

INTEGRATING VISUAL AND LANGUAGE ARTS: A CASE STUDY OF A
TEACHER COMPOSING A CURRICULUM

by

MICHELLE ZOSS

(Under the Direction of Peter Smagorinsky)

ABSTRACT

This case study investigates a teacher's curriculum composing in a sixth grade English language arts class, focusing on the teacher's problem solving and use of drawing to integrate the curriculum with visual arts. Framing curriculum as a process/product composed over time, I investigate the curriculum path of the teacher, Sherelle. Organized into a manuscript format, two articles comprise the body of this dissertation. The first manuscript focuses on composing curriculum and analyzes the curriculum path (Sumara, 1996), relationships, and solutions involved in Sherelle's integrated curriculum. The second manuscript focuses on Sherelle's decisions to use drawing as a tool and frames problem-solving around these decisions as a bricolage (Levi-Strauss, 1966). I analyze the bricolage within a sociocultural framework that provides specific goals, tools, and settings to analyze Sherelle's decisions. Data were collected during the school year through participant observation in the classroom, artifact collection of curriculum materials for student and teacher use, and interviews with the teacher. I reduced field note and artifact data to produce an initial set of codes, applied codes for goals, settings, and tools to analyze the problem solving moves Sherelle discussed in interviews. Analysis

focused on Sherelle's situated activity, specifically her use of drawing as a tool, personal and professional settings in which Sherelle worked, and goals Sherelle had for integrating curriculum within the school context, using drawing as a primary visual art text and tool, and solutions she developed for documenting and negotiating the integrated curriculum. The analysis finds that Sherelle used drawing for several purposes: (1) as a visual cue/illustration tool; (2) as a multimodal composition tool; (3) as a planning tool; and (4) as an assessment tool. The curriculum path integrated visual art on a consistent basis during most of the year, but a decision to focus on a colleague and the end-of-course exams resulted in a temporary shift to a language-only focus. The study concludes with a discussion of implications teachers may face in using visual art in literacy curricula. In Sherelle's case, careful documentation and opportunistic decisions for using available resources were needed to support her use of drawing.

INDEX WORDS: Education, Curriculum, Integration, English Language Arts, Reading, Visual Arts, Literacy, Bricolage, Transmediation, Composing across the Curriculum, School, Qualitative Participant Observation Research, Case Study, Sociocultural Theory, Dewey, Leví-Strauss, Arts Integration, Sketch-to-Stretch, Visual Composition, Aesthetics

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DEDICATION

For my grandparents, Harvey and Betty Failing, who taught me the value of working hard with my hands and mind. For my husband, Nick Zoss, who provided sustenance for my heart while I invested my hands and mind in writing this dissertation.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
CHAPTER	
1 VISUAL ART, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND INTEGRATION.....	1
Background of the Problem.....	2
Problem Statement	4
Summary	6
2 VISUAL ARTS AND LITERACY	8
Introduction	8
Part I: Articulating a Linguistic and Pictorial Semiotics-based Curriculum	10
Part II: Research in Integrated Literacy Contexts	21
Implications for Integrating Literacy with Visual Arts	30
3 COMPOSING AN INTEGRATED CURRICULUM: A TEACHER LAYS DOWN A PATH FOR LITERACY AND VISUAL ARTS WHILE WALKING.....	35
Abstract	36
Introduction	38
Theoretical Framework	41
Context of the Study.....	53

Method.....	58
Results	63
Discussion	92
References	94
Figures	99
 4 INTEGRATING DRAWING AS A TOOL FOR TEACHING IN A LANGUAGE CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY OF A TEACHER BRICOLEUR	 104
Abstract	105
Introduction	107
Teacher as Bricoleur, Curriculum as Bricolage Framework	110
Context of the Investigation	117
Method.....	120
Results	130
Discussion	152
References	157
Figures	161
Appendix	164
 5 INTEGRATED CURRICULUM AS A PATH TO BE LAID AND DOCUMENTED WHILE WALKING	 165
Learning from Sherelle's Curriculum Composing	166
REFERENCES	172

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 2.1: Semiotics-based curriculum general model	33
Figure 2.2: Linguistic and pictorial configuration of semiotics-based curriculum.....	34
Figure 3.1: Table of recorded conversations and interviews, 2005-2006 school year	99
Figure 3.2: Table of major categories, definitions, and examples	100
Figure 3.3: Table of visual art activities observed in Sherelle's curriculum	103
Figure 4.1: Table of codes and frequencies for entire data set within goal, setting, and tool, then configured with the "drawing" code	161
Figure 4.2: Table of major categories, definitions, and examples	162
Figure 4.3: Madison's backpack drawing and essay	163

CHAPTER ONE

VISUAL ART, LANGUAGE ARTS, AND INTEGRATION

Literacy practices in this century require savvy navigation of language and image.

Literacy learning need not be limited to linguistic texts with non-changing words (Fleckenstein, Calendrillo, & Worley, 2002); indeed, now one can develop literacy practices through participation in video games (Gee, 2003) and watching film and television (Flood, Heath, & Lapp, 2005). For literacy teachers the task of creating curriculum becomes enormous if they decide to attend to the visual images that are ubiquitous in 21st century communication. Despite the fact that communication through the simultaneous use of language and image is widespread outside school contexts, the use of image as a text in literacy classes can be limited at best. Specifically, drawing as a form of composition is not a regularly sanctioned text for students to communicate their learning in secondary English language arts and reading classrooms.

The argument for using visual art in literacy classes is not new. The role of visual art in secondary school literacy contexts has a historical precedent dating back to the late 19th century. The Committee of Ten (1892), which included prominent individuals from universities across the country, advocated for the use of drawing in English classes as a component of a rigorous curriculum meant to prepare students to enter college. Drawing was recommended as a useful skill for communicating in science and math classes as well. A century old report, the Committee of Ten document illustrates the idea that using images to teach adolescents about language, literacy, and literature can be a promising

endeavor. The Committee of Ten operated in a century without television, radio, computers, the Internet, or cell phones; teachers in the 21st century have access to a wealth of sophisticated communication tools and literacy classes are rife for the opportunity to teach adolescents about the language and images that can be consumed and composed both in and out of school contexts.

Background of the Problem

In my experience as a high school student, keeping drawings slipped into the spaces of my school books was one of the ways that I kept my concentration focused. I tucked drawings into notebooks and squiggled designs on the margins of paper. I used drawings as an escape, as a small, unobtrusive means to think in image while I worked through the language of high school curricula. Making images during class was my way of making connections between what I was seeing and hearing in class, what I was supposed to be learning, and what I was thinking. Drawing was my personal, revolutionary tactic for dealing with school (cf. Botzakis, 2006, for a discussion of reading tactics). I had to have drawings to understand what I was doing in school.

As an adult I taught English classes in an urban high school in the Western U.S. and I noticed that my students were using drawings in their school work, too. I took advantage of my students' interests in making images in the margins of their school work and began using visual art in my instruction and in activities the students completed. During the two years that I taught freshman English, visual art was prominent in my curriculum. When art was involved in the curriculum, more of my students attended class, their individual and group assignments were turned in on time and received high marks, and as a teacher, I felt that I was making an impact with my curriculum. The

problem was that my inclusion of visual art in English courses resisted traditional methods used in my school and the principal wanted justification for the time and materials used for the visual art produced in my classes. I entered graduate school hoping to find theory and scholarship to support the decisions I made in my classroom.

Along my journey through graduate school I met Sherelle, a student in my undergraduate cohort of English education students, who was interested in integrating visual art in her own teaching practice. Sherelle agreed to participate in a case study with me to afford me the opportunity to examine how another teacher solves the problems involved in bringing visual art into an English language arts curriculum. Part of my agreement with Sherelle was to support and mentor her work with visual art as she began her first year teaching literacy courses (i.e., English language arts and reading) in a middle school, all the while observing her curriculum decisions and probing these decisions in informal conversations and formal interviews.

Wineburg and Grossman (2000) present a number of discussions about the challenges of both implementing and naming the phenomenon of bringing together multiple academic disciplines. Within that volume, Applebee, Burroughs, and Cruz (2000) define a continuum of types of integrated curriculum. On the continuum of curriculum, an *integrated curriculum* only occurs in those instances in which each of the academic disciplines is valued as an equal partner in learning and teaching in the classroom. The notion of integration is contrasted with *multidisciplinary curriculum* in which one discipline is used as a subordinate tool for supplementing the main discipline. The study presented here seeks to understand the problem solving Sherelle used as she

worked toward an integrated curriculum that valued both English language arts and visual art.

Problem Statement

In this case study, I explore the curriculum composing and problem solving practices of Sherelle, a sixth grade English language arts and reading teacher. The study is divided into two articles, the first focuses on the integrated curriculum Sherelle composed and the second focuses on Sherelle as a bricoleur (Huberman, 1993; Lévi-Strauss, 1966), a type of problem solver who uses available materials as the tools for creating solutions to emergent problems. The larger study that comprises this dissertation represents my investigation of Sherelle's work toward integrating a literacy curriculum with visual arts. This dissertation represents my struggle to show how the curriculum, the relationships, and the solutions that Sherelle encounters and creates in her curriculum are all construction of meaning. In order to understand the meanings surrounding Sherelle's curriculum, I asked the following questions:

1. How does a secondary school teacher compose an integrated curriculum?
2. How do the teacher's relations with people and texts that are part of the teaching context affect the composition of integrated curriculum?
3. What solutions does Sherelle create to attend to the relationships with people and materials within her context as she composes her curriculum?
4. How does a teacher within a secondary school setting use drawing as a tool within an integrated visual arts and literacy curriculum?

I next present the problem statements and research questions for the two articles in the dissertation.

Manuscript 1: Composing an integrated curriculum

In this study I investigate a teacher's composing of a curriculum in a sixth grade English language arts (ELA) and reading class. Though the curriculum for this class was outlined by the state's board of education, Sherelle, the teacher, opted to integrate visual art into the curriculum. Sherelle intended to integrate visual art via the use of images and the composition of drawings in her class before the school year began. In addition to imagining a significant role for visual art in her classroom, Sherelle also envisioned a teaching practice that was "hands-on" and engaging for students. Thus, her teaching goals for herself and her learning goals for her students throughout the year were to compose a curriculum that integrated visual art and hands-on activities, materials, and texts. I analyze Sherelle's experiences with her curriculum in relation to her interests in integrating visual art, her understandings of the curriculum over time, and her relationships with her peers, mentors, and leaders in the school. In light of this interest in Sherelle's composing of her curriculum, I explore the following research questions:

1. What is the curriculum path that Sherelle takes to integrate visual arts with reading and English language arts?
2. How do relations with people and texts in Sherelle's setting affect her decisions about integrated curriculum as she composes that curriculum throughout the school year?
3. What solutions does Sherelle create to attend to the relationships with people and materials within her context as she composes her curriculum?

The goal of the study was to understand the integrated curriculum path Sherelle composed during the year and the relations that affected her decisions along the way.

Manuscript 2: A case study of a teacher bricoleur

To further my own understanding of how Sherelle composed her literacy curriculum I frame her practice in the theory of teacher as *bricoleur* (Huberman, 1993; Lévi-Strauss, 1966). The bricoleur is a crafty thinker who uses available materials as tools for solving problems. Any material can become a tool and the purpose of the material/tool can change to accommodate the goals of the bricoleur. In light of Sherelle's interests in using drawing in her literacy curriculum and the problem solving involved in composing that curriculum, I examine the following research question:

How does Sherelle use drawings as tools for achieving her goal of integrating visual art in a middle school English language arts classroom setting?

The goal of the study was to understand a bricoleur in the process of solving a problem. Sherelle is the bricoleur, a teacher thinking, talking, and teaching her way through the problem of using drawing in her literacy curriculum. Her problem solving in composing her curriculum, that is, her *bricolage*, is an on-going, developmental process in which drawing serves a number of purposes.

Summary

I present in this dissertation Sherelle's problem solving as she works on her integrated curriculum. In Chapter 2 I present an argument for integrating visual arts in literacy curricula. I base the argument on a semiotics-based curriculum (Suhor, 1984, 1992) theory. I also review research of integrated visual arts and literacy curricula within secondary school settings. The purpose of the review is to illustrate the complexity of literacy events that can occur when visual art becomes a significant text in literacy curricula. Chapters 3 and 4 are two articles that will be submitted to refereed journals. In

Chapter 3 I examine the integrated curriculum Sherelle composed during the year and explore the relations she had with people and texts that affected her decisions during that year. In Chapter 4 I investigate Sherelle's problem solving through the lens of bricolage (Huberman, 1993; Lévi-Strauss, 1966) in order to understand how she used drawings as a number of different tools in her curriculum development. Finally, in Chapter 5 I conclude the dissertation with a discussion of the implications of integrating visual art in literacy contexts and the challenges that teachers face in working toward integration.

CHAPTER TWO

VISUAL ARTS AND LITERACY

Introduction

The role of visual arts in a literacy context, such as a literature course in a high school or a language arts course in a middle school, need not simply be decorative. That is, visual art in a literacy context need not be limited to a print of Monet's *Water Lilies* on the wall to be looked at when students need a break from reading and writing. Instead, visual art can be a means for students to learn to communicate ideas and to learn new ways to think about problems and texts. The use of visual art as a means to communicate is not an unusual tool for teaching children in elementary schools (Dyson 1997/2005). Children in kindergarten through third grade are encouraged to compose texts with both language and image. Curriculum materials marketed for primary grades include paper for students to learn to write on that includes space for forming letters and for drawing pictures. Beyond third grade, and especially as adolescents enter secondary schools, the role of images in literacy contexts diminishes and, as a result, composing and attending to images are separated, with communication in images placed in the visual arts class and communication in language placed in the literacy class. In contrast to the separation of image and text within school contexts, adolescents lead rich lives of multimedia communication that sync image and language together. The technology and resources available to adolescents is flush with the potential to communicate in language, image, or both simultaneously. With the belief that communication for adolescents should be

approached from a position that embraces both language and image, in this chapter I argue for the integration of visual art within secondary school literacy contexts.

The position for using visual art in literacy classes is not new. The role of visual art in secondary school literacy contexts has a historical precedent dating back to the late 19th century. The Committee of Ten (1892), which included prominent individuals from universities across the country, advocated the use of drawing in English classes as a component of a rigorous curriculum meant to prepare students to enter college. Drawing was recommended as a useful skill for communicating in science and math classes as well. A century old report, the Committee of Ten document is not proof enough that visual art should be used as a curriculum tool in literacy classes; rather, the document illustrates the idea that using images to teach adolescents about language, literacy, and literature can be a promising endeavor. The Committee of Ten operated in a century without television, radio, computers, the Internet, or cell phones; adolescents in the 21st century have access to a wealth of sophisticated communication tools and literacy classes are rife with the opportunity to teach adolescents about the language and images that can be consumed and composed both in and out of school.

The argument I present in this chapter is based on curriculum based in semiotics (Suhor, 1984) in which multiple means for communication are valued. The chapter is organized in two parts: In the first part I explore a model for integrated visual arts and literacy based on the semiotics-based curriculum. The integrated curriculum model is based on the rationale that multiple pathways for learning (Eisner, 1998) are important ends for students in secondary settings. The content of an integrated curriculum includes texts based in language and image, while the processes for making meaning within the

curriculum include transmediation. Transmediation is the opportunity to express or respond to a text in one medium with a response composed in another medium, such as composing a drawing in response to reading a short story (Siegel, 1995). A discussion of medium-specific analysis, i.e., analysis approaches that are particular to a sign system such as language or image, illustrates thinking in different sign systems. In the second part I review research in which visual art plays a role in literacy classes in secondary school settings. The purpose of the review is to illustrate the complexity of literacy events that can occur when visual art is integrated into literacy curricula. I conclude with a brief discussion of implications regarding the implementation of integrated literacy curricula for adolescents and teachers facing demands of standardized assessments.

Part I: Articulating a Linguistic and Pictorial Semiotics-based Curriculum

Suhor's Semiotics-based Curriculum

Suhor (1984; 1992) claims that semiotics provides “a useful framework for conceptualising curriculum” (p. 250). Semiotics is the study of signs (Eco, 1985; Peirce, 1931-1958); “a sign is something that stands for something else” (Suhor, 1992, p. 228). For example, a word on a page or a drawing can be two signs for the idea of a water lily. The word and the drawing constitute two different kinds of signs, one linguistic, one pictorial. Signs are not confined to language and image, however. Signs can also be constituted in architecture, dance, mathematics, and music. Different signs can be organized into sign systems that a person can use to convey an idea or meaning. Communicating an idea about a water lily, for instance, can be viewed in terms of the different signs used to convey what water lily means. According to Suhor, human beings draw from a number of sign systems all the time as they communicate with each other in

person, in print, in image, and in performance. Semiotics, then, is the study of signs and sign systems.

