might look like after they graduated from high school. The big D refers to collective discourses while the small d represents personal discourses. In the U. S., “college” is often offered as the next logical step after high school. This becomes societal Discourse about what seniors should do (even though there are many other options.) Further, the Discourse of post-high school education assumes that everyone can go to college, but this is not the case with many students marginalized by their citizenship, finances, and personal/family responsibilities. As a result of this Discourse, seniors can begin to feel anxiety. This Discourse is then manifested in the personal discourse in which “blame” for not being able to afford college, have American citizenship, and personal/family responsibilities become internalized. Collectively, the students were very aware of their limited options, largely due to their lack of financial resources for college, lack of citizenship or legal status which prevented entry into colleges, and family expectations that they would begin working and contribute to the family. Although all of the seniors expressed unease about graduating, this unease hit Miguel the hardest. This uncertainty became his personal discourse across his texts throughout the year. In the beginning of the year, Miguel shared some of his personal problems with the class which contributed to his feelings of uncertainty about the direction his life would take. In one of



*Figure 67 Miguel's
Picassoesque text*

his first visual texts, the Picasso, he expressed the pain he felt. In Figure 67, Miguel has scars on several places on his face and head. He also has a single teardrop coming down from his right eye and then a heart that has both a devil and angel wing attached in his forehead. Miguel wrote this about his image:

Creo que el picazo significa muchas cosas para mi por que los diferentes colores que escoji y tambien representa mucho el lado que escoji de los dibujos. Yo escoji el lado de enfrente porque creo que muchas personas se fijan ento belleza y no en lo interior que tienes y tambien el dibujo es por que quiere decir que uno simepre tiene quedar la cara y no tratar de evader los problemas. [I believe that the Picasso means many things for me because the different colors that I chose and also represents a lot the side that I chose of the drawings. I chose the opposite side because I believe that many people are set into beauty and not on the interior thing that you have and also the drawing is because I want to say that one always has to remain and face and not try to escape from the problems.] (Miguel, Journal Entry, Response to Picasso, 10.17.08).

Uncertainty in the beginning of the year resulted from his difficulties with his home life, and the possibility that he would have to move and leave his friends behind. He knew that despite his uncertainties, evident in his visual text, he could not turn away from the issue of helping to support his family. He would have to face his problems.

Eventually, his personal discourse took the form of an ancient scroll (Figure 68), the scroll of life, that was at times being rolled up and at other times being rolled out. The scroll represented his personal struggle with the *opening* of certain parts of his life,



Figure 68 Miguel's second sculpture

certain opportunities that had been afforded him as a full-time student, and the *closing* that might take place after he graduated. Once he graduated, he believed that he would

lose touch with his friends and realized that he would be forced out into the adult world of work. This scroll became an icon that he used in four different visual texts he created including his personal mural, the class mural, the awards ceremony banner, and his sculpture. Miguel wrote about the strength of this image and how the two symbols, the parchment and the question mark taken together, captured the essence of the uncertainty in his future:

La forma fue estas esculturas me representan es que siento algo en mi vida que no se descubierto pero tambien siento algo que me ata al pasado por eso el pergamino. El signo de interrogacion significa que no se que quiero en la vida y que mi future todavia no esta echado. [The way these sculptures represent me is that I feel something in my life that that is not discovered but I also feel somewhat tied to the past for that the parchment. The question mark means that I don't know what I want in life and that my future is not cast yet.] (Miguel, Journal Entry, Response to Sculpture, no date given).

At the time Miguel wrote about his sculpture, there was more hope in his tone. He indicated that the question mark simply meant that he didn't know what he wanted, and his future was still open. However, when I had my final member checking interview with him in late April, Miguel shared a more pessimistic interpretation of the scroll:

Tammy: You have the scroll in the class mural. You have it in your sculpture. You have it here. So, what does this scroll mean to you?

Miguel: Uh...you know, one of the main things about this is like it can represent two things about me. It's 'cause of the paper, the scroll thing, and in ancient times, they used this kind, and I really love ancient times, but it also represents about my life thing 'cause now everything has been closed up. My life, it hasn't open it up to me, so just keep on closed. You know.

Tammy: So, this is representing more closing...

Miguel: Yes.

- Tammy: Rather than opening?
- Miguel: Yeah. 'Cause it's still now closed. But now, I don't have those kind of options for my future now.
- Tammy: You don't think you have open options?
- Miguel: No.
- Tammy: Why not?
- Miguel: A lot of problems. (Miguel, Member Checking Interview, 04.23.09, 80-97)

The icon of the scroll offered several meaning potentials for Miguel. He used it as a primary semiotic resource which he drew upon to take up his own personal discourse of uncertainty. This icon was also extended to the larger Discourse of uncertainty that he and his fellow classmates felt from being part of a small immigrant community facing marginalization within the larger school community and from many members of their own ethnic group. Limited opportunities and marginalization as a minority often made the future appear bleak. The Discourse of uncertainty for immigrant students means the possibility of being deported, not being able to find jobs within certain areas of the country, and not being able to go to college even if the financial resources are available. Miguel's personal discourse of uncertainty about his future is directly connected to his family's immigrant status, to their needs associated with economic security, and to the Discourse of uncertainty for immigrants in the U.S.

d/ Discourse of Hope

Although the SNS students struggled with a variety of issues and uncertainties as teenagers and immigrants, a d/Discourse of hope emerged across the year and across the visual texts. The larger Discourses of hope revolve around economics. College means a better job, better status in the community, and more options for jobs. For these seniors,

the Discourse of hope was associated with better jobs. This Discourse is not uncommon for seniors, but the Discourse also presumes that seniors will have financial support from family. For the seniors in this class, their personal discourses of hope offered different readings. The impending decisions that come with graduation and the uncertainties that they faced deeply affected them. Their visual texts indicated a deep massaging of the issues affecting them individually and a sort of work to find answers within themselves.

Nanette explained how working in clay in particular helped her do this:

Tammy: Did you like making that 3D representation of yourself?

Nanette: [shakes head in affirmative] Sí. [Yes.]

Tammy: What about it did you like?

Nanette: Uhm...No sé. Es que como haciendo las cosas con mis manos como que me desahogo de los problemas que tengo. [Uhm...I don't know. It is that like making the things with my hands because I am relieved of the problems that I have.]

Tammy: Okay, what did you find out about yourself while you were making that?

