

An Introduction to

*Critical
Discourse
Analysis in
Education*

SECOND EDITION

Edited by **Rebecca Rogers**



An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education

Accessible yet theoretically rich, this landmark text introduces key concepts and issues in critical discourse analysis and situates these within the field of educational research. The book invites readers to consider the theories and methods of three major traditions in critical discourse studies—discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and multimodal discourse analysis—through the empirical work of leading scholars in the field. Beyond providing a useful overview, it contextualizes CDA in a wide range of learning environments and identifies how CDA can shed new insights on learning and social change.

Detailed analytic procedures are included—to demystify the process of conducting CDA, to invite conversations about issues of trustworthiness of interpretations and their value to educational contexts, and to encourage researchers to build on the scholarship in critical discourse studies.

New in the Second Edition: This edition features a new structure organized around three traditions in CDA: Discourse Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, Multimodal Discourse Analysis; a touchstone chapter in each section by a recognized expert in the approach/theory (James Paul Gee, Norman Fairclough, Gunther Kress); and a stronger international focus on both theories and methods.

Companion Website: Designed to extend inquiry, exploration, and dialogue beyond the chapters in the book, the website includes:

- *Chapter Extensions*
- *Interviews* with James Gee, Norman Fairclough and Gunther Kress, the leading scholars in each of the approaches highlighted in the book
- Four 15-minute *Videos* featuring many of the leading scholars in critical discourse studies
- *Bibliographies* organized by further reading, subject (research area), and object (data source), with links between the bibliographic areas for ease of cross-referencing between studies
- *Resources for Teaching Critical Discourse Analysis* (websites, discussion questions, and more)

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An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education

Second Edition

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**This book is dedicated to my husband,
Michael Mancini, with all of my love.**

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Foreword: *Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education, Second Edition*

The first edition of this excellent volume came out in 2004, as the US invested further in what would become a protracted war in Iraq, led by then President George W. Bush, whose administration is also notable for having early on pushed through legislation called *No Child Left Behind*, which greatly increased federal oversight of public education. The second edition comes to us well into the Presidency of Barack Obama. Deemed in the media a “reluctant warrior,” this president seems to have ended the U.S. military war in Iraq, but his administration grapples with an ongoing economic recession, and it continues the neoliberal education policies of the Bush administration. Now relabeled *The Race to the Top*, like *NCLB*, these policies rely heavily on market-driven “reform” and standardized assessment for students, teachers, and schools, and encourage the further privatization of public education (Nussbaum, 2010; Ravitch 2010; Woodside-Jiron, this volume). These political and economic developments and policy continuities provide a sharp reminder that we live in an era of globalized economic interconnectivity, increasing economic inequalities, and growing cultural and political divisions, within and between nations. It is also a time in which debates about education have achieved an unparalleled public salience.

The past decades of political and economic volatility have been a time in which questions of learning, identity, and power have become densely intertwined (Castells, 1999). In addition, the broader intellectual climate of our era—so-called late or postmodernity—is one of ongoing critique and uncertainty about the bases for knowledge and the grounds for effective action. One result has been a reconsideration of the relation between knowledge and action. As both social analysts and social actors feel the need to grapple with greater complexity, under conditions of greater uncertainty, they do so with an increasing sense of ethical commitments. What can I/we do both to understand and to change the world? How do I “apply” my research? These are insistent questions in education research as well as a range of traditional academic disciplines (Bauman, 1997). At a time of crises, when the general theories and “reliable” methodologies of decades past no longer seem adequate to understanding our globalized, diversified circumstances, when optimism about solutions to social problems is on the wane (Rorty, 1989), it is easy to understand the search

for critical perspectives. As presented in this volume, that search is for views, concepts, and ways of inquiring that offer some purchase on broad questions of power while also permitting study of particulars, the situated activities and events in which life and learning occur.

Concern with critique of social injustice, often focused on educational topics, if not educational sites per se, has a reasonable pedigree in sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. A founder of quantitative sociolinguistics, Labov (1972) wrote a scathing critique in the late 1960s of the then-prevalent notion that nonstandard speakers were somehow linguistically deficient; and Gumperz and Hymes, founding figures in the “ethnography of communication” paradigm, were writing from the 1970s onward about how language difference interacted with social inequalities, in school and non-school settings (Cazden, Hymes, & John, 1970; Gumperz, 1986; Gumperz & Hymes, 1986; Hymes, 1980). What distinguishes the chapters in this collection, as well as other work discussed below, is that groups of researchers are now taking up a common set of goals. Most broadly they seek to combine systematic analysis of language and other sign modes, ethnographic grounding, and social theory engagements in order to develop studies of education which are also inquiries into contemporary life: how we engage each other; learn in groups; develop identities; oppress and resist oppression.

The papers in this volume variously argue that critical perspectives require attention to discourse—language use, sign media, and the social worlds they both presuppose and bring into being—with analytical attention informed by debates within social theory. They do by engaging the frameworks of analysis presented by James Gee, Norman Fairclough and Gunther Kress. James Gee’s scholarship represents a very influential strand in education-related critical discourse analysis, especially in the US. His framework features an unusual synthesis of insights from formal and functional linguistics, cognitive sciences, postmodern literary theory and more workaday historical and sociological research on society, schooling, and literacy. His work offers a range of creative, shrewd analyses of policy documents, stories, video games, and found texts (such as aspirin bottle labels). His distinctions between lower-case “discourse” and upper-case “Discourse,” arguments about cultural models, and analytic proposals regarding “building blocks” of analysis have been widely discussed in education research (e.g. Lakshmanan, this volume; Lopéz-Bonilla, this volume; Purcell-Gates, 1995; Rogers, 2003).

In capitalized form, Critical Discourse Analysis is a research program associated with the work of Norman Fairclough and students and collaborators (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1992, 1995, 2006). The CDA framework is grounded in readings of social theory and systemic functional linguistics; it features a three-part scheme of analysis: text (roughly, words and phrasal units), discourse practice (roughly, communicative events and their interpretation), social practice (roughly, society-wide processes). CDA has been credited with putting questions of power and social injustice squarely on the agenda of UK and European sociolinguistics (Slembrouck, 2001). Analysis

has tended to focus on the critique of large-scale media and formal bureaucratic institutions, and it has also been criticized for regularly neglecting to analyze context (Widdowson, 1998), but it has also been taken up by education researchers with strong commitments to ethnographic inquiry (Lewis and Ketter, this volume; Rogers, 2003; Tusting, 2000).

Gunther Kress's social semiotics emerges out of very early work on "critical linguistics" (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979) that tended to over-emphasize the direct influence of linguistic forms ("texts") on social processes. Subsequent work, especially that emphasizing a semiotic grounding, has instead given priority to the act of sign-making and the interactive, emergent quality of all meaning (Hodge & Kress, 1988). For more than a decade, Kress and collaborators have argued for the importance of visual as well as verbal signs and media in literacy as well as learning more generally (Kress, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Kress, Jewitt, Ogborn & Tsatsarelis, 2001). Perhaps most innovative and valuable in their contribution to this volume are the arguments and analyses showing that knowledge and learning are inseparable from (socially situated) communication in multiple sign modalities. In this regard they complement influential recent work in linguistic anthropology, making similar arguments about knowledge and communication (Silverstein, 2007) or about the inseparability of academic and social learning (Wortham, 2005). But while the linguistic anthropological research is also grounded in a semiotic theorization and analysis of the social, the cognitive, and the communicative, Kress's work further emphasizes the need to explore multiple sign modalities (see also Wohlwend, this volume).

Rebecca Rogers, the editor of this collection, is to be lauded for taking the lead in pulling together this timely exchange between younger, critically minded education researchers and major discourse theorists. Her editorial Introduction clearly presents the relations between Fairclough's CDA, Gee's critical discourse analysis, and Kress's multimodal semiotic approach; it also clearly presents the case for more attention to questions of learning and more fully developed qualitative cases. Among the specific studies contained in this volume, those by Lakshmanan, Lopéz-Bonilla, and Woodside-Jiron provide extensive case material. They present suggestive analyses and conceptual synthesis, exploring literature, sign modalities, and postcolonial theory (Lakshmanan); narrative, identity, and more traditional sociolinguistic approaches in relation to Gee's work on cultural models (Lopéz-Bonilla); power relations in state-level education policy and the contributions of Bernsteinian sociology to CDA (Woodside-Jiron). Other contributions, such as those by Rowe and Lewis and Ketter, pose issues of long-standing interest to practitioners of discourse analysis and ethnography: Rowe's chapter addresses the relation between discourse and action, as part of an inquiry into situated learning; Lewis and Ketter address the relation between discussions in multicultural literature reading and barriers to understanding and dialogue, as part of a long-term inquiry into teacher-and-researcher learning.

It is appropriate that a volume arguing that learning often results from conflictual, contradictory juxtapositions of differing discourses contains uneven

responses from Gee, Fairclough, and Kress. Gee's discussion of discourse, context, and learning occurs early in the collection, treats each concept at length and argues for a clear distinction between CDA and the wider currents of critical discourse analysis. Fairclough, in the middle of the volume, addresses learning as part of "a theoretical reflection on semiotic aspects of social transformation." In short, he goes "meta," that is, he translates the question of learning into the problem of emergence, itself part of a very general discussion of structural determinants and social change. Kress, for his part, argues for an expansive view of learning, essentially that all sign-making involves learning, and therefore that much learning occurs outside of school settings, and is unrecognized by standard school-assessment techniques. Reading Gee, Fairclough and Kress in relation to one another and in relation to the other contributors, one is forced to acknowledge what is at times a fertile tension and at times a yawning chasm between theoretical frameworks and between frameworks and case studies. However, in this at times fluid and at times awkward grappling, the contributors of cases and their primary theoretical interlocutors expand our sense of where learning occurs and the forms it takes, usefully pushing beyond narrow debates about schooling and assessment. In short, they present accounts of learning that are sensitive to situation while also cognizant that we live in a world of often brutal inequalities.

The cases, analyses, and arguments in *Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education* can themselves be seen as part of a wider (potential) dialogue about the need for conceptual debate as well as ethnographic grounding in discourse analysis, whether in education research or elsewhere. In presenting a set of comparable case studies engaging concepts of C/critical D/discourse A/analysis, contributors in this volume also develop the "extended case method" which Burawoy (1991), drawing on anthropological, sociological, and Marxist traditions, has argued is essential for the production of rational, humane, and emancipatory knowledge about society, history, and our place therein. Turning to more immediate collective interlocutors, these would include: (1) the US-based conversations about the "Linguistic anthropology of education" has a book of the same name (Wortham & Rymes, 2003) and is the focus of a lively debate about language, media, schools and social processes (AEQ, 2011a); and (2) the decade-long discussion-and-practice of "Linguistic ethnography in the UK," occurring on the website (<http://www.ling-ethnog.org.uk/>) and listserve (LING-ETHNOG@JISMAIL.AC.UK) and at regular "Linguistic Ethnography Forums" held as part of the annual meetings of the British Association of Applied Linguistics.

In a reflective piece for one Linguistic Ethnography Forum, Ben Rampton addressed how being a former teacher influences the ethnographer's insights and anxieties about both description and theory. He challenged his audience to grapple with the philosophical, personal, and political issues raised by ethnographic inquiry. In his conclusion, he recalled:

Twenty five years ago, Hymes outlined the vision of a democratic society where there was one pole with people who'd been professionally trained in

ethnography; at the other pole, there was the general population, respected for their intricate and subtle knowledge of the worlds they lived in; and in between, were people who could “combine some disciplined understanding of ethnographic inquiry with the pursuit of their vocation (Hymes, 1980, p. 99).” (Rampton, 2003, p. 7)

It seems to me that many contributors to this volume share the Hymesian impulse to widen the reach of ethnography and critical social awareness. This is especially true of this revised second edition. It is shown in the contributors’ concern with reflexive practice, the reports of open exchanges with research participants, and the authors’ desire to make the concepts and practices of critique, discourse analysis, and ethnographic inquiry available to a readership of practicing teachers as well as teacher educators.

James Collins
Albany, NY
September 3, 2010

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Preface

The Logic of the New Edition

I routinely use the first edition of *An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis* in a seminar I teach. I often wonder: How does one become a critical discourse analyst? What kinds of experiences, readings, discussions and activities aide in this process? These questions became the basis of a study I carried out of my teaching and my students' learning within one of the seminars. My intention was to make visible the sorts of processes, issues, and complexities that arise as people engage with critical discourse analysis, particularly when they are relatively new to the field (Rogers, in press). What I learned along the way is that the structure of the first edition of the book did not support my students' learning in the way I thought it could. Thus, the logic of the new edition is rooted in my observations of how people learn to think about, practice, talk about, and represent critical discourse analysis. Here, I share some of these observations that provide the justification for the new design of the book.

My intention as I practice CDA—both in my research and in my teaching—is to pry open spaces to examine taken-for-granted assumptions about discourse, education, and society. I begin my seminars with scholarship in the ethnography of communication, socio-linguistics, and narrative analysis to engage people in theoretical issues and also provide a foundation in the handling and treatment of linguistic data—from segmenting lines, considering units of analysis, generating a theory and method of transcription, developing stanzas, and exploring narrative structures. James Gee's scholarship draws on each of these traditions and, thus, I have found is an ideal place to begin (Gee, 2005). As students consider cultural models, social languages, discourses and figured worlds in relation to their own data, they begin to move beyond a content analysis to look at the relationships between the forms and functions of language. They realize that people do not say important things in unimportant ways. At the same time, there is the recognition that some meanings are more privileged than others.

This exploration generally leads into discussions of representation and power that segues nicely into the scholarship in systemic functional linguistics, French theories of discourse, and Norman Fairclough's approach to CDA.

People also start to grow more comfortable with the language of discourse analysis, including the proliferation of meanings around the construct of discourse itself. At this point, though, there is some predictable uncertainty about their linguistic analyses. Students realize that they need to be looking more closely at how interactions and practices are constituted linguistically but experience angst over what is often times a lack of experience with linguistic analysis. This is a perennial dilemma because, in educational studies, I do not expect that students will have any background experiences in either linguistics or critical social theory. Thus, I provide ample resources on linguistic and social analysis.

Because a key part of Norman Fairclough's work has been answering the question "What are the mediational tools between the linguistic and the social?" turning to his work that draws on systemic functional linguistics and Marxist-inspired social theories works well for students. In particular, I find that learners really begin to understand the relationships between discourse and society when they see the way in which the linguistic dimensions of genre, discourse and style are patterned together (Fairclough, 2003). Of course, throughout all of this they are practicing different approaches to discourse analysis with their own data that helps enormously. Noticing the connections between social theory and discursive analysis helps people to situate their analysis within a set of intellectual debates in the field.

From this point, we approach discourse studies from a multimodal, social semiotic perspective, looking at how meanings are made beyond the linguistic. Students realize that a good amount happens to language users—to use Blommaert's (2005) phrase—"long after they have shut their mouths" (p. 35). Analyzing discourses multimodally provides insights into the array of possible meanings. They may return to some of the hunches they had about their data to look more closely at the multimodal aspects of social practices. With procedures such as data reduction, transcription and searching for patterns in their repertoire, they are able to look at the multimodal aspects of their data.

I think it is worth emphasizing that the process of learning critical discourse analysis is not linear. Rather, it involves a cycling through deepened understandings of the role of language in social life, the tools that can be brought to bear to help make meaning and the associated representational issues. Along the way, I've heard Teun van Dijk's voice in my head as he argues, "CDS cannot be learned, and hence cannot be taught either, no more than that one can learn (or teach) to be politically committed or feel emotionally involved when learning about social inequality and injustice" (<http://www.discourses.org/>). As someone charged with teaching CDA and surrounded by people who are eager to understand CDA, I've needed to be able to come to terms with this and other dilemmas. As an educator, I think it is important that we offer students of education theory, practice, and research an invitation to critically examine discourse practices in ways that are engaging and enticing. It is my hope that the revised edition of this book helps to fill this role.

Structure of the Book

The new structure in *An Introduction to Critical Discourse Analysis in Education, Second Edition* mirrors the logic of learning that I have just sketched out. There are three sections in the book. An “anchor chapter” written by a leading scholar in the field grounds each section, providing a framework for an approach to CDA. Part I Discourse Analysis is grounded in James Gee’s approach to discourse analysis and draws on narrative analysis, social linguistics, and social and cultural cognition. Part II Critical Discourse Analysis is grounded in Norman Fairclough’s approach to critical discourse analysis and draws on the traditions of systemic functional linguistics and Marxist-inspired theories of discourse. Part III Multimodal Discourse Analysis in the book is grounded in Gunther Kress’s approach to multimodal social semiotic approach to discourse analysis. Each section includes updated or new work by scholars working in the field of critical discourse analysis.

By classifying approaches in this way, I realize that I run the risk of creating arbitrary distinctions where there are none. However, I find that moving across the approaches provides a number of angles and entry points for analysts to examine their data. The ordering is not meant to suggest an increasing level of complexity or a linear movement in learning. Depending on one’s interests, questions, and data, the decision to begin with multimodal discourse analysis instead of the seven building tasks might make sense. In reality, it is quite usual to see a “hybrid” approach to critical discourse analysis, where the theories and analytic tools brought to bear on the problem cross various traditions and approaches. I believe this hybridity is a strength of the field because the creative union of theories and methods generates new insights for understanding educational problems and produces new research questions.

One might argue that you could start with the multimodal, social semiotic approach and work into the other approaches. I think that may be true. However, arguably there are less well-developed procedures and methods for the social semiotic approach. I find that because students are really juggling a bunch of stuff as they learn critical discourse studies—theories of language, procedures for representing language, methods of analysis, social theories, representational choices, ethics and so on—having some concrete ways of working with language (procedures that are more ironed out in some traditions of discourse analysis than in others) is helpful for learners.

While analysts are learning critical discourse analysis, they yearn for examples and models. While part of this is the tendency to think that there is “a method” for conducting CDA, I think that many students want to see how other scholars have balanced all of the demands—and there are many—of conducting and representing CDA. And so while I teach using the three different approaches that are represented in the book, my challenge was to find scholarship that was sufficiently empirical and theoretical and provided what I thought were good explanations of procedures in each approach. I want to offer my students good examples of the kinds of research that are representative of each tradition.

I believe that the chapters in this revised edition do just that—they attend to multiple kinds of critical social theory—from social and cultural cognition, neocolonial, critical race theory, neoliberalism, and feminism, to name a few. They also take up the construct of discourse in all of its proliferation of meanings alongside their theories of the world of education. And each of the chapters offers sufficient detail for aiding the reader in “seeing” how they carried out their analysis. While there is no lock step method for conducting CDA, it is important, I would argue, that the procedures are sufficiently detailed as to be transparent to readers of the research. Analysts in this book differ in their methodological procedures—from close linguistic detail to patterns of discourses. And finally, each of the chapters offers a different way of thinking about the representation of their research. This is an area that is often overlooked in the teaching and learning of CDA. Once analyses have been carried out and we have something to say about our project, how do we go about representing it—both in writing and in presentations? This is a challenge in critical discourse studies because it means finding a balance between zooming-in on the fine-grained discourse analysis and zooming-out to provide enough context to make the analyses mean something to someone else.

Chapter Overviews

PART I Discourse Analysis

Chapter 2: Discourse Analysis: What Makes it Critical?

by James Paul Gee

In this chapter, Gee discusses features common to many approaches to discourse analysis, at least those with one foot in the field of linguistics, before moving on to what is distinctive about CDA. His basic argument is this: All discourse analysis that intends to make empirical claims is rooted in specific viewpoints about the relationship between form and function in language, although these are rarely spelled out in discourse analytic work in education. Further, empirically motivated work in discourse is ultimately based, in part, on specific analytic techniques for relating form and function in oral and/or written texts. Different approaches to discourse analysis differ in their viewpoints and techniques in regard to form and function in language, although often in ways that do not necessarily make their various analyses incompatible. None of this, however, renders an approach to discourse analysis critical. He argues that CDA involves, beyond relating form and function in language, specific empirical analyses of how such form–function correlations map onto specific social practices in ways that shape the nature of such practices. Because social practices inherently involve social relationships, where issues of solidarity, status, and power are at stake, they flow bottom-up from work in CDA and are empirical claims. It is in terms of this claim that Gee treats a common

and incorrect criticism of work in CDA—namely, that such work imposes its (usually leftist) politics top-down on the data from the start.

Gee introduces his “tools of inquiry”: situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, and Discourses. The tools of inquiry are theoretical devices that also express his theory of language. The “seven building tasks” are practices designed for analysts to discover what work is being done with language. The building tasks include significance, activities, identities, relationships, politics, connections, and sign systems. Finally, he argues that work on both CDA and sociocultural approaches to language and literacy (the so-called “New Literacy Studies”) needs to adopt a particular perspective on learning if such work is to make substantive contributions to education and the work of social transformation. Gee argues that learning (especially in the “new capitalism” of our “new times”) is best seen not as a mental thing, but as a type of social interaction in which knowledge is distributed across people and their tools and technologies, dispersed at various sites, and stored in links among people, their minds and bodies, and specific affinity groups (one type of which is a community of practice). Such a view of learning, he argues, allows an integration of work in CDA, situated cognition, sociocultural approaches to language and literacy, and particular forms of social theory.

Chapter 3: Narratives of Exclusion and the Construction of the Self by Guadalupe López-Bonilla

Taking up Gee’s concept of *figured worlds*—the taken-for-granted theories, stories, and explanations we carry—Guadalupe López-Bonilla explores narratives of personal experience told by Mexican high school students. An illustration of narrative research (e.g., Bruner, 1986; Gee, 1989; Labov & Waletzky, 1967), the study demonstrates how youth make sense of their experiences both thematically and structurally. The author compares the narratives of those facing imminent expulsion with those constructed by their more successful peers who have made it to the end of their senior years. She asks: How have figured worlds rendered these students’ respective experiences meaningful? How does their language, which she (re)presents in bilingual transcripts within the chapter, suggest the ways in which figured worlds shape their experience of “not understanding” and/or not passing a school subject or, on the other hand, “getting it” and being successful in school?

López-Bonilla argues that, as an analytical tool, figured worlds can be viewed as an interface between discourse and Discourse, between linguistic structure and social order. In particular, she discusses issues of agency and the construction of the self, and suggests that the students’ figured worlds articulate the experiences of the students, an articulation between language and social order that evidences what Bourdieu (1980) calls the “institutionalization of difference,” that is, the strategies institutions such as schools use to enforce statutory and symbolic barriers between people and groups.

Chapter 4: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Neocolonialism in Patricia McCormick's *Sold* **by Manika Subi Lakshmanan**

Lakshmanan uses critical discourse analysis to train attention on the problematic nature of literature written by North Americans about so-called third world countries, examining in particular the young adult novel *Sold* (2006) by Patricia McCormick in order to demonstrate the connections between literary discourse, the marketed visuals on the book's cover, and knowledge practices suggested by the publisher's discussion guide. Taking up as conceptual tools Gee's seven building tasks (this volume), the work that is done by language, she argues that critical literary analysis should not be limited to an examination of power relations which inhere in race, class, or gender differences *in* texts alone. Rather, a critical lens should also be directed at power relations that emanate *from* texts to their global implications. Only then, Lakshmanan claims, can one become aware of the ideological positions being offered to the reader, and how this might affect international relations. In homing in on the most fruitful intersections for analysis, Lakshmanan also takes up Fairclough's notion of *cruces*, the places where textual, visual, and pedagogical implications seem to be at odds or problematic; she brings postcolonial theories on power relations to bear on her analyses throughout the chapter.

In parsing these discursive struggles, Lakshmanan elucidates some of the hegemonic articulations they inscribe. She concludes that the hegemonic *political* discourse on individual/social change in developing countries is contingent on the positive equivalence of a chain of *activities*. For example, in *Sold*, connections are drawn between culture, gender, disempowerment, poverty, and sexual exploitation, suggesting both a lack of transformative agency within the so-called third world on the one hand, and a kind of outsider-Western-savior agency on the other.

Chapter 5: Figured Worlds and Discourses of Masculinity: Being a Boy in a Literacy Classroom **by Josephine Marsh and Jayne C. Lammers**

This chapter focuses on how CDA facilitated the study of the discourses of masculinity. Marsh adapted Gee's (2005) guidelines for CDA and used Fairclough's (1995, this volume) work as a lens for her interpretations. CDA made visible how a middle-class Hispanic 18-year-old male's constructions of masculinity shaped his participation in school literacy practices and, in turn, the way that school literacy practices and classroom contexts shaped his understandings of what it meant to be a boy in a literacy classroom. Using the four analytic tools (particularly cultural models) suggested by Gee (this volume) for CDA as thinking devices, Marsh constructed four stories about Chavo's adolescent literacy experiences. As she constructed stories to represent the cultural models of Chavo, his mother, and his teacher, she conducted a micro-analysis on the

form and function of the spoken language to inform her analyses. This chapter demonstrates how an analysis based on the form and function of language worked in conjunction with a more macroanalysis of CDA to highlight the complexities inherent in discourses of masculinity and school literacy.

PART II Critical Discourse Analysis

Chapter 6: Semiotic Aspects of Social Transformation and Learning by Norman Fairclough

A common critique of CDA is that it has not often attended to matters of learning. Learning, in this chapter, is therefore addressed as a performativity of texts—both spoken and written. Fairclough suggests that social practices such as teaching and learning are mediated by structures and events and are networked in particular ways through orders of discourse. Orders of discourse comprise genres, discourses, and styles or “ways of interacting,” “ways of representing,” and “ways of being.” Here he theoretically reflects on semiotic aspects of social transformation and learning, with the objective being to incorporate a view of learning into the version of CDA that has been developing in his more recent work. In assessing the possibilities for and limitations of critical educational research motivated by emancipatory (e.g., antiracist) agendas for learning and social transformation, Fairclough argues, one needs to consider both factors of a broadly structural character and factors to do with agency.

The particular focus in this chapter is on incorporating a theory of learning into this framework. What is the relationship between individual and collective learning and social reproduction and transformation? How does social science figure in processes of individual and collective learning in contemporary societies? How in particular can critical social scientists (including discourse analysts) envisage their contribution to individual and collective learning in ways that accord with the objectives of critical social science? How, finally, does discourse figure in individual and collective learning in its relation to social reproduction and transformation? How might critical discourse analysts envisage their particular contribution to projects of individual and collective learning and progressive social transformation?

Chapter 7: Learning as Social Interaction: Interdiscursivity in a Teacher and Researcher Study Group by Cynthia Lewis and Jean Ketter

This chapter analyzes discussions of young adult multicultural literature among White middle-school teachers and university researchers gathering as a teacher research group over time. The authors ask the following overarching question: What is the nature of learning among the participating teachers over a 4-year period? Related to this question, how do interaction patterns in the group sustain or disrupt fixed discourses in ways that shape the group’s learning? Using

CDA, the authors examined key transcripts for systematic clusters of themes, statements, and ideas, and also of *genre* and *voice*, that would reveal how the teacher researcher group participants, some of whom were university researchers and others classroom teachers, took up aspects of one another's worldviews, patterns of talk, and systems of thought as they related to multicultural literature and, more generally, to the meaning and purposes of multicultural education. These interdiscursive moments have implications for a theory of learning as social interaction and for the professional development of teachers in long-term informal settings.

Chapter 8: Language, Power, and Participation: Using Critical Discourse Analysis to Make Sense of Public Policy by Haley Woodside-Jiron

Different from the previous chapters in this book, this chapter looks at the use of CDA as a tool in the critical analysis of public policy. Drawing primarily from Fairclough's (1992, 1995) frame, this work emphasizes the analysis of text, discourse practices, and social practices in policies related specifically to reading instruction in education. Through the close analysis of changes in reading policies in California between 1995 and 1997, and the more recent federal "No Child Left Behind" legislation, this research pushes beyond issues of form and function in language to deeper understandings of how specific texts, discourse practices, and social practices affect social arrangements, the naturalization of cultural models, and development of literate identities.

The chapter opens by situating CDA within the field of critical policy analysis. Kingdon's (1995) framework for policy analysis is compared with underlying tenets of critical theory to point toward overarching constructs that are important in the critical analysis of policy. The rest of the chapter is dedicated to the analysis of these constructs at a much more detailed analytic and interpretive level through CDA. Specifically, issues of authority, cohesion, intertextuality, and hegemony are examined. Through the analysis of intertextual consistency and consensus in the development of cohesion, we come to see how the naturalization of particular models and perceived consensus contribute to learning and social transformation. Here people are positioned in specific ways by policy professionals and related policies with respect to knowledge and what is thinkable/unthinkable (Bernstein, 2000). Such engineering of social change, Woodside-Jiron argues, reduces resistance and places specific, potentially hegemonic, restraints on our interactions.

Chapter 9: Locating the Role of the Role of the Critical Discourse Analyst by Lisa Patel Stevens

This chapter explores the concepts of reflexivity and the role of the public intellectual when using CDA in a field-based setting. Analyzing the metalanguage

used by Stevens herself (a university researcher), and a teacher-participant, (a middle-school science teacher), Stevens asks questions about authority, identity, and knowledge claims as these concepts are revealed in the themes and patterns of their interactive discourse. In discussing with her participant the nature of Stevens' own work as a guest in her classroom, Stevens turns the CDA framework suggested by Fairclough back on her own discourse as a field-based researcher. Among other questions, Stevens asks how CDA can be used with research participants, what its role might be as a communicative and transformative teaching and learning tool, and what the nature of the responsibility and relationship is between the discourse analyst and field-based participants.

Stevens suggests that metadiscussions about CDA provided openings for discussion between herself and her research participant, and that applying Fairclough's orders of discourses to conversations shed considerable light on the shifting positionalities, subjectivities, and school-based identities negotiated between the researcher and participants. Stevens concludes that using CDA in field-based settings demands a higher level of willingness for both parties to act as interlocutors than would normally occur through the analysis of public documents and transcribed texts. This shared sense of responsibility as interlocutors has the potential to draw on metalanguages to disclose, explore, and contest the interpretive claims of both analyst and participant.

PART III Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Chapter 10: Discourse Analysis and Education: A Multimodal Semiotic Approach by Gunther Kress

In this section overall and beginning with this chapter in particular, the concept of discourse in general and field of CDA in education in particular is expanded to include nonlinguistic modes of meaning-making. Here Gunther Kress shares the definitions, descriptions, and theoretical implications of social semiosis and multimodality that make possible his approach to discourse analysis. As Kress argues, neither *discourse* nor *text* is sufficient, semiotically speaking, to account for the manifold meanings of the social organization of education. A multimodal social semiotic approach provides a richer perspective on the many means involved in making meaning and learning; on forms and shapes of knowledge; on the many forms of evaluation and assessment; on the social relations evident in pedagogy; on the (self-)making of identity and, in that, on the means that are central in the *recognition* of the agency and the many kinds of semiotic work of learners in learning.

The term *multimodality*, as defined by Kress, draws attention to the many material resources beyond speech and writing that societies have shaped and that cultures provide as means for making meaning. *Modes*, he writes, are socially made and culturally available material-semiotic resources for representation. *Multimodality* attends to the distinctive affordances of different

modes. In itself, it is not a theory, even though its explicit challenge to the central “place” of language has profound implications for thinking about meaning, representation, communication. Other categories are essential: *genre* for instance, similar to both Fairclough’s and Gee’s use of the term, remains the category that points to the organization of social participants in the making of texts. Likewise, Kress suggests that *discourse* is way of representing. Still, Kress would add that in a communicative world understood as multimodal, in realizing the complexity of social/pedagogic environments of learning and teaching, *discourse* is just one, even if a central, category.

Texts, socially made, with culturally available resources, realize the interests of their makers. *Texts* are (made) *coherent*, through the use of semiotic resources for establishing *cohesion*, internally among the textual elements and externally with elements of the environment in which *texts* occur. *Multimodality*, Kress argues, poses a challenge to the long-held and still widely dominant notion that “language” is that resource for making meaning that makes possible the “expression” of all thoughts, experiences, feelings, values, attitudes; in short, the pillar that guarantees human rationality.

Chapter 11: Discourse in Activity and Activity as Discourse by Shawn Rowe

Taking up for analysis the complex, multimodal experience of three participants interacting with a science museum display, Rowe sets out to accomplish two goals in this chapter. The first is to describe a particular learning theory that adds significantly to accounts of how discourse works to reproduce or transform social relations. The second is to explore through specific examples the possibility of using CDA techniques and concepts to analyze the intersections of linguistic and nonlinguistic semiotic systems in learning activity. Rowe begins with a description of learning as the appropriation of mediational means as part of participation in distributed, mediated activity. Accounts of learning as distributed, mediated activity are well established, but most often deal with learning in classrooms or everyday family (or peer) activities. One goal of this work is to move such studies into the in-between space of the science museum, where families and peer groups attend as natural groups and where learning is one goal of activity, but not perhaps the dominant mediated activity. Rowe then situates the empirical study of group activity, in a science museum, within that framework and suggests how a CDA may add to that account. Finally, using a new transcription system that accounts for activity, Rowe discusses the possibilities opened up by addressing nonlinguistic semiotic systems in a critical study of learning. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of how analyzing both linguistic and nonlinguistic aspects of activity helps us better understand how the privileging of particular discourses is reproduced in local interaction.

Chapter 12: Mapping Modes in Children's Play and Design: An Action-oriented Approach to Critical Multimodal Analysis

by Karen E. Wohlwend

Karen Wohlwend uses Kressian multimodal analysis and theories of social semiosis to understand how actions are made meaningful and social in situ rather than in representation. Taking up the sounds, words, images, and actions of children during a reading lesson in a kindergarten classroom, she examines instances of classroom activity to see how modes shape children's literacy learning and participation. Wohlwend especially relies upon the mode of gaze as a way of revealing which modes were most apparent in a classroom literacy event and how the foregrounding of particular modes enforced a set of power relations (teacher/student; reader/nonreader) legitimated by prevailing educational discourses. Mapping the interplay of modes uncovers power relations and social effects visible at the level of modes. Wohlwend argues that a clear understanding of tensions across multiple perspectives could help teachers to see discourses as resources and to act strategically with greater awareness. Critical multimodal analysis provides a way for early childhood teachers to see how the tangible everyday aspects of familiar classroom activity matter.

Chapter 13: The Discourses of Educational Management Organizations: A Political Design

by Mónica Pini

In a world in which an ever-increasing amount of teaching and learning is happening through the medium of the worldwide web and on the screens of computers, multimodal analysis offers an approach that can account for multiple and moving streams of data across similar, apparently stable institutional structures. In this chapter Mónica Pini looks at the websites of educational management organizations (EMOs), businesses that administer and manage schools for a profit. She uses multimodal analysis to examine the layouts and language of these sites and associated texts, as well as the concepts of critical textual analysis suggested by Fairclough, which she uses to unpack and describe certain ideological features embedded in the companies' marketing and communication decisions.

Pini argues that these EMOs, like other for-profit companies, shape their images as an ideological construct through visual and verbal cues and through association between the characteristics of the product and the lifestyle it affords. Allusions such as "world-class" education, for example, and "a new kind of public school" are closely related to positive values, and they are social representations of success and transformation. In Pini's multimodal analyses, linguistic choices such as these are "read" in conjunction with the images that lie behind them on the screen: photographs of the students served, the teachers who teach them, the symbols and colors that figure on the websites, and so forth.

The Companion Website

The companion website (www.routledge.com/textbooks/9780415874298), a new feature of this book, is intended to extend inquiry, exploration, and dialogue beyond the chapters in the book. The website includes the following elements:

Chapter Extensions

This section includes powerpoints for each of the chapters, author biographies and photos and a discussion guide for each section of the book. The powerpoints are intended to offer a complementary perspective on the chapter and also a way of thinking about the representing research in critical discourse studies. Each powerpoint includes a list of suggested readings to extend the theoretical dimensions of each chapter.

Interviews

This section includes transcripts of interviews with James Gee, Norman Fairclough, and Gunther Kress, the leading scholars in each of the approaches highlighted in the book. The interviews are organized by theme and are cross-linked to allow for easy scrolling between sections of the interview.

Videos

This section features four 15-minute videos featuring many of the leading scholars in critical discourse studies. The videos are organized through the following themes: “approaches,” “procedures,” “context,” and “future directions.” The videos can be viewed separately or together but are meant to introduce the reader/viewer to the key leaders in the field—many of whom people read but have not heard speaking. Included in this section of the website is a list of resources and readings associated with each scholar featured on the video.

Resources for Teaching and Learning CDA

This section offers resources for teaching and learning CDA. Some of the resources include:

Bibliographies:

This section of the website includes an extensive bibliography intended to direct readers to the wide range of examples of Critical Discourse Analysis across the international educational landscape. The bibliography is organized by educational domain, object of study (e.g. interviews, classroom discourse, written texts), and analytic method. Hyperlinks between sections make it easy to navigate across sections.

Discourse Analysis Journals:

An extensive list of peer-reviewed journals devoted to language, discourse, and interaction across a wide range of disciplines.

Films:

An annotated list of films useful for teaching and learning Critical Discourse Studies. Films are organized into categories of critical social theory, linguistic theory, language and society, and media and representation.

Syllabi:

Examples of syllabi from professors who teach courses in Critical Discourse Studies are provided to give examples of the range of ways of designing a course.

Because the field is growing and changing at such a fast rate, it is likely that the resources provided today will quickly be replaced with newer resources. Thus I have taken the liberty of selecting a few resources in a number of areas in educational research while recognizing that there are many others we could have chosen. My intention is that students of CDA will use this as a point of departure and will add their own resources to the list. Finally, there are suggestions for teaching and learning CDA. Attending to how people learn discourse analysis—a major goal of this project—can provide those of us who teach CDA with new routes for supporting our students' learning. Likewise, documenting how people learn discourse analysis holds the promise of keeping the field fresh with new insights as our students address new problems (Rogers, in press). It is in this spirit of building from what I have learned from my students that I offer the second edition of this book and the companion website.

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1 Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis in Educational Research

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Why Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis in Educational Research?

Critical discourse analysis is a problem-oriented and transdisciplinary set of theories and methods that have been widely used in educational research. Perhaps this is so because of the many areas of commensurability that exist between educational research and critical discourse analysis. To begin, I will consider just three of these areas.

First, educational practices are considered communicative events; it therefore stands to reason that discourse analysis would be useful to analyze the ways in which the texts, talk, and other semiotic interactions that learning comprises are constructed across time and contexts. Second, discourse studies provide a particular way of conceptualizing interactions that is compatible with socio-cultural perspectives in educational research (Gutiérrez, 2008; Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007). A shared assumption is that discourse can be understood as a multimodal social practice. That is, discourse reflects and constructs the social world through many different sign systems. Because systems of meaning are caught up in political, social, racial, economic, religious, and cultural formations which are linked to socially defined practices that carry more or less privilege and value in society, they cannot be considered neutral (see Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). A third area of commensurability is that discourse studies and educational research are both socially committed paradigms that address problems through a range of theoretical perspectives. Critical approaches to discourse analysis recognize that inquiry into meaning making is always also an exploration into power. Many of the problems that are addressed, particularly in a globalized world system, have to do with power and inequality. CDA provides the tools for addressing the complexity of movement across educational sites, practices, and systems in a world where inequalities are global in scope. Because of the reflexive tendencies of critical discourse studies—rooted in the constitutive relationship between discourse and the social world—the field continues to grow and change, responding to problems with different ways of looking, understanding and, as its practitioners hope, acting.

A Note About Terminology

There are many approaches to critical discourse analysis. Some scholars refer to their approach as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA, in all capital letters). This is the variety that tends to be associated with Norman Fairclough and the people who work in that tradition. However, as will be evident in this introduction and throughout the book, there is a variety of theories and methods associated with critical inquiry into language practices that can be referred to as critical discourse analysis (cda, lower case). This work shares the assumption that because language is a social practice and because not all social practices are created and treated equally, all analyses of language are inherently critical. Thus, we might refer to this scholarship as *critical approaches to discourse analysis* (Blommaert, 2005; Gee, 2004). In this introduction, I use the terms interchangeably—depending on the context—but I prefer the wider designation that is more, rather than less, inclusive of theories and methods. In editing this book, I take the position that it is less important *how* one refers to their work (as either CDA, cda, or critical approaches to discourse analysis) than it is for one to understand that there are differences in what these significations may mean. These differences will become clear as you read across the sections in the book.

Taking Stock of Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis

More than three decades have passed since the publication of two extremely influential books, *Language and Control* by Roger Fowler, Robert Hodge, Gunther Kress, and Tony Trew (1979) and *Language and Ideology* by Gunther Kress and Robert Hodge (1979). These two books, perhaps more so than other books, have influenced the way in which scholars approach the problematic intersections of language and society; they have become cornerstones in what we know as critical discourse studies. Of course, the study of discourse has a much longer history and can be traced to language philosophers and social theorists such as Bakhtin (1981), DuBois (1903/1990), Pecheux (1975), Voloshinov (1973), Said (1979), Kristeva (1980), Spender (1980), Foucault (1969, 1977), and Wittgenstein (1953).

Some of the well-known approaches to critical discourse analysis include: the discourse-historical method (van Leeuwen & Wodak, 1999; Wodak, 2001; Wodak, 2005); systemic functional linguistics (Fairclough, 2003; Kress, 1976; van Leeuwen, 2008); sociocognitive studies (van Dijk, 1993); French discourse analysis (e.g. Foucault, 1972; Pecheux, 1975); social semiotics (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 2009; Lemke, 2002; van Leeuwen, 2008); and critical ethnography of communication (Blommaert, 2001; Collins & Blot, 2003). While individuals tend to get associated with certain approaches, I would caution against a strict categorization because of the points of convergence between approaches.

In educational research, discourse analysis grew out of the work of sociolinguistics (Gumperz, 1982; Labov, 1972; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975); narrative

research (Bruner, 1990, 1991; Gee, 1986; Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Ochs & Capps, 1996); linguistic anthropology (Hymes, 1964, 1996; Silverstein & Urban, 1996); and the ethnography of communication (Gumperz & Hymes, 1964, Heath, 1983; Scollon & Scollon, 2004; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Shuman, 1986). Schools, classrooms, and educational practices became sites for studying not only the micro-dimensions of classroom talk but also the ways in which social structures are reproduced at macro-levels (e.g. Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Collins, 1982; Collins, 2009; Collins & Blot, 2003; Gee, 1996; Heath, 1983; Michaels, 1983; Oakes, 1986/2005; Shuman, 1986).

Critical Discourse Analysis has taken hold in educational research in North America (see Seigel & Fernandez, 2000 for an overview of critical approaches). Over the past two decades, there have been many empirical studies, edited books, essays, and reviews devoted to critical approaches to discourse studies in education (e.g. Blommaert, 2005; Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Bloome, Power Carter, Morton Christian, & Stuart-Faris, 2005; Collins, 1982; Burns, & Morrell, 2005; Florio-Ruane, 1987; Luke, 1995/1996; Rex, et al., 2010; Rogers, et al., 2005). Educational researchers used CDA in many different areas in educational studies—from studies in higher education, policy studies, adult education, and language arts to studies in physical education, math and science education, family and community education, and art education and creativity. An extensive bibliography of CDA work in education can be found on the website, organized by key words and type of data source.

As seen from even a brief glimpse at its topical range, CDA is a broad framework that brings critical social theories into dialogue with theories of language to answer particular research questions. As such, critical discourse analysts are generally concerned with a critical theory of the social world, the relationship of discourse in the construction and representation of this social world, and a methodology that allows them to describe, interpret, and explain such relationships. In the next section, I consider how the concepts “critical,” “discourse,” and “analysis” are embedded in critical approaches to discourse analysis. At times, I draw on interviews I conducted with James Gee, Norman Fairclough, and Gunther Kress. The complete transcript of their interviews can be found on the companion website.

Considering *Critical* in Critical Discourse Analysis

Power is a central concept in critical discourse studies. It tends to be defined in terms of negative uses of power, articulated through and within discourses and resulting in domination and oppression. Blommaert writes, “the deepest impact of power everywhere is inequality, as power differentiates and selects, includes and excludes” (p. 2). However, Blommaert (2005) writes, “power is not a bad thing—those who are in power will confirm it” (p. 1). Blommaert suggests that critical discourse studies should offer an analysis of the effects of power, the outcomes of power, of what power does to people/groups/societies and how this impact comes about. Similarly, Fairclough urges us to

consider power in the following ways: “the power to,” “power over,” and “power behind.” Arguably, more theorization needs to be conducted around productive uses of power and what Kress (this volume) refers to as the “design of new meanings”.

As a way to see and describe the nature of power, Critical Social Theory (CST) provides a theoretical foundation for critical approaches to discourse analysis. CST is a transdisciplinary knowledge base structured by the dual agendas of critiquing and resisting domination and creating a society free of oppression (Anyon, 1997; Appadurai, 1990; Apple, 1995; Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Callinicos, 1995; Collins, 2009; Fraser, 1989; Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1988; Habermas, McLaren, Martin, Farahmandpur, & Jaramillo, 2004; Shor & Freire, 1997; Spring, 2009). Critical social theory and research rests on the rejection of naturalism (that social practices, labels, and programs represent reality), rationality (the assumption that truth is a result of science and logic), neutrality (the assumption that truth does not reflect any particular interests), and individualism. CST’s intellectual heritage draws on philosophy, literature, legal scholarship, cultural studies, critical race scholarship, political economy studies, ethnic studies, and feminist studies, and has been influenced by schools such as the Frankfurt School and the British Cultural Studies.

Each critical tradition locates domination in a slightly different place—racism, capitalist structures, discourse itself, patriarchy—but they all share a common set of principles and assumptions. Critical social theory assumes that oppression and liberation are twin pillars of concern that include material, historical, and discursive dimensions and are enacted across time, people, and contexts. A key area of struggle for those committed to CST is recognizing the seeming invincibility of structural conditions and the inevitability of human agency. Indeed, oppression is understood as the obstruction of one’s human essence and development. In Marxist-inspired CST, capitalism and neoliberalism alienate people from their creative powers by reducing their labor to wages from which an elite class profits. In feminist-inspired CST, patriarchy defines gender roles and expectations that limit women’s freedom and creative powers. In Critical Race Theory-inspired CST, racism defines the material and social positions of people of color, thus limiting the full development of people living under racism (Bell, 1992). Also acknowledged, within CST is harm to the human spirit, not only for those who are oppressed but for the oppressor as well.

Inherent in CST’s stance toward knowledge construction is the assumption that theory and practice are dependent on each other. Reflecting on our practice helps us to generate new ways of thinking (to theorize) and, in turn, our theory, put into practice, is part of our search for the transformed conditions of existence. At the heart of critical social theory is a commitment to work with heart, head, and hands. The work in our heads consists of wrestling with the contradictions that are inevitably a part of our daily existence; considering problems with an open sociological mind; and dreaming of alternative realities. Being open to the realities of injustice with our heart is also an important part

of critical social theory. Ideology works most effectively through the stronghold of emotions—through anger, fear, sorrow, joy, and love. The work on the ground—with our hands—consists of engagement with social struggles, recognizing the historical and contemporary nature of contexts, conditions, and struggles.

Engaging in critique and building alternative realities are both central to CST. A shared assumption among allied traditions in CST is that confronting inequality means coming to terms with the social arrangements that create social disparities and understanding their root sources. The project of critique (through our theory, practice, and reflection) provides us with a framework or a set of tools which help us penetrate to the core of domination, whether it is based in racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism or neocolonialism. This includes a language of critique—puncturing “regimes of truth,” noticing and naming structures, conditions, and manifestations of domination (however small or large). It is important to note that while critique is an important part of the “critical project” it is not the end goal. The end goal is to hope, to dream, and to create alternative realities that are based in equity, love, peace, and solidarity. Thus, a critical project is necessarily based in what Giroux (1983) calls the language of hope or Leonardo (2004) calls the “language of transcendence” (p. 11). This is the generative side of the critical project. Rather than only resisting, critiquing, and reacting to domination, those inspired by critical social theory, seek, in addition, to design and forge alternative ways of representing, being, and interacting in the world with the goal of creating a society free of oppression and domination.

Considering *Discourse* in Critical Discourse Analysis

People seek to make meaning with every aspect of who they are and what they are doing: how they use their bodies; integrate objects, artifacts, and technology; use gestures, time, and space; adjust their tone of voice when they speak; choose the words they use; and interact in particular ways with others. Thus, meanings are made through representational systems—language being just one of the sign systems people use to create meanings. Meanings are always embedded within social, historical, political, and ideological contexts. And, meanings are motivated. When people call on representational systems—images, gestures, or words—they intend to accomplish something—build relationships, knowledge, identities, and worldviews. Some meanings and sign systems (written language over oral language in Western societies, for instance) are privileged over other sign systems, and thus the ways in which meanings get chained together have consequences for privilege, status, the distribution of resources, and solidarity.

From a linguistic point of view, systemic functional linguistics (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Halliday, 1978) is the representational system—the theory of language—that is perhaps the most embedded in critical discourse studies (although it should be noted that Hallidayian linguistics has had a much

broad impact in Europe and Australia than in North America). Systemic functional linguistics as a theory of language is oriented toward choice and privileges meaning makers (language users) as agents making decisions about the social functions of their language use. This social semiotic theory operates on the understanding that meanings are always being invented (versus being inherited); people are actively creating meanings and have choices among representational systems from which to make meanings. How do these representations work? Discourses both construct and represent the social world and thus can be referred to as constitutive, dialectical, and dialogic. Discourse is never just an artifact but a set of consumptive, productive, distributive, and reproductive processes that exist in relation to the social world.

Located between the linguistic and the social, discourse has been assigned many meanings. Discourses are social practices, processes, and products. Discourses are both the object of study and the theoretical device used for meaning making. Given the broadness in parameters of what constitutes discourse, one can see many different definitions of discourse—from language use, to statements that assign meanings to an institution, to social identities, relationships, practices, and categories. At the most concrete level, Stubbs (1983) defined discourse as “language above the sentence or above the clause” (p. 1). Brown and Yule (1983) wrote, “the analysis of discourse is necessarily the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions that these forms are designed to serve in human affairs” (p. 1). To consider the ways in which social grammars and “language bits” (to use Gee’s term) interact and build identities, relationships, and narratives of the social world, we need an expanded account of discourse.

The approach toward discourse in much of critical discourse studies draws from the traditions of critical linguistics, cultural and media studies, neo-Marxist approaches to language, ethnographic approaches to language study, and social semiotics. Additionally, Foucault’s conceptualization of discourse as a social rather than a linguistic category has had an enormous influence on critical discourse studies. Consider the understandings of discourse set forth by James Gee, Norman Fairclough, and Gunther Kress as representative of three traditions in critical discourse studies.

James Gee (1996) defines discourse in this way: “[a] discourse is an association of socially accepted ways of using language, other symbolic expressions and artifacts of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting that can be used to identify yourself as a member of a socially meaningful group” (p. 144). Continuing on, Gee (this volume) writes:

I use the term “Discourse” with a capital “D” (so-called “big ‘D’ Discourses”). I use this term because such groups continue through time—for the most part, they were here before we arrived on the earth and will be here after we leave—and we can see them as communicating (discoursing) with each other through time and history, using us as their

temporary mouthpieces. I use the term “discourse,” with a little “d”, to mean language in use or stretches of oral or written language in use (“texts”). (p. 23, manuscript)

Undoubtedly, Gee is widely known for this distinction between little “d” and “D” discourse; indeed, it was one of the ways through which critical discourse analysis gained leverage in educational studies. As the quote suggests, little “d” discourse refers to the grammar of what is said or written. “Discourse” with a capital D refers to the ways of representing, believing, valuing, and participating with all of the sign systems that people have at their disposal. This distinction stresses that the form of language cannot exist independent of the function of language and the intention of speakers. Also embedded within this perspective is that discourses are always historical and intertextual, linked across time, place, and speakers. Norman Fairclough (1992), blending Hallidayian linguistics with Marxist-inspired theories of discourse, writes:

In using the term discourse, I am proposing to regard language use as a form of social practice, rather than a purely individual activity or a reflex of situational variables. This has various implications. Firstly, it implies that discourse is a mode of action, one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other, as well as a mode of representation . . . Discourse is a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning.

Gee and Fairclough both recognize how discourse functions to reproduce society (through its social structures, relationships, and value structures) but also has a hand in transforming society as people use discourses in creative and agentic ways. On this dialectic between individual agency and social structure, Fairclough (1992) writes:

It is important that the relationship between discourse and social structure should be seen dialectically if we are to avoid the pitfalls of overemphasizing, on the one hand, the social determination of discourse, and on the other hand, the construction of the social in discourse. The former turns discourse into a mere reflection of a deeper social reality, the latter idealistically represents discourse as the source of the social.

It is clear to see how Fairclough’s understanding of the relationship between discourse and the social world is cautiously optimistic about the role of individuals intervening in social, historical, and political discourses. People call on the resources they have for making meanings and, in doing so, enter into a struggle over representation with political and ideological practices. On this, Fairclough (1992) writes, “Discourse as a political practice establishes, sustains and changes power relations, and the collective entities between which power relations obtain. Discourse as an ideological practice constitutes, naturalizes,

sustains and changes significations of the world from diverse positions in power relations” (p. 67).

Gunther Kress, from a social semiotic tradition, views meaning making as a social process where people use the modes, or resources, at their disposal to represent. Language is only one resource or mode for making meaning. Others include images, gestures, body language, proxemics, color, movements, space, and time. Modes are considered to be the material-semiotic resources that people have available for achieving representational work. Texts, both products of and part of discourses, are the “result of semiotic work of design, production and composition; and as such they can be ‘semiotic entities’; of any kind, resulting in ensembles composed of different modes” (p. 207, this volume). Hodge and Kress (1988) define discourse as:

The site where social forms of organization engage with systems of signs in the production of texts, thus reproducing or changing the sets of meanings and values which make up a culture (p. 6).

Kress’s work, which had once been part of the “linguistic turn” in the social sciences, takes us in yet a different direction, toward the “semiotic” and “material,” with semiotics understood as the study of people’s use of sign systems that give insight as to how meanings are enabled and also understood. As Kress says in his interview, “That which we regard quite easily, and quite confidently as language, is actually a collection of different things held together by the socially constructed entity called grammar.” And, thus, Kress describes a multimodal social semiotic approach as aimed at discovering

how meanings are embodied and what the difference is between getting meanings through the eye as against getting meaning through the ear, or getting meaning through the touch of the fingers, or through the taste on your tongue and in your mouth, or through smelling in your nose. All of these are, for me, equally important routes to meaning. (Interview)

Kress’s challenge to discourse analysts is to move beyond language as the preferred mode of meaning making. Touch, smell, gaze, taste are different modalities or routes to meaning making. Perhaps the greatest departure from what has been outlined thus far in terms of theories of discourses is Kress’s focus on the emergent, creative and agentic uses of modes to create meanings. His focus is on the sign-maker, rather than the sign. With that said, it is important to attend to the constraints that people face as they call on and fashion discourses. Indeed, we might think of all meaning making as a struggle over systems of representation. Why are some signs used and not others? Who has the power to represent certain meanings? Further, what has been implied but not yet stated directly in this discussion is that while discourses are semiotically constituted, they cannot be reduced to semiotics. That is, there is a material dimension to discourses.

Looking across the various articulations of discourse within a critical approach to discourse studies, the many points of cross-pollination are most likely clear—at the level of both social theory and language. I should note that James Gee, Norman Fairclough, and Gunther Kress were part of the New London Group that convened in New London, New Hampshire, in 1994. Part of the objective of this meeting was to work out a shared vision and associated language for use across critical discourse traditions. What resulted was general agreement around the concept of *design* as a way of describing grammar as a social entity—something that people actively design for achieving social functions (New London Group, 1996).

And, of course, dilemmas and weak spots in theories of discourse exist. Here, I address one of these areas—the continued privileging of monocultural epistemologies—with the hope that it might provide scholars with directions for future work. Critical discourse analysis in educational research has been conducted across the globe, drawing on many different theories and models of discourse and communication. Despite this diversity, discourse analysis, as a field, has historically been influenced and developed by theories and methods of the North Atlantic (Blommaert, 2005). This has been exacerbated by the predominance of English-based journals, research universities and conferences that have shaped and continue to shape the field. Because of the influence of the North Atlantic epicenter of scholarship in critical discourse studies, theories of discourse tend to reflect monocultural values and perspectives. There is growing discontent with epistemological commitments of critically oriented approaches to discourse analysis, a set of theories and methods rooted in Western epistemologies, and its commensurability with understanding multicultural discourses (Dissanayake, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Shi-xu, 2009). This is a particular concern for the field of educational scholarship within critical traditions given the central concerns with issues of access, equity, and diversity.

There are two areas in which theories of discourse might be re-imagined in order to be inclusive of multiethnic perspectives. First, the well-known Western logic of thought “I think therefore I am” stands in opposition to the African-centered concept of “I am because we are” (Ladson-Billings, 2003). The individual-centered concept of “I think therefore I am” is rooted in Western epistemologies focused on individualism, the primacy of the speaker’s goals, and a separation of mind and body. It has been well documented that Western communication, rooted in Cartesian structures, is constructed around the notion of the individual as the final arbiter of meaning. Shi-xu (2008) argues that theoretically, critically oriented forms of discourse analysis proceed from a view of language that views the individual speaker’s goals and intentions as paramount. This view of communication stands in opposition to Eastern theories of communication (Feng, 2009; Shi-xu, 2009; Shunqing, 2008), where the intention is to be oriented toward the listener, the intersubjective nature of the exchange, and the focus on the collective, with the individual as part of the group.

The second area that might be taken into consideration in relation to multicultural discourse is that of text, contexts, and social practices. This

is an area that has received much attention in the field of discourse studies (Blommaert, 2001; van Dijk, 2008). The problem of context is that it already exists and, at the same time, is being (re)constructed through chains of communicative events. Therefore, the question is: Where does context reside? In the head? Somewhere “out there”? And what does this mean for the discourse analyst? van Dijk (2008) has argued that context is always a cultural model (reference). Others believe that context includes historical, political, cultural, and economic frames as well as the theoretical knowledge an analyst brings to the text (Caldas-Couldhardt & Couldhardt, 1995). Still others believe the concept of context creates a false hierarchy between texts and contexts and wonder whether we should talk about social events and social actors rather than texts and contexts (Fairclough, 2003; van Leeuwen, 2008). Bolivar (in press) argues for a change in focus from texts in context to people in events, the latter of which positions people acting together to produce texts for particular reasons. This, she argues, draws researchers’ attention to how and why texts are produced and the new meanings created. These are important issues to consider in moving toward a multiethnic theory of discourse.

Considering *Analysis* in Critical Discourse Analysis

There are as many different approaches to analyses within critical discourse analysis as there are theories and problems to be studied (e.g. Titscher, Meyer, Wodak, & Vetter, 2000; van Dijk, 2001). What is important is that analyses are connected to a theory of the social world and a theory of language that is coherent. Beyond that, procedures and methods vary. In general, the view of methods of analysis is that one finds a research topic, applies a set of theoretical frames (or allows the frames to emerge from the data) to that research topic, and then selects appropriate methods, depending on the questions being asked and theories being used. Some analysts draw on extensive fieldwork; others collect large corpuses of texts from archives, websites or news sources. There are more and less textually oriented approaches to discourse analysis. Some methods are less linguistically focused and more focused on the context in which the discourse arises. Some foreground micro-level issues, others the impact of global issues on local discourses. Other methods are interested in the historical emergence and evolution of a concept or narrative.

Three of the most influential traditions of critical approaches to discourse analysis in educational research are those of James Gee (1986; 1991; 1996; 2004), Norman Fairclough (1989; 1992; 1995; 2003), and Gunther Kress (1979; 1993; 1996; 2001; 2003; 2009). As will be clear across the sections and the chapters in this book, there is a great deal of synergy across these approaches. We cannot and should not assign each scholar to *one* approach to critical discourse analysis because each scholar has developed and drawn on different theories and methods over time—many of which overlap. I would also note that it is not desirable to associate one person with one set of analytic tools as if this were “Gee’s methods” or “Fairclough’s methods” or “Kress’s methods” for conducting discourse

analysis. These researchers would all embrace the concept of methodological hybridity; they freely admit that their methods are drawn from a wide range of scholarship, and that they adopt and adapt analytic methods according to the needs of a particular inquiry. Still, it may be useful to consider the traditions that each scholar draws on and has been influenced by, and the set of analytic approaches that tend to get associated with their work.

James Gee's Approach to Discourse Analysis

James Gee's approach to discourse analysis draws on three traditions: American anthropological linguistics and narratives (Gumperz, 1982; Hymes, 1974; Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Scollon & Scollon, 1981); social discourse theories (Foucault, 1972, 1977; Latour, 1987); and cognitive psychology (Holland & Quinn, 1987; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Strauss & Quinn, 1997). Trained as a theoretical linguist who worked on syntactic theory and the philosophy of language, he was heavily influenced by Chomskian linguistics. As a result of various professional commitments, his scholarship moved into literary stylistics, Hallidayian grammar, and neo-Marxist theory, all of which influenced his developing approach to the social and cultural study of language. In the 1990s he was part of founding the New Literacy Studies, a movement that situated literacy practices in social and cultural contexts, rather than in cognitive contexts alone. Here, his influence was bringing theories of situated cognition and learning into the scholarship in New Literacy Studies. Over time, his work has included narrative research (1985, 1991, 1999), analysis of situated cognition (1992), social linguistics (1996), and discourse analysis (1999/2005) of video games and learning (2003).

Starting from his often cited distinction "d"iscourse and "D"iscourse, Gee's more recent work (2011) have brought together his theory of language with theoretical devices for inquiry. Situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, and Discourses may be thought of as "tools of inquiry." These are the social and cultural frameworks for understanding how people use language to accomplish social goals. "Situated meanings" evokes Bakhtin's notion of genres and dialogues (1981, 1986) and refers to the historical, intertextual and social trappings of sign systems. "Social languages" refers to grammar and the function of language as a social practice. That is, grammar is not something that people inherit, but something they design to create certain identities and relationships. "Figured worlds" refers to the narratives and images different social and cultural groups of people use to make sense of the world. "Discourse models" are the storylines, narratives, and explanatory frameworks that circulate in a society.

Gee reminds us that anytime we are communicating, we are building social relationships, identities, and figured worlds. The question for the discourse analyst is: What sign systems are being used to accomplish these social goals? The "seven building tasks," the second part of his framework, are the kinds of things that are being built or designed as people make and interpret meanings.

The “seven building tasks” include seven entry points that aid the analyst in constructing meaning from a network of discourse patterns. The tasks include significance, activities, identities, relationships, politics, connections, sign systems, and knowledge. Each dimension has a set of associated questions that aids the analyst. For example, within “sign systems,” Gee asks the question, “What sign systems are relevant (and irrelevant) in the situation?” In “significance,” Gee poses the question, “What are the situated meanings of some of the words and phrases that seem important in the situation?” All the while, Gee’s approach to discourse analysis asks the analyst to attend to learning—how meanings are built and transformed over time.

Norman Fairclough’s Approach to Discourse Analysis

Norman Fairclough’s approach has drawn from Marxist-inspired linguistics (Bahktin, 1981, 1986; Pecheux, 1975), sociolinguistics (Labov, 1972), ethnography of communication (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975), systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 1978), critical linguistics (Fowler, et al., 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979), and social theories of discourse (Foucault, 1972). Fairclough has consistently worked on the question of mediation between the textual and social world. That is, how does one move between the textual and the social? One of his first significant papers, published in 1985 in the *Journal of Pragmatics*, focused on critically descriptive approaches to discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1985). His book *Language and Power* (1989) developed a theoretical approach to language and power across a range of sources and disciplines. Over time, his work has become more intentionally focused on questions of social change such as “globalization,” “neoliberalism,” “new capitalism,” and the “knowledge economy.” This concern with social transformation is reflected first in his book *Discourse and Social Change* (1992), and then a concern with transformation and transition in his more recent scholarship, *Language and Globalization* (2006) and *Discourse and Contemporary Social Change* (2007).

The key concepts—and associated analytic tools—that he has consistently used as leverage to study social change have been *orders of discourse*, *interdiscursivity*, and *dialectics*. His 2000 book *Analyzing Discourse* focuses on an analysis of social problems through textual analysis that draws on systemic functional linguistics. In this project, Fairclough explores the kinds of semiotic resources people draw on as they design and interpret social practices through *ways of interacting* (genres), *ways of representing* (discourse), and *ways of being* (style). Put briefly, ways of interacting (genre) refers to the kinds of texts that people design and call on (e.g. traditional I-R-E patterns of classroom discourse or historical fiction). Ways of representing (discourse) refers to the clusters of meanings that give rise to macro-narratives or cultural models. Ways of being refers to the kinds of identity work that people enact as they are using language. This heuristic—or order of discourse—provides a means for understanding the relationships between the textual and the social. A key element of Fairclough’s framework is the interdiscursive relationship between and within

domains—that is, between and among genres, discourses and styles, and the social world. The analyst attempts to describe, interpret, and explain the relationships between texts and social practices at local, national, macro-regional, and global scales (Fairclough, 2005; Fairclough & Wodak, 2008). This recursive movement between linguistic and social analysis, a key feature of Fairclough's approach, is what makes CDA a dialectical approach.

Gunther Kress's Approach to Discourse Analysis

Gunther Kress is one of the people credited with developing the branch of scholarship referred to as critical linguistics. He, alongside Roger Fowler (a structural linguist), Robert Hodge (a literary scholar), and Tony Trew (a political philosopher), developed an approach for making sense of the social meanings of texts through a methodology strongly influenced by systemic functional linguistics. This group was inspired by Marxist philosophies that attempted to understand the relationships between material relations represented in the socioeconomic base and superstructures such as literature, law, religion, politics, and education as mediated through ideology (interview). Their articulation of how language itself mediated the relationship between the base and superstructure is represented in their book *Language as Ideology* (1979), and in an earlier paper called *Models and Processes* (Kress & Hodge, 1979). This work was concerned with how power gets realized in linguistic forms.

Although Kress's training (early 1960s) was first in English literature, he became dissatisfied with what he saw as an a-theoretical approach to English literary criticism (interview). He moved on to incorporate Chomskian linguistics into his work with the idea that a close analysis of syntactic structures could aid his understanding of how literature worked. Eventually, though, he grew restless with the separation of linguistic form (structure) and function (meaning) in studies of transformational grammar. He then studied with Michael Halliday, whose approach to language centered on the connection between form (structure) and function (social practices), and viewed a speaker as a socially located individual who uses semiotic systems to achieve particular functions or goals. This orientation toward speakers as social and motivated beings, embedded in contexts and making choices, appealed to Kress. Kress brought this Hallidayian schema into the world of critical linguistics through a book that was a collection of Halliday's papers, called *System and Function in Language* (1976).

Kress's academic appointments in cultural and media studies influenced his idea that ideology could be found in many forms of representation, not just language. He reports writing in the preface to *Learning to Write* (1982): "I'm really sad that I can't say anything about the images which accompanies the early writings of children" (interview). He became interested in developing a theory of motivated signs that rests on the agentive action of sign makers. Thus, the challenge was to show how images are ideologically constructed (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; 2006), how subjectivities are constituted, and through what modes (Kress, 2009).

A social semiotic approach is concerned with how meanings are made—in both the outward representation of signs and also the inner interpretation of signs. The analytic procedures for understanding and representing learning—which is always multimodal—are arguably less developed than those for interpreting and representing language. Upon looking at a social practice—say, a math lesson—the analyst might identify which modes are being used and then ask: What are the signs being made through this mode? A key development has been the development of a transcription system that does not privilege language over other representational systems; or, put another way, a convention for representing modally dense meaning making (Norris, 2004). Depending on the social practice, this could mean that body kinesthetics or gestures (not language) are most salient in meaning making.

Rather than a focus on critique, as is the case with other forms of critical approach to discourse analysis, a social semiotic approach is concerned with the concept of design; that is, how meanings get designed and re-designed as people interact with representational systems in different times and places. And this means, in Kress's words, that "the notion of design implies for me intensifying awareness of what the resources are and what the potentials are and how they might be used and what the conditions of constraint are and how these conditions might be overcome" (interview).

The difference between design and critique has become a subject of exploration by scholars in critical discourse studies and can be read in the papers set forth calling for a focus on the relationship between educational practices and productive uses of power (Janks, 2005; Luke, 2004; Martin, 2004; Scollon & Scollon, 2004). Allan Luke (2004) points out the potential for what he calls "reconstructive" versions of discourse analysis that focus on how liberation, solidarity, and community are (and might be) constructed. Martin (2004) refers to this approach as "positive discourse analysis," which can provide a complementary focus on "how people make room for themselves in the world in ways that redistribute power" (p. 183).

The frameworks set forth by James Gee, Norman Fairclough, and Gunther Kress offer bountiful resources for the discourse analyst. Each set of frameworks suggests a more or less stable set of methodological elements that tend to get associated with the approach. The caveat is that depending on one's research problem and theories, there may be methodological constraints that require the analyst to draw on other procedures. Each of these approaches provides a set of tools and resources for understanding social events and practices that are taken up depending on the question. Our work is to apply these tools—and design new ones—in a context that is meaningful for our own work.

A Note to the Reader

Scholarship in critical discourse analysis holds the potential to intervene in educational debates by unraveling powerful discourses *of* education and *in* education. Through critique and design we can provide insight into what learning

and transformation look, sound, and feel like over time and across educational contexts. Our work can help people look differently at routine problems and practices. As practitioners of CDA, it is also important to offer students of education theory, practice, and research an invitation to critically examine discourse practices in ways that are engaging and enticing. This is part of the intention of the revised edition of this book.

The book is divided into three sections that represent the traditions most commonly associated with critical discourse analysis in educational research. With the growth of scholarship in this area, these approaches provide some contour to the landscape of critical discourse analysis. They provide conceptual and methodological markers, especially for people new to critical approaches to discourse analysis. However, given the spreading and increasingly fruitful practice of CDA across disciplinary fields, across kinds of data, and across geographic regions, it is more common to see hybrids and composites of critical discourse analysis rather than studies that focus on one approach. It bears repeating that the structure of this book is meant as a guide to working between and among approaches. As we see in this collection, studies in the section that exemplify Gee's approach, for example, draw on theoretical and methodological tools from Fairclough or Kress and so on.

As you read across the sections and chapters in the book, I would ask that you consider some of the themes that have been brought out in this introduction:

- How do the authors engage with texts, contexts and practices?
- What kinds of multicultural theories of discourse can you locate?
- How do the researchers position themselves vis-à-vis the subject of inquiry and the object of analysis?
- In what ways does each of the authors attend to multimodality?
- How do the authors engage with the terminology around critical approaches to discourse analysis (cda/CDA)?
- What points of intersections and tensions do you see across the approaches to critical discourse analysis?
- What insights does the research offer for understanding learning?

I conclude this introduction by saying that critical analysis of discourse is an analysis not only of what is said, but of what is left out; not only what is present in the text, but what is absent. I would ask readers of this book to read the book in the same critical spirit.

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Part I

Discourse Analysis

2 Discourse Analysis: What Makes It Critical?

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Introduction

This paper is about my approach to discourse analysis (Gee, 2005, 2007). It is also about the question: What makes discourse analysis “*critical* discourse analysis”?

At the outset, I want to make a distinction that is important from a linguistic point of view: a distinction between **utterance-type meaning** and **utterance-token meaning** (Levinson, 2000). Any word, phrase, or structure has a general range of possible meanings, what we might call its meaning range. This is its utterance-type meaning. For example, the word “cat” has to do, broadly, with the felines, and the (syntactic) structure “subject of a sentence” has to do, broadly, with naming a “topic” in the sense of “what is being talked about.”

However, words and phrases take on much more specific meanings in actual contexts of use. These are utterance-token meanings or what I will call “situated meaning.” Thus, in a situation where we say something like “The world’s big cats are all endangered,” “cat” means things like lions and tigers; in a situation where we are discussing mythology and say something like “The cat was a sacred symbol to the ancient Egyptians,” “cat” means real and pictured cats as symbols; and in a situation where we are discussing breakable decorative objects on our mantel and say something like “The cat broke,” “cat” means a statue of cat.

Subjects of sentences are always “topic-like” (this is their utterance-type meaning); in different situations of use, subjects take on a range of more specific meanings. In a debate, if I say “The constitution only protects the rich,” the subject of the sentence (“the constitution”) is an entity about which a claim is being made; if a friend of yours has just arrived and I usher her in saying “Mary’s here,” the subject of the sentence (“Mary”) is a center of interest or attention; and in a situation where I am commiserating with a friend and say something like “You really got cheated by that guy,” the subject of the sentence (“you”) is a center of empathy (signaled also by the fact that the normal subject of the active version of the sentence—“That guy really cheated you”—has been “demoted” from subject position through use of the “get-passive”).

The Utterance-Type Meaning Task

Discourse analysis of any type, whether critical or not, can undertake one or both of two tasks, one related to utterance-type (general) meaning and one related to situated meaning. One task, then, is what we can call the **utterance-type meaning task**. This task involves the study of correlations between form and function in language at the level of utterance-type meanings (general meanings). “Form” here means things like morphemes, words, phrases, or other syntactic structures (e.g., the subject position of a sentence). “Function” means meaning or the communicative purpose a form carries out.

The other task is what we can call the **utterance-token meaning or situated meaning task**. This task involves the study of correlations between form and function in language at the level of utterance-token meanings. Essentially, this task involves discovering the situation-specific or situated meanings of forms used in specific contexts of use.

Failing to distinguish between these two tasks can be dangerous, since very different issues of validity for discourse analysis come up with each of these tasks, as we will see below. Let me start with an example of the utterance-type meaning task. Specific forms in a language are prototypically used as tools to carry out certain communicative functions (that is, to express certain meanings). For example, consider the sentence labeled (1) below (adapted from Gagnon, 1987, p. 65):

1. Though the Whig and Tory parties were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes, they represented different factions and tendencies.