Suhor (1984) illustrates sign systems in a general model for semiotics-based curricula as seen in Figure 2.1. To understand the image in Figure 2.1, one can begin with the assumption that this model illustrates communication with the use of different kinds of signs and sign systems. At the top of the model is the experiential store, a repository of all the sensory information a person takes in and from which ideas are then communicated via the different sign systems listed at the bottom of the model. A person has a “range of media theoretically at one’s disposal in encoding various experiences” (p. 250). In other words, there is a range of possible signs which one can use to communicate about an experience. The sign systems or media available include linguistic, gestural, pictorial, musical, constructive, and other (e.g., aromatics, mathematics). Suhor also notes that human expression and communication can be conducted at any time in these media using multiple sign systems simultaneously. Human expression, then, is not limited to language or image or movement; rather, expression can be achieved through multiple sign systems. For example, a conversation about the image in Figure 2.1 can include verbal language (linguistic) to describe the model, as well as hand and body gestures (gestural) to demonstrate what that language represents, all the while referring to the image itself (pictorial) as a source for the conversation.

Within the model, Suhor (1984) situates the linguistic sign system higher than the other sign systems and connects it to each of the other sign systems with a dotted line. The hierarchy is purposeful, in that Suhor (1992) claims that “language is the main arbiter as students learn to use and understand all of the other symbol systems” (p. 229).

Suhor's claim assumes spoken and written language permeates the learning of all students and does not account for students who use sign-language as one of multiple sign systems to communicate (Ramsey, 1997/2005). For a semiotics-based curriculum for schools, then, the role of language is still primary, but the importance of language as the sole means for communication and expression is tempered by an acknowledgement that valuable thinking and learning *also* occur in sign systems that are non-linguistic.

To articulate a theory that names, describes, and supports literacy curricula that are integrated with the visual arts, I use a specific configuration of a semiotics-based curriculum that includes the linguistic and pictorial media.

An Integrated Literacy and Visual Arts Curriculum

To focus specifically on the integration of visual arts in a language arts curriculum, I narrow the sign systems in Suhor's (1984) general model to include only linguistic and pictorial sign systems. Figure 2.2 illustrates this linguistic/pictorial configuration. I acknowledge that narrowing the possible media used in an actual classroom to just two media is counter to Suhor's claim that "in actual human experience many expressions of thought occur simultaneously in more than one medium" (p. 252). Indeed, a lesson that integrates language and visual art is very likely to include gestural, musical, and possibly other sign systems. However, toward the end of defining a specific instance of curriculum, it is necessary to limit the argument to just the linguistic and pictorial sign systems (cf. Grossman, Valencia, & Hamel, 1997/2005, for a discussion of the challenges in defining the scope of English language arts curricula).

Multiple pathways for learning. The rationale for approaching a literacy curriculum from a semiotics perspective generally and from an integrated

linguistic/pictorial integration specifically is to produce curricula that provide multiple pathways for learning and expression (Eisner, 2002). The content of an integrated curriculum includes both linguistic and pictorial texts; thus the range of texts spans literature to painting and non-fiction to photography. The process or means for integrating this variety of texts involves learning to read image and language, while also learning to respond with image and language. I will return to the content and process in a moment.

To present adolescents with a semiotics-based curriculum that integrates visual art is to present a curriculum that values the variety of ways in which young people express their ideas and learning. The reading and composing processes and products in such a curriculum would yield myriad opportunities for adolescents to explore in language and image the world in which they live and the world they might imagine into being. Integrating visual art into secondary school literacy classrooms thus presents adolescents and teachers with affordances and constraints of two sign systems rather than the more traditional exclusive focus on language.

The affordances and constraints of a curriculum are embedded within the materials and activities of which the curriculum is comprised (Eisner, 2002). The activities that a teacher chooses to teach, the materials used to produce those activities, and the responses students compose in relation to the activity and material are both afforded and constrained by the possibilities of the sign system in which the activity, the material, and the response are located. Certainly linguistic signs are varied: Oral language, written language, literature texts, and informational texts are embedded with different and overlapping affordances and constraints. Adding the pictorial system of

signs, which includes two-dimensional images such as photographs, drawings, and paintings, adds a different set of affordances and constraints. The integration of visual art in literacy classes means that the ways students learn is expanded to include “an experientially rich array of resources for understanding some aspect of the human condition” (Eisner, 2002, p. 154).

The expansion of literacy curricula through integration with visual art activities and materials also includes the expansion of potential pathways for learning (Whitin, 2005). Instead of focusing exclusively on language and literature, adolescents learning in an integrated classroom have at minimum two sign systems in which to present their learning and their knowledge. For example, students could learn about internal conflict in a specific piece of literature by reading the original linguistic text, responding to the text by composing a drawing, watching a film version of the text, and then composing a second drawing that is accompanied by an oral presentation to respond to the original text, the first drawing, and the film.

Texts. With the affordances and constraints of a curriculum built into the materials and activities that comprise that curriculum, the texts that are included as materials to read and activities to produce become important components. An integrated curriculum meant to teach students using linguistic and pictorial signs should include texts primarily of words as well as texts primarily of images. In a typical secondary school literacy class, literature texts, like anthologies and young adult novels, are the main texts from which teachers and students work (Piro, 2002). The emphasis for reading and composing, then, is on linguistic text (Smagorinsky & Coppock, 1995a; Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998a; Smagorinsky, Zoss, & O'Donnell-Allen, 2005). Literature anthologies in the

recent past have included reproductions of works of art in the student editions, as well as in the teacher edition supplements (e.g., *Literature and the language arts: Experiencing literature*, 1996). Meant to accompany selections of literature in the anthology, these optional materials are provided to support the linguistic learning in literacy classrooms. In an integrated classroom, the images are valued as texts to which questions are posed, investigations are launched, and relationships are transacted in ways that scholars investigating readers describe questioning, investigating, and relational engagements with linguistic texts (Faust, 2000; Rosenblatt, 1995; Sumara, 1996).

The inclusion of images as texts fits with Witte's (1992) argument that a conception of text should be expanded to include the various ways people use and compose texts. Witte criticizes notions of writing that privilege "spoken or written linguistic systems of meaning-making" while ignoring other systems of meaning-making, stating that this "can hardly yield a comprehensive or culturally viable understanding of 'writing' or 'text'" (p. 240). Texts for Witte can include signs from any sign system because people use the signs necessary to meet their needs. For adolescents, the available signs within a typical literacy class may be restricted to certain uses of language: writing five paragraph themes, reading British and American literature, and composing short answers and essays for tests. Smagorinsky and his colleagues have argued that the composing processes adolescents use in classes throughout a school include drafting architectural and interior design plans, as well as designing horse ranches, but the composing in the school that is commensurate with testing practices and with the distinction of being highly valued by the school and teachers is the composing students did in English classes in the form of writing linguistic essays (Smagorinsky, Cook, &

Reed, 2005; Smagorinsky, Pettis, & Reed, 2004; Smagorinsky, Zoss, & Reed, 2006).

Like the rich composing practices in multimedia that adolescents use in their lives outside school (Heath, 2004), Smagorinsky and his colleagues' work with composing across the curriculum highlights the idea that writing or composing need not be constrained to the signs available in language. The integration of visual art in a literacy course does not negate the value of the work done in language nor do images provide redundant information (Eisner, 2002); rather, the use of images supplements and complements the linguistic composition (cf. Howard, 1916 for an early 20th century discussion of images for teachers to use in secondary literacy contexts).

The literacies valued in an integrated curriculum with pictorial and linguistic texts would involve both analysis and composition of visual and print texts. Students in literacy classes of this type would not be assessed exclusively with tools like multiple choice tests and written essays, like those found in heritage traditions of schooling (Smagorinsky & Taxel, 2005). Rather, performance in an integrated literacy class would be assessed through the use of both visual and print media compositions and tests. For example, assessment tools could include portfolios, compositions using language and/or image, and oral performance.

Process. The process for composing and reading image and language texts in an integrated literacy context includes the affordance of *transmediation* (Siegel, 1995; Suhor, 1984, 1992; Whitin, 2005) and the constraint of *medium-specific analysis*. Transmediation is the "translation of content from one sign system into another" (Suhor, 1984, p. 250). In an integrated literacy class essays could be composed about paintings as well as literature, and drawings and paintings could be composed about literature and,

perhaps, other images. For example, a student who composes a drawing as a response to a short story is transmediating the linguistic content of the story into a pictorial set of signs. In this example the meaning that the student makes of the linguistic story is represented in a pictorial sign. Siegel explains that students

must arrive at some understanding and then find some way to cross (“trans”) the boundaries between language and art such that their understanding is represented pictorially; it is in this sense that one sign system is explored in terms of (mediation) another (p. 461).

To do this representation of meaning, it is necessary that the student think in terms of the language of the short story and in terms of the images of the drawing. Through the composition of the drawing, the student represents meanings that she constructed that require her to think in both linguistic and pictorial signs.

Smagorinsky (1996) notes that “in translating their thoughts into a material product, learners often develop new ideas about the object of their thinking,” and that the product “becomes a symbol that the student can use to promote further reflection (and often reconsideration) of the ideas that produced it” (p. 15). In other words, the drawing that the student produces is a material product of her thinking and is also a text that can be used for further thinking about the short story. Thus, in the composition of a drawn text in response to a literature text, there is a translation of meaning from one medium or sign system (linguistic → print text) to another (pictorial → visual text).

Transmediation in a literacy education context embraces the notion that “*meaning is not limited to what words can express*” (Eisner, 2002, p. 30, emphasis in original). Eisner’s point is that the meaning one makes of something can include more than one

form or representation. These forms are not required to have language in order to be meaningful. Eisner goes on to say that when meaning is formed in more than one medium, “these forms enable us to construct meanings that are nonredundant; each form of representation we employ confers its own features upon the meaning we make or interpret” (p. 230). The emphasis in this transmediation component of the integrated literacy curriculum framework is that students are given opportunities to think about, compose, and make meanings of texts that are not limited to language. The opportunities for students to represent the meanings they make are expanded to include the affordances and constraints of both the linguistic and pictorial sign systems.

Medium-specific analysis is a constraint attendant to an integrated literacy curriculum. Suhor (1984), Eisner (2002), and others argue that the analysis of texts in different sign systems requires instances of reasoning specific to the sign system in use. For example, when discussing a short story, it is appropriate to use the elements of a story (i.e., character, conflict, plot, and setting) as analytic tools for making meanings about the short story text. Likewise, when discussing a painting, it is appropriate to use the elements of design (i.e., color, form, line, shape, space, texture, and value) as analytic tools for making meanings about the painting text. Suhor cautions that if students are taught to apply only literary criticism, which includes the elements of story, to non-linguistic media, the analysis may be flawed. That is, an analysis of a visual medium with analytic tools specific to a linguistic medium does not allow for a full investigation of that visual medium, and, as such, this pedagogical move may be short-sighted. In a literacy context that integrates visual art, then, students learn how to talk and think about

both language-based and image-based texts and, potentially, texts based in both language and image (Albers & Murphy, 2000; Kress et al., 2005; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001).

An affordance for including medium-specific analysis for images is the opportunity to teach adolescents about perceiving the different kinds of texts they encounter in and out of school. Literacy teachers in the past have taught adolescents to be savvy consumers and composers of linguistic texts. To include visual art in a literacy classroom as a text for analyzing and composing is to expand literacy practices to include the multimedia of language and images that adolescents encounter in their everyday lives. A medium-specific analysis for visual art deals with perceiving qualities, also known as *reasoned perception* (Siegesmund, 1999, 2005) or *qualitative reasoning* (Eisner, 2002). Qualities in an image are the colors, forms, lines, shapes, spaces, textures, and values that comprise the elements of design. When a viewer perceives the relationships among these qualities (e.g., relations of color, of lines, of colors with lines), the viewer begins constructing a meaning of the image. Reasoned perception and qualitative reasoning refer to the process of constructing meaning from the perception of relationships of qualities a viewer encounters in art. Whitin (2005) posits that semiotics-based curriculum affords opportunities to teach students about how their perceptions of sensory experiences, like that of attending to the visual qualities in art, relate to thinking and “multiple ways of knowing” (p. 366).

For Dewey (1934/1980) the act of perception is also concerned with the perceiver’s relationship with the image or work of art. The perceiver’s relationship with the image results in a construction of meaning in which the perceiver brings as much of the meaning-making process to the image as the image brings meaning-making to the

perceiver. Eisner (2002) calls this interactive relationship *the work of art*, a reciprocal process in which the art works on the perceiver and the perceiver works on the art.

Dewey posits that the work of perception, especially when working with visual art, is a demanding cognitive task: “To think effectively in terms of relations of qualities is as severe a demand upon thought as to think in terms of symbols, verbal and mathematical” (p. 46). The perception of qualities is thus a demanding thought process that can be done before one expresses one’s thoughts about this perception in words, image, or other symbol system. Thus, in literacy classes that integrate the visual arts, part of the curriculum is teaching students how to perceive and talk about the qualities in images, a process Dewey claims calls for a high degree of intelligent thinking.

Visual art educators (Eisner, 1998, 2002; Siegesmund, 1999, 2005) value the medium-specific analysis of qualitative reasoning and reasoned perception as a fundamental component of art education. Students who use qualitative reasoning in art classrooms think in visual terms and use both language and images to articulate that thinking. In an integrated literacy context, valuing medium-specific tools for thinking and learning in both visual and linguistic media places language and image on a more equal footing. Daniel, Stuhr, and Ballangee-Morris (2006) argue that accomplishing integration that values art in non-art contexts requires that the visual arts be incorporated into the big ideas, key concepts, and essential questions that drive the curriculum. With interconnections of pictorial and linguistic texts in the heart of an integrated literacy curriculum, students can begin to explore the different types of thinking involved in both visual and language arts. Gardner (1993) and Smagorinsky (1995; 1996) have argued that a strong mathematical and linguistic focus in schools has limited the possible sign

systems in which students learn and can express their knowledge. Though Gardner's and Smagorinsky's arguments were positioned within discussions of cognition and intelligences, the argument is germane to a discussion of semiotics-based curricula that seeks to expand the sign systems available for adolescents to use to perceive, think about, respond to, and compose within schools.

While transmediation and reasoned perception are processes that students and teachers in integrated literacy classes can use to work with linguistic and pictorial texts toward a goal of multiple pathways for learning, there is an important constraint to note. In the multimedia environment of the 21st century, it is hard to imagine that an integrated literacy classroom would not also take advantage of the music, drama, film, and on-line media available. While the question of how each of these different texts would play out in an integrated curriculum is beyond the scope of this chapter, the value of the integrated curriculum lies in the multiple and varied opportunities for students to encounter texts based in language and image, and to think and respond using transmediation and reasoned perception (cf. Walling, 2006, for more ideas for integrating the visual arts with literacy curricula) In the next section, I review a number of studies that have been done with adolescents in secondary school literacy contexts that employ visual art. I will discuss these studies in terms of the content and the processes used in the literacy contexts.

Part II: Research in Integrated Literacy Contexts

Flood, Heath, and Lapp, the editors of the first edition of the *Handbook of Research on Teaching Literacy through the Visual and Communicative Arts* (1997/2005), argue that the purpose of the handbook is "to bring the visual arts into a central place in

literacy and language education . . . to break the trend of literacy educators' exclusive focus on learning as reading and writing" (p. xvi). The resulting collection of 64 articles examines literacy and literacy teaching as practices involving drama, poetry, drawing, television, books, computers, film, video, movement, and play. Among the chapters focusing specifically on the role of visual art in literacy classes in schools, most focus on elementary children with the exception of articles on adolescent street literacy (Conquergood, 1997/2005), adolescents and youth genre (Daiute, 1997/2005), programs designed to bridge home and school literacies (Lee, 1997/2005) and oral and intergenerational texts (Binstock, 1997/2005; Gadsden, 1997/2005).

Conquergood (1997/2005) examined the embodied literacy practices of adolescents in gangs using images and language to proclaim their affiliations on their bodies and on walls and clothing. The texts the adolescents composed as graffiti used language and image and were meaningful signs that conveyed messages to compatriots and enemies alike. Adolescents in Conquergood's study had to attend to the qualities of line and letters in their texts, e.g., two extra points on a star denoted affiliation with a rival gang, while the placement of letters upside down or right-side up were indicators of affiliation and respect or disrespect. While not located in a secondary school literacy class, the literacy practices of the adolescents in this study point to the complex ways in which students encounter and respond to their environments.

Returning to a school-based context, Harste, Short, and Burke (1988) presented drawing as a component of writing for elementary students' emergent writing practices. Whitin (1996a, 1996b, 2005) repurposed the sketch-to-stretch as an image and language composing activity in a seventh grade context and used sketch-to-stretch as a response to

literature. Whitin taught students visual response to literature as a form of composition, as a text that required drafting, editing, and revising, just like the verbal texts they wrote. The sketches were accompanied with written verbal descriptions and students were provided time in class to confer with peers for suggestions to edit and revise their drawings and accompanying linguistic descriptions. Whitin taught her students how to talk about their drawings in small and large group settings, with discussions of the symbols and colors the students used in the drawings as important parts of the curriculum. Students discussed and wrote about the qualities of their drawings and how these qualities functioned as referents to the literature.