Nanette: Que puedo, puedo hacer cosas que a lo mejor creía que no podía hacer. [I can do things that maybe I thought that I could not do.](Class Session Video Transcript, 03.31.09)



Figure 69 Nanette's
Picassoesque text



Figure 70 Nanette's sculpture



Figure 71 Nanette's mask

Although this discourse of hope emerged over the three of the four seniors' texts, Nanette's texts represented hope most powerfully. Hopes and dreams are part of the American Dream. Students are encouraged to dream regardless of their family status. In the images Nanette created, she consistently used the motif of night sky and stars. To her this motif represented her hopes and dreams. She included this in her mask (Figure 71), in her sculpture (Figure 70), in her Picasso discussed previously (Figure 69), and in her choice to paint the universal night sky and stars in the class mural. These images resonated with her, and were marked and re-marked throughout the year. In our member checking interview, Nanette and I discussed her choices and what the use of stars throughout her work meant to her:

Tammy: In the group mural, from what I remember, you did a lot of the painting of the background with the stars, and you have the star coming up, you know, here and in your eyes, in the Picasso, you had the stars [announcements interrupt] what do the stars mean for you?

Nanette: Las estrellas me gustan mucho también porque hay veces que son como mis sueños que están muy altos y nunca los voy alcanzar pero no sé lo mismo a veces de que las estrellas brillante tanto y de que así quiero ser yo algún día. [I like the stars also because there are times that my dreams are like that are very high and I never reach but not so often

that the stars that shine so much and I want to be someday.]
(Nanette, Member Checking Interview, 04.27.09, 310-321)

Each image, however, was revised slightly to include added elements which often incorporated the conversations within the visual texts around her. Prior to the sculpture, one of the last pieces created, Nanette had not included the sun in her compositions. A visual conversation occurred as she worked closely beside Lluvia, and she chose to incorporate the sun into her own composition.

d/Discourse of Stability

While the discourses of uncertainty and hope emerged most prominently in the senior group's texts, the d/Discourse of stability

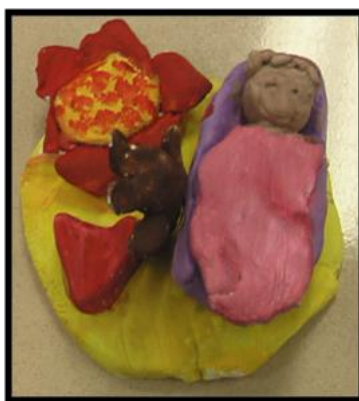


Figure 72 Marely's sculpture

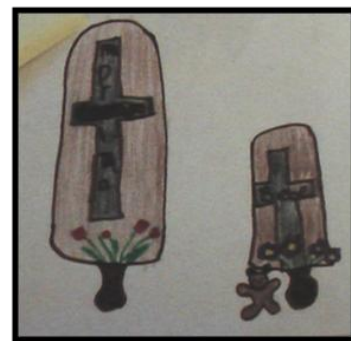


Figure 73 Marely's realism text

emerged most often in the texts of the non-senior group. Stability as a Discourse in this country suggests



Figure 74 Marely's Mafalda comic strip

citizenship (American),

strong families, permanent homes, and good jobs. For these students, their culture, Mexican, is stable. This discourse may have shown up because they were immigrants and their citizenship could be revoked or their family may decide to leave (no job, family,

etc). Personal discourses of stability were especially noted through the role of family, home, and day to day life.

Marely, often discussed the importance of family in her life, and her visual texts were devoted to memories of her cousins, relationships with her mother, and the simple joys of life like going out to a Chinese restaurant for dinner. In Figures 72, 73, and 74, for example, Marely included babies, memories (in the form of tombstones) of a dead cousin and baby, and friends eating Chinese food (her favorite food).

The repetition of these elements over visual texts created represented stability. They were constant, identified her texts as particularly hers, and grounded the images in family, etc.

Natalia participated in the discourse of stability by emphasizing home and family, but her texts strongly emphasized the stability that her cultural and gendered positioning provided her. Across her texts, Natalia represented a strong theme of marriage and romance. The discourse of stability was

particularly evident after Natalia and I examined her texts together. In Natalia's personal mural, Figure 75, created first semester, she used the icons of the heart, the flag, the cross, and the



Figure75 Natalia's personal mural

Virgin of Guadalupe as strong indicators of the role that love, religion, and culture played in creating a stable and meaningful life for Natalia. The Mexican flag is on the left bottom side of the canvas and shows her known and her real. She was first and foremost Mexican. Her ideal was all that love would provide for her. She made certain that the viewer of her texts knew for sure that she wasn't talking about love in general or being in

love with the idea of love, but an actual love commitment to Juan Carlos, her fiancé. His name anchored the meaning of the heart in the real. This relationship also pointed to the idea of family, and stability with children, a home, and a job. Together, these ultimately equal happiness. The heart also symbolized the love she had for her best friend which was located in her known ideal and anchored in language. On the right side of the image were the possibilities that being Catholic and Mexican could provide. They were connections to her cultural heritage and to the symbolic role that Catholicism plays in Mexican family life. These icons taken together demonstrated that Natalia had taken on a discourse of stability and did not seek anything outside a traditional life. Natalia also spoke of her image in our member checking interview:

Tammy: Can you talk to me a little about what you put and where you put it? And what you think about that?

Natalia: Hmm. Hmm. Puse un corazón porque estoy enamorada y lo puse no muy arriba ni muy abajo ni en medio. Está más para arriba que en medio. Y escribí "My Best Friend" porque he estado pensando en mi amiga. Pienso que ella es mi mejor amiga. Y puse la bandera de México porque soy mejicana. Puse Virgin de Guadalupe porque soy catolica y creo en la virgin de Guadalupe y la cruz por... porque también es de lo mismo. Así como que voy todos los domingos a misa. Rezamos todos los días, y puse el nombre de "Juan Carlos" porque es mi novio con él que me voy a casar. [I put a heart because I'm in love and not too much above or below or in the middle. This more up in the middle. And I wrote "My Best Friend" because I've been thinking about my friend. I think she is my best friend. And I put the flag of Mexico because I'm Mexican. Virgin of Guadalupe because I am Catholic and believe in the virgin of Guadalupe and Cross for ... because it is the same thing. Just like I am going every Sunday to Mass. We pray every day, and I put the name "Juan Carlos" because he is my boyfriend that I'm going to marry.] (Natalia, Member Checking Interview, 05.21.09, 342-443)

Natalia's discourse of "stability" was much more than a discourse of romance. What represented stability in Natalia's life was her Mexican heritage, her fiancé, and most importantly her faith and religion. She demonstrated the need to have a traditionally stable life as a young Mexican woman.

Summary of personally relevant discourses. Although each student maintained a discourse that was significant to her/him, projected in the replication of certain icons as signatures or re-marks (Albers & Frederick, 2009), particular discourses became part of the larger Discourses taken up by the two groups. This happened as students replicated certain elements within their texts over the course of the year, and used those texts as a way of making sense of themselves and their lives over the school year. These personal discourses emerged from the larger societal Discourses such college after high school, economic stability associated with college, uncertainties associated with immigration, and discourses surrounding womanhood. While the non-senior group took on the discourse of stability, the senior group moved between the two significant discourses of uncertainty and hope. Age seemed to play a big role in the discourses taken up by the students and for immigrant students who are about to transition out of high school. The implications are enormous as the stability that they may feel at younger ages evidenced in the discourses of the non-senior group, begin to dissipate and anxiety increase as the world of options begin to narrow.