This sentence is made up of two clauses, an **independent** (or **main**) clause (“they represented different factions and tendencies”) and a **dependent** clause (“Though the Whig and Tory parties were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes”). These are statements about form. An independent clause has as one of its functions (at the utterance-type level) that it expresses an **assertion**; that is, it expresses a **claim** that the speaker/writer is making. A dependent clause has as one of its functions that it expresses information that is not asserted, but, rather, **assumed** or **taken-for-granted**. These are statements about function (meaning).

Normally (that is, technically speaking, in the “unmarked” case), in English, dependent clauses follow independent clauses. Thus, the sentence (1) above might more normally appear as: “The Whig and Tory parties represented different factions, though they were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes.” In (1) the dependent clause has been **fronted** (placed in front of the whole sentence). This is a statement about form. Such fronting has as one of its functions that the information in the clause is **thematized** (Halliday, 1994), that is, the information is treated as a launching-off point or thematically important context from which to consider the claim in the following dependent clause. This is a statement about function.

To sum up, in respect to form-functioning mapping at the utterance-type level, we can say that sentence (1) renders its dependent clause (“Though the Whig and Tory parties were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes”) a taken-for-granted, assumed, unargued for (i.e., unasserted), though important (thematized) context from which to consider the main claim in the independent clause (“they represented different factions and tendencies”). The dependent clause is, we might say, a concession. Other historians might prefer to make this concession the main asserted point and, thus, would use a different grammar, perhaps saying something like: “Though they represented different factions and tendencies, the Whig and Tory parties were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes.”

At a fundamental level, all types of discourse analysis involve claims (however tacitly they may be acknowledged) about form-function matching at the utterance-type level. This is so because, if one is making claims about a piece of language, even at a much more situated and contextualized level (which we will see in a moment), but these claims violate what we know about how form and function are related to each other in language at the utterance-type level, then these claims are quite suspect, unless there is evidence that the speaker or writer is trying to violate these sorts of basic grammatical relationships in the language (e.g., in poetry).

As I have already said, the meanings with which forms are correlated at the utterance-type level are rather general (meanings like “assertion,” “taken-for-granted information,” “contrast,” etc.). In reality, they represent only the meaning potential or meaning range of a form or structure, as we have said. The more specific or situated meanings that a form carries in a given context of use must be figured out by an engagement with our next task, the utterance-token or situated meaning task.

The Situated Meaning Task

A second task that any form of discourse analysis, critical or otherwise, can undertake is what I called above the utterance-token or situated meaning task. For simplicity’s sake, I will now just call this “the situated meaning task.” When we actually utter or write a sentence it has a **situated meaning** (Gee, 2004, 2005). Situated meanings arise because particular language forms take on specific or situated meanings in specific different contexts of use.

Consider the word “coffee” as a very simple example of how situated meaning differs from utterance-type meaning. “Coffee” is an arbitrary form (other languages use different sounding words for coffee) that correlates with meanings having to do with the substance coffee (this is its meaning potential). At a more specific level, however, we have to use context to determine what the word means in any situated way. In one context, “coffee” may mean a brown liquid (“The coffee spilled, go get a mop”); in another one it may mean grains of a certain sort (“The coffee spilled, go get a broom”); in another it may mean containers (“The coffee spilled, stack it again”); and it can mean other things in

other contexts, such as berries of a certain sort, a certain flavor, or a skin color. We can even use the word with a novel situated meaning, as in “You give me a coffee high” or “Big Coffee is as bad as Big Oil as corporate actors.”

To see a further example of situated meanings at work, consider sentence (1) again (“Though the Whig and Tory parties were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes, they represented different factions”). We said above that an independent clause represents an assertion (a claim that something is true). But this general form-function correlation can mean different specific things in actual contexts of use, and can, indeed, even be mitigated or undercut altogether.

For example, in one context, say between two like-minded historians, the claim that the Whig and Tory parties represented different factions may just be taken as a reminder of a “fact” they both agree on. On the other hand, between two quite diverse historians, the same claim may be taken as a challenge (despite YOUR claim that shared class interests mean no real difference in political parties, the Whig and Tory parties in 17th-century England were really different). And, of course, on stage as part of a drama, the claim about the Whig and Tory parties is not even a “real” assertion, but a “pretend” one.

Furthermore, the words “privileged,” “contending,” and “factions” will take on different specific meanings in different contexts. For example, in one context, “privileged” might mean “rich,” while in another context it might mean “educated” or “cultured” or “politically connected” or “born into a family with high status” or some combination of the above or something else altogether.

To analyze Gagnon’s sentence or his whole text, or any part of it, at the level of situated meanings—that is, in order to carry out the situated meaning task—would require a close study of some of the relevant contexts within which that text is placed and which it, in turn, helps to create. This might mean inspecting the parts of Gagnon’s text that precede or follow a part of the text we want to analyze. It might mean inspecting other texts related to Gagnon’s. It might mean studying debates among different types of historians and debates about educational standards and policy (since Gagnon’s text was meant to argue for a view about what history ought to be taught in schools). It might mean studying these debates historically across time and in terms of the actual situations Gagnon and his text were caught up in (e.g., debates about new school history standards in Massachusetts, a state where Gagnon once helped write a version of the standards). It might mean many other things, as well. Obviously, there is no space in a chapter of this scope to develop such an analysis.

The issue of validity for analyses of situated meaning is quite different than the issue of validity for analyses of utterance-type meanings. We saw above that the issue of validity for analyses of utterance-type meanings basically comes down to choosing and defending a particular grammatical theory of how form and function relate in language at the level of utterance-type meanings, as well as, of course, offering correct grammatical and semantic descriptions of one’s data. On the other hand, the issue of validity for analyses of situated meaning is much harder. In fact, it involves a very deep problem known as “the frame problem” (Gee, 2005).

The Frame Problem

The frame problem is this: Any aspect of context can affect the meaning of an (oral or written) utterance. Context, however, is indefinitely large, ranging from local matters like the positioning of bodies and eye gaze, through people's beliefs, to historical, institutional, and cultural settings. No matter how much of the context we have considered in offering an interpretation of an utterance, there is always the possibility of considering other and additional aspects of the context, and these new considerations may change how we interpret the utterance. Where do we cut off consideration of context? How can we be sure any interpretation is "right," if considering further aspects of the context might well change that interpretation?

Let me give an example of a case where changing how much of the context of an utterance we consider changes significantly the interpretation we give to that utterance. Take a claim like "Many children die in Africa before they are five years old because they get infectious diseases like malaria." What is the appropriate amount of context within which to assess this claim? We could consider just medical facts, a narrow context. And in the context the claim seems unexceptional.

But widen the context and consider the wider context described below:

Malaria, an infectious disease, is one of the most severe public health problems worldwide. It is a leading cause of death and disease in many developing countries, where young children and pregnant women are the groups most affected. Worldwide, one death in three is from an infectious or communicable disease. However, almost all these deaths occur in the non-industrialized world. Health inequality effects not just how people live, but often dictates how and at what age they die. [see <http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/impact/index.htm> and <http://ucatlas.ucsc.edu/cause.php>]

This context would seem to say that so many children in Africa die early not because of infectious diseases but because of poverty and economic underdevelopment. While this widening of the context does not necessarily render the claim "Many children die in Africa before they are five years old because they get infectious diseases like malaria" false, it, at least, suggests that a narrow construal of "because" here (limiting it to physical and medical causes) effaces the workings of poverty and economics.

The frame problem is both a problem and a tool. It is a problem because our discourse analytic interpretations (just like people's everyday interpretations of language) are always vulnerable to changing as we widen the context within which we interpret a piece of language. It is a tool because we can use it—widening the context—to see what information and values are being left unsaid or effaced in a piece of language.

The frame problem, of course, raises problems about validity for discourse analysis. We cannot really argue an analysis is valid unless we keep widening the context in which we consider a piece of language until the widening appears to

make no difference to our interpretation. At that point, we can stop and make our claims (open, of course, to later falsification as in all empirical inquiry).

Critical Discourse Analysis

Some forms of discourse analysis add a third task to the two (the utterance-type meaning task and the situated meaning task) discussed so far. They study, as well, the ways in which either or both of language-form correlations at the utterance-type level (task 1) and situated meanings (task 2) are associated with **social practices** (task 3). While non-critical approaches can and do, indeed, study social practices, critical approaches and non-critical ones take a different approach to social practices and how to study them. Non-critical approaches (e.g., see Pomerantz & Fehr, 1997) tend to treat social practices solely in terms of patterns of social interaction (e.g., how people use language to “pull off” a job interview). Thus, consider again the sentence from Gagnon we discussed above:

1. Though the Whig and Tory parties were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes, they represented different factions and tendencies.

A non-critical form of discourse analysis could well point out the fact that using “Though the Whig and Tory parties were both narrowly confined to the privileged classes” as a dependent (and, thus, assumed and unasserted) clause sets up a social relationship with the reader in terms of which the reader should accept, as given and assumed, that distinctions of wealth in a society are less central to the development of democracy than political differences within elites in the society (which the main asserted clause is about).

Critical approaches, however, go further and treat social practices, not just in terms of social relationships, but also in terms of their implications for things like status, solidarity, the distribution of social goods, and power (e.g., how language in a job interview functions as a gate-keeping device, allowing some sorts of people access and denying it to others). In fact, critical discourse analysis argues that language-in-use is always part and parcel of, and partially constitutive of, specific social practices, and that social practices always have implications for inherently political things like status, solidarity, the distribution of social goods, and power.

So the issue becomes this: Is it enough to leave the analysis of the social at the level of how talk and texts function in social interactions or do we need to go further and consider, as well, how talk and text function *politically* in social interactions? Does the latter task render discourse analysis—and thus, perforce, critical discourse analysis—“unscientific” or “unacademic,” a mere matter of “advocacy”?

Consider sentence (1) again. There are historians who think that class conflict—conflict between haves and have nots—drives history. They would say that that the fact that the Whig and Tory parties were narrowly confined to the

privileged classes is a key fact about the political situation of 17th-century England (though Gagnon places it in a subordinate clause). This fact, they will say, drove change because it led to the non-elites fighting for representation.

What Gagnon has done is put what these historians see as the key point in a subordinate clause and treated it as assumed and backgrounded information that, while important, does not challenge his main claim that the Whig and Tory parties represented different factions (and, thus, for Gagnon were in the forefront of the development of democracy in Western society). His formulation is a move not only in an academic argument with such historians but in political debates about what and how history ought to be taught in school.

This is an essential aspect to understanding not just what Gagnon is saying, but what he is trying to do. It moves us beyond social interactions between writer and reader and to value-laden positions that are “political.” Claims like Gagnon’s do not come out of nowhere. They are part of ongoing dialogue or debate (as Bakhtin, 1986) and are understood within that dialogue or debate. Thus, a full discourse analysis must discuss such matters and must, in that sense, be critical. When I discuss the “building tasks” in the next section, I will offer yet another, more general, reason why all language use is “political” and, thus, why discourse analysis ought to be critical. I will also define what I mean by “politics” and “political.”

Building Task

I mentioned in the last section that in sentence (1) Gagnon was not just saying something, but doing something: that is, engaging in a debate and making a move in that debate, as well as trying to influence how and what history is taught in the schools. But language in use always performs actions in the world.

Some of these actions are verbal actions in the sense that they require language to carry them out. This includes actions like promising, asking a question, giving an order, or making a request. Some of the actions that we use language to carry out are not verbal. They could be done without language, though in most cases it is easier to do them with language than without. This includes actions like encouraging people, insulting them, manipulating them, and making them believe certain things.

The actions we accomplish using language allow us to build (or destroy) things in the world, things like state history standards, marriages, or committee meetings. We do not usually just engage in a single isolated action and leave it at that. Rather, we have plans and goals and engage in series of related actions in related contexts over long periods of time. These longer-term chains of action are usually done in order to build something in the world (like an institution or a marriage) or to sustain it across time.

We continually and actively build and rebuild our worlds, not just through language, but through language used in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, objects, tools, technologies, and distinctive ways

of thinking, valuing, feeling, and believing. Sometimes what we build is quite similar to what we have built before (e.g., sustaining a good marriage); sometimes it is not (e.g., starting a new career).

So language-in-use is a tool, not just for saying and doing things, but also, used alongside other non-verbal tools, to build things in the world. Whenever we speak or write, we always and simultaneously build one of seven things or seven areas of “reality.” We often build more than one of these simultaneously through the same words and deeds. Let’s call these seven things the “seven building tasks” of language (Gee, 2011). In turn, since we use language to build these seven things, a discourse analyst can ask seven different questions about any piece of language-in-use. This gives us, in turn, seven tools for discourse analysis. Below, I list the seven building tasks.

1. Significance:

We use language to make things significant in certain ways. As the saying goes, we make “mountains out of mole hills.” Things are not trivial or important all by themselves. We humans make them trivial or important or something in between. Gagnon made “The Whig and Tory parties were narrowly confined to the privileged classes” less significant than the supposed fact that “they represented different factions and tendencies.” Other historians would have made the fact that the Whig and Tory parties narrowly represented elites in society more significant.

2. Activities (Practices):

We use language to carry out actions like promising and encouraging and a great many others. However, we humans also enact what I will call larger activities, using the word in a special and restricted way. By an “activity” I mean a socially recognized and institutionally or culturally supported endeavor that usually involves sequencing or combining actions in certain specified ways. Encouraging a student is an action; mentoring the student is an activity. Telling someone something about linguistics is an action (informing); lecturing on linguistics is an activity. Often the term “practice” is used for what I am calling an activity.

We use language to get recognized as engaging in a certain sort of activity. A graduate student who has lost her advisor after some time in a graduate program and asks a professor “Will you be my advisor?” is making a request (an action we do with language). But she is also engaged in the activity of seeking a new graduate advisor in graduate school. This requires more than just the request. There is more that needs to be said and done. For instance, the student has to be able to talk about her background in the program, her knowledge and skills, and her accomplishments in ways that impress the advisor without seeming too arrogant or exaggerated.

3. Identities:

We use language to get recognized as taking on a certain identity or role: that is, to build an identity here and now. For example, I talk and act in one way and I am speaking and acting as the chair of the committee; at the next moment I speak and talk in a different way and I am speaking and acting as just one peer/colleague speaking to another. Even if I have an official appointment as chair of the committee, I am not always taken as acting as the chair, even during meetings.

Doctors talk and act to their patients differently when they are being doctors and when they are talking as acquaintances or friends, even in their offices. In fact, traditional authoritarian doctors and new humanistic doctors talk and act to the patients differently, are different types of doctors. Humanistic doctors try to talk less technically and more inclusively to their patients. One and the same doctor can even switch between the two identities at different points or in different activities in his or her treatment of a patient.

4. Relationships:

We use language to build and sustain relationships of all different kinds. We use language to build relationships with other people and with groups and institutions. For example, in a committee meeting, as chair of the committee, if I say “Prof. Smith, I’m very sorry to have to move us on to the next agenda item,” I am constructing a relatively formal and deferential relationship with Prof. Smith. On the other hand, suppose I say, “Ed, it’s time to move on.” Now I am constructing a relatively informal and less deferential relationship with the same person. Speaking and acting a certain way across time with Prof. Smith or Ed will build a certain sort of relationship with him or multiple relationships with him for different contexts.

5. Politics (*the distribution of social goods*):

I use the term “politics” in a special way. By “politics” I do not mean government and political parties. I mean any situation where the distribution of social goods is at stake. By “social goods” I mean anything a social group or society takes as a good worth having. We use language to build and destroy social goods. For example, for most groups, treating people with respect in certain circumstances is a social good and treating them with disrespect is not. Speaking and acting respectfully and deferentially in these circumstances is to create and distribute a social good.

There are other circumstances where people want to be treated not deferentially, but with solidarity and bonding. Speaking and acting toward someone who wants my friendship with solidarity and bonding is in that circumstance to create and distribute a social good.

Why do I refer to this as “politics”? Because the distribution of social goods and claims about them—goods like a person being taken as acceptable, normal,

important, respected, an “insider” or an “outsider,” or as being connected to acceptable, normal, or important things (in the right circumstances)—are ultimately what give people power and status in a society (or not).

People obviously disagree about what are social goods in various circumstances. They obviously sometimes fight over the distribution of social goods and demand their share of them. Let me give an example that shows that how we construct our sentences has implications for building or destroying social goods. If I say “Microsoft loaded its new operating system with bugs,” I treat Microsoft as purposeful and responsible, perhaps even culpable. I am withholding a social good from them as an institution, namely respect and a good reputation.

If I say, on the other hand, “Microsoft’s new operating system is loaded with bugs,” I treat Microsoft as less purposeful and responsible, less culpable. I am still withholding social goods, but not as much as before.

If I say, “Like any highly innovative piece of new software, Microsoft’s new operating system is loaded with bugs,” I have mitigated my withholding of social goods further and even offered Microsoft social goods, namely treating them as innovative and as not really responsible for the bugs. How I phrase the matter has implications for social goods like guilt and blame, legal responsibility or lack of it, or Microsoft’s bad or good motives, and Microsoft’s reputation.

6. Connections

Things in the world can be seen as connected and relevant to each other (or not) in a great many different ways. For example, people argued over the connection Iraq had to 9/11. That Iraq had no direct connection was eventually conceded by almost everyone, but some people continued to argue that as a “sponsor of state terrorism” they had an indirect connection. Others disputed this connection.

If I say “Malaria kills many people in poor countries,” I have connected malaria and poverty. If I say “Malaria kills many people across the globe,” I have not connected them. Some connections exist in the world regardless of what we say and do (like malaria and poverty). Nonetheless, we can still render these connections visible or not in our language.

Other connections do not exist so clearly in the world until we have worked—partly through how we use language—to make them real in some sense, at least in terms of having real effects in the world. For example, in debates over health care reform in the United States, one regularly hears that government-sponsored health care is a form of socialism. It is debatable whether government subsidies for health care and socialism go together in reality (for example, nearly no one now—though they used to—says Medicare, a government-run program for the elderly, is a form of socialism or wants to get rid of it), but they are so often connected in some of the media in the United States that many people do see them as connected.

7. Sign Systems and Knowledge

We use language to build up or tear down various sign systems (communicational systems) and ways of knowing the world. There are many different languages (e.g., Spanish, Russian, and English). There are many different varieties of any one language (e.g., different dialects, as well as language varieties like the language of lawyers, the language of biologists, and the language of hip-hop artists). There are communicative systems that are not language (e.g., equations, graphs, images) or at least not just language (e.g., hip-hop, poetry, ads with pictures and words). These are all different sign systems.

All these different sign systems are important to the people who participate in them. People are often deeply connected to and committed to their dialect. Lawyers are committed to talking like lawyers. Hip-hop fans are passionate. There are even violent arguments over where and when Spanish should be spoken in the United States. Physicists believe the language of mathematics is superior to languages like English for explicit communication.

Furthermore, different sign systems represent different views of knowledge and belief. As we said, physicists believe the language of mathematics is superior to English for producing and communicating knowledge about the physical world. Poets believe poetry is a higher form of knowing and insight, as do, in another sense, people who use religious varieties of language. Speakers of Black Vernacular English believe there are some things that can be expressed or felt in that dialect better than they can in Standard English. So, too, Spanish-English bilinguals favor one language or the other for different topics or emotions. Statisticians believe statistics is a deep way of understanding reality, while some qualitative researchers do not, or, at least, believe the language of statistics has spread too far in our understanding of the social world.

We can use language to make certain sign systems and certain forms of knowledge and belief better or worse, relevant or privileged, “real” or not in given situations; that is, we can build privilege or prestige for one sign system or way of claiming knowledge over another. For example, I can talk and act so as to make the knowledge and language of lawyers relevant (privileged) or not over “everyday language” or over “non-lawyerly academic language” in our committee discussion of facilitating the admission of more minority students.

I can talk and act as if Spanish is an inferior language, or not. I can talk and act so as to make the language and actions of “controlled studies” (e.g., “controlled studies of classroom”) what constitutes “real evidence” or “real science,” or not. I can talk and act so as to constitute the language of creationism as “scientific” and as a competitor with the language of evolution, or not.

The Sign System and Knowledge Building task is clearly related to the Politics task, since constructing privilege for a sign system or way of knowing the world is to create and offer a social good. But the domain of sign systems (including the world’s languages) and ways of knowing are especially important domains. Consider the effort people have spent trying to build or destroy “design science” (creationism) as an “acceptable” and “true” way of talking and acting.

Example

To see the seven building tasks at work, consider the data below. This is a teacher being interviewed. She was asked if she ever discusses social issues in her classroom, issues to do with power, race, or class. [A comma means a non-final intonation contour; a period means a final falling intonation contour; a question mark means a final rising intonation contour; “I” stands for “interviewer”]:

Uh I talk about housing,
 We talk about the [????] we talk about a lot of the low income things,
 I said “Hey wait a minute,”
 I said, “Do you think the city’s gonna take care of an area that you don’t take care of yourself”? [I: uh huh]
 I said, “How [many of] you [have] been up [NAME] Street”?
 They raise their hands,
 I say “How about [NAME] Ave.?”
 That’s where those gigantic houses are.
 I said, “How many pieces of furniture are sitting in the front yard”?
 [I: mm hm]
 “Well, none.”
 I said “How much trash is lying around”?
 “None.”
 I said, “How many houses are spray painted”?
 “How many of them have kicked in, you know have broken down cars.”

I do not have space here for a full analysis of this data. I will just comment shortly on each task. A full analysis would require tying each point I make below to specific uses of language in the data.

The Significance Building Task: The teacher makes the neighborhood conditions significant in demarcating richer and poorer people. She does not make the social and economic conditions in which they live significant (e.g., there are more broken-down cars in poor neighborhoods, because poor people cannot afford to put them in expensive repair shops).

The Activities Building Task: The teacher enacts a dialogue she has with her class. This dialogue enacts the activity of a certain form of advice giving (what to do and not do for success in society). Indeed, this data was preceded by the teacher talking about an Ann Landers advice column on how to dress for a job interview that she reads to her students.

The Identities Building Task: The teacher creates through her language an identity for her kids as people who are associated with “low income things” and who contrast with people in richer neighborhoods. She holds a view, which she makes clear elsewhere, that class is behavior, and if people change how they behave and dress, they become “middle class” people and not ones associated with “low income things.”

The Relationships Building Task: In her enacted dialogue the teacher sets up a relationship to her students where she is a world-wise middle-class advice giver that can change their lives through her advice. Elsewhere she makes clear that poor children cannot get proper nurturing and advice from their parents and so it becomes the role of the teacher to give this to them.

The Politics Building Task: The teacher is engaged in a form of “blaming the victim” (i.e., you and your “low income” behaviors are the cause of your own failure, not larger social and economic conditions). She is, thus, denying the children in her class the social good of not being associated with “low income things,” as well as the social good associated with those “gigantic houses” in the rich neighborhood. The teacher develops in her language a specific politics of poverty and wealth that has to do with behavior and not the possession, say, of wealth and wealthy houses. [By the way, I am not saying the teacher is “wrong” or “right.” Saying people are just victims of large social forces over which they have no control is also not highly motivating for people.]

The Connections Building Task: The teacher connects “low income things” and a list of neighborhood behaviors (e.g., trash lying around). At a deeper level she connects the appearance of a neighborhood with both its wealth and the “nature” of its people (because it is the people who make the appearances, not the social conditions—e.g., no regular trash pickup—because they are associated with “low income things” and behaviors and can change those behaviors).

The Sign Systems and Knowledge Building Task: The teacher’s language privileges one way to know the world, namely by observing behavior and appearances. This can be contrasted with some sociological ways of knowing the world that argue that behavior and appearances are the outcome of larger social, economic, and political forces. For the teacher, poverty is not first and foremost a socio-economic category. It is first and foremost a behavioral category under the control of the people themselves.

I want to stress that I have not offered a discourse analysis of the data. I have offered some conclusions that I believe could be drawn from the data if an analyst asked what grammatical and discourse features of the language are carrying out which of our seven building tasks and in what ways. We have to tie grammatical and discourse features (linguistic features) to the sorts of meanings each task entails.

Theoretical Tools of Inquiry

We turn now to four tools that are centered in theories from different academic areas about how language ties to the world and to culture (Gee, 2005). First, we will draw on theories from a variety of areas (cultural anthropology, cultural psychology, sociolinguistics, and philosophy) about how meaning goes well beyond human minds and language to involve objects, tools, technologies, and networks of people collaborating with each other. Here we will introduce the notion of “Discourses” with a capital “D” (so-called “big ‘D’ Discourses”).

Second, we will draw on a theory from sociolinguistics about how different styles or varieties of using language work to allow humans to carry out different types of social work and enact different socially situated identities. We will introduce the notion of “social languages” and argue that any language (like English or Russian) is composed of a great many different social languages.

Third, we will draw on a theory from cognitive psychology about how meaning works. We will use the notion of “situated meanings” and argue that we humans actively build meanings “on line” when we use language in specific situations.

Fourth, we will draw on a theory from psychological anthropology about how humans form and use theories to give language meaning and understand each other and the world. Here we will introduce the notion of “figured worlds.” Figured worlds are narratives and images different social and cultural groups of people use to make sense of the world. They function as simplified models of how things work when they are “normal” and “natural” from the perspective of a particular social and cultural group.

Discourses

People talk and act not just as individuals, but as members of various sorts of social and cultural groups. The social groups with which we share conventions about how to use and interpret language are many and varied. These groups include cultures; ethnic groups; professions like doctors, lawyers, teachers, and carpenters; academic disciplines; interest-driven groups like bird watchers and video gamers; and organizations like street gangs, the military, and sports teams. There are yet many other sorts of social groups. All of them has distinctive ways with words associated with distinctive identities and activities.

There is no one word for all these sorts of groups within which we humans act out distinctive identities and activities. People have tried various names for them: “cultures” (Street, 1995, broadening the term), “communities of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991), “speech communities,” (Labov, 1972a, 1972b), “discourse communities” (Bizzell, 1992), “activity systems” (Engeström, Mietinen & Punamäki, 1999), “actor-actant networks” (Latour, 2005), “collectives” (Latour, 2004), “affinity spaces” or “affinity groups” (Gee, 2004), and others. Each label is meant to capture just some such groups or just some aspects of such groups.

I use the term “Discourse” with a capital “D” (so-called “big ‘D’ Discourses”). I use this term because such groups continue through time—for the most part, they were here before we arrived on earth and will be here after we leave—and we can see them as communicating (discoursing) with each other through time and history, using us as their temporary mouthpieces. I use the term “discourse,” with a little “d,” to mean language in use or stretches of oral or written language in use (“texts”).

When we enact an identity in the world, we do not just use language all by itself to do this. We use language, but we also use distinctive ways of acting,

interacting with others, believing, valuing, dressing, and using various sorts of objects and tools in various sorts of distinctive environments.

If you want to show me you are a basketball player, you cannot just talk the talk; you have to walk the walk and do that with a basketball on a basketball court in front of other people. If you want to get recognized as a devout Catholic, you cannot just talk the “right” way about the “right” things; you also have to engage in certain actions (like going to Mass) with the “right” people (e.g., priests) in the “right” places (e.g., church) and you have to display the “right” sorts of beliefs (e.g., the virgin birth of Christ from his mother Mary) and values (e.g., deference to the Pope). The same is true of trying to get recognized as a “Native American,” a “good student,” a “tough policeman,” or a “competent doctor.” You need to talk the talk and walk the walk.

A Discourse with a capital “D” is composed of distinctive ways of speaking/listening and often, too, writing/reading coupled with distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing, thinking, believing, with other people and with various objects, tools, and technologies, so as to enact specific socially recognizable identities.

Discourses are about being “kinds of people” (Hacking, 1986). There are different ways to be an African American or Latino of a certain sort or kind. Thus, there are different kinds of African Americans or any other cultural group. Being a policeman is to act out a kind of person. So is being a “tough cop,” which is to talk and act as sub-kind of person within the kind of being a policeman. Being a SPED student (“Special Ed”) is one way to be a kind of student; it is one kind of student. There are kinds within kinds.

Kinds of people (Hacking, 1986) appear in history and some disappear. At one time in history in England and the United States you could be recognized as a witch if you talked the talked and walked the walk (and you might in some cases do so unintentionally). Now it is much harder to get recognized as a witch in many of the places where it was once much easier, though there are still places in the world where you can get recognized as a witch. That “kind of person” has pretty much disappeared in England and the United States.

The whole point of taking about Discourses is to focus on the fact that when people mean things to each other, there is always more than language at stake. To mean anything to someone else (or even to myself) I have to communicate who I am (in the sense of what socially situated identity am I taking on here and now). I also have to communicate what I am doing in terms of what socially situated activity I am seeking to carry out (Wieder & Pratt, 1990), since Discourses (being and doing kinds of people) exist in part to allow people to carry out certain distinctive activities (e.g., arresting people for a policeman, taking communion for a Catholic, getting an “A” for a good student).

Language is not enough for this. We have to get our minds and deeds “right,” as well. We also have to get ourselves appropriately in synch with various objects, tools, places, technologies, and other people. Being in a Discourse is being able to engage in a particular sort of “dance” with words, deeds, values, feelings, other people, objects, tools, technologies, places, and times so as to get

recognized as a distinctive sort of who doing a distinctive sort of what. Being able to understand a Discourse is being able to recognize such “dances.”

Discourses are not units or tight boxes with neat boundaries. Rather they are ways of recognizing and getting recognized as certain sorts of whos doing certain sorts of whats. One and the same “dance” can get recognized in multiple ways, in partial ways, in contradictory ways, in disputed ways, in negotiable ways, and so on and so forth through all the multiplicities and problematics that work on postmodernism has made so popular. Discourses are matters of enactment and recognition, then.

All recognition processes involve satisfying a variety of constraints in probabilistic and sometimes partial ways. For example, something recognized as a “weapon” (e.g., a baseball bat or a fireplace poker) may share some features with prototypical weapons (like a gun, sword, or club) and not share other features. And there may be debate about the matter. Furthermore, the very same thing might be recognized as a weapon in one context and not in another. So, too, with being in and out of Discourses, for example enacting and recognizing being-doing a certain type of street gang member, Special Ed student, or particle physicist.

While there are an endless array of Discourses in the world, nearly all human beings, except under extraordinary conditions, acquire an initial Discourse within whatever constitutes their primary socializing unit early in life. Early in life, we all learn a culturally distinctive way of being an “everyday person” as a member of our family and community. We can call this our “primary Discourse.” Our primary Discourse gives us our initial and often enduring sense of self and sets the foundations of our culturally specific vernacular language (our “everyday language”), the language in which we speak and act as “everyday” (nonspecialized) people.

As a person grows up, lots of interesting things can happen to his or her primary Discourse. Primary Discourses can change, hybridize with other Discourses, and they can even die. In any case, for the vast majority of us, our primary Discourse, through all its transformations, serves us throughout life as what I will call our “lifeworld Discourse” (Habermas, 1984). Our lifeworld Discourse is the way that we use language, feel and think, act and interact, and so forth, in order to be an “everyday” (nonspecialized) person. In our pluralistic world there is much adjustment and negotiation as people seek to meet in the terrain of the lifeworld, given that lifeworlds are culturally distinctive (that is, different groups of people have different ways of being-doing “everyday people”).

All the Discourses we acquire later in life, beyond our primary Discourse, we acquire within a more “public sphere” than our initial socializing group. We can call these “secondary Discourses.” They are acquired within institutions that are part and parcel of wider communities, whether these be religious groups, community organizations, schools, businesses, or governments.

The notion of Discourses tells us discourse analysts that language—what we are specialists in—is only part of the picture. If we want to explicate the

workings of identity and social practices in society (which is the point of discourse analysis for me), we have to put the language we analyze back into the context of Discourses at work (play?) in society across time and space.

Social Languages

People do not speak any language “in general.” They always speak a specific variety of a language (which might actually mix together more than one language like English or Spanish) and they use different varieties in different contexts. There are social and regional varieties of language that are called “dialects.” However, we are going to concentrate here on what I will call “social languages” (many linguists use the term “register” in a somewhat similar way, e.g., Halliday & Hasan, 1989). Social languages are an important aspect of the language part of Discourses (remember that Discourses involve more than just language).

To understand what a speaker says, a listener needs to know who is speaking. But it is not enough to know, for example, that Mary Smith is the speaker. I need to know what identity Mary is speaking out of. Is she speaking to me as a teacher, a feminist, a friend, a colleague, an avid bird watcher, a political liberal, or one of a great many other possible identities or roles?

Listeners need to know who speakers are. Is my doctor saying I look “stressed” just as a friend or is he speaking as a doctor? When the police officer says “I think you should move your car,” is she speaking as a police officer and ordering me to move the car or speaking as a helpful fellow citizen giving me advice?

I will define social languages as styles or varieties of a language (or a mixture of languages) that enact and are associated with a particular social identity. All languages, like English or French, are composed of many (a great many) different social languages. Social languages are what we learn and what we speak. Here are some examples of social languages: the language of medicine, literature, street gangs, sociology, law, rap, or informal dinner-time talk among friends.

Even within these large categories there are subvarieties. Not all types of gangs or sociologists speak the same when they are speaking as gang members or sociologists. To know any specific social language is to know how its characteristic lexical and grammatical resources are combined to enact specific socially situated identities (that is, being, at a given time and place, a lawyer, a gang member, a politician, a literary humanist, a “bench chemist,” a radical feminist, an “everyday person,” or whatever). To know a particular social language is either to be able to “do” a particular identity or to be able to recognize such an identity, when we do not want to or cannot actively participate.

Dialects like Southern English, Black Vernacular English, and working-class English (all of which come in different subvarieties) can be seen as social languages as well. Southern English is a way to mark oneself as a southerner. Black Vernacular English is a way to mark oneself as an African American of a certain sort.

Let me give an example. A young woman, telling the same story to her parents and to her boyfriend, says to her parents at dinner: “Well, when I thought about it, I don’t know, it seemed to me that Gregory should be considered the most offensive character,” but later to her boyfriend she says: “What an ass that guy was, you know, her boyfriend.” In the first case, she uses distinctive lexical and grammatical resources to enact “a dutiful and intelligent daughter having dinner with her proud parents” and in the other case to enact “a girlfriend being intimate with her boyfriend.”

Note, by the way, that the particular labels I use here are not important. Many social languages have no names and names need not be used by people overtly. People who use a given social language may differ on what they call it. The point just is that people must have some, however tentative, unspoken, and problematic, idea of who is speaking in the sense of what social identity is at play.

Situated Meanings

We have already talked about this tool above when we talked about the situated meaning task. In actual situations of use, words and structures take specific meanings, meanings we will call “situated meaning.” We gave examples of situated meanings above. But there is one important aspect to add here. When speakers speak they assume that listeners share enough knowledge, beliefs, values, and experiences with them to be able to situate the meanings of their words. Listeners situate the meanings of words by consulting what the speaker has said, the context in which it has been said, and (if they actually have it) the wealth of shared background the speaker assumes they have. So take the following remark:

... yet I believe [Milton] Friedman is right that thoroughgoing restrictions on economic freedom would turn out to be inconsistent with **democracy**. (http://www.becker-posner-blog.com/archives/2006/11/on_milton_fried.html)

If you do not know neoliberal theories of economics (which Milton Friedman helped innovate and implement in countries across the world), you have no idea what to make of how “democracy” is being used here. You do not know how to situate its meaning. Given only the utterance-type (general) meaning of “democracy” as representative government with elections, the remark, on its face, would seem to be senseless: surely an elected government could pass laws that restricted economic freedoms and this would seem to be an example of democracy at work. The remark is only consistent if you know how to situate the meaning of “democracy” in it, and you only how to do this if you share with the author (which he assumes you do) knowledge about neoliberal economics.

Neoliberal economics is a Discourse. Many people know how to recognize and get recognized as “neoliberals.” So speakers assume that in situating

meaning we share knowledge about Discourses in society with them. They also assume that we share knowledge of “cultural models” or “figured worlds” with them. And to this we now turn.

Figured Worlds

Is the Pope a bachelor (Fillmore, 1975)? Though the Pope is an unmarried man—and “bachelor” as a word is defined as “an unmarried man”—we are reluctant to call the Pope a bachelor. Why? The reason is that we do not use words just based on their definitions or what we called earlier their “utterance-type (general) meanings.” We use words based, as well, on stories, theories, or models in our minds about what is “normal” or “typical” or “the way the world should be or is.”

It is typical in our world that men marry women. A man who is somewhat past the typical age when people marry, we call a “bachelor,” assuming he is open to marriage but has either chosen to wait or has not found the “right” person. The Pope is both well past the normal age for marriage and has vowed never to marry. He just does not fit the typical story in our heads.

We use words based on such typical stories unless something in the context makes us think the situation is not typical. If the issue of gay marriage or the chauvinism of calling men “bachelors” and women “spinsters” comes up, then we have to think more overtly about matters and abandon, if only for the time, our typical picture. Indeed, things can change in society enough that what counts as a typical story changes or becomes contested. People may even stop using words like “bachelor” based on the typical story and form a new typical story—and, thus, start calling marriage-eligible women “bachelors” as well.

We use such typical pictures so that we can go on about the business of communicating, acting, and living without having to consciously think about everything—all the possible details and exceptions—all the time. This is good for getting things done, but sometimes bad in the ways in which such typical stories can marginalize people and things that are not taken as “normal” or “typical” in the story.

What counts as a typical story for people differs by their sociocultural affiliations. For example, some parents confronted by a demanding 2-year-old who angrily refuses to go to bed when his or her parents say to take the child’s behavior as sign of growth towards autonomy because they accept a typical story like this: Children are born dependent on their parents and then grow towards individual autonomy or independence. On their way to autonomy, they act out demanding independence when they may not yet be ready for it, but this is still a sign of development and growth (Harkness, Super, & Keefer, 1992).

Other parents confronted by the same behavior take the behavior as a sign of the child’s willfulness because they accept a typical story like this: Children are born selfish and need to be taught to think of others and collaborate with

the family rather than demand their own way (Harkness et al. 1992; Philipsen, 1975).

It is, perhaps, not surprising that this latter typical story is more common among working-class parents and families where mutual support among family and friends is important. The former story is more common among middle- and upper-middle-class families with many more financial resources where people are expected to grow into adults who have the resources to go it more on their own.

Such typical stories are not “right” or “wrong,” (for example, children are, of course, born dependent on their parents, but are children primarily inherently selfish and in need of being taught how to cooperate with others or are they inherently reliant on caregivers and in need of learning to be independent? These are different viewpoints that are probably both true in some sense, but one or the other can be stressed and form the main parenting style in the home). They are simplified theories of the world that are meant to help people go on about the business of life when one is not allowed the time to think through and research everything before acting. Even theories in science are simplified views of the world meant to help scientists cope without having to deal with the full complexity of the world all at once.

These typical stories have been given many different names. They have been called “folk theories,” “frames,” “scenarios,” “scripts,” “mental models,” “cultural models,” “Discourse models,” and “figured worlds” (and each of these terms has its own nuances; see Gee, 2004, 2005, for discussion and citations). Such typical stories are stored in our heads (and we will see in a moment that they are not always only in our heads) in the form of images, metaphors, and narratives.

We will use the term “figured world” here for these typical stories. The term “figured world” has been defined as follows:

A socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others. Each is a simplified world populated by a set of agents who engage in a limited range of meaningful acts or changes of state as moved by a specific set of forces. (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998, p. 52).

A **figured world** is a picture of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal. What is taken to be typical or normal, of course, varies by context and by people’s sociocultural affiliations (as we saw in the example of acting out 2-year-olds above).

To give another example, consider the figured world (or typical story) that might arise in someone’s mind if they think about an elementary school classroom: Typical participants include one teacher (a female) and a group of kids of roughly the same age, and some support staff including teachers who help kids with special problems (e.g., learning disabilities, reading problems, or who are learning English as a second language), sometimes by pulling them out of the classroom. The kids are sitting in desks in rows facing the teacher, who is

doing most of the talking and sometimes asks the kids questions to which she knows the answers. There are activities like filling out sheets of paper with math problems on them. There are regular tests, some of them state standardized tests. There is an institution surrounding the teacher that includes a principal and other teachers as well as curriculum directors and mandates from officials. Parents are quasi “outsiders” to this institution. There are labels for individual kids, labels such as “SPED” (special education), “LD” (learning disabled), and “ESL” (English as a Second Language).

This figured world—with its typical participants, activities, forms of language, and object and environments—is, of course, realized in many actual classrooms. However, there are many exceptions, as well, but they do not normally come to mind when we think and talk about schools. In fact, every aspect of this figured world is heavily contested in some current school reforms (e.g., age grading, lots of testing, skill sheets, too much teacher talk, children in rows). The taken-for-granted nature of the figured world, however, often stands in the way of change. Reforms just do not seem “normal” or “right” or “the ways things should be.” For example, today it is not uncommon that young children can teach adults things about digital technology, but the child teaching and the teacher learning violates our typical story. It also violates the values and structures of authority this typical story incorporates.

I have said that these typical stories—what we are calling figured worlds—are in our heads. But that is not strictly true. Often they are partly in our heads and partly out in the world in books and other media and in other people’s heads, people we can talk to. The figured world in which children are born dependent and development is progress towards individual autonomy and independence for adults who can manage their own lives based on their own resources is a model that is found in lots of child-raising self-help books and in the talk and actions of many parents who are professionals (e.g., doctors, lawyers, professors, executives, and so forth) with whom we can interact if we live in the right neighborhood.

When people “figure” a world, that is, imagine what the world looks like from a certain perspective of what is “normal” or “typical” (as in the classroom example above), they are imaging pictures of Discourses or aspects of Discourses at work in the world. They are imaging typical identities and activities within typical environments.

Situated meanings, social languages, figured worlds, and Discourses move us from the ground of specific uses of language in specific contexts (situated meanings) up to the world of identities and institutions in time and space (Discourses) through varieties of language (social languages) and people’s taken-for-granted theories of the world (figured worlds). This progression is, in my view, the point of discourse (or, better d/Discourse) analysis. Since Discourses and their interactions in time and space are inherently about the distribution of social goods (i.e., kinds of people and their places in society), discourse analysis is or should be inherently “critical” and even “political.”

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3 Narratives of Exclusion and the Construction of the Self

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Introduction

Schooling prior to higher education in Mexico comprises four levels: preschool (3 years), elementary or *primaria* (6 years), *secundaria* (3 years), and *bachillerato* (3 years, equivalent to grades 10 to 12 in U.S. schools). *Bachillerato* is not compulsory. Students who have access to this level are expected to pass every subject if they want to remain in school. Although schools provide a second opportunity through make-up exams to students who do not obtain a passing grade, if they fail to pass these exams they are automatically expelled from school, a process described in school records as “*baja académica*” or “academic dropout.” Studies show that this phenomenon occurs predominantly during the first year of *bachillerato* (Álvarez, 2009; Miramontes, 2003; Romo & Fresán, 2002); however, little is known about the way teachers and students experience this process and the school cultures and positions that enable the identity of “academic failure” and expulsion.

In this chapter I focus on narratives of personal experience by Mexican high school students facing imminent expulsion, and compare them to the narratives of their more successful peers at the end of their senior years. The data for this study is a subset of data gathered during a 3-year longitudinal study in which I and a team of researchers and research assistants collected information regarding the literacy practices of one peri-urban and four urban high schools in selected school subjects. The study encompassed classroom observations in all five sites over the course of one class generation (2004–2007), as well as interviews with teachers, school administrators, and selected students from the groups observed. Student interviews took place at two distinct times: I interviewed students who were failing one or more school subjects at the end of their first year of *bachillerato* (equivalent to 10th grade, first year of the study), and successful students, identified by a high GPA, at the end of their senior year (third year of the study).

Overall, I interviewed 27 first-year students, 28 third-year students, and 7 third-year students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate, a curricular program offered as a separate track in one of the school sites. I chose the narratives for the analysis that follows because they all share two very revealing

aspects about the construction of students' selves and their school personae: thematically, they depict episodes of positioning involving teachers and school authorities; and structurally, they evolve around a school conflict and its resolution. In particular, I identify and comment on the figured worlds that render these students' experiences meaningful and the role they play in the experience of "not understanding" and/or not passing a school subject, and the concomitant school identities of *academic failure*, in the case of first-year students, and *academic success*, in the case of third-year students. I contend that, as an analytical tool, figured worlds can be viewed as an interface between discourse and Discourse, between linguistic structure and social order. To frame my analysis I provide some figures and information about Mexico's education system and extrapolate to education in general.

Background

In 2005 only 41% of 14- to 17-year-olds in Mexico were enrolled in *bachilleratos* (Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa, 2006); of these, 60% were able to graduate on time (INEGI, 2005). The low enrollment and graduation rate at this level are symptomatic of Mexico's educational system, where youth face difficult entrance exams, dropout rates are attributable to social, financial, academic, and institutional reasons, and the educational programs vary enormously across regions and student populations. In spite of these staggering numbers, there is a pervasive Discourse on the part of institutions about school achievement that attributes student failure to students' actions and "incompetence." This Discourse is sustained under a meritocratic premise of equal access and opportunities to succeed regardless of students' background, social class, or gender. However, studies show that the uneven distribution of economic, social, and cultural capital among Mexican youth correlates directly to their success at this school level (Villa, 2007; Zorrilla, 2008). Thus, students with different trajectories and resources occupy different positions within the Discourse upon entering secondary and higher education: whereas those who have had access to the necessary resources to "present" themselves as rightful members may indeed be perceived as more "competent," many students who gain institutional entrance are systematically excluded (especially students from working-class families) from the benefits of a good education, and positioned as incompetent or undeserving.

Gentili (2009) explains this phenomenon as a result of the power struggles that have characterized the expansion of education in most Latin American countries. For underprivileged students, argues Gentili, this has translated into educational programs that "invite" these students to abandon school, or that actively expel them while putting the blame on them for not succeeding. It is not sufficient to stay in school, concludes Gentili, if a person doesn't feel that she/he belongs there.

"Not belonging" may arise as a consequence of lacking the necessary resources (social languages, skills and knowledge) and the identities (Discourses,

positions) to fully participate within the specialized domains of school. This situation is not limited to Latin America. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1994) and many others have argued, academic language is “no one’s mother tongue” (p. 8), and for working-class children in particular, “the divorce between the language of the family and the language of school only serves to reinforce the feeling that the education system belongs to another world” (p. 9).

While Bourdieu and Passeron refer specifically to the inevitable “semantic fog” (p. 10) that students have to deal with when they don’t have access to the linguistic code of the teachers, I would like to elaborate on this metaphor and suggest that, in addition to the lack of linguistic and cultural resources, students are also deprived of ways of seeing the world from particular standpoints such as those of specialized domains. For instance, Kress (2001) describes the process in which students of particular subjects are expected to learn to see the world of nature through the “world of culture and its conventions” (p. 402). For Kress, teaching students to learn new ways of seeing requires more than linguistic communication (more than discourse, in Gee’s parlance), which in the case he describes is used as an “ancillary mode of communication” (p. 402). Similarly, Boaler’s (2000) research about students learning math in English schools shows that, for the students interviewed, secondary mathematics was something “*of another world*,” a world that held no meaning or appeal to them (emphasis in original, p. 392).

It is worth mentioning that, in a previous study about academic failure in one of the schools where I carried out my research, Miramontes (2003) found that students who had failed chemistry described this subject as “from another planet” (p. 76), a feeling that was exacerbated by a discourse that was “foreign” and inaccessible to them. Furthermore, Miramontes found that these students’ chemistry teachers assumed their students were not “qualified” to understand their class (p. 93), but felt no responsibility for the situation, thereby revealing a school culture that tacitly accepted a “tolerable” number of flunked (and expelled) students per class.

Describing school subjects as “otherworldly” and with particular ways of speaking and perceiving is one way to convey the figured worlds evoked by different disciplines, each with its own specialized (social) language and “distinctive ways of speaking/listening, writing/reading coupled with distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, thinking, believing,” that is, with the different Discourses that allow the enactment of “specific socially recognizable identities” (Gee, this volume, p. xx). As part of the “shared repertoire” (Wenger, 1998) that students would need in order to fully participate in the specialized domains of school subjects, figured worlds are probably one of the most potent reifications for making sense of one’s position and creating meaning within the domain.

Narratives, Figured Worlds and Positioning

For the (critical) discourse analyst, narratives of personal experience provide powerful insights into the figured worlds that render experience meaningful.

Furthermore, they encode the different voices (Bakhtin, 1981) that make up a person's "space of authoring" (Holland, Lachiotte, Skinner, & Cain, 1998), and thus leave traces of Discourses, positioning, and identities. When someone narrates a personal experience, that person makes herself "an object for another and for oneself . . . But it is also possible to reflect our attitude toward ourselves as objects . . . In this case, our own discourse becomes an object and acquires a second—its own—voice" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 110).

According to Bruner (1986), narrative thinking is one mode of human cognition; in fact, narratives play a crucial role in the way people make sense of their worlds (Bruner, 1986; Gee, 1989, 1999). As Casey (1995) points out, narrative research is "distinctly interdisciplinary" (p. 22). In using narratives of personal experience as the material for my analysis I want to locate this chapter, following Casey (1995), under the overarching work of narrative research; but I want to distinguish it from other forms of narrative inquiry such as what has been lately described as "narrative analysis" (Coulter & Smith, 2009). Whereas the former includes the analysis of narratives to explore the relationship between form and function, the latter produces narratives as a way of knowing.

Perhaps one of the best analyses that explores the relationship between form and function in narratives is the seminal work of Labov and Waletzky (1967). In it, the authors identified five structural elements of narratives: orientation, complication, evaluation, resolution, and coda, to which Labov later (1972) added a sixth initial element: the abstract. Labov and Waletzky also established two main functions of narratives: referential and evaluative. Similarly, Wertsch (2002) distinguishes between the referential and the dialogic functions of narrative. Wertsch alludes to both "empirical" and "fictional" narratives (p. 57), while Labov and Waletzky (1967) concentrate on narratives of events that "did in fact occur" (p. 30) and that are told in the sequence in which they actually happened.

For Labov and Waletzky narratives constitute a method of recapitulating past experience that matches "a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events that actually occurred" (p. 20). The referential function refers to the sequence of events in the narrative, but a narrative that only carries this function may seem pointless and difficult to follow. It is the evaluative function that gives meaning to narratives; Labov and Waletzky explain it by showing how in most narratives of personal experience the narrator suspends the action before the resolution in order to infuse the narrative with evaluative elements that reveal the attitude of the narrator towards the experience narrated in the text. Gee (1999) sums it up by defining the evaluation in narratives as "the material that makes clear why the story is interesting and tellable" (p. 112). Because most narratives respond to a particular stimulus, it is important to consider "the social context in which the narrative occurs" (Labov & Waletzky, 1967, p. 13) and the particular stimulus the narrative responds to. The identification of the evaluative elements of narratives (evaluative function) is one of the most important contributions of Labov and Waletzky's analysis, because these elements encapsulate the point of any narrative.

For Wertsch, the dialogical function refers to “the relationship between one narrative and another . . . [and recognizes] that narratives do not exist in isolation and do not serve as neutral cognitive instruments” (p. 59). Skinner, Valsiner, & Holland (2001) take this argument a little further and, in direct reference to Bakhtin’s notion of dialogism, point out the role of others people’s voices in the construction of narratives, to which the author takes “a position from which meaning is made—a position that enters a dialogue and takes a particular stance in addressing and answering others and the world” (para. 10, p. 5). Considering the referential, evaluative, and dialogical functions in the narratives of the students interviewed for this study can help shed light on the school cultures and d/Discourses that construct students as “incompetent” or “competent,” positions that may lead to either expulsion and academic failure, or permanence and academic success.

Several authors agree that narratives, as cultural artifacts, fall under some kind of distinctive genre, underlying structure, or unconscious realm of interpretation: a “charter narrative” for Amsterdam and Bruner (2000), a “narrative template” for Wertsch (2002), a “master narrative” according to Jameson (1981), or a “master myth” for Gee (1996). For Amsterdam and Bruner (2000) narrative genres “*are mental models representing possible ways in which events in the human world can go*” (p. 133, emphasis in original). Correspondingly, Gee (1996) argues that “cultural models” or “simplified worlds in which prototypical events unfold” (p. 78) are paramount in rendering discourse meaningful. This description is akin to Holland et al.’s (1998) conceptualization of figured worlds.

Figured worlds are historical phenomena that recruit, distribute, divide, and relate participants; they are social encounters in “which participants’ positions matter” (. . . and relate participants to landscapes) “giving the landscape human voice and tone” (Holland et al., 1998, p. 41). Most importantly, figured worlds

take shape within and grant shape to the coproduction of activities, discourses, performances, and artifacts. A figured world is peopled by the figures, characters, and types who carry out its tasks and who also have styles of interacting within, distinguishable perspectives on, and orientations toward it. (p. 51)

Through figured worlds, narratives of personal experience reveal important aspects about the “discourses and practices that describe” the self (Holland et al., 1998, p. 27). In fact, Gergen describes these texts not as “personal impulses made social but social processes realized on the site of the personal” (in Holland et al., 1998, p. 292). As a tool of inquiry, figured worlds can help us to understand the interface between discourse (language in use) and Discourse (a socially enacted identity). That is, figured worlds, as “socially and culturally constructed realm(s) of interpretation” (Holland et al., 1998, p. 52), provide the basis for making choices when assigning meaning to language and social practices (Gee, 1996). For the purposes of this study, this may be grasped through experiences in which social positions and identities are “offered” to particular persons, or what Holland and Leander (2004) refer to as “episodes of positioning.”

Methods and analysis

Data

After carefully reviewing school records, I contacted first-year students who had failed one or more school subjects and explained to them the purpose of the study. All the students voluntarily agreed to be interviewed. The same procedure was followed 2 years later when I approached third-year students, the selection criteria for these students being that they have a high GPA. Most students were interviewed on the school grounds.¹ All of the interviews were tape-recorded and fully transcribed with the students' authorization. One of the questions I asked students was to relate a particular experience they felt they could talk about concerning problems they had faced at school, and I asked them to elaborate on how they had coped. This was a question that I purposefully included to elicit narratives and explore issues of agency and the construction of the self. In most cases this elicited narratives that captured episodes of positioning involving their teachers and other school authorities.

Procedures and Analysis

After several readings of the data, I chose 11 narratives for analysis, 6 by first-year students and 5 by third-year students (3 from the general program and 2 from the International Baccalaureate). I chose these narratives because they fit two criteria according to Labov and Waletzky's (1967) definition of a narrative of personal experience: the sequence of the narrative clauses matched the temporal sequence of the experience, and they were fully formed narratives in terms of evaluative elements. I will comment on the overall themes and structures of the interviews with samples from several of them, but will provide a more detailed analysis based on two narratives, one from a first-year student and one from a third-year student.

It is important to mention the obvious but complex issue of the language in which the narratives were produced. Since all of the students interviewed are native speakers of Spanish and the study took place in Mexico, all the interviews were conducted in Spanish. For the purposes of this chapter this posed a problem: Sequence and grammar are very important when analyzing discourse; furthermore, certain idioms and linguistic expressions may not lend themselves to translation. Fairclough (1995) contends that "to include textual analysis of translated data as part of the analysis of a discursive event . . . [is] a procedure which is open to serious objections." (p. 190). He further recommends that "discourse analysis papers should reproduce and analyse textual samples in the original language, despite the added difficulty for readers" (p. 191). Mindful of these shortcomings, I decided to work with the Spanish originals and translate them into English once I had coded and analyzed every original transcript. This gave me a greater insight into the cultural meanings and the different voices in the narrative. Because a purpose in the analysis was to identify the figured worlds encoded in the narratives, in the English versions I tried to remain

faithful to the registers of the participants and the cultural and linguistic gist of the originals, an objective that I believe I accomplished to a certain degree, but not entirely. For instance, the Spanish expression *no sé qué* is strikingly consistent in all the interviews: It is used at particular times in the interviews when students revoice the speech of others, mainly teachers and administrators. In Spanish this phrase expresses a cognitive activity: knowing (a literal translation would be “I don’t know what”). This became a central aspect in the analysis and informed my repeated readings of the transcripts, thereby allowing me to identify the different ways students captured the alien voice of authority. It is a clear example of the relationship between linguistic form (cognitive statement) and social function (disavowal of authoritarian voice). However, since I wanted to translate the particular gist every time it was used, the expression took different forms in the English text such as “or something” in Narrative 1, and “stuff like that” in Narratives 1 and 2. In spite of these limitations, I tried to convey the force of these utterances through the analysis. All the interviews were double checked for accuracy by a bilingual linguist whose first language is English. In all cases I provide the Spanish original with the English translation.

The length of each transcript was an average of 15 doubled-spaced pages, but in all cases narratives were clearly identifiable in the transcripts because they were responses to a particular question or “stimulus”: a problem each student had faced while at school. Following Labov and Waletzky (1967), I divided each narrative into clauses and, after several readings, identified the overall structure and color-coded the referential function (sequence of events) and evaluative function (evaluative clauses). The referential function provided the basis for identifying the underlying genre of the narrative, while the evaluative function shed light on the figured worlds that gave meaning to the experience narrated in the text. Because narratives are thick with other people’s voices I looked for traces of figured worlds at two levels: dialogical and structural. I considered as dialogical the figured worlds in which the text was clearly double-voiced in Bakhtin’s sense. For instance, I coded the following statement as a dialogical figured world: “If the teachers don’t arrive during the first 30 minutes then everyone can leave” (lines 6–7, Narrative 1). In this case, the student echoes the words of others (school authorities) and captures a figured world of rules and rights for teachers and students. Once I had identified the figured worlds at the dialogical level in the narratives I went back to the full transcripts of all the interviews to search for new textual evidence that would help me get a clearer picture of those figured worlds and the voices echoed through the narrative. This helped me corroborate what figured worlds were shared by the students, and to understand the different ways students faced the episodes of positioning involving the school authorities. In the analysis I provide two types of textual data: two narratives (Narratives 1–2) and five excerpts that illustrate particular figured worlds, d/Discourses, and episodes of positioning (Texts 1–5).

I considered the figured world at the structural level the “charter narrative” or narrative genre of the text; that is, the overall structure of the events narrated in the text. Since all the narratives concern problems faced by the students and how

they resolved them, at this level the figured world expresses the storylines that modeled their sense of self and reveals issues of agency and self-objectification.

Interpretations

No Matter How Much I Study, I Don't Understand

One of the most striking findings was that, in all five schools, not understanding a school subject was described by both first- and third-year students as the inability to grasp a world that had no meaning for the students, a situation that was aggravated by the teachers' authoritarian Discourse and concomitant positionings. Jaime,² a first-year struggling student, expressed his frustration as follows:

Spanish original	English translation
1 J: Química, a eso no le entiendo	J: Chemistry, that I don't understand
2 GLB: ¿Qué es lo que no le entiendes?	GLB: What is it that you don't understand?
3 J: A.. unir moléculas y todo ese rollo, ni	J. To . . . combine molecules and all that stuff, I
4 sé ni.. cómo es..	don't even know what it looks like
5 GLB: ¿ni qué?	GLB: You don't know what?
6 J: No sé cómo es	J: What it looks like

Text 1: Not Understanding

Jaime's words exemplify an instance in which the world of nature is seen "through the world of culture and its conventions," a culture, or rather a world, Jaime is unable to figure and understand. Expressing frustration with the same subject in a different school, another student, Ana, commented on her teacher's inability to communicate with the students:

Spanish original	English translation
1 A: Se pone a hablar como si hablara	A: He [the teacher] begins to talk as if he was
2 solo. No, no se pone a decirle a los	talking to himself. He doesn't, doesn't tell the
3 alumnos cosas, o sea, se pone a hablar	students anything, like, he just talks and he
4 y no habla con nadie, con nadie,	doesn't talk to anyone, not to anyone,
5 parece que está hablando con él	it seems that he's talking to himself
6 mismo	

Text 2: Monologic Discourse

These two instances capture a figured world that is alien to the students and a teacher whose voice is lost in his own monologue. In the first instance, Jaime is unable to grasp the meaning of a linguistic code that describes objects and processes he can't perceive; in the second, Ana refers to a context in which the communicative function of language is lost. These examples are consistent with Miramontes' (2003) findings about the alien world of chemistry for students and the utter indifference of teachers. The following text by a different student (Luisa) further delineates the school culture and the roles assumed by teachers and students in this type of school environment:

	Spanish original	English translation
1	L: Te ponen un ejemplo y te dan otro	L: They [the teachers] give you an example and
2	tema y otra vez, ¿no? pues ya lo	give you another topic, and then again, right?
3	miramos el tema y te explican, te	Well we see the topic and they explain it, and
4	ponen un ejemplo y te dan otro tema y	then they give you another example and another
5	otra vez, ¿no? y te dan otro ejemplo y	topic, and then once again, right? And they give
6	otro tema. Te dan como cinco temas en	you another example and another topic. And they
7	la misma clase y al siguiente día, la	give like five topics in one class, and the next
8	siguiente clase que te toca otra vez te	day, the next class, they give you five more
9	dan cinco temas. . . .	topics.
10	Y en química cuenta 90 % de examen,	And in chemistry he calculates 90% of the grade
11	y yo creo que eso es imposible. Pero	based on the final, and I think that's impossible.
12	pues el maestro así lo hace y, y pues	But he's the teacher and that's how he does it
13	nadie le puede decir nada porque pues	and, and well, there's nobody that can tell him
14	él tiene la autoridad ahí.	anything because he has the authority there.

Text 3: Authoritarian Discourse

In this text the student's voice captures two episodes of positioning: In the first, the teacher covers a prescribed content in the curriculum regardless of students' comprehension of those topics; in the second, the teacher arbitrarily assigns a

final grade without taking into consideration the curriculum. In both instances, students are the objects of the authoritarian Discourse of the teachers. This text also revoices an institutional figured world of school positions (the authority of the teacher, the powerlessness of the students) that is in clear contraposition to an internal figured world of rights and obligations (“he calculates 90% of the grade based on the final, and I think that’s impossible”). This contradiction is expressed formally through evaluative clauses that are linked by the adversative conjunction “but,” a form that in evaluative clauses can signal contrasting figured worlds. In the first evaluative clause, the cognitive I-statement (“I think that’s impossible”) captures an agentic voice that questions the teachers actions, while the second (“but he’s the teacher and . . . nobody can tell him anything”) expresses the frustration of being silenced by the authority embodied in the teacher. These examples of students’ d/Discourse speak of a school culture of indifference towards students’ alienation, which thereby fosters the institutional construction of academic failure. Further, they exemplify the lack of meaning of a specialized discourse when students are denied access to particular ways of seeing the cultural objects and processes that render the discourse meaningful.

He Told Us: “You All Failed”

Not understanding, not having access to figured worlds that have been consistently denied, and not having a voice at school leads to failure, which in turn, leads to expulsion. The following narrative by Brenda, a 16-year-old who had been recently expelled at the time the interview took place, will show the different figured worlds, Discourses and identities this student had to navigate while at school.

Spanish Original	English Translation
1 Y todos, pues sí reprobamos un chorro,	And everyone well, yeah, a lot of us didn’t pass,
2 pues, porque no.. porque no, no calificaba tareas, ni trabajos.	because he didn’t, he didn’t grade our assignments or homework.
3 Sí nos dejaba tareas,	He did give us homework
4 pero no las revisaba nunca.	but he never checked it.
5 Nunca las revisó.	Never checked it.
6 Tengo los . . . tengo los cuadernos, este . . . y	I have my . . . I have my notebooks and well,
7 no, no tengo nada revisado, una hojita, nada más tengo así.	I don’t have anything checked, just one little piece of paper.
8 G: ¿Nunca le dijeron al maestro?	GLB: Did you ever tell the teacher?
9 B: ¡Sí!, y nos decía: “No” que “no sé qué,	B: Yes! And he would say: “No” or something,

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| 10 | sí los voy a calificar.” | “I will grade them.” |
| 11 | Porque una vez, pues, todos se le pusieron al profe. | Because once, well, they all confronted him. |
| 12 | Porque nos quiso poner muchas faltas . . . | Because he wanted to give us a lot of absences.. |
| 13 | es que un día el llegó . . . llegó al . . . | because once he got to . . . he got . . . |
| 14 | nos tocaba clase de once a una, | we had a class from 11:00 to 1:00, |
| 15 | creo, de . . . sí, de once a una, | I think, and yeah, 11:00 to 1:00. |
| 16 | entonces, has de cuenta que, según cuando, sí no llegan los profesores en media hora | So like, if the teachers don’t arrive during the first 30 minutes |
| 17 | todos se pueden ir. | then everyone can leave. |
| 18 | Y todos nos esperamos ahí | And we all waited there |
| 19 | y no llegaba | and he didn’t come, |
| 20 | y pasó una hora | and an hour passed |
| 21 | y no llegaba, | and he didn’t come, |
| 22 | y todos nos fuimos, | and everyone left, |
| 23 | se quedaron nada más como cinco, | only about five stayed |
| 24 | se me hace, | I think, |
| 25 | no me acuerdo cuántos, | I don’t remember how many, |
| 26 | y todos se fueron | and everyone else left |
| 27 | y el profesor llegó a las doce. | and at 12:00 the teacher arrived. |
| 28 | Y llegó | And he arrived |
| 29 | y dio la clase, | and he taught his class, |
| 30 | dio la clase y les puso falta | and he gave an absence |
| 31 | a los que se habían ido. | to everyone who had left. |
| 32 | Y al siguiente día, pues, todos le dijimos | And the next day well, we all asked him why |
| 33 | que por qué nos había puesto falta. | he gave us an absence. |
| 34 | Dice: | And he said |
| 35 | “No, es que ustedes se fueron,” | “it’s because you left.” |
| 36 | pero le dijimos, pues, “que en media hora | But we said well, if half an hour (passes) |
| 37 | se supone que no . . .” | we’re supposed to..” |
| 38 | y este, y dijo: | and he said |
| 39 | “No, pero que me tienen que esperar”, | “no, you have to wait for me” |
| 40 | dijo. | he said. |
| 41 | Y es culpa de él, | And it’s his fault |
| 42 | porque ni siquiera había dicho | because he didn’t even tell us |

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| <p>43 que iba a alguna parte,
 44 y entonces nos dijo
 45 que no se acordaba
 46 que tenía clase,
 47 que pensó
 48 que empezaba a las doce.
 49 Y nos puso falta a todos.
 50 Y pues nos afectaba en ese
 momento para el examen,
 51 o nos bajaba puntos.
 52 Y según él decía que el examen
 contaba el ochenta,
 53 creo,
 54 y no es cierto,
 55 ¡contaba el cien!
 56 Aparte de que nada más nos
 contaba el examen,
 57 nos bajaba puntos.</p> <p>58 GLB: ¿Y cómo distribuyó la
 calificación final?
 59 ¿Eran los tres parciales más el
 final?
 60 B: Más el final. Sí porque no, ya
 después no nos, es que nunca
 nos, a veces . . . ese
 61 examen no nos los entregó.
 62 Ni los (tipo A) no los entregaba.
 63 Nada más decía
 64 que todos estábamos
 reprobados,
 65 pero no nos los entregaba.
 66 GLB: ¿Y les dijo que estaban
 reprobados?
 67 B: Ajá, de por ejemplo, “profe,
 ¿quiénes pasaron el examen?”
 68 yo dije
 69 “tan siquiera lo voy a pasar con
 ocho,”
 70 y le dije yo a mi mamá . . .
 71 y me dijo:
 72 “Bueno, ojalá y pues lo pases”.
 73 Y no, que nos va diciendo:</p> | <p>that he was going somewhere,
 and then he said
 he didn’t remember
 that he had a class,
 that he thought
 it was at 12:00.
 And he gave an absence to everyone.
 And that would affect our grade for
 the exam,
 or he would lower our grade.
 And according to him the final was
 worth 80% of the grade,
 I think,
 but that’s not true,
 it was 100%!
 On top of basing our final grade
 only on the exam
 he would lower our score (because
 of the absences).
 GLB: And how did he calculate
 your final grade?
 Did you have three midterms and a
 final?
 B: Plus the final. Right because no,
 later he would not, cause he never
 . . . sometimes . . .
 that test he never gave it back to us.
 He didn’t return our final either . . .
 He would only say
 that we had all flunked the class,

 but he didn’t give us back our exams.
 GLB: And he told you that you had
 all failed?
 B: Yeah for instance “teacher, who
 passed the exam?”
 I said (to myself),
 “at least I’m going to get a B,”

 and I told my mom
 and she said:
 “Well, I hope that you pass.”
 But no, then he told us:</p> |
|---|--|

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| <p>74 “No, todos están reprobados.”</p> <p>75 G: ¿Y qué sucedió?</p> <p>76 B: Éramos como diez, yo creo, más o menos.</p> <p>77 G: ¿Y no le pidieron el examen?</p> <p>78 B: Después . . . no, nadie se lo pidió.</p> <p>79 Después yo le dije a mi mamá,</p> <p>80 y cuando fue . . .</p> <p>81 y nos dijo la orientadora:</p> <p>82 “No, es que ya es demasiado tarde para pedirlo”, que no sé qué.</p> <p>83 G: ¿Y si hubieras pasado esa materia sí te hubieras quedado?</p> <p>B: Sí.</p> | <p>“No, you all failed.”</p> <p>GLB: And what happened then?</p> <p>B: There were about ten of us, I think, more or less.</p> <p>GLB: And did you ask him for the exam?</p> <p>B: Later . . . no, nobody asked him.</p> <p>Afterwards I told my mom, and when she went [to school] and the student counselor told us “No, it’s too late to ask for it” and stuff like that</p> <p>GLB: And if you had passed that class would you have stayed in school?</p> <p>B: Yeah.</p> |
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Narrative 1: Not Passing a Class

This interview took place at Brenda’s home at the end of the school year, when she had just been informed she would no longer be able to attend school. The daughter of a single mother, Brenda’s lived in a working-class neighborhood. In her narrative, Brenda recalls a particular incident in which the majority of the students in her class confronted their chemistry teacher for not respecting the schools norms and rules and for his lack of accountability. The narrative conveys the teacher’s unfair grading practices and the consequences for students.

The narrative begins with an “abstract” of the experience in Labov’s (1972) sense (“a lot of us didn’t pass”). Lines 2 to 7 are all evaluative clauses and encode the figured worlds of obligations for students (doing assignments) and teachers’ prerogatives (grading at will or not grading at all). In line 10 Brenda uses direct speech to revoice the teacher’s commitment to grade their work. But this line is preceded by a quote that reveals Brenda’s attitude toward her teacher’s discourse (line 9: And he would say: “No” or *something*). She marks the teacher’s words with a phrase showing that some of the original language is lost and further marks those words as suspect or unreliable. Line 11 recapitulates what the narrative will be about (confronting the teacher), and it’s followed by an evaluative clause. Lines 13 and 14 are complicating action, a sequence that is suspended by the evaluative clauses that follow. These encode a figured world of a school that sets rules and rights for both teachers and students: it evokes the way things are supposed to be. Lines 18 to 37 continue the sequence of events, including the confrontation between students and the teacher. In this confrontation students appeal to the dialogical figured world expressed in line 16, that is, the voice of school authorities regarding teacher’s and students’ punctuality and absences.

In describing these events, it is interesting that Brenda's use of the third person plural at the beginning of the narrative (line 11: "Because once, well, they all confronted him") switches to the first person plural in line 32: "and the next day, we all asked him why"). It is as though at the beginning Brenda is speaking with the assumed voice of an outsider, a person who no longer belongs to the world she relives through the narrative; but in recalling this experience she regains her school persona and the collective voice of the group.

Lines 35 through 39 are all in direct speech and show the confrontation between the students and the teacher, each echoing two opposing figured worlds: the institutional world of what ought to be for the students and the figured world of authority for the teacher. This is a clear episode of positioning, an instance in which the students are "invited" to comply with the rules of the teacher or else suffer the consequences. The evaluative clauses that follow ("and it's his fault because he didn't even tell us that he was going somewhere") suspend once more the sequence and capture the authorial voice of Brenda. Lines 44 to 49 continue the sequence of events and we hear more evaluative elements through line 57. Again, lines 60 to 65 are evaluative clauses emphasized by several repetitions. These elements provide a clearer picture of the figured world encoded in Text 3, a figured world enacted through the teacher's actions and authoritarian Discourse.

Line 69 captures the inner speech of Brenda, an important point in the narrative since it reveals her expectations to enact the identity of academic competence so far denied to her. In line 72 Brenda uses direct speech to revoice the wishes of her mother (a direct echo of her own wishes and expectations), and lines 73 and 74 express the outcome and one of the most dramatic episodes of positioning in the narrative: the teacher telling the students that they had all failed his class. Perhaps more dramatic is the lack of agency the concluding elements of the narrative reveal: Constantly being cast in a position with no voice or say in school matters, the students learn that the teacher (and school) is not accountable for their actions and the students unwillingly accept it without even asking for the exam (lines 77 and 78). In a final twist, even the mother is unable to find an answer from the school authorities, and Brenda and her family suffer the consequences.

The figured worlds described so far are clearly double-voiced, dialogical models that are set in motion by distinct actions (or inactions) by the participants. Brenda is thus caught up between the figured world of "what ought to be for the students" and the figured world of what "must be" for the teachers. Although Brenda unwillingly complies with this authoritarian Discourse (with its positions and identities), it is clear that she learns to distrust the discourse (the means of communication) and disavow this language with its representational quality. This is expressed when she revoices her teacher's discourse through direct speech (line 9: "And he would say: 'No' or *something*") or indirect speech (line 58: "*according to him* the final was worth 80%"), and even when she quotes the school authorities at the end of the narrative: "the student counselor told us 'no, it's too late' and *stuff like that*" (lines 81–82). As I mentioned earlier, this is expressed in the Spanish original (*no sé qué*) through a cognitive statement (not knowing) that disavows the representational function of an alien d/Discourse.