The texts used in Whitin's classroom include linguistic and pictorial texts. Students composed drawings and writing about their responses to literature. The drawn responses are examples of transmediation from language to image, while the written responses about the drawing are also examples of transmediation from image to language. The students were given multiple opportunities for transmediation with the composing of their drawings and writing as responses to the literature they read. In a subsequent article, Whitin (2005) writes that the "instances when students composed collaborative sketches best revealed the process of transmediation" (p. 370). The opportunity to compose drawings with other students was accompanied with talk about decisions being made and revised as the students put marks on paper and negotiated the resulting composition. Requiring the students to think about and articulate their thinking in terms of the qualities found in their drawings, that is, requiring students to discuss their design choices for lines, colors, and use of space for example, indicates that reasoned perception was also a part of this integrated curriculum. Sketch-to-stretch as an activity

was further incorporated into the literacy curriculum as a whole as one possible means for making meaning of literature. Making meaning in the context of Whitin's study was achieved via multiple paths, of which sketch-to-stretch was an activity that afforded students opportunities to think and respond using language and image.

An example of an integrated literacy and visual arts curriculum that employs literature and visual art texts, along with reasoned perception, transmediation, and multiple pathways to meaning is the work of O'Donnell-Allen and Smagorinsky (1999; Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998b, 2000). Studying *Hamlet*, students in O'Donnell-Allen's senior English class worked together in small groups to create body biographies (Underwood, 1987) of the main characters in the play. The body biographies were life-size outlines of a human body that were filled with drawings, quotes, poems, and descriptions of the focal character. O'Donnell-Allen and Smagorinsky argue that the process of composing and negotiating the meaning and rendering of the linguistic and pictorial signs on the body biography was both a mediating and mediated process linked to students' transactions with the text and the social practices of the members of the group. The social and artistic practices, both examples of transmediation (from language to image and image to language), of making the body biography informed their reading of *Hamlet*, just as their social and artistic practices and the play text informed their reading of the body biography text. Similar to the students working in Whitin's (1996a, 1996b, 2005) class with the sketch-to-stretch, the students studying *Hamlet* used oral language to mediate their understandings of the play and of their body biography. These studies illustrate that work in language and image is complementary in ways that promote variety in student thinking and composing practices.

Another unit in O'Donnell-Allen's class focused on identity and culminated with the composition of identity masks and verbal self-portraits (Smagorinsky et al., 2005). The unit employed a variety of activities including reading literary texts, viewing artists' self-portraits, and discussing memories of the students' childhoods. The masks were constructed on the students' faces and then painted to represent their identities. The study afforded Peta, the focal student in the study, an opportunity to talk about the meanings he inscribed in his mask. Peta's mask visually represented the non-linear thinking he preferred, a way of thinking that may have contributed to his dropping out of school. Peta also inscribed emotional meanings in the mask, using colors and shapes to show the intensity of frustration and anger he felt when encountering his classmates as well as other adults in his life.

Eisner (2002) and Siegesmund (2006) note that visual arts instruction, especially in terms of teaching and learning about qualities, involves somatic knowledge (knowledge of the body) and connections with emotions. Citing the neuroscience in Damasio's (1999) research, Siegesmund argues that arts instruction with attention to reasoning is intimately connected with the body and emotions. With the mask activity, students had the opportunity to compose pictorial texts that inscribed meaning via visual qualities located on a canvas that not only represented, but was also formed by the very contours of their faces. The students were expected to compose an image that conveyed visually the meanings of identity the students held about themselves. The process of composing the masks was located within reasoned perception because the masks were created using exclusively visual qualities. Peta used language to describe his mask to the researchers, an opportunity for transmediating his understanding of his mask to a

linguistic, oral description. As a component within the larger unit on identity, the mask activity was an example of a visual text among many linguistic and pictorial texts that were used to develop meanings about identity and how identity is represented in different media.

In a seventh grade literacy classroom, Wilhelm (1997) writes about how he used visual art with struggling and reluctant readers. Wilhelm's integration of visual art is focused on teaching students visualization strategies to help them engage with linguistic texts. The students had difficulties imagining or visualizing the stories they read for class. Wilhelm claims that "art may provide a means for experiencing what it means for a reader to enter, create, and participate in a story world" (p. 138). Toward the goal of helping his students create visualizations of story worlds, Wilhelm used several different strategies to make concrete and visible for his struggling readers what proficient readers do in their minds while reading. These strategies included (1) symbolic story representation, in which students brought in or made objects to represent characters and themselves as readers and to use as props for recreating scenes of their reading experiences (cf. Enciso, 1992); (2) visual protocols, in which students composed drawings during and after their reading of linguistic texts to help them visualize the text; (3) illustrated books and graphic novels as entrées into literature (cf. Heath & Bhagat, 1997/2005); (4) illustrations, in which students illustrated print-only stories and later composed their own stories to illustrate; (5) picture mapping, in which students took notes about key details of the story using visual symbols; and (6) collages, in which students used found images to compose a visual response to a poem or a song (pp. 120-124). All of these strategies were shared with peers and Wilhelm (as their teacher) to help the

students articulate the meanings they were making of the linguistic texts and to encourage them to continue with reading as a valuable experience. Wilhelm states “the creation of artwork provides students with concrete tools and experiences to think with, talk about, and share” (p. 141). Thus, the role of art in this context was a means for representing the experiences the students were having while reading their linguistic texts.

Wilhelm’s (1997) visualization practices provided students with opportunities to compose visual art as texts to accompany the literature and other linguistic texts used in the class and allowed students to use transmediation to articulate their responses to reading. Oral language was frequently used for students to talk about their visual compositions and their meanings inscribed in images and in the verbal texts they read. The talk around the visualization strategies was thus important as a sign system for conveying to Wilhelm what the students were learning while they read. Wilhelm’s use of several different visualization strategies illustrates how visual art can be used in multiple ways to help students develop their literacy practices. The list of strategies also takes advantage of different types of pictorial texts available for students to use and compose: Students could use found objects and images to compose works that illustrated their reading relationships with texts; students could draw images that showed the relationships among characters, plot, and setting; students could read graphic novels and comic books in which they could learn sophisticated and professional productions of language and image relations; and, students could compose illustrations for both their own writing and that of professional authors. This multiplicity of strategies affords students support for literacy practices via explicit instruction in how they can use their

experiences in reading and in responding to their reading with images as ways for knowing and understanding linguistic texts.

In another account of attending to the needs of struggling students, Fu (1995) presents the story of a high school student from Laos who begins to use English with confidence as a result of talking about his drawings. The student, Cham, brought a drawing of his experiences living in Laos to his English as a Second Language (ESL) class where Fu was a participant observer. Fu asked the adolescent to tell her about the drawing, and the subsequent verbal exchange she had with him was the most she had ever heard him use English up to that point in the school year. Cham was encouraged by both the ESL teacher and Fu to compose more drawings. The series of drawings that Cham composed became key components in his English oral and written literacy education. Cham knew his reasons for using the qualities of line, shape, and form in his drawings, but he did not have the linguistic skills for articulating those reasons into English until he brought in the first drawing to his ESL class. With time and practice, Cham's language developed quite rapidly because his language learning was intimately related to what he knew he could talk about with the help of a drawing.

While not a whole-class curriculum project, Cham's use of drawings as texts in his language development is an example of how visual art can become significant texts in the development of literacy for adolescents. Using his drawings as a starting point, Cham transmediated what he knew in the pictorial sign system into oral and written linguistic signs. Cham's discussion around his drawings revealed how he inscribed meaning in the relationships of color, line, and shape to convey his experiences as a refugee. He seemed to understand the relationships of qualities in his drawing and he used reasoned

perception to explain the relationships and the meanings of those relationships to his ESL teacher and Fu. Furthermore, his pathway to language was different from that of the other students in the ESL class and as a result of his work in that class he began to develop his skills in other subject areas. Cham found an alternative path to learning in school with his drawings that eventually helped him to navigate the linguistic path of the school's instruction and curriculum.

Jacobs (2006) is another educator interested in the learning paths of students who struggle: Her study focuses on male adolescents who have been incarcerated and their reluctance to read. As part of a literacy curriculum in a jail, Jacobs held 45 minute classes in which she read aloud a young adult novel that the boys collectively chose. During this reading and listening session, the students composed drawings that conveyed their emotional responses to the text. The drawings were accompanied by an oral description of the drawing. Jacobs reasons that the drawings mediated “an alternative yet socially appropriate method of expression” for the boys (p. 115), citing a host of studies about male adolescents in jail and juvenile detention centers as having intense emotional levels as a result of their experiences. Thus, the role of visual art in this alternative secondary context is that of emotional mediator, a role attributed traditionally to the arts (Eisner, 1998); at the same time, Jacobs promotes a notion of literacy that includes drawing as an appropriate sign system for expressing responses to literature.

While Jacobs' (2006) study of incarcerated youth is rich in literature on male adolescents in jails, it is short on description and explication of the value and role of drawing compositions as a response to literature. In this case, drawings are simply what Jacobs calls a “‘hook’ to entice youth” (p. 118) into reading and responding to literature.

I include the study here as a recent and not uncommon example of how people are trying to do this commendable work of bringing the visual arts into literacy contexts for adolescents. At the same time, however, this is an example of the visual arts being used only toward specific ends that do not include visual arts education goals of qualitative reasoning. Visual art in this context is used as a supporting role for literacy goals, a scenario Applebee, Burroughs, and Cruz (2000) and Rényi (2000) find commonplace in schools in which teachers endeavor to bring together multiple disciplines in their curricula. Jacobs has laudable goals for using art as an emotional mediator and a socially constructive means of expression. Other studies with students in alternative school contexts also employ visual and linguistic means for students to compose and express their responses to literature that provide more explicit rationales and results for integrating visual art with literacy (Smagorinsky & Coppock, 1994, 1995a, 1995b). In literacy contexts located in alternative schools or jails, the integration of art can afford adolescents an alternative, complementary sign system for expressing their thinking. Adolescents gain opportunities for connecting with literature, their teachers, and their own emotions and experiences when given access to explicit teaching and teachers attentive to the role of meaning construction (Whitin, 2005).

Implications for Integrating Literacy with Visual Arts

Being able to embrace the idea of multiple points of entry and multiple ends for learning in any classroom requires flexibility on the teacher's part (Eisner, 1994; Huberman, 1993). Eisner (2002) calls this "flexible purposing," a term that is originally Dewey's (1938/1988), to describe "the improvisational side of intelligence as it is employed in the arts...the ability to shift direction, even to redefine one's aims when

better options emerge in the course of one's work" (p. 77). Being able to shift and respond to the needs of students with the flexibility of using language and image, as a teacher in a semiotics-based literacy classroom may do, is a valuable educational end in a world in which the media used to communicate changes frequently. A teacher of integrated curriculum uses flexible purposing to choose appropriate texts and activities that students can then transmediate into suitable media for representing their understandings. Furthermore, a teacher who employs flexible purposing can model for students a responsive and inclusive approach to literacy, rather than a dismissive and exclusionary approach to composing and reading texts both in and out of school. In other words, a flexible teacher can model for students the means for attending to their rapidly changing environment in ways that are suitable to their own idiosyncratic needs.

The multiple pathways for learning and meaning-making presented in the various studies in this chapter show that the role of visual art in literacy classrooms can vary with the setting, the students, the teacher, and the activity. Compositions using visual art and language in these secondary literacy classes fostered the development of multiple meanings for texts. Unlike literacy classes in which texts are read for one essential meaning (Faust, 2000), students in these studies were afforded opportunities to express their ideas in dynamic ways similar to the shifting and fast-paced modes of communication they use outside of school. A challenge for teachers embracing the multiple pathways for learning and transmediation approach to students' composing of responses is the nearly singular pathway and lack of opportunities for transmediation included in standardized assessment practices. As teachers face the requirements of Adequate Yearly Progress reports via student performance on standardized tests, there

may be less room for the visual arts in literacy classrooms. Teachers who desire dynamic teaching and learning in their classes may need to strategically use and seek out curriculum tools that will allow them to be both responsive to the needs of their students (Huberman, 1993) and the demands of a culture of testing that posits reading as being at-risk in the U.S. (National Endowment for the Arts, 2004; Smith, Marshall, Spurlin, Alvermann, & Bauerlein, 2004).

Although I present here a model of integrated literacy curricula as stemming from multiple pathways for making meaning, of a content consisting of texts based in language and image, and of a process founded in transmediation and medium-specific analyses, including reasoned perception, I do not seek to make this a prescriptive outline of what such an integrated curriculum should unequivocally look like. More work can be done to envision literacy activities that also include gestural, musical, and constructive signs in the curriculum. Future research could investigate the potential ramifications for using integrated curricula with high-stakes standardized testing concerns for adolescents while examining the possibilities for fostering excellence in teaching and learning in integrated literacy classrooms.

Figures

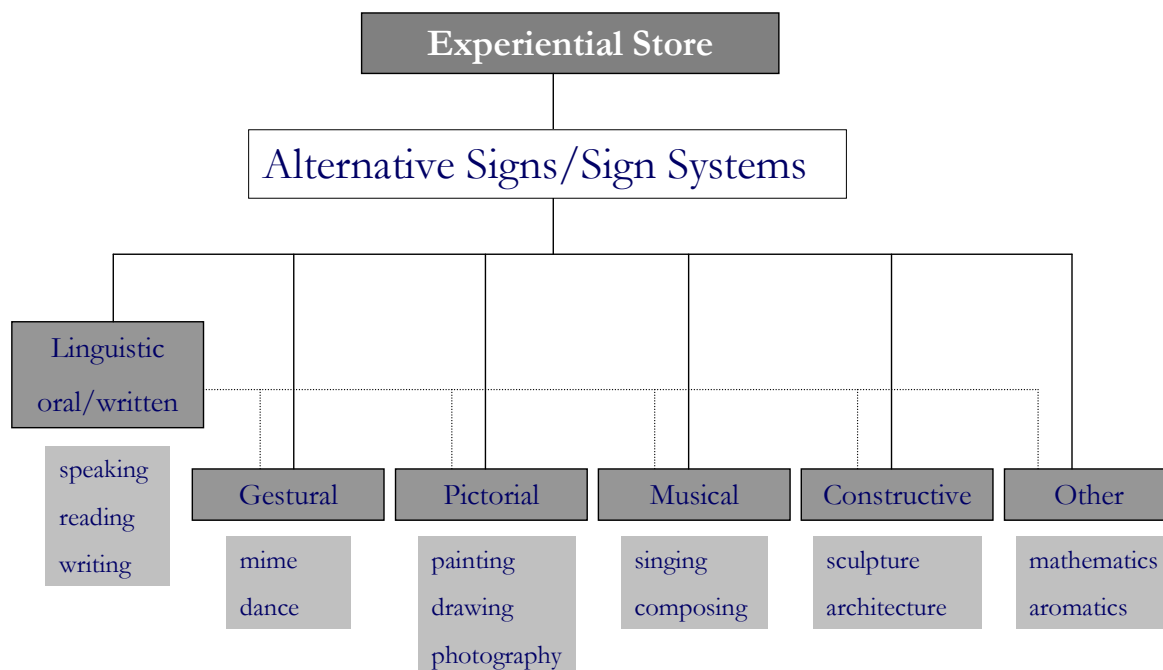


Figure 2.1. Semiotics-based curriculum general model (Suhor, 1984, p. 251).

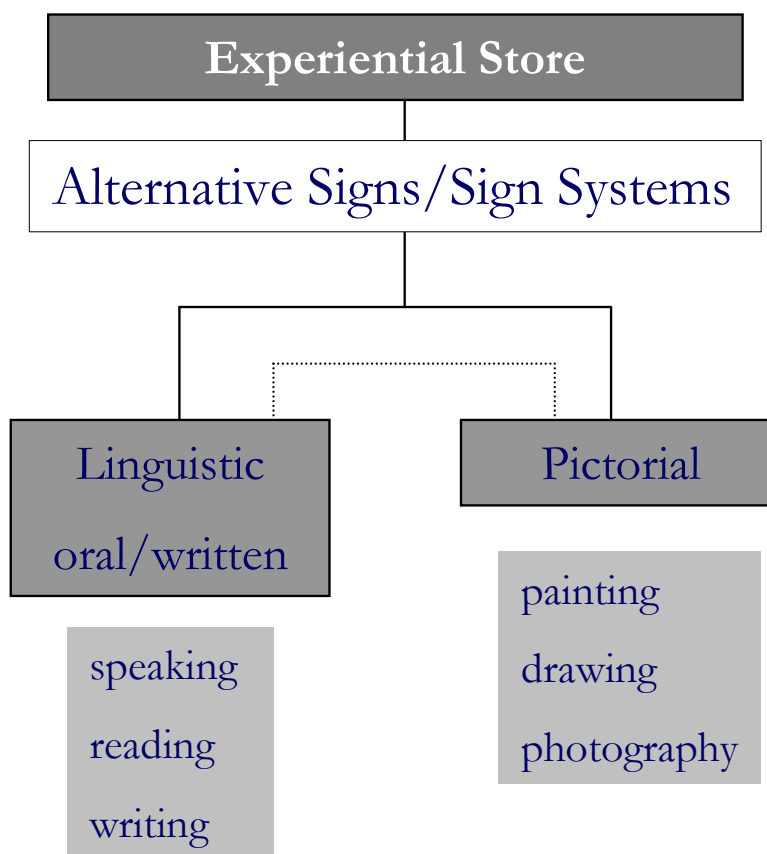


Figure 2.2. Linguistic and pictorial configuration of semiotics-based curriculum (Suhor, 1984, p. 253).