CHAPTER 6

RE-IMAGINING SPANISH FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS CURRICULUM: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH



Figure 76 Tammy's collage

“Breaking through the frames of presuppositions and conventions, we are enabled to recapture the processes of our becoming” (Greene, 1995, p. 130).

As I completed my first attempt at a self-portrait, I remember thinking about how my representation reflected me and how it was also limited by the choices that I had made with regard to pictures or words. While working on this image, I became engrossed in the positioning of the pictures and how layering changed the meaning. My choices were not *arbitrary* (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) even if I did not realize it at the time. I probably cut out as many words as pictures, but in the end result, I found that I moved

away from print and emphasized image. I realize now that I made these choices because visual images afforded meaning that words did not.

As a semiotician, I understand that language is not the only mediator of thought and often inadequate for communicating our emotive, cognitive, and social meanings. In writing up the results of this study, I have found it difficult to present the multiple layers of meaning and identity negotiated in a year's time in the linear format of academic writing required, as have other feminist writers such as Trinh T. Minh-ha (1989), Ana Castillo (1994), and Gloria Anzaldúa (1987). Despite this struggle, I was able to say more through the close study and presentation of the participants' visual and multimodal texts, more about the importance of creating a curriculum in which students are pulled in and engaged in meaningful work about their lives rather than *pushed out* (Antrop-González, 2006, 2009; Valenzuela, 1999, 2009) as the result of the lack of personal and cultural relevancy to their lives.

Significance of the Study

In creating curriculum, it is easy to forget about the realities of the students-where they are, who they are, how they are, etc and often this leads to a one size fits all curriculum which does not ever do justice to the students (Carreira, 2003; Lynch, 2003; Potowski & Carreria, 2004; Roca & Colombi, 2003). This group of SNS students was unique, and curriculum was shaped by our reactions to their needs and by them as they participated within the class. The context shaped the curriculum, and the curriculum shaped the context (Halliday, 1978). Their lives, their stories, their issues became the curriculum (Lynch, 2003). Visual art became a tool of thought, a communication system of significance in that it allowed them to explore and to make sense of who they were

throughout the year. It also was a meaning making system by which they could communicate to others the things with which they struggled, the parts of self that they did not have words for or did not choose to say (Greene, 1995; Silver, 2001).

Rather than pushing-out students (Antrop-González, 2006; Valenzuela, 1999), this arts-infused, multimodal SNS curriculum delivered from a critical-care stance *pulled in* students by pulling in languages, negotiation of meaning, others into the class, and the teacher into ideas of change to a semiotic curriculum. As a result, third space was created where students were able to act outside the mandates of school and home (Gutierrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejeda, 2000) and inside the safety of a sanctuary (Antrop-González, 2006). Through visual analysis, layers of meaning were revealed. Discourses became apparent, and in making these discourses apparent, they could be de-constructed and re-constructed (Albers, 2007b; Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009, in press; Gee, 2003) thus providing more than simply critique but also expanding possibilities (Giroux & McClaren, 1991).

A Focus on Curriculum: *Pulling In*

Pulling in Teacher to Ideas of Change to a Semiotic Curriculum

Understanding that the world is conveyed and understood through multiple systems of communication is critical for the academic and personal growth of all students. This was the beginning point for Esperanza and I to begin to think about how we would approach the year, what kinds of engagements we would design, the pedagogies we would ascribe to and how these would align to a multimodal perspective and approach, and how we would think about reading and composing texts.

Part of the work of this class was creating space to teach students concepts associated with visual discourse analysis (Albers, 2007b; Bang, 2000; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Metalanguage (Callow, 2006), for discussing visual design and discourse analysis was taught within the year so that students could begin to read not only Spanish language text but also Spanish artists' visual texts for social and political meanings that would help provide insight into their lives. In the beginning, we encouraged students to take notice of elements within texts rather than simply think about the aesthetics of the texts. We encouraged students to look and see more carefully by prompting them with questions. As we moved into more complex subjects and students had time to think more about visual texts and talk about them, we introduced the language of visual design. Once this was introduced to students, they began using it to analyze meanings associated with this design within visual artworks and texts that were being viewed and read along with their literary texts. As a final step, we encouraged students to then think about the larger Discourses that surrounded the creation of the texts.

When Esperanza learned to read images using visual discourse analysis perspective, she had a better understanding of the problems her students faced because she could read their artwork, and the image was a window into the inner lives of the image makers (Igoa, 1997). This study suggests the usefulness of a multimodal approach and visual discourse analysis to increase critical literacy.

Pulling in the Negotiation of Meaning through Multiple Sign Systems

We included daily opportunities to work with both image and language. According to Walsh (2003, p. 123), "...images can evoke different levels of response."

As I found in this study, many of the students were more comfortable with writing by the end of the study, which was a source of great distress at the beginning of the study. Many students said they benefited from using images, both their own and others'. Ideas were explored and represented in the reading and composing of images. Students were also given opportunities to write about their thoughts in their journals. Writing was an additional medium for holding their thoughts just like image was a medium for holding thought.

Activation of schema of various kinds also occurred while the students created personally and culturally relevant art to negotiate meaning and in the process were able to extend oral and written language. It was not the creation of the text itself that generated language but the activation of the schema which generated language. Because grammar elements are present in both text and image, incorporating skills of reading text and image provided a greater opportunity for SNS students to negotiate and extend meaning.

As students created participated in the creation of their texts, the process was as important as the products. I could see the joy in the play with the forms and materials that were used, the problem solving going on in the creation of the texts and the at times the dissatisfaction with the forms. When this occurred, students often revised their creations in a more authentic way than had they done in writing where revision is often forced on students rather than occurring because of dissatisfaction with the outcome. Students in this SNS course were often at play, but in this play, the serious business of communicating and making sense of themselves and their communities were always at hand.

Pulling in Languages

An important aspect of taking into consideration the needs of the students was designing opportunities for students to generate meaning across sign systems. When students encounter challenges to their languages, dialects, or styles, they interpret this as a challenge of who they are. Schools often unintentionally mirror attitudes about language variations held by society (Kutz, 1997). With language and identity being intimately intertwined, Esperanza and I encouraged the students to use the available multiple communication systems for meaning making. The focus was not on language, *per se*, but on making meaning and extending thought.