It is a language that is lost and becomes suspect or unreliable. This is something that was common in all the narratives of first-year and some narratives of third-year students. The following extract (Text 4) by a first-year student exemplifies best the attitude of these students toward the representational function of this institutional d/Discourse, an alien discourse imbued with authority but that clearly is not internally persuasive or authoritative for the students:

	Spanish original	English translation
1	Pues yo creo que, la verdad sí me gusta	Well I think that, actually, I do like
2	Química. Esa materia sí es muy bonita,	chemistry. This subject is very attractive
3	porque es todo lo que nos rodea y bla, bla, bla, bla,	<i>because it's everything that surrounds us and blah, blah, blah,</i>

Text 4: Representational Function of Language

Maybe That's Why I Was Able to Remember

Extending Bakhtin's notion of authoritative discourse, Morson (2004) distinguishes between authoritarian and authoritative discourse and reflects on how each affects students' learning, including learning "our sense of ourselves" (p. 318). For Morson, authoritarian discourse is distinctively monologic, such as the discourse authoritarian regimes impose on their own publicly sanctioned interpretation of history. Authoritative discourse, on the other hand, may or may not be authoritarian. Morson argues that authoritative discourse

may try to insulate itself from dialogue with reverential tones, a special script, and all the other signs of the authority fused to it, but at the margins dialogue waits with a challenge: you may be right, but you have to *convince* me. Once the authoritative word responds to that challenge, it ceases to be *fully* authoritative. . . . Every educator crosses this line when she or he gives reasons for a truth. (p. 319)

In the two narratives discussed above we see instances of the authoritarian Discourse of the teachers in which there are no signs or attempt to engage students in dialogue. This is reinforced by a school culture that treats certain students as "expendable," especially those students who have been denied access to particular discourses (specialized languages), figured worlds (ways to perceive objects, people, and activities) and Discourses (ways to enact a particular identity) of "academic competence."

The following sample by Carlos, a middle-class, third-year student, provides a different scenario. In this case the student explains his frustration at not being able to learn how to do fractions, in spite of receiving help and support from his father, whom he depicts as very knowledgeable. The episode describes the moment when he finally "understood":

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 C: entonces cuando llegué a
segundo de
2 secundaria, creo, un maestro muy
bueno y
3 este, y con la primera vez que me
explicó lo
4 entendí bien rápido, y se me hacía
así como
5 que a veces, ay qué tonto, porque,
tú, tal vez,
6 me explicaron pues ese mismo
procedi-
7 miento pero no lo comprendía
hasta que ese
8 profesor no me lo enseñó,
entonces fue un
9 problema porque conforme iba
pasando el
10 tiempo yo decía es que sí como
no, voy a
11 saber todo lo demás y no voy a
poder hacer
12 fracciones, se me hacía como que
ilógico.
13 GLB: ¿Y te acuerdas de algo en
particular de
14 la forma como te explicó ese
maestro que
15 haya contribuido a que
comprendieras?
16 C: Tal vez porque estaba en el
pizarrón y
17 este, y ponía y te preguntaba,
¿sabes hacer
18 esto? y no pues que sí, ah, pues, y
te lo
19 explicaba, no sé, tan
detalladamente así, te
20 marcaba súper bien, te encerraba
los números
21 que, te encerraba por ejemplo, te
encerraba</p> | <p>C: so, when I was in eighth
grade, I think,
[I had] very good teacher and
with him,
the first time that he explained
it to me I
understood right away and I
would think,
how stupid, they had
explained that same
procedure before but I didn't
get it until
that teacher taught me, and so
[before] it
was a problem because as time
went by I
would think, it's like, I'll know
everything
else but I won't be able to do
fractions, I
thought, kind of illogical.

GLB: And do you remember
something in
particular about the way that
teacher helped
you to understand?

C: Maybe because when he
was at the
blackboard, and he would
write and he
would ask you, do you know
how to do
this? And well yes or no, and
then ok he
would explain it to you, I
don't know, with
a lot of detail, he would
highlight really</p> |
|--|--|

22	donde iba a empezar a hacer el	well, he would circle the
23	procedimiento a desglosarlo	numbers and like,
	como para que	he would circle where he was
24	vieras de por qué salió, te lo ponía	going to
	aparte, te	begin the procedure and then
25	lo explicaba y luego te preguntaba,	he would
	y te decía	break it up so that you could
26	te hacía ver y se regresaba, como	understand
	se iba y se	why he would come up with
27	regresaba, se iba y se regresaba	a result, he
	cada paso,	would highlight that and he
28	como que a lo mejor eso hizo que	would explain
	se me	it and then he would ask you,
29	grabara más.	and he would
		tell you, <i>he would make you</i>
30		<i>see</i> and he
		would go back and forth, back
31		and forth,
		step by step and, maybe that's
32		why I was
		able to remember.

Text 5: Learning To Do fractions

What this student describes is the authoritative discourse of the teacher becoming internally persuasive for the student through the teacher’s engagement with him and the resources he uses to make an alien figured world accessible for the student, best captured with the expression “he would make you see.” It is a case of what Lave and Wenger (1991) define as legitimate peripheral participation. This type of experience is completely absent in the narratives by first-year students, as the previous examples showed.

I Was Not Going to Let That Happen

The second narrative I want to discuss is by Gabriela, a middle-class student enrolled in the International Baccalaureate. In it she describes an episode of positioning by a teacher whom she confronted:

	Spanish original	English translation
1	GLB: ¿Puedes contar algún problema que hayas tenido en tus clases?	GLB: Can you tell a particular problem you had in your classes

2	G: Por ejemplo sistemas de información, tuvimos un problema	G: Yes, for instance in information systems we had a problem,
3	de que nos dejó un proyecto,	we had to do a project,
4	de hacer un video como si fuera un comercial,	we had to produce a video like a commercial,
5	entonces lo hicimos,	so we did it,
6	pero mm, yo siempre soy, soy perfeccionista	but mm I'm always, I'm a perfectionist
7	o sea trato de hacer las cosas lo mejor que se pueda,	or I try to do things as best as I can,
8	entonces yo lo edité, el video y . . .	so I edited it, the video
9	la profesora dijo	and the teacher said
10	"sí que me editen," no sé qué,	"yes, edit it" and stuff like that.
11	pero al final de cuentas todos mis compañeros lo trajeron sin editar,	But at the end all my classmates brought it in without any editing,
12	o sea nada más tomaron el video,	like, they just took the video
13	lo entregaron	and turned it in,
14	y yo por querer editarlo lo traje tarde	and I, by trying to edit it turned it in late
15	y la profesora no me lo quiso recibir,	and the teacher wouldn't take it,
16	me quería reprobar,	she wanted to fail me
17	y pues no, o sea yo no me iba a dejar reprobar así nada más porque sí,	and well no, I mean I was not going to let that happen just like that,
18	fui y hablé con la profesora Magda y con el subdirector	so I went and spoke with [a teacher] and with the vice-principal,
19	y ya le dijeron que no fuera tan drástica,	and they told her not to be so drastic,
20	que me calificara mi práctica,	to grade my assignment,
21	y le di el trabajo,	and I gave it to her,
22	valía 5 puntos	it was worth 5 points
23	y me quedé en 7,	and she gave me a C,
24	pero pues 7 es aprobatoria, gran diferencia entre el 5.	but well, C is a passing grade, big difference than an F.

Narrative 2

For the analysis of this narrative I want to concentrate in the evaluative clauses expressed in lines 6, 7, 11, 12, 17, and 24, because these lines capture the

figured worlds that give meaning to the student's experience and text. In lines 6 and 7 she uses an "I-statement" (Gee, 1999) that positions her as a thoughtful and responsible student, a figured world about herself in relation to the rest of her classmates; it is a figured world that is taken up and elaborated again in lines 12 and 14 where she evaluates her classmates' actions ("just took the video") as opposed to her own ("by trying to edit it"). In line 17 she expresses a figured world about teachers not unlike those of her less successful peers: a world of authoritarian teachers who arbitrarily "fail" students. Similarly, she disavows this language when she revokes the teacher's speech (line 10: "The teacher said 'yes, edit it' *and stuff like that*"). Consistent with her figured world about herself, line 17 captures her own agentic school persona, a positional identity quite different from first-year, working-class students who, in spite of evident signs of solidarity among themselves and their collective actions, in their agentic selves were severely curtailed by the school teachers and authorities. Gabriela seeks support not only from another teacher but from the vice-principal as well, a support that is granted and allows her to reverse the teacher's arbitrary decision. In this episode Gabriela uses a narrative strategy identified by Labov and Waletzky (1967) as an effective method for evaluating the whole experience: the judgment of a third person absent from the experience (line 19: "they told her not to be so drastic"). The sequence of events being evaluated describes the experience of a middle-class student enrolled in the most prestigious program in the school (the International Baccalaureate), and because the person evaluating Gabriela's experience is the school's vice-principal, we see how schools construct and position students in very different and opposing ways. In this case, school authorities side with Gabriela against the arbitrary decisions of their own personnel.

Narrative Structure and the Construction of the Self

So far I've commented on how the polyphony expressed in narratives of personal experience capture different figured worlds, voices, and d/Discourses the authors have to "orchestrate" in their own voice (Bakhtin, 1981; Holland et al., 1998). There is another way we can look at figured worlds in narratives, what I previously described as the "charter narrative" or structural figured world. A good way to look at the structural figured world is to focus on the referential function of narratives: In Narrative 1 the sequence of events portrays collective human agency being curtailed by institutional forces, a model that may very well be a variation of fatalism. In Narrative 2 the sequence of events appears to be the result of individual human action, in particular the agency of the narrator.

Because these are narratives of personal experience, the "charter narrative" provides a good insight into self-objectification, since "self is a popular fiction, a 'figurative reification,' by means of which we account for our and others' actions" (Holland et al., 1998, p. 293). In a similar vein, Amsterdam and Bruner (2000) explain how narrative genres "*model*" (p. 117) characteristic plights of

groups of people that share the same culture. This happens because “cultures convert their plights and aspirations in narrative forms that represent both the culture’s ordinary legitimacies and possible threats to them” (p. 117). In this sense, these authors argue that

narratives function not simply to make experience communicable and thereby increase cultural solidarity, but also to give a certain practical predictability to the plights of communal life and a certain direction to the efforts needed to resolve them. (p. 117)

In Narrative 1 we see a student who constructs herself through her relationships with others and through the eyes of others who imprint on her their own gaze and positioning. It is a “sociocentric” self (Holland & Kipnis, 1994), a self that seeks the collaboration of others like her and expresses her solidarity through collective action. However, the figured world encoded in the narrative plot is of a self with limited possibilities for agency and action. It is a self that, regardless of her collective or individual action, is rendered powerless by the enforcement of an authoritarian school Discourse. This is quite the opposite of the second narrative. Here we find an “egocentric” and agentive self, expressed through a charter narrative that echoes the autonomous subject of modernity, a subject in charge of her own destiny and a byproduct of school cultures that construct students differently.

Final Remarks

I want to conclude this chapter with a reflection on method. As Gee (this volume) convincingly argues, for the critical discourse analyst the issue of frame is crucial. The narratives discussed in this chapter were chosen after careful readings of hundreds of pages. The analysis was always done in a two-way direction: the selected texts illuminated the overall picture afforded by the interviews and vice versa. Having two distinct groups of participants provided many contrastive elements, which were consistent throughout the data: the collective voice of first-year students versus the “autonomous” subjects of third-year students; the authoritarian Discourse imposed on first-year students versus the enabling authoritative Discourse described by third-year students. The figured worlds that articulate these experiences, an articulation between language and social order, provide clear evidence of what Bourdieu (1980) calls the “institutionalization of difference,” that is, the strategies institutions such as schools use to enforce statutory and symbolic barriers between people and groups.

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4 A Critical Discourse Analysis of Neocolonialism in Patricia McCormick's *Sold*

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I hurt
I am torn and bleeding where men have been.
I pray to the gods to make the hurting go away.
To make the burning and the aching and the bleeding stop.
Music and laughter come from the room next door.
Horns and shouting come from the street below.
No one can hear me.
Not even the gods.

(Patricia McCormick, *Sold*)

These are the lacerating words of Lakshmi, the 13-year-old protagonist in Patricia McCormick's *Sold*, a 2006 National Book Award Finalist in young people's literature. Sold into prostitution by a drunken, greedy, and destitute stepfather, Lakshmi travels from a pastoral Nepali village to the infamous red-light district of Kolkata, India. These are also the opening words of a speech on human trafficking, delivered by Mr. Gary Lewis, Representative, United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime at the 53rd Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference held in New Delhi, 2007 (Lewis, 2007). One might say that literature is one of the many "storylines" or *Discourse models* which people use "to make sense of the world and their experiences in it" (Gee, 2006, p. 61).

In this chapter I take on the problematic nature of literature that is written by North Americans about "third world"¹ countries. Literature about the world is typically envisioned as a bridge that spans the differences between cultures and nations, as a window that opens minds to the world's diversity and global challenges, and as a mirror that encourages reflection (Bishop, 1990; Botelho and Rudman, 2009; Hadaway, 2007; Lepman, 1969; Stan, 2002). My intention is to dismantle the window's frame, survey the pillars of these connecting bridges, and hold up a critical mirror that examines our assumptions about these

The first version of this chapter was written for Dr. Rebecca Rogers' seminar on Critical Discourse Analysis at The University of Missouri-St. Louis. Since then, discourse analysis has guided my dissertation research and publications.

structures and the concepts they entail (Lakshmanan, 2009). Literature's global reach is further enhanced by technology. Today, authors' and publishers' websites offer links to international organizations such as Amnesty International or the International Labor Organization. In teaching guides and scholarly articles, literature is also presented as a springboard for engaging students' participation in social activism abroad (McKenna, 2007; Yokota & Kolar, 2008). Referring to "transformative models" of reading, Marian J. McKenna (2007) writes that literature about the world should not only "teach students about the world in which they live but also . . . transform them into engaged, active citizens" (p. 166). Emerging from a framework of critical multiculturalism, reading becomes a means to engage with concerns about the subjugation of race, class, and gender (Botelho & Rudman, 2009). This is particularly true of literature on contemporary South Asia, which is often written with a view to informing readers about existing social injustices. I argue that critical literary analysis should not be limited to an examination of power relations that inhere in race, class, or gender differences *in* the text. Rather, a critical lens should also be directed at power relations that emanate *from* the text to its global implications. Only then can one become aware of the ideological positions being offered to the reader, and how these could affect international relations (Lakshmanan, 2009).

I propose that before literature about the world is used to activate social justice in the world, readers need to delve below the surface *content* of a text, and discern how the *form* of language, narration, and visuals constructs knowledge practices, mediates relationships, and directs a certain ideological discourse on how individual/social transformation happens or should happen. In this chapter I will examine *Sold* (2006) by Patricia McCormick, in order to demonstrate the connection between literary discourse (as ways of representing, being, and participating in the world), the marketed visuals on a book's cover, and knowledge practices. Patricia McCormick is well known for her previous novels, *Cut* (2000) on self-inflicted "cutting," and *My Brother's Keeper* (2005) on drug addiction. Both of these novels are based in the United States. *Sold*, instead, is set in Nepal and India. Here, McCormick captures the searing reality of child trafficking in the sex trade. It is the result of several interviews during the author's month-long stay in these countries. Written in free verse, and the first-person voice of a diary, Lakshmi's story unfolds in a series of crisply edited poetic vignettes. In an interview posted on her website (www.patriciamccormick.com), McCormick states her "inspiration" to tell this story:

I believe that young adults want to know what's happening to their peers on the other side of the world, but that media accounts, by their very nature, cannot usually go beyond the surface. To me there is nothing more powerful—or permanent—than the impact of a book. (McCormick, para. 2)

Literature as a privileged mode of knowing the "other" side of the world begs a deeper study of how its knowledge practices are embedded in a discursive

formation that extends beyond the text. Keeping in mind the institutionalization of literature, by way of marketing and education, my analysis relates the text to the author's intention, the cover image, and the publisher's (Hyperion) discussion guide (Zimmer, n.d.), which is freely available on the internet. By way of method, I take up James Paul Gee's (2006) idea that we collaboratively use language and other semiotic systems to "build" seven interrelated and intertextual tasks to construe situations and the world around us (p. 104). Based on Gee's model, I am guided by the question: How does the enactment of *significance, activities, identities, relationships, connections, and knowledge* practices condition the *political* discourse on individual/social change in literature written by North Americans about "third world" developing countries? In this respect, I am guided by Norman Fairclough's (1995) comment that "no proper understanding of contemporary discursive practices is possible that does not attend to the matrix of change" (p. 19).

The Text and Context

The novel opens with the line, "One more rainy season and our roof will be gone, says Ama." We soon realize that in spite of the idyllic surrounding of a verdant Himalayan slope, where the "yellow pumpkin blossoms will close, drunk on the sunshine" (p. 9), poverty is endemic. Every season is marked by "women's work and women's woes":

This is the season when the women bury the children who die of fever. . . .
This is the season when they bury the children who die from the coughing disease. (pp. 10–11)

Lakshmi's story is set against this predetermined rhythm of poverty, death, and womanhood. Beset by debts and alcoholism, her stepfather sells her to a prostitution ring. Lakshmi, who is convinced that she is going to work in the big city as a maid, dreams that thanks to her efforts, her mother will finally have a tin roof when the rains come, and money for "rice and curds, milk and sugar. Enough for a coat for the baby and a sweater." But the reader knows that her stepfather will gamble away the money at the tea-shop, or buy another contraption, like the defunct motorcycle he bought when her mother pawned her earrings. Sold for 800 rupees, Lakshmi is accompanied by "aunts" and "uncle-husbands" across the Indo-Nepali border, and into the teeming heartland of India "where the lying-down people look like the dead. And the standing-up ones, like the walking dead." She is finally re-sold, at a tremendous profit, to "Happiness House," a brothel in the Calcutta (known as Kolkata since 2001) red-light district. Lakshmi is locked in a room, beaten and starved, but she will not give in. A vignette titled "After five days" has only one line: "After five days of no food and water I don't even dream." The blank page beneath says it all. Finally, a drugged glass of buttermilk does what hunger and confinement could not, and her first customer "rolls off" her. Drugged for several days, imprisoned

in the room, men come and go: "They crush my bones with their weight. They split me open. Then they disappear." Yet Lakshmi's spirit is not entirely broken. In "Happiness House" she also discovers friendship, the awe of watching *The Bold and the Beautiful*, the sparkle of Coca-Cola, and the liberating joy of a yellow pencil. Ultimately, she is rescued, by an American.

I chose *Sold* for three reasons, each addressing the overlapping public and private contexts in which literature operates. Context is understood as the "the mentally represented structure of those properties of the social situation that are relevant for the production and comprehension of discourse" (van Dijk, 1998, p. 356). First, the book's themes are directly related to the global Discourse on poverty, sexual exploitation, gender, and the tension between culture and modernity. Second, the *Discourse models* associated with the text gain institutional privilege because of the marketing, circulation, and consumption associated with "award-winning" books.² Third, as a woman of South Asian origin, I am driven by the need to unravel the archive of texts and images which have come to inscribe my own identity. As Seyla Benhabib puts it, "To be and to become a self is to insert oneself into webs of interlocation" and "our agency consists in our capacity to weave out of these narratives our individual life stories" (2002, p. 15). Yet, I am more than aware that this personal impetus can also obfuscate my vision. While there can be no shying away from my suspicion of any relic of a colonial civilizing mission, the theoretical framework and methodology of critical discourse analysis (CDA) afford me some distance between the text and myself. But most importantly, CDA allows me to examine how semiotic signs (language and visuals) and narrative patterns represent and construct our relationship to "the other side of the world."

It bears repetition that my purpose is *not* to undermine the factual, moral, and humanitarian validity of a book that seeks to broaden the reader's awareness of the relationship between human trafficking, poverty, and culturally fostered gender inequities. Rather, I would argue that in spite of the indisputable commitment to human rights and the pedagogical need to foster empathy and further social justice, a critical stance needs to be alert to the morphing of hegemonic processes in the "third worlding" of social action.

Literature, Critical Discourse Analysis, Social Semiotics, and Post/Neocolonialism

Literature as discourse has been studied by numerous scholars (Eagleton, 1991; Fowler, 1977, 1981; Hodge, 1990; Hodge & Kress, 1993; Said, 1979; Stephens, 1992; van Dijk, 1985). As Terry Eagleton (1991) puts it, literature is about "who is saying what to whom for what purposes" (p. 9). As a discourse, or a certain way of relating to the world, literature is a social practice that resounds with the implied reader precisely because it is enmeshed in a society's way of representing, being, and participating in the world. This, however, does not exclude the possibility that literature can be a vector for a transformative counter-discourse. Indeed, in the international arena, the pen has sometimes proved an

active player in international relations. Alan Paton's *Cry, The Beloved Country* (1948) brought apartheid to world consciousness just as Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1989) plunged the literary narrative into the maelstrom of global conflict. If anything, recent events validate that language, the narrative, and semiotic signs such as visuals, cartoons, and clothing cannot be extricated from identity and the enactment of a certain political relationship to the contemporary world.

Viewed in this light, one can surmise that literature *about* other nations and cultures is embedded with a multimodal compass, directing a new generation on how to participate in the world. This nexus between text, semiotic signs, and being in the world is best captured in Gee's (2006) theorizing of discourse in Discourse, or D/discourse. The former (discourse) refers to how language is used to "enact activities and identities" (p. 7). But, social or ontological meaning is not made through language (or image) alone. The author's intention, the awards conferred, how a book is cited and researched, how it is taught, and the blogs it generates, are all instances of the macro Discourses (with a capital "D") that coalesce to make the production, marketing, and consumption of the book a social practice. Hence, analyzing literature as D/discourse does not distinguish between the literary text, the non-literary, and social practice.

The writing, production, reading, and interpretation of the text are also political acts. By political, I mean, in Gee's words, how "power, status, value or worth" are distributed (2006, p. 2). Any critical analysis and interpretation of a text written about a "third world" situation would be incomplete without the perspectives of postcolonial theories on power relations. Postcolonial theory, which emerged in the 1980s, addresses the *dominant Discourses* used to view non-Western people. It is essentially about the problematic relationship between social and historical conditions, representation, knowledge construction, the constitution of the subject, and effective practices. Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak are considered central to the field of colonial discourse analysis (Childs & Williams, 1997), which was heralded by Said's seminal book, *Orientalism* (1979). Said melds the Gramscian notion of hegemony with a Foucauldian understanding of discourse to examine the discursive practices of the European construction of the "oriental," and its hegemonic complicity with Western imperialism. He describes Orientalism as "an accepted grid for filtering through the Orient into Western consciousness" (p. 6). In *Culture and Imperialism* (1994), he further develops his argument, maintaining that the novel articulates a prevailing "structure of attitude and references," thereby indicating both the limitations and possibilities of these structures. With respect to *Orientalism* (1979), Said has been widely critiqued for his essentialist binary opposition between East and West. Homi Bhabha (1994), instead, introduces terms like cultural hybridity, liminality, colonial mimicry, and ambivalence, to argue for a more fluid notion of cultural production in the colonial encounter.

Though postcolonialism is a response to a history of colonial rule, it cannot be dislocated from the present actuation of neocolonial political and economic

hegemony. In fact, as Spivak famously remarked, "We live in a post-colonial neo-colonized world" (1990, p. 166). In this sense, postcolonialism "names a politics and philosophy of activism that contests that disparity [of inequality and dependence], and so continues in a new way the anti-colonial struggles of the past" (Young, 2003, p. 4). In addition, rather than an obscure theory advanced by ivory-tower intellectuals, the Subaltern Study group, (Ranajit Guha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Gyan Prakash) have elaborated a politics of the subaltern, or a "postcolonialism from below" (Young, 2003, p. 6). This perspective urges me to remain alert to any effacement of the autonomy and agency of the subaltern woman.

Method

The frame of this analysis is limited to the book's text, the visual on its cover, the author's interview on her website, her mode of observing and recording, and the publisher's discussion guide (available at <http://www.hyperionbooksfor-children.com>). James Paul Gee's (2006) seven building tasks provided a common lens that directed my analysis of how the form and patterning of semiotic signs construct identities, relationships, and power relations. Gee proposes that when we use language, actions, interactions, and non-linguistic semiotic systems, we build seven "areas of reality" (2006, pp. 10–11). These interrelated tasks are *significance*, *activities*, *identities*, *relationships*, *politics*, *connections*, *sign systems*, and *knowledge* (henceforth italicized). My analysis is derived from the questions Gee proposes for each task.³ Applying Gee's seven building tasks to correlate an ensemble of signifying vectors permitted me to chart the regularity of a recognizable *dominant Discourse* on relationships with the developing world. For example, if the cover engendered a certain kind of *relationship* between the image and the viewer, then it was legitimate to ask what kind of *relationship* is furthered in the author's interview, the text's linguistic markers, and the publisher's discussion guide. My premise is that ideology is patterned in the orchestration of different domains of activity that are related to a text.

My analysis began with decoding how the book cover produces social *relationships* and construes the *identity* of the "third world" woman. It would be remiss not to mention that it was the disturbing image on the book's cover that first beckoned me to read the book. Specifically, I applied Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's (1996, 2001) social semiotic methodology. Kress and van Leeuwen bring to CDA an examination of how the elements of design articulate a discourse through the representations made available, the social interaction enacted, and the way in which the representational and interactive elements relate to each other. I sought the theoretical juncture between Kress and van Leeuwen's method and Gee's "seven building tasks" by asking which building task does the *sign system* of design, color, composition, image, or semiotic mode exemplify. My underlying assumption was that through a critical decoding of book covers, we can ask ourselves what global *relationships* are being marketed and offered for consumption. Having explored the social semiotics of the book

cover, I then proceeded to the textual analysis of the book, shuttling back and forth from the cover to the text, the author's interview, and the discussion guide. Patricia McCormick's interview is taken as an indication of the book's intended *activity*. As van Dijk (1998), succinctly puts it, "a fully fledged theory of discourse and context is impossible without assuming the relevance of intentions of speakers or writers as part of the 'cognitive' dimension of the context" (p. 217). Throughout the analysis I kept in mind Fairclough's advice that "textual analysis should mean analysis of the *texture* of texts, their form and organization, and not just commentaries on the 'content' of texts which ignore texture" (1995, p. 4).

Sold is told in a series of 177 vignettes, ranging from a couple of pages, to a few lines. The capitalized title of each vignette succinctly captures its essence, whether it is a concept (THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SON AND A DAUGHTER), an event (A TRADE), or a description (ON THE BUS). Some vignettes are barely a couple of lines. "A PRONOUNCEMENT," the episode before Lakshmi is drugged into submission, has three sentences: "One day Mumtaz came to my door without her strap. 'I have decided to let you live,' she says. Then she is gone, leaving me to ponder what will happen next" (p. 118). The rest of the page is blank, leaving both Lakshmi and the reader to wonder "what will happen next."

In order to decode how the texture of form and content relate to a macro Discourse on the "other side of the world," I focused on vignettes with repetitive linguistic patterns that are also mirrored in another episode. I worked from the hypothesis that this intentional doubling of linguistic form underscored and connected certain topics. These units were taken as examples of *significance* (Gee's first building task), which poses the question: "How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?"

Two sets of vignettes were identified: A NEW WORLD (number 42) on rural Nepal and NEXT (number 47) on urban India (Figure 4.1). In both vignettes, Lakshmi's view of her spatial setting is described through the following syntactical construction: indeterminate article + noun + gerund/present indicative. For example, as Lakshmi travels through the countryside, she sees "a man pulling a wild boar on a rope." Six such phrases illustrate the Himalayan villages. Similarly, when she enters the city, she looks at "a man scooping hot popcorn into a paper cone, next to . . ." Conveying the frenetic urban pace, there are a total of twenty descriptive phrases, all patterned in a similar manner. Since my analysis deals with what linguistic patterning can tell us about an implied relationship with the Third World context, I categorize these vignettes as concerned with contextual relationships (see Figure 4.1).

The second set of mirrored vignettes were EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW (number 11) on culturally mandated behavioral norms for girls, and EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW NOW (number 95) on the ploys of prostitution (Figure 4.2). While the previous set of vignettes dealt with the context of spatial setting, these focused on time and causality, as indicated in the syntactical form before-now-never-always and the conditional if/then clause. In

EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW, Lakshmi's mother tells her "Before today . . . you could run as free as a leaf. . . . Now . . . you must carry yourself with modesty." In EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW NOW, Lakshmi is told that "Before . . . Mumtaz sent the customers to you. . . . Now you must do what it takes to make them choose you." Similar parallelisms were noted in if/then conditional clauses, and the use of strong modal verbs.

I then used Gee's seven building tasks to categorize these four vignettes (Figure 4.2). The first set (Figure 4.1), which describes rural and urban settings, were taken as examples of an enactment of *relationship* and *connection* to the *activity* Lakshmi is watching. Since the phrases under consideration are all object clauses (Lakshmi stares at *x*), *identity* and *politics* were not considered. The second set of vignettes had to do with codes of behavior as mandated by cultural traditions and profession. Here, the gendered *activity* of being a girl or female prostitute defines Lakshmi's *identity* and *ways of knowing and believing*. It is a *political* discourse since these rule books distribute social goods believed to be of power and status, in this case the male and money (Gee, 2006, p. 2). Finally, keeping in mind that the conclusion of a "problem" novel often conveys a preferred outcome (Stephens, 1992), I analyzed the last vignette, THE WORDS HARISH TAUGHT ME.

As a further layer of investigation, I examined the book's cover and the above mentioned vignettes for evidence of what Edward Said identified as stylistic

<i>Vignette number & page</i>	<i>Title of vignette</i>	<i>Dominant linguistic patterns</i>
42 (pp. 58–59)	A NEW WORLD	Contextual relationship Indeterminate article + noun + gerund/present indicative
47 (pp. 65–66)	NEXT	Contextual relationship Indeterminate article + noun + gerund/present indicative

Figure 4.1 Building tasks: *relationship, connections, activity*

<i>Vignette number & page</i>	<i>Title of vignette</i>	<i>Dominant linguistic patterns</i>
11 (pp. 15–16)	EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW	Time & Causality Before-now-never Conditional causality: If/then
95 (pp. 141–143)	EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW NOW	Time & Causality Before-now-always Conditional causality: If/then

Figure 4.2 Building tasks: *activity, identity, knowing and believing, political*

filters that typify an “Orientalist” perspective: repetitive tropes, synecdoches, establishing binary differences and hierarchy by portraying the subject as “incapable of defining itself” (1979, pp. 300–301), and imagery and metaphors that classify, generalize, and accommodate the “strange” by making it familiar (pp. 58–59). Bhabha’s (1994) notion of cultural production in a third border-line space was also kept in mind.

Finally, following Fairclough’s (1992) advice, my study is directed by the need to identify, describe, and interpret what he referred to as cruces or moments of crisis. These discursive struggles alert me to shifts in hegemonic articulations. For an understanding of hegemony, I draw from Laclau and Mouffe (1985). Torfing’s (1999) rendering of their definition is pivotal to the conclusions I reach:

We can define hegemony as the expansion of discourse, or set of discourses, into a dominant horizon of social orientation and action by means of articulating unfixed elements into partially fixed moments in a context criss-crossed by antagonistic forces.

This definition of hegemony has a general validity for analyzing processes of disarticulation and rearticulation that aim to establish and maintain political as well as moral-intellectual leadership. Thus, the concept of hegemony refers not only to the privileged position of a nation-state in a group of nation-states, but more generally to construction of a predominant discursive formation. (p. 101)

In *Sold*, the novel’s conflict of “antagonistic forces” and the concluding “fixed moment” when Lakshmi finally articulates her identity enabled me to reach conclusions regarding hegemonic processes that further a political D/discourse on America’s global role. Gee’s seven building tasks offered a heuristic that helped to unscramble the discursive conditions which lead to narrative conclusions that support American social activism and moral leadership in “third world” developing countries.

Reading a Book by its Cover

Gazing at us is the face of a young girl (Figure 4.3). Her mouth is covered by a shawl, or the end of a sari. The bright saffron yellow background, with a lightly printed geometric pattern, contrasts sharply with this sepia-washed photograph. The capitalized title “SOLD” hovers in the middle, directly above the girl’s head. From a marketing point of view, the jacket “advertises” the book’s content in an aesthetically unique image that will capture the consumer’s attention. In doing so, it has to activate a whole chain of connections, values, and judgments. Therefore, even before we open the book, our *Discourse models* have been positioned to “read” it for discourses shared in our “community of practice.” According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2001), elements of design, such as the layout, color, text, typography, *provenance*, perspective, and

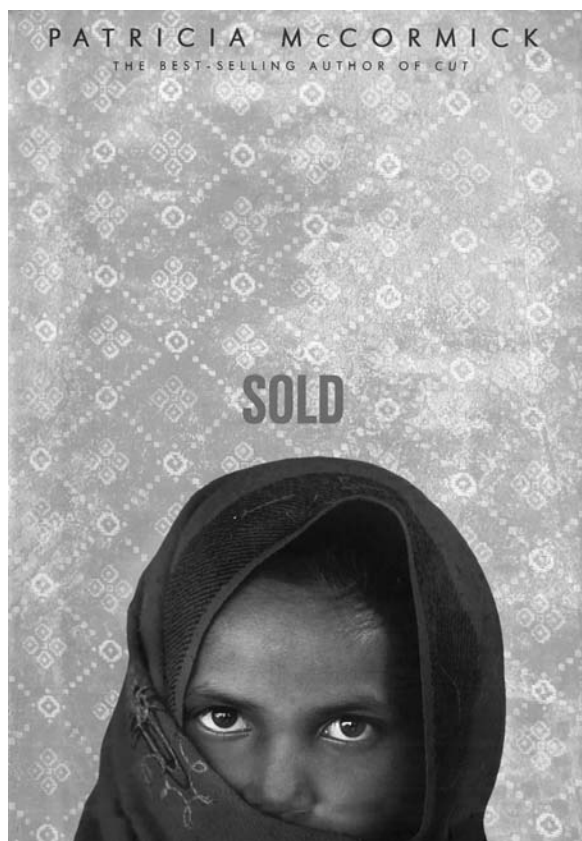


Figure 4.3 “Sold”

mode, are all expressions of this discourse. Kress and van Leeuwen remind us that pictorial structures of design not only reflect reality but are “bound up with the social institutions within which the pictures are produced, circulated, and read. They are ideological” (1996, p. 45). As a discourse, or a certain way of representation, design is a *sign system of knowledge* that conveys a certain kind of *relationship* between the visual and the viewer. There are three dominant elements in this design: text, color, and image.

At the center is the title, *Sold*. The solid red typography alludes to a stamp, a repeatable stamp; much like a label you would find on a sold item. It is not the individuality of handwriting. As a word, the use of the passive voice (*x* is sold by *y*), which excludes agency, indicates *how* this thematic action will take place. A closer look at the printed saffron yellow background reveals several *interdiscursive connections*. To begin with, it evokes cultural connotations, directing the onlooker to a South Asian scenario. Significantly, saffron yellow is directly

associated with the Indian subcontinent. It calls to mind the robes of Hindu and Buddhist monks and the deep saffron (*kesari*) on the Indian flag symbolizes courage, sacrifice, and the spirit of renunciation. All at once, we have *interdiscursive connections* with religion, cultural values, and political identity. Even so, while one may read connotations onto the background, it is important to remember what it is not. It is not deictic of any specific place in India or Nepal. The backdrop of regional and cultural connotations is emptied of any specificity. Context, it would seem, remains on the surface of evocative generalities.

Clearly the focus is on the photograph of the girl. There are three participants in the communicative interaction ensuing from the photograph: the onlooker, the subject of the photograph (who is not acknowledged), and the photographer (duly credited). As a *sign system*, photographs are a “mechanical analogue of reality” (Barthes, 1977, p. 18) and experience. Since a photograph thereby carries the validity of testimony, truth, and objectivity, the onlooker’s trust is strengthened. But, as a signifier, the retro black and white photograph activates *connections* to the old, not contemporary, and hence not modern. The photograph also activates certain kinds of *relationships* between the viewer and the viewed. In fact, some very significant questions arise if the photo is viewed from the position of the photographer (shared by us): Who could see this person in this way? What sort of person would I have to be to occupy that space? And if we remember Susan Sontag’s (2003) observation that “photographs objectify: they turn an event or a person into something that can be possessed” (p. 81), we may well ask: What does it mean to objectify those who cannot respond? These are questions that relate to the viewer’s position of power.

An even closer look at the photograph reveals several semiotic signs: the cultural *provenance* of clothing, and the embodied modes of gesture and gaze. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) refer to *provenance* as signifieds that are “‘imported’ from some other domain (some other place, time, social group, culture) to signify a complex of ideas and values which are associated with that ‘other’ domain by those who do the importing” (p. 72). When signs of *provenance* are consistently repeated, they fossilize into what Roland Barthes (1972) refers to as the *metalanguage* of representation. The woman’s head cover (*burkha*, *chador*, *nijab*) is a persistent example of *provenance* in representations of the exotic or repressed Oriental woman. When one considers this unrelenting and selective representation, the image of a girl’s covered head and mouth certainly signifies cultural practice, but at the second stage of Barthes’ metalanguage, it alludes to being voiceless (Barthes, 1972). Hence, the *provenance* of clothing and an embodied gesture have become a synecdoche for a discourse on repressive cultural practices and female disenfranchisement (Said, 1979). The gaze instead, is strongly experiential, evoking sympathy, engagement, or at the very least, a voyeuristic curiosity. It is *not* the dreamy long-distance gaze of reverie. It is a middle-distance gaze “out of the frame,” that verges on the stare. Certainly, she is not looking at the future, but at *us*, engaging the onlooker in a relationship. It

seems to speak, in lieu of the covered mouth. Much has been written about the gaze. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), the gaze is more interactional than representational (p. 90). They distinguish between *offer* and *demand* in a gaze. An indirect address would represent an *offer*, whereas a direct address represents a *demand* for the viewer to enter into a relationship with the person (pp. 126–127). Other studies consider the frontal or oblique direction of the gaze from behind the camera. John Tagg (1988, p. 189) argues that frontality is a technique of documentation. Reminiscent of the ethnographer's lens, it offers up what is represented for *evaluation*. Tagg describes how historically, the frontal portrait is a “code for social inferiority” (p. 37). If one conceptualizes the photograph in these terms, then the image on the cover goes beyond its exteriority, and enters a Discourse on how identities are construed, and practices of intercultural relationship.

Taken as a dynamic composite of text-image-color, the cover has a narrative and discursive function. To begin with, it speaks about a young girl who has been sold. But, when the discourse of visual sign systems is dismantled, the construct of the “third world” woman's identity becomes evident. She is the not-so-modern, voiceless, or at best muffled subaltern, who *demand*s (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) a relationship of engagement and *evaluation* (Tagg, 1988). But is this a dominant discourse model that cuts across different genres of activity? Kress and van Leeuwen emphasize that “language and visual communication can in many cases express the same kind of relations, albeit in many different ways” (1996, p. 211). With this in mind, I added layers of textual analyses that investigate the relationship between the cover image, vignettes identified as *significant*, the author's interview, and discussion guides.

“Everything I Need to Know” about the “Other Side of the World”

The novel opens with the innocence of childhood. Much like Mary and her little lamb, Lakshmi goes to school followed by her goat Tali. Everything changes after her “first blood.” Now a woman, her mother schools her in “EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW” (pp. 15–16):

Before [italics added] today, Ama says, you could run as free as a leaf in the wind.

Now [italics added], she says, you must carry yourself with modesty, bow your head in the presence of men, and cover yourself with your shawl. (p. 15)

Recalling the shawl-covered girl in the photograph, her look of demand or evaluation is now changed to a downcast gaze of submission. The axis of time (before, now, never) is accompanied by varying degrees of modal verbs. *Before* she “could,” *now* she “must,” and the future is locked in the assertion of a categorical, unconditional and non-modalized “never.” In this how-to-behave list of rules, Lakshmi must:

Never [italics added] look a man in the eye.
 Never allow yourself to be alone with a man who is not family.
 And never look at growing pumpkins or cucumbers when you are
 bleeding.
 Otherwise they will rot. (p. 15)

Once she is married, the mother's sociocultural rule book adopts a conditional if/then sequence, in which every *activity* is conditioned by the male. In this case, the reader knows that the antecedent (if) is not hypothetical, nor is the consequence (then) contingent on a previous event. Instead, the conditional clause alludes to a given causality of circumstantial context.

If [italics added] he burps at the end of the meal, it is a sign that you have
 pleased him.
 If he turns to you in the night, you must give yourself up to him,
 in the hopes that you will bear him a son. (p. 15)

After a series of instructions on breastfeeding a son as against a daughter, the vignette concludes with Lakshmi asking her mother:

"Why," I say, "must women suffer so?"
 "This has always been our fate," she says.
 "Simply to endure," she says, "is to triumph." (p. 16)

Like the photograph on the cover, the use of the present tense is anchored in the "here" and "now" and the reader/viewer becomes a participant in the protagonist's *activity* (Traugott & Pratt, 1980). In fact, just as Lakshmi asked, "Why must women suffer so?" the text demands the reader's engagement and evaluation of these codes of behavior. The mother's reply becomes emblematic of the book's representation of culturally determined female suffering. The sentence "*Simply to endure is to triumph*" appears italicized on the inner jacket of the book. Evoking the stereotypical notion of Hindu passivity, determinism and fatalism, temporality (before-now-always) and causality (if-then) are imprisoned in a sociocultural system which obliterates the experiential difference between passivity ("to endure") and agency ("to triumph"). This timeless obliteration of the human actor is linguistically endorsed by the statement "simply to endure is to triumph," in which a categorical universality is rendered by the present tense copula "is" (Said, 1979, p. 72), and the implicit nominalization of endurance and triumph, shifts the discourse from one of conditional human agency, to the collapsing of the actor into the action itself (Hodge & Kress, 1993, pp. 22–26).

These episodes are directly related to at least three of Gee's building tasks: *identity*, and *ways of knowing and believing*, and *activities*. Lakshmi's *identity* and *ways of knowing and believing* are defined through the *activities* of a girl of a certain culture and socioeconomic status. Gee's seventh building task on knowledge poses the question: "How does this piece of language privilege or

disprivilege . . . different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief?" (Gee, 2006, p. 13). While culture, superstition (looking at cucumbers and pumpkins), and gender roles dictate Lakshmi's *ways of knowing and believing*, what about the reader? The reader too, is limited by the character's referential frame and point of view. Point of view, as Fowler noted (1977, p. 52), constitutes perspective in literature. The stylistic choice of a first-person narrative is not incidental. In the author's interview she states:

I knew immediately that I wanted to do what no one else had done so far: tell this heartbreaking story from *the point view of one individual girl* [italics added]. (McCormick, para. 1)

Stephens (1992) reminds us that total identification with a focalizing character blurs the distance between author-narrator-reader, making the reader susceptible to implicit ideologies (pp. 67–69). In novels written from the perspective of a child, who is not privy to the heterogeneity of societies, the first-person narrative filters the complexity of context. Point of view also accounts for an estrangement from the context. In *Sold*, Lakshmi, the author, and the reader all view Nepal and India as outsiders. As the author says on her webpage interview: "It helped that I was a foreigner on the busy streets of Kathmandu and Calcutta, because I was as bewildered and awestruck by these places as Lakshmi in the novel" (McCormick, ¶ 3). Thus, while the use of the first person effectively focuses the reader's identification and empathy on Lakshmi's experience, thereby fulfilling the *demand* of the haunting gaze on the cover, the individualized perspective limits the reader's peripheral view, enacting *relationships* (Gee's fourth task) that are distanced and non-dialogic. This dislocated⁴ mode of *relating* to the context is brought out in the episode "A NEW WORLD."

Lakshmi is sold to a go-between Auntie. As they walk past the Himalayan countryside, people "gape" at them (a common complaint of foreigners). Recalling the piercing gaze of the girl on the cover, Lakshmi too "stares" at "all the things" she has never seen before.

A man pulling a wild boar on a rope.
A herd of yak hauling sacks of salt.
A mail runner ringing a cluster of bells as he nears a village.
A rope footbridge strung like a spiderweb.
A river that runs white.
And a man with teeth entirely of gold. (p. 58)

Seven pages later, the cinematic panning is repeated when Lakshmi is plunged into an alien Indian city. Craning her neck, Lakshmi looks at:

a man scooping hot popcorn into a paper cone, next to
a barber lathering an old man's face, next to
a boy plucking the feathers from a lifeless chicken . . . (p. 65)

In both passages, the repeated indefinite article “a” foregrounds each line, suggesting a dislocated and distanced *relationship* between the author/narrator and pastoral Nepal or urban India (Hodge & Kress, 1993, pp. 87–89). Compare this with the use of a more contextually situated definite article: “The river runs white,” “The man with teeth entirely of gold.” That would have been an insider’s point of view. I suggest that the technology of viewing and recording reality mediates ways of *knowing*, writing, and *relating* to context. McCormick writes on her website, “trained as an investigative reporter, I took notes and photos observing the sights, smells, foods, sounds, and the custom-details to give the book authenticity” (§ 3). Transposed to language-use, what we have is a series of disjointed photographic images. This is another aspect of Kress and Leeuwen’s (2001) notion of *provenance*, which typically points to where signs come from, but in an “unsystematic, *ad hoc* manner, which is often communicated as a pastiche or list” (p. 73). With a sharp focus on individuals and their actions, the contextual frame of reference is blurred into blankness. Rather than leading the reader into the visual space, zooming in from large to small (or the reverse), this technique quickly transitions from one scene to another, mimicking a series of photographs. The panning of street life continues for the rest of the page, till Lakshmi wonders:

In this swarming, hurry-up city,
what will happen
next
to me. (“Next,” pp. 65–66)

By the end of the vignette, the locative connector, “next to,” takes on the added function of a temporal “next,” shifting the expository narration, to the happening of plot. This is achieved by the spatial splitting of “next” and “to me.” Organization of words and the use of empty space can be considered as a *sign system* which highlights the relationship between the text and the reader. Referring to the several episodes which are only a few lines, McCormick comments, “I also think the ‘white space’ between vignettes calls on the reader to engage his or her imagination in the story-telling process to fill in the blanks.” In this regard, Terry Eagleton’s comment on imagination comes to mind:

The imagination is the faculty by which you can empathize with others—by which, for example, you can feel your way into the unknown territory of another culture . . . But this leaves unresolved the question of where you, as opposed to they, are actually standing. . . . (2000, p. 45)

The episode ends with two words: “to me.” As a passive form, it forebodes the actions the protagonist will undergo. Drugged and beaten into submission, Lakshmi is now schooled in the rules, routines, and ruses of prostitution. In the episode “EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW NOW,” (pp. 141–142) Shahanna instructs her:

Before [italics added] when you were in the locked room, Shahanna says, Mumtaz sent the customers to you. *Now* [italics added], if you want to pay off your debt, you must do what it takes to make them choose you . . .

Always wash yourself with a wet rag after the man is finished . . .

. . . *If* [italics added] a customer likes you, he may give you a sweet . . .

If a customer likes you, he may give you a tip . . .

The temporal axis of “before-now-always” and the use of conditional clauses mirror the earlier episode “EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW” when her mother instructed her on what a woman should and should not do. The similar patterning of these episodes prompts *connections* between the two *activities*. In fact, on publisher Hyperion’s discussion guide, students are asked to: “Discuss the vignette entitled ‘Everything I Need to Know Now.’ What do you think of the cultural mandates that she must live by? Compare it to the vignette of the same title that appears later when she is in the city. How does it represent all the changes in her life?” Gee’s building task on *connections* asks: “How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?” (p. 13). Both episodes are about female existence and *identity*. But, in the first episode gender roles are connected to cultural sanctions, whereas in the second episode the subservience and conditional causality of a woman’s existence is connected to the gendered economics of sex trade. The marked parallelism in the form of the two episodes draws *connections* between these two domains: “cultural mandates” and “sex trade.” This latent intersection elides economic factors; parents sell their children because of poverty, not because of culture. The fusion of culture and exploitation is underscored by the shawl as a connecting signifier. While the earlier episode (EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW) referred to the cultural function of the shawl, it now takes on the dubious roles of a marketing lure, a protective shield, and finally a possible noose. As the girls “paint their faces,” one of them explains to Lakshmi another semiotic performance of the shawl:

There are special things you need to know about how to use your shawl,
she says.

Flick the ends of your shawl in a come-closer gesture and

You will bring the shy men to your bed . . .

. . . Draw your shawl to your chin, bend your neck like a peacock.

This will bring the older men to your bed . . .

Press your shawl to your chin with the back of your hand . . .

when you must bring a dirty man to your bed. (pp. 142–143)

The reader can now conjecture as to why the girl in the photograph covers her mouth. Perhaps it was not a gesture of voiceless submission, but of repulsion. The passage concludes ominously with another use of the shawl:

There is another way to use a shawl, she says . . .

. . . That new girl, the one in your old room, she says.

Yesterday morning Mumtaz found her hanging from the rafters. (p. 143)

Clearly, the D/discourse is about the annihilating exploitation of women. Culturally prescribed gender roles and economic enslavement are to blame. In her foundational 1984 paper "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourse," Chandra Talpade Mohanty (cited in Brydon, 2000) suggests that "the singular, monolithic notion of patriarchy or male dominance leads to the construction of a similarly reductive and homogeneous notion of what I call the 'Third World Difference' – that stable, ahistorical something that apparently oppresses most if not all the women in these countries" (p. 1185). Ratna Kapur (2005), who also writes from a framework of postcolonial feminism, examines how trafficking and violence against women and sexuality in the context of human rights have served to reinforce the first world/third world divide. She comments that the prevalent characterization of sex workers as victims of a culturally endorsed practice, and the persistence of economic exploitation, is an approach "located on an East/West binary and assumes that choice is possible in the West, while economic oppression in Asia is so all encompassing, that the very possibility of choice or agency is negated" (p. 76).⁵ hile undoubtedly the "fetishism" of selective and homogenous representations persists, in a world of cultural hybridity (Bhabha, 1994) and sensitivity to what Abdul JanMohamed (1986) referred to as the Manichaeon allegory, a critical analysis of D/discourse cannot be limited to ferreting out generalizations, differences, and equivalences in a text (such as South Asian culture = male dominance); instead, an analysis of power relations needs to identify and describe how these ethical, cultural, and existential models are resisted and changed within the text. In short, who has the power to engender change? How does Lakshmi break the shackles of a culture portrayed as "simply to endure is to triumph"? How does she discount the calculations of poverty and dependence? How does she get and use voice?

"I Know This Voice. It is My American."

As the book progresses, *Sold* actually presents the hybridity of two cultures operating in India and Nepal: South Asian culture and the globalization of American culture and commodities. In the Himalayan village, culture is a mélange of Hindu festivals, cultural practices, and superstitions. But in "Happiness House," American cultural icons become far more active. Though "posters of gods" plaster the walls, the practice of religion is not portrayed. Instead, the girls watch *The Bold and the Beautiful*. Shahanna comments, "It's from America. It's our favorite show" (p. 136). Similarly, a bottle of Coca-Cola holds promises of happiness. Lakshmi is curious about this drink since "the people who drink it on TV are happy when its tiny fireworks go off in their mouths" (p. 235). McCormick is equally wary of falling into facile moral binaries of east/west.

Lakshmi's customers include a gentle Indian, a drunken American, and an American who promises to take her away to a shelter for girls.

However, despite the author's careful calibration of the good, bad, and ugly, the power to change Lakshmi's situation does not come from within South Asian society. It is not one of the many South Asian grassroots movements (included in the author's acknowledgements) that comes to Lakshmi's rescue, but an American. I argue that the latent message is that South Asian society offers little potential for positive change. Instead, the American abroad is at the center of a transformative discourse on literacy and the articulation of individual identity. For the women of the brothel, literacy is a curse. As Harish, the little boy who befriends Lakshmi, cautions: "If they find out you can read and write, they will think you are planning to escape" (p. 171). Harish goes to a "singing-and-playing school" run by a "kind" American lady. In this value-added package of friendship-innocence-literacy-freedom-America, he represents the mediator between the disempowered subaltern and American goodwill. It is he who secretly teaches Lakshmi Hindi and even English, while reassuring her that she can trust Americans, despite Anita's warning:

The Americans will try to trick you into running away . . . Don't be fooled. They will shame you and make you walk naked through the streets.
(p. 142)

Soon Lakshmi learns "American words" from a storybook given to Harish by the American lady. She can now say:

Big Bird,
Elmo,
ice cream,
soccer. (p. 174)

Literacy is firmly grounded in the tropes of American childhood. Unlike the dubious aspirations of *The Bold and the Beautiful*, this is the "good" humanist export of American culture (a Hindi version of Sesame Street, called Galli Galli Sim Sim, was released in 2006, the year *Sold* was published). We are given to understand that it is thanks to Harish that the Americans organize a police raid. And it is Harish who teaches Lakshmi the words of self-awareness:

"My name is Lakshmi," . . .
"I am from Nepal.
I am thirteen years old." (p. 192)

These are the words she repeats to herself, and these are the words of freedom, that she announces to her liberators. The use of italics in both passages draws the reader's attention to a *connection* between two Discourses: the positive icons of American childhood and the enunciation of her identity. In short, Lakshmi's

identity is articulated in terms of America and literacy. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) describe hegemonic discourses as the result of articulation, where articulation is a “practice establishing relations among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of articulatory practice” (p. 105). Torfing (1999) succinctly adds that “articulations that take place in a context of antagonistic struggles and conflicts are defined as hegemonic articulations” (p. 298). Lakshmi’s self-defining articulation is a hegemonic discourse in so far as it is contingent on the resolution of a discursive struggle between two political forces: the American as friend or foe. The role of the “good” American abroad culminates in the final episode titled “THE WORDS HARISH TAUGHT ME.”

Stephens (1992) reminds us that “Intentionality can only be fully attributed to a text from the perspective of the close” and “Endings reaffirm what society regards as important issues and preferred outcomes” (pp. 42–43). Seen from this perspective, closures often indicate an ideological conclusion to the book’s discourse. It is a year since Lakshmi left her village. After “days of waiting for the American” who had promised to liberate her, the book concludes with a raid, and Lakshmi’s reassurance that “her” American has arrived:

I know this voice. It is my American . . .
 It is an American, I whisper . . .
 The American is shouting something . . . he is calling out to me . . .
 I cannot go to my American . . .
 But I can still hear the American . . .
 The American calls out . . .
 My American is leaving . . . Something inside me breaks open, and I run
 down the steps . . .
 I see my American. There are other men with him, Indian men, and the
 American lady from the picture.
 “*My name is Lakshmi*”, I say.
 “*I am from Nepal.*
I am fourteen years old.”(p. 263)

This is a political ending. Gee’s fifth building task is *politics*. Gee asks: “What is the politics of the situation, who has what status and power over when and where? (2006, p. 174). In this brief concluding episode of three pages, the word “American” occurs nine times. Notably, it is a political Discourse on the trustworthy commitment of the good American abroad, and *not* about collective or indigenous social change. This liberal humanist focus on individual agency as evidence of a possible challenge to systems and its eventual transformation dismisses the context of the social, economic, and historical. Most importantly, the narrative of the American as liberator discounts homegrown movements. The reality on the ground says otherwise. In the book’s coda of acknowledgements, McCormick writes:

This book could not have been written without the help of Ruchira Gupta and Anuradha Koriala, who paved the way for me to visit the Maiti Nepal

shelter for women and children in Kathmandu; the village of Goldbungha in the Himalayas, and the Deepika Social Welfare Center for Women and Children in the red-light district of Calcutta.

It is unfortunate that considering the courageous work done by several Nepali and Indian women, *Sold* portrays the "third world" woman as one whose liberation and identity cannot emerge from within her own society and culture. One can of course dismiss the American presence as a necessary narrative ploy that makes the text relevant to an implied American reader. It can also be read as an instructive narrative about a nation's export of goodwill, individual freedom, and enlightened modernity. From a humanitarian point of view, one may argue that the right to protect (R2P) is above and beyond nations, cultures, and ideologies. Others may contend that imagination is an artistic license which should not be conflated with political nuances.

Whether the novel's conclusion is a response to an implied market, a reflection of political models (not necessarily mutually exclusive), or is validated by its firm ethical footing, the question still remains as to how knowing and understanding "the other world" finds its resolution in praiseworthy American intervention. It is a moot question if one considers the current scenario of international relations. As Homi Bhabha (1990) puts it, the people are "constructed in the performance of narrative" (p. 299). The people are also constructed through the performance of education. In an attempt to investigate how institutions (in this case the publisher) further the educational "performance" of a narrative, I turned to publisher Hyperion's discussion guide. Students are asked to consider: "What was the most disturbing part of this story for you? What facts crawled under your skin and continue to haunt you? Do you think there is anything you can do to help? What?" It appears that emotive empathy with the protagonist is the privileged way of understanding what happens beneath the surface. Even "facts" crawl "under your skin," grafting the "other side of the world." I suggest that the pedagogical enterprise of privileging *ways of knowing* that heighten individuation and *relationships* that are de-contextualized may induce empathy with a human condition, but an enthusiasm for individuals as the source of meaning, action, and change, is untenable because the supporting framework of political and socioeconomic assumptions is not accounted for.

Constructing the "Third World" Narrative

This chapter began with the question: How does the enactment of *significance, activities, identities, relationships, connections, and knowledge practices* condition the *political* discourse on individual/social change in literature written by North Americans about "third world" developing countries? Operationalizing Gee's seven building tasks used to "create or build the world of activities" (2006, p. 10) has helped me reveal the discursive conditions which lead us to accept a D/discourse in which emancipatory change comes primarily from an American presence.

First, I would conclude that an analysis of the book cover, text, and discussion guides reveals that the hegemonic *political* discourse on individual/social change in developing countries is contingent on the positive equivalence of a chain of *activities*: friendship-literacy-enunciation of consciousness-the American-liberation. Second, the efficacy of this chain of equivalence (to use a Laclauian term) depends on an oppositional *relationship* with another set. For example, in *Sold*, *connections* are drawn between culture-gender disempowerment-poverty-sexual exploitation. These connections negate the possibility of change from within the “third world.” Operating from this premise, the promise of individual/social transformation is now open to a neocolonial discourse which portrays the subaltern third-worlder’s *identity* as “incapable of defining itself” (Said, 1979, p. 301) in an autonomous frame of reference. Roderick McGillis’ description of neocolonialism comes to mind: “neocolonialism manifests itself as both a depiction of minority cultures as inveterately other and inferior in some ways to the dominant European or Eurocentric culture” (2000, p. xxiv). Third, when the macro *significance* deals with human rights violations, questioning who has the power to engender change or how the subaltern is voiced becomes irrelevant. In such cases, it would even be immoral to talk about covert political deployment. This de-politicization of *Discourse models* is furthered in educational *knowledge practices* that promote affective engagement and a heightened individuation that is de-contextualized and un-problematized. By foregrounding personal engagement, the underlying *political* discourse is obscured. And by continuing the dichotomy between West and the rest, “the other side of the world” is then once again proved to be incompetent. Nonetheless, it bears repeating that the importance of literature lies precisely in its potential to provoke a dialogue that is willing to confront ambiguities, fathom complexities, and challenge comfortable assumptions. This chapter is an attempt to stir, and bring to the surface, the kind of reflection from which such learning is launched.

Conclusion

Learning has been described as a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 2002) or a “way of talking about the shared historical and social resources, frameworks, and perspectives that can sustain mutual engagement in action” (Wenger, 1998, p. 5). If learning activates communal identity, the problem for global relationships is clear. How does one veer away from the pitfalls of divisive parochialism? Or, as Gee (2008) observes, “with the notion of a ‘community’ we can’t go any further until we have defined who is in and who is not, since otherwise we can’t identify the community” (p. 88). When reading and re-reading *Sold*, I was constantly reminded that in the case of literature about the world, transformative learning is the willingness to question the “communities of practice” we are entrenched in, and identify how the text and image defines “who is in and who is not” part of that shared “engagement in action.”

Reading *Sold* through a postcolonial and neocolonial lens would have immediately directed me to the exclusion of the “third world’s” potential in engaging with the *telos* of human emancipation. So why combine it with CDA? To begin with, CDA and multimodal analysis strengthen postcolonial/neocolonial discourse analysis, giving it a systematic process-oriented methodology that can translate theory into a critical praxis of reading. In fact, CDA, social semiotic theories, and postcolonial theories form a compatible set of analytical tools, sharing a common concern with the imbrications between discourse, ideology, power, identity, and practice. Combined, this ‘tool-kit’ can lay bare how a book’s D/discourse places the reader in naturalized subject positions of power with respect to the disenfranchised. Finally, a ‘third world’ perspective satisfies what Fairclough described as socially transformative learning: “a relatively high degree of dialogicality and orientation to difference” (2004, p. 233).

CDA, postcolonial and neocolonial theories are all concerned with the exercise of power. Yet, while analyzing *Sold*, I became aware that power circulates ubiquitously, both within the text and in the interpreter. In the book, Lakshmi’s father, the brothel owner, and the American all exercised power over her identity. In tandem with each of these narrative sites of power, I too weighed in with the loci of my identities: the independent woman, the Indian-American, the third-worlder, the educator, and the researcher. As a woman, my sentiments tugged me unequivocally toward female empowerment, in whatever way that may come about. As an Indian-American who has lived in the United States for 16 years, I still harbor the innate pride of a third-worlder who is always aware of a selective and enduring genealogy in the representation of the “third world” woman. Growing up in post-independence India, I belonged to a generation which knew about US journalist Katherine Mayo’s justification of British rule and her searing attack on Indian nationalism. In her infamous book *Mother India* (1927), Mayo gave a detailed account of public health in India and more explicitly the sexual practices of the Indian woman. Mahatma Gandhi famously referred to Mayo’s book as the “drain-inspector’s report.” What remains of this dubious legacy is the specter of how others choose to see the South Asian woman. As a teacher of children’s and young adult literature about the world, I grapple with the daunting task of balancing universal values with a principle of difference and autonomy. And as a critic, I am acutely aware that the bridge between analysis and interpretation is always suspect. It is a difficult position to be in. Yet, it is the awareness of the multiple and frequently conflicting sites of our identities that strengthens how we analyze, learn, and interpret. Weaving into the text and out of ourselves, we can bring context and complexity to the way we look at the world.

Notes

- 1 Young (2003) has this to say about the contemporary use of the term “third world”: “At the Bandung Conference of 1955, 29 mostly newly independent African and Asian countries . . . initiated what became known as the non-aligned movement. They saw themselves as an independent power bloc, with a new ‘third world’ perspective on

political, economic, and cultural global priorities” (p. 17). This was a time when the world was divided into two major political systems, capitalism (the first world) and socialism (the second world).

- 2 American Library Association’s 2007 Top Ten Best Books for Young Adults; Booklist Editors’ Choice (Youth), 2006; Children’s Literature Council’s Choice, 2007; National Book Award finalist, 2006; Publishers Weekly, Best 100 Books of 2006; YALSA Best Books for Young Adults 2007.
- 3 In *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, Gee (2006) states that, “a discourse analyst can ask seven different questions about any piece of language-in-use” (p. 11). These are:

Significance: “How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not and in what ways?”

Activities: “What activity or activities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e. get others to recognize as going on)?”

Identities: “What identity or identities is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e. get others to recognize as operative)?”

Relationships: “What sort of relationship or relationships is this piece of language seeking to enact with others (present or not)?”

Politics: “What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating (i.e. what is being communicated as to what is taken to be ‘normal,’ ‘right,’ ‘good,’ ‘correct,’ ‘proper,’ ‘appropriate,’ ‘valuable,’ ‘the way things are,’ ‘the way things ought to be,’ ‘the high status or low status,’ ‘like me or not like me,’ and so forth?”

Connections: “How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?”

Sign systems and knowledge: “How does this piece of knowledge privilege or disprivilege specific sign systems (e.g. Spanish vs. English, technical language vs. everyday language, words vs. images, words vs. equations) or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief?” (Gee, 2006, pp. 11–13).

- 4 Torfing (1999) describes dislocation as the “destabilization of a discourse that results from the emergence of events which cannot be domesticated, symbolized or integrated within the discourse in question” (p. 301).
- 5 A salient example of collective agency is the Kolkata based sex workers’ union. In 1995, the Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC) formed a forum of transgender, male, and female sex workers and their children. Demanding their right to form a trade union, they lobbied for their basic human rights, security for their children, old age support and better working conditions. As their program director put it, “They work with their bodies and hence they want workers’ rights” (*The Times of India*, 2005). The DMSC’s “Sex Workers Manifesto” has been taken up by other sex workers’ unions in India. A copy can be downloaded from the website of Network of Sex Work Projects (www.nswp.org/rights/dmsc), an international organization operating in 40 countries.

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5 Figured Worlds and Discourses of Masculinity: Being a Boy in a Literacy Classroom

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Theories about masculinities (e.g., Coles, 2009; Connell, 2005; Jackson & Salisbury, 1996) suggest that there are multiple Discourses (Gee, 1996; 2007; this volume) or ways of being and doing masculinity. Discourses of masculinity are constructed and reconstructed over time within different social and cultural groups. These groups (e.g., families, sports teams, street gangs, literacy professors, high school English teachers) share conventions about language and activities such as speaking, writing, reading, acting, interacting, valuing, dressing, and so on. In this chapter, we explore the activities and language conventions within the Discourses of a Mexican American adolescent who was aspiring to be a certain kind of popular male athlete and literacy student.

Masculinity theories recognize that masculinities and femininities are constituted in relation to one another, and that some Discourses¹ of being masculine hold more social status and power than others, depending on the particular social contexts (Coles, 2009; Connell, 2005; Jackson & Salisbury, 1996; Reed, 1999). Often, however, Discourses of masculinity are represented as stable and nonnegotiable. For example, *machismo*, a concept associated with Hispanic masculinity, has been represented as a rigid set of practices such as domination of women, aggression, confrontational behavior, and a strict division of labor in the household (Klein, 2000). Recent research (e.g., Klein, 2000; Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank & Tracey, 2008) found that there are varying degrees and dimensions of machismo, and Hispanic men are far more complicated and diverse than the generalized concept of machismo might suggest. Still, the beliefs associated with the ideals of machismo linger and serve to perpetuate rigid stereotypes about Hispanic men.

Critical discourse analysis allows for the study of the Discourses of masculinity through an analysis of social practices. In this chapter, we (two middle-class White females) adapted Gee's (2005; this volume) guidelines for critical discourse analysis to explore how Chavo's (a middle-class, Mexican American, 18-year-old male) constructions of masculinity shaped his participation in school literacy activities and the way that school literacy activities and classroom contexts, in turn, shaped his understandings of what it meant to be a boy in a literacy classroom.

Chavo was aware, as early as middle school, of the different Discourses of

masculinity (e.g., popular male athlete, nerd, skater) that existed at his school. To be recognized as a member of the popular male athlete Discourse—a Discourse to which he aspired—he took steps to hide his good grades and learned ways to pass English courses without reading the required texts. Chavo's story is not unique among adolescent boys. What is unique was his ability to articulate the practices/activities of masculinity and literacy that he believed would help others recognize him as a certain kind of young man. Chavo was 1 of 21 adolescent males who participated in a narrative inquiry that explored what was happening with and to them in a variety of literacy classrooms in the southwestern United States (Young, Hardenbrook, Esch, Hansen, & Griffith, 2003). Our purposes in highlighting Chavo's literacy stories in this chapter are twofold: (a) to complicate simplistic notions of male stereotypes; and (b) to make visible the ways in which critical discourse analysis can allow us to understand the multiple Discourses that inform our beliefs and understandings of masculinities and literacy participation.

During the year-long study in which Chavo was a participant, Marsh (aka Young), along with four other researchers, observed seven adolescent literacy classrooms (e.g., English, reading, humanities, and writing) and selected three male focal students from each site to observe and interview. We interviewed these male students and their teachers and parents about their literacy and gender beliefs and practices. We also wrote weekly field notes about the literacy class in general and the ways that the focal students participated in it more specifically.

Meant to add to the growing body of research about boys, masculinities, and literacies, the purpose of the study (Young et al., 2003) was to gain an understanding of what it is like to be a boy in an adolescent literacy classroom. This research was timely given the resurgence of concern over boys' achievement, especially literacy achievement, in schools (e.g., Beaupre, 2003; Lesko, 2000; Smith & Wilhelm, 2002). These concerns rose to near panic status in the United States after the rash of school violence in late 1990s; statistics showing declines in school achievement (Hedges & Nowell, 1995) and male college attendance (e.g., Fonda, 2000; Goodman, 2002) were publicized, and boys' high school reading and writing standardized test scores fell (Beaupre, 2003). For example, Sommers (2000) suggested that we are waging a *war against boys*, and Faludi (1999) wrote about betraying our boys and men. Our study was particularly concerned with the trouble some boys seemed to be having in the area of school literacy. For instance, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2000), boys were three to five times more likely than girls to be placed in learning/reading disabilities classes. Boys in elementary through high school scored lower than girls on standardized measures of reading achievement (Hedges & Nowell, 1995), and were less likely than girls to enroll in advanced placement (AP) courses in language, literature, and history (College Board, 2007). Still, almost 10 years later, our research remains timely as concerns about boys' achievement and the existence of a gender gap continue to garner the attention of the media (Cook, 2006; Tyre, 2006) and educational researchers

(Downey & Vogt-Yuan, 2005; Hammett & Sanford, 2008). However, recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results (Mead, 2006) do not support the notion that boys' achievement is continuing to fall. For example, fourth- and eighth-grade reading assessment scores on the 2003 test show improvement. These data, however, are less clear for older boys, with 17-year-old boys' scores falling, but the gap between boys and girls was not much different than it was in the 1970s. Boys' graduation rates are also lower than those of their female counterparts, and these differences are magnified among Black students (Lloyd, 2007).

Some educators, journalists, and lawmakers called for (and still call for) quick fixes that rely on equal opportunity approaches to curriculum (Brozo & Gaskins, 2009; Skelton, 1998). Solutions include returning the so-called feminized literacy classrooms back to the boys by hiring more male teachers, providing all-male classrooms and more male literacy role models, and using more *boy books*, which focus on stereotypical male interests (Brozo & Gaskins, 2009; Scieszka, 2003). These calls for reform tend to narrowly define masculinity and do not take into account race, class, and the long history of the *boy problem* in schools (Griffith, 2009; Tatum, 2008a; Tatum, 2008b; Tyack & Hansot, 1990). They also tend to reinforce stereotypical gender roles by pitting boys' literacy needs against girls' (AAUW, 2009) and promoting a "boys will be boys" ideology (Kimmel, 2000, p. 7). In addition, these solutions have not adequately addressed the social complexities inherent in Discourses of masculinity and school literacy practices.

Discussions that theorize masculinities are taking place within literacy education (e.g., Alloway, 2007; Blair & Sanford, 2004; Madill, 2009; Martino & Kehler, 2007; Tatum, 2008a, 2008b; Young, 2000). These discussions about the practices of masculinity enable us to explore the ways that race, ethnicity, and social class complicate the picture of boys' literacy achievements and school behaviors (Griffith, 2009; Kimmel, 2000; Tatum, 2008b). They make visible the practices of masculinity and includes masculinity in our discussions about gender (Kimmel, 2000). Discussions of masculinity also make visible the influence of social contexts and diversity on how boys do and think about gender and literacy and can inform our thinking about ways to engage boys in school literacy. It is our intention to highlight some of these complexities through the analyses presented in this chapter.

The Gender Order and Discourses of Masculinity

Certain social practices/activities and Discourses of masculinity come with more social status, potential power, and social goods than others. R. W. Connell (1987) used the term "gender order" (p. 91) to describe the hierarchies present between and among the different ways of being masculine and feminine. He theorized that the Discourses of masculinity interact with institutional and societal relations to negotiate and construct hierarchies and differences. These differences and hierarchies are known as the gender order and are influenced

by race, class, age, and sexual orientation. In addition, the gender order is not static; it is constantly changing and creating relations of power between men and women and among men. The gender order describes the political nature of Discourses of masculinity and is important to keep in mind when thinking about boys and literacy because it works to limit the way boys and men participate in literate activities in and out of school. For instance, boys and men who strive for membership in a more dominant Discourse (one that defines a *real man*) may adopt particular literacy practices that they believe will identify them as a member of that particular *real man* Discourse. These practices might include liking books with action-filled plots, identifying with male characters not female ones, and selecting books and other texts written by and about men; or they might include withholding all participation in school literacy practices. In other words, boys who wish to be viewed as a boy of a certain sort (e.g., jocks, nerds, skaters, gays) must “talk the talk” and “walk the walk” (Gee, 2005, p. 21). They must learn to read (or not read), write (or not write), and so on like others who claim membership in that particular Discourse of masculinity. This learning takes place as they interact with others over time within particular social contexts.

Critical Discourse Analysis

This research depicts stories recalled by Chavo, his mother, and his humanities teacher of Chavo’s lived literacy experiences. The stories were told to me (first author, Marsh) during individual semi-structured interviews with Chavo, his mother, and his teacher, and they reflect my observations in Chavo’s senior-level honors humanities classroom over a 6-month period and my informal observations of him in the sports arena for several years. As I constructed the stories for this chapter, I used four theoretical tools of inquiry suggested by Gee (2005; this volume) for critical discourse analysis. The four tools I used were (a) Discourses, (b) social languages, (c) situated meanings, and (d) figured worlds. Although all of these were useful in helping me understand the Discourses that influenced Chavo, because of page limitations I focus primarily on figured worlds for this analysis.