CHAPTER THREE

COMPOSING AN INTEGRATED CURRICULUM: A TEACHER LAYS DOWN A PATH FOR LITERACY AND VISUAL ARTS WHILE WALKING¹

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Abstract

This case study investigates a teacher's composing of a curriculum in a sixth grade English language arts (ELA) and reading class, with a focus on the teacher's goals to integrate the curriculum with visual arts. Assuming that curriculum can be composed over time and can be responsive to the context, I examine the curriculum path the teacher, Sherelle, created as she integrated visual arts with reading and English language arts, the relations with people and texts that affected her curriculum decisions, and the solutions she devised to attend to her relationships as she composed the curriculum. The integrated curriculum was based in semiotics model and involved activities of transmediation in which both the students and teacher constructed meanings from one sign system (language) to another (image). The relationships Sherelle had with teachers and an administrator in and beyond the school context provided both support and resistance to her curricular goals for integration. Data were collected during the school year through participant observation in 66 class sessions of one section of English language arts/reading, artifact collection of curriculum materials for student and teacher use, and informal and formal interviews with the teacher. The field note and artifact data were reduced to produce an initial set of codes and then combined with a secondary open-coding scheme to analyze the interviews for the activities, texts, people, and problem solving moves Sherelle made as she composed her curriculum. The analysis finds the curriculum path integrated visual art on a consistent basis during most of the year, but shifted briefly to a language-only focus when the relationships with a colleague

and the end-of-course exams took precedence. The curriculum included a number of different types of visual art activities and the integration of visual art was supported by the principal and Sherelle's teaching team colleagues. Despite the support provided to her, lingering concerns about the rigor of the integrated curriculum prompted the production of verbal negotiation decisions and written documentation of explicit connections between visual art production and the state standards for student performance in literacy.

Introduction

In a study of readers and reading practices in groups, Sumara (1996) presents an argument for conceiving curriculum as a verb, an action of relationships among teachers, students, and texts that is created within the context of those relationships. Sumara studied adults reading in a book club who reflected on their experiences with texts as readers and as teachers. He cites the Latin origins for curriculum, *currere*, which means to run and then argues that the work of Dewey, Pinar, and Grumet pave the way for considering curriculum as a path to lay down while walking, rather than a set path to be run. Sumara writes: “the path of curriculum is ‘laid down while walking’ . . . and this path will bend, wind, and turn depending on particular ways relations among students, texts, teachers, and contexts develop” (p. 175). The curriculum, then, is not something that is set in stone for a teacher to follow; rather, the curriculum is an on-going, contingent text that is composed by the teacher in relation to his or her students, the texts they read and compose, and the contexts in which these relationships are situated.

Curriculum, in the most general sense, is “teaching and learning as accomplished by teachers and students within particular courses of study” (Sumara, 1996, p. 168). As an achievement of a teacher working in a school, curriculum is also the set of learning objectives as defined by a governing body over a school (e.g., state board of education or local school board). In this study I am working from the assumption that curriculum is not simply a product designed by an outside company or body such as a school board or state board of education that a teacher is meant to follow in order to teach students well.

Curriculum as a product is one way to imagine and use curriculum in schools, but it limits the notion that teachers can contribute to the employment of that curriculum in a classroom filled with students and materials. Instead of a product view for curriculum, in this study I approach curriculum from a process stance (Dewey, 1902/1976; Sumara, 1996), in which curriculum is an emergent set of solutions that a teacher devises in order to attend to the shifting situation she encounters in her classroom (Huberman, 1993; Lévi-Strauss, 1966).

To imagine curriculum as something that is constructed or composed while teaching may conjure images of helter-skelter in the classroom; however, there are images of teachers working on contingent, responsive curricula in the illustrations of teacher as artisan (Huberman, 1993) and teaching as artistry (Eisner, 2002). Huberman writes that the vision of teacher as artisan is one who “adapts on the spot the instructional materials that have been brought, given, or scavenged, as a function of the time of day, the degree of pupil attentiveness,” and does so with the goal of working through a teaching practice “that must be reconfigured as a function of the specific situation in the classroom” (p. 15). The teacher as artisan image shows the teacher working to construct a responsive practice with appropriate materials that are adapted for and from the flux of relationships in the classroom. Like the bricoleur (Lévi-Strauss, 1966) working with available materials to be used and repurposed toward the end of creating a set of solutions for a given problem, the artisan teacher is attentive to the materials at hand (i.e., texts, students) and the context in which he or she encounters those materials (i.e., the setting of the classroom within a school and larger community) in order to create ends or solutions that are appropriate for the problems at hand.

For Eisner (2002), artistry in teaching means “*a form of practice informed by the imagination that employs technique to select and organize expressive qualities to achieve ends that are aesthetically satisfying,*” a practice that involves teachers receiving “criticism concerning their work from others . . . to enable [teachers] to secure a more sensitive and comprehensive grasp of what they have created” (p. 49, emphasis in original). Like the artisan, the teacher who employs artistry is also composing a responsive curriculum by using imagination to consider the goals of teaching and learning. Eisner’s argument is situated within a discussion of what the arts can contribute to images of teaching; qualities refer to elements that are found in artistic compositions, such as color, form, line, shape, and texture in visual art, and these qualities, when perceived in relationships by a viewer, become meaningful representations. Teachers also work with qualities on a daily basis when they attend to the curriculum they present and embody in their classrooms. An imaginative teacher selects and organizes activities, texts, and groupings of students to achieve ends that satisfy the learning objectives within the lesson, the unit, and the curriculum as a whole.

In this study I investigate a teacher’s composing of a curriculum in a sixth grade English language arts (ELA) and reading class. Though the curriculum for this class was outlined by the state’s board of education, Sherelle, the teacher, opted to integrate visual art into the curriculum. Sherelle intended to integrate visual art via the use of images and the composition of drawings in her class before the school year began. In addition to imagining a significant role for visual art in her classroom, Sherelle also envisioned a teaching practice that was “hands-on” and engaging for students. Thus, her teaching goals for herself and her learning goals for her students throughout the year were to compose a

curriculum that integrated visual art and hands-on activities, materials, and texts. I analyze Sherelle's experiences with her curriculum in relation to her interests in integrating visual art, her understandings of the curriculum over time, and her relationships with her peers, mentors, and leaders in the school. In light of this interest in Sherelle's composing of her curriculum, I explore the following research questions:

1. What is the curriculum path that Sherelle takes to integrate visual arts with reading and English language arts?
2. How do relations with people and texts in Sherelle's setting affect her decisions about integrated curriculum as she composes that curriculum throughout the school year?
3. What solutions does Sherelle create to attend to the relationships with people and materials within her context as she composes her curriculum?

I next describe how I understand curriculum, integrated curriculum, relationships, and texts as I use these terms to investigate Sherelle's composing of an integrated curriculum in her middle school literacy classroom.

Theoretical Framework

Curriculum, Text, and Relationships

For this study, I define curriculum as the on-going composition of a text among Sherelle, her students, and the materials she uses to teach. By text, I mean the process and products constructed in the relationship among teacher, students, and materials within a specific context (the school). Like the relationship created between a reader and a piece of literature (Rosenblatt, 1995), a curricular text is dependent upon the interactions among the teacher, students, and materials. The interactions comprise the activity within

the classroom and shape the scope and direction of the curriculum as the teacher makes decisions minute-by-minute, lesson-by-lesson, day-by-day.

The study of and defining of curriculum has a long history (Sumara, 1996). Pinar and his colleagues (2002) write that “Curriculum scholarship supports the notion that curriculum *is* aesthetic text” (p. 567, emphasis in original). In their review of a large body of scholarship on the discourses of curriculum, curriculum as aesthetic text means that “curriculum comes to form as art does, as a complex mediation and reconstruction of experience” (p. 567). Sumara argues that curriculum has “been understood as the course to be run rather than as the running of the course” (p. 175) and posits that a conception of curriculum as the laying down of the course or path affords a frame for investigating “the particular ways relations among students, texts, teachers, and contexts develop” (p. 175). From the perspective of investigating a curriculum from a teacher’s point of view, then, the curriculum is an emergent, socially constructed (Burr, 1995) text that is located within the interactions that a teacher has in her context. The relationships inform the teacher’s decisions about the curriculum just as her decisions about the curriculum inform the relationships in the context of the class.

Pinar et al. (2002) review the connections between the arts as texts and curriculum as text. The role of the word aesthetic within the declaration of curriculum as aesthetic text reinforces the idea that curriculum concerns relationships among teacher, students, texts, and context. Like the study of curriculum, aesthetics, too, has a long history. Aesthetics as a term was coined by Baumgarten (1750/1961) from the Ancient Greek *aisthanesthai*, a verb that means to perceive. Siegesmund (1999) writes that the conjugation of the verb, which is an action and interaction between subject and object,

suggests a relationship in which both subject and object work on each other. When perceiving a work of art, then, the work of perceiving is located in the interaction between the viewer and the art piece (Eisner, 2002). Applying the idea of aesthetics and text as relational constructs to curriculum, then, means that curriculum as a text is a set of relations composed in and through experience. My interest lies in understanding Sherelle's experience in composing her curriculum as a text among her students and her teaching materials within the context of her classroom and school.

To frame curriculum as a text in process, specifically a teacher's process of *in situ* decision-making and problem-solving over time, assumes that when I look at interview transcripts, field notes, and artifacts from that decision-making, the data becomes a trace of the curriculum path (Sumara, 1996). For example, by assuming that the curriculum Sherelle composes in her literacy class is a set of decisions made over time and negotiated with the relationships in her context, I assume that this curriculum does indeed change with time and the influence of materials and people, including students, teachers, and administrators and there is a trace or trail of evidence showing these changes that can be found in the data I collected. Also, like a work of art, a curriculum is constructed, is a means of communication, and is dependent for its meaning on an encounter with an audience (Pinar et al., 2002, p. 573). Thus, I present in this study an examination of the trace of Sherelle's curriculum after observing that curriculum being composed in her classroom and in our interviews.

Integrated Curriculum

As an extension of the notion of curriculum as text, integrated curriculum expands the materials involved in the relationships that constitute a curriculum under construction.

Because Sherelle's stated curricular goal for the year was to use visual art in the teaching and learning experiences in her classes, a semiotics-based curriculum (Suhor, 1984, 1992) is useful for framing the work Sherelle did during the year. The curriculum Suhor posits is grounded in semiotics, which is the study of signs and sign systems with signs being anything that stands for or represents something else (Eco, 1985; Peirce, 1931-1958). Signs include texts like works of literature or art and can include language, image, music, mathematics, drama, and dance. Signs can include symbols (e.g., words), icons (e.g., a painting, a piece of music), and indexes (e.g., physical and emotional pain). Further, signs are "organized into systems of objects and behaviour" (Suhor, 1984, p. 248). Central to semiotics is the role of meaning construction: A sign is meaningful only when it is in relation to an interpreter. A semiotics approach to curriculum as text, then, affords a frame for understanding curriculum as a production of communication that is achieved via a number of signs.

Within a semiotics-based curriculum model, the linguistic sign system, which includes media based in language, is given a primary position because Suhor (1992) argues that "language is the main arbiter [of communication] as students learn to use and understand all of the other symbol systems" (p. 229). Investigating curriculum from a perspective in which language is understood as an arbiter but not the only means of communicating meaning affords a look at Sherelle's curriculum via her talk about the curriculum and observations of her interactions with students and materials during class sessions (Kress et al., 2005). Thus, a semiotics-based perspective on studying Sherelle's curriculum does not need to rely solely on the lesson plans, performance standards from the state board of education, or the materials distributed to students; rather, a semiotics-

based perspective affords a view of Sherelle's on-going meaning construction of the curriculum as she interacts with and enacts her curriculum in her classroom with her students and as she reflects on her curriculum and relationships in her context.

The semiotics-based curriculum model provides a useful entrée into understanding how visual arts can be integrated into a literacy curriculum. That is, I understand a semiotics approach to a curriculum as a means for examining the meaningful communication that occurs in more than one sign system. In the case of Sherelle's integrated curriculum for reading and English language arts with visual art, the sign systems under investigation are the linguistic system that includes speaking, reading, and writing and the pictorial system that includes images such as painting, drawing, and photography. Narrowing the study to the possible sign systems or media used in an actual classroom to just two media is counter to Suhor's (1984) claim that "in actual human experience many expressions of thought occur simultaneously in more than one medium" (cf. Gardner, 1993). However, toward the end of defining a specific instance of curriculum as text that is focused on integrating visual art and literacy, it is necessary to limit the argument to just the linguistic and pictorial sign systems (cf. Grossman, Valencia, & Hamel, 1997/2005 for a discussion of the challenges in defining the scope of an ELA curriculum).

Transmediation

A semiotics perspective includes the notion that meaning construction can occur via transmediation (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988; Siegel, 1995; Suhor, 1984, 1992; Whitin, 2005). Transmediation is the "translation of content from one sign system into another" (Suhor, 1984, p. 250). In a curriculum that integrates visual arts with literacy

practices, for example, essays could be composed about paintings as well as literature, and drawings and paintings could be composed about literature and, perhaps, other images. Siegel (1995) explains the process of a student composing a drawing in response to a piece of literature:

[Students] must arrive at some understanding and then find some way to cross (“trans”) the boundaries between language and art such that their understanding is represented pictorially; it is in this sense that one system is explored in terms of (mediation) another. (p. 461)

Transmediation in an ELA context embraces the notion that “meaning is not limited to what words can express” (Eisner, 2002, p. 30). Eisner’s point is that what one makes of something in terms of meaning can include more than one form of representation for that meaning. These forms are not required to have language in order to be meaningful. Eisner also argues that when meaning is formed in more than one medium, “these forms enable us to construct meanings that are nonredundant; each form of representation we employ confers its own features upon the meaning we make or interpret” (p. 230). There are opportunities in an integrated curriculum for students to represent the meanings they make in different media, inclusive of both image and language.

For the teacher composing an integrated curriculum, there are also opportunities to transmediate the meaning of the curriculum. The teacher works on her meanings of the curriculum as she responds and attends to interactions with students and texts such as literature and images. With each interaction, the meanings of the curriculum can shift and possibly change. In a discussion of meaning construction, Smagorinsky (1996) writes that

“in translating their thoughts in material product, learners often develop new ideas about the object of their thinking” and that product “becomes a symbol that the student can use to promote further reflection (and often reconsideration) of the ideas that produced it” (p. 15). Like Smagorinsky’s students composing ideas into material products, a teacher composing a curriculum translates thoughts into material products that he or she uses to teach and students use to learn the curriculum. The material products a teacher may create include the selection of texts for students to read, the composition of handouts and tests for students to interact with, and the use of dry-erase boards and overhead projectors as canvases for producing language and image texts that convey ideas. As the teacher considers the curriculum through reflection and reconsideration of the ideas that have been produced in that curriculum, the curriculum changes. The teacher working on an integrated curriculum has both linguistic and pictorial signs available for use in the teaching and learning context of the classroom.

Applebee, Burroughs, and Cruz (2000) argue that integrated curricula only occur in those instances in which each of the academic disciplines involved in the integration is valued as an equal partner in learning and teaching in the classroom. Integration is contrasted in the Applebee et al. argument with multidisciplinary curricula in which one discipline is used as a subordinate tool for supplementing the main discipline. The idea that integration in a curriculum is a goal toward leveling the importance of one discipline with another is a laudable but difficult goal to achieve. Eisner (2002) writes that three goals dominate the integration of arts in non-arts-based curricula: 1) to support learning of historical periods; 2) to support learning of concepts or themes across disciplines; and

3) to support the development of problem solving. Eisner also raises a caution for approaches to curriculum that seek integration of the arts:

[T]he utilization of an experientially rich array of resources for understanding some aspect of the human condition is not a bad thing to pay attention to. What must also be paid attention to is the art in the project. Simply exploring materials without encouraging attention to aesthetic matters renders them void of their artistic potential. Such practice results in integration without art. (p. 154)

The inclusion of visual art in an ELA and reading curriculum, whether integrated or multidisciplinary, is a move that has the potential to bring at least two sign systems (linguistic and pictorial) and two disciplines (art and literacy) together in ways that can raise both to positions of importance in a classroom or to subsume one for the other. This infusion of sign systems is not necessarily exclusionary of music, sculpture, and drama, and indeed in this study drama and music were included in Sherelle's curriculum. For the purposes of this study, though, I concentrate on the pictorial and linguistic signs used in Sherelle's class.

Relationships

To understand the integrated curriculum Sherelle composed, I look at the context and the relationships in which this curriculum was situated. The cultural milieu within which Sherelle taught permeated the work she did in her classroom, recalling Sumara's (1996) position that curriculum is laid down among the relations of students, teacher, materials, and the context in which these relations are situated,. Her curriculum was "nested" (Cazden, 1988, p. 198) within the cultural practices of her life outside school, her students, her faculty colleagues, and the school and community at large. Sherelle's

decisions about her curriculum were not exclusive to the relationships with students and materials during class sessions; rather, her decisions about the composition of her curriculum were also affected by people and materials within the school in which she taught. To understand how these relationships affected Sherelle's curriculum, I focus on Sherelle's discussion of her relationships with her teaching team and an ELA colleague, her assigned mentor in the school, and the principal, who conducted observations and evaluations of her teaching performance. Beyond the school relationships, I examine Sherelle's discussion about two art teachers, including myself, who she consulted during the year. Thus, the meanings Sherelle constructed about her curriculum included relationships within and beyond her classroom. The role of meaning construction is important to my understanding of how Sherelle composed her situated and integrated curriculum. I turn now to a brief discussion of meaning construction.