Students were encouraged to communicate their ideas using Spanish, English, Spanglish, gestures, and visual art fluidly and flexibly, moving seamlessly between languages and sign systems. Faltis (2009) described the joy of being able to use the languages, dialects, and combinations of these such as Spanglish. However, in American schools, fluid movement between languages is frowned upon, and in some cases banned. In this SNS class, students, teacher, and researcher learned language and negotiated meaning from one another as we were all at different points on the bilingual continuum (Valdés, 2001) and spoke varying dialects of these languages. SNS students were able to express thought and understanding of the personal, social, and political forces influencing their lives without the shackles and vulgarities enforced by any given language (Castillo, 1994).

Pulling in Critical Literacy by Providing Sanctuary

The SNS class at Landings High School was a sanctuary for Latino students. It provided more than a course to simply develop standard Spanish language skills. Many

students brought personal and emotional baggage to class. Sanctuary was a place to work through these problems. The students could not discuss topics such as dating and sex with their parents; they could in sanctuary. Esperanza had established Circles as a form of group counseling where students released feelings of tension, anger, frustration, and sadness and were empowered to help themselves out of their troubling dilemmas. Antrop-González (2006) suggested that students want schools to be a place where they feel safe and where they belong. When schools create such atmospheres and student-centered climates, students thrive. Esperanza's class provided a safe haven within the larger school space.

Within the safe space of the SNS class, students were more willing to take a critical look at their lives and their worlds. As Esperanza and I worked together in curriculum design sessions and in informal conversations throughout the year, we negotiated a critical-care pedagogy. We wanted to create more meaningful experiences for the students. Prior to this study, Esperanza had primarily worked from a pedagogy of care, and I had worked from a critical literacy lens. Together, we envisioned, shaped, and enacted a critical-care pedagogy.

Defining critical literacy and what that actually looks like with teenagers is often difficult because what we, as educators, think of as being a critique of the larger world may actually begin with a critique of their own networks, their groups of friends and the tough issues that they deal with daily. This kind of work was arduous and emotional. It required time for rest and time for rejuvenation. Esperanza allowed for this as she not only invited spaces for discussions on tough topics but also provided spaces for play and for experiencing joy as noted in the celebrations such as the Video Awards.

In our interactions, critical literacy became an area of focus and one that had to be negotiated. Critical literacy, by its nature, becomes a consciousness raising event (Freire, 1970). One reason why Esperanza had a problem with critical topics was because of the negative connotations associated with the word “critical.” She was uncomfortable with the term “critical” because it could mean that one would have to question many beliefs and assumptions. This can be very unsettling. She reacted the same way to the word “push.” I often used the word “push” to mean to get students to think a little more deeply and to move out of comfort zones and had to reconsider the use of this term. To many of the students, the process or experience surrounding the creation of the texts was just as important, if not more important, than the final products. For example, Nanette expressed the pleasure she experienced in working with clay to create her sculptures. She said that she liked using her hands because it helped her release frustrations. This space let students explore their lives and their current situations and work to resolve their problems. Circles allowed for a forum for students to discuss concerns and issues and the actual work of creating visual and multimodal texts allowed students to express themselves and their thoughts about not only content but about issues that were of importance to them and their personal lives.

Arts-Infused Multimodal SNS Curriculum as Third Space

This SNS class was more than a site to develop heritage language. It was a space for personal, social, cultural, cognitive, and emotive development. It was a site that was used to develop thinking in and through languages and multiple communication systems. It was a space for identity negotiation and meaning making. It was a space that offered sanctuary for immigrant students—a home away from home. It was a space that

encouraged exploration of heritage language and its relationship to the dominant language of the larger society, that of English, and ultimately, it became a space for contestation and critical action.

The visual arts were used in this SNS class to support, extend, and critique meaning and were explored. Specifically, semiotic systems of meaning making supported and extended meaning. The SNS students used visual systems of meaning to express conceptual knowledge, emotional significance, and social issues and built community through this work (Arts Education Partnership, 2005). By learning about the grammar of visual design and visual discourse analysis, students became more focused on meaning. Knowledge of art as a discipline and as a language allowed for more informed and significant readings of visual texts. Knowledge of art as a discipline and as a language allowed for critique of meaning and identification of and disruption of cultural symbols that emerged in professionally-generated and student-generated texts.

Students were able to study content and explore meaning while also exploring their own identities through the context of the various engagements and techniques used within each unit. Through the projects and engagements designed and completed during each unit of study, students were able to engage in content exploration from a personal standpoint by relating the knowledge learned and studied in the unit with their own lives.

Visual Analysis within the Arts-infused Multimodal SNS Curriculum

In this study, I used visual discourse analysis as a way to understand visual meaning making of the SNS students. Studying the visual texts over time allowed me to identify content learned and expressed, identify Discourses that emerged, and identify discourses that emerged.

When considering the semiotic principles outlined by Albers and Murphy (2000) used to examine students' artworks, the SNS students in this study used art as a tool of thought to visually communicate the D/discourses to which they belonged and participated. Intentionality was demonstrated as an aspect of many of the participants' visual and multimodal texts and was supported in their statements about their visual texts. Fabiola's comment on how she decided against creating a face on her mask as a way to assert her individuality evidenced how intentionality played a part in their knowledge of visual design and how it played out in the visual text:

No le puse carra porque queria ser algo diferente y ser unica de todos los demas. A mi no me gusto copiar a la gente y usar mi imaginacion.
 [I did not put a face because I wanted it to be something different and to be unique from all the others. I do not like to copy people and use my imagination.] (Fabiola, Journal, Response to mask, 05.19.09)

Each image was an act of discourse. If the discourses in the images offered hopelessness, depression, etc., the question for us then becomes what can we do to address Discourses that have shaped students' understanding of themselves, and how their discourses can be reshaped and supported?

Ideological positioning was evident as the participants created their visual and multimodal texts within a community of their own Latino peers. Eight out of the nine participants came from Mexican heritage with six of them being born in Mexico, and thus, their creations were primarily created within a context of Mexican culture and value. Choices about color, images, and modes often represented cultural characteristics. The class mural was evidence of the strong influence the Mexican heritage students had on the C/conversations taking place both visually and orally within the class. Although one participant was from Uruguay, and the teacher was from Venezuela, the Mexican

flag was presented almost center within the globe as the effective center of attention, and the hope of the community rested in the Virgin of Guadalupe which took up most of the space on the right side of the canvas. As students used and shared elements within their own texts across time and with each other sedimented and habituated identities became visible.

The metaphor of the kaleidoscope is useful for understanding this process of sedimentation and habituation within the visual texts. Any turn of a kaleidoscope creates a particular mixture, or, a particular meaning production within that instance of meaning making where we are drawing on various selves, discourses, interactions, communication systems, and critiques/ or ideologies. Like the kaleidoscope, this is ever-turning and ever-changing despite the limited semiotic resources available. There is suggestion that an infinite number of combinations can still be made. However, as fascination with one turn becomes of particular interest at a given time, we may rest here for what seems like a longer than usual amount of time. During this year, students chose and repetitively used certain icons and elements to make sense of their lives. During this year and within the multiple turns of the kaleidoscope, the repetitive elements often were marked and re-marked (Albers & Frederick, 2009) establishing a discourse around dualism, both literally and metaphorically. Students' worked through understandings of self in terms of good and bad, light and dark, sun and moon, opening and closing, happiness and sadness, immigrant and nonimmigrant, losing and finding, Spanish and English, outsider and insider, etc.