The first tool, Discourses, framed the study. I sought to identify the Discourses in which Chavo, his mother, and teacher were members and understand how these Discourses informed their ways of thinking, speaking, reading, acting, and so on. The other theoretical tools assisted me in this process and offered questions to guide my thinking about the data. The questions, adapted from Gee (2005), helped me look closely at the words, how they were put together within different social contexts.

The theoretical tools of *social languages* and *situated meanings* assisted my analysis. Social language is the way a person speaks or writes to enact a particular identity (e.g., Chavo’s use of the phrase *it sucks* when he described the humanities class to his teammates so that he appeared to be a certain kind of guy). Situated meanings or utterance-token meanings (see Gee, this volume),

refer to the multiple connotations words take on in different contexts. As I read the data, I asked questions to help me understand the situated meanings constructed and the social languages used during our interviews and informal chats. These questions included the following adapted from Gee (2005): What social language did Chavo use in his conversation during the interview? How did this social language represent him? How did the contexts shape the meaning of his responses? What sorts of discourse patterns indicate this?

In this way, I considered how social language and the situated meanings constructed during the interviews influenced the way participants used language to represent themselves and their ideas. For example, during an interview, Chavo told me that the humanities class “isn’t motivational.” He used language that defined him as a student within the context of a formal interview with a professor. Using the terms *isn’t motivational* helped me to recognize him as an experienced student—one who knew the lingo of school and one who blamed the course for his disinterest. One reasonable meaning that I could infer from this statement was that Chavo did not like the class, but he did not want to come out and tell me this during the interview. Perhaps he was unsure if I would report back to his teacher or mother. Perhaps he did not want me to think less of him as a student, so he blamed the course. Interestingly, in speaking about the same class to a soccer teammate who was considering signing up for it the following year, I overheard Chavo tell him that the course “sucked.” The term *sucked* in this context helped his teammate recognize him as a fellow teenage athlete who did not like English courses, especially this one. As with *isn’t motivational*, the terms *class sucked* also placed the blame for his disinterest and dislike for the course on the course, but in more popular terms. In both instances, Chavo used social language to enact a particular kind of identity situated within different social contexts—one as a student talking to a professor, one as a fellow male athlete.

Figured worlds is the fourth analytical tool suggested by Gee (this volume) and the major analytical tool used during this analysis. Applying the concept of figured worlds helped me make visible and understand how Chavo’s constructions of masculinity shaped his literacy practices and how, in turn, his literacy practices shaped his understandings of what it meant to be a boy in a literacy classroom. Figured worlds, similar to cultural models (Gee, this volume), are everyday storylines or theories that help individuals determine what is normal and typical within a particular Discourse. It is the beliefs, values, and attitudes held that inform what we say and how we act, read, and interact. Figured worlds are not static; they change as we interact, read, experience, observe, and adapt to new situations, and they mean different things to members of different Discourse communities. For example, the figured world storyline *boys will be boys* means something slightly different to mothers, young boys, adolescents, coaches, and teachers. Using figured worlds as a tool of inquiry led me to ask interpretive questions such as: What figured worlds were relevant to Chavo, his mother, and his teacher? How consistent are the figured worlds throughout the study? How do figured worlds relevant to Chavo, his mother, and his teacher

reproduce, transform, and create Discourses and the social practices associated with being male in adolescent literacy classrooms?

To construct stories about Chavo's literacy practices/activities, I first read and reread the data many times and asked the questions of the data related to Gee's theoretical tools (2005; this volume). I selected snippets from the interview transcripts and observational data that seemed to answer my research question about what it was like for Chavo to participate in literacy classrooms and how his constructions of masculinity might have shaped his participation in school literacy. I organized the transcripts into lines and stanzas as defined by Gee (2005). Each line consisted of a single idea unit or a small piece of information, and a set of connected lines that were about a theme, perspective, topic, or image was considered a stanza. In other words, I left large portions of the transcripts intact and did not rearrange the lines of the transcripts. I titled each stanza to help me determine themes and perspectives of the speakers. The following is a stanza I titled *Chavo Used to Read*. It represents an idea unit represented by a snippet of intact transcript.

Chavo Used to Read

*In sixth grade, ah,
we had a list of all the honors' books and
I had my mom go pick up like four or five of those during the summer.
In sixth grade and
I read them all and then seventh and eighth grade
I just, I don't know, I just decided not to do that anymore.*

I then constructed a 27-stanza narrative that wove together transcripts from interviews I conducted with Chavo, his mother, and his teacher. Using Chavo's transcripts as the foundation for each stanza, I selected transcripts from Chavo's mother and teacher that informed Chavo's words. This sort of multi-vocal transcript provided me with a fuller picture of Chavo and his figured worlds. It allowed me to ask analytical questions of the data and to make hypotheses about how the activities and beliefs about masculinity of each speaker were constitutive. I then separated the stanzas back by speaker in an effort to represent different perspectives about Chavo's literacy and masculinity.

In the following section, I present stories about Chavo's literacies and masculinities in the words of Chavo's mother, teacher, and Chavo himself. I constructed stories using the word-for-word transcripts of the interviews with his mother, his teacher, and Chavo. I took out sound representations such as "um," "ah," and false starts to make the text more easily read (Institute of Oral History, 2001). I also deleted my interview questions that elicited these responses. I reorganized the stanzas for the purpose of connecting ideas or themes, but did not rearrange the lines within each stanza, thus leaving most of the transcripts intact. Then within each story of Chavo, I took apart the transcript again and looked carefully at the form and function of the words spoken by each participant. For example, to understand the figured worlds that were relevant to

Theresa, Chavo's mother, about her son's literate life, I found that her use of reported speech (dialogue used in retellings of events such as I said . . . , he said . . .) served as evidence to support the figured worlds informing her beliefs. I then isolated the reported speech and organized it into stanzas. This microanalysis of the transcripts helped me see more clearly how Theresa perceived Chavo's literacy experiences and facilitated my interpretation of the function that reported speech played in Theresa's story of Chavo. Likewise, in Ms. Brown's story of Chavo, I found her use of two descriptive nominalizations (compound nouns used to name a certain kind of person, place, thing—e.g., a literature kid or a man's man) and reported speech to be powerful in determining the figured worlds important to her. For Chavo's story, I focused my analysis on his use of I-statements (e.g., I know, I read) during the microanalysis of his transcripts. In each case, I isolated the specific words (e.g., nominalizations or I-statements) and thought carefully about what they were telling me about figured worlds and Discourse.

Stories of Chavo's Adolescent Literacy Experiences

From His Mother's Perspective

Chavo's mother, Theresa, is Hispanic and the mother of four sons. Chavo is the next to youngest. For many years, she stayed at home with the boys and participated in their school and after-school activities. She recalled that Chavo spent long hours putting puzzles together when he was preschool age, and that he loved to sit on her lap and be read to when he was young. He would snuggle up to her and ask her to read his favorite books. In fact, he was so interested in reading at an early age that she taught him to read before he entered kindergarten. Later when he was a bit older, Chavo's father took over the nightly reading by reading aloud to Chavo and his three brothers from classic and popular novels.

Literacy was an important part of Chavo's household. Both parents are strong readers, and the family always deemed education an essential aspect of their lives. As young children, Chavo and the brother closest in age to him played creatively, much of the time without toys, making up their own stories and games. As they grew up, they played outside sports with the neighborhood boys and engaged in computer games together and alone. When Chavo entered high school and his younger brother was in middle school, Theresa went back to school to become a licensed social worker. Chavo saw her reading and studying during the years in which she pursued her master's degree. He also observed his Euro-American father, a public health physician and university instructor, studying his medical journals, writing a textbook, and grading medical student papers. Chavo was surrounded at home by people who read and wrote, and never lacked literacy-related texts and tools—books, magazines, newspapers, computers, paper, and so on. In fact, Theresa reported that Chavo read the sports section of the newspaper every day. The following snapshot presented in

Theresa's voice is a brief overview of her memories about Chavo's past participation in school literacy activities.

Figured World 1: Chavo Was Not Challenged at School

I.

Chavo was reading by the time he was in kindergarten,
And, so by the time he got to first grade,
He was in the top reading group.

He always did like rules and he always followed them.
It was important for him, too, for other kids to follow the rules.
And if they didn't, that's when he had a bit of a problem.

I think he had beautiful handwriting.
Chavo was one of the best printers,
But he worked really hard at writing so that it was done within the lines and
by the rules.

And I think, in elementary school,
He was really fairly popular
simply because he was hardly ever in trouble.
But I think that his love for reading was always there.
He did a lot of reading all the time.

II.

In middle school, they did a lot of group stuff.
Chavo was one of their better students,
Followed all the rules, did all the things he was supposed to.
He would end up doing all the work so that the group could end up getting a
high grade.
He worked really hard.

I think towards the end of eighth grade, he wasn't being challenged enough in
his classes.
And he got by.
Even his written work, I started noticing, [the work was] not the quality that it
had been.
I could tell and I questioned him about it and said,
"Chavo, what is going on here?"
And he said, "Well, it doesn't matter. They don't care. I'm still getting A's."
So, I basically got the group of teachers together
and I said, "You know, you're losing him because he's not being challenged."
And, one of his teachers, I think his English teacher actually said to me,
"He's still making very high grades."

And I said, "He may be doing that but I am telling you the quality of his work has really gone down."

III.

I tried to convince Chavo that he ought to go to St. Anthony's (a Catholic boys' prep school) so he would be challenged.

And instead, we compromised by taking honors classes at the high school.

And he actually got into the [high school honors] program and he did very well.

IV.

But I think that as time went on

and he got interested in cross-country,

I think that he lost the interest [in academics].

It [running] was very, very satisfying to him.

I think a lot of that has to do with the fact

that he was very much more interested [in running],

It is very demanding and it physically wears you out.

But I think the other half of that is that,

I don't think that he really had a challenge.

And all honors meant was that it was more homework.

It wasn't necessarily more interesting.

Figured World 2: Being male has nothing to do with it

I think that with Chavo, because of his really deep love for learning,

I don't think that [being a boy] ever mattered to him,

what anyone would say, or kid him about doing his homework, or being a good student.

He thrives on being a good student.

I mean, that is a really big thing for him to be able to accomplish.

But, when I think of him being male, I think that he very early figured out

that, first of all that he loved to learn these things,

but second of all, because of his rules, he knew that in order for him to play sports,

he was gonna have to make the grades.

I think that made sense to him . . .

And I think the overall riding factor in that was that he does have a real huge love for learning.

Two figured worlds seemed to inform Theresa's perspective about Chavo's literacy and academic achievement. The first one, and perhaps the most striking, was the figured world that teachers are responsible for making school challenging and motivating for all students. Chavo began school as a motivated student and always tried to do his best. He was a good student and knew that a good student followed the rules. He had a love for reading that was facilitated

at home. Beginning in eighth grade, things started to change for Chavo. His mother believed that this was at least in part due to the fact that his teachers did not challenge him to achieve more than the status quo. He learned quickly by the middle school teachers' responses to his work that he could get an A without working very hard or even doing the same quality work he had produced in the past. Theresa went to the school to point out this observation and was greeted by a teacher who did not seem to understand her concerns because, after all, Chavo was still making A's.

What Chavo did find challenging in high school was running cross-country. Cross-country challenged him physically and mentally. He ran long cross-country courses through the deserts of the Southwest, over terrain full of cacti, snakes, and rocks in hot August and September temperatures. Theresa observed her son running and perceived that running competitively was very satisfying and challenging for her son. He was animated after running and was a cheerleader for his teammates who ran slower than he.

The second figured world relevant to Theresa's thinking about Chavo's literacy was that gender had nothing to do with his participation in school literacy and other academics. She believed that peer pressure from the other kids in school had nothing to do with Chavo's doing or not doing his work. The only thing about being male that may have influenced Chavo, according to his mother, was his respect for rules—specifically, the rule that stated he had to make good grades to play high school sports.

To identify and describe the figured worlds that were relevant to Theresa, I looked closely at what she said and listened to how she said it. The tone of her voice changed as she told stories about Chavo's literacy. Her voice was warm with the memories of Chavo learning to read and becoming a reader and good student. When retelling about Chavo's middle school years, her voice reflected the anger and disappointment she felt about Chavo's experiences with some of his teachers. She spoke quickly and with much animation as she retold his middle school, emphasizing her belief that teachers had a responsibility to make school challenging and motivating.

Another way Theresa represented relevant figured worlds was through her use of dialogue or reported speech within her interview with me. Reported speech served several functions (Myers, 1999), including giving evidence, making stories more vivid and interesting, and shifting the focus of attention from the speaker. As Theresa told stories about Chavo's past literacy experiences, she included reported speech that depicted her past experiences with Chavo and his teachers and provided evidence of the figured worlds relevant to her. For example, when she described her meeting with his teachers, she selected speech that best represented her belief that teachers should present challenging learning opportunities for students (e.g., "You know, you're losing him because he's not being challenged") and her belief that the teachers did not believe in the same way (e.g., "He's still making very high grades"; "They [the teachers] don't care, I'm still getting A's"). Her use of reported speech was powerful and served to emphasize and support her beliefs.

From Chavo's Teacher's Perspective

Chavo's honors humanities teacher was Ms. Brown. She was a 30-year veteran English teacher and chair of the English department. Her passion for the humanities and teaching was evident in and out of the classroom. She was a humanities major in college until she realized she needed to broaden her field to English if she wanted a teaching position. She told stories of the Greeks and Romans with such intensity and excitement that often I forgot to write field notes about what her students were doing at the moment. I was enthralled by her stories and found her to be an engaging storyteller. Most notable was her desire for her students to love the humanities. She believed that humanities was more than literature—it was a world of ideas.

Many of the students in her class were leaders in the school and most were very high achievers. She expected high-quality written and oral participation from these students and usually got it. Ms. Brown was very proud of her students, and she believed that most had been raised as renaissance people. By this she meant that they were raised to believe they could be good at anything regardless of their gender. Because of this, she posited, gender was not a factor in determining how the students participated in this class. She believed that the boys participated "every bit as much as her girls," and she explained the lack of boys in the class (6 of the 25 students were male) as a consequence of other senior English course offerings such as regular senior English and creative writing. However, she held other notions about who were and were not humanities or literature kids that were not so visible.

Figured world 3: Chavo Is Not a Literature Kid

I.

Nothing, I know nothing about Chavo.

I said to Chavo about a month or six weeks ago

I said "Chavo, I know you don't like this class."

I said, "You remind me so much of my daughter, she didn't like it either and I know your mother's making you stay in here."

I said, "but would you just smile at me once in a while." =

II.

He must be so bored with this stuff.

He would never, you know, I don't know if Chavo reads on his own,

but I would venture to guess if it's not a sports magazine or a soccer journal,
he doesn't.

He is not a literature kid from my perspective.

He's gotta B in the class.

No, it's not an easy class.

And he does his work

But he doesn't love it.
It's not awful.
It's just not inspired.

III.

Chavo has never voluntarily participated in the discussions all year.
He has never opened his mouth unless I call on him and then he gets all spazzled.
So I don't do that anymore because I don't want to embarrass him.
I'm just trying to bring him in.
So, now I just wait, but he's been more jovial.
He's smiling a bit more.
But he is definitely not a humanities kid.

IV.

And I don't know if it's because he's a boy or not . . .
My daughter is not a boy, she's quite tomboyish (chuckle) [she did not like the humanities class] So I don't know whether that's just gender.
I'd say with my daughter, (laughingly) she had too many headers [soccer term for passing the ball with one's head] and maybe that's Chavo's problem.
No, he doesn't seem, not bright, he's just not interested.

V.

It's not like there's not precedent, my two best discussers are boys.
It's not like he couldn't if he wanted to. I don't know that it's a gender issue.
Unless all boys are interested in math and science and all girls are interested in literacy, but I don't think that's true anymore.
I just think that it's a Chavo issue.
I don't think it's gender . . .
He is my least enthusiastic student.

One of the figured worlds that seemed relevant to Ms. Brown was that not all kids were literature or humanities kids. Along with that model, like Chavo's mother, Ms. Brown held the cultural model that gender had nothing to do with participation or enrollment in the honor humanities class. Ms. Brown appeared to have a picture in her mind about who were and were not literature or humanities kids. They could be male or female; in fact, she believed her best discussers were male. She also knew who were not literature or humanities kids—her daughter, a tomboyish athlete, was not a humanities kid, and neither was Chavo. Her belief that certain kids were or were not literature kids seemed strong and most likely influenced her interaction with these students. For example, she stopped trying to get Chavo involved in class after seemingly embarrassing him by asking him questions. She finally just asked him to smile once in a while. She denied that being male might have influenced how Chavo

participated or that being male had anything to do with the lack of boys in her class. She believed that Chavo's disinterest in the class and his lack of participation was a Chavo issue, nothing more, and she explained that the low number of boys enrolled in her class was due to the number of senior English courses available.

To represent the figured worlds relevant to her, Ms. Brown, like Theresa, used reported speech to describe an interaction with Chavo and as supporting evidence for the figured world that some kids are not literature kids. Most powerful in her representation of figured worlds is her use of two descriptive nominalizations—literature kid and humanities kid—during the interview. By describing Chavo as not being a humanities kid or literature kid, she compiled lots of information into a compound noun. It is hard to know the exact information that went into the creations of nominalizations by Ms. Brown (Fairclough, 2003; Gee, 2005); we would need to know more about Ms. Brown's expectations and experiences as an English teacher to completely understand. We are left wondering what the exact characteristics of a literature kid or humanities kid are, and characteristics of not being one. All we really know is that Chavo was not a literature kid, he was the most unenthusiastic kid in the class, and his work lacked inspiration. Nominalizations tend to turn concretes into new abstract entities (Fairclough, 2003; Gee, 2005), like literature or humanities kids. Using the nominalizations effectively named him without clearly defining the process or attributes of being or not being a literature/humanities kid.

From Chavo's Perspective

Chavo entered the senior honors humanities classroom with a face of stone each day. All expression of affect was erased from his face. He walked in and sat down quietly. His face told me (and his teacher) that he did not want to be 1 of the 6 males in a class of 25 high school honors students. His facial expressions were supported by his actions in the classroom. He rarely spoke in class or entered one of the many whole-group discussions. He slouched in his seat, looked down or around, and seldom looked at the teacher. Often he closed his eyes or put his head on his desk.

It was hard for me to believe that this was the same guy who was captain of the cross-country and soccer teams. My two sons were on the same high school soccer team as Chavo, so I had observed him for 3 years as a student athlete. He was a leader and motivator. He was a role model for the other guys on and off the soccer field. He quietly led through mutual respect, loyalty, and friendship. The difference in his demeanor in the classroom and on the soccer field intrigued me. After a few months of weekly classroom observations, I invited him to be part of the study. I wanted to investigate what it was like for Chavo to be a student in this high school literacy classroom and explore how his constructions of masculinity might have shaped his participation in it.

Figured world 4: Athletes Don't Read Books

I.

In sixth grade,
We had a list of all the honors' books and
I had my mom go pick up like four or five of those during the summer.
I read them all.
And then seventh and eighth grade, I just, I don't know, I just decided not to
do that [read the summer honors' books] anymore.

Where the Red Fern Grows [was one of the summer honor books]
I couldn't put it down, like I'd go home and read . . .
But non-stop and then when it ended I seriously did not want the book to
end.
I was so caught up in the characters
I felt like I knew 'em and stuff

II.

I think, I found sports more interesting [than reading] and doing stuff.
I mean like in a house full of guys
you can always find some kind of athletic activity to do.
Whether it's playing basketball or Nintendo or the backyard swimming.
And especially where we live, there's always kids like in our neighborhood.
And then we'd ride bikes, play tag, all kinds of stuff.
So somehow I just lost reading as a priority.

III.

I think also once you get involved in sports like you're s'pose to be known as
like an athlete.
It's just like a lot of the [athletes] really don't even want to like talk about
reading or so don't even read.
So you just kind of get caught up into that somewhere along the line,
I guess.

IV.

I still tried to get good grades, got straight A's in middle school.
And I just wouldn't like be loud about it or brag about it.

V.

The kids just like to harass each other in middle school
Yeah, if he's a good athlete like he's better than other people
I get kind of mad about that.
And then also I, if he is good at something else,
I prob'ly, I guess prob'ly, I'd harass him now [in high school]

VI.

[The last book I read] was *Grapes of Wrath* [in 11th grade]
That's when I stopped [reading]
Because we had a quiz on it
And then I got like a D on it and I had read the whole book.
It was picky questions, really picky and that's a thick book . . .
I decided, I could just skip reading and get the same grade.
And that's when I totally stopped [reading].

We read current events every week in Economics. I
always read the sports page.

Figured world 5: Guys Participate Differently than Girls

I.

Well, I don't participate in that class [honors humanities] at all.
I don't really want to, and I probably won't want to for the rest of the year.
I mean I don't know, I don't feel uncomfortable around those people because
I've been in the same class with them since sixth grade.
But it's just different, like, when I'm with the sports team or whatever, like
that really motivates me and stuff like that.
This class isn't motivational.

II.

Ms. Brown thinks it's important that everyone is heard.
So sometime or another you have to participate.
I don't know, it [being called on] makes me feel kind of like, it puts me on the
spot, really.
And it kind of makes me feel like I'm a little bit less, or kind of, I don't know,
like she doesn't think I know the answer.
And that is usually the case.
I don't think she should be doing it.
I think that she's trying to make us feel involved.

III.

Since there are less of us [guys],
I feel overpowered by the women.
And our teacher is a woman.
I really think that she's like a big time supporter of women.
How it's their turn to get the spotlight, all this stuff.
She's always talking about women's rights.
And, I just think she's more, this might not be true,
I just see that she's more lenient towards the girls. Like if they're all involved
in after-school activities, not necessary sports but other stuff,

Well since they're involved in other stuff that's academically like more
challenging,
They seem to get a lot more exceptions.
They turn in work late.
I feel like I can't even ask her if I can turn in something late
because it's dealing with a sport and
I think she'll just tell me no.

IV.

They [guys in class] say how they feel.
All the girls just think whatever the teacher says they'll just do it.
Some of us [boys] speak out against that.
A lot of guys don't like to do the work, especially their senior year.

V.

Well, the first semester like I sat in the back of the room.
Which was, I don't know, I wasn't really with any of my friends or whatever.
And there's a bunch of girls back there
and so I was like having to listen to them and everything.
And so I switched seats.
Now I'm sitting with Dave and Peter and Johnny.
And I think we all basically feel the same about that class.
[I'm] more comfortable around them cause they're my friends.
And then I don't know, it could be that they're males, you know,
'cause over on the other side there wasn't (any males).
I was sitting next to a bunch of girls
and I felt really uncomfortable.

These stories portray the figured worlds relevant to Chavo's life that seem to guide the choices Chavo made about his participation in reading and being an athlete. One of the figured worlds was that male adolescent athletes do not read (or admit to reading) and they do not excel in school academics (or let anyone know if they did). Kids would harass you if they found out you were good in both, he believed. No one liked someone good in sports and academics. Chavo made decisions about his literacy practices based on this figured world. Even after good experiences reading the summer honors books in sixth grade, Chavo decided not to participate in the honors summer reading again and said that somehow he lost reading. It appeared that he lost reading to outside play and sports, but not entirely. He read the sports page every morning, read current events, and he read at least some of the required books for school until he learned in 11th grade that reading the book was not necessarily linked to success on a test about that book.

Chavo was a good student and a good athlete. This presented a tension for him. As early as middle school, Chavo learned how to cover up that he was a good student to be identified as a male athlete. In middle school, he learned

to keep his grades quiet. In honors humanities, he addressed this tension by acting bored and disinterested and refusing to participate in class discussions while quietly maintaining a B average. I am left to wonder how he earned the B without reading at least some of the required texts or paying some attention in class. Perhaps turning in all the written assignments and being present in class was enough. Perhaps he secretly read the materials. Perhaps not. Chavo did not openly participate in the humanities, nor did he think he ever would. His actions in class made it clear that the class was not motivating to him. Sports motivated him, the humanities did not.

Chavo believed that girls and guys participated differently in the humanities classroom. This belief was informed by the figured worlds he held about male athletes, literacy, and school and contributed to the way he participated in the humanities classroom. In this particular class, there were significantly more female than male students. This fact probably fed into his belief that girls participated in humanities more than boys. He reported that he did not feel comfortable sitting among a "bunch of girls." Yet he sat in this location for almost an entire semester. The girls, he said, always agreed with the teacher, whereas the guys would speak out against the teacher's point of view or about a given assignment. Eventually, Chavo moved (there was never any restriction about where to sit) to sit by some of the guys. These guys questioned Ms. Brown, and Chavo perceived that they felt the same way about the class as he did. They were also athletes and wore their varsity letter jackets whenever the weather permitted. Interestingly, moving next to these guys did not change his participation in class discussions. However, I observed that Chavo did speak to the guys during class and worked collaboratively with them on certain assignments.

Another way Chavo thought the girls were different than the guys was the teacher's response to them. He perceived that the teacher was more lenient toward the girls about late assignments, for example, because they were involved in after-school activities that might not be related to sports. He never tested this belief and continued to believe that the girls got more exceptions than the guys in the class without ever asking Ms. Brown for an extension himself. He perceived that the teacher honored academic and service after-school activities more than those that dealt with athletics.

In both stories, what was most apparent in the form of Chavo's words was the strength of his convictions and the personal responsibility he took for his views and actions. Chavo's use of strong *I-statements* (e.g., I think, I read; Gee, 2005) made more visible to me the figured worlds that were relevant to him. In other words, how he answered my interview questions, the structure or form of his language, helped uncover what figured worlds were relevant to him.

Whereas Gee and Crawford (1998) used *I-statements* to look at differences in the talk of middle-class and working-class youth, I found *I-statements* to be useful in uncovering figured worlds. In the 119 lines of the selected transcript, Chavo used 53 *I-statements*. I categorized the *I-statements* based on the kind of verb that followed the pronoun, I. The vast majority of *I-statements* were either cognitive (16) or action (24) as defined by Gee (2005). Following Gee, I

defined cognitive statements as statements made about his thinking and knowing. I-statements such as *I don't know*, *I decided*, *I think*, and *I guess* fell into this category. His cognitive statements provided information, knowledge, and opinions about his beliefs and experiences with literacy. They served to explain and state his opinions about his past literacy experiences and interactions.

Chavo used nearly twice as many action statements as he did cognitive statements. His use of action-oriented I-statements tells more about his historical story of being a male athlete who lost reading. His I-statements—such as *I had my mom*, *I read*, *I'd go home and read*, *I found*, *I'd harass*, *I stopped reading*, *I switched*, *I'm sitting*—paint a picture of Chavo as a young enthusiastic reader who gradually changed as he learned others' expectations of him as a male athlete and student, and the social practices of the Discourse of male athlete to which he aspired. The action I-statements he used demonstrated how he took responsibility for his actions. Chavo's use of I-statements led me to believe that he perceived himself to be in control, that he consciously made decisions about his identity, and that he strongly believed that popular male athletes do not read (at least in public). He also believed that guys and girls participated differently in literacy classrooms.

When describing his experiences in the humanities class, much of his speech was laced with emotions and feelings as he reported his literacy experiences to me. Words and phrases such as *harass*, *uncomfortable*, *feel kind of on the spot*, *feel like I'm a little bit less*, *make us feel involved*, *feel overpowered by women*, *more comfortable*, and *I feel like I can't even ask her* exemplify the difficulties young men like Chavo may feel as they navigate the terrain of being male and participating in school literacy. It is interesting that he is so aware of and open about his feelings and emotions associated with being a male student in the class.

From the Researcher's Perspective

The Situated Meanings of Being Chavo

My story of Chavo is from the perspective of a White, middle-class university researcher, the mother of two of Chavo's teammates, and a past high school literacy teacher. My perspective is influenced by the stories told by Chavo, his mother, and his teachers and my past research and reading on masculinities and literacy. I have a great interest in boys, literacy, and the influence that Discourses associated with sports have on literacy and schooling, in part, because of my two sons. I have watched as one of my sons quit reading as a high school student and as the other never developed a love or respect for reading. I also remember the boys who hid in the back of my classroom to read paperback books and magazines when I was a reading teacher at an alternative high school. I have long wondered about boys and literacy and have read with great interest theories of masculinities and boys and literacy.

What I find so interesting in the stories of Chavo is the power of figured worlds to shape beliefs and actions related to literacy and masculinities. Chavo

defined masculinity as having to do with strength, courage, sticking up for what you believe, and responsibility as the following transcript depicts:

Someone who shows like strength and courage, and
Has the ability to stick up for what they believe.
And someone who is willing to do whatever it takes . . . like on an everyday basis.

Like when you're older going to work everyday, that kind of thing.
Of just going to school everyday and just getting what you have to do and like getting it done.

My dad (epitomizes masculinity)

Because . . . he could be getting paid a lot of money [as a doctor in private practice], but instead he is working for people that really can't afford the health insurance and stuff.

He's working for those kind of people and manages to find money to provide for his family. Sometimes he worked on weekends, he did what he had to do to support his family. And if we ever have a problem we go to him. . . .

The Discourse of masculinity exemplified by his father played an important role in Chavo's constructions of masculinity and being a student. He learned to incorporate and emulate this model of masculinity within the Discourses of which he claimed membership. The attributes of masculinity—strength, courage, sticking up for your beliefs, and responsibility—were evident in how he represented himself through language and social practices/activities.

Chavo's muscular body, brown skin, and big dark eyes provided him the look of an athlete. He worked out regularly in the school weight room and ran to stay in optimal shape. He pushed himself in the weight room and bragged to his teammates about the number of pounds he could lift. On occasion, I observed him and his teammates measuring their biceps to compare arm sizes and amount of growth. His clothing also helped others recognize him as a certain kind of young man (Harris, 1995). He selected clothes to wear such as tight T-shirts and baggy shorts or athletic wear, which accented his muscular, athletic body. If that did not do it, he wore team garb and his varsity jacket to school with many letters and awards sewn onto it. No one could mistake it, he was an athlete.

Chavo acted the part. In addition to being a good athlete, he was known to be a tough competitor and good leader. He was well liked and respected by his peers, as evidenced by being voted captain of two sports teams—soccer and cross-country. He took responsibility for leading the cross-country teams to a state championship—this required both physical and emotional strength. As he positioned himself as a popular athlete, Chavo earned the respect of his peers and worked to *not* be recognized as a good student. Yet he was. His mother knew he was and was frustrated that his teachers did not challenge him. His humanities teacher did not know him as a good student, but made assumptions based on his status as an honor student. He started hiding his inclination

to be a good student in middle school when he stopped reading honors books and stayed quiet about his grades as he learned the practices of the Discourse of popular boy athlete at his school. By his senior year in high school, he was an expert at doing his version of popular male athlete and student. No one would doubt that he was bored and did not like humanities. His whole body told the story, and he never spoke during class discussions. Yet he took responsibility for doing what had to be done to make a good grade. He exemplified the practices of masculinity he revered in both the humanities classroom and the athletic arena.

Surprisingly, Chavo, the good student, became visible during the last month of school. He won the contest for the best end-of-year humanities project. The project was designed to synthesize and extend what they had learned about humanities. The students selected a modern-day thinker, artist, and activist and made video or computer presentations about a common cultural theme the three shared. Chavo and the two guys he sat next to in humanities focused their presentation on three people associated with sports—Jerry Colangelo (great thinker who brought professional sports to Phoenix), Michael Jordan (great artist), and Chris Berman (a sports anchor and activist)—and demonstrated how they contributed to a culture that treated sports in similar ways as the ancient people did religion. His group worked long hours on the script and video presentation to integrate what they had learned about human thought and culture with modern-day cultural concerns and emphasis on sports. His voice was the narrator on the video, giving rise to Ms. Brown exclaiming after the video showing, “I haven’t heard you speak that many words all year.” Chavo’s group’s project was deemed “the best” by his classmates and teacher. He was recognized with a monetary prize and the grade of A on the project. One is left to wonder whether this is the kind of challenging curriculum his mother hoped for and what might have happened if Chavo had been asked to do similar kinds of literacy activities before the last month of school.

Chavo’s mother and teacher embraced a figured world in which gender does not matter. However, for Chavo gender, or his beliefs about what it meant to be masculine in a literacy classroom, played a role in the decisions he made about his participation in the literacy classroom. This was especially evident in the humanities class, where he reported feeling overpowered by women in the class and did not like the way the girls acted in class. The sheer numbers of female students made him uncomfortable. He believed there were differences in how girls and guys approached literacy courses. He participated in the way that he thought would best represent him as masculine. For example, he felt it was important to stick to his beliefs, although they were different from the teacher’s. He did not think the girls did this. For him, the Discourse of popular athlete included being masculine—strong, courageous, responsible, and having strong convictions. He demonstrated these qualities in the class as he resisted his teacher’s enthusiasm for humanities and his mother’s belief in reading, all the while making good grades and excelling in a class project.

In addition to strong beliefs that gender did not matter, Chavo’s mother,

teacher, and Chavo held firm notions of what counted as acceptable literacy practices. Even though he pronounced he did not read anymore, he confessed to reading the newspaper daily, particularly the sports pages. This apparently did not count as reading, but was an acceptable literacy activity within this particular Discourse of popular male athlete.

It is important to note that in my analysis of Chavo there is only a hint about influences of social class and ethnicity. Chavo's mother is Mexican American and she and her husband share many of the same middle-class values and expectations as Chavo's teacher and myself, the researcher. Chavo's brown skin, dark hair, and Hispanic heritage did not come up in any of the interviews, although I suspect it is always present in his interactions with others. I wish I had asked Chavo's mother how she thought her Hispanic heritage might have influenced the teachers' response to her when she requested more challenging curriculum for Chavo and how she thought it influenced Chavo's beliefs about his own masculinity and literacy practice. I also wish I had found out from Chavo how he thought being Mexican American might have influenced the Discourses of masculinity and of being a literacy student for which he aspired. Further, I wish I knew how it influenced Chavo's past teachers' academic expectations and interactions with him. These unanswered questions are limitations to my analysis, and answers to these questions are needed to fully understand how Chavo learned to be a boy in a literacy classroom and multiple ways of being masculine.

Note

- 1 I use big "D" Discourse in the tradition of Gee to mean ways of reading, writing, acting, valuing, dressing, and so on to be recognized as a certain sort of person.

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Part II

Critical Discourse Analysis

6 Semiotic Aspects of Social Transformation and Learning

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Introduction

A common critique of CDA is that it has not often attended to matters of learning. Learning, in this chapter, is addressed as a performativity of texts—both spoken and written. Social practices such as teaching and learning are mediated by structures and events and are networked in particular ways through orders of discourse. Orders of discourse comprised genres, discourses, and styles or “ways of interacting,” “ways of representing,” and “ways of being.”

This chapter theoretically reflects on semiotic aspects of social transformation and learning. Its particular focus is one gap in my work in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which a number of contributors in this volume have pointed out: It has not addressed questions of learning. So my objective is to incorporate a view of learning into the version of CDA that has been developing in my more recent work (Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002; Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2003; Fairclough, Jessop, & Sayer, 2003). I approach the question of learning indirectly in terms of the more general and in a sense more fundamental question of the *performativity* of texts or, in critical realist terms (Fairclough, Jessop, & Sayer, 2004), their causal effects on nonsemiotic elements of the material, social, and mental worlds and the conditions of possibility for the performativity of texts. I use the term *semiosis* rather than *discourse* to refer in a general way to language and other semiotic modes such as visual image, and the term *text* for semiotic elements of social events, be they written, spoken, or combining different semiotic modes as in the case of TV texts.

Semiotic Aspects of Social Structures, Social Practices, and Social Events

Let me begin with the question of social ontology. I assume that both (abstract) social structures and (concrete) social events are real parts of the social world that have to be analyzed separately as well as in terms of their relation to each other—a position of analytical dualism (Archer, 1995, 2000; Fairclough et al., 2004).

Social structures are abstract entities. One can think of a social structure (such as an economic structure, a social class or kinship system, or a language) as defining a potential—a set of possibilities. However, the relationship between what is structurally possible and what actually happens, between structures and events, is a complex one. Events are not in any simple or direct way the effects of abstract social structures. Their relationship is mediated—there are intermediate organizational entities between structures and events. Let us call these *social practices*. Examples would be practices of teaching and practices of management in educational institutions. Social practices can be thought of as ways to control the selection of certain structural possibilities and the exclusion of others, and the retention of these selections over time in particular areas of social life. Social practices are networked together in particular and shifting ways. For instance, there has recently been a shift in the way in which practices of teaching and research are networked together with practices of management in institutions of higher education—a *managerialization* (or more generally *marketization*; Fairclough, 1993) of higher education. Semiosis is an element of the social at all levels. Schematically:

Social structures: languages
 Social practices: orders of discourse
 Social events: texts

Languages can be regarded as among the abstract social structures to which I refer here. A language defines a certain potential, certain possibilities, and excludes others—certain ways of combining linguistic elements are possible, others are not (e.g., *the book* is possible as a phrase in English, *book the* is not). Yet texts as elements of social events are not simply the effects of the potentials defined by languages. We need to recognize intermediate organizational entities of a specifically linguistic sort—the linguistic elements of networks of social practices. I call these *orders of discourse* (see Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1992). An order of discourse is a network of social practices in its language aspect. The elements of orders of discourse are not things like nouns and sentences (elements of linguistic structures), but discourses, genres, and styles (I differentiate them shortly). These elements, and particular combinations or articulations of these elements, select certain possibilities defined by languages and exclude others—they control linguistic variability for particular areas of social life. Thus, orders of discourse can be seen as the social organization and control of linguistic variation.

There is a further point to make: As we move from abstract structures toward concrete events, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate language from other social elements. In the terminology of Althusser, language becomes increasingly *overdetermined* by other social elements. At the level of abstract structures, we can talk more or less exclusively about language—more or less because *functional* theories of language see even the grammars of languages as socially shaped (Halliday, 1978). The way I defined orders of discourse makes

it clear that at this intermediate level we are dealing with a much greater overdetermination of language by other social elements—orders of discourse are the social organization and control of linguistic variation, and their elements (discourses, genres, styles) are correspondingly not purely linguistic categories, but categories that cut across the division between language and nonlanguage, semiosis and the nonsemiotic. When we come to texts as elements of social events, the overdetermination of language by other social elements becomes massive: Texts are not just effects of linguistic structures and orders of discourse, but are also effects of other social structures and of social practices in all their aspects, so it becomes difficult to separate out the factors shaping texts.

Semiosis as an Element of Social Practices: Genres, Discourses, and Styles

Social events and, at a more abstract level, social practices can be seen as articulations of different types of social elements. They articulate semiosis (hence language) together with other nonsemiotic social elements. We might see any social practice as an articulation of the following elements:

- Action and interaction
- Social relations
- Persons (with beliefs, attitudes, histories, etc.)
- The material world
- Semiosis

For instance, classroom teaching articulates together particular ways of using language (on the part of both teachers and learners) with particular forms of action and interaction, the social relations and persons of the classroom, and the structuring and use of the classroom as a physical space.

- We can say that semiosis figures in three main ways in social practices:
 - Genres (ways of acting)
 - Discourses (ways of representing)
 - Styles (ways of being)

One way of acting and interacting is through speaking or writing, so semiosis figures first as part of the action. We can distinguish different genres as different ways of (inter)acting discursively—interviewing is a genre, for example. Second, semiosis figures in the representations, which are always a part of social practices—representations of the material world, of other social practices, reflexive self-representations of the practice in question. Representation is clearly a semiotic matter, and we can distinguish different discourses, which may represent the same area of the world from different perspectives or positions. An example of a discourse in the latter sense would be the political discourse of New Labour, as opposed to the political discourse of old Labour, or

the political discourse of Thatcherism (Fairclough, 2000b). Third and finally, semiosis figures alongside bodily behavior in constituting particular ways of being, particular social or personal identities. I call the semiotic aspect of this a *style*. An example would be the style of a particular type of manager—the way a particular type of manager uses language as a resource for self-identifying. Genres, discourses, and styles are realized in features of textual meaning and form, and we can distinguish three main aspects of textual meanings and their formal realizations (similar to the macrofunctions distinguished by Halliday, 1994) corresponding to them: actional, representational, and identificational meanings. These meanings are always simultaneously in play in texts and parts of texts.

Social Effects of Texts and on Texts

I have begun to discuss the causal effects of social structures and social practices on texts. We can see texts as shaped by two sets of causal powers and by the tension between them: on the one hand, social structures and social practices; and on the other hand, the agency of people involved in the events of which they are a part. Texts are the situated interactional accomplishments of social agents whose agency is enabled and constrained by social structures and social practices. Neither a broadly interactional perspective nor a broadly structural perspective (the latter now including social practices) on texts can be dispensed with, but neither is sufficient without the other.

We also have to recognize that texts are involved in processes of meaning making and that texts have causal effects (i.e., they bring about changes) that are mediated by meaning making. Most immediately, texts can bring about changes in our knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, experience, and so forth. We learn from our involvement with and in texts, and texturing (the process of making texts as a facet of social action and interaction) is integral to learning. Yet texts also have causal effects of a less immediate sort—for instance, one might argue that prolonged experience of advertising and other commercial texts contributes to shaping people's identities as consumers or their gender identities. Texts can also have a range of other social, political, and material effects—texts can start wars, for instance, or contribute to changes in economic processes and structures, or in the shape of cities. In summary, texts have causal effects on, and contribute to changes in, persons (beliefs, attitudes, etc.), actions, social relations, and the material world.

We need to be clear what sort of causality this is. It is not a simple mechanical causality—we cannot, for instance, claim that particular features of texts automatically bring about particular changes in people's knowledge or behavior or particular social, political, or material effects. Nor is causality the same as regularity: There may be no regular cause–effect pattern associated with a particular type of text or particular features of texts, but that does not mean that there are no causal effects.¹ Texts can have causal effects without them necessarily being regular effects because many other factors in the context determine whether

particular texts as parts of particular events actually have such effects, and this can lead to a particular text having a variety of effects.

Contemporary social science has been widely influenced by social constructivism—the claim that the (social) world is socially constructed.

Many theories of social constructivism emphasize the role of texts (language, discourse, semiosis) in the construction of the social world. These theories tend to be idealist rather than realist. A realist would argue that, although aspects of the social world such as social institutions are ultimately socially constructed, once constructed they are realities that affect and limit the textual (or discursive) construction of the social. We need to distinguish *construction* from *construal*, which social constructivists often do not: We may textually construe (represent, imagine, etc.) the social world in particular ways, but whether our representations or construals have the effect of changing its construction depends on various contextual factors, including the way social reality already is, who is construing it, and so forth. So we can accept a moderate version of the claim that the social world is textually constructed, but not an extreme version (Sayer, 2000).

A major causal effect of texts that has been a major concern for Critical Discourse Analysis is ideological effects—the effects of texts in inculcating and sustaining ideologies. I see ideologies as primarily representations of aspects of the world that can be shown to contribute to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination, and exploitation—*primarily* because such representations can be enacted in ways of interacting socially and inculcated in ways of being in people's identities. Let us take an example: the pervasive claim that in the new global economy countries must be highly competitive to survive (something like this is presupposed in this extract from a speech by Tony Blair to the Confederation of British Industry: "Competition on quality can't be done by Government alone. The whole nation must put its shoulder to the wheel"). One could see such claims (and the neoliberal discourse with which they are associated) as enacted in new, more businesslike ways of administering organizations like universities and inculcated in new managerial styles. We can only arrive at a judgment about whether such claims are ideological by looking at the causal effects they have in particular areas of social life—for instance, factories or universities, asking whether they contribute to sustaining power relations (e.g., by making employees more amenable to managers' demands).

Dialectical Relations

The relations between elements of a social event or social practice, including the relation between semiosis and nonsemiotic elements, are dialectical relations. We can say that elements are different, cannot be reduced to another, require separate sorts of analysis, and yet are not discrete. In Harvey's (1996) terms, each element internalizes other elements. What I said earlier about over-determination can be seen in terms of the internalization of nonsemiotic elements in semiotic elements (texts, orders of discourse).

What I said about the causal effects of texts can be seen in terms of the internalization of semiotic elements in nonsemiotic elements.

We can see claims about the socially constructive effects of semiosis, including the moderate social constructivism advocated earlier, as presupposing the dialectical internalization of semiosis in the nonsemiotic—presupposing, for instance, that discourses can be materialized (internalized within the material world) in the design of urban spaces. We can also see claims about how people learn in the course of communicative interaction (such as the claims in the chapters of this volume) as presupposing the dialectical internalization of semiosis in the nonsemiotic. What people learn in and through text and talk, in and through the process of texturing as we might put it (making text and talk within making meaning), is not merely (new) ways of texturing, but also new ways of acting, relating, being, and intervening in the material world, which are not purely semiotic in character. A theory of individual or organizational learning needs to address the questions of retention—of the capacity to recontextualize what is learned, to enact it, inculcate it, and materialize it.

Dialectical relations obtain intrasemiotically as well as between semiotic and nonsemiotic elements. For instance, processes of organizational learning often begin (and especially so in what has been conceived of as the contemporary *information society* or *knowledge society*) with the recontextualization within organizations of discourses from outside—an obvious example these days is the discourse of new public management (Salskov-Iversen, Hansen, & Bislev, 2000). Yet such discourses may (the modality is important in view of the moderate version of social constructivism advocated before) be enacted as new ways of acting and interacting, inculcated as new ways of being, as well as materialized in, for instance, new buildings and plants. Enactment is both semiotic and nonsemiotic: The discourse of new public management may be enacted as new management procedures, which semiotically include new genres (e.g., new ways of conducting meetings within an organization). Inculcation is also both semiotic and nonsemiotic: The discourse of new public management may be inculcated in new managers, new types of leaders, which is partly a matter of new styles (hence partly semiotic), but also partly a matter of new forms of embodiment. Bodily dispositions are open to semioticization (as indeed are buildings), but that does not mean they have a purely semiotic character—it is precisely a facet of the dialectical internalization of the semiotic in the nonsemiotic. What this example (and the case study by Salskov-Iversen et al.) also points to is the dialectic between colonization and appropriation in processes of social transformation and learning: Recontextualizing the new discourse is both opening an organization (and its individual members) up to a process of colonization (and to ideological effects) and, insofar as the new discourse is transformed, in locally specific ways by being worked into a distinctive relation with other (existing) discourses—a process of appropriation.

Let us come back to the modality of the claim that discourses may be enacted, inculcated, and materialized. There are social conditions of possibility for social transformation and learning, which are in part semiotic conditions of

possibility (Fairclough et al., 2003). In the example of new public management discourse, for instance, the semiotic conditions of possibility for the recontextualization and dialectical enactment, inculcation, and materialization of the discourse within particular organizations refer to the order of discourse: the configuration of discourses, genres, and styles, which is in place not only within a particular organization, but in the social field within which it is located and the relations between the orders of discourse of different fields. To cut through the complexities involved here, we can say broadly that the openness of an organization to transformations led by a new discourse, and the openness of the organization and its members to learning, depend on the extent to which there is a discourse or configuration of discourses in place within the organization and the field for which the dialectic of enactment, inculcation, and materialization is fully carried through, and the capacity for autonomy with respect to other fields (not, of course, a purely semiotic matter).

Emergence and Learning

The CDA of texts includes both interdiscursive analysis of the genres, discourses, and styles drawn on and how different genres, discourses, and styles are articulated together (textured together), and analysis of how such mixes of genres, discourses, and styles are realized in the meanings and forms of texts (which entails linguistic analysis and other forms of semiotic analysis, such as analysis of visual images or body language). The chapters in this volume by Rogers, and Lewis and Ketter, for instance, point to the significance in talk of interdiscursivity, discourse hybridity, for learning. In the critical realist frame I have been drawing on, one can see this as the basis for semiotic emergence, the making of new meanings. Yet as Lewis and Ketter indicate, the possibilities for emergence depend on the relative dialogicality of text and talk—the orientation to difference. We can schematically differentiate five orientations to difference, with the proviso that this is not a typology of texts—individual texts and talk may combine them in various ways (Fairclough, 2003):

- (a) an openness to, acceptance of, and recognition of difference; an exploration of difference, as in dialogue in the richest sense of the term
- (b) an accentuation of difference, conflict, and polemic—a struggle over meaning, norms, and power
- (c) an attempt to resolve or overcome difference
- (d) a bracketing of difference, a focus on commonality, solidarity
- (e) consensus, a normalization and acceptance of differences of power, which brackets or suppresses differences of meaning and over norms

Scenario (e) in particular is inimical to emergence. Dialogicality and orientation to difference depend on the sort of broadly structural conditions I pointed to in the previous section—conditions to do with social practices, fields, and relations between fields, which have a partly semiotic character (in terms of orders

of discourse). However, as suggested earlier, the causal powers that shape texts are the powers of agency as well as of structure—whatever the state of the field and the relations between fields, we can ask about both latitudes for agency and their differential uptake by different agents, including agents involved in the sort of critical educational research reflected in the chapters of this volume.

A relatively high degree of dialogicality and orientation to difference can be seen as favoring the emergence of meaning through interdiscursive hybridity, although to talk about learning there needs to be some evidence of continuity and development (provided by longitudinal aspects of the research reported in this book) and retention (which one might see as requiring evidence of transfer and recontextualization, from one context to others). Learning can be seen as a form of social transformation in itself, but as a necessary but insufficient condition of social transformation on a broader scale. Learning through text and talk can be interpreted as part of what I referred to earlier as the semiotic conditions for social transformation.

Critical Research, Learning, and Social Transformation

In assessing the possibilities for and limitations of critical educational research motivated by emancipatory (e.g., antiracist) agendas for learning and social transformation, one needs to consider both factors of a broadly structural character and factors to do with agency. With respect to the former, educational research can be seen as part of a network of social practices that constitutes an apparatus of governance (in part semiotically constituted as an order of discourse; Fairclough, 2003)—a network that includes practices of classroom teaching, educational management, educational research, and (national, state, local, etc.), government, and policy making (Bernstein, 1990). The nature and workings of the apparatus are internally as well as externally contested—critical educational researchers are, for instance, often seeking to create more open and equal relations between academic research and classroom teaching. One issue they must consider is what I referred to earlier as the social conditions of possibility for social transformation and learning, which include latitudes for agency within educational research. These issues can be partly addressed from a semiotic perspective in terms of latitudes for agents in social research to develop, recontextualize, and seek to enact and inculcate new discourses. But there are also considerations to do with forms of agency in recontextualizing contexts (e.g., questions of the dialogicality of interactions between educational researchers and teachers). Once again neither a structural nor an interactional perspective can be dispensed with, but neither is sufficient without the other.

Note

- 1 The reduction of causality to regularity is only one view of causality—what is often referred to as Humean causality, the view of causality associated with the philosopher David Hume (Fairclough, Jessop, & Sayer, 2003; Sayer, 2000).

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7 Learning as Social Interaction: Interdiscursivity in a Teacher and Researcher Study Group

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In this chapter, we closely examine the interactions of a long-term teacher and researcher study group focusing on the reading and teaching of multicultural literature in a rural middle school setting. Over the 4-year span of the study, the group included 10 members—all White females—the two of us as researcher-participants and eight teachers of grades 5 to 9. The purpose of the group was for participating teachers to read and discuss multicultural young adult literature in ways that would help them to make decisions about whether and how to teach these works in their community. (See Appendix A for book list.) In order to do this, our work together over the years focused not only on issues related to the teaching of literature but, more importantly, on our individual and collective assumptions about race, identity, and multicultural education in terms of how these assumptions shape decisions about text selection and teaching approaches.

This study builds on earlier phases of our research that examined how our discussions of multicultural young adult literature were shaped by community contexts and by constructions of racial identity (Lewis, Ketter & Fabos, 2001; Ketter & Lewis, 2001). In this work, we identified the fixed practices in which all members of the group engaged, practices that seemed to create barriers to our learning and dialogue. We came to see how these practices were created and reinforced by the social and political contexts of the particular setting.

For this phase of our longitudinal study, we were interested in understanding the nature of learning over time among members of the study group. In addition, we wanted to know how interaction patterns in the group sustained or disrupted fixed discourses in ways that shaped the group's learning.

Review of Literature

Three areas of scholarship inform this research: sociocultural theories of learning, critical theories of language, and critical multiculturalism as it relates to

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the reading and teaching of multicultural literature. Our theoretical framework views learning not as primarily a mental act but as a social act dependent upon interaction among people and their tools and technologies (Gee, 1999; Lave, 1996; Rogoff, 1995; Wenger, 1999). Based on her research on learning communities outside of schools, Lave argues that learning is about constructing “identities in practice” (1996, p. 157). Wenger (1999) also views learning as arising from the identity work that occurs through participation in communities of practice, communities “created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise” (p. 45). Identities practiced in such communities are always a work in progress shaped by individual and collective efforts to create coherence through participation in varied social contexts. Barton and Hamilton (2005) argue that the scholarship on communities of practice does not sufficiently examine the mediating nature of language in reifying and reshaping communities. Our study shows how language works in these ways in one community of practice—a book group. Explicitly connecting a theory of language with a theory of learning, Hicks (1996) asserts that learning involves the learner in *appropriating* and *reconstructing* the discourses within his or her social world. Grounding her use of the term “appropriation” in the work of Bakhtin (1981, 1986), she argues that his emphasis on the dialogic nature of utterances supports a generative use of the concept of appropriation. Central to Bakhtin’s theory of language is the sociocultural constitution of utterance, with a speaker’s utterance embedding prior and anticipated utterances. Hicks argues that this process represents a rearticulation rather than a recapitulation of existing discourses.

This theoretical argument is important to our study because we are interested in examining what Fairclough (1992) refers to as “interdiscursivity,” defined as the presence or trace of one discourse within another.¹ Interdiscursive texts, according to Fairclough, can lead to dynamic rearticulations of otherwise stable discourses. In this way, such hybrid discourses have transformative potential that, in our view, connects language to learning. Related to Fairclough’s notion of interdiscursivity is Wenger’s description of the interdiscursive demands placed on anyone who enters a new community of practice whose discursive practices may conflict or contrast with those of another community in which the participant has been a long-time actor. All communities of practice bring with them unarticulated but shared knowledge—ways of acting and generic expectations that prescribe or make convenient certain ways of writing, thinking and speaking and preclude others. Hence, those who join a new community of practice often initially operate on the boundaries of that community, a boundary where the participants must negotiate with intersecting and often conflicting discursive practices (Wenger, 1999). Wenger argues that these boundary locations are exactly where new knowledge is produced and identities can be transformed.

An examination of how the teachers and researchers in this group are challenged to rearticulate and reconstruct available and often conflicting discourses, including one another’s, has implications for what it means to learn

in a professional development community. Moreover, such a view corresponds to recent research on professional development that underscores the benefits of teachers forming learning communities that provide intellectual renewal (Grossman, Wineburg, & Woolworth, 2001), productive conflict (Achinstein, 2002) and the structures necessary to form critical relationships (Gallego, Hollingsworth, & Whitenack, 2001). In their study of a long-term learning community of English and social studies teachers, Grossman et al. (2001) found that whereas group members initially shared their individual content expertise, more substantial learning over time was evident when individual perspectives and epistemological positions were internalized by other members.

Beyond these features of professional development, Lawrence and Tatum (1997, p. 63) argue that White teachers engaged in professional development related to multicultural education must examine their own racial identities in order to be effective educators. This argument is particularly compelling in light of the demographic statistics that reveal the persistence of a majority White teaching force, suggesting the continued need to examine issues of racial identity in teacher education and professional development. Moreover, the epistemology of racism constitutes the very conditions upon which knowledge is enacted and evaluated within dominant institutions such as public schools (Scheurich & Young, 1997). In the 1990s, many theorists of race and ethnicity argued that White people normalize Whiteness and the privilege it represents. For example, in her study of White teachers' responses to workshops on multicultural education, Sleeter (1993) found that teachers typically denied that racial identity was a significant factor in their teaching. White teachers did not expect to examine Whites as a racialized group when attending workshops. Instead, preservice and practicing teachers were accustomed to focusing on groups they perceived as "other," groups about which they wanted information. In this way, race and ethnicity were marked as "foreign" and teachers were positioned as cultural tourists (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997; Purves, 1997). Recent scholarship has cautioned that antiracist and critical pedagogies in teacher education can result in alienation, shame, self-righteousness, or anger (Marx & Pennington, 2003; Thompson, 2003; Trainor, 2008); rather than a productive sense of responsibility or solidarity (Flynn, Lensmire, & Lewis, 2009; Sheets, 2003).

According to many scholars, reading multicultural literature in ways that consciously consider the cultural and sociopolitical influences that shape authorship and interpretation can challenge a reader's perception of self and other (Florio-Ruane, 2001; Medina, 2010). Fang, Fu and Lamme (1999) argue that multicultural literature "should be considered sociocultural and political texts (Taxel, 1992) for fostering students' understanding of the historical and material forces underpinning the construction of cultural identities" (p. 270). Yet teachers are rarely taught to read children's and young adult literature as political texts, nor are they encouraged to read bibliographic resources with a critical eye (Harris, 1993). The meanings and purposes that teachers assign to the teaching of literature influence and reflect how young adult literature

functions politically and theoretically in any context, but these political and theoretical functions are often disregarded in curricular conversations (Barrera, 1992).

Methods and Analysis

Given our research focus on learning over time, we have found it useful to combine a view of learning grounded in the literature on “communities of practice,” with social and critical theories of language. Doing so has provided us with the theoretical and methodological tools to better understand how our interactions produce and at times disrupt a particular set of discourses. Whereas earlier phases of this research used ethnographic tools to help us fully understand the context of this rural school district and community related to the teachers’ responses to multicultural texts, this study employs critical discourse analysis (CDA) to help us understand the longitudinal nature of our learning. Using CDA, we studied key transcripts over the 4-year period to examine the ways that participants took up particular world views, patterns of talk, and systems of thought as they related to multicultural literature and to the meaning and purposes of multicultural education. Teaming critical discourse analysis with ethnographic research allowed us to establish invaluable contexts for the sort of knowledge CDA extracts from texts.

Although eight teachers participated over the 4 years of the study, five teachers formed the consistent core of the study group. These language arts and reading teachers teach fifth-, sixth-, and eighth-grade students at a middle school that has an all-European American faculty and two administrators who are both White males. The student body of the middle school is over 94% European American and 25% of the students receive free or reduced-cost meals. We researcher-participants are White middle-class women who have both taught language arts and reading in the public schools before going on to work at the university and college where we are now respectively employed. We acted as participant/observers in the study group and saw ourselves as viable contributors to the process of text selection and procedures for discussing the texts. We secured funds to purchase one class set of multicultural books for each participant teacher and to pay for the books we read for all but one year of the study.

To establish the ethnographic context for the CDA we used for this part of the study, we called on the wealth of data we collected and coded using the NUD*IST qualitative research program over the 4 years of the study. The ethnographic context included a careful analysis of our own positions within the study group and community related to status, affiliation, and ideological stances. Data included audiotaped sessions of the literature discussions, audiotaped interviews with participants and 11 community informants, written responses to surveys, an audiotaped focus group discussion of group dynamics, and both observational and reflective field notes. After each session, we recorded our observations and analyses separately in order to insure that they were first articulated without the influence of the other researcher. We also

taped several key research meetings in which we examined how our roles as researchers and as participants played out in the literature discussions (Alvermann, Commeyras, Young, Randall, & Hinson, 1997).

To analyze the groups' interactions in this phase of the study, we used a method of critical discourse analysis suggested by Fairclough (1992) and Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999). Specifically, we examined 15 transcripts taken from the entire span of the study (six from the first 2 years and nine from the last 2 years). It was important that we analyze more transcripts from the latter part of the study, given our research focus on change over time. We chose the transcripts that were most salient to our research question about learning and social interaction. The ones that struck us as having the most potential in this regard were transcripts that included segments in which we either sustained or disrupted discourses that had become fixed interactional positions taken up repeatedly by members of the group. We reasoned that to understand learning over time, we would need to closely examine segments of talk that contained statements and ideological positions that repeatedly surfaced in the transcripts and compare those segments to others that moved us beyond these reified positions. Given our long-term involvement with this study group and our multi-layered analyses of the transcripts, we were able to use the knowledge gained from earlier phases of this research to locate the transcripts containing such segments. For instance, in our earlier work (Lewis, Ketter, & Fabos, 2001), we had identified statements and ideological positions in our talk that reinforced norms of Whiteness through the use of language that universalizes across experiences. This insight—the result of both qualitative coding procedures and the tools of discourse analysis—was useful to us as we selected the 15 transcripts to be closely examined in this new phase of our research.

Once we identified the 15 transcripts, we divided each transcript into episodes, with each episode representing a series of turns that all relate to the same topic or theme (Marshall, Smagorinsky, & Smith 1995; Florio-Ruane, 2001). We then examined each episode to identify first its prominent discourses. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, p. 63) define "discourse" as "the construction of some aspect of reality from a particular perspective." However, in our efforts to identify prominent discourses in the transcripts, we found it useful to draw on Luke's (2000, p. 456) definition of discourse as "systematic clusters of themes, statements, ideas, and ideologies [that] come into play in the text." In this vein, we searched the transcripts for regular clusters of themes, statements, and ideologies. Again, this process was aided by our extensive involvement in the study group and its surrounding community as well as our previous analyses of the transcripts. Identifying the recurrent and somewhat fixed themes, statements, and ideologies present in these transcripts led us to formulate the coding categories for "discourse" listed in Appendix B.

One dominant discourse we identified in our discussions was that of liberal humanism. In an article advocating for Critical Race Theory's method of counter storytelling as a way of addressing the discomfort and defensiveness that arises in classroom discussion about race, Williams (2004) identifies two narra-

tives that contribute to discomfort and resistance in such discussions. Williams argues that the first narrative, “Individualism trumps social forces,” is somewhat unique to the United States and ties it to meritocratic ideals upon which our country was founded (p. 185). The second narrative, that Whiteness is not a race, plays out in the discourses we describe here as an assumption that Whiteness is the norm and that race only “matters” when we are discussing those who are not White. In our analysis of the transcripts, we found that these narratives, which we identify as a discourse of liberal humanism, were often paired with a discourse that we researchers espoused—that of critical multiculturalism with a focus on recognizing Whiteness as a race and uncovering the systems or structures of inequality that act as barriers to individual achievement. Because CDA requires an in-depth examination of language in use, we have limited the focus of this chapter to these two discourses as they repeatedly surfaced over time. We decided to focus on the intersection of these discourses because they represent an epistemological conflict that was central to our discussions and persisted over time. The discourse of liberal humanism represents the individual as unified, coherent, and possessing freedom of choice. The discourse of critical multiculturalism represents the individual as a socially, culturally, and historically produced subject. The intersection of these discourses often suggested conflicting world views that had implications for how we interpreted and evaluated multicultural texts. Once intersections of the two discourses were located in the 15 transcripts, we chose episodes for close analysis that would be most salient to our research questions.

We cross-coded these episodes using the categories of genre and voice as defined by Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, p. 63) as follows:

- (1) Genre is “the language (and other semiosis) tied to a particular social activity . . .”
- (2) Voice is “the sort of language used for a particular category of people and closely linked to their identity . . .”

An analysis of genre included an analysis of participant structures with regard to turn-taking. We established the other categories for genre by considering all the features of our activity setting. Given the overarching genre of “book group,” we made repeated passes through the transcripts to identify norms and expectations that were established in this social and linguistic setting, a process that led us to formulate the codes for the category of “genre” that appear in Appendix B. Most of the coding categories listed under “voice” (Appendix B) are adapted from Fairclough (1989, 1992) and Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999), who suggest that these features of language are particularly salient to issues of power and identity in the construction of social reality.

The following example demonstrates how discourse was cross-coded with genre and voice. Rather than use an example directly related to a novel we have yet to discuss in this chapter, we include instead an example of a conversation peripheral to one of our readings. The conversation centers on whether or not

people are inclined to prefer associating with their own race. We have omitted comments by all participants other than two, Barb and Carol, to provide a brief example of how features of genre and voice intersect and serve to coordinate particular discourses.

Barb But I think you go, you go to a major university and you see Black students sitting with Black students and Asian students sitting with Asian students. You tend to (.) hang around people that have like similar backgrounds (.) to *you*=

Carol Right.

Barb =it, it seems like I mean don't we hang around the same kind of people that we=

...

Barb Yeah, you just, you just do that.

...

Carol But I think, I think people feel threatened also.

...

Barb I don't think it's threatened, it's just that you don't *understand* it. I mean it, it *is* a different culture, I mean/

Carol But I, I think/

Barb =it just is.

...

Carol But I also think when you're talking about this, I think they feel threatened for the very reason that we're talking about this, because you have now you have two kids who like each other who may eventually marry, so you have that, the cross cultures again and some people that frightens, to have, to have (.) the mixing up of races. It does frighten them. [spoken softly] (..) You know, so, I think sometimes fear comes into it. [very softly]

The pronouns in this exchange frequently shift even within speaker turns. Barb uses pronouns that will draw her listeners into the stories and ideas she is relating. Her frequent use of the indefinite form of "you" creates a bond with her listener ("You tend to hang around people that have similar backgrounds to you."). She asks a rhetorical question for the sake of affirmation and uses the indefinite form of "we" to stand in for 'everybody' ("Don't we hang around the same kind of people that we ="). These are features of voice that serve to naturalize the discourses being promoted. It is natural, her talk suggests, for everybody to feel this way about being with people who have similar backgrounds. Carol's pronoun use, on the other hand, first creates bonds with her listeners and then distances her from her subject. Consider, for example, some of the shifts in her final turn:

... because now **you** have two kids who like each other who may eventually marry, so **you** have that, the cross cultures again and **some people** that

frightens, to have, to have (.) the mixing up of races. **It** does frighten **them**. You know, so, **I** think sometimes fear comes into **it**.

First Carol creates a bond with her audience through the use of “you,” but then she distances herself from those other people who are threatened by interracial relationships.

As in this example, CDA helps us to discover how our fixed discourses persisted through or were interrupted by the interaction patterns and voices we enacted as the group evolved. Focusing closely on genre, discourse, and voice in these portions of text allowed us to identify subtle processes not readily apparent in more holistic readings of text. Underlying our analysis is the assumption that fixed discourses are most likely to be interrupted when more dialogic (Bakhtin, 1981) conversations occur. These moments may be marked by hybridized discourses, discourses that indicate shifts in the socially situated identities of the participants and in which newly constructed perspectives or ideologies are embedded.

Findings

We begin this section with a brief discussion of the overarching discourses and genres that characterized our conversations about multicultural literature. We then move to a more nuanced analysis of transcripts from the early and middle years of our study to reveal the ways in which our binary discourses and our interaction patterns evolve over time. This paper covers a span of study group years from June 1997 to April of 2000.

Overarching Discourses and Genres

Across the 15 transcripts, there is a tendency on the part of the middle school teachers to see the inequity characters experience in novels (and real life) as resulting from individual choices or circumstances rather than from structural or systemic forces. Public schools have long been and continue to be institutions that define as democratic a championing of individual achievement and individual responsibility and thus discount counter theories charging that institutions and their established cultural practices oppress and disempower the poor, immigrants, and people of color (Spring, 2004). According to numerous studies, this view is typical of White preservice and practicing teachers (Beach, 1997; Fang, Fu, & Lamme, 1999; Naidoo, 1994; Rogers & Soter, 1997; Sleeter, 1993). The teachers also demonstrated a related tendency to attribute the cause of the character’s oppression to poor parenting or “abnormal” social practices rather than to structural barriers or institutionalized racism, a move that Bonilla-Silva labels “biologization of culture” (2001, pp. 147–149). We argue that the liberal humanist discursive practices reinforced and reinscribed through the teachers’ participation in their public school’s community of practice conflicted with the more social constructionist practices typical of our institutions and the

research community of practice in which we are active members. For example, the transcripts suggest a tendency on our part to see the inequities depicted in these novels as examples of structural racism and to focus on the social or cultural rather than the individual experience. This finding is in keeping with research on perceptions about racism conducted by Gee (2005) in which teachers' responses focused on individual acts and professors' responses focused on institutional racism.

From the beginning this group was a hybrid social and linguistic activity or genre: part book group, part professional development, and part academic seminar. It was a site on the boundary between conflicting communities of practice that challenged all participants to search for coherence and stability in the face of our shifting identities as teachers and readers. From the academic community of practice, the group borrowed from a seminar format with we researchers leading the discussion of texts. As a book group, it was part informal discussion similar to book groups meetings held in people's living rooms, where, in fact, we did meet on several occasions. As professional development, the talk frequently focused on how the books might be used in a classroom or whether they were appropriate for a particular age level or group of students, topics not typical of adult book group discussions and more likely to occur in workshops or seminars meant for the continuing education of practicing teachers.

In our earlier study, we found that the middle school teacher participants viewed us as having a kind of outside authority they did not, and we viewed the middle school participants as having an "insider" authority arising from their daily interactions with students and other teachers. In keeping with the seminar genre (seminar "leaders"), we were commonly the speakers who introduced a topic or began the discussion, particularly in the early years of the study. We had a tendency to make what we call "teacherly moves," although we did not consciously plan these moves. Included in this category were probing questions, requests for elaboration, intertextual references, and the citing of authorities (e.g. scholars, children's book authors, colleagues).

As researchers connected to the university, we often felt as though we were looked upon for expertise at the same time that our expertise was viewed as impractical or erudite. We brought to the group an orientation toward critical multiculturalism that shaped the discussions in ways that were alternately taken up, ignored, or resisted. We used verbal and nonverbal cues to signal our shifting affiliations and statuses. We would look down when saying something that we believed might sound too academic or politically radical, for instance, and we often adjusted our vocabulary so that it would not be mired in the jargon of our disciplines. We stumbled over sentences that we would have spoken articulately in our university or college settings, not intentionally, but because our hyper-awareness of power and status relations within the group troubled our speech. We assume that the teachers may have been doing some of the same, working out their own issues related to status and power among themselves, much as one of the teachers put it when she talked about feeling intimidated by another teacher in the group based on their long history of professional

relations. Although we usually were not conscious of these performances at the time, they repeatedly surfaced during our independent analyses of transcripts and in our reflective fieldnotes.

The Early Transcripts: Polite Opposition

Our early book discussions reveal the emergence of the two intersecting, and often opposing, discourses: liberal humanism and critical multiculturalism. We begin with an excerpt from our discussion of *An Island Like You: Stories from the Barrio* (Cofer, 1995), our third book discussion in the first year of the study. A theme that runs through this collection of short stories about life in a Puerto Rican community in Paterson, New Jersey, is that of adolescents trying to find a comfortable identity in the face of competing views of who they are or should be, some stemming from their own community and some imposed by normative definitions of beauty and success mired in Eurocentric institutions and sensibilities. In this excerpt, Cynthia initiates a turn in which she tries to illustrate that racism and oppression have cut this barrio off from the rest of the country, but this move is resisted by Denise, who identifies with what it must feel like to be an individual in the barrio.²

Cynthia: It's interesting what you said about the universality of it, too, because I think that is so much there, and that's why it's such a good book to use with kids. At the same time, it's called "An Island like You" and I know that's a reference to the grandparents, but I think it's also sort of a claustrophobic sense of being apart from the rest of the world that so many of the characters feel. The barrio is sort of a part of the rest of the world. . . . There's this universality, but there's also this incredible difference.

Denise: And the poem at the beginning says "alone in a crowd." And, you know, I think that's something kind of like an island, I mean you're the only one who feels that way or the only one that thinks that way or the only one who's had that experience, and you don't connect with people.

This exchange was characteristic of many early exchanges in which either Cynthia or Jean makes a statement to focus on how the race or ethnicity of the characters marginalizes them. In this case, Cynthia was offering a response to an earlier comment made by Denise suggesting that the stories are about common, universal experiences. Here, Cynthia began by affirming Denise's stance but quickly moved to what is, in effect, an argument against Denise's view that the characters' experiences are universal. Denise responded by indirectly asking us to identify with the experience—one we presumably all have had—of being a lone individual in the midst of others who do not understand the individual's experience. She used "you" in a way that works to persuade her listeners to identify with the lone individual as she herself does ("you're the only one,"

“you don’t connect”). Her take on the book title and the poem that serves as the book’s prologue was a decidedly psychological one whereas Cynthia’s was sociological and cultural.

Perhaps most interesting is the language used to signal agreement, despite the disagreement at the root of the exchange. Cynthia began by affirming Denise’s earlier comment valuing this book for its universality and suggested that it is these universal qualities that make it a good book to share with kids. This being only our third book discussion, Cynthia voiced her disagreement in a manner that was likely to be palatable and fairly indirect, couched in an overall sense of affirmation and agreement. Not wanting to claim any particular authority, she introduced her disagreement with the phrase “at the same time,” which suggests that the two discourses can coexist, side by side, with no contradiction, rather than a phrase such as “on the other hand,” which would point to the incompatibility of the two discourses. Similarly, Denise initiated her response to Cynthia’s comment with the conjunction “and,” which suggests a continuation of Cynthia’s idea and an implicit agreement; however, she quickly shifted to her focus on the individual, using the pronoun “you” and the repetition “only one” which create a bond with her listeners by pulling them into the experience of the lone individual.

Later in the same discussion, we can see the same dynamic at work, this time between Denise and Jean.

Denise: But, I think that self-esteem—and going back to some of the characters in this book—is such a vital thing for students. I just see kids with low self-esteem that are, really have big problems.

Jean: And it’s interesting since self-esteem issues arise out of racism they experience, you know, a lot these kids, like the Mateo boy, and, um, Luis and Arturo, to some extent, especially, I think, and the girls too.