Meaning Construction

The notion of meaning construction I use here begins with Peirce's (1931-1958) work with semiotics. Briefly, Peirce argues that semiotics involves the relationship among a sign, the meaning of a sign, and the person interpreting both meaning and sign. Working from Peirce's triadic semiotics, Smagorinsky (2001) argues that construction of meaning in a Peircean plane is always contingent on who is making the meaning and with what objects. Smagorinsky argues that the potential meanings, which can be unlimited and varied with each potential sign/meaning/interpreter relationship, are culturally situated. Meaning is thus mediated by cultural influences, whether those influences are overt or implicit.

Smagorinsky's (2001) argument further stipulates that the construction of meaning is a complex event. He states:

Initially, meaning emerges through the process of articulation as sense achieves expression through the medium of a psychological tool. This process produces some sort of image, a newly constructed text that provisionally serves as the repository of meaning. This text is protean, changing with new reflection on its form. Its articulated potential thus makes it available as a tool for new transformations. (p. 162)

In other words, psychological tools mediate the process of bringing sense into articulation. Smagorinsky defines sense as Vygotsky's (1987) notion of "the abbreviated syntax and stream-of-consciousness properties of unarticulated, inchoate thought" (Smagorinsky, 2001, p. 145). Articulation, in turn, is the event in which sense is coupled with a sign (Suhor, 1984) and a new text is evoked. This new text is a "repository of meaning." The new text is a makeshift placeholder for the meaning that is "protean, changing" and just becoming articulated. This new meaning is also now available for repurposing in other texts for another potential meaning to be constructed. The process of sense becoming articulated is fluid and each meaning that is articulated can be subjected to further articulation and change.

The curriculum Sherelle works on throughout the school year is a repository for her emerging understanding of how to negotiate the relationships that bear upon her decisions for that curriculum. The curriculum, in other words, is a text that Sherelle is constantly revising and re-thinking in order to meet the demands of the relationships that comprise the context of her teaching practice. The meaning that she constructs about

curriculum has a fluid quality that can shift and change according to the situation. Thus, the curriculum Sherelle composes during the year is, in part, a negotiation of what integrated curriculum means within the context of her classroom at different points in time. The meanings for integrated curriculum that Sherelle provisionally establishes and negotiates throughout the year both respond to and are responsive to the relationships that she has with colleagues, students, superiors, and materials within her nested context.

Dewey: Perception of Relationships and Aesthetics

As philosopher and educator, Dewey (1938/1988; 1934/1980; 1916/2004) is concerned with the individual and how thinking processes involve mind and body inseparably in the creation of experiences. That is, Dewey's projects investigate the transactions of the human being in the environment (Biesta & Burbules, 2003). Education, in particular, is the process of experiences that are transactions in educational settings. These school experiences involve what Dewey (1916/2004) calls "doing" and "undergoing." The doing and undergoing describe the ways a person acts and is acted upon by the environment. The process of doing and undergoing is directed toward goals of solving problems in specific contexts (cf. Biesta & Burbules, 2003; West, 1989). The assumptions of this doing and undergoing pragmatism, especially as laid out in *Democracy and Education* (Dewey, 1916/2004), are that education (1) is a "fostering, a nurturing, a cultivating, process" (p. 10); (2) involves problem solving from an experimental disposition; and (3) involves and values experiences to the extent that they provide "the perception of relationships" (p. 134). Dewey further argues: "All authorities agree that that discernment of relationships is the genuinely intellectual matter; hence the educative matter" (p. 138). In short, education in a Deweyan framework is a process of

cultivating the disposition to solve the problems of perceiving relationships among the environment and human beings using experimental means. The perception of relationships is thus a key component of an education that includes both experience and theory.

In the case of Sherelle and the construction of her curriculum, she is the person doing and undergoing the problem solving of composing an integrated curriculum. The relationships she attends to in composing her curriculum are factors that she works on (the doing) and that work on her (the undergoing). The interviews, field notes, and artifacts are a record illustrating how Sherelle was doing and undergoing the relationships and problem solving involved in achieving her integrated curriculum goal.

The doing and undergoing educational process is similar to Smagorinsky's (2001) argument for concept development. Smagorinsky argues that "when an exploratory, tool-mediated process leads to representation that in turn leads to reflection and new evocations that when articulated, generate further evocations, with the process potentially extending indefinitely—a new concept emerges" (p. 162). The composing of a curriculum as a text developed over time, i.e., laid while walking, and in relation to a context is type of concept development: the concept under development in this study is Sherelle's integrated curriculum.

Sherelle had a number of relationships with people and with curriculum documents provided by the state and the school. I theorize these relationships as perceptual relationships in the aesthetic sense. With origins of aesthetics in the verb to perceive (Baumgarten, 1750/1961; Siegesmund, 1999), an aesthetic relationship consists of a subject engaged in an act of perception of an other (be that object, subject, space or

place) that requires that both the other and the subject work on each other. The act of perception in an aesthetic relationship is not something that a subject simply does to an other. Rather, the perception is a type of doing and undergoing (Dewey, 1916/2004) that requires the perceiver to both take in information and to work on information that is coming from the other in the relationship. This study is designed to understand Sherelle's composition of her curricular text that involves meaning construction, transmediation, and a number of relationships that she worked on and that worked on her. I next describe the context in which Sherelle taught.

Context of the Study

In their description of how the researcher can understand how the case is situated within a specific context, Dyson and Genishi (2005) recommend collecting data about the cultural, social, spatial, and temporal conditions in which the people of the case are a part. In locating these dimensions of culture, human relationships, space, and time, the researcher bounds the case to a specific location with a specific group of people. In the case of Sherelle, the cultural and spatial boundaries are located with Sherelle and her curriculum that was composed in a middle school in a small Southern town with a group of sixth grade students. The relationships that Sherelle encountered and responded to with her curriculum decisions included people located within and beyond the school and state-authored documents for assessment: the end-of-year content area exams.

This participant-observation case study was primarily bound (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Stake, 2000) with Sherelle, an Asian American woman, and her integrated curriculum meant to bring together visual arts, language arts, and reading practices. Sherelle was a first year teacher at Central Middle School (all names and places, with the

exception of Sherelle, are pseudonyms) and taught English language arts (ELA) and reading classes on a team of three teachers with about 90 students. She was recruited for this study using a purposeful, criterion sample (Patton, 2002) from a group of 59 university students who graduated from a large southeastern university English education program during the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 academic years. From the graduates of these two academic years, I made the selection of one teacher based on an expressed interest in using visual art in his or her teaching practice and a willingness to participate in a year-long participant observation study.

During the year of data collection, Central Middle School had 520 students, with 253 of those students qualifying for the free or reduced-price lunch program. The population of students was approximately “4.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 13.8% Black, 8.5% Hispanic, 71.2% White, and 1.5% multi-racial” (from district website). Lead by an African American male principal, Mr. Wallace, and a European American female vice principal, Mrs. Roberts, the school advertised on its website that it was “A learning community striving for student success!” The school, like most in the county-wide district, had met all state and federal expectations for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) when the study began.

Central Middle School was located in a small town of just over 10,000 people; the city was situated within a county between a large metropolitan area and a university community. The county, which was demarcated by three rivers in the area, had at least 83 churches within the city limits. These churches comprised a wide variety of Christian organizations, including organizations for the African American and Hmong populations in town. A survey of local websites for the city, county, and local phone directories

showed that temples and mosques for other religions were either not present in the community or were not advertised on-line or in phone books. The city was originally settled by a Creek Native American community; a local history website reported that European settlers later renamed the city three times since 1893. Local industry in the area included farming and manufacturing; historically the community was an important site for the rail lines shipping locally produced goods between the university and the metropolitan area.

Sherelle worked on an interdisciplinary team of three teachers: Sherelle taught English language arts (ELA) and reading, Carrie taught math and science, and Patricia taught social studies and academic enrichment; the latter was a class meant to give students more time with concepts first taught in the other core curriculum areas of math, science, reading, ELA, and social studies. The team was also supported by a fourth teacher, Belinda, who taught inclusion classes for the special education students who were mainstreamed part-time on the team. The youngest of all four teachers, Sherelle was one of only a handful of teachers beginning their careers at the school. Sherelle opted to work at the school primarily for the chance to collaborate with a team of teachers to create interdisciplinary curricula. However, once she was hired, she reported that her team worked together primarily to focus on the academic performance of students, rather than the planning of curriculum units. She said,

I was like, “Awesome! I'm gonna work with a team and we're gonna have these interdisciplinary lessons and, you know, we'll always be planning as a team.”

And, when, during pre-planning I said, “So, do we ever get together and do units together?” And [Carrie] was like, “No, not really, not unless something comes

up.” . . . [So] we typically don't link things together, which was kind of a let-down to me.” (Interview 1, 11/2)

Despite Sherelle's apparent disappointment at not having opportunities to work closely with Carrie and Patricia on curriculum, she reported that Belinda was a supportive colleague who helped Sherelle to formulate ideas for teaching. She also learned to seek out help from other teachers while walking through the building: “[I] just go in and ask and get stuff that way” (Interview 1, 11/2).

The students on Sherelle's team were diverse in culture and language: Students on the team spoke English, Hmong White and Green, Romanian, and Spanish. Sherelle taught these students on a block schedule: Classes were 90 minutes long and rotated subject matter every other day. Sherelle taught ELA one day and reading the next and so on. Sixth graders in the school had their three “academic” classes in the morning, and one “connections” class was offered in the afternoon (e.g. art, band, chorus, and P.E.). For the participant observation component of the study, Sherelle chose her third period class, a group of 23 students. The curriculum decisions Sherelle made, especially as those decisions played out with this third period class over time, comprise the focus of this study.

As a participant observer in Sherelle's class and a mentor outside of class, I have known Sherelle since her senior year of college. She was a student in a class that I taught: arts-based approaches to teaching English. Sherelle expressed interest in practicing the ideas explored in this class, and I told her I was interested in helping her. We had several conversations about how our goals for learning and teaching with integrated curricula might be supported by a project located in her classroom. We decided we would work

together to accomplish her goals of integrating curriculum and my goals of understanding the concept of integrated curriculum. Then we planned to accomplish these goals by including me in her classroom as an observer and colleague to watch her teach, to talk with her about her practice, and to offer my experiences as an art and English teacher and as a researcher.

My relationship with Sherelle began when she was my student and shifted into a collegial relationship in which we both worked toward the goal of understanding what it meant to integrate visual and language arts. Our conversations and interviews were marked by a trading of ideas of about what we saw happening in her curriculum and what we might or would like to see in the future. Often my role in the relationship was one of an idea-generator and a critical friend. During classes I acted as a second teacher, an extra small group member for students, or another learner in the large group discussions. Within our conversations, opportunities arose for us to examine what she was doing as a teacher and how the concept of an integrated curriculum played out in her teaching. I focus on the network of relationships that she drew from and that affected her. Sherelle had a number of important relationships that affected her curriculum. These relationships included a number of people: her teaching colleagues, her school administrators, her friends and family outside of school, and me. There were also key relationships Sherelle had with texts from her student teaching, from the state government's board of education, and the curriculum materials provided by the school.

Method

Data Collection

Data were collected over the course of Sherelle's first year of teaching. I was a participant observer (Patton, 2002) in Sherelle's third period class for 66 days. In the participant role, I worked with students in small groups and one-on-one during class, I co-taught occasionally for visual-arts based lessons, and I collaborated with Sherelle to develop her lessons and activities; in the observer role, I took ethnographic field notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) detailing the events of the class, statements and questions Sherelle posed, as well as drawings and verbal information provided on the dry-erase board and overhead projector. Supplemental artifacts to the written and drawn field notes I composed, I also took photographs of the dry-erase board, the walls, and layout of desks and other objects within the room. After classes I observed, Sherelle and I frequently debriefed the day's lesson and planned for future classes. These after-class conversations were informal, though some were as long as 1-1/2 to 2 hours in length. Several of these conversations were taped and digitized for transcription. Additionally, three formal, open-ended interviews (Patton, 2002) were conducted which extend and elaborate on the conversations after class (see Figure 3.1). In total, there were 4.8 hours of formal interviews and 6.4 hours of informal conversations.

Data Reduction and Analysis

I analyzed the field notes and interviews from the perspective of understanding the curriculum Sherelle composed during the year through three major categories: the *curriculum path*, *relationships*, and *solutions*. I used an inductive analysis (Ezzy, 2002) situated in the questions of understanding the activities and texts Sherelle used in her

curriculum (the curriculum path), the people and texts in relation to Sherelle in her context (relationships), and the problem solving she did to compose her curriculum (solutions). Codes, definitions, and examples within each of the major categories are listed in Figure 3.2. The examples listed are quotes from the informal and formal interviews with Sherelle, but I generated the categories and definitions from both interview and field note data. Within the field note data, I reviewed all of the photographs of Sherelle's classroom, as well as the field notes I composed and the artifacts I collected to identify instances in which visual art activities and compositions were present and made lists and contact sheets of these photographs. From the reduction of the field data and a line-by-line analysis of the interview transcripts, I developed the three major categories. Within the set of transcripts, the analysis began with selecting quotations based on one discrete unit of thought or decision. For example, one quote was a unit of analysis because Sherelle described her relationship with Carrie and Patricia. The quotes varied in length, depending on how long Sherelle talked through an idea or decision.

To develop the curriculum path, relationships, and solutions categories and attendant codes, I analyzed the data as I listened to and transcribed the audio tapes that captured the interviews with Sherelle, a process LeCompte and Preissle (1993) refer to as a perceiving of data. I then conducted an open-coding analysis through the lens of questioning what Sherelle's curriculum path was, with whom did she have relationships, and how did she solve the problem of integrated her curriculum. The code list I developed was long and was inclusive of themes of composing a curriculum within a context (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). I next describe each of the three major categories

of curriculum path, relationships, and solutions along with codes housed within each category.

Curriculum Path

In order to understand the curriculum path Sherelle laid while working through the school year, it was necessary to examine the traces of that curriculum (Sumara, 1996). That is, to see how the curriculum took shape, I looked at what she and her students produced during class and her talk about the curriculum. Sherelle produced visual texts as part of her *visual teaching materials*, which included drawings and graphic organizers that she drew on the dry-erase board, the overhead projector, and on materials given to students. Students also produced visual texts and I coded the activities surrounding these compositions as *visual art activities*. There were a number of different types of visual art activities and I list these along with definitions and examples in Figure 3.3. Students in Sherelle's class also read a number of texts, including traditional literature texts and *visual/verbal texts* that used both image and language such as graphic novels and comic books. Sherelle's curriculum also included school-sponsored activities such as the *Jane Shaffer Writing Method* and *test preparation*. The Jane Shaffer method was a language-based method for teaching writing, especially expository writing, which was adopted by the school as a common method in all classes (i.e., from ELA to P.E. to home economics to math) for teaching students writing. The school also provided materials for teachers to use in *test preparation* activities for the end-of-course exams. Sherelle used several different types of *assessment practices* to supplement the reading and composing practices in her curriculum. Her assessments included tests and quizzes that she created, final exams co-created with her sixth grade ELA and reading colleague, and standardized

assessments provided by the school to determine student ability levels in reading and writing. Within the curriculum path category the visual art activities, assessment practices, and test preparation codes became the most salient group of codes to illustrate how Sherelle composed a shifting, negotiated curriculum.

Relationships

The data coded for relationships revealed how Sherelle was working on and how the other in these relationships worked on Sherelle. That is, I coded for the ways Sherelle affected and was affected by relationships in her context. These codes are located in the interview data because as Sherelle talked through her decisions about her curriculum, the role of these relationships emerged. I construe Sherelle's talk about the people and texts in her context as indicative of how she was thinking about and problem solving issues with these people, texts, and her curriculum. The relationships category encompasses several key relationships Sherelle had with people and one with a text.

The relationships with people located in the school were Sherelle's *teaching team*, which included the *teachers, Carrie and Patricia* as well as *students* on that team; *Jane*, the other ELA and reading teacher in the sixth grade; and the *principal, Mr. Wallace*. Sherelle had two relationships with people beyond the borders of the school: *Mrs. Parker*, an art teacher and friend of Sherelle's family, and the *author*, an art and English teacher and former instructor for Sherelle at the university. Finally, the *end-of-course exam* was one text that Sherelle frequently talked about and that consistently was a topic for class activities.

Solutions

Within the data set I identified two types of solutions that Sherelle used as part of the composing of her curriculum. I use the category name solutions because I understand Sherelle's meaning making process in composing the curriculum as a kind of on-going problem solving. Several times during the year Sherelle puzzled through how to explain to someone other than me what she was doing in her curriculum. She decided eventually that *documentation* in the form of written rationales located in her lesson plans would be a useful solution. She and I also discussed on several occasions the idea that her decisions regarding the curriculum were *negotiations*. That is, the curriculum path she composed required a savvy navigation through her relationships, her goals for an integrated curriculum, and the need she expressed to prove through documentation that the work she and her students were doing with art was valuable.

Sample of Coded Text

I include a section of coded data from an interview transcript to illustrate how I identified the categories of curriculum path, relationships, and solutions.