Individuals have multiple subjectivities. These subjectivities become enacted in a myriad of contexts. Immigrant students often become positioned by the dominant

society's monolingual, monolithic, and monocultural lens to make meaning of their lives through dualistic paradigms-either/or, this/not that, black/white, Spanish/English, American citizen/illegal alien. As a result, they begin making meaning of who they are through these dualistic constructions of self. The SNS students were very complex because of immigration status. They not only had to adapt to the larger U.S. society and culture, but they also had to be accepted as who they were on a variety of levels.

Implications for Heritage Language Curriculum and Practice

To prepare for a semiotic/multimodal curriculum, teachers must take into consideration the factors which influence knowledge building. The factors include learner's purpose and interests, cultural tools used (language, numbers, artworks, etc.), scaffolding, and metacognitive strategies (Efland, 2002).

Heritage language students must be given more opportunities to express their understandings of content learned in school, of their world, and of their own unique personal and cultural experiences (Lynch, 2003). When teachers learn how to read the images created by this population of students, as well as all students, the possibilities for understanding the cognitive and affective worlds of the students become realized (Albers, 2007b; Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009, in press; Igoa, 1995; Silver, 2001). These realizations will, in turn, provide for better learning environments and opportunities for students. In addition, value will be given to the different affordances that multiple sign systems and modes offer (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). As a responsibility of schools and teachers to prepare students with the critical thinking skills necessary to critique, interpret, and reinvent their world, semiotics and multimodality must become an important part of the school curriculum.

As part of the multimodal curriculum, space for designing arts-based engagements to extend meaning is vital. Teaching students to read visual images through the language of visual design is necessary. In addition teaching students to read and interpret images from a critical perspective is important (Callow, 2006).

Visual arts ought to be viewed as a primary language worthy of study (Albers, 2007a). Teachers need to learn how to read visual images in order to have a better understanding of what their students know. While arts-integrated, multimodal curriculum has been researched and become more common place in English language arts classes as well as ESOL classes (Carger, 2004; Gay, 2000; Igoa, 1995, 1997), the same has not been true for the larger field of heritage language and foreign language classes (Potowski & Carreira, 2004). Some foreign language classes have a majority of heritage language learners, such as Korean, and using visual meaning making systems in conjunction with literacy learning can be an alternative curriculum design of value. In addition, rather than think about only language and literacy classes, per se, this study has implications for teaching and learning in content area classes for second language learners.

It is important for teachers to study visual discourse analysis to better understand the visual texts of students. In studying visual texts in language and literacy classrooms, and in this study of the unique space of the SHL classroom, a wealth of information can be mined. The language and literacy practices of the individual text-makers and the practices of groups of text-makers can be determined. The individual ideologies brought to the social context and reflected in the visual text and the ideologies of groups within the classroom or school environment can be read from the visual texts of groups when studied across time. Individual constructions of selves to group constructions of figured

worlds can also be determined from studying students' visual texts within the class.

(Albers, 2007b; Albers & Frederick; 2009; Albers, Frederick, & Cowan, 2009, in press;).

As evidenced by these findings, this study suggests that literacy is more than being able to read and write in the dominant society's language- be it English, as in the larger context of the study, or Spanish, as in the context of this course. Literacy is a means to express thought and understanding of ourselves and the world around us, and "endless interrogation as diverse persons strive to create themselves in their freedom" (Greene, 1995, p. 121).

Teachers must also help students read and interpret visual images as a group of projects to help determine what discourses exist in order to help change the conversations which exist. Teaching learners to examine their own work overtime will help them see how they have developed meaning over a period of time and to think about directions for growth.

Positioning Selves as Critical Care Educators

Educators must begin to position themselves as critical care educators within heritage language classrooms. By taking this stance, HL teachers will be able to take into consideration the needs of their students and help them transform their lives. Taking into consideration the varieties of students' experiences, linguistic characteristics, immigrant status, social and economic needs is crucial.

Approaching the curriculum from an additive approach will allow HL teachers to value the varietal dialects of language and rather than focus on one standard variety, they should encourage the acquisition of a wide variety of communication systems by their students to enhance their language learning. For example, Kutz (1997) drew upon the

example of Black Vernacular English as a social dialect which has been one of the most marginalized in our society despite the fact that “The varieties of English that are spoken in different speech communities are fully grammatical and functional, and there is no linguistic reason to prefer one over another” (p. 121). This example is especially powerful considering that many black children are taught by white teachers. Similarly, heritage language instruction is often provided by teachers who are nonnative speakers of the language; and they bring with them their own perspectives on language and the place of speaking standard forms of languages rather than recognize the joys that are often associated with combining multiple forms of a language with the combination of other languages and dialects.

Making connections between the students’ home and social languages to the standardized forms of the heritage language are equally important. Rather than understand their roles as givers of the “correct” language, teachers of heritage language classes must take care to honor the knowledge students have first. As stated by Esperanza, she believed that the needs of SNS students are different than Spanish foreign language (SFL) students and must be understood from their unique situations and needs. Understanding that as insiders or outsiders to the main school curriculum and communities influences as both teachers and learners. Kutz (1997) explained:

We are all at different times, insiders or outsiders to different discourse communities. Our successful participation in those communities will have a lot to do with whether we’re invited into the conversation and treated with tolerance and respect as we gradually acquire a new discourse, or whether we’re kept outside the conversations that would support that acquisition until we demonstrate a mastery that we can’t achieve without participation. (p. 137)

If we value our students' knowledge and languages that they bring with them, we have to allow ourselves, as teachers, to be the outsiders at times and work to successfully participate in our students' language communities. A purpose of language instruction in schools should not just be about teaching students the power language, be it standard English, Spanish, or any other language, but it should be about empowering them to know how and when to move fluidly from discourse to discourse and to participate in all of the multiple discourses that will provide them with opportunities to not only succeed in life but to have fulfilling lives. We can do this by helping students identify discourses that emerge across their texts.

Designing and implementing heritage language curriculum from the perspective of immigrant students and from students who are first generation American is very important. In the U. S., immigrant students may work hard and want to go to college, but many barriers may prevent it from happening. Among those are immigration laws and financial situations. As a result, how we can help students imagine and actualize successful futures becomes the challenge. To meet this challenge, we must begin changing the discourses surrounding education.