Here, again, the teacher, Denise, in the exchange was focusing on the individual psyche of the characters (and by association, her students), whereas the researcher, Jean, was focusing on the structure of racism as it affects self-esteem. And again, we see Jean begin her turn with the appearance of agreement (“And it’s interesting since self-esteem”) but then shift quickly into the discourse of structural inequity (racism).

In terms of genre, we coded Jean’s initial clause, “And it’s interesting,” in two categories: “politeness/etiquette” and “teacherly move.” She avoided disagreeing with Denise in any direct way as she might have had she known her better or not been concerned about appearing to be in control of the discussion. She did not begin her turn with something on the order of “It’s important to understand that the lack of self-esteem arises out of the racism these characters experience,” a statement which would have made her sound like a teacher who is correcting Denise’s response. Yet, we believe that beginning her turn with “And it’s interesting” represented another kind of teacherly move—one that we’ve both often used with our own students when we want to detract from our

own power by affirming the student's point even as we disagree. This is a way of "honoring a response" of a speaker while arguing against it or restating it to make a different point. Such moves are beyond mere politeness or attempts to downplay difference because the "teacher" is attempting to refine or reinterpret an idea for the participant who presented it.

We are not suggesting that our use of language (the teachers' or our own) was an intentional ploy to achieve a certain affect, for we doubt this was the case. It is the form and function of the text that is of interest to us and how the form and function constructs and is constructed by the situated identities of the speaker. That is, we are interested in how social identities are achieved through moment-to-moment interaction and how these interactions are shaped by particular identities. The process, as Fairclough (1992) and Gee (2005) make clear, is dialectic.

In our discussion of *Scorpions* (Myers, 1988), the sixth book our group read together, similar dynamics were at work. When discussing *Scorpions*, a book about an African American youth caught up in a gang to which he does not want to belong, all of us worked to connect at an emotional level, perhaps to offset the effects of the opposing discourses we espoused. Here, again, Jean began with a comment that pointed to structural inequity as it is passed on from generation to generation. Denise, on the other hand, responded through identification with the boy who suffers in the story. Since by this point in our discussion, it had already become clear that our discourses about the literature differ, we worked to agree at an emotional level. All of us agreed from the start of this discussion that the characters in the stories suffer, that they are forced into situations that present difficult if not impossible choices even if we disagree about the context that creates that suffering.

Jean: But you just see this, I kept thinking about this kind of trap that doesn't seem to, it doesn't seem to be different from generation to generation. And one of the poignant things about this book that I thought was very well done was because it wasn't overdone, but two times she talks about when, when the older son was born . . . how she has all this hope.

. . .

Denise: Yes. There was just no hope. I mean, how, there was no way out. There was just no way out, you know, and even this kid that picks on him at school. He doesn't want to fight with this kid. He just wants to ignore him. He wants him just to go away. And yet, he's not, you know, that, the other kid is not going to allow that to happen, and so then, what do you do if you're that kid? And you're constantly being picked on. And how many of our kids are victimized like that? And then they end up striking back and then they get in trouble and then they get a reputation and then people expect them to be bad. Just like all his teachers.

Cynthia: Right. Such a cycle.

Affective bonding is clear in this exchange through our direct reference to the emotional nature of our responses to the work. In Jean's turn, she referred to the "poignancy" of the mother's hope when her older son is born, and Denise spoke of empathizing with the students who get in trouble and then can't shake their bad reputations. This was an emotional issue for Denise, whom we have found to be the consummate child advocate—always seeing the best in her students and believing that kids have enormous capability to respond to literature in deep and thoughtful ways. When Jean co-taught with Denise on several occasions, she found that Denise often raised the concern that teachers make judgments about students based on what other teachers say, or what they know about the students' families. She often spoke with outrage about a situation in which a teacher told one of her students that he was too "dumb to make it to college."

The use of intensifiers, repetition, and pronoun usage also signify emotionality or affective speech. For example, in her turn, Denise used intensifiers such as "just" and "constantly" to index her empathy with the character. She also switched to "you" in the fourth line, indicating her own empathy with the character she imagined and also to include the others as participants in her distress about how the boy is victimized. She referred to the victims she imagines as "our" kids, including all the participants as caretakers or guardians of the kids she describes.

Cynthia affirmed her response with agreement and restatement. "Right. Such a cycle." Although her response echoed Denise's response with the intensifier "such" and affirmation of her feelings, she was also returning to Jean's initiating turn in the episode focusing in the structural forces at work, passed on, in cyclical fashion from generation to generation. Denise, on the other hand, focused on individual experiences and choices in her analysis of the "victim's" experience.

This pattern repeats itself in another turn between Denise and Cynthia. Cynthia had just asked if the lack of hope in the book would make it too difficult to share with adolescents. Sarah's response initiated the following exchange:

Sarah: You don't, you wouldn't want to be preachy about it and say, "Look you guys, this is what could happen to you if you don't toe the line."

Denise: I think the, I think the, uh, no, I think the value of the book is for kids to see what other kids in other subcultures are going through. Every day of their life. I think we're so removed from that here. I mean that. Maybe we're not.

Cynthia: Yes. And it makes those, those, these kids seem very human and very. And to have, they have ethics and morals and /

Although Sarah sounds as though she would not want to use the book as a cautionary tale, she often talked about young adult literature in just those terms, believing that it should present kids with moral and ethical truths they can live by. She tended to view students as incapable of getting beyond sur-

face responses to texts and often asked group members how she could help her fifth-grade students “dig deeper” under the surface of the literature they read. This is in contrast to Denise, who, as described earlier, had every confidence that her eighth-grade students could think deeply and thoughtfully about the books they read. In response to Sarah, then, Denise somewhat tentatively offered her belief about the value of teaching this book. Although she seems to second guess herself at the end of this turn (“Maybe we’re not”), she uses intensifiers like “every day” and “so” and “I mean” to express her distress that these “other” teens, who are “in other subcultures” do not have the advantages Denise sees her students enjoying. Cynthia’s first response was “Yes.” Again she affirmed Denise’s response at an emotional level but then presented a different argument in that she emphasized the way that the characters in the book can be normalized rather than viewed as “other.” Features of voice here are very interesting because Denise uses “othering” pronouns—“they and we”—and Cynthia began by repeating this pattern, but then changed it: “those, those, these kids.”

In this excerpt, Denise signified the other adolescents for whom she’d like her students to have empathy. This way of viewing the Other can lead to a moral judgment or paternalism or a desire to protect the innocence of the adolescents in this community. Although it is tempting for us to read her remarks in this way, we would like now to offer an alternative reading, one that is more generous and in keeping with Denise’s strong affinity for her students and general advocacy for youth. Asked to come up with a reason for teaching this book to kids in her community, and wanting to emphatically divorce herself from any sense of this book as a cautionary tale, she made what we believe to be an attempt to situate the characters in this book within an unjust system of oppression and inequity. She referred to this system through her use of the word “subcultures,” which marks a movement away from viewing the characters as individuals who make what appear sometimes to be bad choices. My response, on the other hand, can be read as a shift to a focus on the kids rather than the structures that shape them.

This exchange is an example of interdiscursivity as defined earlier – a trace or presence of one discourse within another. In this case, one can read the discourse of the individual in Denise’s remark (the individuals who are her students can learn from what the other individuals experience every day) and the discourse of structural inequity in my remark (the underlying assumption being that it is necessary to represent as human those who have been systematically represented as “other” and as malevolent). Embedded in each of these remarks, however, are alternate discourses: an understanding about the structural nature of subcultures in Denise’s remark and an understanding about the importance of foregrounding the individual, with moral and ethical dilemmas, in my remark. This pattern of interdiscursivity becomes more pronounced in later transcripts, and we argue that such hybrid language opens spaces for learning as we have defined it—the appropriation and reconstruction of discourses within one’s social world. Fixed practices are most likely to be interrupted when

more dialogic conversations occur resulting in subtle shifts in the social identities of the participants.

The Middle Transcripts: Interdiscursive Moments

In our analysis of transcripts from the middle years of this study, we found marked changes in the categories of genre and voice as they intersected with the discourses of liberal humanism (individual) and critical multiculturalism (structural forces). To demonstrate these changes, we focus this section on a lengthy exchange from our discussion of *American Eyes: New Asian American Short Stories for Young Adults* (Carlson, 1994) that took place in April of 2000. This collection of short stories by Asian American writers explores issues of assimilation and acculturation among young Asian Pacific Americans. We focus on two episodes from the book group discussion, and include nearly the entire episode in each case in order to make some points about the structure of participation in each episode.

We begin with an episode that starts with Carol, a teacher who taught gifted education and had been a member of the group for a little over 2 years at the time of this discussion. Carol is unique in the group because she had experience teaching in a rural south Texas community with a population of working-class Latinos. Her experience was often reflected in her analysis of a character's motivation and, in particular, her perceptions of the conflicts those from a minority culture experience in schooling and society at large. At this point, we were discussing a story about a first-generation Japanese adolescent who revisits Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, where his recently deceased father had taken him many times as a child (Oba, 1994).

Carol: And it's so funny, too, I think all the way through that that, um, all the way through the book, the trade off that they have to be an American and not give up whatever culture is offered, whatever their culture offers them. I'm not explaining this right, but each one of them has kind of a different way, like, like, when you were talking about that seeing ghosts, you know, calling back his uncle, and accepting that he would really appear, and the boy who went back, tried to go back to that Japanese part, yeah, yeah, to find the different stores and everything and they were gone, and, I don't know/ . . .

Sarah: Oh, that was sad.

Cynthia: And he wasn't accepted in the store [restaurant].

Carol: Right. Exactly. Exactly. When he sat there waiting for him

Sarah: Yes ()

Cynthia: That was sad.

Sarah: Um hmm. It was.

Sarah: Was that the story where they repeated this phrase a couple times, "If you lived here you'd be home"?

[All affirm]

Sarah: There's something about that phrase.

...

Cynthia: His father has died, right, and his mother is filling her life by making origami. That's a great image.

Sarah: All over the house.

Carol: And she left the neighborhood, too, so it's like there aren't any connections back with that neighborhood anymore.

The episode started with Carol struggling to explain her sense that these characters are caught between American culture and the culture of their ancestry. One could argue that Carol's use of the word "American" reveals an experiential value (Fairclough, 1989) or ideological stance toward first generation ethnic minorities that marks them as immigrants or non-Americans and assumes White people as unmarked "Americans." Yet, in the context of her entire turn, it seems more likely that the phrase "American culture" refers to "dominant" American culture, and that Carol is interested in how this individual's life is shaped by a larger social and cultural framework. Another interdiscursive moment, this speaker turn holds traces of both discourses under discussion—the individual and the structural. Given that before Carol's turn, we had been discussing something entirely different (nuclear family narratives), Carol took control of the topic, a move not typical of the teachers in the early transcripts.

Also related to the genre of "book talk," Carol claimed a particular stance at the same time that she seemed either unwilling to claim it or unsure of herself. She began this rather serious statement about the characters' cultural positioning with the seemingly contradictory "And it's so funny, too," perhaps as a way to undercut the seriousness of what she was about to say. A few sentences later, she undercut her claim to authority by stating "I'm not explaining this right." We found that when teacher participants in the group began to frame their responses in terms of the discourse of structural forces, they did so with some degree of inarticulateness, using more filler words and sometimes apologizing for their manner of speaking ("I'm not explaining this right"). This inarticulate voice was far from ineffective, however, because it signaled a shift in discourse as participants constructed new perspectives. Carol did not simply appropriate a way of thinking more associated with Cynthia or Jean. Instead, she reconstructed this world view in her own way, one that centered as much on the individual as it did on the social constitution of the individual.

We include most of the turns that were part of this episode because they reveal both the animated, collaborative talk that we displayed by this time in our group's evolution, and because this series of turns serves as an extended example of interdiscursive talk that weaves in and out of both discourses. For instance, although all of the turns add a bit of detail to create a sense of immediacy and sadness about the predicament of this individual adolescent boy, three of the turns reinforce the structural nature of his predicament. Cynthia reminded others that the boy was not accepted as more than a tourist in

one of the Japanese restaurants he entered, searching for a past he had lost. Carol agreed and added an image of the boy waiting to be acknowledged in the restaurant. And, finally, Carol underscored the lack of cultural affiliation the boy experiences. Throughout this set of cohesive turns, we follow up on each other's comments, almost finishing each other's sentences and building on previous turns.

The next episode followed directly after the one just discussed. It, too, represents an instance of interdiscursivity, but one that works quite differently than the first episode. Sarah began by asking a question about White privilege, but did so from a position of dominance that served to marginalize those whom she refers to as "people who are different."

Sarah: I wonder how many White people are aware in their day-to-day life how much other people are trying to be like them? You know, people who are different. I never think of that until I read these stories and see about how important all these things are—the language, the hair color, all of those things—that striving for those things, that we don't even think about it. Why, why do people feel they have to be just like that in order to be of worth?

Cynthia: Yeah, I don't see them as striving for it, I see them as (pause) wanting

Sarah: envy?

Cynthia: the privilege that comes with that

Sarah: Oh, okay.

Cynthia: and the power that comes with these things and feeling like they're completely denigrated and treated with prejudice because they don't have it. That seems like it's more directed towards us than towards the self to me, but what do others think?

It was difficult for us to be generous in our response to Sarah's initial turn in this episode, coming as it did nearly three years into the study group at a time when we had hoped we had progressed beyond such comments. In our view, her first sentence was inscribed with the very White privilege her comment, at some level, sought to challenge. Moreover, by indexing White people as "them," she seems not to acknowledge her own implication in this system of privilege. Later in the turn, Sarah uses repetition of an article ("*the*" language, "*the*" hair color, "all of those things") to refer to characteristics of White people that she believes are seen as desirable. Her use of "the" and shift from "these things" to "those things" further serves to distance her from this system of privilege.

Indeed, there are some characters in *American Eyes* who measure themselves against Eurocentric standards of beauty; however, they do so with an awareness of the power differences that privilege these standards. One can read into Sarah's turn the now familiar discourse of liberal humanism (and the individual psyche). She was concerned that this "striving" toward White characteristics could be damaging to one's self-worth.

Cynthia channeled her frustration into a response that directly opposed Sarah's discourse of Whiteness, attempting to disrupt the way that Sarah conflated White privilege with what she perceived as the desire to be White. Even as Cynthia paused to consider the best way to finish her sentence about not seeing people of color as "striving" to be White, Sarah jumped in to finish Cynthia's sentence with the word she thought would fit—"envy," further revealing her belief that White people serve as objects of desire for people of color.

Earlier in the life of our book group, as is evident from our analyses of genre and voice in the exchanges included in the section on early transcripts, Cynthia most likely would have made her point less directly. For instance, she might have found some common point of agreement before moving on to disagree, or, possibly concerned about sounding too authoritative, she might have found herself pulling back—speaking inarticulately, using filler words, half-spoken sentences, and seeming not to want to claim her position. Such was not the case by this time in the study group, however, and so, after a quick affirmation ("yeah"), she explicitly states her opposition, claiming her position, in part, through the use of repetition ("I don't see them as striving for it, I see them as . . ."). She continued to draw on the features of book talk genre that we've labeled as "teacherly moves" and "disagreement" for several turns, strongly stating her position. Finally, having had control of the floor for three turns, Cynthia opens the floor to others in a very teacherly manner ("but what do others think?"). She spoke those words, as teachers sometimes do, as though she were completely open to other perspectives, but we now suspect that everything about her words and intonation suggested otherwise. Vocabulary such as "privilege," "power," "completely denigrated," and "prejudice," make the discourse of critical multiculturalism very clear, and this discourse, it seemed to us when we first analyzed this episode, stands in stark contrast to Sarah's discourse of liberal humanism and self-worth.

However, as we have read and reread Sarah's words, placing them in the context of our historical understanding of Sarah and her position in our group, we have come to see her contribution differently. Sarah was reared in a Midwestern town where she lived in what she described as a "working-class town with much prejudice, including [her] parents." Many times in our years together, she commented, often derisively, about the way her home community would have treated a particular character. She was proud of her participation in this group, calling it a "class," and reporting that her friends, family, and fellow teachers asked her questions about why she belonged to the group and what its value was to her. She kept count of the books we read and shared short articles and bibliographic entries about multicultural literature taken from teaching magazines. This year, the fifth year of the study, the group is continuing their monthly meetings without us, and Sarah, who has just retired from teaching, is organizing and audio-taping the meetings and leading the book selection process.

Sarah's role in the group was most always tentative. Her turns were often questions, asking for advice or elaboration, usually directed to Cynthia or Jean. She

also had a habit of echoing the end of someone's sentence and then nodding her agreement. She represented herself in interviews as someone who did not know as much about interpreting literature as others in the group (since she was elementary trained and the others were trained in secondary English). Her social identity as a member of this group was tentative and insecure, whereas her social identity as derived from participation in the group was elevated. She often referred to the strong bonds we had developed as a collegial learning community.

This history of identities, relationships, and connections (Gee, 2005) moved us to re-see Sarah's turn about "other people" striving to be like White people. In the context of Sarah's evolution in this group, we began to realize that the lens through which we interpreted Sarah's words was shaped by the way our academic discourse community talks about race. Thus, we did not consider that Sarah's words could be read as an awareness of Whiteness as a race rather than a taken-for-granted norm. As she put it, "I never think of that until I read these stories and see about how important all these things are—the language, the hair color, and all of those things—that striving for those things that we don't even think about it." Here she moved in a new direction, tentatively considering the construction of race in relation to self and other, before the next sentence when she returned to a focus on the psychology of individual self-worth. This move was in keeping with research findings (Helms, 1990; Lawrence & Tatum, 1997) suggesting that becoming aware of one's own Whiteness is an early stage of White racial identity development.

Although Sarah could be said to "other" those who are "different," she also represents White people as other in her first sentence. Later in the turn, she used the pronoun "we" to refer to White people, but in the first sentence, she referred to White people with the pronouns "their" and "them," setting herself apart from those White people who live their lives day to day naturalizing race. She, on the other hand, had begun to denaturalize race, and reading the literature under discussion has helped her to do so. Sarah's way of representing the discourse of structural inequality was different than ours. She embedded the discourse within a story—the story of her thinking and reading processes.

After Cynthia asked what others thought, hoping, at the time, that someone else would challenge Sarah, Carol continued the episode with a turn that displayed a common feature of the book talk genre—the personal story.

Carol: I think it is whatever that country puts up as their ideal. I know that my friend who came from Bolivia had, has, fair skin and, um, golden eyes, and dark hair. And his skin is not, and he would be my color—he's not, like, very fair. And he was looked down upon, I mean literally, to the point where he was carrying a knife in school to scare them away, because he was not dark. So, it's just, he wasn't Indian enough looking.

Denise: He didn't fit in. That must be a sad state of affairs.

Carol: Right, and he was looked upon as a foreigner even though he was Bolivian. And his mother came from Chile.

Here, as in the case of Sarah's turn, the personal story is being used in ways that are quite different than one might expect. Rather than feeding into the discourse of the individual, Carol told a story from which we listeners were expected to extract significance: it is the larger structures of privilege that determine who will be marginalized, and those structures are somewhat arbitrary (changing from country to country). Perhaps having read Sarah's comment as a privileging of Whiteness, Carol's story served to contest that privilege. Some readers might suggest that her discourse is too quick to assume that the structure of power and privilege is arbitrary rather than historical, political, and economic. However, coming on the tail of Sarah's comment, it serves an important purpose in this local scene—to gently challenge within the framework of story. And Carol sticks with this position in her last turn, despite Denise's attempt to focus on the individual circumstance of Carol's friend ("He didn't fit in.").

The Intersection of Genre, Discourse, and Voice

In the early transcripts, the individual/structural binary was constructed through generic features of talk in our book group, such as politeness and affirmation. We researchers denied our authority even as we controlled most topics and made indirect teacherly moves. Although our talk was constituted in a range of social languages, those social languages emerged out of the discourses we brought to the table from our respective social worlds (e.g. liberal humanism for the teachers; critical multiculturalism for us). Our language bridged these binary discourses through elements of voice that downplayed them—through the use of pronouns, filler words, and intensifiers that created bonds and promoted affect. In the middle transcripts, the individual/structural discourses were less distinct. Elements of genre intersected with these discourses in ways that blurred their boundaries. For instance, the use of personal story, an often-cited feature of "book talk" genre (Florio-Ruane, 2001; Long, 1986; Marshall, Smagorinsky, & Smith, 1995) that serves to accentuate the individual, here instead provided a form through which teachers gave shape to the structural.

Although we researchers still at times resorted to teacherly moves as a feature of our book talk, we did so with more explicitness, making our agendas clear (a feature that is even more accentuated in later transcripts). Disagreements among members were more explicit as well. One teacher, for instance, disagreed so strongly with Jean's statement that racism was the root cause of an African American character's incarceration that she strongly retorted "Now wait, wait, wait! You think that's what he's thinking? Or is that what we're reading into it." More often, during this middle period, a teacher participant would challenge another teacher's reading of the text more effectively than we did because the teacher's use of hybrid discourses (individual/structural) was accomplished through the use of a familiar and affective genre such as personal story.

Our analyses of the data in this study point to the central role interdiscursivity plays in learning. If we view learning as the appropriation and reconstruction of one's social world, then it stands to reason that interdiscursive language

would be critical to this process. For it is through the presence of one discourse in another that a generative rather than fixed appropriation becomes possible. In this vein, the members of our study group take up one another's genres, discourses, and voices over time in ways that create rather than replicate, thus opening spaces for new ways of constructing a teaching and learning self.³

Appendix A: Book List

<u>Date Read</u>	<u>Book Title and Author</u>
6/19/97	<i>Hold Fast to Dreams</i> , Andrea Davis Pinkney
7/16/97	<i>Warriors Don't Cry</i> , Melba Patillo Peale*
8/6/97	<i>An Island Like You</i> , Judith Ortiz Cofer
9/22/97	<i>Journey to Topaz</i> , Yoshiko Uchida
11/05/97	<i>Last Summer with Maizon</i> , Jacqueline Woodson
12/01/97	<i>Scorpions</i> , Walter Dean Myers
1/20/98	<i>The Watsons go to Birmingham: 1963</i> , Christopher Curtis
2/17/98	<i>Behind the Bedroom Wall</i> , Laure E. Williams
4/07/98	<i>Jip, His Story</i> , Katherine Paterson
5/05/98	<i>Growing up Native American</i> , Patricia Riley (Ed.)
7/22/98	<i>Growing up Native American</i> *
8/31/98	<i>Toning the Sweep</i> , Angela Johnson
9/23/98	<i>Bless Me Ultima</i> , Rudolfo Anaya
10/26/98	<i>Bless Me Ultima</i>
12/07/98	<i>Novia Boy</i> , Gary Soto
4/10/99	<i>Playing in the Dark</i> , Toni Morrison* (our only text meant for adult readers)
5/16/99	<i>Sugar in the Raw</i> , Rebeca Carroll
6/28/99	<i>Annie John</i> , Jamaica Kincaid
8/11/99	<i>Seedfolk</i> , Paul Fleischman
9/29/99	<i>Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child</i> , Francisco Jimenez
11/01/99	<i>True North</i> , Kathryn Lasky
12/18/99	<i>Power</i> , Linda Hogan
1/31/00	<i>Farewell to Manzanar</i> , Jeanne Houston
2/28/00	<i>Monster</i> , Walter Dean Myers
4/03/00	<i>American Eyes: New Asian American Short Stories for Young Adults</i> , Lori Carlson (Ed.)
5/09/00	<i>Cool Salsa</i> , Lori Carlson (Ed.)
8/07/00	<i>Oh Freedom, Kids Talk about the Civil Rights Movement with the People Who Made It Happen</i> , Casey King, Linda Barrett Osborne, & Joe Brooks
9/12/00	<i>From the Notebook of Melanin Sun</i> , Jacqueline Woodson
10/25/00	<i>If It Hadn't Been for Yoon Joon</i> , Marie G. Lee
12/05/00	<i>The Birchbark House</i> , Louise Erdrich
1/16/01	Discussion of article, "Reading Multiculturally," Daniel Hade

2/28/01	<i>Like Sisters on the Homefront</i> , Rita Williams-Garcia
4/25/01	<i>The Skin I'm In</i> , Sharon G. Flake
6/28/01	<i>Buried Onions</i> , Gary Soto
8/01/01	<i>So Far from the Bamboo Grove</i> , Yoko Kawashima Watkins

* designates that the discussion of this book was not successfully audiotaped

Appendix B: Coding Categories

1. Genre

Language tied to a particular social activity (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 63), in this case, a book group

1. Topic control (note when a new topic is initiated and when it shifts)
2. Participant structures (turn-taking—overlap, interruption, etc.)
3. Encouragement and affirmation or agreement (encouraging someone to talk; affirming what someone says)
4. Not wanting to claim something (e.g. “i don’t know if this makes sense or not” or “i would never do this, but”)
5. Politeness/etiquette
6. Humor
7. Personal stories
8. Page reference/evidence from text
9. Teacherly moves
10. Disagreement
11. Attention to literary devices
12. Seeking affirmation

2. Discourse

1. “Construction of some aspect of reality from a particular perspective” (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 63); “Systematic clusters of themes, statements, ideas, and ideologies [that] come into play in the text” (Luke, 2000, p. 456.)

1. Adolescence
 1. Universal
 2. Adolescent as Other
 3. Developing child/maturity
 4. Adolescent as needing protection
 5. Adolescent as savvy
 6. Adolescent as gifted
2. Feminism/Gender
3. Good Parenting/Bad Parenting or good/bad families
4. Critical Multiculturalism/structural inequity
5. Liberal Humanism/individual choice or circumstance
6. Teacher

1. Overworked
2. Beleaguered
3. Under Surveillance
4. Teacher knowledge/lack of knowledge
7. Capitalism
8. Popular Culture
 1. Corrupting
 2. Useful
9. YA lit. as moral guide
10. Whiteness
11. Book group as useful
12. Racism/prejudice/social class divisions
2. The way the perspective is put forth
 1. Reference to book or author (or other person) as authority
 2. Personal experience
 3. Teaching story
 4. Reference to another form of popular culture
 5. Reference to specific section of book under discussion
 6. Reference to book group history or members' particular frameworks

3. Voice

Language used for a particular category of people and closely linked to their Identity (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 63). The way we use language to present ourselves in relation to others in the group and outside the group, or in relation to the text.

1. Pronouns (particularly places where we shift within our own utterance or where the pronoun shifts from speaker to speaker; note all uses of We and You)
 1. Affect
 2. Cognition
 3. Othering
 4. Bonding
2. Modality (should, would, could, may)
3. Qualifiers
4. Inarticulateness (e.g. not completing sentences), fillers, or apologizing
5. Passive voice/Active
6. Register (word choice associated with various statuses and identities)
7. Kinds of questions
 1. Probing or asking for elaboration
 2. Asking what someone thinks
 3. Asking what to do
 4. Asking to challenge
 5. Asking in order to speculate

8. Repetitions
9. Irony
10. Intensifiers
11. Strong statement (lack of fillers, many intensifiers, affect-laden)

Notes

- 1 Fairclough's use of the term "interdiscursivity," also referred to as "constitutive intertextuality," draws heavily from Kristeva's (1986) use of the term "intertextuality" in her explication of Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) dialogic theory of social languages and genres.
- 2 The following conventions are used in the presentation of transcripts: [text] indicates descriptive text added to clarify elements of the transcript; text indicates overlapping speech; () indicates unintelligible words; . . . indicates extracts edited out of the transcript; / indicates interrupted or dropped utterances.
- 3 We are interested in studying how the teachers' learning in the study group might shape their work with each other and with their students now that we have left the site. Currently the study group is continuing without us—a group that includes five of the core teachers plus two new teachers. The teachers have agreed to provide us with audiotapes of their discussions, which will allow us to study instances of interdiscursivity as they occur without our participation. We are also interested in how our study group may have shaped discussions of multicultural texts in the teachers' classrooms. To this end, we are currently analyzing interviews with the teachers that speak to this subject as well as the artifacts and narratives related to their teaching that the teachers brought to our study group meetings. In addition, Jean has taught three collaborative units with Denise in her eighth-grade classroom. The data from this collaboration will provide more information about the role of interdiscursivity in learning as it plays out in the classroom context.

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8 Language, Power, and Participation: Using Critical Discourse Analysis to Make Sense of Public Policy

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State and federal policymakers in the U.S. have never been more concerned with reading than they are today. Nationwide we have seen a tremendous increase in state legislation around reading and phonics (Allington, 2002; Paterson, 2000). At the federal level we are experiencing what some refer to as a “policy epidemic” (Hopkins, 2001, p. 4). The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and Reading First legislation provided \$1 billion a year for reading education beginning in 2002 and ended in 2007.¹ These changes mark a significant shift that has taken place not only around reading, but also around the role of elected officials in defining how to teach. Traditionally, issues of pedagogy and teaching content have been left to teachers and administrators. These more recent trends in policymaking, however, take a different approach—one that pushes against constitutional rights for local, school-based control.

These shifts have not taken place in a vacuum. Newspapers across the country report that all children must be reading on grade level by grade 3, that there is a crisis in education, and that scientific research should be the basis for most if not all decision making. Despite the omnipresence of this agenda and the apparent persuasiveness of the media and agenda setters, we need to complicate these discourse practices of cultural models and expertise. Instead of simply assuming that they are both stable and correct, we need to reach the text, discourse practices, and social practices behind them (see Coles, 2000; Edmondson, 2000; Rogers, Mosley, & Kramer, 2009).

By combining the works of Fairclough (1992, 2003) and Bernstein (2000), this chapter explores the use of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a tool in the critical analysis of public policy. Through the close analysis of changes in reading policies in California between 1995 and 1997, this research seeks deeper understandings of how power and policy are interrelated.²

As Fairclough suggested, policies define how we are to act and by what rules we must abide. Through public policy we come to be socialized in many ways into what is thinkable and unthinkable (Bernstein, 2000). Policy and political discourse represents the authoritative allocations of values and goals and socially situated representations of the world (Ball, 1990; Fairclough, 1995a). These cultural models (Gee, 1996, 1999) or understandings about the world

position people in specific ways. Although it is easy to point to the evidence of power in policymaking and policy documents, it is quite another thing to be able to show *how* that power is generated, the role individuals play in that power structure, and the implications that those lines of power have for policy consumers. Given this complex web, a critical analysis of policy is necessary—one that pushes past questions of efficiency and outcomes to questions of “how power is used to define the parameters of particular questions, to set the rules for particular practices, and to shape particular agendas” (Edmondson, 2002, p. 114).

Prunty (1985) defined policy as an agenda or set of objectives that legitimizes the values, beliefs, and attitudes of its authors. He argued that issues of how problems arise and appear on agendas, how issues are developed, how policy is developed, and how policy is implemented are each important features for critical policy analysis.

Kingdon’s (1995) framework for policy analysis speaks to this view of analysis, offering explicit analyses of the contexts, constructs, and social roles played by those inside and outside of policymaking. Although Kingdon’s framework addresses much of what Prunty called for in the critical analysis of policy, it does not engage us in critical social analysis or inquiries into how such political power constructs (and is constructed by) larger social practices. Critical analyses of policy include inquiry into underlying issues of power and ideology embedded within the definition of the perceived problem and solution. Although more recent analyses of reading policies in the United States make explicit the political nature of policymaking, they do not lead us to examine how political power with respect to dominant voices actually flows throughout (or drives, as the case may be) the policy domain (Woodside-Jiron, 2003). Helpful in thinking about the different layers of inquiry necessary in this sort of policy analysis is Fairclough’s (1992, 2003) frame for CDA.

CDA, Bernstein, and Policy Analysis in California

Fairclough and CDA

Fairclough (1992, 2003) named discourse as a mode of action—one that is socially constitutive. He identified texts, discourse practices, and social practices and how they each come together to carry constructive effects. In his framework, he adopted a Hallidayian (Halliday, 1978) definition of *text* as spoken as well as written language. Discourse practices involve the processes of text production, distribution, and consumption. Social practices represent discourse as ideology and power.

As Rogers (this volume) points out, local, institutional, and societal levels of interpretation necessarily take place at each of the three levels of analysis in CDA: text, discourse practice, and social interaction. I argue here that placing these domains in relation to one another is complex and requires a sys-

tematic theory and analysis of relationships. What is often missing in CDA are the specific analytic procedures—something that Bernstein’s framework and Fairclough’s more recent works (2003) offer to CDA.

Bernstein and the Pedagogic Device

Bernstein’s (2000) work sheds light on this issue by offering a specific theory of relationship among the various levels of discourse under study. Specifically, Bernstein presented the *Pedagogic device* reflecting the relationship between *regulative* and *instructional* discourses. In his framework, Bernstein presented *regulative* discourse as the moral discourse that creates order, relations, and identity and ultimately controls instructional discourse. *Instructional* discourse is that which creates specialized skills and their relationship to each other. Bernstein suggested that the regulative discourse ultimately controls the instructional discourse. By placing these discourses in detailed relation to one another and examining how the regulative discourse actually shapes the instructional discourse, we begin to understand the pedagogic device or specific power relations between the two. The charge to the researcher combining this frame with Fairclough’s CDA is to thoughtfully and systematically identify these discourses (i.e., texts, discourse practices, social practices) as regulative, instructional, and pedagogic so they can be examined in relationship to one another, offering a more complete understanding of the social analysis present in CDA (see Table 8.1). This analytic approach offers a way for the critical policy analyst to explore

Table 8.1 Combining Lenses to Inform Critical Discourse Analysis

<i>Fairclough/Chouliaraki</i>	<i>Bernstein</i>	<i>Implications for Research/Reflexivity</i>
Local context: Interactions or outcomes of the institutional context	Instructional discourse: What is thinkable/ unthinkable	Places where things are being redefined for the larger public (language/text). Issues of genre or ways of interacting
Institutional context: Social and political institutions that frame the local context	Regulative discourse: Dominant forces, voices, or decision makers	Governing bodies that name those redefinitions (organization/ discourse practice). Issues of discourse or representing
Societal context: Larger governing bodies including policies, mandates, and political climates that influence the local and institutional contexts	Pedagogic device: Relationship between the two. Sociological nature of pedagogic knowledge. What makes this kind of communication/ phenomena possible?	What larger context/ideas make this arrangement of knowledge and decision making possible? (cultural models/norms/member resources/ social practice) Issues of style or ways of being

not only the presence of power structures in social change, but also *how*, specifically, power structures influence social change.

The concepts of text, discourse practice, and social practice referred to in Fairclough's CDA, and those of instructional discourse, regulative discourse, and pedagogic device (respectively) in Bernstein's work are combined in my use of CDA in critical policy analysis. For the ease of discussion, I will refer simply to text, discourse practice, and social practice throughout the rest of this chapter.

Fairclough and Bernstein's Frames in the Context of Critical Policy Analysis

In working to understand how policy and power fit together in creating change, Fairclough (1995a, 1995b) referred to *cruces tension points* as moments of crisis. These are times when things are changing or going wrong. What is significant about these moments is that they provide opportunities to deconstruct the various aspects of practices, particularly language practices, that are often naturalized and therefore difficult to notice. In this regard, important sites for investigation include policy documents, well-circulated documents that serve to redefine current thinking, and specific events where particular voices, ideas, or agendas are brought to the front and acted on. These texts have the potential to direct our attention away from the more complex sites of political tension where issues of equity and justice reside.

For analysis, I will now turn to the reading policy changes in California between 1995 and 1997. This account and inquiry will serve as a springboard for continued critical policy analysis in education, including the most recent *Race to the Top*, and is designed to go beyond describing and interpreting these changes to explaining them through the use of CDA.

Inquiry Context

I selected California as the site for this inquiry for several reasons. First, the state of California has the largest population in the United States, with 5 million elementary and middle-school-age students currently being affected by the reading policies recently put into place. Second, California is the second largest textbook adoption state. The textbook market is a fiercely competitive one. Whichever publishers win California adoption typically win a huge chunk of the national textbook market (Manzo, 1997). Therefore, the legislated reading policies passed in California inevitably find their way into textbooks and thousands of classrooms across the nation. Students and teachers across the entire country are affected by California's policies by default. Third, California provides an extremely visible account of considerable policy change over a relatively short period of time, thereby facilitating critical conversations around change—questions ignored in the functional analysis of policy. Basing my sampling strategy on cases of political importance (Kuzel, 1992; Patton, 1990) affords a particular advantage in making explicit how policy can be used

as a means to create social change with respect to teaching and literacy learning, and how terms like “systematic, explicit phonics” and “phonemic awareness instruction” have influenced the way reading is to be taught in California and elsewhere, ultimately influencing students’ apprenticeships into literacy (Collins, 1995; Egan-Robertson, 1998; Ferdman, 1990; Gee, 1996; Mahiri & Godley, 1998; Mertz, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978).

Data

The data for this study included formal and informal documents, and written and oral texts, including legislated policy documents, official state education agency documents, professional listserv and private correspondence, newspaper articles, and documents from popular media sources with high circulation rates such as *Time* and *Newsweek*. Related *discourse practices* were also included in the data set. Historical context data were drawn from significant events that took place in California around this body of policy. These historical events included electoral events, shifts in the organization of educational decision-making procedures specific to California’s governance system, temporal links between various documents, and legislative hearings (videotapes) where consistent and influential voices were present. Situating fine-grained discourse analysis in political and cultural context allows researchers to both explore cultural models and how they interact with moments of change, and to examine how educational processes and practices are constructed across time and how discourse processes and practices shape what counts as knowing, doing, and being within and across events (Fairclough, 2003; Gee, 1996, 1999; Gee & Green, 1998; Rogers, 2003). Steeped in this collection process, I maintained detailed field notes and research journals to record analytical decisions and explanations of *social practices* over time, and in order to register my ongoing reflections. Fairclough (1995a) noted that this third level of analysis is the most explanatory and thus requires such a system of accountability.

Analysis of Text

Fairclough (1992) suggested that the analysis of spoken and written texts can be organized under four main headings: vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and text structure. His more recent work (2003) focuses more elaborately on genres (ways of acting), discourses (ways of representing), and styles (ways of being). Particularly interesting in the critical analysis of policy are features of text that speak to the genre (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2003) of policy, including the vocabulary used while presenting new rules about the way people function and the way in which policies are written so as to produce cohesion. Here authoritative sentence structure in the introducing of new information and the intertextual features of the text work together to create cohesion (which is a property of neither the text nor the interpreter, but rather the intersection of the two).

For this analysis, I have broken the selected texts into information units (Halliday, 1994) and identified *theme* and *rheme* in the sentence structure to interpret their structural role in the introduction of new information. As one analyzes spoken and written texts in CDA, one is at the same time addressing questions of form and meaning. I also looked at the nonstructural features of text that contribute to particular interpretations of text and social change. Specifically, I made note of the use of determiners in establishing authority and facts as well as the consistency of vocabulary in contributing to the cohesion of the overall text. How, during a time of policy change, did the policymakers make use of language to construct a perceived consensus among and between outsiders and insiders?

Analysis of Discourse Practice

With the tools and methods of CDA, I saw that policies were layered on top of one another to create cohesive collections of policy. When the discourses of policymakers are repeated over and over again, when policymakers talk about them collectively as “the final word” or “the most authoritative version,” these texts come to be established as fact or normal when, in fact, they are simply individual texts bundled rhetorically. Also important in studying the production, distribution, and consumptions of these texts is the social and political context from which they come. In this study, I point to the opening of policy windows in California and the way in which new policies and text are strategically linked to established texts to promote *minimal resistance*. Further, I interpret the ways in which people are actually forced to consume the policy through mandatory and monitored professional development experiences.

Analysis of Social Practice

I have paid particular attention to the way in which consensus was actually *crafted* by influential policy professionals both in the context of legislative policymaking and in the popular media. Here we are able to explain levels of participation in the construction of new knowledge and think about how that new knowledge gets presented. In looking at the legislative and public contexts, we can begin to explain how particular individuals and research were strategic in the development of legislative policy and the preparation of the public for these policies through the popular media. Being able to then turn these understandings back on the prior analyses of texts and discourse practices in relationship to one another, as Bernstein’s frame allows, strengthens my analysis of social practices and how people come to be positioned in various ways. Having introduced critical policy analysis into the frame of CDA, now let us explore one such case study of policy.

The Language of Politics and the Politics of Language in California Reading Policy

As I analyze the changes that took place throughout California's reading policies, it is interesting to watch the ways that a seemingly small assumption grows and hardens into mandated teacher practices and instructional materials. The first of the five policies presented "the fundamental skills required" in reading, a construct that would become the stem from which basic instructional materials and current and confirmed research would be named.³ As each of these policies gained speed individually and collectively, the restrictive nature of the policy increased, further narrowing decision-making processes and the definition of reading, teaching, and learning. By engaging in this close analysis of changes that took place over time, I am able to not only describe the changes, but push further to explain how these changes occurred.

Text

Texts and Themes in the CDA of California's Reading Policies

In January 1995, the California state Assembly introduced the first of five bills that would later redefine reading instruction in California. Given this surge of California legislation and the tremendous impact it had in creating radical changes in California's state documents, instructional materials, and professional development experiences, these legislative documents are key data in the critical analysis of California policy. These policies (individually and collectively) represent radical changes in how California named reading in K to 3 and also the underlying assumptions about teaching and learning.

Making the Unfamiliar Familiar Through Text Structure

The bills inscribe an underlying assumption or assertion (no small difference there) that there were some predetermined "fundamental skills required" in reading. This language was first introduced (and mandated) through Assembly Bill 170 (1995a), Instructional Materials.

Fairclough (1992) highlighted that "it is always worth attending to what is placed initially in clauses and sentences, because that can give insight into assumptions and strategies which may at no point be made explicit" (p. 184). In the analysis of the semantic relationship between information structure and thematic structure, Halliday (1994) noted that generally a speaker will "choose the Theme from within what is Given and locate the focus, the climax of the New, somewhere within the Rheme" (p. 299). *Theme* can most easily be defined as the initial part of a clause, whereas *rheme* is the later. This particular type of writing—where new information is linked with given, more familiar information in legislation—is important because it provides a set of conditions that

exploit the potential of the new information being presented. *New* information here does not necessarily mean brand-new methods of instruction or definitions of reading. To be sure, California has experienced several cycles of more and less phonics-based methods of reading and instruction throughout its educational history. Rather, “new” in this analysis means new with respect to its presence in the given conversation: for example, in 1987, “these details [phonics, word-attack skills, vocabulary, and the conventions of language], when taught, should be in context and not in isolation” (Honig, 1991, p. 110). In the 1999 framework, however, “students first learn to apply and practice decoding and word-attack skills in carefully controlled, decodable texts” (California Department of Education, 1999, p. 4). A significant shift has taken place with respect to how reading, teaching, and learning were being presented in California’s framework. The phonics and word recognition approach is considered “new” because it provides such a contrast to the previous framework, which emphasized meaning. How the given and new information of the first bill (A. B. 170, 1995a) information was positioned within the text ensured particular interpretations.⁴

1. 600200.4. (a) The State Board of Education shall ensure that the basic instructional materials that it adopts for mathematics and reading in Grades 1 to 8, inclusive, are based on the fundamental skills required by these subjects, including, but not limited to, systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills.

2. (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the fundamental skills of all subject areas, including systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills, be included in the adopted curriculum frameworks and that these skills and related tasks increase in depth and complexity from year to year.

3. It is the intent of the Legislature that the instructional materials adopted by the State Board of Education meet the provisions of this section.

We can see specific patterns in how tensions between language and language structure present opportunities to make the unfamiliar familiar. These ultimately represent struggles over meaning and truth. The first information unit begins with a theme possessing a given:

1. “The State Board of Education shall ensure that the basic instructional materials that it adopts for mathematics and reading in Grades 1 to 8, inclusive . . .”

California has long been a textbook adoption state (Honig, 1991; Manzo, 1997). The State Board of Education is the governing force in this process. Therefore, the given information in the initial positioning of this sentence refers to this long-standing policy of textbook adoption. The new information is then presented in the final position of the sentence:

1. are based on the fundamental skills required by these subjects, including, but not limited to, systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills.

The way in which this new information follows an already established fact relays to the reader a sense of order and logic. Here new ideas are attached to more familiar ideas, thus naturalizing the new concept at hand (Fairclough, 1992, 1995b). In the next sentence, this new information is picked up and placed in the initial position, thus relaying that it is now *given* information and used to introduce additional new information:

2. (b) It is the intent of the Legislature that the fundamental skills of all subject areas, including systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills, be included in the adopted curriculum frameworks and that these skills and related tasks increase in depth and complexity from year to year.

Here, policymakers strategically link yet another established policy (curriculum frameworks) with the newly introduced “systematic, explicit phonics.” However, specific attention was also being given to the order and sequence of skills to be taught (“increase in depth and complexity”), which again marks a change from previous legislative authority. These maneuvers typically feel obvious and natural to the reader given their flow and reference to already established policies. They have come to be naturalized. In essence, however, they represent the privileging of particular ideologies and paradigmatic commitments. Finally, the authors of A. B. 170 use the last information unit in this sample to reiterate the purpose of the document:

3. It is the intent of the Legislature that the instructional materials adopted by the State Board of Education meet the provisions of this section.

In summarizing new information in this way, the authors make what was initially unfamiliar familiar. The information that sounded new at the outset of this policy (“the fundamental skills required,” “systematic, explicit phonics,” sequential “depth and complexity”) is now established as fact (“*the provisions of this section*”; italics added). Although views about reading, teaching, and learning are manipulated via theme and rheme, later in the 1999 framework these same principles of order and complexity attain the status of fact claiming “the reality that standards in the earlier grades are building blocks for proficiency in the later grades” (California Department of Education, 1999, p. viii)—a significant shift.

In part through the structuring of the text, the elected officials have come to naturalize new information that was not present in California’s reading policies immediately prior to that time, thus changing the language being used in conversations around reading and reading instruction. In essence, they are

claiming a moral high ground of sorts from which they are able to establish moral order as a given.

Whereas the analysis of theme/rheme and the structuring of given/new information inform our understanding of how meaning is organized at the elemental level, the analysis of *lexical cohesion* offers an understanding of the ways in which continuity is established in text via the use of key words, their repetition, and other words that are used as synonyms. Analyses of these nonstructural features are important in that they also can give any passage of text the status of fact—an important tool in influencing the readers' construction of text.

Lexical Cohesion: Fact or Foe

One discourse practice often present during times of change in educational policy is the use of specific new terms to name what is important or of value in the given policy (Fairclough, 1995a). These terms are often difficult to identify because they are presented with such authority and *ofcourseness* that we tend to pass over them. For example, "systematic explicit phonics instruction" is repeated time and time again throughout California's reading policies between 1995 and 1997. This phrase is repeated in documents from state education agencies as well as the popular media. These terms are used as places where particular views of reading, teaching, and learning are systematically mandated.

In the first information unit described earlier, *the fundamental skills required* for reading were introduced. This new information is then repeated in each of the subsequent information units⁵ that follow and warrants our attention in terms of how it is used to mandate new definitions of reading and instructional materials. Significant in the phrase "*the fundamental skills required*" (italics added) is the presence of the word *the*. In this case, *the* is a *determiner* (Gee, 1999), which serves as a cohesive device communicating that there is some finite and stable set of skills that have been identified that correlate with reading achievement. Although *the* is a tiny word, it carries with it a tremendous amount of power. It serves in this context to signal some universal agreement on how reading is acquired. It assigns the status of fact to phonics as the fundamental or primary skill required in learning to read. In keeping with the previous analysis of text, such specific skills would typically be introduced earlier in the document, and then the determiner *the* would link back to them. This would indicate that that information was assumed to be predictable or known on the basis of the preceding sentences. Here, however, *the fundamental skills* is only defined later by the newly introduced *systematic, explicit phonics* with respect to reading, thus marking the introduction of new and favored information. It is as if *the fundamental skills* is used to initially arrange a general commonsense agreement among the audience members and is then returned to later and used interchangeably with *systematic, explicit phonics*. It is a discourse practice that has a quiet way of nursing the audience along in your way of thinking.

The intertextual nature of such structuring of change through various influential policy documents (formal and informal) necessitates the close analysis

of text in understanding how new information comes to be established as fact. Particularly important in the intertextual chains throughout California's policy changes is the genre of policy. Specifically, the use of grammar and vocabulary in claiming authority while reducing resistance was significant. Together the use of grammar and vocabulary contributed to cohesion through consistency as new information became fact in these policies.

Differences in Discourse

We see as we begin to engage in the interpretive analysis of discourse practice in the changes taking place that California policy in mandating systematic, explicit phonics placed restrictive measures on teachers' professional development and knowledge. California legislation went so far as to mandate that "systematic explicit phonics instruction *does not mean* 'embedded phonics instruction' which is *ad hoc* instruction in phonics based on a random selection of sound and word elements" (A. B. 1086, 1997, p. 5; italics added). This means that the professional development that embraced or even entertained such a perspective would not (and did not) receive state funding, which is a huge regulative and restrictive exercise in power affecting how people are positioned. In this case, the opportunities to actually explore differences in discourse and how educators deal with difference are minimized, leaving the opportunity for a metadiscourse about change defunct (see Toll, 2002).

Discourse Practice

The analysis of discourse practice necessarily involves processes of text production, distribution, and consumption. By investigating these processes, we come to see how various member resources (Fairclough, 1992, 2003) are drawn on and how. As Fairclough suggested, pin-pointing the context of situation in terms of this mental map provides two bodies of information relevant to determining how context affects the interpretation of text in any particular case: a reading of the situation which foregrounds certain elements, backgrounds others, and relates elements to each other in certain ways; and a specification of which discursive types are likely to be relevant. (Fairclough, 1992, p. 83). In other words, understanding how texts are produced, distributed, and consumed informs our understanding of how authors work to ensure particular interpretations of text and how this engages our various member resources.

Discourse Practices and Themes in the CDA of California's Reading Policies

During this period of change in California's legislative and state policies, larger political changes were also taking place. In November 1994, California Republicans gained control of the State Assembly, the majority of the nation's governors were Republican for the first time in decades, and bipartisan agreement over issues of education began (Carlos & Kirst, 1997).

As California's new reading policies were being mandated, California's system of educational decision making was reorganized. Traditionally, the State Department of Education (CDE) had been the governmental unit charged with turning legislative policy into local policy, with the State Superintendent, Bill Honig, acting as overseer in this process. However, dismal test scores, fiscal improprieties, and bipartisan agreement with a back-to-basics agenda presented a unique window for policy change. Honig resigned, and power consequently shifted from the CDE to the State Board of Education (SBE). Important in California's educational governance system is the fact that members of the SBE are appointed by the governor. This meant that with the shift in control from the CDE to the SBE came more top-down power and political influence from elected officials via the governor's influence over the SBE. Instead of CDE members turning policies into action, now members of the SBE, handpicked by the governor, held this power. Also important is that this change took place in the context of fear and disbelief among the larger public in California. Again this represents another narrowing of decision making among a governing body that is responsible for much of the translating of legislation into local-level policy and instruction ultimately affecting California's teachers and students.

Assigning "Current and Confirmed Research"

One month after the introduction of the first reading bill, the Assembly introduced a second one, A. B. 1504 (1995b—Instructional Materials: Spelling). This bill was introduced by the same legislators (Burton, Alpert, and Conroy) and was designed with the legislative intent of ensuring the adoption of "basic instructional materials."

In this second bill, legislators specified the criteria for the adoption of instructional materials mandating that:

(1) The submitted basic instructional materials are consistent with the criteria and the standards of quality prescribed in the state board's adopted curriculum *framework*. In making this determination, the state board shall consider both the framework and the submitted instructional materials as a whole.

[...]

(3) The submitted instructional materials are factually accurate and incorporate principals of instruction reflective of *current and confirmed research*. (A. B. 1504, 1995b, p. 2)

There are two different features of this policy text that warrant our attention with respect to the institutional shaping of discourse. First, in this policy, legislators have made an explicit link between the frameworks that were, at that time, under revision and the textbooks that the SBE could approve. Aligning instructional materials in this way with "the state's educational philosophy, theory, current research, and best practices teachers are to follow" (Chrispeels, 1997, p. 459) is a pedagogic maneuver influencing both how reading is defined

and how it is to be taught. Such legislated policy serves to place power over many among a small number of elected and appointed officials. It also reduces access to the naming of reading and reading instruction because fewer people are making decisions. Because of this decision-making structure or pedagogic device, there is little room for debate or conflict. Decision-making information is not provided, and public voice is not welcomed. The legislators mandating this link with a curriculum framework, which is ultimately, although implicitly, subjective and ideological, creates an understanding of and a compliance with a social order that, in this case, positions elected and appointed officials as authority.

The second feature of this policy sample is that “principles of instruction reflective of current and confirmed research” are introduced and named as criteria for selecting textbooks. Here “principles of instruction reflective of current and confirmed research” represent an intrinsic logic and favored agenda. This bill was making its way through the Legislature at the same time that dismal scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and California Learning Assessment System (CLAS) were being reported and local and national newspapers were riddled with conversations about America falling behind, “scientific research,” America Reads, and reading on grade level by third grade. Gee (1999) suggested that such understandings are simplifications about the world that leave out many complexities. Problematic is that cultural models like this can do harm by “implanting in thought and action unfair, dismissive, or derogatory assumptions” (p. 59).

As systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills were boldly named among *the* fundamental skills in mathematics and reading in the first ABC bill (A. B. 170, 1995a) without explicit and grounded logic, so we see instruction being linked with current and confirmed research here in this policy. Although legislators go no further than to define the research that instruction is to be based on as “current and confirmed” in this particular policy, later this principle was extended and transformed considerably. Two years later in A. B. 1086: Reading Instruction (1997), *current and confirmed research* would be further defined:

(j) . . . “Current” research is research that has been conducted and is reported in a manner consistent with *contemporary standards of scientific investigation*. “Confirmed” research is research that has been *replicated* and the results duplicated. “Replicable” research is research with a structure and design that can be *reproduced*. “Generalizable” research is research in which samples have been used so that the results can be said to be true for the *population* from which the sample was drawn. (A. B. 1086, 1997; italics added)⁶

Control over such discourse defining reading and how it is to be taught creates the rules of social order in educational decision making. This is a process of *recontextualization*—of redefining knowledge with respect to reading, teaching, and learning. It is the process of regulations being placed on the formation of a

specific pedagogic discourse. This legislation serves to eliminate entire bodies of quality research, including qualitative research that reports by means different from the replicable, generalizable “contemporary standards of investigation.” Such a maneuver is a significant tool in naming what is thinkable and unthinkable in California’s teaching of reading. As Bernstein (2000) suggested, it attempts to regulate those who have access to this site and in this way control alternative possibilities. We see this being done in the naming of instructional principles based on current, confirmed research complying with contemporary standards of scientific investigation in California’s reading policies.⁷

Eliminating Resistance: A. B. 3482 and A. B. 1086—California’s Teacher Training Bills

Up to this point, we have been talking about policy documents as if there is a direct relationship between policy and practice. Of course, this is not necessarily true, and policymakers know this. To ensure the success of policy, one must engage in discourse practices that eliminate as much resistance as possible. This can take many forms. In California it took the form of mandatory and heavily screened professional development for teachers.

Less than a year after both Instructional Materials had been passed (A. B. 170, 1995a; A. B. 1504, 1995b), a third bill came along (Education: Teacher Reading Instruction [A. B. 3482, 1996]). This was the first of two bills dedicated entirely to influencing teacher inservice training. It mandated that:

44756. To be eligible for funds pursuant to this chapter, a school district shall certify to the State Department of Education that not less than 90 percent of its certificated employees who provide direct instructional services to pupils enrolled in Kindergarten or any of grades 1 to 3, inclusive, have received the type of inservice training described in [the policy].

Whereas the prior bills had targeted instructional materials primarily, this legislation mandated that the vast majority of California’s K to 3 teachers receive specified inservice training in how to teach reading. A fourth bill, A. B. 1086, specified that teachers must abide by *developmental progressions* and that their instruction must be direct, systematic, and explicit. *Embedded phonics instruction* was not to be taught in these service training sessions because it was deemed by policymakers to be “ad hoc instruction in phonics based on a random selection of sound and word elements.”

This policy was followed by the last of the California reading mandates: Reading Instruction (A. B. 1086, 1997). This final bill provided explicit details about the specific criteria for the teacher inservice training sessions mandated in A. B. 3482 (1996). One year later, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the SBE, and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing collectively authored and published the advisory report *Teaching Reading: A Balanced, Comprehensive Approach to Teaching Reading in Prekindergarten*

Through Grade 3 (Reading Program Advisory, 1996). The report was designed to “provide the policy direction and instructional guidance needed to support the improvement of reading achievement in California” (p. v).⁸ Recognized as being influential in the content provided were 10 of the 27 authors of the earlier Task Force report issued the year before. Tracing the authors in this way is an important part of critical policy analysis because it enables us to further explore which voices are influential and which power sources dominate. For instance, the State Superintendent is an elected position in California, as is the office of governor. The SBE and this taskforce, however, were appointed positions controlled by Governor Wilson and State Superintendent Eastin at that time. Making explicit the pedagogic device, who controls knowledge, and how control over time, text, and space come to exist (Bernstein, 1990) is essential in the critical analysis of policy. Given that these reports were intended to inform policy and resulted in more prescriptive policies, we see how increased control over issues of educational content and instruction were situated among a relatively small number of elected and appointed officials. Again these connections represent the naming and distribution of influential ideas and ideologies about reading and reading instruction in California.

Teaching Reading was in direct response to the recommendations outlined in the report of the Superintendent’s Reading Task Force, *Every Child a Reader* (September 1995). It was also designed to support two new statutes known as the ABC bills (Assembly Bill 170, Chapter 765, Statutes of 1995, and Assembly Bill 15, Chapter 764, Statutes of 1995), which required, in part, that the SBE adopt materials in grades 1 through 8 that include “systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills.” The advisory amplified both the recommendations of the Reading Task Force report as well as the new requirements in law, and it was offered as a policy statement rather than a “how-to manual” (Reading Program Advisory, 1996). Particularly interesting in our inquiry here are (a) the intertextual link and “support” for the previous ABC bill, and (b) the statement that *Teaching Reading* was not intended to be a “how-to manual.”

Because it was distributed to all of the schools in the state, the Reading Program Advisory was the intertextual link with the ABC bills and its support for such policy, *Teaching Reading* served to add to the cohesiveness of this movement in reading ideology toward systematic, explicit phonics instruction and current and confirmed research.

The second feature—the statement that *Teaching Reading* was not intended to be a how-to manual—extends beyond intertextual to intratextual relations (Bernstein, 2000, p. 53) Although its authors express that *Teaching Reading* was not intended to be a how-to manual, we find, in the same text, the contradictory intent that it will “provide the policy direction and instructional guidance needed to support the improvement of reading achievement in California” (Reading Program Advisory, 1996, p. v). These two intentions are in conflict with one another. Although the Task Force states that it is not intended to be a how-to manual, they did state their intent that it provide “policy direction and instructional guidance.” The recommendations from this document would

later be found in the subsequent legislative policy (A. B. 1086, 1997). Here we see a discourse practice being used that leads readers to believe that this report is something that it is not, creating dissonance between what is being articulated and what is actually being carried out. Bernstein (2000) referred to this as the carrier versus what is carried. This makes manifest the institutional power that elected and appointed officials have in producing new information and ideas via such influential documents and legislation.

Institutional Arrangement and Power

As particular concepts such as *current and confirmed research* come to be privileged and defined in more detail and by fewer people, we witness an example of Bernstein's (2000) regulative discourse. Understanding this shifting of power and the ways in which it changes the larger discourse is key in moving beyond recognizing the presence of power to understanding how such political power constructs and is constructed by larger social practices.

Social Practice

While understanding how texts are produced, distributed, and consumed informs our understanding of how authors work to ensure particular interpretations of text, the analysis of social practices makes explicit the connections between the discourse practices and the social practices of which they are a part (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough's more recent work suggests that "social practices can be thought of as ways of controlling the selection of certain structural possibilities and the exclusion of others" (2003, p. 23). This dialectical ordering of discourse reinforces the fact that discourse as a political practice is not only a *site* of power struggle, but also a *stake* in power struggle: Discursive practice draws on conventions that naturalize particular power relations and ideologies, and these conventions and the ways in which they are articulated are a focus of struggle (Fairclough, 1992).

The Role of the Expert in Influencing the Policymaking Forum and Building Consensus

Immediately following the first of the [teacher bills] (A. B. 3482, 1996), a special Hearing on Reading of the Education Committee of the California State Assembly was held on May 8, 1996 (Honig, 1996). During this hearing, former State Superintendent Bill Honig was called on to provide expert testimony. Throughout Honig's testimony, one of his main messages was that of a need for *consensus*:

this research that you are about to hear [NICHD research]. It's very powerful stuff. I think it *backs up* this consensus position. It shouldn't be a right, or left, or moderate, or at all. It really is what works with youngsters

and if enough of us *get behind it* I think we're going to make a difference in California. (*italics added*)

During his testimony, Honig made several references to the “convergence of research and best practice,” “the secret to getting a consensus position,” “fashioning a message,” “singing the same tune on this position,” and the need for major players such as the State Board, Department of Education, legislators, governor, and educators to “get behind” this consensus message. His message was clear to the Assembly Education Committee: Together, they were *crafting* a consensus (Allington, 1999) for the educational institution and larger public to consume.

Also during this hearing, G. Reid Lyon of the National Institute of Health (NIH), then acting chief of the division of Child Health and Development, was invited to provide expert testimony with respect to reading research. Lyon emphasized that phonemic awareness, phonics, and high-interest, decodable texts are necessary to ensure the “fast, accurate decoding of words.” Lyon manipulated his testimony to best persuade his audience with respect to what is rational and what is not in terms of reading and reading instruction (*thinkable* and *unthinkable* in Bernstein’s terms). Via Lyon’s title, and supported by the cultural assumptions about “science and research” that he presents as commonsense to the Assembly, he painted a simple picture of what reading is and how best to go about teaching it.

The Education Committee assembled was chaired by Assemblyman Steve Baldwin with Committee Vice Chairwoman Mazzoni. Nine months later, they would become first and second authors of California’s most restrictive professional development bill yet, A. B. 1086. During this special hearing, Assemblyman Baldwin introduced Lyon to the rest of the Assembly as clearly being *the* authority figure on reading. Lyon initially established his credibility to the Assembly member quorum by linking himself with *real* science (e.g., neurobiologist neophysiolgist, biomedical research, genetics). He then emphasized that he was “recruited” by the federal government to develop the research he was about to share. This discourse practice is effective in appealing to the Assembly members present and positioning himself as expert. Further, he emphasized that the NIH oversees 12 research sites around the country that are studying “the reading issue” to which Baldwin referred. He offered that the annual budget for NIH reading research is \$14 million, and “since 1983 the cumulative budget looking at these issues that I’ll talk with you about today is about \$104 million dollars.” Despite his deep investment in this particular collection of research, however, he strategically positioned himself as being “unbiased”—another important discourse practice in establishing credibility.

Lyon: You won’t hear me endorse any reading approach today or any reading method. That’s not the job of the NIH. The job of the NIH is to distill the information so we understand “what does a human being have to do to be able to read?”

To be sure, Lyon has a vested interest in maintaining the health of the NIH research budget—his own paycheck depends on it. Yet he claimed to remove himself politically and ideologically from the testimony he was about to give—he was only there to provide the *distilled information* and *inform policy*. This image of distilled information relayed a message to the audience that they were about to receive “facts” about the “reading issue” from *the* authority figure in the field of reading in their most pure and unbiased form. This, of course, is misleading because with any kind of inquiry come choices about which information is valued and which is dismissed. One of the more recent and visible examples of this is the Congressionally commissioned National Reading Panel and their *distillation* process. That panel, in attempts to “build on the recently announced findings presented by the National Research Council’s Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children,” limited the research that they reviewed and that would be used to “identify gaps in the knowledge base for reading instruction and the best ways to close these gaps” (National Research Council’s Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children, 1998).

Lyon later appealed to the Assembly members present with the agenda of improving reading education by claiming what he believed to be an irrefutable truth: “If you don’t learn to read, you simply don’t make it in life.” Such a declarative moral and causal statement fanned the flames of existing fears and tuned the ear of his captive Assembly member audience. After all, the Assembly members’ job is to serve the people and preserve the peace. Surely finding a way to ensure that we “make it in life” qualifies as an agenda for immediate action. It primed the Assembly and positioned them as recipients for the distilled information and research provided in Lyon’s testimony. He linked illiteracy with those who do not finish school, end up in prison, and become unwed mothers. Such presuppositions are effective ways to manipulate people because they are so difficult to challenge (Fairclough, 1992, 2003). Here they are presented as fact and in causal relationship. There is little room in Lyon’s discourse practice here to challenge these assumptions because he distilled the information, insisting that he does not want to “belabor or bore” the Assembly with the “technical issues.” Ultimately, this means they are not able to evaluate the information firsthand, but rather are forced to go on his own expert interpretation. There is little room for debate because of the moral high ground laced throughout his argument. As such, anyone who would get in the way of policy intended to “help children learn to read” would be seen as ultimately getting in the way of children and success. This is a moral battleground that few are willing to enter—especially those who are publicly elected and rely on people’s votes.

Despite Lyon’s admission that he is the lead person within the federal government by way of the *time* he spends in it versus his *knowledge*, he offered and claimed the authority to name reading as “fast, rapid, automatic decoding and recognizing of words” and “fast, accurate decoding of single words.” He then identified phonological or phonemic awareness as the solution, which in just 9 short months would be found in the final policy and criteria for mandated

inservice providers, affecting at least 90% of all California's primary teachers and their students.

The Role of the Expert in Influencing the Larger Public and Building Consensus

This consensus was also portrayed throughout the popular media during California's changes in reading and instruction policies. October 27, 1997, was a particularly interesting day in popular print media with respect to education and, more specifically, reading education. On this day, both *Time* and *Newsweek*, two of the most widely circulated and accessible print media sources, ran feature articles specific to how children learn to read. These feature articles were distributed the week prior to when the Reading Excellence Act (1998) was to pass through Congress, reinforcing the consensus position that Honig referred to earlier (see Coles, 2000; Taylor, 1998).

The *Newsweek* (Wingert & Kantrowitz, 1997) reporter reported that:

Researchers have identified *four* distinct steps in learning to read; breakdowns anywhere in this process can explain severe reading problems. G. Reid Lyon, acting *chief* of the child-development and behavior branch of the National Institutes of Child and Human Development, says that reading for all children begins with phonological awareness. (p. 60; italics added)

Note that it is the reporter and not G. Reid Lyon speaking himself—an interesting reporting style because it removes the reader from the original source of information. We saw the same authorial move by Lyon in his testimony when he said things like, “I don’t want to belabor or bore you” with the technical details (p. 7). We also experienced this in Honig’s testimony when he made broad claims about the NICHD research as being “powerful stuff.” We also hear this in many, many different arenas as people claim “the research shows” yet do not provide the original research so that the intended audience can decide for themselves. This *Newsweek* quote goes on to complete the list of four steps that include linking sounds with specific letters, becoming fast readers, and finally concentrating on the meaning of the words. This information is the same that Lyon presented in his testimony before the Assembly.

It is interesting to note that, in this article, Lyon’s *voice* consumes more space than those of any of the other experts or researchers referenced throughout the article. Also Lyon is introduced with the long and authoritative title of “acting chief of the child-development and behavior branch of the National Institutes of Child and Human Development” attached to his name. This use of status, as in the prior legislative hearing, lends him credibility as an expert throughout this article.

In the *Time* (Collins, 1997) article, Lyon is again referenced directly—this time on the heels of two other well-known researchers. The reporter in this article foregrounded similar steps to learning to read via these researchers, and then added:

As the 1990s progressed, more verification of the importance of phonemic awareness came from studies conducted by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development at the National Institutes of Health. Under the direction of Reid Lyon, *researchers have found* that problems with phonemic awareness correlate extremely closely with reading failure. Other NICHD studies have reaffirmed the conclusions reached by Chall and Adams—that programs with some systematic phonics instruction lead to better outcomes. (p. 80; italics added)

Both of these reports actively construct a perceived consensus in terms of both the problem at hand and the solution. The first is the authority given to research. Throughout the prior texts, research *identifies, verifies, finds, and reaffirms conclusions*. These are powerful and uncontested actions in this context. From these claims specific assumptions about reading, teaching, and learning are advanced. As we saw in the legislative changes discussed earlier in this chapter, such claims have significant impacts on how children come to experience reading and reading instruction in the classroom. Understanding the specific ways by which policymakers and scientific research are placed in positions of authority and how they relay certain understandings about knowledge and our role in the production and consumption of knowledge is essential because it is *constitutive* (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 52).

What we see through these discourse practices is the naturalization and consolidation of the message that both Honig and Lyon conveyed in their expert testimony before the Education Committee of the California State Assembly. In naming reading as a series of set steps and in explicitly focusing on a narrow body of research, reading in California was redefined and recontextualized. These ideologies and agendas were then effectively distributed through what would be the last of California's reading bills at that time. These points are important because they push our thinking about the intersection between the text and the reader. Understanding this relationship offers us the opportunity to explain the ways in which learning takes place throughout the many facets of policymaking (e.g., participation in policymaking, the way in which participation—limited or not—positions people, and the structural power that that contributes to in the policymaking process and, in this case, the power of few over many).

Gee suggested that we do not have a reading crisis in our schools. Rather, we have an *affiliation crisis*. To affiliate with particular people, practices, institutions, methods, and so on is to “participate fully in the attitudes, values, and norms the practice requires” (Gee, 2001, p. xviii). This is not realistic for many students coming in contact with legislated and one-size-fits-all policy, curricula, and assessments. We need to find ways to engage in larger dialogue and systematic research about how the ways in which literacy-related social practices do and do not recruit children's affiliation (Gee, 2001).

Current Policy Impacting Literacy Education Today

Since the first edition of this book was published, the Presidential administration has changed, the costly “War on Terrorism” continues, and the economic crisis looms large. To date, the U.S. carries a national debt of \$12.5 trillion and a national unemployment rate of 9.7% (U.S. Department of Labor). NCLB’s Reading First was initially authorized for FYs 2002–2007. It was then extended with significantly less financial support. Now the reauthorization of the ESEA is on the horizon once again. It is certainly welcomed at a time when resources are scarce and schools feel more accountability pressure than ever before. However, many schools are also anxious about what the reauthorization will require and how responsive it will be to the genuine challenges faced by children and schools gripped by poverty, changing family dynamics, and often times increasingly contrastive home and school experiences. NCLB was scorned for what seemed to many education practitioners an overly simplistic approach to assessing Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). Teachers and administrators remain thoughtful as to how English Language Learners and Special Education Students will fit within the legal parameters of the next wave of legislation.

California has also experienced changes of its own to be considered in this changing political climate. It now serves more than 6.2 million students. Currently approximately half of the state’s students come from low-income families, a quarter of them are ESL students, and about one in 10 requires Special Education services (EdSource). Finally, the state has made more than \$17 billion in cuts to education in the past two years and is likely to cut more in the near future (ABC News). This means a potential loss of more than 19,000 teachers, which certainly presents daunting challenges for the nation’s most populous state.

Most recently, the federal economic stimulus package channeled 4.35 billion dollars to the U.S. Department of Education for a competition called “Race to the Top.” This competition fund is targeted specifically for education reform and is of obvious interest to both California and all other states in a time of such economic stress.

Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education, communicated the competitive nature of the “race” on the U.S. Department of Education website:

the president and I want to send a message to everyone: governors and mayors, school board members and teachers, parents and students; businesses and non-profits. We all need to work together to win this race so that our students can outcompete any worker in the world.

To win the race, states have to have standards and tests that prepare students to succeed in college and careers. They’ll need to recruit and reward excellent teachers and principals. They must have data systems to track students’ progress and to identify effective teachers. They must identify their lowest-performing schools and take dramatic action to turn them around.

In addition to the “Race to the Top” competition, the administration has another \$5 billion available to targeted efforts to reform schools.

We have the resources at the federal level to drive reform. Now all of us need to take this challenge on and work together to reform our schools. (<http://www.ed.gov/blog/2009/07/race-to-the-top-begins/>)

There are many assumptions embedded within this text, discourse practice, and social practice. Words such as *win*, *race*, and *outcompete* name values and norms that you must buy into if you are to participate in the race (and who can afford not to?). College is lifted up as a commonsense practice when the reality in today’s economic crunch is that many cannot afford the burgeoning costs associated with college. These assumptions represent but one particular set of ideas about how to set education policy or conceptualize reform.

In terms of school reform in Duncan’s comments, teacher effectiveness is bound with student progress with little or no regard for the challenges that states like California are currently facing. Also, the call to identify “lowest-performing schools and take dramatic action to turn them around” implies a very top heavy approach to school reform. Decades of school reform literature makes explicit that lasting school change is an inside out process. Fullan (2001) observed, “Educational change is technically simple and socially complex” (p. 69). The perception that children and schools can be “turned” is simplistic. Instead, struggling schools must be given support that meets them where they are in their development and guides them forward with urgency and accelerated learning toward equity and ever narrowing achievement gaps.

While California did compete for funds for the “Race to the Top,” the state did not receive support in the first of two rounds of applications. As often happens when demonstrating a perceived consensus is important for approval, finger pointing increases and scope of vision decreases. A reporter from the San Francisco Gate (March 6, 2010) reported:

One thing that definitely went wrong [with California’s “Race to the Top” application for funds] was the attitude of the state teachers’ unions. Union leaders fought the reform legislation at every turn and managed to water down the [application] package that eventually passed in January. Marty Hittelman, president of the California Federation of Teachers, even said he wasn’t sorry that California lost the first round. And in part because of these kinds of feuds within the education community, lots of California school districts opted out of participation in Race to the Top. In Kentucky, every single school district signed on.