[For] any teacher that wants to do this kind of stuff [with visual art], you have to know [that] I can't just say, "Alright, now you've taken the test on the story. The test that was all multiple choice, short answer, fill in the blank. Now, here's some crayons, let's just draw. Just draw your favorite character." You can't do it like that! Because then, I mean, the kids'll start rolling their eyes and if you proclaim that *this* is using art in the classroom, your administration could possibly say "No. Don't do this anymore." And you make a bad name for what it is you gotta do.

(Interview 3, 6/22, emphasis in original)

In this quote Sherelle from the last interview in the study, Sherelle used a negative case to illustrate the role that drawing played in her curriculum as a *visual art activity*. That is, Sherelle conceived drawing in her ELA and reading curriculum as having a primary role, rather than serving as an afterthought for students finishing an *assessment practice* like a multiple choice test. I coded this quotation as a connection with Sherelle's *relationships* with her *principal* (the administrator) and with *students* because if students roll their eyes at the use of drawing as a one-time activity not fully connected to the conceptual work at hand, and if the principal knows about the students' reactions and the haphazard use of visual art, then visual art is not integrated into the curriculum. Working from this negative case example, then, Sherelle was arguing in this quote for a *negotiated* use of visual art in ways that would accommodate the expectations of students, principal, and teacher. I also construe the statement "if you proclaim that *this* is art" as an example of an implied *documentation* of a curriculum decision, in that a proclamation is often based in language and in the case of teachers, such claims about curricular decisions appear in lesson plans.

Results

During the school year Sherelle composed an integrated curriculum that was an on-going, provisional text for her meanings of curriculum. The data show how the curriculum Sherelle composed and her understanding of integrated curriculum shifted as the year went on and she attended to her students, her materials, her colleagues, and her administrators. The school year was divided into four quarters from August to May. During the first two quarters, from August to December, Sherelle taught a number of visual art activities, including the anthology of illustrated ghost stories, graphic

organizers, icons, murals, photographs, murals reading projects, re/vision activity, sequential drawings, and sketch-to-stretch (see Figure 3.3). January marked the beginning of the third quarter and for the first three weeks of class, only icons were used in the instruction as Sherelle began a shift toward language-only activities. Sherelle's relationships with Jane, her ELA colleague, and the end-of-course exams precipitated this shift in the curriculum. February through April Sherelle brought graphic organizers, reading projects, and sketch-to-stretch back into her curriculum. After the students completed the end-of-course exams in April, Sherelle taught Aboriginal paintings and essays, backpack drawings and essays, and invited a visit from a comic book artist. I turn now to the curriculum path, the relationships, and the solutions involved in Sherelle's composition of her curriculum. First, I discuss the path Sherelle's curriculum took during the year, focusing on the visual art activities, assessment practices, and test preparation components. These three components highlight the decisions Sherelle made in composing a curriculum that bridged her goals for literacy and visual arts integration. Second, I discuss the relationships that affected Sherelle's decisions about her curriculum, highlighting the relationships with her teaching team, her ELA colleague Jane and the end-of-course exams, the principal, and two art teachers. Finally, I discuss the solutions for composing an integrated curriculum. Sherelle used negotiation of her decisions to navigate the standards of the literacy curriculum through activities involving visual art and documentation to show potential critics the value of the integrated curriculum she composed.

Sherelle's Curriculum Path

Integrated curriculum in Sherelle's class meant that drawings and other visual art images were used in a variety of different activities and texts for students to read and compose, including in some assessment practices. Sherelle also used images in materials she created for students to use in these activities. She used our interviews as a space to try out ideas both verbally and visually for her lesson planning. The curriculum also included the Jane Shaffer writing method, test preparation, and unit, final exam, and end-of-course exam assessments as the most frequent locations for language-only activities. The visual art activities, assessment practices, and test preparation codes figured prominently in my analysis, as these three categories revealed specific instances in which visual art was integrated and not integrated in the curriculum, as well as moments when the curriculum shifted during the year. I next discuss these three aspects of the curriculum Sherelle composed.

Visual Art Activities

Sherelle's integrated curriculum included twelve different types of activities that involved visual art or images as integral components. These activities are summarized in Figure 3.3 with a frequency count for each time I observed these activities in Sherelle's class. Icons, or small drawings, were used often throughout the year to complement the content Sherelle taught for grammar and vocabulary development. During my observations, Sherelle used icons in 21 different lessons. Typically, she drew pictures on the dry-erase board, on overhead projector transparencies, and on handouts for students in which the purpose for the drawings included fostering studying habits, recalling information, and clarifying concepts. The students composed their own icons in their

notes and in their assignments. She reported that icons were fully integrated in the students' vocabulary work:

I always try to incorporate some sort of [way] where [students] make their own logos, graphic cues. When we have vocabulary, they're always doing a little doodle or drawing or symbol or something to go with that. And, it's become so much a part of our routine for vocabulary that they just know that's a part of it now: the definition, the sentence, all the written stuff, and then the picture, too, which also has writing to go with it. (Interview 1, 11/2)

Graphic organizers, like icons, had frequent roles in Sherelle's curriculum. Used 18 times while I observed, graphic organizers provided potentially meaningful information for students within the spatial organization of words and icons. For instance, Sherelle used bifurcated tree organizers to help students see the relationships between transitive and intransitive verbs. She also used a plot map with icons to teach students the sequence of introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement found in Western short stories. Sherelle drew graphic organizers for grammar concepts such as verbs and adjectives on her dry-erase board and left these organizers on the board for several days at a time, adding more information as new items were introduced. Students composed these organizers on their own paper or on handouts that Sherelle provided and Sherelle encouraged them to add their own icons and additional linguistic information.

While the icons and graphic organizers were frequently used drawings and spatial organizers that functioned to supplement oral or written information, Sherelle also assigned activities in which students focused primarily on creating an image. The Aboriginal paintings, backpack drawings, murals, sketch-to-stretch drawings, reading

project visual options, and the re/vision activities required students to compose drawings in ways similar to essays composed in the class. That is, the drawings in these activities were subject to revision, criticism from peers and teachers (Feldman, 1994), and were followed up with a written component. The writing that accompanied these drawings included directives for students to discuss their visual composition choices (i.e., use of color, symbols, etc.) and the meanings they attributed to the visual qualities and the resulting designs in their images. In Sherelle's integrated curriculum there were affordances in these activities for students to spend time working in both image and language. Sherelle's was not a curriculum in which language was the only means for understanding texts; rather, Sherelle's curriculum included activities with multiple opportunities throughout the year for both her and the students to use images, especially drawings, as a means for conveying and complementing ideas based in language.

In addition to drawings that students composed, Sherelle used images as texts for students to read and to which responses in language were composed. She used photographs and comic books as texts for students to discuss visual relationships of color, line, shape, and other elements of design. Sherelle introduced comic books as visual narratives in which qualities of color, line, and shape functioned similarly to the relationships among words in literature. Visual relationships, Sherelle told me in a conversation after class, were important to show students that tone and theme were important ideas that can be conveyed both visually and verbally. To address these concepts, she created a lesson on narratives, theme, and tone with comic book texts composed almost entirely in images (Runton, 2005) and then followed-up with a lesson using a language-based text to further explore theme and tone.

Further reinforcing the value of visual composition, Sherelle invited a local comic book artist to come in and talk with the students about how he developed the narratives and the characters in his comics. The artist composed a drawing for the students and explained his processes for developing storylines and emotional qualities in his characters, which were all animals. During the discussion, Sherelle asked the artist questions about how he drafted and revised his drawings, and the artist responded by showing students how he used a special blue-lead pencil for initial drawings and a black ink pen for his final revisions. He also shared copies of an entire comic book draft in which revisions were visible. In classes that the artist visited, Sherelle referred to the artist as an example of an adult working and publishing in the world using image as the primary medium for conveying his ideas.

The visual art activities in Sherelle's curriculum were the most visible traces of her decisions to integrate visual arts. These activities were visible in part because they involved the composition of visual art, but also because Sherelle displayed several class sets of these visual compositions on the walls inside her room and just outside her door in the hallway. The trace of visual art in Sherelle's curriculum was evident in the images she posted around her classroom. For every drawing that she pinned to a bulletin board, there was always a language component, a piece of writing, attached. She said that she "definitely went out on a limb with trying to incorporate with visual arts" (Interview 3, 6/22). By purposefully arranging the public displays of her students' art work alongside their language work, she showed and documented visually the fact that she was bringing visual art into her ELA and reading curriculum while attending to the requirements for descriptive and personal narrative writing set by the state.

Assessment Practices

Because Sherelle worked in an ELA and reading position, her curriculum necessarily attended to the language and literacy development of her students. It was her prerogative to integrate visual art into that curriculum, but she still had to ensure that her students were developing proficiency in language and literacy. Assessment practices in Sherelle's curriculum thus included compositions based in language and image and tests based almost exclusively in language.

Sherelle's repertoire of assessments for students included a number of composition tasks. These assessments, which were not test-like, included the reading projects for comprehension of texts; sketch-to-stretch drawing and writing compositions for comprehension of character, conflict, plot, setting; and writing projects, including the publication of an anthology of illustrated ghost stories, an essay about an invention, and a personal narrative about the tangible and intangible things the students carried in their school bags that was composed after students spent two class periods drawing their bags. With the exception of the invention essay, which was based on research students did online and with print resources, compositions were often linked to images.

Tests in Sherelle's curriculum included teacher-generated unit tests on grammar and poetry, final exams on content that was covered during the semester, and vocabulary tests of five to ten words taken from literature texts read in class (e.g., *lair*, *ludicrous*, and *vast*) or test preparation materials (e.g., *analyze*, *predict*, and *explain*). The tests and quizzes Sherelle used on a weekly and monthly basis to assess student understanding of the material in the curriculum were most often language-based, e.g., Sherelle gave students a sheet of paper with questions about verbs that students responded to with

written answers. The exceptions to these language-only tests were the vocabulary tests. Vocabulary tests consisted of matching terms with definitions, composing sentences using the vocabulary in such a way as to show that the student understood what the word meant, and a drawing. Students could choose from a handful of words on the test to draw a scene illustrating the word. These illustrations were always accompanied with language:

They had to include the language with that [drawing], too, because I told them, “There's no way for me to read this picture and get what you want me to get out of it. I need to know that what you're drawing is what this word is and you know what the word means.” (Interview 1, 11/2)

The drawing on the vocabulary test was still a nonredundant text for conveying meaning (Eisner, 2002); however, Sherelle did not necessarily trust her own understanding of the students' drawings as means for conveying what they knew about the word they illustrated. Sherelle needed the language for two reasons: 1) to be sure that what she saw in the drawing was what the student meant to convey and that assurance was provided with the written explanation of the drawing; and 2) to be sure that what the students were doing with the drawings was clearly connected to language because this was, after all, a vocabulary test.

The final exams given in December and May were different from the tests Sherelle composed for her grammar and literature units. That is, the final exams given for all the sixth grade students had to be similar. When I asked if she was expected to have the same exam as the other ELA and reading teacher, Sherelle said, “I think we're supposed to, but we're not because we're pulling from the same bank of questions and it's

gonna be all over the same things” (Conversation, 11/30). In other words, Sherelle had a discrete set of questions from which to compose her final exam and the goal was for both teachers to test the students on the same content but with different questions.

The levels of success of the students on these final exams were problematic for Sherelle. The students’ grades on the reading final exam in December were cause for concern because the grades were low compared to the grades students earned during the semester. She reported that she gave students “a lot of class work grades in reading . . . but, I didn't have very much individual assessment” (Conversation, 12/16). The concern was that the work done in class did not reflect the individual assessment and the almost exclusively linguistic format of the final exam. During the reading class students worked in a variety of groupings (e.g., pairs, table groups of five students, larger groups of 8 to 12 students, or as an entire class) on visual art activities such as sketch-to-stretch, murals, sequential drawings, and the reading projects. The final exam did include a section in which students used the murals they had designed to generate different pronouns and homophones and then compose sentences using those words. These homophones and pronouns were recorded both on the test form and on sticky notes that were attached onto the mural. On the final exam, then, visual art was present as a text for students to respond to and write about.

The problem, Sherelle said, was that the students scored low grades on the exam and high grades in her class. A month after the exams were given, her concerns still fresh, she said the students’ reading grades for the course were “inflated because [she] would grade drawings as in-class activities and [give] grades for them” (Conversation, 1/17). She went on to say that she “wasn’t sure how the drawings are relating to rest [of her

curriculum].” Sherelle’s concern was a tension in her process of composing the integrated curriculum. The role of drawings in her class as compositions to be assessed for grades needed an explicit connection to the language and literacy content in her curriculum.

I see this concern about the disparity between how students performed during class and how they performed during a testing situation as indicative of a tension in the role of visual art in assessment. Because Sherelle had to use an assessment tool essentially designed by a different teacher with different teaching goals, the final exam did not necessarily test the students on the content and the form of their learning during the semester. By form, I mean the sign systems the students used in class to explore the content of the curriculum (e.g., literature, grammar, and composition) included both linguistic and pictorial signs. In contrast, the final exam tested for linguistic responses and not for pictorial responses. The mural component on the exam to generate words and sentences based on what the students saw in the murals was worth less than ten percent of the total exam grade. While the inclusion of a mural as a writing prompt on the final exam met Sherelle’s goal for integrating visual art in the assessment, ultimately the small point value she gave the mural-prompt writing indicates that the students’ performance on the language-only portion of the test was more important.

By May, Sherelle’s talk about final exams shifted. At the end of the year the end-of-course exam scores were posted and Sherelle’s team of students had a 90% pass rate, which meant that 90% of her students met or exceeded the state requirements for content knowledge in reading and language arts. With the knowledge that her students had met the state’s standards, she was again confident in her teaching. This time she was

confident that the integration of the visual art was part of the equation of factors that helped her students to achieve high scores. The final exam for second semester, then, was not as large a concern as it was at the end of first semester because now Sherelle had standardized test scores to document that her students were learning the content she was supposed to teach.

Sherelle also used standardized tests provided by the school and administered at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to determine student reading levels and reading comprehension development through the Accelerated Reader (AR) program. The AR program had two components germane to Sherelle's assessment of student reading levels. First, students took a cloze method reading test, from which the results showed each student's reading level and zone of proximal development for improving that level. Second, students could check out books in the library that were marked with the reading level and the point value for successful completion of a comprehension test. A second important standardized test, the end-of-course exam also figured prominently in Sherelle's class. The end-of-course exam was administered in April in each content area (e.g., reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies). The preparation for the end-of-course exam began in October and I turn to this issue next.

Test Preparation

The end-of-course exams were state-mandated and published standardized tests given to students to show achievement for the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation. As such, these tests were high-stakes assessments that, although given to students a full month before finishing sixth grade, were to show students' content-knowledge development for the entire school year.

The textbooks and workbooks Sherelle had for ELA and reading were published specifically for the state and included exercises for students to complete in preparation for the end-of-course exam. On October 19, I observed the first instance of this end-of-course exam preparation as students completed an “[End-of-Course Exam] Practice Plus” exercise in their reading text book. During the first semester, the end-of-course exam was a regular topic of discussion as Sherelle taught students ways of reading and understanding questions that were found in all multiple choice tests students might encounter in their school lives. In contrast, the end-of-course exam figured much more prominently in the daily activities of Sherelle’s class during second semester.

Each class session of the first three weeks of classes during second semester began with time devoted to the end-of-course exam. That is, the students practiced taking portions of publicly released forms of the end-of-course exam as the first class activity in both reading and ELA. Eisner (2002) notes that both the amount of time and the time of day devoted to activities within a curriculum communicate a message about the value of those activities. By placing the end-of-course exam preparation first in each day’s class, Sherelle was effectively placing the end-of-course exam foremost in the curriculum each time she met with her students. The emphasis on the importance of the end-of-course exam was tempered, however, with the amount of time spent on it during a given class. The warm-up portion of the 90 minute class period typically lasted 10 to 20 minutes, with the remaining 70 to 80 minutes devoted to other activities.

While observing during the first weeks of second semester, I noted a shift from the group-oriented, visual art-inclusive activities present earlier in the year to a focus on language-based test preparation and independent work with an increase in the number of

teacher-generated tests. By the end of January, Sherelle's curriculum shifted again and began to look more like the curriculum she had composed during the first semester. I asked Sherelle about this shift and she said,

It was very weird because at the beginning of the semester I felt really confident. I was like, 'This is gonna be great.' And then I guess, I just, I just realized, 'Well, there's a lot still left to teach and you know.' So. Yeah, definitely feels different and I've been more frustrated and I told one of my carpool buddies yesterday that it's just basically, it's because the way that I have to get through things now doesn't really lend itself to my teaching style. And I know it doesn't lend itself to my students learning style, but. [breathes out] I mean what do you do? Do you just go into the [end-of-course exam] knowing that they don't know these parts of speech, but they know these really well? I mean, what? So, like I said. My plan of attack: kind of throw it all out there, hit it all, and then come back later and touch up. (Conversation, 3/10)

Sherelle was confident at the beginning of the semester that she would be able to prepare her students to do well on the end-of-course exam, but this shift in the curriculum came at the expense of the kind of teaching she did during the first semester. As February began, Sherelle brought visual art back into the curriculum and students again worked in pairs and small groups as well as independently. The end-of-course exam never left the curriculum during the second semester, but by March, students were preparing mini-lessons to teach their peers about a selection of questions on the end-of-course exam using drama and visual art in their instruction. Within three months, then, Sherelle found a way to integrate visual art into the preparation for the standardized and highest stakes

exam the students took all year. I turn now to Sherelle's relationships with people in her school who affected her decisions about her integrated curriculum and will return to the end-of-course exam test preparation and the visual arts activities as part of that discussion.