If teachers look at any one individual, then they will miss the discourse of the whole group. If teachers look at any one text of the individual, then they will also miss the personal discourses of that individual. As was evidenced in the visual texts of this group of SNS students, the struggle to see themselves as good, whole, and agents of their own destinies was a constant one. Immigrant status and possibilities associated with that status can be viewed as a text.

Immigrant students come to school with built-in assumptions, as do all students. We need to make discourses visible. What teachers must do and the text of hopelessness needs to be disrupted. We need to look across and study the texts that students create, both written and visual texts, understanding that these texts represent the schemes that kids already have in place, and how we can help to disrupt limiting schemes and discourses. We need to be, as Greene (1995) suggested, “Made aware of ourselves as questioners, as meaning makers, as persons engaged in constructing and reconstructing realities with those around us.... that the construction of it is never complete, that there is always more” (p. 130-131). We need to support students’ desires and hopes through the use of semiotic languages that include art, drama, movement, and so on. By reading messages conveyed by students (dualistic notions of self, depression, financial issues, etc.), we can be better prepared to support them or help them find the resources.

Implications for Heritage Language Research

When teachers learn how to read the images created by these students, as well as all students, the possibilities for understanding the cognitive and affective worlds of the students become realized. These realizations will, in turn, provide for better learning environments and opportunities for students. In addition, value will be given to the different affordances that multiple sign systems and modes offer. As a responsibility of schools and teachers to prepare students with the critical thinking skills necessary to critique and impact their world, semiotics and multimodality must become an important part of the literacy curriculums in all school spaces. Findings suggest the importance of offering flexible uses of a variety of communication systems, especially the visual arts, in

language and literacy classes to critically explore and examine social and political issues that may otherwise go unchallenged.

This study suggests that spaces such as heritage language classrooms should be given more attention in future language and literacy research as they will be increasing in number with the growth of a more diverse U.S. population. There must be a continued study of students' cultural and linguistic resources (dialects, languages, experiences, etc.). For example, studies which examine how students with special needs and/or students with varying linguistic and cultural backgrounds could benefit from the opportunities to signify thought and meaning afforded them by art that standard American English (or any standard formal language) are also needed. In addition, future research and attention must be given to how all students could benefit by opportunities to express their understandings of content learned in school, of their world, and of their own unique cultural-historical experiences using the visual arts.

Researchers need to study the different ways of meaning making in these classes to understand the meaning potential of each and the affordances that they bring. Specifically, a special study of visual arts as a meaning making potential and special study of the discourses that shape this meaning are critical to fully understanding the beliefs and ideologies students bring with them. As in the case of this study, some projects created more of a cohesion and critical look at content than others. Studies of students' responses to the various opportunities and projects that are designed and implemented within a class are warranted.

Conclusion

Heritage language students must be given more opportunities to express their understandings of content learned in school, of their world, and of their own unique personal and cultural experiences. When teachers learn how to read the images created by these students, as well as all students, the possibilities for understanding the cognitive and affective worlds of the students become realized. These realizations will, in turn, provide for better learning environments and opportunities for students. In addition, value will be given to the different affordances that multiple sign systems and modes offer. As a responsibility of schools and teachers to prepare students with the critical thinking skills necessary to critique, interpret, and reinvent their world, semiotics and multimodality must become an important part of the school curriculum in all spaces.

Epilogue



Figure 77 Completed class mural

Curriculum is the lives we want to live, the people we want to be.

-Jerome Harste

During the year following the study, Esperanza and I continued to be close and talked often about her SNS classes. She often shared how she continued to implement the semiotic curriculum that we developed the year before. She discussed the unique needs of her new groups, reminding me again, that even within the same community, the same school, and the same teacher, a new group of students would need different things

because their experiences individually and as newly formed communities would be different. Curriculum can never be static; modifications, adjustments, and new ideas and techniques will always be needed.

At the end of the 2009-2010 year, and as I was completing my dissertation, one day Esperanza came in very excited to tell me all about the mural that her SNS II class was creating. She could not wait for me to see it and began describing it to me. Each day until the last day of school, she updated me on the students' progress and the pride with which her current group of students worked to communicate who they were. On the last day of school, she showed me the completed mural. It was approximately six feet by six feet. There were similarities between this one and the original one from the previous year which continued to adorn the back wall of the SNS class. A peace symbol was drawn as the anchoring icon and was the size of the paper. The circle and bars of the peace symbol were parceled out into enough sections for each student in the class to have his/her own space. Each student and Esperanza drew and painted his/her own personal mural on a section. Across each side of the symbol, large flags were drawn. On the left side was the Mexican flag, and on the right side was the American flag. I was struck by the dualism once again present and the real identification students had with their Mexican heritage and the possibilities that America held for them. Unique to this class, each person was represented as an individual with personal interests united in peace and through their heritages with one another. The work that had begun the 2008-2009 year continued and the difference it was making to the students was visibly tangible. Curriculum for Esperanza's class was about the lives they wanted to live and the people they wanted to be.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Research Questions and Corresponding Data Sources

| Research Questions | Sources of Data | How Data Source Helps to Answer Questions |
|--|--|---|
| <p>What factors were considered as the teacher and the researcher co-planned this arts-infused multimodal curriculum, and how did the consideration of those factors shape the curriculum?</p> | <p>initial questionnaire</p> <p>individual interviews</p> <p>weekly fieldnotes</p> <p>transcriptions of audio-recordings and video-recordings of selected class sessions</p> <p>researcher's journal</p> | <p>The questionnaire and interviews helped me understand what the students expected and wanted to get out of the SNS class. The teacher interviews helped me understand what the teacher needed to design an arts-infused curriculum and what factors were important in meeting the needs of this particular group of SNS students.</p> <p>The weekly fieldnotes, transcriptions of audio-recordings and video-recordings of the class sessions and the researcher's journal helped me to observe and return to my observations about what was occurring in the class and how those events shaped the curriculum.</p> |
| <p>How did students enrolled in this SNS class make and negotiate meaning and identity as they worked within this arts-infused multimodal SNS curriculum?</p> | <p>student-generated texts</p> <p>participant journals</p> <p>transcriptions of audio-recordings and video-recordings of class sessions</p> <p>researcher's journal</p> <p>individual interviews</p> <p>weekly fieldnotes</p> <p>member checks</p> | <p>Student-generated texts and participant journals revealed what became significant to students as they participated in a curriculum where multiple modes of thought and expression were encouraged.</p> <p>Transcriptions of audio-recordings and video-recordings of class sessions, researcher's journal, and weekly fieldnotes allowed for a constant comparative analysis of the multiple modes in which participants responded. The students' practices were documented over time.</p> <p>Interviews and member checks allowed me to verify my findings by gaining insights from the participants' words.</p> |
| <p>What discourses around students' meaning making practices and identities emerged within their visual texts over time and across texts?</p> | <p>student-generated texts</p> <p>participant journals</p> <p>member checks</p> | <p>Student-generated texts, particularly visual texts, were analyzed via visual discourse analysis to better understand meaning making practices and identities which may not have been revealed in other modes.</p> |