The tenor of this text is blame—frustration with losing the first round of the “race.” While Hittelman is blasted for not being sorry that California lost the first round, the unwritten text is *why* he wasn’t sorry. Were the differences of opinion really “feuds within the education community”? Were they perhaps deeper, more experienced commitments to lines that he was not willing to cross

in terms of what is best for children and their learning? Did the compromises required to be successful in this application mean a bigger compromise that some students would excel while others would be further pushed to the margin? Recognizing the exercise of power that is embedded with federal funding is important. Most grant-funded activities require applicants to endorse the funder's assumptions as the point of departure and provide limited flexibility for one's own agenda or context. These are the larger issues that are important to unpack in both written and unwritten texts present in all federal policy documents and subsequent state and local responses. These difficult locales are where questions of power and authority lie waiting to be pulled apart and put back together again in more equitable and just ways.

Discussion

Extending critical analyses of policy to include explanations of how political power constructs and is constructed by larger social practices is an important process because policy is constitutive. It serves not only to distribute, but to *mandate* such ideals across a much larger forum—the educational institution and its members. This is particularly important as we consider larger social issues and trend data reflecting social injustices linked with literacy education, children and families of poverty, and second language learners. As we have seen here, the close analysis of text, discourse practice, and social practice through CDA extended by Bernstein's theory of relationships makes explicit the ways in which text, discourse practice, and social practice come together to foster social change. Across all three of these dimensions was the drive to create consensus and restrict potential resistance.

Typical to information structures, we saw in California's policies the ways in which text was structured to ensure particular interpretations. In the close analysis of particular texts in context, we saw how informational units were structured so that given information preceded the new. Structuring text in this way contributes to what is known as the "good reason" principle (Halliday, 1994, p. 308; see also Habermas, 1996, for a more thorough discussion) and ultimately constitutes the internal resources for structuring the clause as a logical, grounded message. This contributes to the process of *naturalization* (Fairclough, 1992; 2003).

Analyzing this process of naturalization in the structural analysis of text, we understand the ways in which ideologies are embedded in discursive practices and made more effective by becoming naturalized. When this happens, the ideologies and discourse practices attain the status of common sense and become difficult to recognize or push against.

Naturalization takes place not only in the structural elements of text, but also in the nonstructural elements. Lexical cohesion through consistent vocabulary or reference to "current and confirmed research" also builds cohesion and helps naturalize a text. Regardless of whether there is intrinsic logic to "current and confirmed research," the ways in which it is promoted and imposed on the

educational institution are what Bernstein (2000) called *social facts*. In transmitting this particular idea about how things are and should be, policymakers are positioning themselves in a rather dictatorial way, which means that others must be more passive and receptive. At the core of this naming of what counts and what does not is a power relation between dominant and passive participants, thus influencing principles of selection.

As elected and appointed officials force changes in the terms that we use, the focus of our attention changes, creating similar conversations among larger populations and thus altering what is perceived as normal. By doing this, resistant readings of the policy are reduced by way of anchoring new and often vague terms against specific bodies of research, proclaimed experts, and instructional materials. In changing which instructional resources are to be made available and prohibited, we not only further influence what practices and conversations are likely to take place, but also the potential content and pedagogical knowledge made available to teachers. The implications of such positioning mean that such discourse methods actually gather steam from the people being systematically eliminated from them in the first place. Also important is that the readers contribute to this unknowingly because the text is structured to be seamless and naturalized. Again, this ultimately creates a distraction from the larger social issues that are at the root of imbalances of power and representation.

Understanding the shift in California's system of educational decision making in power (CDE to SBE), we must also look at *how* the ideologies and agendas represented by influential players were advanced both within the policymaking forum and among the larger public. Studying the relationship between power and ideology in this way extends Fairclough's attention to text and context via CDA. "Particular interpretive principles come to be associated in a naturalized way with particular discourse types, and such linkages are worth investigating for the light they shed on the important ideological functions of coherence in interpellating subjects" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 84).

The presence of the NICHD research in these policy development forums, as well as the ways in which it is naturalized and effectively distributed, cannot be ignored. It represents a body of research that was hand picked by the federal government and policymakers, which many have been passively selected as *the* authoritative source on reading and reading instruction. Influential reviews (sometimes including second- and third-generation published research) as well as the physical presence of NICHD researchers and staff members in legislative sessions have influenced how reading has come to be defined and taught via legislation in California.

As reflexive and critical discourse analysts, we must make decisions about how to interpret, describe, and explain texts, discourse practices, and social practices. Bringing Bernstein's pedagogic device to CDA offers us the opportunity to understand how text, discourse practice, and social practice represent the elements of social analyses that Fairclough highlighted (i.e., social matrix, orders of discourse, and the ideological and political effects of discourse). In placing text and discourse practice in relation to one another in this way, we

come to see not only the function of language in change, but also the social network that underlies the degree of success or failure to impact change that language and discourse practices can have.

Concluding Thoughts

Political discourse, by its very nature, is designed to influence people's representations of cultural norms and the principles of classification which underlie them. "The power of political discourse depends upon its capacity to constitute and mobilize those social forces that are capable of carrying into reality its *promises of a new reality, in its very formulation of this new reality*" (Fairclough, 1995a, p. 182). Throughout this analysis we have used critical discourse analysis to make sense of reading policy in public schools. This analysis of California policy between 1995 and 1997 makes explicit the ways in which policy is constitutive and can have a lasting impact reaching social systems far and wide. It presents specific examples of cruxes for analysts of educational policy to examine to identify the deeper social practices at hand. As a result, we are left with urgent questions for continued critical analysis: What are the *new realities* presented in today's policies? What principles of classification are being defined, mandated, and used across diverse populations with complex and varying needs? Here we see that there are procedural changes that take place with policy implementation (i.e., reading curriculum and policy) but that there are also social changes that require close analysis if we are to truly understand the social practices and the relationship between instructional and regulative discourses (Woodside-Jiron & Gehsmann, 2009). In taking a critical approach to policy analysis in this way we are better equipped to understand the intended and unintended consequences of policy-induced change in schools. Schools are democratic institutions and as such require reorienting of our means of policy inquiry (Fischer, 2009). Critical discourse analysis offers one such means of doing so with its multidimensional approach to both inquiry and analysis.

Fundamental to critical policy analysis is the explicit analysis of the process of naturalization in policy development, policy communication, and policy implementation. This is especially important because the procedures and practices may be politically and ideologically invested and because these procedures and practices position people in specific ways. In this *naturalization* processes or shaping of cultural models, some norms are brought to the center and others are pushed to the margin. In the case of policymaking around reading in education, select policy players and policy informants took center stage while parents, teachers, administrators, taxpayers, and students were pushed to the margin. How people participate in the language and power of policy shapes their surrounding social structures, social relations, and agendas. Often this is an invisible process that strengthens the language, power, and participation processes. This is particularly problematic when participating in this way continues to push some people to the margin and silence them from the conversation. Such hegemonic processes must be not only brought to light, but aggressively

pushed against and restructured. As researchers and leaders in education, it is essential that we become better at communicating such practices to the larger public being supplied with these crafted consensus around such constructs as *scientific research*, *reading crisis*, and one-size-fits-all solutions like *systematic, explicit instruction*. Such balances of power and orders of discourse have serious implications. Such manipulative (discursive) practices shape our children and their literacy learning experiences. CDA as a framework for analyzing power and cultural models offers a promising means to better understand the links between policy and those who experience policy firsthand and offers a social lens for change.

Notes

- 1 The authorization for the program was automatically extended for one additional fiscal year (through FY 2008) under section 422(a) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1226a(a)) but at a significantly lower rate.
- 2 This period of change in California is particularly illustrative of this process given the presentation of popular media and political power at that time. Further still, the unusual size of the state and its subsequent impact on the larger educational publishing industry is significant.
- 3 This later extended to the federal level as NCLB legislation linked increased funding to “scientifically proven methods of reading instruction” (NCLB, 2003, p. 2).
- 4 Note that these have been broken into information units (Halliday, 1994).
- 5 Here *the provisions of this section* refers to *the fundamental skill* further defined as “systematic, explicit phonics, spelling, and basic computational skills.”
- 6 It is interesting that these terms are all present in G. Reid Lyon’s testimony before the Assembly Education Committee Hearing on Reading on May 8, 1996.
- 7 At the national level, we see this being done through the Congressionally mandated review of research by the National Reading Panel. Their review included a restrictive screening process by which whole bodies of research were systematically eliminated.
- 8 Baldwin referenced this report as if looking forward to it in a policy decision in the May 1996 hearing.

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9 Locating the Role of the Critical Discourse Analyst

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Historically, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) first involved analysis of language and its ideological echoes in public speeches and platforms, with the analyst functioning as a conduit between the public and the ideologies conveyed through language by public office holders. For example, Norman Fairclough, a foundational author of both uses and methodological structures of CDA, has used CDA (2000) to explore the neoliberal ideologies enacted through public speeches by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and United States President Ronald Reagan. In uses such as these, the direct interface between the analyst and the speaker is limited, with the analyst examining language that was readily available to and heard by others and publishing the analysis to academic and public audiences.

Across the use of CDA in educational research, two trends have emerged. First is a trend largely in keeping, relationally speaking, with CDA's first analyses of public speech, in the form of critical policy analysis using CDA to explore educational policies' ideologies and positions (e.g., Dworin & Bomer, 2008; Jones, 2009; Liasidou, 2008; Stevens, 2003). A second trend is characterized by CDA used in situations where the researcher and the speaker are in close relational proximity to each other, with the analyst working with and/or researching teachers, students, and parents' uses of language (e.g., Rogers & Mosley, 2008; Sieg, 2008; Tuten, 2007). This proximity brings to bear altogether different questions of power and responsibility, particularly pressing for researchers and study participants.

Some of the questions instigated by an up-close use of CDA include: What responsibilities and roles do educational researchers using CDA hold in school settings? How does the public intellectual, who holds the explicit role of analysis and exploration of ideologies, work in settings where the researcher and participant work together closely? How does this role of the public intellectual fluctuate within structured and informal relationships where power slips and glides across interactions? In these types of settings, what promise is held by CDA as both an exploration of potentially harmful discourses and social relations and as potentially transformative of those social practices?

These questions are not unique to CDA but carry with them a disturbingly opportunistic legacy of educational research in school settings. Educational

research has been conducted, published and fed academic knowledge that has diminutized and then pathologized ‘at-risk’ populations (Stevens, 2009). This trend emanates not from malicious intents but more so of a mismatch between the pursuit of ‘scientific’ and objective knowledge and a more humanistic and engaged praxis (Freire, 1970; Bartolome, 1994). Similarly, some educational research, particularly qualitative research that is conducted in classrooms and schools, has a tendency of being less than forthright about intents (Newkirk, 1996). Again, this mismatch can be mapped to the intents of academic pursuits and the responsibility researchers have to participants, not just to academic publishing. Critical inquiry into language holds both the potential to re-enact these opportunistic trends and the possibility to recraft the presence and use of critical language awareness in educational research.

In this chapter, I draw upon my own uses of CDA and critical linguistics from educational praxis and research settings to explore these questions and the potential possibilities of shared critical discussions about language and ideology in educational settings. In particular, I describe and analyze my uses of CDA as a researcher with teachers. In relation to the data I present here, I held various institutional positions as a literacy specialist, a co-teacher, and a researcher. Common to these positions was my explicit interest in the ways that language practices can be better understood to shed light on the dynamics of power and identity in educational spaces. However, as I moved from literacy specialist and collaborator to researcher and critical discourse analyst, my dialogic exchanges with teachers became more complicated, contested, and, arguably, better. In this chapter, I share some of these conversations and what they portend for educational researchers using critical linguistic approaches in the field. In particular, I articulate two key concepts crucial to the exploration of this role: reflexivity and answerability.

From the fields of sociology and psychology, reflexivity is defined as an act of self-reference where examination or action bends back on itself, refers to, and affects the entity instigating the action. Social theorist Margaret Archer (2007) refers to reflexivity as “the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their social contexts and vice versa” (p. 11). Archer elaborates upon this definition to describe the internal conversations that humans have with themselves, explaining, justifying, interrogating themselves and others in the social world. Thus, as we bring CDA into the field and use it in direct action with participants, we engage in acts of reflexivity, bring internal conversations into the realm of the interpersonal, with potential affects on all participants, including ourselves.

In moving internal conversations into the realm of the spoken and interpersonal and prompting this shift, we also engage in dialogic exchanges with research participants never broached by analysts of Thatcher’s speeches. These interpersonal exchanges hold, as with any dialogic exchange, the promise and portend of answering each others’ invitations to engage, what philosopher and semiotician Mikhael Bakhtin called answerability (1990). Bakhtin described every utterance as answerable, as it is part of a dialogue with another who is

part of our dialogic exchange, an interlocutor. Those are the rules of illocutionary discourse but interlocutors feel those moments of dialogic promises and responsibilities to respond in immediate and subsequent exchanges. In that sense, conducting CDA in schools with/on participants brings to bear questions of answerability that are different in analyses conducted from afar. In the following, I share my research approach, particularly the steps in my methodology that magnified questions of reflexivity and answerability.

Shifting roles as interlocutor

In my research approach, I endeavored to share my uses of Critical Discourse Analysis with my participants, to seek their perspectives as ways of better understanding possible interpretations of classroom practices. Using CDA in educational settings *with* participants, as opposed to *on* participants, requires high levels of trust and the willingness of both parties to engage in an exploration of plausible descriptions and interpretations of discourse. In the data that I present, I had different shared sets of inquiry stances with the participants over time. The work here was drawn from my dual relationship as a researcher and literacy specialist working with a sixth-grade science teacher. Within the study, I paid attention to, and the participants paid differential attention, to the ways that language enacted ideologies.

Working as a Literacy Specialist

When I was a literacy specialist working at a middle school, I worked primarily with the school's content area teachers, modeling effective literacy strategies and lessons in their classrooms and mentoring their use of the literacy practices. Within that middle school context, I worked with all of the school's teachers, and my goal was to support how language and literacy were leveraged and used within their content area teaching. With other teachers in the school, there was a shared interest in developing and using metalanguage to identify how language, both semantically and syntactically, represents worldviews (Halliday, 1985). With some teachers, these exchanges were closely connected to a text-centered literacy strategy used to engage students with content, and the conversations that I examine in this chapter draw from such a collaboration.

Throughout my work as a literacy specialist and transitioning into my doctoral research, collected at the same school, I worked with Dawn Scolari (pseudonym), an experienced sixth-grade life science teacher. Dawn was a thoroughly pragmatic teacher, interested in her students achieving well on district and state assessments. Dawn was the science department's chairperson, a veteran teacher with 15 years' experience at the time of our pedagogical and research collaboration, and she held the reputation of a teacher who covered well her Earth Science curriculum. When I was a literacy specialist assigned to the school where Dawn worked, our interactions typically went something like following:

Dawn: Hey, Lisa, that vocab strategy worked really well the rest of the day. The kids seemed to like it a lot.

Lisa: Great. They should be used to adding the pictures and sentences, since we already practiced that with the vocab cards.

Dawn: Mmhmm. I'll save some samples so you can see their work.

Lisa: OK, cool. Hey, I've got another strategy that has the kids do the same thing, except they take more of the lead in picking words they don't know well.

Dawn: Yeah?

Lisa: Yeah. I'll drop a copy in your box. And maybe I can come back in to demo it.

Dawn: Sounds good. See you later.

What is superficially a simple exchange about both past and present interactions contains nuances of our different educational roles. From a discourse analysis view (Gee, 1996) of this exchange, there are clearly defined differentiations in our roles, although we share a few key identity kit aspects being female and teachers at the same middle school. Another view of the interaction, with some critical discourse analysis notations, shows more clearly the shades of distinction between our roles. The italicized comments are notes about the dialogic positions taken up within the exchange. The underlined text shows the style choices, the particular language choices to position the speaker, and the italicized text shows the genre, or mode of interaction taken up in the exchange.

Dawn: Hey, Lisa, that vocab strategy worked really well the rest of the day. The kids seemed to like it a lot. Review, Report of last interaction and reference to student response as indicator of success.

Lisa: Great. They [the students] should be used to adding the pictures and sentences, since we already practiced that with the vocab cards. Confirmation of report and connection to previous work conducted. Use of we to promote collaborative stance

Dawn: Mmhmm. I'll save some samples so you can see their work. Offer of access to the students' work to an outsider. Reference to student work as another source of support.

Lisa: OK, cool. Hey, I've got another strategy that has the kids do the same thing, except they take more of the lead in picking words they don't know well. Offer of similar activity follow-up, with slight modification. Working within the style of what has already occurred in the collaboration

Dawn: Yeah? Expression of interest.

Lisa: Yeah. I'll drop a copy in your box. And maybe I can come back in to demo it. Reiteration of follow-up and offer for assistance.

Dawn: Sounds good. See you later.

Within our interaction between literacy specialist and classroom teacher, Dawn assumed the role of reporting back to me, and I used modalities such as *maybe*

to offer support for her report and for offering an additional team teaching situation while resisting directives and other strongly worded viewpoints. As the literacy specialist for the school, I was still a teacher on the same professional level as Dawn, but also responsible for mentoring and coaching teachers in their literacy practices. This was a challenge in several ways: being younger yet being in the role of a coach when not all the teachers in the school felt they wanted a coach. My professional role was to mentor them, ideally through team teaching in their classrooms, and nurture a professional learning community. I was responsible for mentoring but beholden to the teachers to allow me access to their practices, and in some cases, to their beliefs about teaching and learning through language.

During one year of my doctoral work, I resigned from my literacy specialist role in the school and focused full time on graduate studies, with emphasis on gathering empirical data, at this same school, about the shape of literacy practices in science teaching. Again, I appealed to the collaborative generosity of colleagues to provide me access to their classrooms and pedagogical practices and beliefs. Certainly throughout my roles as a literacy specialist and through the initial months I came back to the school as a researcher, Dawn and I did not necessarily share the same critical theoretical perspective on language. Our respective roles of classroom teacher and literacy specialist were more closely knitted to discourses of what works, what is effective, for classroom learning of science content. Our genre of conversation had tended to revolve around planning and reviewing classroom strategies, but stylistically our linguistic choices in terms of words and syntax reflected an experienced classroom teacher and a younger, academically leaning specialist.

The patterns of discourse are particularly notable in my appropriation of Dawn's pragmatic view of teaching and learning (what works), in a way to establish intersubjectivity and somewhat shared understandings. Subtext to this discussion was the more tenuous relationships of mentor and learner, more experienced and less experienced teacher, older and younger women. In our discussions, these roles and identities were backgrounded and our exchanges more cleanly reflected the roles of classroom teacher and literacy specialist.

Working as a Researcher

However, these dimensions of subjectivity (Stevens, 2005), or more accurately their surface performances, were further complicated when Dawn participated in a year-long professional development project centered on content area literacy, which I facilitated. The dimensions were further deepened and transformed in the immediate when I returned to Dawn's classroom as a researcher using ethnographic and discourse analysis to study secondary science teachers' beliefs and practices about literacy.

As a literacy researcher, and one using CDA (Fairclough, 1989, 1992) as a framework and methodology, I navigated different territory with Dawn than I had as a literacy specialist. I chose to use CDA as a way to analyze how language

was reflection and enacting ideologies and beliefs within the science classroom. This stance was, and continues to be for me, informed by sociological views of literacy and education (Bourdieu, 1991; Luke, 2008). However, this was a different role than the one I held as literacy specialist with some of the school's teachers, including Dawn. Visiting her classroom on a weekly basis for 1 year, I found the role of the critical discourse analyst in an educational setting to be much more complex, tentative, rewarding, revealing, and fraught with confrontation than that of a literacy specialist whose primary concern was access to teachers' classroom. As I used CDA as a set of tools to examine the relationship between knowledge, power, and identity in her science classroom, I also began to share my findings and perspectives with Dawn. I shared my field notes, transcriptions of interviews, and first sets of analyses not in an effort to triangulate or arrive at a shared truth, but rather, to be explicit about the research, to put it "on the stage" (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002, p. 28). In this sense, CDA became a tool for discussions about her classroom, the school context, and society. Dawn and I shared interactions that touched on much deeper issues than we had previously, including our differing positions and epistemologies as educators. These conversations, in which we used a metalanguage to talk about the discursive and ideological choices made by both Dawn and myself, also brought forth an opportunity to explore the potentially transformative nature of CDA. Although the precise use of the term *critical* in this setting evokes, for me, the dialectical relationship between language processes and social worlds, it also holds in a Freirian sense the possibility of analyzing and exploring discourse as a mediational tactic to understanding and transforming these social relations. It is within that definition that CDA holds great promise to be reflexive and answerable to those who use it.

As Dawn and I discussed my CDA of her practice, I found that our interactions marked a different sort of dialogic process around the ideologies of education, literacy, and young people. In other words, it was only through sharing the CDA and more so, sharing a common metalanguage, that we were able to see the patterns in our talk and interactions and engage, often disagreeing, about those patterns and what they meant.

The Research Methodologies

For the discourse analysis, I used Gee's (1996) explication of social linguistics and discourses, as well as Fairclough's (1989, 1992) CDA as both frameworks and methodologies. From the perspective of these frameworks, language works to construct us as much as we use language to construct possible worlds (Foucault, 1999). Related, language both embodies and constructs ideologies (Fairclough, chap. 6, this volume).

However, for a study examining literacy practices and beliefs in a largely textually mediated setting, CDA provided an appropriate perspective and methodology. Further, my desire to address close dialectic between language and social relations necessitated the critical perspective that Fairclough's (1989)

work lent. Working with these frameworks, I positioned the form and function of language in relation to Dawn's literacy practices. Using Fairclough's orders of discourse (Fairclough, chap. 10, this volume), I analyzed the study participants' words, including Dawn's during class and interviews for the genres, discourses, and styles used to create and constrict literate possibilities for their students.

I transcribed and analyzed classroom and out-of-classroom discussions between myself and the study participants for elements of (a) genre, the loosely configured relations typically associated with a type of exchange; (b) discourse, the systematic clusters of themes; and (c), style, the ways of being taken up within a dialogic exchange. In analyzing the transcripts shared in this chapter, I paid particular attention to the ways in which style choices complicated the genres of research and pedagogical conversations.

In the study, I used these analyses to draw conclusions about the various societal discourses, or clusters of ideologies (Gee, 1996), about adolescents and literacy that were operationalized in classroom practices. The overall purpose of these approaches was to provide a continual mediation between interpersonal uses of language and its reflection and creation of social relations. During the weekly classroom visits, participant observation techniques (Merriam, 1998) were used to document the literacy activities in the classroom. I sat in the back portion of the room and recorded field notes on a computer, noting the classroom environs, activities, physical factors, and particularly the discourses during the class sessions. After the field notes were collected, I immediately transcribed them all into detailed descriptions. Additionally, class sessions were audiotaped, occasionally videotaped, and later transcribed for discourse analysis.

Sharing the Analyses

Each week I created a one-page summary of my observations and analyses and sent it to Dawn. These one-page summaries were first developed to gain feedback from Dawn and ultimately became one of the key tools used to mediate our discussions about her beliefs and practices and my discourse analysis. These one-page summaries became pivotal because they served as the initial launch pads for the conversations that Dawn and I had about my analyses of her literacy practices.

Interviews—both structured and unstructured—were conducted to inquire about specific literacy practices, general notions of literacy in the content classroom, and perceptions of the staff development project and its components. Unstructured interviews, which occurred primarily directly before and after each classroom observation, were noted using field notes and followed the same transcription process as the observation field notes.

At first, I shared the one-page summaries of interviews and observations out of advice from another qualitative researcher and to be somewhat consistent with the open and forthright relationship that Dawn and I had known as colleagues working in the same school. However, both of these premises for

sharing back qualitative notes proved remarkably shallow for navigating the issues of answerability and reflexivity that surfaced.

Although I knew Dawn would not restrict me from making my own analyses and to a certain extent could not, I was also relatively certain that I would not gain validation in the form of a member check, as is sometimes sought from participants in ethnographic studies. In many cases, member checks are used as a form of triangulation, a method of ensuring validity of the study. In fact, since the publication of the first edition of this edited volume, triangulation has regained once critiqued ground (Blaiki, 1991) as a mechanism of establishing validity across quantitative and qualitative approaches (e.g., Kadushin et al., 2008).

However, I was interested in a method that would help me to be explicit about my subjective interpretations in Dawn's classroom, and I hoped that sharing my research would help me move more fluidly between the reflection and realism for which reflexivity calls, and more so, make these subjective analyses more explicit and traceable to others (Luttrell, 2000).

Sharing the analyses and findings with Dawn proved complex. Discussions of her discourse and how it often supported what literacy researchers would deem less than desirable ideologies about teaching and learning were difficult topics for discussion. Using discourse analysis revealed much about Dawn's literacy practices and ideologies, but it also raised questions of how to conduct research in ways that are reflexive to all parties and how to be answerable to field participants.

Shifting Roles

Contrasted with the pragmatic identity that I enacted with Dawn as an onsite literacy specialist, my purpose as a critical discourse analyst marked an indelible departure from the seemingly apolitical relationship we had previously cultivated. Although many ethnographic and qualitative researchers (e.g., Merriam, 1998; Spradley, 1980) have documented the challenge of working with research participants in qualitative inquiries, the prospect of entering Dawn's classroom to explicitly investigate local, institutional, and societal enactments of ideology in language required more than just gaining access to her physical classroom. Beyond access to her room, I also needed access to her beliefs and practices, and although analyzing her classroom discourse revealed much about her beliefs, I found it necessary to debrief with Dawn after each classroom observation. These discussions marked the first turn we took toward discourse analyst and participant. After one classroom visit, I was talking with Dawn about the school-wide emphasis on organization. All students were expected to keep a three-ring binder, with one section for each class. In many classes, teachers did spot checks of the binders, including Dawn. She directed her students to number the pages in their binders as a way to make sure that the students all had the same notes, handouts, and worksheets in their science binders. After a classroom observation in November 2000, Dawn and I were discussing this highly structured use of notebooks with her sixth graders:

- Lisa:* I wonder if this school-wide emphasis on organization can even be somewhat stifling for the students who don't, um, value that way of learning.
- Dawn:* Maybe, but that's what they need to get through the system and be successful, don't you think?
- Lisa:* Without a doubt. I think what I'd like to question, though, is how the system might be too narrow in how it defines success for all students.
- Dawn:* Yeah, maybe.
- Dawn:* (after a pause) But that is the system we're working on, and that is what these kids need for college, isn't it?
- Lisa:* Yeah, to a certain extent, but also to a certain extent not, 'cause I'm not sure this is the one and best way of getting there. Does that make sense?
- Dawn:* Um, not really. Until they develop their own systems of organizing their stuff, they need to be shown how to do it.

Within this exchange, Dawn and I are making an explicit turn in our previous patterns of discussion of 'what works,' beginning to discuss the underlying purposes and functions of classroom practices like maintaining a uniformly organized binder. In this conversation, I make judicious use of modalities (Halliday, 1985)—words and phrases like *I wonder*, *I'd like to*, *might*, *if*, *I'm not sure*, and *does that make sense*. These are all modalities used to soften my stance that the monochromatic practice of organizing information prioritized certain types and stances towards knowledge. The use of these modalities also echoes a mismatch between my discourses as an emerging researcher using sociological lenses and that of both my former role as a literacy specialist and Dawn's epistemological stance as a science teacher. This mismatch is on the surface in this conversation across all of those subjectivities.

Of note here also is the contrast between this conversation and the conversation at the start of the chapter, where I used some but far fewer modalities, and my and Dawn's style choices matched more closely. The genre of our conversation had also shifted significantly, in that we were no longer working within the genre of evaluating a classroom strategy and making room for another one. In the latter conversation, our genre shifted significantly to discussing not what works but more so for what purposes and intents, and what the side effects might be of classroom strategies that work more so to maintain order than to result in learning.

As we moved into this genre, I made some stylistic turns in how I interacted, most notably through the markedly increased use of modalities as I etched out a different theoretical stance on the binders than Dawn. One interpretation of my usage of these modalities is that as a linguistic researcher, I am at once analytical of the discourse but also interested in opening possibilities for conversation around alternative views. Looking back, I used these modalities both to strive for a dialogic exchange and out of my own hesitations at taking up considerable representational power and not yet fully grasping how to name

and claim my own subjectivities within the study as a first step, and as next and more important steps, how to share findings in ways that make the dialogue accessible and meaningful for all involved. In short, how to make it answerable. When I am responding from an overly academic style—one that stems from a critical orientation—I am enacting an answerability that is not a shared order of discourse between myself and Dawn. This, then, undercuts the potential for shifts in reflexivity, or at least for those shifts to be part of the shared language and shared discourses of the interlocutors.

It is actually with the refractive view that CDA provides of this interaction that I was able to discern an increase in modalities on my part. I might have suspected that, due to the long-range nature of my relationship with Dawn, I would be more forthright and less guarded about my viewpoints, but the analysis done with CDA shows just the opposite. Although other grounded theories and discourse analyses might offer insights into the conversational pattern, CDA helps provide the metalinguistic tools of style, genre and discourse to highlight this compelling example of the mismatch in discourses across exchanges over time.

What is also of note is Dawn's ease and willingness to disagree with me and, more largely construed, my then affiliation with a university. It may seem probable that the professional relationship we maintained, as specialist (or grant facilitator, or researcher) and classroom teacher, would reflect the power dynamics in which the specialist (now researcher) maintains a more expert position in educational systems where higher education is positioned as more advanced than secondary contexts. This is far from the case in this and reflects a more nuanced understanding of power than as residing easily within institutional roles.

Rather, Dawn's clarity about her philosophy of teaching, her goals for her students, and her identity as a teacher remained relatively fixed over the course of our professional relationship, where my role shifted from literacy specialist and teacher to researcher. For example, although Dawn occupies what could be viewed as a lower status position of being a teacher in juxtaposition to a university-affiliated researcher, she uses phrases like *don't you think so* and *isn't it* as openings and markers for me to take up part or all of what she has just said, exerting her own position and authority as a practicing teacher—one who is in the trenches and interacts with theories and research from a practical level.

Pursuant to this more fluid and fluctuating power footing is Dawn's strongly established identity as an experienced and successful teacher of 22 years, her position as department chairperson in the school, and our previous relationship in which she chose what she found useful from what I had to offer as a literacy specialist. In short, in the social field of the school, Dawn had a tremendous amount of status, of cultural and social capital. She could take up what she found useful from my offerings as a literacy specialist, focusing on text-based strategies, and leave behind other themes such as critical approaches to language and schooling.

Also relevant to these types of exchanges was the relationship we had formed over several years of working together. Dawn and I enjoyed a high level of mutual professional regard. This was not born out of closely overlapping ideologies, but instead came out of multiple successful partnerships as teachers, working alongside each other with both her sixth graders and the rest of the science faculty. This collegial regard carried over into my presence in her classroom as a critical discourse analyst, but not without some explicit references to the shift in my roles, as is demonstrated in the following excerpt.

While Dawn and I were debriefing a typical one-page summary in which I posed some questions about school-sanctioned literacies versus other types of literacies, she and I had the following exchange:

Dawn: What did you mean here by “dichotomy between in-school literacies vs. out-of-school literacies?”

Lisa: Well, what I was getting at was that in all of the stuff that I’m listening to, it’s just about the kinds of reading, writing, listening and speaking that’s found in schools. And not so much all of the things that we might do well outside of school, like digital literacies, you know, like the Internet, visual literacies. That kind of stuff.

Dawn: (slight laugh). I must be missing the point here. Aren’t we supposed to teach them the stuff they need for school?

Lisa: Well, yes and no. It’s kind of like the question that kids ask: When am I ever going to use the stuff that you’re teaching today? Um, I guess what I am saying is that seems to be a pretty valid question in today’s world. And I’m, uh, wondering about all the literacies our kids have, maybe even some of our struggling kids, that don’t ever get acknowledged. Ya know?

Dawn: Hmmmm. I guess you have more time to think about that kind of stuff now, huh?

Lisa: Yeah, that’s definitely true. But I was thinking about some of this stuff when I was still here.

In this conversation, Dawn and I are again providing different interpretations to the core purpose of schooling, and the purpose of literacy and language pedagogy within that purpose. Coupled with this difference in viewpoint is Dawn’s interpretation that I bring up these observations at this juncture in my professional trajectory because, as a doctoral student, I must have more time for these observations. These points are expressed both explicitly through the content that is discussed but also through stylistic choices made by both of us. In this exchange, we find the same types of modalities used by me and the same types of attempts for shared understandings from Dawn. Yet what is perhaps most compelling is Dawn’s mention of the shift in my role from teacher to researcher with far more flexibility with time than the typical teacher enjoys. Dawn’s message is spot on and speaks strongly to the institutional roles and responsibilities that differ strongly from school to university. From a classroom teacher’s

perspective, researchers and discourse analysts obviously enjoy great luxuries of time to review myriad nuances of classrooms, including language, the use of which seems as automatic as the intake of oxygen. Therefore, the development and use of a metalanguage for the analysis of something so automatic and pervasive can seem frivolous and indulgent. It was out of this perception of discourse analysis as something for academics, Dawn's curiosity, and the promise of Critical Discourse Analysis as transformative (Fairclough, 1989) that I began to share more of my discourse analysis with her. What is most compelling to me here is Dawn's gradual uptake of the metalanguage used in my analysis. Antithetically, although Dawn quite cogently levels an implicit critique of the luxury of discourse analysis, she is able to do so from the vantage of acquiring and learning some of those very skills and processes. In other words, Dawn engages in a conversation about the types of literacies that are sanctioned by school, a conversation spun into motion from the presence of a researcher, and then is able to critique the conversation for its dabbling into less pressing matters, like out of school literacy practices.

This instance gives a point of reflection on the role of learning in these interactions. First, drawing from Gee's (1996) work, we must first try to distinguish between learning and acquisition in this situation. I spoke explicitly to Dawn about the methodologies I was using, but we also began to use terms like *literacies*, *metalanguage*, *sanction*, and *power* in our conversations. In this way, we can see nuances of both acquisitions (through use) and learning (through explicit explanation) of this metalanguage. As we gradually began to share a metalanguage, Dawn and I were able to discuss the connections that I was making between some of her discourses and the social relations in her classroom and in broader contexts, as seen in the following example about Dawn's discourse about young people. Within these exchanges, though, my reflexivity went through unexpected and important challenges. I needed to be answerable to Dawn's critique of my shifting role, and more so, to her critique of the relevancy of academic research to classroom practice, a consistent discourse across many of our conversations. I found it to be fairly easy to engage with these her in instances where we negotiated differing interpretations, but when there was a stronger disconnect between worldviews, as with our views of adolescents, our exchanges demonstrated stronger gaps in answerability and engagement.

Differing perspectives on youth

The discourse of adolescent as bundle of raging hormones was readily apparent in Dawn's instruction. A large and pervasive societal discourse of youth characterizes them as bundles of raging hormones, virtually devoid of rational thought, as they are at the will of their changing physiologies. This discourse is present not only as a commonly held notion, but also goes largely unchallenged in educational settings (Finders, 1998; Lesko, 2001). Ascribing to this notion that adolescence is a life stage that amounts to little more than a hormonally induced confusion contains common sense, almost teleological, implications

for instruction, including positioning the teacher as agent of control in the classroom, choosing activities that allow for minimal student interaction, and using unidirectional, didactic instructional strategies.

In keeping with the purposes of CDA and also stemming from a sociological analysis, I spent time in the study participants' classrooms, noting how their conceptions of youth were enacted in their classroom interactions. Using the discourse analysis to note turn-taking patterns, the overwhelming predominance of Dawn's turn taking (Fairclough, 1989) and the series of unidirectional directives underscores Dawn's consistent role as decision maker in her classroom. The discourse is also apparent in the highly structured routine and formatting that her students followed. There was little or no room for students' individual identities to have voice in her classroom, the implication perhaps being that as bundles of raging hormones the adolescents had little sense of identity to offer; this stance was expressed in her classroom interactions and in our conversations about her teaching, as seen in the last conversation analyzed in this chapter.

In conversations about teaching sixth graders, Dawn often referred to her duty to *train* them, including showing them how to organize their notebooks according to her system and teaching them how to behave in middle and high school classrooms. Expected behaviors included only speaking during the course of a lesson and only after raising their hands, asking the teacher only those questions deemed by the teacher pertinent to the daily lessons, and following teacher-given directions (Field notes, 3/26/00, 4/ 15/00, 8/28/00, and 10/12/00). During an interview in March 2000, Dawn also used several metaphors that described the characteristics of her sixth graders as animals:

Dawn: It takes me a good month or two to just rein them in.

Lisa: Um, can you tell me a little more of what you mean by that?

Dawn: Well, you know, they come not knowing anything, not how to organize their backpacks, what forms to use, where the bathroom is (laughter), anything!

Lisa: So, they have to be reined in to learn those things?

Dawn: Exactly. I get them under control, herded up, and then we get onto the business of learning, reading and writing.

In my summaries of observations and interviews such as these, I included comments about the pervasive discourse regarding young people. For these analyses, I paid particular attention to the content in Dawn's talk, such as the need for organization, the imperative to discipline, and an ethos of business. As Dawn reviewed her talk, she became increasingly aware of her language choices that, in turn, prompted her interest in the relationship between her discourse and classroom interactions. She was alternately bothered by and defensive of her characterization of young people as overly hormone-driven. When she and I sat down to review the last excerpt, we had the following conversation:

- Dawn:* Geez. That seems kind of bad, doesn't it?
- Lisa:* What do you think? Is it bad to talk about kids that way?
- Dawn:* Well, it seems harmless enough and pretty accurate, if you watch them for a while, but what's bugging me is that you think that there's a link between how I teach and how I view them.
- Lisa:* Yeah, I think so.
- Dawn:* So what's the alternative?
- Lisa:* Well, if you were teaching a group of adults, would you do things in the same way?
- Dawn:* No, but I wouldn't have to.
- Lisa:* Right. So. There seems to be a kind of link between seeing adolescents as kind of out of control and how you teach them. Does that make sense?
- Dawn:* It does, but the more I think about it, the more I'm sure that if I didn't do it this way, it would be chaos. Just look at Brian [a seventh-grade Earth Science teacher down the hall from Dawn]. His kids are totally out of control.
- Lisa:* And do you think that's because he thinks about adolescents differently than you do?
- Dawn:* I think it's because he doesn't know how to control them.

Through debriefing discussions such as this, Dawn and I figured out quickly that we could agree implicitly that her language and actions in her classroom communicated certain viewpoints, and this could be plausibly certain. However, we could also agree and disagree to varying extents, and from instant to instant, as to how appropriate and justified these viewpoints were for the benefit of the sixth graders and to what extent these viewpoints reflected, rejected, and/or transformed dominant ideologies about youth, schooling, and literacy. In this way, Dawn and I enjoyed a joint investigation into the highly complex and layered nature of discourses and explored multiple interpretations. We developed a "self-consciousness about the rootedness of discourse" (Fairclough, 1989, p. 167). In this sense, the one-page summaries and debriefing conversations never accomplished the goal of triangulating the analysis—a misapplied notion from the irreconcilable viewpoint of quantitative research. Instead these conversations served to textualize my analysis and make me answerable to Dawn's practitioner-based responses to my analyses. The conversations also served to reconstruct the texts, breaking from a potentially nihilistic cycle in which texts are only deconstructed without reconstruction or revisioning of alternate texts. Sharing and talking about the discourse with Dawn also created space for different variations on our roles, more appropriately wrestling with and exploring various hybrid forms of representation and identity (Luke, 2002).

Last, this example also points to the potentially transformative promise of CDA in educational settings. As Dawn and I used a shared metalanguage to discuss the flows between language and ideologies, Dawn showed an impermanent awareness of the connections between some of her language choices and

the social relations in her classrooms. Although there is no empirical evidence in this study as to whether this resulted in change in Dawn's practice, such an investigation might be too narrow to fully engage the interpretive and symbolic analysis that a focus on discourse potentially holds (Fairclough, 1989). The use of CDA holds great promise as a mediational tactic to be used in educational settings, but should not be saddled with teleological transformative responsibilities because no unilateral and foregone connection exists between discourses and social worlds. Instead public intellectuals can look to CDA as a way to mediate their responsibilities to be an agent of social and political justice (Said, 1996), to help them to be answerable to their interlocutors and to engage in regular reflexivity about the responsibility and relevancy of their research. Because the use of CDA has largely occurred outside of direct contact with the participants, using this framework and methodology in educational settings with participants requires deep consideration of the analyst's responsibilities.

How then should critical discourse analysts proceed in working with research participants? From my experiences with Dawn and other teachers, I have come to believe that the answer to this lies within the explicit self-naming of the analyst's perspectives and subjectivities (reflexivity) and, in a collaborative stance, one that allows for mediation and negotiation of power and knowledge from the onset by both the researcher and participant. This collaboration was marked by both participants being willing to be explicit about their beliefs and, in fact, staying in conversations where their beliefs were challenged and probed by the other person. Over the time of the research project, our collaboration opened the door to a shared inquiry into teaching and learning, and the discourse analysis was a deepened aspect of this pattern. In that we held shared ground of purpose. However, as my purpose in her classroom and with her shifted to one of more research colleague than teaching colleague, our exchanges reflected more areas of disconnect and more explicit negotiations of agency and power, reflected in language choices. These language choices also point to areas of answerability that are far from quickly resolved.

The conversation we had about Dawn's appropriation of a dominant discourse about adolescents made me, and probably Dawn, uncomfortable. At the time, I misjudged my discomfort to be from feeling that I needed to objectively justify my analysis. On reflection, I now believe the reason for my uneasiness was a nagging realization that I was perhaps revealing to Dawn an aspect of her discourse and ideology that served a real and possibly justified purpose in her identity kit as a teacher. I was hesitant that I was asking her to question an aspect of her ideology that she did not want to question—and what right did I have to do that? In those moments, I felt uncomfortably like I had somehow stepped into the role of a psychoanalyst rather than a critical discourse analyst working in education. This slip, in essence, was one of answerability. I was working and researching from a stance where my research answerability was held accountable not by Dawn but by the doctoral committee that would approve my dissertation. From that realm of answerability, it was appropriate and expected for me to elucidate my findings of ideologies enacted through

classroom practice. However, sharing research, let alone conducting research with participants, begs a wholly different answerability.

Often discourse analysts avoid this complication by working with the discourse of people far removed from themselves—that of politicians, advertisers, and others who do not participate in weekly interactions about the discourse analysis. However, Dawn and I faced this challenge of using her discourse as a refracted image of her beliefs and practices. In so doing, the analyses also engendered refractions of my role as a researcher, my beliefs about education which largely had been previously unspoken to Dawn, and my practices as a professional educator who valued and continues to value work with teachers in school settings. Just as I was cautious about exposing aspects of Dawn's discourse and ideology to her, I was equally hesitant about superimposing a false sense of knowledge of what was acceptable to share with her and what was not. Because of Dawn's confidence as a teacher and her experience as a teacher-researcher, I could not arbitrarily decide which discourse analyses to share with her. She needed access to all of them, but she then also assumed the responsibility of determining what she wanted to further understand, what she wanted to question, and what she saw as inconsequential or inaccurate.

The Possibilities of Critical Discourse Analysis to Enhance Learning

The exploration of what theory of learning can be used as a lens to understanding the interactions between a critical discourse analyst and participants in an educational setting must first be cautioned with who is doing the learning. As with our previous interactions, Dawn and I enjoyed a dialogic exchange (Freire, 1970), in which roles of teacher and learner were blurred. Although I offered descriptions, interpretations, and analyses of her discourse, she texturized these reactions with reflections from her vantage point. Also at work in our interactions was a theory of learning about language that differentiates between acquisition and learning (Krashen, 1985; cited in Gee, 1996). Although Dawn had acquired primary and secondary discourses (Gee, 1996) as a teacher, department chairperson, scientist, and middle school educator, our work together engendered a learning situation about language and ideologies. This is not to say that Dawn was learning a discourse. Rather, Dawn—through her interactions with a critical discourse analyst—was learning a metalanguage for discussing how her practices as a sixth-grade life science teacher shaped and were shaped by ideologies. This learning is similar to the aspects of critical literacy that are all but missing from traditional educational notions of reading and literacy found in the United States (Freebody & Luke, 1990). This overall lack of acknowledgment of the highly political, historical, and social nature of language and its role in ideology is part of what made CDA seem at first to Dawn so foreign, and then so compelling once she was able to enter into interpretations.

This type of inquiry is a good first step to making classroom talk a portal for analysis of ideologies and cultural practices in classrooms—one that could be

engaged to move beyond the traditionally stultifying ways in which practitioners are shaped and reinforced as rugged individualists with little to no time for reflection (Britzman, 1991; Lortie, 2002). CDA encourages educators to push beyond the surface layers of language and note the ideological work accomplished through language. In this way, researchers and teachers can further understand the ways in which certain cultural models of teaching and learning are reproduced and reinforced and other cultural models ignored. Also the use of the tools and social theories behind CDA by users such as teachers and students would serve the larger and much needed purpose of opening of CDA as a metalanguage to unpack and name the ways that language enacts ideologies (Luke, 2004).

Engaging educators in this type of analysis is easily done and facilitated using nonidentified samples of discourse and language. However, engendering on this type of inquiry with a teacher's own discourses requires an altogether different type of relationship. The exchanges between Dawn and me proved to be successful from the standpoint of achieving shared understandings and maintaining respect for divergent opinions because of the high level of trust and forthright conversations. This type of relationship must be cultivated and constantly remediated for the various hegemonic underpinnings of such an inquiry. Ample spaces of answerability and reflexivity must be co-negotiated by the discourse analyst and educator. In other words, all parties must be willing to claim their positions, speak from those positions, answer to others' positions, and reflexively re-engage in those roles (Hanrahan, 2006).

In our situation, Dawn and I achieved those spaces by eventually blurring the lines between who was doing analysis. As Dawn and I furthered our interactions, she appropriated the language of discourse analysis and was able, at times, to coincide with my "read" of her discourse and at other times to challenge it. The process provided myself and Dawn with opportunities to learn about language, opening up spaces for all-too-rare instances of analytic and ideological awareness.

Dawn and I engaged in many conversations in which we were refracting the discourses used in her classroom, used in teacher education, and used in the school and district. We were in essence looking back on captured moments in time. Rather than characterize these backward looks as reflective of either the participants or the language, it is more appropriate to term them *refractive*, accounting for the altered ways in which subjectivities are performed.

This refraction, or negotiated reflection, is more closely attuned to reflexivity than more commonly understood notions of reflection found in the field of education. It is generally believed that reflection is an essential component of teachers' professional development and is commonly defined as an individual reflecting on their unique practices and beliefs as an educator (Risko, Roskos, & Vukelich, 1999). However, this type of definition, focusing on the sole practitioner and introspection, is contrary to the social situatedness of CDA and a dialogic understanding of interactions. Rather, as Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) discussed, CDA calls for a reckoning of historical and social positioning as crucial aspects and contexts of discourse, ideology, and habitus. The

interactions between myself and Dawn demonstrate that in negotiating the various contexts, interpretations, and analyses, refractions of our positions, our interpretations, and our beliefs were explored. This notion of refraction accounts for the appropriately altered interpretations offered, negotiated, and rejected throughout our discussions. In the end, both Dawn and I commented several times how fruitful it would be for teachers to have the intellectual space and support to reflect on the ideologies enacted in their classrooms. The more common use of reflection in educational research hegemonically positions the lone practitioner reflecting in order to modify practices, not necessarily to better understand ideologies at play in the classroom. In this sense, then, educational research, including CDA, must be answerable not just to maintaining teachers' prescribed roles but to opening up spaces and providing tools for reflexive interrogation.

By situating the teacher-researcher interactions within the social fields of schooling and the academy, by using CDA as a tool to critical language and ideologies, and allowing for various refractions of representations, Dawn and I were able to move away from restrictive binaries that dominated content area literacy research: good/bad, what works/what doesn't, teacher/researcher, and, of course, teacher/student. This also helped us move away from a potentially nihilistic presence of CDA and research in a larger sense in classrooms. In numerous locations around the world, relationships between schools and universities are strained as teachers and administrators have felt the sting of a research article that has characterized their work in negative portrayals or have been seduced and then betrayed by researchers' expressed interests (Newkirk, 1996). Although a level of reflexivity in the researcher-participant collaboration does not and should not guard against research and discourse analysis that shows damaging aspects of education, it should offer an opportunity for a dialogic process between researcher and participant. It points to a possible way for critical discourse analysts who work in educational settings to be answerable to their participants, not to produce synchronized interpretations, but to flesh out better differing interpretations.

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Part III

Multimodal Discourse Analysis

10 Discourse Analysis and Education: A Multimodal Social Semiotic Approach

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Education and Discourse Analysis

Education is a social process. It is embedded in “the social” and, being social, it is the product of social agents, structures, processes, values, purposes, and constraints. In its forms and processes it reflects the society in which it exists—in all ways and with all its contradictions. Discourse analyses of different kinds provide means of “getting at” certain of the meanings which are constitutive of, embedded, and emergent in the semiotic entities and forms—the “texts”—that are produced in educational settings. These in their turn have (had) their part in shaping and constituting the practices, structures, shapes, values and purposes of the institution and of those who are participants in its processes.

Texts—as material objects—are in part constitutive of social institutions; they provide means of “reading” the interests and purposes of those involved in the making of *texts* in an institution; they reveal the meanings and the processes involved in their making. *Texts* are outcomes of processes initiated and performed by social agents for social reasons; and they provide a means of getting insight into these processes and the purposes of social agents. In this chapter I treat discourse analysis as one means for elaborating tools to elucidate educational concepts, processes and forms, to help in shaping understandings of that institution, its participants, and their purposes. In the broadest terms, it is the aim of elaborating tools that shapes my approach to discourse analysis here.

“Education” goes well beyond conceptions of institutions defined by bricks and mortar; by timetables; by the organization of knowledge as curricula; by hierarchies of participants with designated roles; and by metrics of evaluation shaped by power. It is seen in terms of practices and of processes that take place outside of such sites and their practices, drawing in members of groups of all kinds and of all ages. Neither *discourse* nor *text* are sufficient, semiotically speaking, to account for the manifold meanings of the social organization of education. Other categories are essential: *genre*, for instance, as the category that points to the organization of social participants in the making of texts. That is, in realizing, “entexting,” the complexity of social/pedagogic environments of learning and teaching, *discourse* is just one, even if a central category.

In the recent history of practice and theorization of education, “language” has played a—or better, perhaps *the*—central role in the core of educational concerns. It has been treated as the key to an understanding of learning and to ways of knowing; to forms of teaching; to kinds of assessment/evaluation. To treat “language” as central in this way was not, of course, the invention of education; rather it was the appearance, in this site, of a centuries’ long commonplace in “Western” thinking, which had treated language as the *sine qua non* of rationality as much as of “humanity,” as that means without which neither would exist, and as the means in which all—or very nearly all—of what was taken as definitive of rationality and humanity could find its expression. “Language” was taken as *the* means for the “realization”—making real and material—of “knowledge”; as the *major* route and vehicle for learning and knowing; as the provider—in the form of a “meta-language”—of means for reflection.

In this tradition, “language” came to be seen as the material means for the realization of the social phenomenon of *discourse*—whether in its Foucauldian sense as “institutionally produced “knowledge” (Fairclough, 1992; Foucault, 1971; Gee, 1999; Kress, 1984/89) or in other approaches. It needs to be said that in the writings of Foucault *discourse* is a social rather than a linguistic category; for him, the social rather than the linguistic is the focus of attention.

In education, discourse analysis has had a history of some 40 years (Cazden, John, & Hymes, 1972). It followed from two moves in the Humanities and the Social Sciences more widely. One was an acceptance of the (generally Marxist-inspired) view that posits the intricate link of power and knowledge; and ideologically motivated attempts to “naturalize” that conjunction by various means (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Kress & Hodge, 1979). Yet even where the link of power and knowledge was not foregrounded in these terms, it was seen as an effect of representation, encapsulated in Richard Rorty’s (1967) phrase “the linguistic turn.” Both moves emphasized the “constructedness” of knowledge in all processes of representation. In education, both insights became an implicit assumption, curricularized in the notion of *critique*—critical reading (e.g., Giroux, 1988; Illich, 1971).

In its more linguistically derived versions (e.g., Fairclough, 1989, 1992; Kress & Hodge, 1979; Kress, 1984/89), the history of *discourse analysis* has been beset by a problematic fuzziness around the homonym “discourse.” In much sociolinguistic work of the 1960s, *discourse* was generally used as a term to describe regularities of various kinds in “extended stretches of speech or writing” above the level of the sentence (Wodak & Meyer, 2009). By and large, the major focus was on the link between environments of *language use* and features of the *language used* (Hymes, 1964; Labov, 1966, 1972); “the social” and its meanings were central in such work. Others theorists (van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983; Wodak & Martin, 2003) were interested in finding regularities of a formal kind in “texts,” on an analogy with Chomskian conceptions of the organization of language as a psychologically/cognitively shaped and formally describable phenomenon (Chomsky, 1957, 1965). Such work tended to be referred to as

text-linguistics, and its accounts as *text-grammar*, by analogy with *sentence-linguistics* and *sentence-grammar*; yet it too became, however vaguely, intertwined with “discourse analysis.”

Given that, the terms *text* and *discourse* could readily come to be used more or less interchangeably, as “extended stretches of speech or writing.” On the one hand, the term *discourse* could be used to refer to the (philosophical) approach of Foucault and its notion of discourse (Kress, 1984), while on the other hand there were the ([text-]linguistic) approaches of, for example, van Dijk, and of wider sociolinguistic approaches (e.g., Gumperz, 1982; Hymes, 1964; Labov, 1966). There was as well a more strictly sociological use of the term, most prominently in the work of Habermas (1984). There, *discourse* is used as a category located between “the social” and “the communicational-linguistic,” to refer to *social action* and to the linguistic means used to establish consensual knowledge in the interaction of social actors.

This proliferation of uses of the term has blurred its meaning. *Discourse analysis* could be a study of the appearance of sociological phenomena—*discourse* as institutionally shaped knowledge; *discourse* as the realization of social life; or *discourse* as social and semiotic means to achieve consensually produced understanding. In other cases, it could be the study of formal regularities discernible in “extended stretches of speech or writing,” as in *text-linguistics*.

A word then, briefly, about the category *text*, to indicate how I use the term in this chapter. In the etymology of the word, *text* is the result of processes of “weaving” different “threads”—usually assumed to be (either of *speech* or) *writing*—into one coherent whole. In my use, these “threads” are many and materially diverse: *gesture*, *speech*, *image*—still or moving, *writing*, *music* as on a website or in a film. In that use, *text* may stand for a semiotic entity in two, three, or four dimensions, as when students in a science classroom make a 3D model of a plant cell; or when they perform/enact a play scripted by them (Franks, 1997; Franks & Jewitt, 2001). *Texts* are the result of semiotic work of design, production, and composition; and as such they can be “semiotic entities” of any kind, resulting in ensembles composed of different *modes*.

Texts, socially made, with culturally available resources, realize the interests of their makers. *Texts* are (made) *coherent*, through the use of semiotic resources for establishing *cohesion*, internally among the textual elements and externally with elements of the environment in which *texts* occur (Bezemer & Kress, 2009; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Kress & Bezemer, 2009). The principles of *coherence* are social in their origins and, being social, they “track” social changes—though social and semiotic pace may not necessarily be the same. *Texts* are material entities that exhibit conceptions of order of the group that has shaped the principles and uses them as a resource for establishing cohesion and coherence. In texts, these social principles become material, manifest, visible, tangible. In traditional institutional education, the principles of coherence held by one generation—teachers, let’s say—were dominant. Increasingly, with an ever-growing gap between the principles of students and those of their

(generationally distant) teachers, these principles are likely to be ever more different. Given that power is differentially distributed between these two groups, that leads to serious problems.

I have labored the point about “language” because *discourse analysis* has by and large assumed that language—usually as writing—is the material means for the realization of discourses. In its uses in education this has meant that discourse analysis offered, on the one hand, theoretical/conceptual tools for the “opening” of pedagogic spaces and practices; while in its normalized assumptions about the centrality of language it tended to maintain and reinforce yet again the problematically exclusionary focus on language as *the* means for making meaning—and learning. The one opened—crucial for education—a critically distancing perspective on the power-laden use of (forms of) speech and writing in socially discriminatory ways. The other has blocked a path to a full understanding of meaning and *knowledge* in relation to learning, teaching, evaluation/assessment, as well as of the shaping and the characteristics of environments for learning more generally.

Multimodal Social Semiotics and Education

A multimodal social semiotic approach provides a richer perspective on the many means involved in making meaning and learning; on forms and shapes of knowledge; on the many forms of evaluation and assessment; on the social relations evident in pedagogy; on the (self-)making of identity and, in that, on the means that are central in the *recognition* of the agency and of the many kinds of semiotic work of learners in learning.

Multimodal social semiotics has two aspects. *Multimodality* focuses on the material *means* for representation, the *resources* for making texts: that is, on *modes*. *Social semiotics* provides a theoretical frame for a focus on all aspects of meaning-making: on the agents who *make* signs and complexes of signs as *texts*; on the processes of meaning-making and on the theoretical entities that are involved in this—*sign*, *text*, *genre*, *discourse*, *interest*, as examples. These two aspects are entirely interconnected at all times and yet remain distinct. The educational consequences of a multimodal social semiotic approach derive from both aspects: differently, in line with their distinct foci.

The term *multimodality* draws attention to the many material resources beyond speech and writing which societies have shaped and which cultures provide as means for making. *Modes* are socially made and culturally available material-semiotic resources for representation. *Multimodality* attends to the distinctive affordances of different modes. In itself, it is not a theory, even though its explicit challenge to the central “place” of language has profound implications for thinking about meaning, representation, communication. *Multimodality* poses a challenge to the long-held and still widely dominant notion that “language” is that resource for making meaning that makes possible the “expression” of all thoughts, experiences, feelings, values, attitudes; in short, the pillar that guarantees human rationality.

Social semiotics is a theory about meaning-making in processes of interaction as communication. To be specific, it is a theory about meaning-making as sign-making with all the *modes* that are available in a culture, where sign-making is seen as the semiotic work of social agents. Social semiotics deals with the sign-maker's assessment of *environments of communication*, that is, with the *rhetorical* assessment of the complex of participants–occasion–objects involved, linked in practices shaped by relations of power. The theory includes attention to the means of dissemination, that is, to the *media* involved. At the center, at all times, is the *interest* of the sign-maker. The emphasis on sign-making rather than on sign-use is crucial: it asserts that signs are always newly made, out of the sign-maker's assessment of the environment of communication, the resources available for making signs, and the *interest* of the sign-maker at the moment of making the sign. *Signs* are *motivated* conjunctions of form and meaning, the product of the sign-maker's agency and interest.

For education, the theory provides a link between the (interest of) sign-makers as *learners*, and an account—as a hypothesis—of their perspective on the world at the moment of making a sign. The social semiotic view of the sign is crucial for a theory of learning: it permits taking the sign as evidence and documentation of the *interest* of the sign-maker/learner. *Interest* names the effect—in the moment of making the sign—of the multiple and complex social formation of the sign-maker/learner, of her or his sense of their present social environment, and of the shaping of their meaning as a response to a prior prompt.

In this view, a sign that does not conform to an assessor's expectation can not, in the first instance, be treated as something “not properly understood,” as “misunderstood,” or as “badly remembered” maybe. At the first step, a sign is always taken as documenting the learner's principled engagement with what was (to be) learned and her or his response to that with the new sign.

Assessors and learners are likely to have a quite different “take” on the curricular or pedagogic matter at issue; and in that context the assessor may well see the sign as an “inadequate,” “wrong,” “mistaken,” misguided sense of the matter. Yet with a focus on the centrality of the sign-makers/learners, the sign is seen as the result of their principled semiotic work. That opens a perspective to different principles and forms of assessment: principles and forms not based on metrics of “adequate comprehension” or “appropriate acquisition” but as documenting the characteristics and principles of the learner's interest: which may reveal *the learner's engagement*.

Features of this kind make multimodal social semiotics relevant to central areas of education. As a theory it provides a dual focus: on the *agency* of the *makers* of signs in social environments and on the *resources used* in the making of signs. The theoretical and descriptive tools of social semiotics provide the means to see *sign-* and *meaning-making as learning*; and they allow *learning* to be seen as an instance of *sign-* and *meaning-making*. Multimodality provides the tools for the recognition of all the modes through which meaning has been made and learning has taken place.

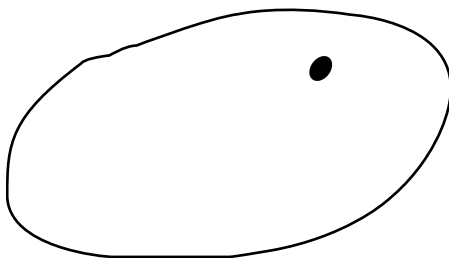


Figure 10.1 Cell with nucleus

Here is an example to exemplify some of the points made so far. In a science classroom for 13 to 14 year olds, the children are in the fourth lesson on cells. The teacher asks one of the children: “Susie, what can you tell me about a plant cell?” Susie says “Miss, a cell has a nucleus.” The teacher asks Susie to come to the front and *draw* on the whiteboard what she has just *said*. Susie takes a felt-tip pen and draws something, as in Figure 10.1.

In drawing the image, Susie is faced with some (implicit) questions that she had not faced in making her spoken comment. She has to decide what shape the cell (-wall) is; what the nucleus looks like; how large it is; whether it is a circle or a dot; and she has to make a decision as to where in the circle she needs to place the nucleus. The result of the decisions she has made are realized in the drawing of Figure 10.1. At times I have tried this example in teaching or in talks; some people feel that the nucleus ought to be in the center of the cell-shape—either because the word or the notion of “nucleus” suggests “centrality,” or for some other reason. Once having drawn the circular shape and placed the dot or circle, the maker of this sign has made an *epistemological commitment*: “this is what it is like, and this is the relation between the entities ‘cell(-wall)’ and ‘nucleus’”. A student who looks at a teacher’s drawing on the board or a drawing in a textbook is entitled to take that as “the facts of the matter.”

Epistemological commitment can not be avoided: a shape of some kind has to be drawn to indicate the cell-wall and the cell; a dot or a circle of some size has to be made as a representation of the nucleus; and the dot or circle had to be placed somewhere. Yet the spoken comment also represents an *epistemological commitment*: that there are two object-like things, a “cell” and a “nucleus,” that are joined in a relation of possession, “has.” The drawing entails no suggestion of possession; there the relation is one of spatial co-locations of a specific kind: proximate or distant, central or marginal. Epistemological commitment can not be avoided, no matter what the mode. It does vary in line with the affordances of each mode, here in a contrast of *speech* and *image*—of *lexis* vs *depiction*; of *possession* vs *proximity* or *distance*, of *centrality* or *marginality*; as a *verb-form* vs *spatial co-location*; *sequence* (as *temporal succession* in speech or *linearity* in writing) vs *simultaneity* (of appearance and arrangement) of the entities.

Both the signs were newly made. The drawing was new—and even though drawings of a similar kind will have been made before, nevertheless this drawing is unique. The spoken utterance is also new (here reproduced in a massively reduced “transcription” into writing, where nothing remains of *tone of voice, dialect-features, pace, rhythm, intonation, gender-features of the voice*). Both drawing and spoken utterance are based on the *interest* of the student: in the one case, for instance, selecting “nucleus” as the salient feature. That is, both the spoken utterance and the drawing represent this student’s selection from a large variety of material encountered in the course of four lessons. Both signs represent selection, transformation and encapsulation of her knowledge, at that moment. In making the signs, she is making *knowledge* for herself and for others. Both signs declare: “this is what I *know*.” Quite likely she may know other things about cells as well, but at this moment, in response to the teacher’s *prompt*, out of her *interest*, she has chosen to condense what she regards as salient in this environment at this moment and present that as her knowledge in these two signs. They are *signs of learning*.

The two representations materialize (curricular) “knowledge” about this topic differently: ontologically, the two are different accounts of the world in focus. For learning and teaching, in the construction and presentation of a curriculum for a specific group, this matters. Until “knowledge” is “made material” in a specific mode, it has no “shape”: we cannot “get at it.” To me it is not at all clear what knowledge *is* before it is made material in a representation. In *speech*, knowledge is represented in a mode shaped by the underlying logic of sequence of elements *in time*; as *image* it is shaped by the logic of simultaneity of elements *in space*. Each *logic*, with the social shaping of each in long histories of social and semiotic work, imposes its ontology and epistemology on what is represented through the organization of elements in arrangements.

To make a sign is to *make* knowledge. *Knowledge* is shaped in the use, by a social agent, of distinct representational affordances of specific modes at the point of making of the sign. Another student might have regarded cytoplasm as most significant; or he might have focused on the functions of the membrane of the cell; and in each case he could have written or drawn what he wanted to represent. In each case, from an enormous amount of “stuff” encountered over four lessons, selections have been made by the students; the selections indicate the interest of the students at this moment. The modes used would be a response to the requirements of the moment—a response to “can you tell me?” or to “show me!” Just moments later, perhaps as the effect of the prompt of another student’s sign or a new prompt from the teacher, the student’s interest is likely to have changed.

Both the spoken utterance and the drawing represent *learning*: they are *signs of learning* (Kress, Jewitt, Ogborn, & Tsatsarelis, 2001). Whether in making the spoken sign or the image sign, the sign-maker has made knowledge. She has *shaped* something and now knows that something in a way she might not have known before or known in this way. In making the sign, she has augmented her knowledge: she has *learned*. Making signs, meaning, and knowledge all change

the “inner” resources of the sign- and meaning-maker; in that process identity is constantly remade.

Teachers need to know what students have learned. So the question arises how a teacher treats these *signs of learning*; how (s)he responds to them. If the result of decisions the student made are embedded and materialized in the drawing of Figure 10.1, is the teacher able and willing to recognize this sign as the outcome of “*decisions*”? Did he (in this case) have the means to *recognize* the semiotic work of the student and accord *recognition* to the student’s “decision”? And does he have the means to understand the principles—of interest, selection, representation—on which the sign is based? This goes directly to the matter of theories of learning, evaluation and assessment and of forms of either.

A Brief Reflection: *Discourse Analysis*?

What *kind* of analysis have I engaged in with this small example? Is what I have been “doing *discourse analysis*” or have I “simply” elucidated various aspects of meaning in a small text? I have said nothing about *discourse*, whether in a Foucauldian or Habermasian or any other sense. I have not pointed to regularities of the social environments in which both the small texts have been made. I have said that both arise out of the interest of their maker and have assumed that they represent the student’s selection from a mass of materials that had been presented over the preceding three lessons, a selection made according to principles arising out of her interest. I have asserted that each sign presents a different *epistemological commitment*, shaped by the agency of the sign-maker using the affordances of the two modes (their *material* potentials for meaning; the social elaboration of certain—not all—of these potential over long periods of time; and the logics inherent in the materiality), which lead to significant differences in “knowledge,” in being made material. I have treated both signs as the result of semiotic work. Although I have not linked the epistemologies with distinct “discursive positions” it is nevertheless the case that in making *recognition* of semiotic work a major feature of analysis, I have assumed the principled semiotic work of selection of material and of modes for representation as a response to a prompt. All of these imply a social positioning by the maker of the sign, a social location that makes a difference.

In other words, the assumption, which I have, so far, left implicit, is that a multimodal social semiotic approach is inherently and inevitably an instance of discourse analysis. It is socially positioned in pointing to the social origins of the social *subjects* as sign- and meaning-makers, to their agency, and to the present social embeddedness of their actions and their interest in the making of texts. That is, I have pointed to the fact that this sign-maker is embedded in discursive arrangements (in the Foucauldian sense) of specific communities—here of the school. Her sign-making is shaped by the teacher’s prompt; it in turn is shaped by the institution of the school, with its multiplicity of discourses. If social positioning, social location, implies discursive positioning—as I assume it must—then this is in fact an instance of discourse analysis.

So there is a brief description and analysis of two signs, with some traces of the semiotic work of selection, transformation and transduction pointed to, from which some hypotheses about meaning can be made. At this stage this is a sketch; it is partial. I have not attempted to describe the sign-maker's present, wider social environment, nor her social "formation." Had that been a question—in a research project, say—it would be possible to explore these in relation to the example. Every description and every analysis is motivated by a question. Setting out that (research) question would give shape, coherence, and "point" to the analysis; it would turn it into an instance of a full discourse analysis.

Communication as Meaning-Making

"Education" is an instance of a social institution. In social semiotic multimodal theory, *sign-*, *meaning-* and *knowledge-making* are effects of communication in social environments, with their potentials and constraints: and so, therefore, are *learning*, *teaching*, *curriculum*, *assessment/(e)valuation*. *Sign-making* is one aspect of interaction as communication, whether with social others or with some aspect of the world. Without interaction (as communication) there is no *meaning-making*, no (change to) knowledge, no learning. That makes a theory of communication essential as the frame and model of a (multimodal social semiotic) theory of education.

A brief sketch of a theory of communication presented here draws on two different educational sites, neither that of a school. One is an operating theatre (Figure 10.2), an example of interaction among a group of professionals engaged in joined practice; the other is from a project on museum "visitor studies" (Figures 10.3a and 10.3b), as an example of individuals interacting with a specific environment. In both environments meaning is made and learning happens: each functions as a *site of learning*, each in a significantly different way.

Figure 10.2 shows an operating theatre; an operation is in its very early stage. A "scrub nurse" stands in the foreground; behind her, on the right, is the "lead surgeon" and opposite him the "assistant surgeon" (who is also a surgeon-in-training). Behind them, separated by a screen, is the anesthetist; at the very back, barely visible on the right, is an "operating theatre technician." That is, representatives of four professions, distinct yet entirely integrated, are present.

The event is, first and foremost, a clinical one of professional practice. At the same time, it is an environment in which learning (and teaching) are going on: the assistant surgeon is in the process of becoming a fully qualified surgeon. From a multimodal social semiotic perspective, the question is: "How does communication happen?" From a pedagogic perspective, among the questions posed are: "How does learning happen?" "What is being learned and how has it been taught?" and "How can we assess that learning?"

Communication here is multimodal: by *speech* at times; by *gaze*; by *actions*—passing an instrument, reaching out for an instrument; by *touching*. A *gaze* can be taken as a *prompt* and produce a spoken comment that can produce an action; a look at the screen by both surgeons can produce a guiding touch by the one



Figure 10.2 Operating theatre

of the other's hand; an outstretched hand is met by an instrument being passed. *Communication has happened when the attention of one of the participants has focused on some aspect of the interaction, and that has been taken by him or her as a prompt of some kind, and that prompt has been interpreted by that participant.*

This sketch assumes (1) that communication always happens as a response to a prompt; and that *communication has happened when there has been an interpretation*; (2) the "shape"—the characteristics—of the *prompt* constitute the *ground* on which interpretation happens; and (3) communication is multimodal. The *interpreter* and *interpretation* are central. The sketch asserts that both the characteristics of the *ground* and the interpretation of that ground as prompt are crucial in communication and in learning. It demands that *all modes* involved in communication are considered and attended to as potentially equally significant in making meaning and leading to learning. The three assumptions, always taken together, provide the basis of both a plausible theory of communication and a plausible theory of learning (and teaching).

To restate this in the specific frame of *learning* and *assessment*: *learning* happens in complex social environments; always in interaction with "the world"; often in interaction with (members of) distinct social groups and their distinct and related interests. The learner's *interest* guides her or his *attention*; it *frames* (a part of) the environment; that becomes the *ground* for interpretation. In interaction, members of groups communicate and make meaning, construct knowledge, and learn *across* boundaries of social difference. In all cases it is the individual's

interest that shapes and directs her or his *attention* and *frames* what becomes the *prompt* for *engagement*, *interpretation*, and *learning*. The (always) transformative (and/or transductive) interpretation of the prompt constitutes *learning*.

In the environment of a formal institution of education, specific features appear: the *ground* is shaped according to the requirements of the institution, as a *curriculum*; the occasions of the learner's engagement are formalized in various ways: through *the organization of time*, by *the organization of knowledge as curriculum*, and shaped by notions of *development*, *ability*. *Learning* is *assessed* through *metrics of achievement* set by that institution. That is, what is to count as learning, and treated as learning, become subject to the power of the institution.

Communicational (and therefore learning) environments are always modally complex; they consist of a plethora of semiotic phenomena. Any one of these can, potentially, be constructed as a *prompt* by the interpreter, whether in the operating theatre or in the science classroom as much as in so-called informal sites of learning: in visiting a website or, as in the next example, in a visit to a museum, or indeed in any instance of daily life. In such sites, what is constructed as a *prompt* is less directly and overtly shaped by external power; it depends more on the interest of a participant, which directs her or his *attention* and shapes the *ground*. This "interested attention" frames an aspect of the communicational environment as a *prompt*; the characteristics and the "shape" of the prompt provide, guided by the interest of the "learner," the basis on which the interpretation proceeds.

So far I have placed emphasis more on *learning* than on *teaching*, to signal two factors: the far-reaching social/political changes in power-relations in contemporary (anglophone) societies that have shifted attention to the agency of learners; and to insist that the agency of *learners as interpreters* has always been a factor, though kept invisible by theories of learning based on the exercise of power, however implicitly.

Now (in many parts of the anglophone world at least) students in schools act according to a very different sense of their power, not as "acquirers" of knowledge at the behest of authority, but in interpreting and transforming materials presented to them as *makers* of knowledge. With hindsight it can be seen that past accounts that construed learning as *acquisition* were skewed views of human semiosis: both distorted *and* sustained through the exercise of power, in schools as elsewhere. That led to a constant damaging mis-recognition of the semiotic work of those who—knowingly or not—exercised their right to interpretation/transformation in ways that were neither legitimated nor recognized; that were "out of tune" with power and hence "invisible." Those who did "interpret"/"transform" too far from permissible limits failed to "achieve," in terms of assessments based on metrics of conformity rather than in terms of principles for the recognition of semiotic, transformative, interpretative work.