Relationships within Sherelle's Curriculum

The context in which Sherelle composed her curriculum was an important factor in the way she constructed meanings about that curriculum. The relationships with people in the context included Sherelle's teaching team, another ELA and reading teacher, the principal, as well as an art teacher and me as participant observer in her classroom. The decisions Sherelle made about her curriculum reflected how she worked on these relationships and how these relationships worked on her. That is, Sherelle's relationships, i.e., of herself and her curriculum in relation to other teachers and the principal, were part of the composition of her curriculum. For example, Sherelle decided to focus on test preparation during the second semester, in part, because she felt pressure from Jane, the other ELA teacher, to have students perform well enough that Sherelle's team could carry the scores of Jane's team. According to Sherelle, Jane expected her students to score below Sherelle's students, so Sherelle's students needed to score high enough to ensure that the average of the entire sixth grade scores was at a passing level. As Dewey (1916/2004) theorized that education was about the doing and undergoing involved in learning, Sherelle composed her curriculum as part of continual doing and undergoing of her perceptions of these relationships.

Sherelle's Teaching Team: Carrie, Patricia, and the Students

Within Central Middle School there were two teams for each grade level. The teams consisted of three or four teachers who taught the “core curriculum” (conversation, 1/17) for students at the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade levels. On Sherelle’s team, she taught ELA and reading; Carrie taught math and science; and, Patricia taught social studies and Academic Enrichment, a course that is “supposed to be focused on math and reading because that's what the [end-of-course exam] focus is this year” (Interview 1, 11/2). The team was also supported by Belinda, a special education teacher who provided inclusion support and also taught a small group of students in each of the core curriculum areas.

Sherelle had an additional mentorship relationship with Carrie. The assigned mentor relationship was one that reassured Sherelle on the one hand and left her worried on the other. On the reassuring side, Sherelle felt comfortable going to Carrie for advice about teaching, especially for tips on how to approach students not performing well in class: “[Carrie will] always give me advice about, ‘Well, this is what works for me here.’. . . I feel like she's a little bit more open-minded in that way” (Interview 1, 11/2). Throughout the school year Carrie also gave Sherelle information about deadlines for report cards, disciplinary actions, and preparation for the end-of-course exam testing week. Carrie’s opinion of Sherelle’s teaching mattered because she was a designated leader within the school, within the team, and a mentor to Sherelle. In November Sherelle talked about how she perceived Carrie’s influence:

Sherelle: I have the best days when I'm not worried about my discipline and I'm not worried about: “Well, what will Carrie say if she sees this?” . . .

Author: Do you have that worry?

Sherelle: Sometimes I do. And, you know, I really do.

Author: Has she ever said anything about how you teach?

Sherelle: No, no. She's never observed me. But, you know, she's never said anything about how I teach or how I discipline the kids or "You need, you know what, you really need to, you know." She never has, but.

Author: But you feel that pressure.

Sherelle: Some, yeah, sometimes. (Interview 1, 11/2)

Sherelle was concerned that if students did not behave appropriately in her class, she may get caught teaching in a way that Carrie might disapprove. Sherelle never reported being criticized for her teaching or her curriculum. Nevertheless, she still felt that under Carrie's supervision the curriculum Sherelle composed might not be well received.

Over the course of the year Sherelle and Carrie talked about the role of writing in English language arts and in science. Carrie's goals for integrating writing into the science curriculum helped Sherelle consider her own curriculum. Sherelle told me about a conversation she had with Carrie, in which the two teachers discussed the role of writing in their curricula:

If the students can write—I mean, yeah, if they can produce a collage or if they can produce a song or if they [can] make a mural or if they do some other kind of rendering, they can show understanding. But if they can also write, which all of those things should have with it anyway. If you have a mural, you need to have the writing behind it, too. It gives you a solid assessment tool [and] you can see where they're at, what they need to work on, what's good. (Conversation, 4/24)

In this statement, writing is the representation that will prove to Sherelle that a student understood what he or she was doing when producing a collage, a song, or a mural for class. The “solid assessment tool” requires both the image/song and the writing to be together. From these statements, Sherelle positioned writing in the arbiter role that Suhor (Suhor, 1992) posits is important for understanding a semiotics-based curriculum. That is, in the integrated curriculum Sherelle composed, Sherelle pointed out the need for language to add additional information for the images students made. She also included music in this statement as a means for composing, showing that her notion of an integrated curriculum was not conceptually exclusive to linguistic and pictorial signs. Sherelle told her class on several occasions “my other language is music.” A trained musician and actor, Sherelle included music and plays in her curriculum as well, but our conversations during this study were focused on the visual art and other linguistic texts and activities in her classes.

Sherelle’s relationship with Carrie was one that helped her to explore potential connections between images and writing within a content area. Patricia offered a different opportunity to integrate visual arts, writing, and content from the social studies curriculum. In April Patricia asked Sherelle if she would like to teach a short activity on Aboriginal art. The activity involved drawing and painting an animal or pattern using tempera paint and then writing about the symbolism of the visual choices the students made. Patricia had just finished teaching a unit on Australia and asked Sherelle, “Do you want to do this in your class?” (Conversation, 4/24) Sherelle incorporated the social studies curriculum materials (i.e., cultural information about Aboriginal peoples in

Australia) with the painting and a writing task to “describe or explain why they chose the animal they did or the patterns or the colors” (Conversation, 4/24).

Sherelle discussed the Aboriginal painting and essay first as a composition activity and then as a negotiating move to address the state standards in ELA and social studies while incorporating drawing as a composition tool. She said the Aboriginal art lesson was an opportunity to reinforce her integrated curriculum goals: “another good way to do the visual stuff and the writing afterward” (Conversation, 5/23). Patricia’s offer to Sherelle to do this activity came after a year in which Sherelle rarely talked about Patricia except to say that in comparison to Carrie, Carrie was the “more positive of the two” (Interview 1, 11/2). Like Carrie, Patricia was an experienced teacher. Off-tape, Sherelle said that she was pleased about the opportunity to teach an integrated art and language lesson from Patricia’s curriculum and did not hesitate to agree to teach the activity. With the inclusion of the Aboriginal painting and writing activity, Sherelle’s integrated curriculum thus expanded to include content from the social studies curriculum.

The students who I observed in Sherelle’s class completed their visual arts and other language-based activities without audible complaint or consternation. In fact, I saw students regularly smile and talk about their interest in drawing with their classmates when Sherelle introduced a new visual activity. For example, in May, two students told Sherelle that the drawings they composed of their backpacks and their written essays were the best thing they had ever done in school. I asked Sherelle earlier in the year about how she thought the students received her integrated curriculum:

Author: You've said in the past that when you teach you do things differently than other teachers in the school. How do you think the kids are picking up on that?

Sherelle: Maybe they just take it like teacher by teacher because I'm sure that there are things that their other teachers do differently. And so they just know, "Well, when we come in here, these are the sort of things [we'll be expected to do.]" But, you know, last semester I noticed they would just start doing little doodles or drawings to connect, especially with their vocabulary but even with other notes that we took. When I didn't specifically say, "Let's do this [drawing]," they just started doing it on their own. And I think that that's something that maybe they've adapted . . . one of those types of strategies that they know that they can use in my classroom. (Conversation, 1/17)

Sherelle's integration of visual art in the curriculum thus began to show up in student work as icons to be drawn and included while working through a text or a concept. To follow up on this idea that students had their own volitional use for icons in the curriculum, I asked if the students ever talked with her about how they felt about her class. Her response referred to the earlier noted shift in her teaching that occurred in January.

I've heard some students say from time to time that they enjoy my class. But sometimes I used to think that that was because maybe I wasn't like, I don't know. I don't know how to explain it. It's like this semester; I know that I'm sticking with the core curriculum. Like, extremely. First of all, there's so much emphasis

because the [end-of-course exam] is in a couple months. And I don't know if you remember, but I was kind of feeling pressed at the end of last semester. . . . Last semester when students would say that ["I enjoy your class"], I would kind of attribute it to, "Well, I don't know if I'm teaching you all the stuff I'm supposed to, so maybe you'll like my class because it's not as intense as the others yet. Or you know?" I don't know. (Conversation, 1/17)

From this statement I infer that Sherelle's concerns and decisions to teach the "core curriculum" as preparation for the end-of-course exam in April potentially affected how students thought about her class. The remark that her class was not as "intense" during first semester points to how Sherelle perceived her own curriculum in relations to her teaching team members' curricula. Sherelle's curricular concerns during the first semester were located in integrating visual art with reading and writing, exploring different purposes for reading, creating an environment in which students worked in small groups on a daily basis, and not necessarily explicitly preparing for the end-of-course exam. Whereas, Carrie and Patricia had a full handle on the "core curriculum" and were able to plan their instruction and materials accordingly so that students could perform well both in the classes and on the end-of-course exam. As I discussed earlier, the curriculum changed in January when Sherelle shifted to more language-focused activities designed for individual achievement and preparation for the end-of-course exam.

Jane and the End-of-course exam

Jane, Sherelle's counterpart on the other sixth grade team, was a veteran teacher in the district and the school. Unlike the kind of encouragement and help that Sherelle

perceived in her relationships with her teaching team colleagues, her relationship with Jane was one that exerted enough pressure that Sherelle questioned the value of her integrated curriculum. In the first interview Sherelle said, “When I go in to share ideas or get ideas, we're not really on the same page I guess” (Interview 1, 11/2). Sherelle attributed Jane not being on the same page for two reasons: 1) Sherelle thought that Jane’s practices with teaching were not in-line with an integrated curriculum: “I think the other teacher, Jane, is just you know reading and then like doing comprehension questions” (Conversation 12/17); and, 2) Sherelle reported that in conversations Jane characterized Sherelle’s students as different and more able to work with visual art and language because they were “just higher level students. They're just somehow, more well-behaved and more sophisticated and they can think better or whatever. So therefore I can do ‘Let's get up and move around’ things” (Interview 3, 6/22).

With Jane, Sherelle was looking for a relationship that would support her thinking about not only integrated curriculum, but the basic ELA and reading curricula that were provided by the state. She elaborated on her frustration in not getting the support she wanted from Jane in her literacy content area:

It was so frustrating for me this year to walk into [Jane’s] classroom and be ready to plan, have some ideas, and then just be shut down because [Jane said,] “Oh, my kids can't do this. They don't know how to do this. Here I give them this worksheet, I give this book stuff.” (Interview 2, 3/29)

Despite her frustration, Sherelle continued to go to Jane for information about the content of the ELA and reading curriculum, pacing for teaching the curriculum, and for help in developing assessments such as the final exams discussed earlier.

During the last few weeks of the first semester, as Sherelle began to plan for her final exams and a large stack of copies of the end-of-course exams arrived in her room for test preparation, Sherelle's relationship with Jane shifted. Sherelle needed Jane's bank of questions, she said, to assess her students' knowledge. She also needed Jane's experience as a veteran teacher to guide her through the content within the final exams, to assure what Sherelle taught during the first semester was consistent with what the school expected sixth graders to learn. The doing and the undergoing that Sherelle experienced in her relationship with Jane shifted, as did her curriculum: Prior to the arrival of the end-of-course exam copies and the final exam creation, Sherelle looked to other teachers in the school, to an art teacher, and to me for help with her curriculum because she was frustrated with Jane; she was thus able to redirect her relationship with Jane to continue her focus on integrating visual art (the doing), but the semester ended with Sherelle acquiescing to Jane's curricular direction toward a focus on language-only activities (the undergoing). Indeed, Sherelle was confident about her choices in the first few weeks of second semester because Jane had given her a pacing guide for the ELA and reading curricula. She now had a road map to direct her teaching, and she was no longer "looking into a vastness that had no direction" (Conversation, 1/17). So the support she sought from Jane for guiding her curriculum was now in her hands. However, with this direction also came the shift toward language-based activities in Sherelle's ongoing composition of her curriculum. Sherelle's curriculum shifted back to an integrated focus, but the end-of-course exam preparation remained present and constant over the course of second semester.

Mr. Wallace, Principal

Mr. Wallace, the principal of Central Middle School, was a person Sherelle discussed in all three formal interviews and in two informal conversations. We talked primarily about the visits Mr. Wallace made to Sherelle's classroom to observe and evaluate her teaching performance. Sherelle described Mr. Wallace's expectations of teachers: "He's always asking us to break out of the mold of, you know, just the kids sitting down. He always wants them to have something to touch and feel and things to be very concrete" (Interview 1, 11/2). She also reported that he and the vice principal also expected teachers to use the "break[ing] out of the mold" curricula to prepare students to do well on the end-of-course exam. So on the one hand, Sherelle was to teach creatively and on the other hand, she was to do so in a way that supported an exam based on a specific content and with multiple-choice questions.

Mr. Wallace knew that Sherelle's teaching goal for the year was to compose an integrated curriculum. He gave his approval for this study and subsequently my presence in the room as a participant observer interested in understanding Sherelle's interest in visual art and literacy. So throughout the study it was no secret that Sherelle's teaching included visual art activities. Despite the fact that Sherelle knew that Mr. Wallace had approved the study and hence the use of visual art in her ELA and reading curriculum, she still worried: "If my principal walks in and they're [the students] drawing pictures, what's he gonna think?" (Interview 3, 6/22). Similar to Sherelle's concern that Carrie might not approve of her curriculum decisions, she also worried that Mr. Wallace would not approve. These fears of backlash for potentially getting caught with kids drawing in her class were calmed after Mr. Wallace's first two observations. During the first

observation students composed their vocabulary icon drawings as part of the lesson. Sherelle reported that in the follow-up meetings to these observations Mr. Wallace praised both her and the students' performances.

The relationship with Mr. Wallace points to an important tension in Sherelle's composition of her curriculum. Even though she felt confident at different points during the year in her relationships with her teaching team colleagues and students, she also needed confidence in her relationship with the principal. Sherelle still harbored concerns that kids drawing pictures in her ELA and reading classes would have negative consequences. I infer from these concerns voiced in the interview data that the role of art as a peripheral and not a core discipline is still alive and well (Eisner, 2002). Visual arts classes are often located on the edges of school campuses and the edge of the curricula valued most in schools. To allay her concerns, Sherelle sought the guidance of two art teachers to help bring visual art into a more central, rather than peripheral, role in her curriculum.

Author and Mrs. Parker, Art Teachers and Resources

Sherelle had two relationships that extended beyond her school that helped her understand visual art: Mrs. Parker, who was a family friend; and the author, a K-12 art and secondary ELA teacher. Sherelle had known Mrs. Parker, a retired elementary and middle school teacher, for several years. During the school year, Sherelle consulted with Mrs. Parker for her art education expertise, her ideas about specific activities to use, and her guidance in teaching these activities in her ELA and reading classes. The illustrated anthology of ghost stories was originally an activity Mrs. Parker used with 7th grade students. Mrs. Parker helped Sherelle adapt the lesson by sharing "all of her original

stuff” (Interview 1, 11/2), including lesson plans and pacing guides for students to collect stories from their families and communities, illustrate the stories using a variety of drawing materials, and publish the final product. Sherelle approached the project from a perspective found in high school journalism classes: students worked in small groups with one or two writers, a researcher, and an illustrator. The final product was two copies of the manuscript, with one kept in Sherelle’s classroom and one in the school library.

Mrs. Parker also taught Sherelle how to use photo-editing software to manipulate portraits of student faces to become canvases for students to color: “[Mrs. Parker] takes pictures of [students] and then she basically removes the color from the picture. . . so it looks like a pencil or ink drawing of the [student’s] face” (Conversation, 1/27). Sherelle used this portraiture technique as one of the visual art options in the reading projects; she taught students what Mrs. Parker had taught her about adding color and value to the facial features. The reading project option, which several students opted to complete, consisted of students using their own or other students’ faces to describe a character in a young adult novel. The project required students to compose both a visual portrait and a written description of the character. These portraits and the ghost story anthology illustrate how Sherelle sought a relationship to support her goals for visual art integration in her curriculum. She was thus willing to learn from an art teacher different means to integrate curriculum.

As a participant observer, colleague, and mentor, I had a complex relationship with Sherelle. Our conversations and interviews afforded opportunities to reflect on and evaluate her integrated curriculum and the role of visual art in that curriculum. During these exchanges, we talked about activities Sherelle had completed and possible activities

she might use in the future. We also talked about her relationships with the other teachers, Mr. Wallace, and with me. She reported that she valued our relationship, that “it helped a lot” (Interview 3, 6/22) as she planned and evaluated her curriculum.