APPENDIX B

Initial Questionnaire

1. How did you come to be enrolled in the Spanish for Native Speakers (SNS) class?
2. What do you expect to gain from taking the SNS class?
3. What do you think is the purpose of the SNS class?
4. Do you consider yourself to be fluent in Spanish?
5. Do you consider yourself to be fluent in English?
6. Do you read and write in Spanish? If so, for what purposes?
7. Do you read and write in English? If so, for what purposes?
8. How do you feel about reading?
9. How do you feel about writing?
10. Do you participate in any other forms of communication such as the visual arts, dance, drama, and or technology? If so, can you please describe your participation in these forms of communication?
11. Please provide information about yourself that can help me to get to know you better and to help us understand what you would like to get out of your SNS experience. Use the following blank sheet to answer and to also provide a visual representation of yourself and those things you wish to get out of the SNS class.

APPENDIX C

Abbreviated Lesson Plans for Spanish for Native Speakers II

Unit 1: España: Puente al Futuro

Unit Project: Students will choose an aspect of Spain: Sports, geography, tourism, food, music, government, etc.

The project will include: Visual (ex. poster); Written (at least one page typed); Oral (oral presentation (at least 5 minutes)).

Lesson 1

- Show transparency # 9 on overhead projector. Students will right their observations in their journals.
- Assign students (groups) a reading from pages 74 -78 (Gente del mundo 21, and España: continente en miniatura). Students will summarize the reading in 10 words (gist).
- Groups will take turns to explain their readings to other students. Pictures (transparency # 9) will be shown as students talk.
- Students will write in their journals: “Today I learned...”

Materials: textbook, *Nuestro Mundo*; Journals; Transparency # 9

Lesson 2-3

- P. 81 (Anticipando la lectura) think about “realism” and “idealism.” Ask questions. Discuss.
- Make ink blot on white paper using the acrylic or poster paint.
- Students will write in their journals and answer the following questions:
 - a. What is the blot?
 - b. Why did you choose these colors?
 - c. How do realists view the world?
 - d. How do idealists view the world?
 - e. Do you view the world through the eyes of a realist or through the eyes of an idealist?
 - f. Students will share their inkblots and discuss their observations about their own and others’.

Materials: textbook, *Nuestro Mundo*; White paper; Acrylic, or poster paint; journals

Lesson 3

- Show students transparency # 12 and ask them to make observations about the pictures. What do they notice? What conclusions can they draw from their observations?
- Students will read pages 83 – 86 (Don Quixote de la Mancha – Aventura de los molinos de viento)
- Show transparency # 12 again and ask students to compare their observations to the situations from the story.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; Transparency # 12; journals

Lesson 4

- Show students transparency # 13. Ask students to describe the picture in their journals.
- Students will share their descriptions.
- Show the students transparencies # 16 and 17 for more samples of realism. Discuss.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; Transparency # 13, 16, 17; journal

Lesson 5

- Review realism with the students and ask them to draw in their journals a picture of an event that happened in their lives making the picture as realistic as possible

- Students will write about the situation in their lives and share the pictures with the class. Discuss.
Materials: journals

Lesson 6

- Students will anticipate the reading on page 108. Show Goya's picture 2 de mayo (Realism) Transparency # 18.
- Compare Picasso's Guernica on page 102 (Transparencies #19 and 20) with Goya's 2 de mayo (Transparency #18). Discuss.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; Transparency # 18, 19, 20; journals; color pencils, crayons, or markers

Lesson 7

- Show students Dali's picture in transparency # 15. Talk about Surrealism.
- Students will make their surrealist piece.
- Students will write in their journals how the 2 different techniques (Realism and surrealism) help them express their feelings about an event. They will also state which technique they preferred and why.

Materials: Transparency # 15; journals; white paper; magazines; color pencils, crayons, or markers

Lesson 8

- Work on page 101 (Vocabulary in context)
- Students will read about Picasso on pages 102 – 105. Discuss.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*

Lesson 9

- Explore color combinations on pages 28- 29 and 32- 33.
- Students will make a Picasso of their faces using the instructions of the book.
- Students will write in their journals about their "Picasso:" a. Their feelings ; Choice of colors, etc.

Materials: Book on Faces; white paper; magazines; color pencils, crayons, or markers

Unit 2: Los Hispanos en los Estados Unidos: Crisol de Sueños

Unit project: Class mural designed and created by whole class surrounding an issue that they would like to work towards resolving in their community.

Lesson 1

- Show transparency #5 to the students. Students will write in their journals a description of the murals.
- Students will read about Cesar Chavez on page 26. Show students transparency #6 "El Movimiento Chicano." Students will describe the mural in their journals. Discuss.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; Transparency # 5, 6; journals

Lesson 2

Students will design a personal mural to represent their own movement and issues that are significant to them.

Materials: journals and/or white paper; color pencils, crayons, or markers

Lesson 3

- Remind the students about the "Movimiento Chicano" and the murals.
- Ask students to share their personal murals.
 - a. What ways are people close to you doing to improve their conditions? Politically? Socially? As teenagers?
 - b. In "La Ofrenda" movement was that the farmers were not happy with their situation. What is your cause? Movement?
 - c. What would you put in your mural? Important symbols.

d. Students should compromise about the symbols they are going to choose for the class mural.
Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 4-6

Students will work on the mural.
Materials: butcher paper; acrylic paints, brushes

Lesson 7

- Students will write in their journal about the mural:
 - a. What it meant to you?
 - b. Their impressions about participation.
 - c. What did they think the mural expressed?
 - d. What does it say about all of you?
 - e. What does it say about you?
 - f. What part did they work on?
 - g. Why did you choose to work on that part of the mural?
 - h. How can you use the mural to help accomplish the goal? (racism, unity, etc.)
 - Students will share their writings and discuss about the mural and the experience.
- Materials: journals

Unit 3: México y Guatemala: Raices de la Esperanza

Unit project: News Video and newspaper.

Lesson 1

- Ask students: “Is there racism in Mexico?” “How it is manifested?”
 - Discuss social issues and struggles in Mexico. What issues impact you?
 - Insider’s views? (students from Mexico) Outsider’s views? (students from other countries)
 - What message would you like to show other people?
- Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 2

- Students will read pages 120 – 125 (Gente del mundo y México: tierra de contrastes)
 - Discuss if the reading responded to some of the critical questions.
 - Students will write observations on the transparency # 21 in their journals:
 - a. Center of attention.
 - b. What is at the left? (top / bottom)
 - c. What is at the right? (top/bottom)
 - d. What is at the top?
 - e. What is at the bottom?
 - f. Look at the corners.
- Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; transparency # 21; journals

Lesson 3

- Diego and Frida Kahlo. Analyze using VDA Transparency # 23.
 - Students will write in their journals about the transparency.
 - Discuss students’ interpretations.
- Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; transparency # 23; journals

Lesson 4

- Students will read about Guatemala on pages 136 – 143. Discuss.
- Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 5

- Students will look at the videos and will vote for the different sections.