In any case, the presence of a teacher never guarantees learning; and by far the largest part of what anyone does learn is learned without the (overt) presence of a teacher. However, my argument is in no way either against the need for teachers or their importance, nor against schools as crucially important social and cultural sites. It is, rather, an argument for the development of apt tools

for the recognition of agency in learning and for the recognition of the many modes through which learning becomes evident. Such tools will allow us to insist on the *recognition of agency* in social processes in institutional education and beyond; and provide resources for *recognizing the means*—the many modes used in making meaning and involved therefore in learning. The social semiotic aspect of the theory deals with the former; the multimodal with the latter.

If communication is a response to a *prompt*, then the sign that follows on from the interpretation of a prompt is based on that prior interpretation. This sign is a *sign of learning*. It is based on the now changed resources of the sign-maker, changed as a result of the prior interpretation. This has led to the *augmentation* of the interpreter's "inner" resources. That means that the newly made sign, being based on prior interpretation, points at the same time to *what had been learned*. This *sign of learning* moves the focus away, decisively, from the metaphor of *acquisition*, away from "metrics of achievement" based on the power of an institution, and toward a hypothesis about the *principles* of interpretation/transformation that had been brought to bear in the sign-maker/learner's interpretation. Assessment that appropriately recognizes all semiotic work in all modes allows the elucidation of the principles that have led the learner to interpretation and to learning.

An understanding of these principles provides a basis for a teacher's next step in the shaping of a new *ground*. In turn, the new ground gives the learner means to recognize and understand the principles he or she had used in their earlier interpretation and in their making of the new sign. It gives learners the resources to reflect on their signs in relation to the principles inherent in the teacher's new ground. By these means learners can be brought closer to the culture's understanding of the matter in a number of steps.

This approach gives recognition to the semiotic work of learners, to their principles, and uses these to construct a (series of) further prompt(s) that lead the learner to an understanding of the culture's sense of the matter. In other words, attending to the learner's principles is neither a question of "anything goes" nor one of "bend your understanding to the power of an institution." Rather, it allows a teacher to use the learner's principles to lead her or him to the meanings of the culture: not via imposed power but via the road of the learner's principles.

My second example shows learning in a so-called informal site of education. It comes from a research project on visitor studies, "The museum, the exhibition and the visitor" (funded by the Swedish National Science Foundation), conducted at the National History Museum in Stockholm, in an exhibition of Swedish pre-history, and at the Museum of London, in two exhibitions, "London before London" and "Roman London."

In the project, one aim was to understand how visitors "made sense of" a specific exhibition in a museum. Visitors were invited to participate as couples (grandparent and grandchild, friends, married couples, etc.), in order to "capture," at least in part, a sense of their *interaction* with a fellow visitor and with the exhibition. Participants were given small wearable voice-recorders; they

were videoed as they made their way through the exhibition; they were given a camera to take whatever images they wished. At the conclusion of their visit they were asked to “draw a map” that represented their sense of the exhibition and they were asked to participate in a brief interview about the visit, prompted by their “map.” All of these—video, photos, voice-recording, interview, and “map”—were seen as a possible means of documenting “signs of learning.”

Museums can not, usually, exercise the kind of power over their visitors that schools (attempt to) exercise over their students, whether in relation to communication or to learning. So school-based forms of assessment are problematic—which does not mean that they are not frequently used. “Assessment” of learning based on the principle of interpretation suggests itself as preferable. As an example, here are two maps made in each case by a member of two of the “couples.” Both are from the London component of the study, from the exhibition “London before London.”

Curators (as designer(s)) of an exhibition have specific aims: they show objects, produce images, design reconstructions of the pre-history of a community or a place, and they do this by *telling* “stories,” by *constructing* “displays,” by *showing* videos. They have purposes—social or pedagogic, ideological, aesthetic, or others. These are rarely stated overtly in the exhibition, though in interviews with curators or curatorial teams it is clear that much discussion around these purposes precedes the construction of an exhibition: framed by policies of the museum, of governments, etc. Given the absence, usually, of overt, explicit accounts of the aims of such exhibitions, discourse analysis seems an ideal tool for gaining an understanding—as a hypothesis—of what meanings have been made by the



Figure 10.3.A Map of a museum exhibition—Integrated Display

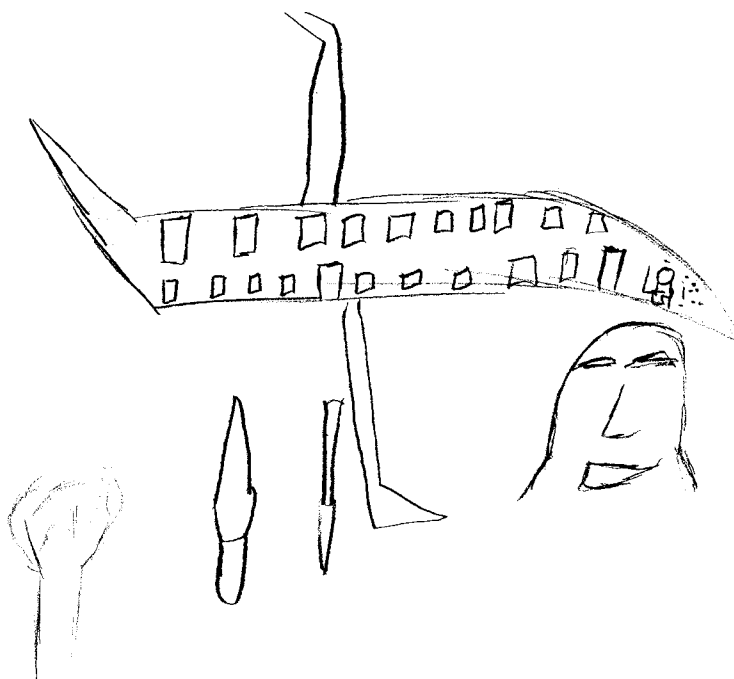


Figure 10.3.B Map of a museum exhibition—Heathrow

curator/designer; and what meanings visitors in their turn make from the exhibition. Or, seen from a pedagogic perspective, getting a sense of what the visitors might have *learned* in the course of their visit.

Semiotically speaking, an exhibition is a message; it provides a complex series of prompts for the visitors who come to engage with it. Pedagogically speaking, an exhibition (re)presents a “curriculum” for visitors seen as learners. In that context, the “maps” made by the visitors at the conclusion of their visit, can give some indication of which aspects of the overall design/message/curriculum engaged the visitor’s interest and how; they function as *signs of learning*. Whether from the perspective of *communication* or of *learning*, the maps are of equal interest. They are not, of course, a full account of the meanings made by either of these two visitors (a young woman and an 11-year-old boy). They do give a clear sense of a difference in *interest*, hence of a difference in *attention* and *framing*, and of distinctly different *interpretations* of the same large environment, seen as a complex *ground*.

Most immediately, the two figures show a specific—and we might say, unusual—sense of what a “map” is or does, based on specific conceptions of what “mapping” means and what is to be mapped. In both cases the notion of “map” is a “conceptual”—rather than a “spatial”—one. Unlike the exhibition in Stockholm (see “maps,” Figures 10.4a and 10.4b), the exhibition in Lon-

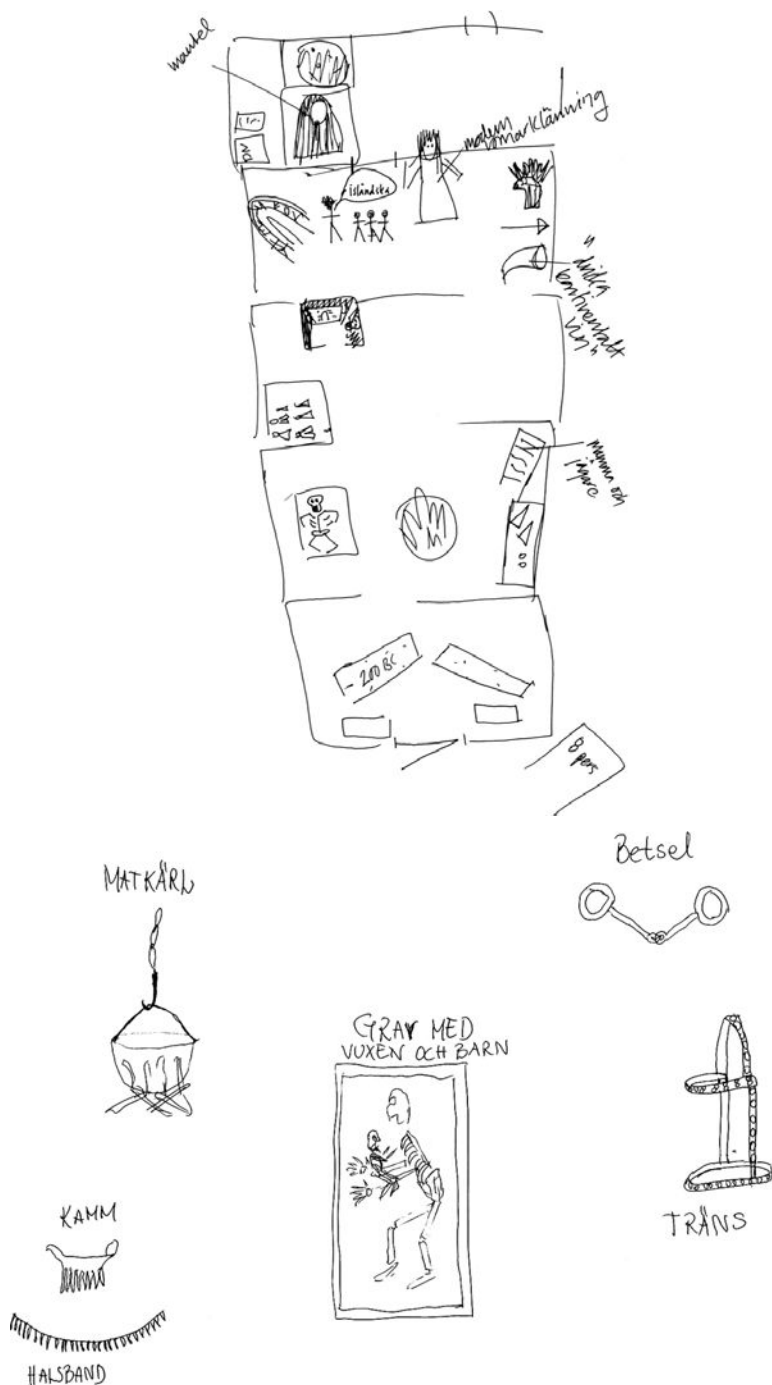


Figure 10.4.A and 10.4 B Two visitor 'maps' from Stockholm

London before London
450,000 BC — AD 50

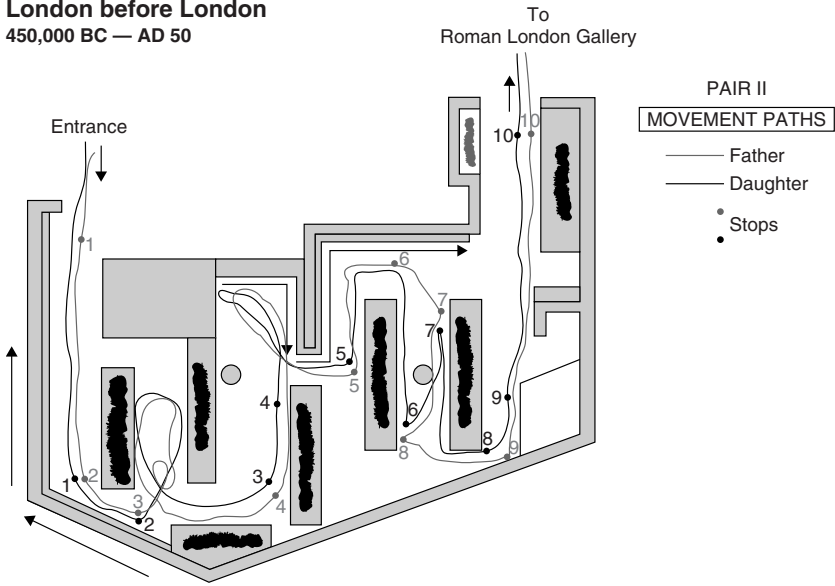


Figure 10.5 Groundplan, exhibition ‘London before London’ with a trace of a couple’s visiting path

don was not arranged as distinctly separate spaces; rather, it occupied one large space (see Figure 10.5).

A sign makes the sign-maker’s *interest* and interpretation material and evident. In that sense the maps can be taken as answers to an implicit question: What was my interest? In the case of one map (Figure 10.3a), that question seemingly was: What is my sense of that exhibition overall, given the interesting objects and displays I encountered? In the other case (Figure 10.3b) the question, seemingly, was: What, for me, were (the) salient elements of this exhibition, and in what arrangement shall I present them? For the first map-maker, the map presents an integrated, coherent impression of the kind of life lived by neolithic people: significant objects, people, and practices in interrelation define the notion of “map.” “This is what life was like” seems to be mapped here. That is the *interpretation* of the exhibition overall for this visitor; it represents (an aspect) of the knowledge made and of what has been learned.

The “map” of Figure 10.3b is a *conceptually* ordered representation (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006), as a presentation/display of elements regarded as salient by the map-maker. It has fewer elements than the previous map and the elements are not integrated into a tightly coherent display. That is not to say that this map does not “have” coherence: its principles of coherence need to be elucidated in ways that they do not need to be in the map of Figure 10.3a. This map is organized by and presents a different interest: less focused on “what was

the museum trying to show” and more on “what items were interesting to me.” This visitor too has made knowledge for himself; he too has learned.

Pedagogically motivated questions might be: “Has one visitor ‘failed’ in their experience of the exhibition? Or have both, perhaps?” or “Is one map better than the other?” Do we say that the map of Figure 10.3b is incoherent? Or do we say—as a theory focused on the learner’s agency suggests—that the assessor’s task is to reflect on and attempt to uncover the principles of coherence employed by the makers of both maps? Such questions are motivated by a focus on agency and sign-making. Attention to multimodal and social semiotic aspects would make us ask about the processes of *selection*, *transformation* and *transduction* that are apparent in the two maps. In the map of Figure 10.3b several three-dimensional objects—a mask, a model airplane, a stone knife—appear as images. That is the case with the map of Figure 10.3a: there three-dimensional *objects* are transduced to *image* (e.g., of the skull), diaramas/*images* are (re)presented/transformed as *image*, *written* descriptions are transduced to *image*. All these are selected, transformed and transduced, *composed*, and given coherence in an integrating (visual) genre of “display,” of “visual documentary.”

If *interest* guides *selection*, *attention*, *framing*, *interpretation*, we need to ask about that “interest”: Who are the map-makers, what are their interests and what principles of selection, attention, seem to be evident in these maps? This is not the place for a detailed account, though it will help understand these two *signs of learning* to know that the first “map” was made by one of two 18-year-old German women who were spending a week in London to get to know England; and that the other map was made by a 11-year-old boy from London who had come—reluctantly—with his mother for a “day of activities” (which did not eventuate) at the museum. His attention had been drawn by a model airplane at a display representing a neolithic campsite uncovered at the site of the present Heathrow airport, as well as by an African mask and some tools and weapons.

The social semiotic part of the theory attends to uncovering the sign- and meaning-maker’s *interest*; to the semiotic work done and the principles used in *selection*, *transformation*, *transduction*, *arrangement* of modes. The multimodal aspect attends to the modal resources used and to their affordances. In description and analysis it is not easy to keep these apart, though to do so has heuristic value, while conflating them produces blurring, imprecision, and categorical confusion. Both aspects of the theory allow us to make inferences about environments of learning, about interest, attention, framing, prompt, ground, principles of composition, modes, transformation, transduction.

All four maps/signs rest on an initial analysis (as selection). All signs, including Figures 10.4a and 10.4b, are the outcome of *design*. In turning from *analysis* to *design*, theoretical precision about the semiotic resources—e.g., kinds of *ordering* and *arrangement*, *transformation* and *transduction*—and the representational resources—the *modes* and their potentials—is an essential semiotic requirement for the designer/sign-maker.

Pedagogically, we can ask about *environments of learning*, *learning*, *means for understanding*, and *documenting* learning as apt theories of “assessment.” Both sign-makers have made knowledge for themselves; both have learned. The questions are whether and how that learning is given recognition; what might follow from that for theories of learning, teaching and communication generally, in this site as in all sites. On the face of it, the map of Figure 10.3a might be more readily accorded recognition in terms of learning (and design) than the map of 10.3b. Figure 10.4a is the most “map-like” of all four maps. Yet all are based on semiotic work of principled selection, design and composition. These are matters of power. Behind that are the questions: “How do we assess what learning there had been as a result of the engagement with this site?” and “What is accepted, by whom, as legitimate materials to be assessed?”

If signs—say, each one of the two maps here—are the result of their makers’ interest and are an apt reflection of that interest at the moment of the making of the sign, then the *shape* of the sign is an indication of what has been learned. We can see what has been selected; and if we know the exhibition we can see what has not been selected—where interest and attention have gone and where not. The maker of the sign has made the sign as an apt expression of the meaning to be represented and has used the “form” of existing sign-making material—signifiers—to do so. We can see the principles of ordering, arrangement and composition and make inferences about notions of coherence. For the recipient of the sign, therefore, the form of the sign is a resource for forming an hypothesis about the makers’ interest and about the principles that they brought to their engagement with the prompt and that led to the making of the sign—whether the experience of the visit to the museum exhibition, or the experience of a series of lessons in the classroom, or of any other environment and event.

That makes the *form* of the sign into a means of uncovering (principles of) learning. When the “recipient of the sign” is an “assessor,” the question becomes: “What are the means for assessment? What principles? What metric will he or she apply?” Will it be a metric oriented to authority—indicating the “distance” from what ought to have been learned, whether in terms of modes used, or in terms of conformity to the authority of the teacher/assessor? Or will it be a metric oriented to the learner’s interest and the principles the learner brought to the engagement with the curriculum? Will it be the metric of the curator as communicator or of the curator as pedagogue, or will it be a metric oriented to the visitor’s interest?

“Whose *interest* is dominant here, the curator’s or the visitor’s?” and “What metrics of assessment are to be used, and why?” Three of these “maps” do not conform to general understandings of the *genre(s)* of map. Lack or not of *means of recognition*, refusal or inability to recognize signs of learning, have effects on assessment. This might be because of *mode* (one “map” from the London study was in the form of a written critique of major aspects of the exhibition); or being regarded as generically inappropriate, that is, “these are nothing like a map”; or a lack of recognition of the semiotic work of the sign-maker more generally in some other way.

The matter of *modes* arises with the question of *rhetoric* and *design*. It goes to initial conceptions of the exhibition and from there to the overall “shaping” of the exhibition: it is evident in the selection of its objects; in the salience given to particular themes; and to the modes chosen in representing specific meanings: so for instance in the layout of the exhibition, in its lighting, in the use of written text or of image or of 3D objects. Are three-dimensional objects more salient, more “attractive,” more noticeable than written captions? Is movement more salient as a means of explanations than longer written accounts? Are painted scenes more engaging than three-dimensional tableaux? What effect does lighting have in creating affect and mood? Is the distance at which visitors are able to engage with objects, or whether they are able to touch an object, a significant matter? The question of *affect* has to be addressed in the case of the exhibition: the “wrong” affect will inhibit or detract the attention of visitors. But affect is equally significant in all sites of learning, institutional or not.

Emergent Issues: Design, Transcription, Simulation

In interaction as communication, texts always occur as *ensembles* of several modes, that is, as *multimodal ensembles*. The awareness of the possibility of choice of the means for representing, the awareness of the availability of many modes, inevitably leads to the question: “Which modes are best, here, in terms of my audience and in terms of the matter which is the focus of communication?” In other words, *design* moves into center-ground. In an era when the assumption had been that there is language, either as the only, or as the central, or as the major means of communication, that question did not arise—or at least not in the same way. It was of course the case that children’s books were heavily “illustrated,” as might be handbooks of various kinds, even though the very term “illustration” pointed to the marginal role of image in relation to writing (Barthes, 1968)

Design is the servant of *rhetoric*, which, as the “politics of communication” (Kress, 2010) names the process of assessing the conditions in the environment of communication: the salient characteristics of the audience, the matter to be communicated, and the relations of power that obtain in the communicational environment. *Rhetoric* draws on the resources of social semiotics, while *design* names the processes that give semiotic shape to the social, ideological, and political understandings produced by a *rhetorical analysis*.

A multimodal approach to educational issues directly raises—as I pointed out in the example of the cell—the questions of ontology and epistemology. In the shift from one mode to another mode, that is, in *transduction*, that issue is focal: socially, through a changing “address of the audience”; and epistemologically and ontologically, in the shaping of knowledge. In effect each mode offers its distinct “take” on the world, which can be seen as offering distinct “transcriptions” of “the world,” and, in that, produce distinctly different “data.” By this means, *multimodal ensembles* offer the possibility of multiple transcriptions of a phenomenon, highlighting its different facets, in each case for specific reasons.

Transcription has been a standard and central feature of education: whether in research—in producing “data”; or in learning and teaching—in shaping what is to be learned in a socially (e.g., realist *images* for young learners) and epistemologically (a *diagram* for the representation of the magnetic field of a bar magnet) apt form. With the issue of *simulation*, a related yet fundamentally different issue arises—increasingly so in fields of “professional learning” and practices. If *transcription* names the process of reducing the messiness of “the world” to the orderliness of “data” that can serve to answer a research question that has been posed, then *simulation* raises a very similar issue, though this time in relation to practices in which questions of *knowing* and *knowledge* come to the fore in terms of the *explicitness* or *implicitness* of “embodied” knowing/knowledge.

Transcription proceeds usually by transduction: What exists in the world in one mode—*speech*, usually—is reproduced in another mode—*writing*, usually. In the process there is massive abstraction-as-selection: only that which serves as a means to answer the research question is transcribed. A similar process of abstraction-as-selection takes place in simulation. Here, however, what is selected—either for purposes of research or of learning and teaching—is reproduced (by and large) in the same mode: *speech* remains as *speech*, 3D objects (e.g., instruments, furniture, dress) remain as 3D tools. The process of simulation of embodied knowing does, however, require that that which had been seen as implicit knowledge become explicit. Or, to express it in multimodally apt terms, that which was regarded as implicit because it was embodied but not spoken or written is nevertheless now shown to be explicit—embodied still, and yet modally explicit at the same time (Figure 10.6).



Figure 10.6 Simulation

As a last, crucial remark, this raises the serious issue of *meta-language: explicitness* is possible without recourse to the modes of *speech* or *writing*. It becomes apparent that every resource for representation developed by a society—every *mode*—has the capacity to develop meta-forms, meta-level representations. *Every mode has its meta-mode*. That has the most far-reaching implications for education generally, for learning, teaching and for assessment; and for epistemology much more widely.

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11 Discourse in Activity and Activity as Discourse

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A basic claim of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA; Fairclough, 1989; Gee, 1999) and dialogic approaches to conversation analysis (Linell, 1998) is that Discourse is constituted by both talk and actions working in concert.¹ This may be stated in either a weak or strong version. Linell (1998) argued for a weak version, describing talk as a type of action that “includes accompanying paralinguistic signals and embedding contexts” (p. 6). Gee (1999) made the case more strongly, drawing a distinction between discourse (with a small “d”) and Discourse (with a capital “D”). Discourse (with a capital “D”) includes both talk and action:

To “pull off” an “X” doing “Y” (e.g., a Los Angeles Latino street-gang member warning another gang member off his territory, or a laboratory physicist convincing colleagues that a particular graph supports her ideas, or, for that matter, a laboratory physicist warning other laboratory physicists off her research territory) it is not enough to get just the words “right,” though that is crucial. It is necessary, as well, to get one’s body, clothes, gestures, actions, interactions, ways with things, symbols, tools, technologies (be they guns or graphs), and values, attitudes, beliefs, and emotions “right,” as well, and all at the “right” places and times.

When “little d” discourse (language-in-use) is melded integrally with nonlanguage “stuff” to enact specific identities and activities, then, I say that “big D” Discourses are involved. (p. 7)

Two things, however, are missing from analyses like Linell’s, Gee’s, and Fairclough’s. First, there is not generally a learning theory articulated in these kinds of discourse analyses. The result is that it is hard to describe just how people learn to recognize and use the right members’ resources (Fairclough, 1989) and nonlanguage stuff necessary for getting particular identities right. Second, activity as part of discourse is usually ignored in both transcribing talk and analyzing it. The result is that, although analysts refer to activity in their discussion of talk, close analysis of the nonlanguage stuff of Discourse is not carried out. The two solutions I offer are to make some of the connections between CDA and sociocultural approaches to learning (Rogoff, 1990, 1995; Wertsch, 1985,

1991, 1998) explicit and to demonstrate a way of transcribing and analyzing talk and activity simultaneously.

Sociocultural Approaches to Learning and CDA

There are many approaches to learning that fall under the heading of *sociocultural*. What they all share are their roots in the work of Vygotsky (1978, 1981, 1986). The particular sociocultural approach that I draw on here is that outlined by Wertsch (1985, 1991, 1998). This approach sees development and learning in terms of the appropriation and mastery of physical and psychological tools as part of participation in collective and individual activities (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986; Wertsch, 1985) during which individuals engage in what Wertsch (1985) called *strategic activity*, appropriating collective problem-solving procedures and cultural tools as part of “mediated activity” (Wertsch, 1991, 1998).

Traditionally, the primary, although by no means the only, tool of the collaborative problem solving that sociocultural theorists focus on is language. Although he did spend some time investigating other types of psychological tools, Vygotsky focused on language as the premier tool of psychological development. Language is ubiquitous to human activity—especially the kinds of group activities on which discourse analysts and sociocultural theorists focus. Yet it is certainly not the only semiotic system or mediational means at work in learning. As Gee argued earlier, learning to perform a given identity in any given activity is much more than getting the language right. From a sociocultural perspective, we can speak of all semiotic systems functioning as tools in the development of interpersonal communicative activity and individual cognitive activity. Taking into account how language shapes activity is important, but it is also important to find ways to talk about how the wider array of other semiotic systems operating as part of activity afford and constrain group learning activity as well as how activity shapes language use and interpersonal interactions. A sociocultural approach to learning and language in use thus addresses CDA’s concern with transformation by focusing on the ways in which members’ resources are privileged, appropriated, rejected, and deployed as part of participation in activity.

Yet sociocultural approaches to learning have often failed to recognize questions of inequity and authority in the distribution of mediational means. They have failed to recognize, as Linell (1998) suggested, not only cooperation, negotiation, and shared activity, but also fragmentation, complementarity, and struggle, which characterize much of interpersonal activity. Of particular importance in this regard is the idea that cultural tools, including language, are often unequally distributed throughout a group and a society. Critical approaches to discourse bring to a sociocultural approach to learning recognition of the ideological saturation of cultural tools and their potential for re-creating and/or subverting particular orders of Discourse (Fairclough, 1989). A critical approach to language, psychology, and activity is a crucial, but often neglected, addition to any sociocultural project that seeks to highlight the structure and realization in everyday activities of the inequitable distribution

of power, authority, and valued cultural and physical resources that shape all social institutions.

Discourse as Talk and Activity

For a combined sociocultural and CDA analysis to work, however, the analyst must be able to describe not only language in use (the purview of Discourse analysis), but also activity (especially learning activity) as it develops (the purview of sociocultural analysis). Discourse and conversation analyses of all kinds generally relegate activity to the background of analysis, citing it solely as something that accompanies talk. Nevertheless, even those linguists who do not work directly with language in use (and language in use with Gee's nonlanguage stuff) generally recognize that activity and talk are interrelated. The psycholinguist Clark (1996), for instance, created a discourse continuum moving from activities that are mostly linguistic to those that are mostly nonlinguistic:

1. telephone conversations, newspaper items, radio reports, novels
2. face-to-face conversations, tabloid items, TV reports, science texts
3. business transactions, plays, movies, coaching demonstrations, apprenticeship lessons, bridge games
4. basketball games, tennis matches, two people moving furniture, making love
5. playing a string quartet, waltzing, playing catch. (p. 50)

Most analyses of language in use cover only a tiny part of this spectrum. Yet a great deal of activity, especially learning activity as Clark's continuum suggests, occurs at the place where talk and action co-occur. Precisely because interlocutors' actions are such a strong part of establishing relevant contexts for making sense of utterances, they must be taken into account.

Despite the importance of capturing the co-occurrence of talk and action to understand meaning making and learning, most transcription techniques used by discourse and conversation analysts completely ignore activity. At the most, the analyst adds some parenthetical information to *disambiguate* the referent of certain deictic expressions for the reader or to explain the result of some talk. For example, look at the following transcript from a science classroom taken from Lemke (1990):

Transcript 1: Carbon

27 *Teacher:* Ron?

28 *Ron:* Boron?

29 *Teacher:* That would be—That'd have uh . . . *seven* electrons. So you'd have

30 to have one here, one here, one here, one here . . . one

31 here—Who said it? You?

32 *Student:* Carbon.

33 *Teacher:* What's—

34 *Students:* Carbon! Carbon!

- 35 *Teacher*: Carbon. Carbon. Here. Six electrons. And they can be anywhere within those—confining—orbitals. This is also from the notes from before. The term orbital refers to the average *region* transversed [*sic*] by an electron. Electrons occupy orbitals that may differ in size, shape, or orientation. That’s—that’s from the other class, we might as well use it for review. (pp. 17–18, 20)

Lemke explained that this is a conversation between a student and a teacher standing at the blackboard on which a chalk Atomic Orbital Diagram is drawn. As the teacher talks, he gestures at the diagram and a periodic table hung on the wall. The drawing and table are more than mere props of the teacher’s and students’ dialogue, and they are more than mnemonic devices for the students. At the least, they serve as part of preparing contexts (Lemke, 1990) within which particular questions and statements make sense. When students miss these preparations, they might not even understand what is expected of them as interlocutors, much less the science content of the talk (Lemke, 1990). The students are expected not only to learn to talk about atoms and their orbitals in the correct way, but also to recognize and use such diagrams and tables in the correct ways to perform adequate identities as science students. Because science talk is a gateway to further education as well as career choices, such simple routines as this one are important as apprenticeship activities.

When we employ turn taking as the unit of analysis and fail to include any description of the activity that co-occurs with the talk and contextualizes it as part of the transcript, some parts of the talk become virtually meaningless to the analyst (i.e., pointing out electrons—“one here” or referring to the diagram “that’s from the other class”). If we are interested in how the mediational means (like diagrams), talk, and activity work together as a distributed system, with how both talk and action shape each other over the course of an activity, and thus with how people learn to use the linguistic and nonlinguistic stuff that makes up Discourse, then we need a different kind of transcript.

Getting Talk and Activity Together for Analysis

Transcript 2 (Rowe, 2002) is a different kind of representation: In this case, the participants are interacting with a particular kind of mediational means (a hands-on exhibit) in an interactive science museum. Such hands-on activities are common in U.S. science museums, and they are a large part of many science classrooms as well. This exhibit consists of a 2-meter inclined plane. The plane is made up of two sets of railings down which two wheels roll. Each wheel has an axle at its center. When the wheel is placed in the ramp, its axle is actually the part that rolls on the rails. In this way, the wheels spin around their axles as they move down the ramp. Each wheel is further equipped with three movable weights placed evenly around the axle. Each weight can be moved to one of three positions from close to the center of the wheel to close to the outer edge of the wheel. Adjusting the position of the weights affects the

movement of the wheels by distributing mass differently around the rotating axles.

To try to understand how small groups of adults and children organize their activity around this exhibit and make meaning out of it, and how that does or does not contribute to the re-creation of particular orders of Discourse, it is necessary to see how activity contextualizes talk and vice versa. Thus, the transcript includes both talk and actions; further, it visually shows the relationships between utterances and actions, between utterances and other utterances, and between actions and other actions by including a person's actions and utterances in one box of the table. Each box contains two lines of text—the first is a transcription of talk, the second of action. This procedure allows the analyst to see how action and utterance are related to each other in creating contexts within which those actions and utterances have meanings.

Transcript 2: Rolling

1

B	walking to right end of ramp; takes right wheel, carries to top Places wheel
M	Approaches right top, puts hand on right wheel

2

B	holding wheel with M	Releases wheel
W	approaches right top	
M	1) You see how you can move these weights	That makes it go faster or slower
	with B moves two weights takes hand off	Steps back from ramp one step

3

B	walks to bottom, rolling wheel back up	picks up wheel carries to top
W	2) Pick it up Sonny, carry it up	3) Now if you put it in
	walks halfway down ramp follows B back to top	
M	[unint] they say	
	standing two steps away	

4

B	places wheel	adjusting weights
W	a different place	4) I think this one's been
	leans over B holding wheel, touching weights	
M	That's what affects the speed	
	pushes weight in place steps back	steps back further

5

B	5) I wanta move down that one	
		looks at M
W	there a while [unint] change them	
		steps back
M	That's what affects the speed	
		steps up pushes weight in place

6

B	Releases wheel	Follows down hand on ramp leaning on ramp,
		walks to bottom, rolls
W		
		steps back farther
		leaves
M		
	steps back	steps back farther
		walks down

7

B	
	wheel part way up, turns and walks away
W	
	from top of ramp, talking to researcher
M	
	ramp past B and toward different exhibit

Adapted from Rowe (2002).

Inspired by Bakhtin's (1979) concept of polyphony and a microgenetic approach to the development of activity (Rowe & Wertsch, 2002; Vygotsky, 1978), and to

capture the relationships among actions and talk carried out by multiple agents as they develop over the course of an activity, I am employing a transcript that is read from left to right as a musical score is read. In this particular case, there are seven segments on the page representing just over 1 minute of activity and talk. When the reader reaches the end of one segment (the right-hand margin) he or she returns to the beginning of the next segment immediately below it (the left-hand margin). This transcript facilitates what Norris (2004) and others call a multimodal discourse analysis—one that is concerned with multiple modes of communication simultaneously, seeks to maintain their unity in analysis, and recognizes that

language in use, whether this is in the form of spoken language or text is always and inevitably constructed across multiple modes of communication, including speech and gesture not just in spoken language but through such “contextual” phenomena as the use of the physical spaces in which we carry out our discursive actions or the design, papers, and typography of the documents within which our texts are presented. (Scollon and Levine, 2002, pp. 1–2)

Agents (B—a boy around 10 years old, M—a man in his late 40s, and W—a woman in her late 40s) are listed in order of their appearance at the exhibit. As new agents enter the setting, a new box or cell is added for them. Each box or cell contains two lines. The bottom line details the agents’ actions. Just above that in the same box is a line that details the agents’ talk. Boldface type separates talk from action. Within this kind of microgenetic analysis of activity, it is important to capture the development of activity and talk across time (Wertsch, 1991). However, because the actual time at which an action or utterance is begun and ended is less important than the relative position of that action or utterance with regard to other actions and utterances, the transcript is not broken down into equally spaced time units. Thus, the transcripts capture both talk and action as they develop over the course of an activity within a group. They also visually represent which actions and utterances are co-terminus and which are co-constructed.

Any transcript is already an abstraction for a particular purpose, and one of the challenges of any transcription procedure is determining what level of detail should be included in the representation of both talk and actions. The level of detail is usually determined by the purposes of the analysis or the theoretical assumptions underlying it. In this case, for instance, not every action is described. There is no attempt to include individual movements such as “takes wheel with right hand” or “looks upward and to left.” Some analyses, such as those described by Norris (2005), do require this level of transcription detail.

Yet there are also theoretical assumptions underlying the transcript, and I turn to some of those now because they are important for the claims I make about what is going on in the transcript. There are basically two claims that

arise from the dialogic and sociocultural approach to language and development that I am integrating with a critical approach to discourse analysis: (a) the unit of analysis for language in use is the utterance, and (b) activities are often distributed among multiple agents.

The Unit of Analysis for Language in Use is the Utterance

Within a dialogic approach to language, the utterance (rather than the phoneme, morpheme, word, phrase, or sentence) is the basic element of language in use. Bakhtin (1986) rather loosely defined the *utterance* as “the change of speaking subjects” (p. 71). Because his model was dialogue between speakers, the “change of speaking subjects” that Bakhtin was interested in has some analogies to turn taking as it is described by conversation analysts (Linell, 1998). From the point of view of analyzing individual contributions to dialogue, the change of speaking subjects or turn taking is a natural unit of analysis. Yet such a unit becomes problematic when there are multiple speakers (and sometimes even in dyads) when, for instance, conversational partners complete each other’s sentences, speak simultaneously, or immediately latch one speaker’s words onto another’s without salient break. These examples represent the *co-construction of dialogue* by multiple participants. Unfortunately for the discourse analyst using turn taking as the basic unit of analysis, such cases are more the rule than the exception in some activities and among some groups.

In such cases, and generally from the point of view of analyzing how discourse contributes to group activity, it makes more sense to treat any *uninterrupted stretch of speaking activity* as one utterance even if it is distributed among multiple speakers. For reasons that become clear later, I am interested in just those places where multiple speakers construct one utterance. I call these *co-constructed utterances*. Thus, I define the *utterance* as an “uninterrupted stretch of speaking” and the *co-constructed utterance* as an “uninterrupted stretch of speaking activity involving more than one agent.” Not every utterance that includes more than one recognizable voice is co-constructed. As Bakhtin (1981, 1986) noted, multiple voices almost always co-exist within one speaker’s utterance. Such utterances are polyphonic or heteroglossic (Bakhtin, 1979), but are not co-constructed. My definition of co-constructed utterances tries to take account of utterances that might involve more than one speaking agent, but only one voice. Like the Greek Chorus who speak in one voice, these are potentially cases of co-construction that are not heteroglossic (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986).

In terms of the transcript, this means that when utterances are numbered for reference or coding, not every individual contribution is separately numbered. Rather, when two or more people co-construct an utterance, it is numbered and coded as one utterance. For example, utterance 3 (W: “Now if you put it in a different place”; M: “that’s what affects the speed”) is one utterance co-constructed by two speakers (M and W). The two voices are latched without break. W begins the utterance with a statement that ends with rising intonation

(which could also be indicated in the transcript if the analysis required it), and M completes the utterance.

Co-Constructed Talk and Situation Definitions

In Transcript 2, utterances are co-constructed as part of explicitly formulating a situation definition for the activity. A situation definition is a statement about the context that specifies what we are doing at a given moment or what we take to be the background against which our utterances and actions are to be interpreted. Here is the first link between sociocultural approaches to learning activity and CDA. Not everyone in every situation has the authority to define the situation. That authority is negotiated on the ground as part of activity, but it may be couched in terms of talk about content. In Utterance 3, M and W seek and provide information about the way the exhibit works. They also work to define the situation in a particular way that explicates “what’s going on” at this given moment. In this case, “what’s going on” is something like MOVING THE WEIGHTS (Rowe, 2002).² This way of defining the situation contrasts with, for example, what we may call RACING, where two participants roll the two wheels simultaneously as part of a competitive game to see which one will reach the bottom first. The co-constructed utterance works this way by indexing a particular context within which every other utterance and action has meaning potential. Thus, such co-constructed utterances are part of establishing and maintaining intersubjectivity (Rommetviet, 1974)—that is, a temporarily shared version of the social background against which what we say and do can make sense to interlocutors.

As the example in *Transcript 1: Carbon* suggests, learning to recognize and use such cues as these to understand the situation is not only part of learning to interpret what is said and what is expected of us as interlocutors, but also part of “pulling off” a particular social identity. It is the ability to manipulate particular members’ resources to be recognized as a particular kind of *who* doing *what* (Gee, 1999). In that sense, M and W are pulling off identities as the kind of people who go to museums and know what to do with exhibits there—that is, you do not simply play with them, you experiment and observe the results.

Yet utterances alone do not make up the particular constellations of members’ resources that make up particular Discourses. That brings us to the second theoretical claim underlying these transcripts. The transcripts show that co-constructed utterances are combined with co-constructed actions. In concert, utterances and action define both the situation and the particular performing identities of the participating agents.

Activities are Often Distributed Among Multiple Agents

For purposes of analysis, I have borrowed Gee’s (1999) three-part terminology of activity, subactivity, and action.³ An activity is a bounded sequence of doing something with a more or less recognizable beginning and end. In the case of

Transcript 2: Rolling, and from the point of view of the observer, the activity is something like “Doing an interactive museum exhibit.” Similarly, in the case of *Transcript 1: Carbon*, the activity is something like “Using a diagram to review a lesson” in the classroom. Both of these activities are in turn made up of particular subactivities that are shaped by the physical and social constraints and affordances of the exhibit (rather heavy wheels on an inclined plane) and the classroom (chalk of different colors; a diagram left over from a previous class) and of the setting (a free-of-charge, public museum, on the one hand, and a secondary school science classroom in a public school, on the other hand).

In *Transcript 2: Rolling*, there are several identifiable subactivities that have to do with the nature of the exhibit and setting. These include approaching the exhibit, reading the label, setting up a roll by moving the wheels to the top of the ramp, rolling the wheels, solving a variety of technical difficulties with the operation of the exhibit, adjusting the weights, and exiting the area. Some of these subactivities are mandatory (approaching, setting up a roll), whereas others are optional (reading the label or rolling the wheel or adjusting the weights). Last, solving physical problems with the exhibit is mandatory when they occur, but might not be part of any given group’s activity. In addition, other subactivities are not necessarily part of the activity as dictated by its physical nature, but are elements of how people interact as they use the exhibit and shape the way the activity is socially distributed. These include things like establishing participation, directing activity, or explaining the activity.

These subactivities are in turn made up of particular actions. Any number or type of actions can be used as part of setting up or explaining the activity. For example, as part of setting up, sometimes a participant simply drags the wheel from the bottom of the ramp to the top before releasing it. Another person might set up by lifting the wheel out of the ramp and carrying it to the top and placing it in the ramp. Still another person might bring the wheel to the top, place it in the ramp, and then roll it backward slightly to reorient the weights. Each of these actions can be coded, but for my purposes here the categories I use in *Transcript 2* generally belong to the level of subactivities rather than actions or activities. This level of detail, again, is determined by the questions to be addressed.

Co-Constructed Activity and Situation Definitions

For my analysis of activity, I treat the activity as analogous to utterances. Thus, one subactivity or one action is any uninterrupted stretch of physical activity. It is immediately obvious that an action, subactivity, or activity can be distributed among multiple agents. Two students who work together to assemble a balance beam for an in-class experiment are in this sense engaged in one subactivity with roughly identifiable boundaries (a beginning and an end). More important for the current discussion, an action or subactivity may be begun by one participant and completed by another. Two students—one of whom picks up weights of different sizes and hands them to another student who places

them on the balance beam— may complete the subactivity of putting weights on the balance beam, which in turn may be part of several activities (measuring the unknown weight of another object, calibrating the balance) and may be made up of multiple actions (getting attention, putting the weight in one's hand, grasping the weight, etc.).

In the case of Transcript 2, there are two co-constructed subactivities. The first occurs at the beginning of the activity in Segment 1. B has approached the exhibit and taken one of the wheels to the top of the ramp. Before he can do anything else, M approaches, places his hand on the wheel, and says, "You see how you can move these weights" (Utterance 1) and moves two of the weights while the boy holds the wheel. M thus takes authority early on in the activity for defining it in a certain way—not only by what he says, but also by what he does. He and B co-construct the subactivity of moving the weights, and the activity is thus defined as MOVING THE WEIGHTS rather than simply ROLLING THE WHEEL or RACING. The second case of co-constructed activity further reinforces this situation definition. In Segments 4 and 5, B, W, and M all co-construct the activity of moving the weights. This group (as do many of the groups who use this exhibit—see Rowe [2002] for more discussion) co-constructs activities at just those points where they are defining the activity as a particular type (Segment 1) or when they are trying to solve a physical problem (how to move the weights in Segments 4 and 5).

Learning as the Appropriation of Mediational Means for Meaning Making

By extending this analysis in more detail, we can address the critique that applications of CDA do not routinely attend to learning. Bringing together a socio-cultural approach to learning activity, a dialogic approach to language in use, and a critical analysis of discourse, we can define *learning* as the appropriation of culturally valued mediational means or members' resources as part of participation in active, distributed meaning making. The key to understanding learning thus defined is analyzing how the appropriation of mediational means occurs across time and in interaction (or does not occur).

In Transcript 2, the three participants are at the exhibit for 1 minute and 17 seconds. As soon as B brings the wheel to the top of the ramp, M approaches. Having read the label, he puts his hands on the wheel with B. In his first utterance, M draws B's attention to the weights and explains the activity in terms of the situation definition MOVING THE WEIGHTS. The second half of this utterance is actually addressed to both B and W (who has joined them) and positions M as the interpreter of authority by presenting the situation definition as part of what "they say." He and B then co-construct the activity of adjusting the weights, and he steps away from the exhibit. W, however, steps in (physically and verbally) immediately, directing B's activity and behavior through a direct address (Utterance 2) and by physically approaching him. In this utterance and action, she contributes to the situation definition by

addressing what it is not. It is not about ROLLING THE WHEEL (up or down the ramp), but about MOVING THE WEIGHTS, which she further makes clear in her part of Utterance 3. This utterance has the form of a statement, but is said with rising intonation that seeks a completion as a question or clarification of “what’s going on.” All three of them then participate in adjusting the weights. W initiates the adjusting by leaning over B, touching the weights, and seeming to explain their difficulty in moving them in Utterance 4. B then enlists M’s aid with an utterance (5) and look, and W steps back. After M helps adjust the weights, W and M both move back further, allowing B to finish the subactivity. At the end of the next roll of the wheel, B again begins to roll the wheel back up the ramp before following M to a different exhibit.

In this short time, these three participants do quite a bit of work (both physically and in terms of what they say) to shape the situation definition. This is not PLAY, RACING, or ROLLING THE WHEELS, although the last seems to be B’s preferred activity. Rather W and M define the situation as MOVING THE WEIGHTS to affect the speed. M and W’s situation definition is cast in terms of a preferred or privileged way to do the exhibit, associated with the authority of the museum (i.e., with what “they say” about it). As already noted, they employ co-constructed subactivities and utterances to articulate the situation definition.

Note also how carefully M and W monitor and control B’s actions. As soon as B places the wheel for the first time, M establishes his participation (and authority for defining the situation) by placing his hand on the wheel and adjusting the weights while drawing attention to the weights as the salient feature of the wheels and what you can do with them (make it go faster or slower) as the salient activity. He does not, however, attribute this to his own knowledge or observations, but to the authority of the museum. The second time B places the wheel, he has just been admonished for “breaking frame” by rolling instead of carrying the wheel back up to the top. As soon as he places the wheel, W establishes her participation in a more direct way than her Utterances 2 and 3 do by placing her hands on the wheel and trying to adjust the weights while talking about what happens when you do move them (“put it in a different place”). Thus, W and M do a lot of (literally) hands-on work to define what it is they are all three doing and how they should do it.

Once B’s participation is established and a correct or preferred way of doing the exhibit is assured, they physically and verbally leave the activity up to B. This is consistent with teaching and learning or apprenticeship (Rogoff, 1990, 1995) activities of all kinds, where one participant who is positioned as an *expert* scaffolds the participation of another participant who is positioned as a *novice*. The expert gradually transfers authority for doing the activity to the novice, who appropriates the tools, procedures, and goals of the activity or rejects them. In this case, although B is the first to approach the exhibit, M takes control immediately of the situation, and W enters the scene at just the point where B seems to be taking too much authority (ROLLING THE WHEEL back up the ramp instead of conforming to the situation definition of MOVING THE

WEIGHTS). Eventually, both M and W remove themselves from the activity: a full transfer of authority over the doing of the exhibit to B. In this case, he does not pursue it for long, but seems to have his own definition for what's going on as he begins again ROLLING THE WHEEL back up the ramp just before exiting. He thus rejects the situation definition of MOVING THE WEIGHTS once authority for doing the activity has been physically and verbally transferred to him. He does not seem to have appropriated the meaning of the situation as defined by the adults.

As a result of all this work, one situation definition predominates. There is little chance for an alternative situation definition to be activated. Rather, the adults work hard to limit the possible situation definitions by presenting their preferred one (which is in fact their perception of the museum's "official" design) as authoritative and by working to direct the child's participation in a way that is appropriate to the situation thus defined. Once the child seems to have appropriated that situation definition, the adults relinquish verbal and physical control over directing the activity and eventually exit the exhibit area. Yet the child then turns to a different kind of activity for a short period. He has rejected the preferred way of contextualizing the activity by rejecting the resources handed to him by his parents.

Appropriating Discourses, the Bigger Picture

In the case presented in *Transcript 1: Carbon*, it is clear that a particular, privileged school Discourse is being negotiated and enforced by both the teacher and students (and that is in fact part of what Lemke goes on to discuss). Yet the same kind of thing is happening in *Transcript 2: Rolling*, too. In the case presented in Transcript 2, a particular way of interacting with the exhibit is privileged and deployed by M and W as part of organizing their own activity and directing B's participation in it. Yet their privileging this particular situation definition has implications beyond their own, local activity. In the science museum, this particular way of interacting with the exhibit is associated with a socially privileged Discourse—that of science. The exhibit label presents this activity as being about "The Scientific Method" and what scientists do. M and W reproduce at the level of this one group's interactions this wider social privileging of a particular order of discourse (Fairclough, 1989) or social language (Bakhtin, 1981)—that of the scientist. And yet, it seems as if B is, indeed, taking up an authentic scientist identity, as (once he is left on his own) he is interacting with the materials to explore and satisfy his own interests and questions in the same ways that scientists learn by trial and error. His mother and father, on the other hand, seem more interested in interacting with the exhibit (and teaching their son to interact) in the way they believe they are supposed to; their practices model the identity of a science student in school who learns by being directed to do things in certain ways.

Looking just at the talk, however, does not give the analyst many clues as to how this Discourse is privileged, how much work M and W do to privilege

it, or how B appropriates or rejects it. What participants say and do are equal parts of understanding how they create a situation definition that privileges or rejects particular social languages and orders of Discourse. The microgenetic analysis of Discourse as it is developed in both talk and action simultaneously that I demonstrate here allows us to analyze the privileging, appropriating, and rejecting of particular members' resources and mediational means as part of activity. This sort of microgenetic analysis of course does not demonstrate how or if participants appropriate these social languages in a really deep sense so that they become part of their everyday performances of identity. That requires analysis of the same agents' participation in a wide variety of interactions over time to see whether and how they appropriate and deploy privileged and non-privileged ways of acting and speaking. It also does not demonstrate how certain ways of speaking and acting and those who use them come to be privileged or nonprivileged. That is precisely what CDA offers to sociocultural approaches to learning: analysis of the histories, social affordances, and constraints of the particular Discourses people appropriate and reject as part of learning.

Notes

- 1 In some senses, these are three different traditions in analyzing spoken and written texts with different histories, units of analysis, and purposes of analysis. In other senses, they have a great deal in common. Despite differences in their analytical styles and focal points of analysis, Gee and Fairclough both departed from traditional discourse analysis because of their insistence on the ideological saturation of the elements of language (a tradition that stems from Marxist and deconstructivist literary analysis and systemic-functional linguistics [SFL]). This makes their work consistent with Linell's, which seeks to anchor conversation analysis in a dialogic or Bakhtinian approach to language in use that takes account of the ideological nature of all elements of language and the dialogic structure of all language in use. Scollon and Wong Scollon (2004) make a similar case in their accounts of mediated discourse and nexus analysis.
- 2 Throughout the rest of the chapter, SITUATION DEFINITIONS are presented in ALL CAPS.
- 3 These categories are consistent with those of activity theory—activity, actions, and operations (Leont'ev, 1978), stemming from Vygotsky's work. They are also consistent with the lower-level activities, higher-level activities, and practices described in Norris' (2004) work.

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12 Mapping Modes in Children's Play and Design: An Action-oriented Approach to Critical Multimodal Analysis

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Amid the bustle of play activities in the housekeeping corner of one kindergarten classroom, Daniel empties the cabinet under the sink in the child-sized kitchen. He removes the white plastic tub that represents the sink and inspects the remaining square hole. Next, he grabs two forks, crawls inside the cabinet, and flips over on his back. Stretching out his legs, he begins to poke the undersides of the metal faucets with the once-forks-now-wrenches. "I'm fixing the sink!" he announced to Ayeesha who peers down at him through the hole in the countertop. Immediately, she picks up a nearby fork and reaches down through the sink opening to help him fix the imaginary pipes.

And so, a fork becomes a wrench. As children represent the world through their play, writing, drawing, and construction, they simply and flexibly use whatever "comes to hand" and seems apt for their particular message. Kress (2003) suggests that children as players and designers strategically emphasize salient features of objects to represent essential aspects of the surrounding reality: Daniel emphasized the lever function of a fork and exploited its potential as a stand-in for a wrench by simply using it to pry at the metal faucets, a transformation bolstered by his sink-fixing supine position and a strip of language, "I'm fixing the sink!" From this four-word utterance, a twisting gesture, and two legs poking out of a sink cabinet context, Ayeesha immediately recognized the fork as a wrench and took up her own fork/wrench without an explicit explanation. Ayeesha and Daniel along with Mitchell, Jack, and Stephen, whom you will meet later in this chapter, were students in a kindergarten classroom that I studied for one school year. In their classroom, I examined how the children's play and design¹ activity transformed materials in ways that shaped their classroom participation and peer power relations. While Ayeesha and Daniel used play to transform plastic forks for their imaginary plumbing scenario, other children used design to transform art materials into paper toys. Mitchell, Jack, and Stephen regularly sat together at the kindergarten art table where they experimented with new ways of handling tools such as scissors and tape and engaged in friendly competitions such as who was the best "draw-er" or who knew the "hardest" math facts. Multimodal

analysis of the boys' activity at the art table reveals how making a SpongeBob SquarePants puppet allowed Mitchell to demonstrate his status as a 6-year-old design expert to his tablemates.

Multimodal Analysis

Recently, the field of critical discourse studies has expanded to include "nonverbal (semiotic, multimodal, visual) aspects of interaction and communication" (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 2). Similarly, definitions of literacy have expanded to include embodied and visual ways of producing signs as multimodal literacies comprising physical actions with bodies, objects, and images that represent and interpret ideas (Kress, 1997; Siegel, 2006; Wohlwend, 2008). Van Leeuwen (2008) argues that actions are made meaningful and social through verbal language. Using a multimodal approach to critical discourse analysis, he analyzes texts and objects through grammars and linguistic structures to see how they represent social actors and their activity, particularly how represented actions, reactions, and interactions constitute power relations.

In this chapter I take a different tack, using multimodal analysis to understand how actions are made meaningful and social in situ rather than in representation, looking at interaction among modes, semiotic practices, and discourses in globalized contexts. I examine instances of classroom activity to see how modes shape children's literacy learning and participation in early childhood classrooms. Analyzing gaze as a mode reveals the meanings of the ways that students look at classroom materials and at each other, as well as the ways that they are surveilled by the teacher and by the researcher. Gaze turned upon people produces subjectivities, shared gaze among people produces social space, and a research gaze turns subjects into objects of inquiry. In this research, I drew upon the mode of gaze as a way of revealing which modes were most apparent in a classroom literacy event (e.g., gaze, print, and book-handling during a reading lesson) and how the foregrounding of particular modes enforced a set of power relations (teacher/student; reader/nonreader) legitimated by prevailing educational discourses.

Multimodal analysis involves isolating, examining, and explaining an aspect of lived experience to understand how actors exploit available semiotic resources to represent meanings, carry out social practices, and realize power relations.² Norris (2004) identifies a range of modes:

- auditory (e.g., speech, music, and sound-effect)
- visual (e.g., print, image, and gaze)
- action (e.g., gesture, posture, movement, facial expression, touch, and manipulation of objects including mediated actions with books, writing tools, or art materials)
- environmental (e.g., built environment including dress, layout [of things like furniture in a classroom or street signs at an intersection], proxemics [near/far relationships of bodies and things])

Multimodal analysis emerged as a move away from linguistic analyses that start with transcripts of speech or printed texts. This shift in focus offered fresh perspectives that included modes such as gesture or image, extending discourse studies in education that have primarily featured linguistic “methods of data collection and analysis that ‘strip away’ the multimodal features of contexts and practices. The question of how multimodal representational and communicational resources shape and reshape education does not arise or is not foregrounded” (Jewitt, 2006, p. 2). Multimodal analysis draws upon social semiotics to conduct critical readings that uncover power relations in the strategic arrangement of elements in images, artifacts, and texts. Moving beyond textual analysis, Norris (2004) offers methods for multimodal *interactional* analysis that capture and analyze the tangle of interrelated modal relationships within a segment of lived experience. Although this approach provides rich depiction of experience, it does not critically interrogate interactions for power relations and discourses. A *critical multimodal analysis* of interaction must examine how power circulates among the embodied actions and modal interactions within a moment of lived experience. A critical lens looks deeper and wider, beyond the here-and-now activity, to uncover who decides which actions and modes matter most in a particular event.

The critical multimodal analysis in this chapter considers how particular social practices foreground some modes over others and how this foregrounding reflects power relations; that is, certain modes “count” more than others when using a social practice that is valued in a particular context. For example, print literacy practices (reading, writing) are privileged in school settings and foreground visual modes (gaze, print) for accessing textual information through primarily paper media (Kress, 1997). In contrast, play practices (pretended pipe-fixing) foreground action modes (gesture, posture, movement, and manipulation of objects) while design practices (drawing, constructing) foreground visual modes (gaze, image) as well as action modes (handling objects such as paintbrushes, markers, scissors, and art materials).

Drawing upon studies in multimodality (Jewitt, 2006; Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996; Norris, 2004, 2006) and mediated action (Scollon, 2001; Scollon & Scollon, 2004), I use an activity model (Engeström, 1999; Leont’ev, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978) to coordinate three theories that support action-oriented multimodal analysis: social semiotics (Jewitt, 2006; Kress, 1997, 2003), mediated discourse (Norris & Jones, 2005; Scollon, 2001; Wertsch, 1991) and practice theory (Bourdieu, 1977). This critical multimodal analysis examines the sign-making and discursive positioning accomplished nonverbally as well as verbally, with particular attention to embodied action and handling of materials in classrooms. It blends social semiotics with activity theory (Jewitt, 2006) to provide a lens that interprets child-made products as signs motivated by available semiotic resources and that situates children’s sign-making within rules, roles, and power relations in learning communities and discourses of schooling. Signs are vestiges of the modes and mediated actions that produced them and reflect each designer’s habitus (Bourdieu,

1977), internalized dispositions and practices engrained in childhood. Thus, a mode- and action-oriented—rather than language-oriented—analysis examines learning as mediated, motivated, and situated activity.

Learning as Mediated, Motivated, and Situated Activity

In a multimodal view of education, learning mediates, and is mediated by, material resources and other social actors according to cultural practices and discursive histories. Learning produces, and is produced by, expanded repertoires of resources for sign-making and increased participation in classroom apprenticeships organized by shared expectations and histories. A multimodal perspective recognizes young children as designers who talk, act, and create texts, images, and artifacts as intentional messages and who make strategic use of available materials, social spaces, school cultures, and global discourses (Dyson, 2003; Kress, 1997, 2003; Rowe, 2008; Siegel, Kontovourki, Schmier, & Enriquez, 2008; Wohlwend, 2007). Of course, this multimodal perspective on early literacy is itself a discourse (Wohlwend, 2009a). From this perspective, literacies are diverse sets of interrelated semiotic practices for producing and interpreting texts (e.g., reading, writing, play, design) and learning is signaled by changes in participation that are valued and recognized according to prevailing discourses within a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Mediated Actions and Social Practices

In Vygotsky's (1935/1978) sociocultural orientation to learning, mediation is the key to guided participation and learning within apprenticeships (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1995). Mediation is literally action with media, or tools that make the meanings in the cultural and material world more accessible and comprehensible (Wertsch, 1991). In an apprenticeship model, children learn ways of "doing and being" (Gee, 1999) by collaborating with peers or teachers who help them interpret signs and symbols to represent meanings that make sense within the cultural context. Children learn by participating in semiotic practices (e.g., drawing, coloring, pretending) with physical instruments (e.g., pencil, markers, forks, puppets) and media (e.g., paper, toy sink, puppet stage) for crafting messages. The signs created by attaching shared meanings to these material objects are products of mediated actions. The term *mediated action* (Wertsch, 1991) recognizes that sign-making actions do not occur as isolated decontextualized behaviors, but rather as purposeful manipulation that meaningfully modifies materials and situations. Mediated actions make up *social practices*, categories of clustered mediated actions that have locally contextualized meanings (Scollon, 2001). For example, *loudly tapping a plastic fork* is a mediated action; whether it is interpreted as *making music*, *fixing the sink*, or *abusing classroom toys* depends upon which social practices are attached to the action, based upon the actor's intended meaning as well as the resources, rules, discourses, and roles that configure a local classroom community (Figure 12.1).

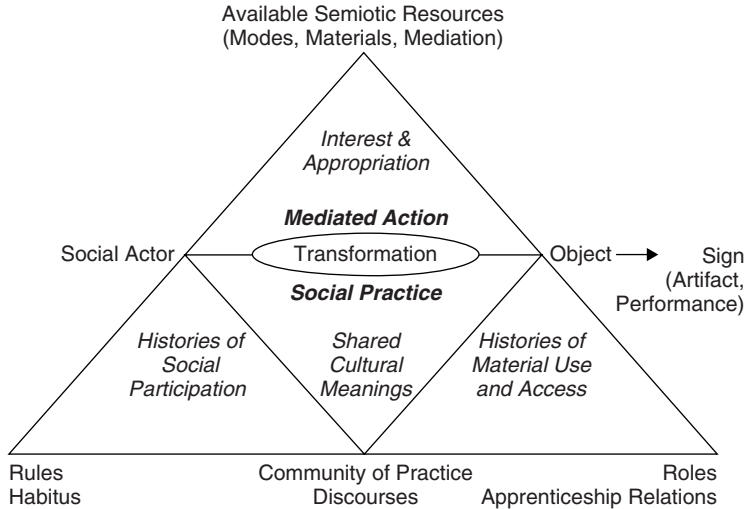


Figure 12.1 An Activity Model of Mediated Action and Social Practice

Motivated by Material Affordances and Designer Interest

The agency, economy, and materiality of playful design in the pipe-fixing pre-tense illustrates children's flexible approach to shared meaning-making, in and out of classroom events (Kress, 1997, 2003). The temporary and fluid nature of play allowed Daniel to pivot the fork's conventional function as eating utensil and recontextualize it to fit his changing purposes (Vygotsky, 1935/1978). Two forks turned into wrenches for loosening a pipe in this excerpt, but a few minutes later the forks were transformed again, this time into spatulas for flipping imaginary pancakes after the sink was fixed. "The real point about this voracious appetite for semiotic recycling is the child's ever-searching eye, guided by a precise sense of design, both for material and for shape" (Kress, 1997, p. 104). According to social semiotic theory (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress, 1997), signs are motivated by physical properties of the particular materials at hand; that is, the material properties of an object influence how well it will act as a signifier to best represent a signified meaning.

Signs are conveyed in (and through) modes. "Mode is used to refer to a regularised organised set of resources for meaning-making, including, image, gaze, gesture, movement, music, speech and sound-effect. Modes are broadly understood to be the effect of the work of culture in shaping material into resources for representation" (Kress, 2003, p. 1). Each mode and medium more aptly facilitates certain meanings over others by offering specific affordances. For example, drawing uses a visual mode and organizes space in a way that affords analytical classification or image displays that prompt "This is a . . ."

captioning. Talking uses verbal and auditory modes and organizes time in a way that affords sequential narratives of changing action over time (Kress, 2009). When a sign is conveyed through several modes, the combination of modes amplifies and complicates its meaning. Children, less accustomed than adults to cultural expectations for "proper" uses of materials, strategically combine modes to intensify meanings (Kress, 2003). For example, masking tape is often used by adults in schools for attaching materials to painted walls. But Mitchell discovered alternative ways to use masking tape, including sticking it to his hair to amuse his friends, while creating a SpongeBob paper sack puppet. Children extend the semantic potential of their designs by transduction, fast-paced blending of forms into the best available mode: cutting out drawings to create a two-dimensional shape or taping papers to construct three-dimensional toys (Kress, 1997).

In social semiotics, (Hodge & Kress, 1988), signs are motivated by the sign-maker's social interest as well as the immediate semiotic resources. In this case, the sign *wrench* was motivated by Daniel's interest in performing adult roles and in recruiting Ayesha to support his play scenario as well as the physical aptness of the fork's shape for imitating a wrench. Pahl and Rowsell (2007) argue that a designer's interest is also shaped by habitus (Bourdieu, 1977). More than a social purpose that guides the selection of semiotic resources, interest taps into a storehouse of histories of identities, practices, and dispositions that become sedimented into an artifact during its production. Pahl's ethnographic research analyzed children's artifacts for layers of identities, social practices, and dispositions learned at home and school. For one child, making a bird from tissue paper layered his knowledge of chickens on his family's farm in rural Turkey, a pet name that his mother had for him, a teacher's reading of *The Ugly Duckling*, and a prior bird-making craft activity at school. His handmade bird bore traces of these histories as well as the immediate practices used to fabricate the tissue paper craft. This reconceptualization of artifacts as identity texts recognizes children's designs—drawings, crafts, and art projects—as literacy objects that can be read as layered assemblages of meanings, modes, practices, histories, and discourses. For example, Daniel's fork-turned-wrench enhanced his immediate performance of plumbing pretense but also drew upon a "do-it-yourself" discourse and knowledge of pipe-fixing practices in his habitus developed through prior histories with adults engaged in household repairs.

Modes manifest interest when certain ways of combining voice, gaze, and handling objects are expected and tacitly valued in the designer's habitus. Examination of uses of particular modes in valued practices can reveal how combinations of actions, talk, gesture, etc. create naturalized ways of participating that automatically elicit cooperation of others (Scollon, 2001). In this case, posture, talk, and the mediated action of tapping on metal faucets with plastic forks prompted Ayesha to recognize this instance of socio-dramatic play as pretended sink repair and to join in the with a fork/wrench of her own.

Situated in Classroom Social Relationships and Global Discourses of Childhood

It is not enough to access, use, and exploit multimodal resources; it is also necessary to get one's performance and use of materials recognized as a valid way of belonging within discourses that shape classroom apprenticeships and school cultures. Discourses are socially expected patterns of "using language, other symbolic expressions, and 'artifacts,' of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member" in a global community (Gee, 1996, p. 131). Educational discourses in early childhood classrooms include skills mastery, developmentally appropriate practice, and in some classrooms, multimodality (Wohlwend, 2009a). The discourses and practices associated with *skills mastery* (NCLB, 2002) stress the necessity of meeting skill benchmarks and standardized testing targets. The discourses and practices associated with *developmentally appropriate practice* (c.f., Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) stress children's need for exploration and learner-directed curricula. The discourses and practices associated with multimodal approaches to learning (Kress, 2003) stress emerging technologies and learner strategic design (Table 12.1).

Of course, these discursive perspectives overlap and blur in lived classrooms where administrative mandates focus on skills mastery, early childhood teachers advocate for developmentally appropriate practice, and children bring popular media to school in SpongeBob backpacks. Conflicting and competing discourses can also produce tensions at the classroom level such as tensions between developmentally appropriate and skills mastery perspectives. Early childhood professional organizations circulate developmentally appropriate discourses and practices through teacher education literature that promotes an active, play-based, child-centered curriculum (Paley, 2004). Early childhood teachers are expected to nurture the whole child—intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially—by providing plentiful opportunities to play in a stimulating environment that prompts children to engage in exploration. In contrast, federal and state governments circulate skills mastery discourses and practices through accountability mandates, achievement benchmarks, and annual standardized testing (Albright & Luke, 2008). However, this approach exemplifies developmentally "inappropriate practice" (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 72), a term used to critique lessons that push young children prematurely into the paper-and-pencil seatwork of formal schooling.

Each educational perspective favors particular modes for sign-making. The modes that are privileged in curricular activity serve as tangible markers that reveal the educational discourses circulating in a particular classroom. For example, a skills mastery perspective privileges print media and verbal modes (e.g., naming letters in flashcard drills, filling in math equation worksheets). The model of developmentally appropriate practice privileges action modes (e.g., focusing on the processes of play and exploration in dabbing paint on paper rather than the finished painting). A multimodal perspective on young

Table 12.1 A Few Educational Perspectives on Early Childhood Learning

<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Discourses and How They Circulate</i>	<i>Practices that Count as Learning</i>	<i>Valued Modes</i>
Skills Mastery	Circulated through government mandates for accountability and standardization that require demonstrations of skill competency and displays of content knowledge	Remembering and reproducing correct responses on standardized tests and school tasks to meet benchmarks and rubric criteria	Print
Developmental	Circulated through developmentally appropriate models that value learner-directed exploration and children's intention to create social messages	Repeated hypothesizing in a natural progression toward conventional forms	Action
Multimodal	Circulated through social semiotics view of sign-making as motivated by the aptness of available resources and the child's social interest	Reading and producing signs that strategically combine varied modes in multimedia: drawings, music, play, popular media, and digital forms	Interacting multiple modes: image, print, sound, action, etc.

children's learning privileges multimedia and visual and action modes (e.g., art projects, play performances, computer interaction). In this way, multimodal signs are situated in tensions among multiple discourses associated with their constituent modes.

The conflation and intersection of Discourses become modalities in texts, which, alongside practices, provide a formative picture of the meaning makers—not only their pathway into literacy but also how they make meaning in certain contexts and engage in practice.

(Pahl & Rowsell, 2007, p. 392)

In the kindergarten in this chapter, children's multimodal activity drew from, and was interpreted according to, educational discourses that made particular modes and media available and determined whether multimodal interaction constituted valued school practices.

Methods for Analyzing Multimodal Interaction

During three school years, I observed, photographed, and analyzed the physical environment and play activity in eight classrooms in three schools that were recommended by knowledgeable informants (principals, professors, teacher

mentors). I conducted pilot studies in two of the kindergarten classrooms to develop a sense of each teacher's learning environment, to strengthen my ability to conduct fieldwork in these sites, and to work through technological issues in video- and audio-recording. I conducted preliminary critical discourse analysis to explore interpretations of children's work and play by having teachers view, categorize, and discuss videotaped instances of classroom activity. Next, I returned to this set of data and compared these kindergarten classrooms to generate specific criteria and identify one classroom for more intensive study. I analyzed the ethnographic data using classroom environment surveys (Loughlin & Martin, 1987; Wolfersberger, Reutzell, Sudweeks, & Fawson, 2004) to examine the physical products, tools, and material objects actually used by the children in the selected classrooms, looking particularly for evidence of child-directed design and play.

After locating a play-rich site, I visited the selected classroom approximately once a week during the school year. The kindergarten with one teacher and 18 students was located in a K-6 public school in a university community in a rural midwestern state. Visits lasted from 2 to 3 hours, primarily during the mornings during play-integrated periods. The 5- and 6-year-old children in this class read, wrote, drew, colored, cut, pasted, and played throughout the morning-long literacy block. Following shared reading of big books and poetry charts, children worked on self-selected projects during three consecutive 45-minute activity periods—literacy choices, writers' workshop, and choice time centers—separated by short class meetings to share projects and, always, to listen to a story.

While Daniel and Ayesha most often chose to play school in the class meeting area or enact family scenes in the housekeeping corner, another group of children chose to draw pictures and construct paper toys or projects at the art table. Mitchell, Jack, Stephen, and four other boys regularly chose to sit together to "make stuff", creating two-dimensional images of sports events, team logos, and popular culture characters and three-dimensional objects by folding, cutting, and gluing paper, cardboard, fabric scraps, yarn, and a variety of recycled materials. All the boys in this group were blonde, wore T-shirts in the local university's colors, played soccer together at recess, and talked about team sports as they coached each other on art projects. I coded this group as "Just Guys" because they often denied that the puppets, paper airplanes, or light sabers that they produced held a particular meaning, characterizing their products as "just a design" and their practices as "just drawin' somethin'" or "just playin' around." However, as the multimodal analysis in the next section suggests, the boys did more than "play around": their play and design replaced teacher mediation with exploratory play and peer competition, created a school-sanctioned space for engaging popular media, and maintained a hierarchy of design mentoring relationships among the boys in this play group.³ When Just Guys did attach meanings to their creations, they often drew favorite popular culture characters such as Ninja Turtles, Spiderman, Darth Vader, or SpongeBob SquarePants as they coached each other on art projects.

Data Collection

Analysis of multimodal interaction required copious data collection using video technology supplemented by ethnographic methods and multiple filters to locate key instances of play and design for microanalysis (for a discussion of video data collection for multimodal analysis, see Jewitt, 2006). As a participant-observer, I observed and videotaped children as they played, participating in projects as necessary in a classroom where children looked to adults for help. I documented my observations through a mix of data sources including fieldnotes, digital photographs, audiotapes, videotapes, classroom maps, and lists of the constantly changing collection of children's books and print on the walls of the classroom. I also consulted my collection of teacher/researcher emails, parent newsletters, and notes from informal interviews with the classroom teacher. A digital research portfolio housed data from all these sources along with organizational spreadsheets that cataloged data and documented analysis decisions and coding revisions. This electronic portfolio consisted of folders of electronic data, diagrams of coding schemes, expanded fieldnotes, an audio research journal, and coding reports and spreadsheets. The computerized nature of this portfolio also provided a mechanism for organizing digital data from the study such as audio files of children at play and JPEG photographs of student work that I photographed and immediately returned to the children. One spreadsheet chronicled coding progress and evolution, creating a record of the rationale behind each coding revision, tracking choices I had made that affected patterns in the analysis and making my assumptions visible and traceable. An overarching organizational spreadsheet in the portfolio cataloged data sources as well as data summaries for each session. The research portfolio became the place to deposit emerging theories, to look up previous interpretations, and to question assumptions against developing data patterns.

Data Analysis

Issues of Transcription

One of the challenges in multimodal analysis is recording the variety of modes that can interact within a single event, including auditory modes (spoken language, music), visual modes (gaze, print, image), action modes (posture, facial expression, object handling, gesture, touch) and environmental modes (proxemics [near/far relationships], layout). Researchers have responded to this challenge in a variety of ways, including action-enhanced transcripts and timelines (Ochs, 1999; Nelson, Hull, & Roche-Smith, 2008) and speech- and action-enhanced images (Norris, 2004).

Action-Enhanced Transcripts

Discourse analysts have developed a variety of transcription formats to include action and context (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2004).

One approach uses a matrix in which each row represents a turn of talk, with description of action and context in the first column followed by transcribed speech in the second column (Ochs, 1999). Another approach captures video data using a timeline format similar to film-editing software with separate synchronous strips for different modes: one strip contains still video images (frames) captured at specified intervals, one strip contains transcribed audio for each frame, and another strip contains pertinent information from transcribed interviews with participants (Nelson, Hull, & Roche-Smith, 2008, p. 428). Frame interval transcription chunks activity into slices of uniform time slots that correspond with utterances (transcribed turns of talk) represented by freeze frames of video. A video is a representation of both time and space (Kress, 2009): a linear text that can be examined as a sequence of frames with spatially related actors and objects. Each frame depicts a slice of time-space and changes in spatial position across frames produce (a representation of) action. Matrix and frame interval transcription enables linear sequential readings in action-enhanced formats that mimic the linearity of spoken language, supporting analysis that assumes action and space are made meaningful and social through verbal language.

Speech- and Action-Enhanced Images

However, spatial relationships, action and environmental modes do not map neatly onto utterances or time interval segments. Norris (2004) addresses this issue by representing activity through a multiple frame image that captures changes in actions or posture with transcribed speech flowing across frames and movement, posture, and gesture depicted through directional arrows. This method privileges movement across spatial arrangements over changes in verbal sequences, reflecting an analytic assumption that meanings are also communicated spatially by proximity, direction, and relationships between actors, objects, and nonverbal modes.

Mapping Modal Relationships

I argue that analytic tools that use linear transcription formats privilege temporality and are based on a logic of change over time that underlies a view of sequential orderly learning. This chapter explores alternative formats that privilege spatiality, mapping the interplay of semiotic resources within social spaces to support a view of learning as complex coordination of repertoires of semiotic resources and participatory relationships. Semiotic resources and participatory relationships can be mapped by examining how modes segment spaces (boundaries), vary in visibility (perspectives, foregrounding and backgrounding), and interact as modal density (complexity and intensity) (Norris, 2004; Scollon, 2001, Scollon & Scollon, 2003; Wohlwend, 2009b). Analysis of interaction among modes uncovers the ways that social interactions unfold in a nonlinear fashion, involving complex and simultaneous coordination. Even

in practices where a particular mode dominates, backgrounded modes produce resonances and tensions with the foregrounded mode in ways that complicate seemingly straightforward interactions. "Instead of viewing social actors as performing one-thing-at-a-time, this framework demonstrates that individuals perform many [mediated] actions simultaneously by attending to them to different degrees" (Norris, 2006, p. 402).

Mapping the interplay of modes uncovers power relations and social effects visible at the level of modes. Modal density explains how the relationships among modes produce social effects through modal intensity or complexity (Norris, 2004). A mode has modal intensity when it is highly foregrounded in an event (e.g., the mode of speech when pretending to talk on the telephone in the play kitchen). Modal complexity occurs when a mode is intricately intertwined with other modes (e.g., talking to a friend while lying inside a kitchen cabinet and tapping on a faucet with a fork when pretending to fix the sink requires coordinating multiple verbal, action, and visual modes). Norris (2006) closely examines events to determine modal density, suggesting that practices that are modally dense are more socially relevant because they require actors to coordinate resources and attention while carrying out an activity. In this chapter, I adapt Norris' transcription methods and concept of modal density to critically examine power relations constructed through children's manipulation of modes in the process of designing a paper sack puppet. In the following excerpt, Mitchell draws and colors with markers and cuts strips of tape to construct a SpongeBob hand puppet. This puppet-making activity required Mitchell to coordinate multiple modes; the mode of object handling was especially dense with multiple mediated actions (drawing, coloring, cutting, affixing) with varied media (paper, markers, scissors, masking tape). As Mitchell made a SpongeBob paper puppet, he exercised his own social interest in drawing a favorite media character while dodging school expectations for written work. Multimodal analysis of the vignette shows how Mitchell juggled multiple modes to produce the puppet but also to navigate tensions among schooling discourses and to cordon off social space for his popular culture interests.

Constructing Space and SpongeBob

Mitchell, Stephen, and Jack are seated at their favorite spots at the art table, which is almost completely covered with papers that spill out of Mitchell's writing folder. A large makeshift screen, improvised from a cardboard shadow puppet theater, blocks off the end of the table to Mitchell's right. Stephen sits behind this screen, completing letter recognition tasks under the watchful eye of Mrs. Hansen, the teacher's aide who monitors and assists him. The screen and individual aide are new additions to the art table: accommodations prescribed by a resource teacher to reduce distractions and keep Stephen "on task." The three boys are accustomed to helping each other design and construct their art projects and, from time to time, Stephen and Mitchell peek around the screen to comment on each other's work. Jack, who sits across the

table from Mitchell, carefully fills a blank sheet of paper with columns of addition equations, but stops now and then to comment on the SpongeBob puppet that Mitchell is making.

Mitchell positions a pair of scissors in one hand, using his chest to steady the scissors as he puts his fingers in the grips. Cradling a roll of masking tape under his arm, he takes his fingers out of the grips of the scissors and uses both hands to open the blades with a jerk. Mitchell repositions his fingers in the scissors, unwinds about 5 inches of tape, clips off a 3-inch piece of tape, and sets the scissors on the table. The tape curls and twists back on itself and Mitchell cannot straighten out the tape strip. Mitchell attaches a sticky-side-out tape loop to the left top corner of the paper on the table in front of him, flattening it down with his fingers.

This was the first of nine cutting actions as Mitchell tried out multiple techniques for clipping off strips of masking tape in the process of constructing a SpongeBob sack puppet. Mitchell spent 15 minutes cutting and affixing strips of tape, as he experimented to discover the properties of adhesive materials while creating a SpongeBob “practice puppet—just for fun,” which he characterized as a test case for a real puppet that he might make at some future time. Before he finished his practice puppet, Mitchell tried out multiple techniques for cutting tape strips as he developed his ability to operate tape and scissors. He also experimented with the material affordances of masking tape: he discovered its water-resistance, which protected the paper from the red water-based marker, and its ability to adhere well to various surfaces, including his own hair.

Not surprisingly, handling scissors was the most prominent action in Mitchell’s puppet design activity; cutting strips of tape by manipulating the scissors and masking tape roll took most of Mitchell’s time and attention (Figure 12.2 and Table 12.2). The dominance of cutting actions produced modal intensity, demonstrating the importance that Mitchell attached to this activity, albeit his claim that he was just “playing around”.

The entire episode lasted 14 minutes and 5 seconds, beginning at 11:26:38 in the first frame in Figure 12.3 and ending at 11:40:43 in the last frame in Figure 12.3. Cutting tape took 6 minutes and 55 seconds, or 49% of the total time; drawing took 18%; coloring took 17%; smudging took 5%; and peeling tape took 9% (Table 12.3). Although cutting consumed the most time, it was not the only mediated action in Mitchell’s handling of objects. Making the puppet required coordination of multiple mediated actions with many art tools: sticking, smoothing, and peeling tape; drawing, coloring, and smudging with markers on paper (Figure 12.3).

Mapping Modal Density

Close examination shows that object handling was most relevant in this activity. The modal intensity of this mode in the puppet-making activity increased

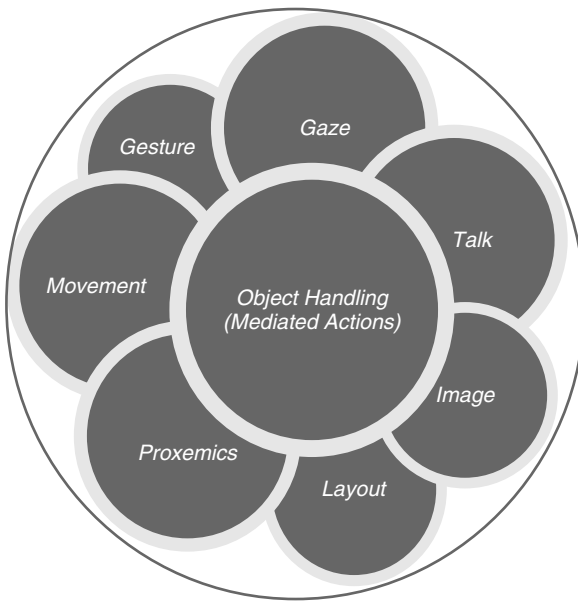


Figure 12.2 Modal Density: Object Handling as Dominant Mediate Action

Table 12.2 Description of Cutting Mediated Actions in Context

<i>Mediated Action</i>	<i>Description of Action in Context</i>
Cut 1 (Top left image in Fig. 1)	Mitchell unwinds about 5 inches of tape and clips off a 3-inch piece of tape, and sets the scissors on the table. The tape curls and twists back on itself and Mitchell cannot straighten out the tape strip. Mitchell attaches a sticky-side-out tape loop to the left top corner of the paper on the table in front of him, flattening it down with his fingers.
Cut 2	Mitchell turns the wheel of tape, finds the end, and peels back another 3-inch strip of tape. This time, Mitchell cuts the tape strip close to place where the tape leaves the roll. Mitchell attaches the tape sticky-side-down to his paper below the tape loop and smooths the piece of tape with his hands so that it lies flat on the paper.
Cut 3	Mitchell unrolls another strip of tape, this time placing the tape roll between his knees to steady the tape as he pulls back a 2-inch strip and clips it off, but it twists and sticks to the scissors.
Cut 4	Mitchell uses his newly invented method of holding the tape roll between his knees to cut another piece of tape. This time he pins down the tape with his thumb so that it doesn't tangle. Holding the scissors in his right hand, Mitchell pulls tape away from roll with his left hand. He suspends the roll by the strip of tape. Mitchell lifts the tape and tries to cut the tape with the scissor blades perpendicular to the tape edges but the blades of the scissors pinch the sticky edges of the tape together. Mitchell pulls the scissors back so that the edges unstick, causing the tape roll to twist back and forth. Mitchell stands

- up and holds the tape edge in one hand with the tape roll hanging free. He cuts the tape but this time, positions the blades parallel to the tape surface, allowing a clean cut. The tape roll drops upright on the table with a plop. Mitchell smiles and sings a wordless tune, the *Star Wars* theme, “ERRerr- err-err-ERRRRRR-err. ERR-err-err-ERRRRRR-err,” as he smooths the final piece of tape on the paper, attaching a second column of tape to his paper.
- Attempted Cut 5 Mitchell picks up the tape again and unwinds the longest piece of tape yet, about 7 inches. The end of the tape immediately curls back upon itself and Mitchell tries to untangle it. He announces, “I always draw. Even I play on my computer.” Mitchell holds up tape and watches as the roll swings and twirls. He bends his head forward against the exposed sticky side of the tape strip. The tape adheres to his hair from his crown to his hairline. The tape roll bounces against his forehead and Mitchell smiles. He picks up the scissors to cut the tape against his forehead, changes his mind and begins pulling off the tape. The tape pulls at his hair as he removes it. “Ow. Ow, ow, ow, ow, ow.”
- Cut 6 Pulling the tape completely free, Mitchell sits up, glances at the nearby teacher associate, looks at me and grins, “A::h-ow::::.” Still holding the scissors, Mitchell inspects the tape strip that he just pulled off his hair. He explains, “I wanted it to do that. ‘Cause you know why? I wanted to get a scissors rip.” Mitchell puts the tape close to his head speculatively, “Hey, I need to do that again.” Mitchell wraps the tape around his wrist. It sticks tightly and the remaining tape strip and tape roll dangle from his arm. Mitchell tugs on the roll. “Now I’ll do it on my arm. It doesn’t even hurt.” The tape pops free and Mitchell holds the roll in his hand. “Ya know that, why?” Mitchell attaches the tape to the table edge; now the teacher associate steadies the roll of tap as he clips off a short piece of tape. Next, Mitchell takes a 4-inch piece of tape and attaches one end to the left column of tape on his paper. He repositions it several times before smoothing it on top of the existing column. “I’m gonna see—Aw:::::.”
- Cut 7 He clips another strip of tape by resting the roll vertically on the table, holding the tape strip in one hand and cutting with the other. Mitchell attaches the strip of tape horizontally across the two columns, creating an “H” out of masking tape.
- Cut 8 Mitchell picks up the tape roll and wedges it between his chest and the table ledge. He pulls out an inch of tape and sticks it to the back of his left hand which rests on the top of the roll of tape. He holds the scissors in his right hand. “I’m putting it on my lit-tle hand.” He positions his right hand in the scissors, then removes his hand to use both hands to open the blades. He tries cutting at a perpendicular angle again but stops short before he closes the scissor blades.
- Cut 9 Mitchell picks up the tape roll by the leading tape strip. Holding it above the table, he cuts at an angle parallel to the tape surface and snips off the tape, letting the tape roll fall to the table. “Cut! Phew!”
-

Table 12.3 Description of Various Mediated Actions in Context in Puppet Construction

<i>Mediated Action</i>	<i>Description of Action in Context</i>
Drawing	Having finished cutting the tape, Mitchell concentrates on drawing eyes and a mouth on the puppet.
Coloring	Mitchell colors SpongeBob with a yellow watercolor marker and then experiments, using a red watercolor marker to cover the tape's water-resistant surface.
Smudging	Mitchell drags an index finger across the wet watercolor, and inspects the pinkish smudge that results. Mitchell continues to smudge the tape until the entire surface of the tape is pink instead of red. "I'm just playing around. I'm just pre- I'm just play, playing around so, so I could draw SpongeBob."
Peeling	Mitchell discovers the masking function of the tape as he peels a corner of the tape away from the puppet leaving a white space where the reddish tape had been. He continues to peel off tape, holding the puppet down with his left hand while peeling with his right. A passing child asks, "Why you ripping that off?" "Because, so, so I will want to know what it looks like. Who:::a. I [xxx] go looking 'at good. Hey!"
Sticking	As flickering lights signal cleanup, Mitchell shakes tape off his finger onto the table. "Get here. Ack." He peels the last piece off the puppet but it catches the edge of the paper and starts to rip the paper. Short on time, he decides to stop, leaving the last piece of tape on the top right corner still attached. "That's ok. I'll just leave it."



Figure 12.3 Modal Complexity: Coordinating Various Mediated Actions to Make a Puppet

as Mitchell attended closely to managing scissors as he learned to cut and place the sticky tape. Mitchell's coordination of multiple mediated actions created modal complexity as his mediated actions interacted with other modes such as gaze, speech, movement, and posture: as Mitchell gazed at his drawing of the SpongeBob image, he chatted with others, moved around the table to get materials, and changed posture as he stood up, bent over to pick up the tape, and leaned back in his chair.

Figure 12.2 shows a mapping of modes within the production of the SpongeBob puppet. The number of overlapping circles indicates the modal complexity of the event, and the size of an individual circle represents each mode's modal intensity. The large size and central placement of the action mode of object handling indicates its high modal intensity and its foregrounding during puppet construction; in other words, Mitchell's attention was highly focused on cutting masking tape. The large number of circles surrounding the object handling mode indicates the modal complexity of this event: Mitchell coordinated multiple modes as he combined practices: making an artifact, gazing at the puppet-in-progress, maintaining close proximity to other people at the table, navigating the layout of built environment to find more art supplies, changing his posture by standing and sitting at the table, and talking—all the while coordinating the mediated actions of cutting, coloring, and affixing tape. Each mode will be considered briefly in this section, followed by a closer look that coordinates multiple modes in the next section.

Image/Artifact

The character that Mitchell chose for his puppet was SpongeBob SquarePants, a popular character with the Just Guys group and the main character on an animated television program that airs on the Nickelodeon cable network. The program features anomalies in the underwater adventures of SpongeBob, a cheerful, energetic sea sponge (who has the bright color and boxy shape of a yellow kitchen sponge). Mitchell exploited the rectangular shape of the paper bag puppet by coloring to the edge, pressing hard on a fresh marker to create a saturated yellow color (Figure 12.4). When Jack pointed out (twice) that SpongeBob's spots should be green, Mitchell ignored him and continued to color black dots on the yellow sponge. He colored the H-shaped masking tape suspenders red, dressing the character to represent a worker's overalls (varied occupational garb is a typical motif in SpongeBob licensed merchandise). But later, he peeled almost all the tape off, fascinated by the masking property of the tape.

Proxemics, Posture, Movement, Gesture, and Layout of Built Environment

Positioning of children, materials, and physical space influenced the children's interaction and reflected peer relationships and educational discourses. Jack worked on math problems as he sat across from Mitchell at the art table, and the boys maintained close proximity. Although the boys worked separately on unrelated projects, their history of collaborative mediation and their proximity allowed peer critique and mentoring. Proximity enabled shared gaze and talk, gesturing to each other's work, and created a bounded social space that limited access to their boys-only play group. Consistent with a developmentally appropriate perspective on early childhood education, children chose where to sit, decided which materials to use, and moved freely around the room. Mitchell stood as much as he sat, moving around the table, and around the room, getting



Figure 12.4 Mitchell's Finished SpongeBob puppet

paper and markers. Consistent with a multimodal approach to learning, the table's location next to the paper shelf allowed easy access to a rich supply of art materials including bins of markers, tapes, scissors, and papers. Free access to plentiful supplies manifested learner agency in both educational discourses.⁴ Most prominent in the physical layout, however, was the cardboard screen that isolated Stephen. The screen, combined with the close proximity and gaze of a supervising adult, concretized the practices associated with a skills mastery perspective by enforcing "on-task behavior": disrupting his proximity to other children at the table with the goal of limiting his gaze and talk and directing his attention to letter recognition skills tasks.

Gaze

Mitchell and Jack primarily focused on their own papers, but when they occasionally glanced at each other's project, they evaluated its quality. For example, Jack looked critically at Mitchell's puppet for its accuracy in depicting the correct colors of the SpongeBob character. Mitchell also showed his completed puppet to Mrs. Hansen, and she watched him cut the tape strips. The screen prevented Stephen from gazing at others' work and thus decreased his opportunities for collaboration and peer mediation. Despite this visual barrier, Mitchell did look behind the screen to coach Stephen on identifying the letter G (by singing the alphabet and stopping on the letter G). Stephen also stepped out from behind the screen once to comment on Mitchell's puppet.

It is important to note that my perspective as researcher determined the camera's perspective and the research gaze: where I aimed my camera created a frame of activity with a particular point of view and a foregrounded segment of space. Mitchell's gaze as subject is foregrounded here as a window into what he knows but it is my backgrounded gaze as the researcher that produces a knowable subject (Foucault, 1995).

Talk and Singing

As noted in the previous sections, collaborative talk and singing accompanied Mitchell's puppet-making. Using the phrase "just for practice," Mitchell created a space to explicitly "play around" and explore design tools as he created a practice puppet. The phrase "just for practice" suggests an aimlessness that protected his space from instructional oversight by nearby adults (teacher associate, researcher). An artifact created for practice is disposable, risk-free, and invites experimentation with techniques. Even so, Jack critiqued Mitchell's rendering of SpongeBob. The following instance was typical of the tension in Just Guys' competitive project critique and cooperative peer scaffolding.

JACK [looking at Mitchell's paper bag covered with masking tape H]: That doesn't look like SpongeBob. He has green dots.

MITCHELL: [singing as he begins drawing SpongeBob's eyes] SpooongeeBob.

JACK [louder]: He has green dots.

MITCHELL: Black to me. [while searching through basket for black marker]

JACK: Hey, did you know $30 + 20$? 20 minus 10 is 10 . Get it? 10 plus 10 is 20 . If you take away 10 , 10 . Get it?

MITCHELL: If you take away 10 , and then there will be 10 !

JACK: It's funny, isn't it?

MITCHELL: If you did a 10 , then there will be 10 . [slapping hand with marker for emphasis.] Get it?

JACK: Now, I got it.

This snippet of talk links to larger patterns of competition and cooperation among boys in this group. The Just Guys' ongoing peer coaching strengthened their group cohesion by acting and talking a space into being; that is, by discursively creating a place in the classroom for playing and designing their own projects. Jack's critique, "That doesn't look like SpongeBob. He has green dots," was typical of the evaluative comparisons the boys made in informal competition to determine who was "best draw-er." Mitchell's response, "Black to me," asserted his authority as designer to alter the color. Mitchell maintained his status as an expert designer among this group of boys by demonstrations of his skill with tools and claims of original designs ("I comed at this idea myself"). However, as this conversation reveals, their talk also supported Jack's writing of addition problems, allowed both boys to voice their emerging expertise with two-digit addition, and furthered the goals consistent with a skills mastery

perspective in the midst of activity closely aligned with multimodal and developmental perspectives. Clearly, Mitchell and Jack were interested in getting recognized as good students as well as good designers.

Linking Modal Density to Semiotic Repertoires and Discursive Participation

Semiotic Repertoires Layered in a SpongeBob Puppet

Mitchell expanded his repertoire of semiotic resources as he manipulated modes and honed his design practices to make this puppet. The SpongeBob puppet was a modally dense artifact that acted as a durable text that represented the character's meanings (Brandt & Clinton, 2002) but it also concretized modes associated with Mitchell's design practices. Modal layers in the puppet sedimented verbal histories (remembered and invented storylines and dialogue for the SpongeBob character), its tactile and visual properties (smooth paper, bright colors, hand-sized structure), its past and future tool uses (prior designed use as a paper sack transformed into potential use as a hand puppet, realized uses of tape, scissors, and markers), mediated actions (object handling that increased Mitchell's cutting and taping knowledge and skill development), and its designer's social interest (making a "practice" puppet that enabled a temporary, transitional, "not real" state that legitimated playing around). The sedimented modes and the quality of the artifact's design provided tangible evidence of Mitchell's design skill that turned a paper puppet into a concrete marker of his identity as a master designer among the Just Guys. The layers in the puppet marked Mitchell's identity as an innovator and explorer, as a master kindergarten designer with advanced cutting and taping skills, as a peer mentor who would teach these skills to other kindergartners, as a fan of a cartoon series that features humor and parody of adults, and as a SpongeBob character animator and puppeteer. In more ways than one, it was a sign of his learning (Kress, this volume).

Participation in Classroom Apprenticeships and Discourses of Schooling

In this classroom context, social positions reflected a hierarchy of power relations based on the children's relative design and academic skills within the classroom apprenticeship and within peer culture. In the classroom, design skills constituted cultural capital valued in kindergarten curricula and school habitus as evidence of fine motor skills, neatly crafted products, and an ability to work independently. Among Just Guys, Mitchell occupied a position as an innovative designer and an active mentor who often helped other boys copy one of his designs; in contrast, Jack was a competent designer who usually worked alone and critiqued but rarely coached other children. Whether Just Guys created or copied designs, they used design practices for social purposes, developing and honing skills in order to compete and be recognized as group

members. Due to school-mandated structures like the visual screen, Stephen had far fewer opportunities to develop design skills, limiting his participation in the Just Guys group. Indeed, the accommodations intended to help him to master skills curb his development of a more robust semiotic repertoire and his access to peer coaching.

In this kindergarten, developmental and multimodal perspectives ensured that playful exploration was valued and encouraged; however, in many time-crunched classrooms where skill mastery discourse dominates in this standards-driven era, playing around with design is discouraged or penalized as off-task behavior. In such classrooms, play and design only occur in the cracks and crevices of the daily schedule, outside teacher surveillance. When one discourse overwhelms others, critical multimodal analysis can reveal who is disadvantaged and how this is accomplished through a gesture, a look, or the arrangement of furniture. A reconceptualization of learning as expansion of semiotic repertoires and discursive participation recognizes that children engage complicated mixes of meanings, modes, and practices through ordinary classroom materials and projects—even those created just for practice. Learning repertoires—including play and design practices—flexibly employ semiotic resources for their cultural meanings, physical properties, and design affordances to represent ideas but also to negotiate overlapping educational discourses and navigate classroom social spaces. Whether played or designed, the complexity of children's interactions with plastic forks, paper sack puppets, and other multimodal texts suggests the need for multimodal analysis that closely examines artifacts in their sites of production and interpretation in order to read these sites for their layered assemblages of meanings, modes, practices, histories, and discourses.

The critical multimodal analysis described in this chapter offers a way to focus on particular aspects of the seemingly aimless and often chaotic activity of children's play and tease out discourses circulating in the background. This action-oriented approach to multimodal analysis differs from other approaches in three ways: 1) Many forms of social semiotic multimodal analysis focus on readings of images and artifacts for strategic uses of modes; critical multimodal analysis focuses on the unfolding of interactions in contexts. This is especially helpful when studying young children's play that is fleeting and gestural or their designs that fluidly morph from one idea to the next. 2) Some social semiotic analyses focus primarily on one mode in terms of its modal grammars (e.g., reading images in terms of visual grammar and the layout of design elements); critical multimodal analysis focuses on multiple modes and the ways they interact to produce tensions, blurrings, and resonances. Early childhood classrooms are often busy, noisy, and wonderfully messy sites of modal interaction. 3) Finally, some forms of interactional analysis unpack modes to provide rich descriptions of communicative practices; critical multimodal analysis unpacks modes to reveal how modal interaction maps onto discursively maintained power relations. In this way, tacit power relations that shape daily classroom activity are made visible and available for deconstruction.

Critical multimodal analysis of the modes in the SpongeBob episode revealed the ways that power relations and discourses kept Mitchell at the center and Stephen at the periphery of the classroom community. Mitchell was able to negotiate tensions between multimodal and developmental perspectives that enabled his design exploration and a skills mastery perspective that kept Stephen "on task" but prevented collaboration with the other boys. These tensions between educational discourses in early childhood classrooms are long-standing and deeply ingrained. Early childhood teachers find themselves squeezed "between a rock and a hard place" (Goldstein, 1997) when their efforts to encourage multimodal learning in developmentally appropriate ways conflict with administrative mandates for scripted lessons, skills benchmarks, and testing targets. Faced with these dilemmas, teachers often feel personally responsible and question their own teaching ability rather than turning the lens back to question which institutions and groups benefit by competing educational discourses and practices. Elsewhere, I have argued that such dilemmas signal critical sites for teacher choice and agency that afford strategic shifts toward resistance and critique (Wohlwend, 2009a). A clear understanding of tensions across multiple perspectives could help teachers to see discourses as resources and to act strategically with greater awareness. Critical multimodal analysis provides a way for early childhood teachers to see how the tangible everyday aspects of familiar classroom activity matter; how playing plumber in the housekeeping corner or cutting tape for a paper sack puppet link to discourses and power relations that operate in the background; and how making small changes in the arrangement of furniture, in the availability of modes and media, and in daily classroom interactions could make a big difference in children's opportunities to learn.

Notes

- 1 For the purposes of teasing out practices and supporting mediated actions for close analysis in this study, I used the term *design* to refer to practices that produce images and artifacts and the term *writing* to refer to practices that produce printed or hand-written text. However, in lived lives, the boundaries are blurred as texts, images, and artifacts all constitute multimodal texts. I also intend my use of the term *design* to be consistent with social semiotic definitions (Kress, 1997; New London Group, 1996) in which (D)esign refers to planful action that appropriates conventions and reconfigures power relations.
- 2 It is important to remember that although modes are useful heuristics, lived experience is inextricably multimodal (Norris, 2004) and messy in ways that analysis and discourse can only approximate. Modes are grouped loosely here to suggest a range of experience but modes are not discrete units. Rather, they overlap multiple categories. In Norris's scheme, print is a "disembodied" mode that could be categorized as an environmental mode and also as a visual one.
- 3 The boys' design cooperation and competition also produced gender exclusion and peer group cohesion. A discussion that situates this group in gender and sports fan discourses is the focus of another article (Wohlwend, 2008).
- 4 This analysis focuses on three educational discourses, overlooking the multiple discourses that circulate in any given place. For example, the plentiful and easily

accessible supplies also convey an expectation to liberally consume material goods consistent with discourses of neoliberal consumerism. Further, the boys-only group drew upon discourses of masculinity and gendered models of sports fandom that played out in tensions between competition and cooperation as well as inclusive and exclusive peer group relations (See Wohlwend, 2008).

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13 The Discourses of Education Management Organizations: A Political Design

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Introduction

Ten years ago, *Business Week* dedicated its February 10, 2000, issue to “For Profit Schools” with reports from Massachusetts, Michigan, Philadelphia, and Arizona (Symonds, 2000; Symonds, Palmer, Lindorff, & McCann, 2000). An article in *Business Week* affirmed: “The advent of the knowledge economy, combined with mounting dissatisfaction with the dismal state of many public schools, is creating vast openings for for-profit companies” (Symonds, 2000, p. 35). *Business Week*’s focus on the business of education foreshadowed the growing trend of privatizing public education through allocating public resources to private markets. The most well-known privatization initiatives are voucher programs, charter schools, and educational management organizations (EMOs). Voucher programs provide dollars directly to families so that they may select a religious or private school of their choice. Charter schools became public-private hybrids since they are publicly funded and privately managed, increasingly through EMOs. EMOs administer and manage schools for a profit. Because of the strong support given to charters and to partnerships with business from both political parties, the number of for-profit EMOs and the number of states in which EMOs are operating has increased over the past 10 years. Besides, lately, “while the actual number of companies has remained relatively stable . . . many of the large and medium-sized EMOs are expanding into new service areas, such as supplemental education services” (Molnar, Miron, & Urschel, 2009).

The growing phenomenon of EMOs sparked my interest because EMOs are changing the essential nature of public education in the United States. Additionally, the politics and policies of education in the United States constitute one of the bases for anticipating the school reform trends in Latin America. The increase of educational corporate management in the United States marks a world trend, because corporate strategies originate in the “advanced” countries and subsequently are transferred to “developing countries” (Stocker, Waitzkin, & Iriart, 1999; Torres & Puiggrós 1997). For these reasons, I designed a study

that examined the websites of major EMOs to analyze the ways in which they represented themselves (Pini, 2000). In this chapter, I return to my analysis, 10 years later, asking: How do EMOs design their images, build relations and attract consumers and, in turn, shape what is understood and experienced as public education? Along the way, I reflect on the changes that have occurred in the websites, although a comparison across time is not the major focus of this chapter.

The Discourses of Privatization

The “manufactured crisis” (Berliner & Biddle, 1995) of public education that EMOs have exploited is representative of the attack on public institutions in general. In this context, and especially in light of the social problems that urban schools face, the promise of privatization appeared in many cases to be a magic solution. However, privatization masks the real for-profit nature of EMO activities, silences the contradictions involved in for-profit enterprises operating public services, and plays down the tensions between quality education for all and efficiency.

Educational management organization (EMO) is the name coined by the investment community to name the for-profit, private companies that manage schools. Businesspeople and investors have viewed education as an open field in which to expand their opportunities. “They think that the technological and political problems confronting education today are similar to those faced by the health-care industry twenty years ago [health maintenance organizations (HMOs) were the answer], and they are proposing a similar solution: privatization” (Furtwengler, 1998, p. 45). With nearly 50 million students (K-12), and an estimated \$543 billion a year in revenues (NCES, 2010; \$300 billion in 1999), education is big business in the United States, which is why business magazines and newspapers publish more information and show more interest in this phenomenon than educational journals. For EMOs, education is just like any other industry: to make a profit they have to attract consumers and lower costs. As an “education analyst” tells *Business Week*: “The major competitor is the government,” because “education is the last big bastion of the economy largely controlled by the government” (Symonds, 2000, p. 35).

As with public health management in the 1980s and 1990s (Stocker et al., 1999), privatization of schools involves the corporate management of schools. In fact, Molnar (1996) has documented that corporate involvement in the schools actually started in the 1980s. He points out that the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983 (U.S. Department of Education) raised interest in privatization because of the catastrophic diagnosis it promoted with respect to public education. Molnar describes the origin and development of those corporations that first identified public schools as a good investment for venture capital. He also explores the connection between these corporations and conservative politicians and foundations.

I view the corporate management of public education in a double sense: as a phenomenon in itself and as a vehicle to understand the larger ideological

context in which corporate practices develop. Corporate discourses are persuasive because they influence people's perceptions of reality, what Gramsci (1977) called their "common sense." Private companies present themselves as being able to offer that which education has seemingly lost: 1) in managerial terms, high quality and efficiency; and 2) in political terms, credibility and legitimacy.

Different forms of privatization, some of them hidden (Burch, 2009), lead to the expansion of the market at the expense of social equity, but what has grown in education is far from a "free market."¹ One example of the ideological misuse of the notion of "freedom" is market advocates' off-repeated slogan that "a free market will bring democracy to all," omitting the fact that the means to acquire goods is not equally distributed in society.

Charter schools are politically more palatable to the public than school vouchers, because they *are* public, avoid the state-church controversy, claim to address student needs, and provide schools with waivers from district rules. Given the flexibility and, at times, ambiguity of state laws (Pini, 2000) that have been created in part through corporate lobbying (Molnar, 1996), charter regulations are viewed as favorable to for-profit schools in several states. According to Symonds (2000), the charter school movement has fueled for-profits, and even if most charters are non-profit, the for-profit operators have gained market share and grown rapidly.

EMOs represent the corporate culture that functions politically and pedagogically to produce consumers instead of citizens. Given this agenda, it is worthwhile to reflect on the kind of public education EMOs promote. Two competing conceptions of education and society are at the root of the struggle for public schools: the view of education as either a public or private good and the view of society as either comprising participating citizens in a political system or producers and passive consumers in a market system (Anderson, 1998; Labaree, 1997).

Education is an arena of controversy in the United States as opposing political groups struggle over the meaning of such issues as local decision-making, student evaluation through standards and testing, school accountability, and parental school choice. In this study, I employ the "quasi-Gramscian view" of Fraser (1989) who argues that "struggles over cultural meanings and social identities are struggles for cultural hegemony, that is, for the power to construct authoritative definitions of social situations and legitimate interpretations of social needs" (p. 6).

The consequences of market-oriented discourse-practices are policies that lead to more inequality and segregation (Cobb & Glass, 1999; Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley, & Wang, 2010; Miron, Urschel, Mathis, & Tornquist, 2010; Wong & Shen with Novacek, 2001). Research on educational reform in other developed countries also suggests that those who most benefit from market models are the people who already have choices (Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995; Patrinos & Ariasingam, 1998; Whitty, Power, & Halpin, 1998). Public schools are an essential part of the public sphere that is basic to democracy. Although

the boundary between public and private is not always clearly delimited (Buenfil Burgos, 1997; Fraser, 1989), by “public” I mean the common terrain that constitutes a national community in spite of social antagonisms. The defining characteristic of “public” is universal access to institutions or services without discrimination, including the enforcement of administrative regulations that support equal access.

Research Design and Methodology

In this study, I examine the appropriation and representation of public education through a critical discourse analysis of the EMOs’ websites and associated texts. My analytic method is based on critical discourse analysis (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1989, 1995; Mouffe, 1993; Torfing, 1999; van Dijk 1985, 1997; Vermehren, 1997), and multimodal analysis (Jewitt & Kress, 2003; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Kress, Leite-García & Van Leeuwen, 1997) including some elements of what Foucault has termed *genealogy* (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Foucault, 1995; Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000). Given the complexity of this analysis and the insufficient development of specific categories to analyze multimodal advertising-educational texts, social semiotics was especially useful because, from its perspective, language and image work together to transmit information (Kress et al., 1997). I use the tools that discourse analysis provides to deconstruct “marketization” and “corporatization” of education as regimes of truth and as an attempt to symbolically colonize the “public.” Critical discourse analysis is one of the best tools we have for identifying power relationships and ideology in and behind discursive practices.

I have divided the analysis into two levels. The first level is concerned with providing a detailed description and analysis of the visual and verbal features of the companies’ websites. I chose to analyze the EMOs’ websites because they are the principal vehicles through which the companies advertise. The online information is detailed, extended, and continuously updated. From the perspective of social semiotics every design is a discourse, because designs involve communicative competences and strategies. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), the concept of design is midway between content and expression; it is the conceptual side of expression and the expressive side of conception. For these authors, designs are the (use of) semiotic resources in all modes and combinations of semiotic modes. But designs also add something new in that they change socially constructed knowledge into social (inter-) action. Figurative designs are used to satisfy or seduce the public. In this sense they have a rhetorical function, because a defining characteristic of rhetoric is persuasion.

The second and deeper level of my analysis involves the interpretation and explanation of EMOs’ discourse-practices in their social contexts. According to Cherriholmes (1988), “no firm, stable, clear, unequivocal distinction can be drawn between discourse and practice . . . Discourse, a more or less orderly exchange of ideas, is a particular kind of practice, and practice is, at least in part, discursive meanings flow back and forth from what is said to what is

done, from ourselves to the world” (pp. 8–9). Discourse-practices involve both textual and iconic semiotic designs. Paraphrasing Cherriholmes, interpreting texts and images in the websites as discourse-practices implies moving from what is written/showed to what is not written/showed and back again, “from what is present to what is absent, from statements to their historical setting” (p. 8). Written language is only one element in the discourse, and it has to be read together with all the other semiotic modes, because producers of texts are making greater and more deliberate use of *a range of representational and communicational modes* which co-occur within the text (Kress, Leite-García, & van Leeuwen, 1997). The intertextuality of discourses and practices with the previous written and social texts that corporate discourse draws on establishes which presuppositions or assumptions are taken for granted and constitutes the social and educational world of the EMOs.

Since the EMOs’ institutional communication is a kind of “marketing” (see below), I analyzed them as a form of advertising. Following Fairclough (1989), the use of vocabulary and imagery in discourse conforms to familiar advertising strategies that are usually used by companies to *build relations, images, and consumers*. *Building relations* involves personalizing the communication and/or the product, but owing to the impersonal and mediated conditions of advertising discourse, companies use *synthetic personalization*, a “compensatory tendency to give the impression of treating each of the people ‘handled’ en masse as an individual” (p. 62). Companies *build images* as an ideological construct through visual and verbal cues and through association between the characteristics of the product and a lifestyle. Allusions such as “world-class” education and “a new kind of public school” (see below) are closely related to positive values, and they are social representations of success and transformation. The idea of *building consumers* has to do with characterizing the consumers and making the product fit their needs or creating the needs according to presupposed values, what Fairclough calls *naturalized common sense*. In the case of education, it is a community of parents preoccupied with their children’s education and future, as well as administrators and policy makers. EMOs provide consistent and attractive models for consumer needs, values, and behavior. Companies build images, relations and consumers through particular discursive strategies, such as:

- *Rhetorical function* of design and vocabulary; rhetoric is a means to influence the public in general or somebody in particular through forms of discourse: 1) that are not subject to objective verification, and 2) in which no threat of violence or harm is involved. It aspires to make something more attractive (Sexe, 2001);
- Synthetic personalization; mostly achieved through conversational styles and the use of personal pronouns, and emotional situations intended to appeal to people (Fairclough, 1989);
- Presenting ideas as universal, what Barthes calls *exnomination*² and Fairclough *naturalization*;
- Pretending neutrality and objectivity;

- Appealing to emotions and the trustworthy character of the companies to mask defective reasoning;
- Argumentation techniques; discourses by necessity state certain propositions intended to justify the author's claims (Van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jackson, & Jacobs, 1997);
- Persuasion techniques; the three classic necessary conditions for persuasion to be successful are: 1) appealing to people's emotions, 2) giving a good impression of the author of the discourse, or 3) proving the truth of the statements made (Harré, 1985);
- Silences, negations and presuppositions, interpreted through *intertextuality*, a property related to the *dialogic* and the *historical* character of the texts (Fairclough, 1989).

These discursive strategies serve on the one hand to create an attractive image of EMOs and on the other hand to produce negative definitions of "traditional public schools":³ herein lies their ideological thrust. Some of the above categories apply as well to the analysis of corporations' discourse-practices.

Once I selected the EMOs and exhaustively read the pages and other information about the companies, I started coding data in various ways. I made a table with information about their size and location. In a second table I compared webpage designs according to a series of categories I considered relevant since I did not find more precise literature on this kind of analysis (see Table 13.2). I also compared companies' homepages, the first view offered to the web-reader/audience. Once I established the range of discursive strategies through phrases, words, visual and textual design, etc., I prepared classification tables for each company containing the various dimensions that contributed to build image, relations, and consumers. Last, I contrasted and compared the data within and between companies, as well as consulting research studies, reports, and laws.

The Sample of Companies

I focus on the texts released by four of the biggest for-profit educational management organizations that manage American public schools. The sample is purposeful, theoretically oriented, and includes the companies that have been marketed in public education for more than 10 years (Pini, 2001, 2003; Molnar et al., 2009). They are: Edison (<http://www.edisonlearning.com/>), The Leona Group, L.L.C. (<http://www.leonagroup.com/>), Mosaica Education (<http://mosaicaeducation.com/>), and National Heritage Academies (<http://heritageacademies.com/>).

Data consist of selected corporate texts, primarily EMO webpages and other relevant documents. Secondary sources such as state charter school laws and enrollment figures helped to provide a socio-historical context. I begin by identifying the companies, the number of schools that each of them operates, their enrollment, and in which states their schools are located, to give an idea of the scale and distribution of the organization and operations. After this brief

background, I examine the information that each EMO gives about itself, describing the design of each company's presentation.

Table 13.1 summarizes some of the information about these companies provided by the Eleventh Report on EMOs (Molnar et al., 2009). The last line of Table 13.1 shows specific public information that companies provide about themselves, retrieved online.

In my previous research (Pini, 2001), Michigan was the only state where all four companies operated public schools, and several other companies operated schools there as well. Nowadays three of them also operate in Colorado and Indiana, and all of them manage many schools in Ohio. EMOs generally choose states that have "strong" charter school laws. This means that there is a high expenditures per student, few caps on the number of charter schools that can exist, and an environment that is politically friendly to charter schools (Pini, 2001, 2003).

The Visual and Textual Design of the Websites

The content of the EMOs' webpages is only part of their effectiveness. Visual and textual stimuli are powerful tools that attract and convince parents to send

Table 13.1 Number of Schools, States, and Enrollment of the Selected Companies

	<i>Edison Learning</i>	<i>The Leona Group, L. L. C.</i>	<i>Mosaica Education</i>	<i>National Heritage Academies</i>
Number of schools and states	62 in 16 states	67 schools in 6 states	33 schools in 8 states	57 schools in 6 states
States where they operate	CA, CO, GA, IA, IL, IN, LA, MD, MI, MN, MO, NV, NY, OH, PA, WI	AZ, FL, IN, LA, MI, OH	AZ, CA, CO, GA, DC, IL, MI, OH, PA	CO, IN, MI, NC, NY, OH
Enrollment	37,574	18,577	10,163	36,737
What EMOs say	In the 2008–2009 school year, Edison Learning will serve over 350,000 students in 24 states and the United Kingdom, through 120 school partnerships and in programs that are provided in hundreds of additional buildings.	Currently, more than 20,000 students are enrolled in nearly 70 Leona Group schools in Arizona, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.	Mosaica currently serves more than 11,000 students in over 40 elementary and middle school programs in seven states and the District of Columbia.	This passion has taken us from one school in 1995 to partnerships with boards at 61 schools in six states, serving over 38,000 students and families.

their children to the school. EMOs are constantly applying and recreating strategies borrowed from the advertising business. Sophistication of designs, quality and quantity of pages, sections, links, drawings, pictures, and videos vary among the companies sites. It is important to note that all of the companies have more sophisticated designs than they had 10 years ago. Edison, for example, had two interconnected sites in 2009: Edison Schools and Edison Learning. Since February 8, 2010, Edison Learning is the only webpage that opens, and

Table 13.2 Main Features of EMOs Webpages

<i>Features</i>	<i>Edison Learning</i>	<i>Leona Group</i>	<i>Mosaica</i>	<i>National Heritage Academies</i>
Design & Colors	Light blue and white. Link to its blog.	Dark blue, gray, and orange on white background.	Blue and red on white background.	Green on white. Links on light gray and sand.
Sections	About us; Our offerings; Proven Results; Resource room; News and events; Join our team; Contact us	Home; Our Services; Our Schools; Our Philosophy; About Us; Career with us; Contact Us	Home; About Mosaica; Career; Contact us; School Locator; Our Pillars; Success Stories; Vendors; Paragon	About NHA; Our Schools; Parents; Students; Careers; Home; Contact Us; Apply Now
Type of Language	Colloquial, appealing in the front page, more formal in the rest. Short texts. Using the third person singular.	Colloquial, appealing in the front page, more formal in the rest. Short texts. Using the third person singular.	Formal, clear. Pointing out leadership, innovation and success. Using the third person singular.	Colloquial, using the first person of the plural. Focus on quality, success and moral.
Videos	None	Owner and staff testimony	None	Short institutional documentary emphasis on personalized education
Pictures	Beautiful big picture. Graphics	Big changing pictures on top and smaller ones distributed on page.	Changing pictures on top distributed in an informal way.	Seven big changing pictures on top, each one appearing with a different movement design and a different text on the right.

it is not possible to access the old one. Table 13.2 presents a synthesis of the features that I will briefly describe for each of the EMO websites below: design, sections, number of pages, language, video, and pictures.

Edison

At the top of Edison's front page (<http://www.edisonlearning.com/>), on the left corner, was the company trademark Edison Schools® and the phrase "A World-class Education for Every Child." The structure was rectangular in vertical position, with links to the sections on the left margin and on the superior margin, under a two-part block of images. The images showed, from left to right, a picture with students and teachers at work, and a picture after a fleeting sign "The faces of Edison," with another box on the left, a flower with the legend "Click photo to play." The pictures change with each link, and the picture on the right becomes a video where someone—principal, teacher, student—speaks well about Edison Schools.

The language was formal, repetitive, and presented in short texts. The design and the language suggested a high level of expertise in the work of design. There were many sections (see Table 13. 2) with a high quantity and variety of links. It was the longest and most complete website of all the companies I analyzed.

A picture showed African American teachers and African American students in class and, on the left, the video with teachers talking enthusiastically. Another picture showed three diverse students. When one clicked on the link "Charter Schools," the new site opened, showing a beautiful picture of an African American girl in the center, and another student, a boy, less visible, in the back. Diversity is one of Edison's stated principles, promoted through the pictures that accompany the texts. The webpage of Edison Learning, the new one, shows similar diversity, with diverse students smiling and working in a friendly environment, just like Edison used to show in the 2000 site (Edison Schools, 2000; Edison Schools, 2001). One difference is that the language is less formal, using the inclusive pronoun "we" to personalize communication. Instead of texts that depict abundant technological resources, nowadays Edison presents texts that talk more about schools' designs and developing leaders (Edison Learning, 2010). The current site no longer includes a link for investors but does include a new link called "Resources for Academics."

The Leona Group

The Leona Group, L.C.C. A New Kind of Public School© is the legend at the top of the front page (<http://www.leonagroup.com/>). Its colors are dark blue, grey and orange on white background. Its seven sections have links to every other section and to pages inside sections. The site has 10 changing pictures in its front page, making it visually appealing. In turn, the pictures on the front page show: a group of African American students surrounding a White teacher; two students of color in class with a White teacher, along with a model of a human

body used in science class and an African American or Latino child writing on the blackboard; another working on his desk; a group of students graduating; more groups of racially diverse students enjoying seemingly friendly relationships; and a blond child with a young teacher (Leona Group, 2010). The elements included in the pictures portray diversity, students at work, and enjoyment of learning. In spite of the intended diversity, all the teachers on the front page are White.

The language is colloquial, appealing, and personalized in the front page, using the first person singular and plural; more formal in the rest of the document. On the right margin we find at the top four links: Leona Corporate, Arizona Region, Florida Region, and Midwest Region, each one going to more sections. Below it is a searcher for schools that ask for the zip code, a link to subscribe for news and updates, a picture-video of Dr. Bill Coats, without telling who is he, as if he does not need any introduction, and finally a series of news items with small pictures.

Mosaica

Mosaica's website has a simple design. Its logo is an icon of a Greek academia (<http://mosaicaeducation.com/>). Its colors are blue and red on white background. It has changing pictures on the top of the front page, distributed in an informal way. The pictures show diverse students and various elements for class work (pencils, notebook, blackboard).

A big icon represents "the pillars" (of Mosaica). The front page is simple and divided in three columns. The left column has the links for the different sections; the middle one, the most visible, shows a brief text under the title "Opening portals of opportunities," and news under it; the right column is dedicated to Paragon, Mosaica's Curriculum, under the title "Propelled by Paragon," and in the bottom, PARAGON™ "A World of Ideas That Makes a World of Difference." PARAGON is also one important section that links to the front page and it is the only section that has images in its six subsections (Mosaica Education, 2010).

The language is formal, clear, and professional, pointing out leadership, innovation, and success, using the third person singular. This site has more text and fewer images compared to the others, and no videos. Mosaica chose a more academic-political style. Private management of public schools and Mosaica's educational model are the priorities revealed by this company's website.

National Heritage Academies

The National Heritage Academies website uses green color on white background (<http://heritageacademies.com/>). Its design is much more dynamic and less formal than it was 10 years ago. The links on the top of the front page are light grey and the last two on the right top corner (Contact Us and Apply Now) are sand colored. It has seven big changing pictures on top, each one appearing

with a different movement design and a different text on the right side (Figure 13.1). Its language is colloquial, using the first person the plural and the focus is on quality, success and moral. The eight sections have links to one another and to pages within sections.

The larger pictures show racially diverse students smiling and working in class, particularly African American students with White teachers (National Heritage Academies, 2010). The scenes in the pictures appear to have been carefully selected by Heritage to reinforce the text content: diversity (although there are no African American teachers), motivated students, satisfied parents, order, values, personalized attention and teaching, and a comfortable learning environment.

On the left, under the title “See what makes NHA unique,” a picture that shows a student going into the school becomes a short institutional documentary with an emphasis on personalized education. The picture includes also a welcome sign with the name of the girl/boy who is the protagonist of the video. Parent testimonials can be seen also in video with the name of each one: Pat Schemmel, Sandra Mathews. There are also signed texts by parents talking about their sons’ and daughters’ good experiences at school. One of them emphasizes that it is great education for free: “All of our priorities for our daughters offered at no cost!” There are also students’ testimonies presented with a picture on a blackboard where each of them has written and drawn his/her thoughts and feelings about the school and the teacher with chalk.

Common Elements in the Design of the Sites

The pages described above have several elements in common. All of them have introductions to themselves, lists and locators of schools operated by the companies, and detailed descriptions of their schools, curriculum, organization, management, and services, careers, or job openings. Two of them have added videos with testimonies and most of them have links to the webpage of each school.

A section about “Careers” is more important now than it was 10 years before. It has this title in NHA and Mosaica website, “Join our team” in Edison, and “Career with us” in The Leona Group. They show not just the description of positions available at each school or at the company headquarters, but a complete description of benefits and professional development for the best teachers and employees. All the EMO webpages have “Contact Us” as a separate section, and some, like Edison, offer information for business development. All of them have a section for news in which they emphasize new schools, company growth or success, and student improvement.

The use of “inclusive” pronouns like “we” and “our,” by all the companies but Mosaica, is designed to communicate a sense of the company being a part of local communities, sharing the dreams and interests of parents and educators.

Beyond the information mentioned above, two of the companies, Mosaica and Heritage, have a section devoted to answering frequently asked questions

related to charter schools. Here one can see examples of what Fairclough (1995) calls “the promotional function of informative language” (p. 150). He argues that there is an ambivalence in many contemporary texts in which it is not clear whether the meaning or the effect of the text is primary. While all of the EMOs use informative language to promote their goals, Mosaica is the only one that has a special section that overtly expresses its ideological position on public education reform. In the next section I shall demonstrate how EMOs build an ideal image of themselves through their discourses.

The School of Your Dreams

To begin thinking about the public images of the private corporate managers of public schools, I analyzed the marketing discourse of the selected EMOs, describing the techniques they use to construct an ideal image in order to attract *consumers*. EMOs do this like any other company, but as with food products, it is crucial to know if the advertising reflects the quality of the product. Merely from the names EMOs have chosen to give themselves, one can see the use of a highly suggestive symbolism. The companies’ names in themselves deserve attention, because they anticipate most of the ideas transmitted through the respective texts. The ideas of light (Edison), strength (Leona), knowledge (Edison), success through diversity (Mosaica), and American values (Heritage) advance the self-images developed by private educational companies. Some of the EMOs emphasize experience, others excellence, and others “difference” or “opportunity.” All the companies stress the “public” character of the schools they manage or aspire to manage, and all of them advertise that they operate charter schools. As in my previous analysis, Leona is the one that emphasizes that there is no tuition for parents, “tuition-free public schools.” NHA expresses the same idea through a parent testimony, “at no cost!” and through the second item of “Your questions answered”: “How much is tuition? We do not charge tuition. NHA is a free, state-funded, public school open to all students.” Just one of the EMOs (Mosaica) mentions its profit in the sections for *consumers* (in the third answer of FAQs). Edison cancelled the sections for investors that it used to have.

Advertising used to be more explicit than now about the competition between EMOs and “traditional” public schools; nowadays most of them emphasize the presentation of the best possible image to school board members, parents, students, and teachers who may apply for a job. Mosaica is more explicit about its ideas related to the failure of public schools as the reason to develop Mosaica, dedicating the two first answers to the questions “Why was Mosaica Education conceived?” and “Are Mosaica schools more efficient than traditional public schools?” in “About Mosaica, FAQs.

They have an incentive to show that they are unique and better than the other EMOs that compete for public money. Earlier, I have written (Pini, 2001, 2003) that the attention to a great image had three other purposes. The first one was the struggle for social legitimacy accomplished through: a) emphasizing

the “public” character of the schools they manage (charter), b) advocating education for all children, and c) showing excellence in achievement and commitment. All of these elements serve to elude the suspicions and criticisms awakened by the idea of private profit made from public money. The second goal is the race for partnerships (schools and districts). The third goal, related to the first two, is the construction of a new *common sense* based on market principles and favoring corporate power in order to change the definition of “public.”

Introducing Themselves: The Ideal Virtual Image

Although there are some discernible differences in EMOs’ identity and focus, the general message remains the same: private companies are able to educate better than traditional public institutions. These for-profit companies managing public education transmit a central idea—that they are excellent, different, enhanced. They achieve this through the evocative images and rhetoric of their presentation. On Edison’s frontpage (2010), the most visible text on the left says, “We share your passion for learning. For achievement. For giving every child a world class education,” and the name of that page is “Working together for student success.” The Leona Group, L.L.C. (2010), defines itself as “A new kind of public school” and, also at the frontpage, it starts personalizing its identity:

Who is Leona?

I am a teacher, highly qualified and innovative.

I am a student, excelling in a structured and caring environment.

I am a parent, supported, welcomed and involved.

I am a leader, passionate about improving education in urban areas.

I am a free public charter school, innovative, accountable and achieving.

I AM THE LEONA GROUP.

Mosaica Education (2010) says: “Opening Portals of Opportunities.” National Heritage Academies (2010) declares “Our purpose: Challenging each child to achieve . . . Our vision: To better educate more children.”

Yet those concerned with education may ask the questions: Different from what? New and better in what ways? What kind of opportunities and for whom? One can find the EMOs’ answers in the same texts by paying attention to what they imply: *different* from traditional public schools; *new* in contrast to the traditional (meaning public school) curriculum; *enhanced* management and teaching compared to public schools; *good* for children, parents, community, teachers, and a country “damaged” by “failing” public education.

Metaphors play a very important role in communication. As Postman (1985) wrote, “Our media are our metaphors. Our metaphors create the content of our culture” (Postman, 1985, p. 15). The metaphors used by EMOs are strong and attractive, but the image they present contradicts their practices:

the masked interest in profit, connections with powerful conservative interests, and the similarity with other “successful” corporate forms of appropriating public goods such as health maintenance organizations (HMOs).

Edison Learning

Edison is the oldest of the EMOs I examined. It uses language derived from the world of business to introduce itself, touting its expertise, philosophy, products, and expansion:

EdisonLearning works with educators and communities to improve public schools and boost student performance . . . Our expertise and the value we bring to clients results from over 17 years’ experience not only servicing but *operating* public schools in collaboration with districts, boards, and other authorities with whom we partner . . . These governing principles inform all of our products and enable our success, whether a sixty-hour *Learning Force*[™] tutoring program, an *Alliance*[™] school improvement engagement, or a fully operational school design . . . In the 2008–2009 school year, EdisonLearning will serve over 350,000 students in 24 states and the United Kingdom, through 120 school partnerships and in programs that are provided in hundreds of additional buildings. With our educator partners, we provide an extensive portfolio of academic services that inspires students to think, learn, and succeed. (Edison Learning, 2010)

Edison’s introduction contains allusions to the company experience, and it makes clear that it has to offer something different, the mechanism of operation (contracts), and whom its clientele comprises (local school districts and charter boards).

The story behind Edison is the following: Chris Whittle (Edison founder) made a career of making a profit from education. He founded Edison Project “to capture some voucher money by designing a conservative and technologically advanced school that could be franchised across the country” (Spring, 1997, p. 62). This would allow him to get capital to create a large number of private schools for economic profit. His strategy is to save money by reducing bureaucracy and teachers and by increasing voluntary work by parents and students (Weiss, 1999). When the voucher plans did not pass, he looked for other forms of public support through charter schools, starting in Massachusetts and Colorado, whose governors contacted Benno Schmidt, Chairman of the Edison Board of Directors at that time.

Whittle also was the owner of Channel One, another profitable enterprise in the form of an educational tool (Molnar, 1996). Some observers are amazed that Whittle tries to attract minorities to his schools because he was instrumental in promoting the publication of *The Disuniting of America* by Arthur Schlesinger. According to Spring (1997), Whittle sent free copies of this attack on multicultural education to business leaders. Perhaps it is not so surprising,

since Schlesinger's book is *pro-assimilation* of minorities. This can be considered consistent with Whittle's "diverse" Edison Schools, in spite of the racially diverse pictures on the website.

Chris Whittle, Benno C. Schmidt, Jr., and John Chubb, who have headed Edison, are advocates for the privatization of public education and, in some cases, for principles that place democracy at risk (Chubb & Moe, 1990). Whittle offered Benno C. Schmidt Jr., former president of Yale University, an annual salary of about one million dollars to head Edison Project (Spring, 1997). Names of company chairs have disappeared from the new website. The old one (Edison Schools, 2000) had a list of "people behind Edison" that included Reverend Floyd Flake, a former Democratic U.S. representative from New York (Walsh, 2001b), President of Edison Charter Schools,⁴ but omitted the name of one of the consultants on the project, Chester Finn, Jr., of the conservative Hudson Institute, a former U.S. Department of Education assistant secretary under William Bennett (Reagan administration), co-author with Bennett of *The Educated Child*, president of the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, and member of the board of a new Bennett venture, K-12. He was also a member of the transition advisory team for the Department of Education during the presidential campaign of George W. Bush and has a long career as a scholar backed by a network of foundations that advocate right-wing causes (Robelen, 2001; Spring, 1997; Walsh, 2001a).

Now, under the title "Who we are," Edison (2010) personalizes itself in a more democratic way, through naming members, the use of strongly symbolic terms like "people" and "promise," and pointing to positive emotions like passion, joy, enthusiasm, energy, associated with supreme goals: improve learning at public schools (fulfill the promise), and improve the world:

Who we are.

Teacher. Triathlete. Principal. Pilot. District Administrator. Volunteer.

EdisonLearning is staffed by passionate professionals whose joyful enthusiasm for student learning is matched only by their relentless pursuit of it. The shared energy between our employees and our partners is fueled by a common goal: to fulfill the promise of public education, and to make the world a better place.

At EdisonLearning, it is *people* who make the greatest difference in the learning and lives of students.

Besides, Edison claims a "comprehensive" school design, professional expertise, and commitment to students learning. "Our offerings. School design: Whole-school solutions that helps educators and communities open new schools or improve the performance of existing ones."

The Leona Group

As I showed before, The Leona Group (2010) introduces itself by personalizing its identity at the frontpage, where there are other two paragraphs titled: "What we believe" and "What we offer." Under the first we read:

Every child can learn, regardless of ethnicity, economic or educational disadvantage. Every child deserves quality choice in free public education. These founding beliefs drive The Leona Group's commitment to excellence in elementary, middle and high school classrooms across the country.

Leona is the company announcing from the beginning of the webpage that its schools are free, that there is no tuition for parents, as an important positive argument for choosing it, and it explicitly advocates choice in the service of better educational quality at national level.

Leona claims that they can offer quality in education in spite of children's social, racial, or educational conditions. This is a reminder of the unequal services provided to students in urban and suburban schools, one of the conspicuous problems with the public school system (Kozol, 1991; Spring, 2001; Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Leona also promotes parental involvement, another concern raised frequently about public schools. In the following quotation, the mention of "community" reinforces the idea that Leona supports local agency:

Each Leona Group charter school offers a unique, tuition-free option tailored to the needs of the community, students and parents it serves—especially urban communities where the need for choice is greatest. Through comprehensive support services, we partner with schools in key areas to ensure both short and long term success. (Leona Group, 2010).

This site has a highly elaborated pedagogical discourse, pointing almost to every aspect of student needs for learning, and parents' expectations and wills.

Mosaica

Mosaica builds an image of excellence through its icon: a classic Greek building like a temple of knowledge. The text reads:

Opening Portals of Opportunities

At the forefront of education reform, Mosaica Education opens portals of opportunity for children and adults through excellence in education around the globe. Our purpose is to accelerate education reform, one of the most dramatic cultural transformations in our world today. (Mosaica, 2010)

Mosaica's text is one of the most overtly ideological, speaking of the need for "accelerating" educational reform to revitalize public education with the paradigm of a world-class education, implying that "children and adults" did not get this opportunity from "the traditional public schools." Mosaica describes itself as a national leader in education reform and international leader in excellence. Like Leona, Mosaica designs its message to address parent concerns, through the discourses of "safe learning environments," for example. The company

constructs professional and formal relations using the third person instead of more personal forms of advertising.

Mosaica used to be the only EMO that had its own original curriculum—Paragon. Now all of the companies show their trademarked products. I think this is why the presentation of Paragon includes high values and heroes for students to learn “by stepping into the shoes of great historical figures, both real and imaginary . . . to become the architects of tomorrow.”

The section “Executive Management Team,” in “About Mosaica,” includes a list of five officers with background in business. Just Dawn Eidelman, one of the co-founders, comes from the field of education.

Difference is one of the key concepts that all these companies use, and the phrase “make a difference” is obviously associated with improvement and the promise that *different* (private management of public schools) is better.

National Heritage Academies

Heritage’s discourse appears less conservative than it used to be, without forgetting the importance of moral values. The following introductory text emphasizes commitment to children’s academic learning, excellence, and moral values:

National Heritage Academies is an education service provider that partners with independent school boards that want to bring a charter school to their local community. NHA is hired by the board to manage all of the day-to-day operations of the school. School boards choose NHA as their partner because we’ve established a proven track record of success over the past 14 years and our passion to positively impact the lives of children is evident. This passion reveals itself in everything we do; from the unwavering commitment to our four pillars, to the safe, secure learning environment our school buildings provide, to the design and implementation of our curriculum, to the ongoing investment in professional development for teachers, to the commitment to provide students with the resources and support they need to succeed, and for constantly asking “what can we do today to be better than yesterday?” This passion has taken us from one school in 1995 to partnerships with boards at 61 schools in six states, serving over 38,000 students and families. (NHA, 2010)

Passion, repeated three times, suggests that charter schools have an energy lacking in the traditional public system. Passion, together with commitment and safety, constructs a powerful message that is likely to resonate with school boards and parents who have understandable concerns about student success.

This company also stresses difference throughout the website—“A different kind of education. A different kind of school”—and goes on with the reason: “We’re not like any other school. It’s because we take the time to figure out

what you do well, and not so well, in order to help you become a better student. If things get tough, we'll be there to guide you."

The company emphasizes quality through the use of terms such as academic excellence, resources, and support for achievement. The first of these pages, for example, reads:

At National Heritage Academies, we believe that a quality education is the foundation for a successful life. We also believe that every child is capable of excelling academically, so we are firmly committed to providing the support and resources to help our students understand and realize their potential. At NHA schools, dreams are formed, inspiration is fostered and each child is challenged to achieve.

The last phrase conveys the idea that NHA is so good that their kids even learn to dream. It is an evocative word for any parent looking for a better future. It also evokes the promise of public education.

NHA uses a more personalized and colloquial style, stressing uniqueness and success with parents' satisfaction. NHA remarks that it responds to parents, implying that traditional public schools are non-responsive. The website states, "Together, we can deliver on the promise of your child by offering a different kind of education in a different kind of school." The text fails to mention the profit involved in the operations of privately managed charters. At the same time, it presents private management as intrinsically more reliable and responsible than public schools owing to its partnership with the "community." Because no real proof of the EMO's superior performance is offered, this is a very good example of a manipulative strategy of persuasion that consists in appealing only to the trustworthy character of the advertiser—the EMO—to disguise its lack of substance.

Contrasting themselves with the image of mediocre public schools seems to be one of the intentions of EMOs' messages. J. C. Hiuzenga, the multimillionaire businessman and founder of Educational Development Corp. (the former name of National Heritage Academies), declared to *The Grand Rapids Press* that he was launching a for-profit charter school revolution that would change the way American children were educated. His "mission" was also consistent with the market model for education, since for him "competition increases quality and lowers cost." Huizenga said, "It is working in every other sector of society. Why not in education?" He also believes that if there is not profit in an activity, it means that society does not value it. Huizenga hosted a private fundraiser for President George W. Bush in 1992 (Wilkerson, 1997). The compatibility between corporate ideology and public education is dubious because corporate interests are always placed above the public good.

"Ideological Marketing"

"Ideological marketing" constitutes a set of principles that are important for EMOs to build and defend a market (Ferguson, 1999). According to Ferguson

(1999), "Unlike other types of companies, for-profit education providers must constantly defend their very existence against naysayers who are opposed, for myriad reasons, to market-based, consumer-driven education" (p. 2). I found several examples of the specific "defense of their very existence" in the past EMO marketing, for example through the constant critique of public schools (Pini, 2001, 2003). At the present it seems to show less a defense of their existence (or the need to legitimize their business) and more the competition between companies. The main competition seems to be placed on the appearance of the pages, using the most sophisticated techniques and resources to show uniqueness.

The trend to privatize public schools has garnered great intellectual support, expressed in various business and education publications and media that disseminate the ideas that 1) private management is better than public, 2) school choice is going to fix educational problems, 3) the market can do everything better and more efficiently than the government, and 4) educational bureaucracy and unions are hampering reform. Some groups, including private companies that are in a position to profit from education, have invested in spreading and legitimating these ideas as a means of expanding their business.

Consequently, the kind of standardization I found in the design of the EMO's websites, each of them trying to be unique, in my view reflects a consolidation of their business and the politics and policies they embody.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this section I will elaborate on the following two groups of findings: 1) the most frequent discursive strategies used by EMOs in their advertising; and 2) the re-definition of "public" that EMOs construct through their advertising.

Common Discursive Strategies

From my analysis it is evident that EMOs use several common advertising techniques to construct their image, to build relations, and to attract consumers. In order to construct their image they: 1) visually appeal to the potential consumer through the skillful use of color, design, photographs, videos, graphics, and links; 2) appeal to the trustworthy character of the companies more than to verifiable evidence; 3) make claims of commitment to children, learning, and life; 4) use evocative rhetoric; 5) make affirmations based on simplistic or absent evidence (consumer satisfaction); and 6) denigrate the competitor (traditional public schools) through lexical opposition or comparison.

To create relations between themselves and their potential consumers, they construct logical fallacies characterized by 1) personalization, and 2) appealing to parents' emotions and wills.

To attract consumers to the websites, they engage in *argumentum ad populum* in three ways: 1) identifying with universal values (for example, "Wisdom, Hope, Justice, Respect, Courage, Responsibility, Compassion, Integrity";

Edison Schools, 2009); 2) using appropriate vocabulary reflecting social concerns (for example, “*Every* child can learn, regardless of ethnicity, economic or educational disadvantage”; Leona Group, 2009); and 3) evoking popular symbolism (for example, “Making a world of difference”; Mosaica Education, 2009). Furthermore, they omit significant evidence (for example, studies that show low equity and diversity, such as Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley, & Wang, 2010 or Miron, Urschel, Mathis, & Tornquist, 2010).

The Symbolic and Material Appropriation of the “Public”

Just as EMOs construct their own image, they also shape a definition of their competitor/partner, the traditional public schools. The *classification scheme* traditional public schools = negative and EMO schools = positive that I re-constructed in this section is based on the combination of explicit and implicit elements in the discourses of these four companies. Explicit elements are EMO experience, success, commitment, and expansion, contrasted to public school “crisis,” declining quality, escalating costs, bureaucracy, and marginalization of students. In most cases the contrast is not overt, but implicit in the references to “all children,” “every child,” “student needs,” or “parents’ satisfaction,” conveying the ideological polarization.

EMOs characterize “traditional public schools” as inferior and inefficient while privately (corporate) managed schools are portrayed as efficient and superior. Their texts do this in six ways:

- 1) Reinforcing “the manufactured crisis” of public schools;
- 2) Denigrating traditional public schools;
- 3) Advocating school choice based on the purported failure of public schools;
- 4) Exploiting parents’ hopes and fears and school boards’ concerns;
- 5) Naturalizing private management of schools as part of the universalization of the market logic (what Fairclough, 1995, calls marketization) and corporate culture;
- 6) Masking the for-profit motive.

It is possible to describe the EMOs’ re-definition of “public” as a symbolic appropriation of all that “public” represents (e.g. the common good) as a means to advance the material appropriation of all that public schools represent to them, e.g. funds, contracts, clientele, facilities, potential profit. The logic that underlies EMOs’ rhetoric can be seen as a narrative that goes something like this: Because “traditional public schools” are incorrigibly and hopelessly inadequate, EMOs had to create and market a superior corporate alternative for parents. This alternative is inherently excellent and efficient, and it lacks or is able to overcome all the “traditional” problems of public schools in order to help all children, especially the poor. One could admire such a noble project if not for certain inherent contradictions: the masked interest in profit, the

connections with powerful conservative interests, and the similarity with other corporate forms of appropriating public goods such as health maintenance organizations (HMOs).

Although similar design elements are present at the institutional sites of the EMOs I studied, ideological arguments, except in Mosaica, are expressed more subtly and concepts such as efficiency and innovation have given way to others such as experience, difference, more products, and commitment to learning. One hypothesis about the reasons for this change is that the “industry” is no longer at the stage of novelty as regards the private management of public schools, but is in a time of consolidation and regular competition with other companies in the market. The criticism of public schools that used to be a central topic in EMOs webpages has gone to a second place, emphasizing their own experience (now they do have it), commitment, excellence, and new products and services. This emphasis gives the best corporate image of its schools. The quality of teaching, a motivating and safe environment, and improved performance and growth remain central elements of the image.

Through marketing and the political climate of the last decade, EMO’s have achieved high social legitimacy that, in turn, has constructed a kind of *common sense* based on market principles. This logic is less about the public good and more about individuals’ choices and interests. Generally, the websites’ collective conceptual approach constructs a market-oriented “common sense” that characterizes “traditional” public schools as an exhausted and anachronistic institution, ready to be replaced by what EMOs call the “new” schools, which more resemble private schools. EMO schools, like private schools, are relatively free of public scrutiny. But unlike private schools, they are publicly funded. The appropriation and definition of “public” by corporate schools and market model advocates was the key issue addressed by “ideological marketing.” At first EMOs tried to sell the market model for education together with its services/schools; today what I see is that they sell their schools as a natural part of the market model.

Political factors have been influential in obtaining “strong” laws, which in charter school parlance means less regulation, while advocates term “weak” those laws that are more restrictive. Conservative think tanks and choice advocates have provided the intellectual support necessary for EMOs’ definitions of “public” and public schools (e.g., Finn, 1996) that ultimately benefit private-sector interests.

EMOs’ ideological rhetoric builds an ideal model of education that is not consistently supported by evidence and veils the for-profit character of the companies. The ideological appropriation of the public agenda by corporations and their allies is functional to the EMOs’ material appropriation of schools. My hope is that this study will help to unravel the dominant discourse—the common sense of the market model—surrounding education. At the same time, this kind of analysis can lead to the constitution of *counterpublics*—supportive structures that challenge corporate discourses and practices in order to expand democracy and improve public education.

Notes

- 1 Free market economics is based on competition between spontaneous forces of supply and demand in society. While classic liberals thought that the state's power had to maintain market conditions and deal with social issues, neoliberals consider the state necessary for enforcing laws that protect private property, contracts, and the workings of the free market (Spring, 1998).
- 2 "Exnomination is a process whereby the views of the powerful in society are naturalized and the political nature of discourse is masked as class, gender, racial, and other differences. Exnominated discourse comes to be accepted as common sense" (Ludwig, 1997, p. 160).
- 3 EMOs call public schools "traditional public schools" in their webpages to differentiate them from their own schools, which they also describe as "public."
- 4 Edison Charter Schools is only a division of Edison Schools, because the corporation also contracts to manage districts.

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