Materials: voting cards; student videos

Lesson 6

- Students will write an acceptance speech to use for the awards presentation (if they win).
- Students will write a reflection on the videos:
 - a. The way they view themselves in the video.
 - b. How did they communicate in the video?
 - c. Was that a good way to communicate?
 - d. Did the video have advantages in communicating vs. writing or speaking?
 - e. How did they perceive themselves in the video (same or different from the class)?
 - f. How did the video help them communicate their ideas?

Materials: journals

Lesson 7

Award ceremony and celebration.

Materials: awards, envelopes

Lesson 8-9

Students will write an article about an aspect of the ceremony and work on a newspaper (Using Publisher).

Unit 4: Cuba, la República Dominicana y Puerto Rico: En el Ojo del Huracán

Unit project: Write 2 poems and create a sculpture to represent you.

Lesson 1

- Students will interpret and write about transparency # 30 in their journals.
- Students will read on pages 164 – 169 and answer questions.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 2

- Students will read image transparency #31.
 - a. Talk about photo and statue (similar and different)
 - b. What do they represent? (photo/ statue)
- Read page 170. Discuss.
- Start working on sculpture.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*

Lesson 3

- Students will complete their sculptures and they will pose for a picture with their statues. (Simulating transparency #31)
- Students will write about their sculptures in their journals.

Materials: camera; journals

Lesson 4

- Read poems. Talk about poetry elements. Talk about sensory images.
- Write a poem about friendship using sensory images. (color, smell, taste, etc. of friendship)

Materials: José Martí's poems; journals

Lesson 5

- Read poem by Eliseo Diego on page 171.
- Students will find things in the magazines to write a multimodal poem titled "Tools of Man" or "Tools of Women."
- Students will use visuals in their poems, as Eliseo Diego used them in his poem.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; magazines, white paper, glue; scissors

Lesson 6

- Students will write in their journals about their experiences in writing their poems and creating their statues. Read and discuss the section about Dominican Republic.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 7

Read and discuss the section about Puerto Rico.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Unit 8: Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay y Chile: Aspiraciones y Contrastes

Unit: Draw a caricature of yourself. Draw a comic strip of you interacting with a character from *Mafalda*.

Lesson 1

- Students will read Argentina and Uruguay on pages 374 – 384. Ask students: “Why this book includes this people?” “How do you think they chose the people?”

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 2

- Students will read Anticipation to the reading on pages 385 – 391. Do activity on page 391 (Dramatizaciones).

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 3

- Students will read some of the caricatures, and become familiar with the characters.
- Students will go online to look at “Quino”. Ask students the following questions:
 - a. Who are the main characters?
 - b. What are their personalities?
 - c. What do they represent?
 - d. What are some topics?
 - e. How do the characters talk about the topics?
Ex: Do they make fun? Do they teach by metaphor?
- Go to page 305 and write a dialogue.

Materials: *Mafalda* cartoons online and in books; journals.

Lesson 4

- Students will draw themselves as a cartoon character.
- Brainstorm (about mini-strip). Create a draft. Create a comic strip where they will interact with another character from *Mafalda*. Draw final draft in their journals.

Materials: *Mafalda* cartoons online and in books; journals.

Lesson 5

- Students will read lesson 2: Paraguay on pages 394 – 406. Discuss
- Students will share their comic strips with the class.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Lesson 6

- Read Chile on pages 414 – 419. Discuss.

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals

Unit 6: Colombia, Panamá y Venezuela: La Modernidad en Desafío

Unit project: Create a mask.

Lesson 1

- Read pages 306 – 313. Discuss. Research information about “ Los Diablos de Yare.”

Materials: textbook *Nuestro Mundo*; journals; internet

Lesson 2

- Students will create a mask to represent them. Students will write about the masks they created.

Materials: balloons; paper machete; journals

Lesson 3

- Students will paint their masks. Students will write about their masks in their journals.

Materials: acrylic paints, newspaper, journals, paintbrushes

APPENDIX D

Sample of Teacher Participant Interview Questions

1. How were you recruited to teach the SNS class?
2. What would you like for students to gain by taking the SNS class?
3. How would you describe the purpose of the SNS class?
4. How do you develop curriculum for the class?
5. What factors play a role in your decisions about what to include and what not to include as a part of the curriculum for the class?
6. What kinds of literacy activities do your students participate in?
7. What forms of communication and expression have you included in your SNS course?
8. What kinds of projects have your students participated in? Please describe one of those projects?
9. What have been some of the most beneficial activities, materials, and lessons you have created for your students?
10. Please describe a particular lesson that was especially good that your students enjoyed?

Describe an ideal class session and/or a class session that went extremely well in the past.
11. So, if you could design any class session that you would want, what would happen in that class session?

12. What are your needs in developing this course?
13. So, how many years have you been teaching this course?
14. What do the students need?

APPENDIX E

Sample of Student Participant Interview Questions

1. How did you find out about the Spanish for Native Speakers class (SNS)?
2. How long have you know Mrs. Esperanza?
3. What do you expect to gain from taking this class this year?
4. Tell me a little about yourself.
5. Do you consider yourself to be fluent in Spanish/English? Explain.
6. Are you a good reader/writer in Spanish/English? Explain.
7. How do you feel about reading/writing in general?
8. What kinds of communication do you participate in outside of school (art, drama, dance)?
9. Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX F

Classroom Arrangement

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------|
| computers | computers | Door | | | |
| computers | Student desk | Student desk | Student desk | Student desk | |
| computers | Student desk | | | Student desk | whiteboard |
| computers | Student desk | | | | whiteboard |
| computers | Student desk | | | | whiteboard |
| computers | Student desk | | | Student desk | |
| computers | Student desk | Student desk | Student desk | Student desk | |
| Teacher's desk | Bookcase | Bookcase | Cabinet | | |

APPENDIX G

Sample Member Checking Interview Questions

1. What kinds of things have you noticed in your visual texts over time?
2. Share your thoughts about the year.
3. Please talk about your work using art to express your thoughts.
4. What role has art played in your speaking this year?
5. What role has art played a role in your writing this year?
6. Is there any technique that you preferred over others? Explain.
7. What was your favorite project? Why?
8. Have your expectations been met in this class? Explain.
9. Tell me about your (provide technique name and look at it in the journal together).
10. Can you tell me more about (elements within the texts).
11. This is what I notice about your text. Tell me what you think about my reading.
12. Cycle through 8-10 for each technique completed in the year.