Within a mentor capacity, I talked with Sherelle about her curriculum, her students, and her thoughts in general about school. She said that sometimes “I just need to talk to someone!” (Interview 3, 6/22), and I was an available resource. In addition to providing ideas for the curriculum and space for reflection after class, I helped Sherelle with instruction for the visual art activities during class, acting as an additional teacher in the room. For instance, when she taught Mrs. Parker’s portrait activity, teaching students about using a variety of colors to mimic realistic skin tones, I added brief instruction on adding shadows and highlights to those colors to render the landscape of a human face. Sherelle evaluated my role as an observer and participant in her classroom:

There are benefits because there are two teachers in the classroom and you can help out where I can't always get to every student. Or maybe because I know that you're in that class, maybe I do change things. . . I wonder if maybe I'm a better teacher because you're in here and it's third [period], so I've had two segments to practice with. (Conversation, 12/17)

I include this quote about Sherelle’s evaluation of my presence and role in her class because the relationship we developed in this study has been one in which I have been careful to be respectful (cf. Behar, 1993/2003). I was a teacher of language arts who used visual arts to teach. My research interests gravitate toward understanding the problems of integrating visual arts and image into the linguistic realm of English language arts and reading instruction. Throughout the study and after the school year

ended, I had a vested interest in helping Sherelle to compose her integrated curriculum. The result of this investment on my part and Sherelle's part resulted in a collegial relationship in which we could both explore our questions about integrated curriculum through collaboration. Certainly my interests in integration and my role in and beyond Sherelle's classroom could potentially create a bias toward viewing this classroom with a positive outlook. However, bias or no bias, the relationship Sherelle and I developed during the study was one that provided a means for her to reflect on and talk about her decision-making about her curriculum. The reflection piece of the meaning-making process that Smagorinsky (2001) theorizes is an important component to the articulation of emergent meanings and ideas.

As Sherelle reflected on the network of relationships surrounding her curriculum, her decisions about what that curriculum could become and could mean to both herself and her students was informed by those relationships. It is likely that the composition of her integrated curriculum would be quite different if the people in her context were different. I turn next to a discussion of the ways in which Sherelle ultimately dealt with these relationships.

Sherelle's Solutions for Composing an Integrated Curriculum

The decisions Sherelle made about her integrated curriculum coalesced into two primary solutions: negotiation and documentation. Negotiation was a term that both Sherelle and I used in our discussions to describe how she navigated the state standards for students in ELA and reading, Mr. Wallace's expectations for success in student academic achievement through creative teaching practices, and her goals for bringing visual art into the mix. Documentation was a term that Sherelle used as she talked about

the need to show hypothetical critics of her curriculum how and why she made her decisions to include visual art in her literacy curriculum.

Negotiation

As Sherelle composed her curriculum to integrate visual art, she also composed it to attend to the expectations laid out in the state's performance standards for students. She reported that her decisions about what to teach in a given class period were based on the performance standards and whether she could use visual, linguistic, or other texts and activities to put the concepts within those standards into the hands of her students. That is, she wanted to make the curriculum a lively experience in which students could use language and image to understand the concepts and texts at hand. Freedman, Flower, Hull, and Hayes (1997/2005) argue for "negotiated curriculum" as a type of curriculum that "moves beyond fixed programs aimed at an idealized whole class" (p. 742). In Sherelle's case, the curriculum moved beyond the fixed program of student performance objectives set by the state board of education in order to address student composition in both language and image.

During our conversations and interviews, she used hypothetical language to demonstrate what her responses to potential critics would be, if such critics wanted to know how she negotiated attention to state-mandated standards with the daily curricular decisions she made.

Some people could say, "You just played dress up. You let the kids walk around the room, dig through bags, they dressed up and they [drew] pictures." But the way that you negotiate that is by saying, "Well, this was a very important piece that they needed to visualize the story." (Interview 3, 6/22)

In this quote, Sherelle is mindful of questions that may be asked of her as an ELA and reading teacher, if someone were to see her students involved in an activity that was not exclusively located in language. The purpose for students dressing up and drawing pictures in this scenario is explicitly to aid their visualization of a story (Wilhelm, 1997). Sherelle's statement shows that the rationale for integrating visual art is attentive to both her students and a potentially critical observer.

Documentation

Sherelle also discussed the idea that her rationale for composing curriculum required written documentation to show how she attended to the needs of her students, the state performance standards, and to her colleagues. Mr. Wallace required all the teachers in the school to turn in written copies of their lessons plans each week. Sherelle used these lesson plans as a means to show Mr. Wallace how her integrated curriculum activities addressed the state standards for English language arts and reading performance standards for students. When asked what advice she would give another teacher interested in integrated curriculum, she said

The next thing I would definitely do is make sure, make sure, make sure that he or she has everything well documented: like if you're doing it this way [with visual art] as opposed to giving a handout or doing grammar workbook exercises, why is it that this way is effective? And to have that somewhere, like in a lesson plan. . . . And if she gets called to task on it, at least to have something in her head to say, "Well this is why. This is what I'm aiming at here." (Interview 2, 3/29)

Documentation is thus a means for showing what the teacher understood about the curriculum and how decisions were made based on contextual factors such as available

materials, students, state curricula, and teacher interests. The role of visual art in an integrated curriculum can potentially be made clear to an observer because this documentation is based in language, the arbiter of school communication (Suhor, 1992).

Discussion

There are potential lessons to be learned in the case of Sherelle and her integrated curriculum about what it means to teach in a school with a vision of student success and teacher creativity, with teacher colleagues that are more and less interested in teaching with similar goals, and with a research colleague and mentor to serve as a resource for reflection as the teacher composes the curriculum. Sherelle's story is not an unusual one within the context of teachers faced with desires to be innovative within the affordances and constraints of a system designed to focus on Adequate Yearly Progress through standardized measures and attending to the needs of all children in crowded classrooms.

Certainly the idea of bringing visual art into a language and literacy course is not a new idea: Integration of arts-based strategies in English language arts curricula was suggested as a teaching strategy in the publication of the National Education Association's Committee of Ten Report (1892), when the committee advocated the use of drawing as a means of generating responses for literature. An article in *English Journal* from the early 20th century argues that images, including photographs, postcards, and "moving pictures" should be used as tools for teaching literature (Howard, 1916). Since then, arts-based strategies for teaching subjects outside visual arts or music classrooms has been problematic due to national reports marking U.S. schools and reading practices in the nation as at risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; National Endowment for the Arts, 2004). What can be gained, then, from Sherelle's case?

Sherelle's work on her curriculum can be considered a composition of *currere*, of laying down a path while walking (Sumara, 1996). Sumara argues that "currere is not the course to be run but the running of the course. . . . The path depends on everything, and everything depends on the path" (p. 174). The integrated curriculum that Sherelle worked on and that worked on her was a path she laid down as she walked and taught and documented her progress. She started with ideas about what integrated curriculum might mean, but her curriculum and the relationships within her context shaped her ideas. The integrated curriculum in Sherelle's classroom was laid down each day given what was present: the students, the texts to be read and composed in language and image, the colleagues, the principal, and the observer from the university. Sherelle's case is one that illustrates that curriculum, especially integrated curriculum, is not a fixed entity with a set number of solutions. Rather, integrated curriculum is continually composed, marked with multiple pathways for attending to relationships with people and texts, and never perfect.

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Figures

Taped Conversations	Formal Interview 1	Taped Conversations	Formal Interview 2	Taped Conversations	Formal Interview 3
10/19, 10/26	11/2	11/30, 12/5, 12/9, 12/16, 1/17, 1/27, 3/10	3/29	4/21, 4/24, 5/23	6/22

Figure 3.1. Table of recorded conversations and interviews, 2005-2006 school year.

Category	Definition	Example
Curriculum Path		
Assessment Practices	Testing and other assessment practices Sherelle used to determine how well students grasped the material in her classes; includes the End-of-course exam, final exam, class work, and homework.	“If you have a mural, you need to have the writing behind it, too. . . It gives you a solid assessment tool because you can see where they're at, what they need to work on, what's good.
Jane Shaffer Writing Method	A method of teaching writing, especially expository writing, adopted by the whole school for teaching students how to write.	“Just because I wanted to do what I'm supposed to be doing as far as like curriculum, I wrote in the guidelines for the reading project that they have to write their responses using Jane Shaffer [writing method].”
Test Preparation	Activities for reviewing content before unit tests, final exams, and the end-of-course exam.	“This is a test we're taking on Monday over nouns. I gave them the study guide. . . Yesterday was the day it was due. Ten percent of my class did it. . . So I'll do a good bit more of like review before the test time with this class probably. More than I do with other classes”
Visual Art Activities	Activities in which drawing was a primary component; includes backpack drawing, revision drawing, Aboriginal painting, sketch-to-stretch.	“The next thing they're going to do with the writings is do a compare and contrast where they talk about the similarities or differences of creating the different types of art: the Aboriginal paintings and the backpack drawings.”
Visual Teaching Materials	Materials Sherelle produced and/or used in her teaching; includes the dry-erase board, planning materials, handouts for students	“I realize that even when I say, ‘You know, there's this message in red on the board,’ I'm using that specific color to point out that this thing is important or that you have to look at it or you have to see it or to make sure that kids are seeing it.”
Visual/Verbal Texts	Texts used in Sherelle's class that used images and language; includes graphic novels, comic books, Time for Kids.	“One of the genres I'm gonna include is graphic novels. Yes, it's not in the curriculum really but I don't care. Because, because I mean, it's reading and it's what [my students] enjoy.”

Relationships		
Author	My role in helping Sherelle compose her curriculum and as participant observer in her class.	“Sometimes I think kids think that understanding these school things that we talk about, the kind of stuff that I'm asking them to do only lives in school. Even though they're learning from each other and teaching each other all the time outside of school, they don't know that that's what that is. But, there have been some times when I've been giving notes or something and you jump in with an idea and we kind of, as an aside from what's going on, talk about [that idea].”
Carrie & Patricia, Teaching Team Members	Carrie, the math and science teacher, as well as Sherelle's assigned mentor. Patricia, the social studies and academic enrichment (A & E) teacher. One of two sixth grade teams.	“Okay so I needed to make Jane Shaffer [writing method] come to life. . . For science and math classes, Christy just wants, wanted [the students] to go ahead and know how to do it [the writing method] because I think she's gonna start them writing some stuff.”
End-of-course exams	Content-based, standardized exams required and produced by the state given in each academic content area: reading, language arts, math, science, and social studies.	“One of the things that I do have to [do]—Do you see that big stack of stuff on the overhead [projector]? And there's another stack hiding over there. Those are [end-of-course exam] tests . . . 2000-2001 or something. One's reading and one's language arts. And, now we have to start incorporating bits and pieces.”
Jane, ELA Teacher	A veteran sixth grade ELA and reading teacher who taught on the other sixth grade team.	“I'm supposed to plan with the language arts and reading teacher on the other sixth grade team. But, she's been teaching for a while and she doesn't really like to—like, when I go in to share ideas or get ideas, we're not really on the same page I guess.”
Mrs. Parker, Art Teacher	An elementary and secondary art teacher who is a family friend.	“[This is] a lesson that [Mrs. Parker] taught several years ago to seventh graders. And I have all of her original stuff. She saved it, even like student work, she still has from years ago.”
Students	The students on Sherelle's team.	“For some kids they don't, they get very nervous about having to draw something, you know? But for the most part, a lot of them took right to

		it. And whereas with writing, you see something different.”
Mr. Wallace, Principal	The principal of the school.	“After that [first] formal observation and I went in and I was so scared when I met with him. And he said so many good things. It gave me so much confidence.”
Solutions		
Documentation	Creation of written rationales for the inclusion of visual art in the curriculum to show explicit connections between development of oral and written communication skills and the use of art.	“The next thing I would definitely do is make sure, make sure, make sure that [a teacher using visual art] has everything well documented: like if you're doing it this way as opposed to giving a handout or doing grammar workbook exercises, why is it that this way is effective? And to have that somewhere in her lesson [plans].”
Negotiation	Rationales for decisions Sherelle made to accommodate perceived expectations of the school, state performance standards, and other teachers.	“Some people could be like, ‘You just played dress up. You let the kids walk around the room, dig through bags, they dressed up and they took pictures.’ But the way that you negotiate that is by saying, ‘Well this was a very important piece that they needed to visualize in the story.’”

Figure 3.2. Table of major categories, definitions, and examples.

Visual Art Activities	Definition, example	Frequency
Aboriginal paintings and essays	A social studies lesson based on Australian Aboriginal art	1
Anthology of illustrated ghost stories	Stories collected from the community, illustrated by students, and published	1
Back pack drawings and essays	Charcoal drawings of student bags with essays about what they carry	2
Graphic organizers	Includes Venn diagrams, story plot maps, life maps	18
Icons	Small drawings used in note-taking, graphic organizers, grammar and vocabulary exercises	21
Murals	Large scale drawings composed by groups of students	2
Photographs	Photos from Sherelle's personal collection and those in <i>Time for Kids</i> used as writing prompts	2
Reading projects	Activities to be chosen by students Include sketch-to-stretch, flip books, treasure boxes among other language-based options	2
Re/vision activity	Two drawings cut up and reconfigured as new drawing	1
Sequential drawings	Includes storyboards, comic book panels and used in grammar exercises	2
Sketch-to-stretch	Drawing paired with writing as response to literature	4
Visit from comic book artist	A local graphic novelist/comic book artist discussed how he conveyed narratives without using words	1

Figure 3.3. Table of visual art activities observed in Sherelle's curriculum. Frequency counts show instances in which the activity was used in the class during the 66 days of observation.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTEGRATING DRAWING AS A TOOL FOR TEACHING IN A LANGUAGE CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY OF A TEACHER BRICOLEUR²

² Zoss, M. To be submitted to *Teachers College Record*.

Abstract

In this case study I examine how a middle school teacher of English language arts and reading, Sherelle, integrates visual art in the curriculum through the use of drawing as a tool for multiple purposes. Sherelle used problem solving, like Huberman's artisan and Leví-Strauss's bricoleur, to attend to the setting in which she taught, the goals she had for composing a curriculum integrating visual arts with state standards for language and literacy performance, and the strategic use and reuse potential for drawing as a tool. I frame the study within a sociocultural perspective and investigate Sherelle's problem solving and the meanings she constructed for drawings through the lens of drawing as a tool to achieve goals for integrating visual art into a literacy curriculum. Data were collected during the school year through participant observation in 66 class sessions of one section of English language arts/reading, artifact collection of curriculum materials for student and teacher use, and informal and formal interviews with the teacher. Analysis focused on the situated activity of the teacher specifically, her use of drawing as a tool, the personal and professional settings constituting the context of the study, and the goals Sherelle had for integrating curriculum within the school context, using drawing as a primary visual art text and tool, and solutions she developed for documenting and negotiating the integrated curriculum. The analysis finds that Sherelle used drawing as a tool for four purposes: (1) as a visual cue/illustration tool; (2) as a multimodal composition tool; (3) as a planning tool; and (4) as an assessment tool. The study concludes with a discussion of the implications that teachers may face in using drawing

in literacy curricula. In the participant's case, careful documentation and opportunistic decisions for using available resources were needed to support her use of drawing.

Introduction

Practices of literacy in this century require savvy navigation of language and image. Literacy learning is no longer limited to linguistic texts with non-changing words (Fleckenstein, Calendrillo, & Worley, 2002); indeed, now one can develop literacy practices through participation in video games (Gee, 2003) and watching television and film (Flood, Heath, & Lapp, 1997/2005). For literacy teachers, such as English language arts and reading teachers, the task of creating curriculum becomes enormous if they decide to attend to the visual images that are ubiquitous in 21st century communication. Despite the fact that communication through the simultaneous use of language and image is widespread outside school contexts, the use of image as a text in literacy classes can be limited at best. Specifically, drawing as a form of composition is not a regularly sanctioned text for communication in secondary English language arts and reading classrooms.

Studies from Wilhelm (1997) and Whitin (1996a, 1996b) show that the use of images as tools in a literacy context can be successful for students. Both researchers conducted studies in seventh grade classrooms. Wilhelm focused on attending to the needs of struggling readers by introducing a series of activities designed to help the students visualize their reading. Through the use of drawings and found objects, Wilhelm taught students how to visually and orally represent their reading relationships with characters as well as visualize the relationships among characters in the literature they read. Whitin used an activity called sketch-to-stretch (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988) as a

form of reader response composition (Rosenblatt, 1995). The students in Whitin's class drew images and wrote brief essays about the drawings, with both image and language texts used as tools for understanding what they read, thus working from the idea that a reader's response to a piece of literature can be accomplished through composing meanings in multiple sign systems (Suhor, 1992). The sketch-to-stretch compositions were provisional texts (Smagorinsky, 2001) in which students inscribed their meanings of the literature into both image and language. The drawings and the writing were subject to discussion with peers and Whitin, and to revision based on these discussions and the students' emerging understandings of the literature texts.

In this case study I investigate the problem solving of a literacy teacher who also used drawing in her middle school English language arts (ELA) and reading curriculum. The teacher, Sherelle, acknowledged her students' *savoir-faire* for navigating the images and language in their lives outside of school. She sought to bring images into her literacy classroom as a means for developing her students' understanding of communication in a broad sense that included drawings as tools for teaching practices of reading and composing. Like Wilhelm (1997), Sherelle was interested in helping her students connect language with image so they could visualize the literature texts they read. She used drawings that she and the students composed as tools to attend to the language activities she presented. Like Whitin (1996a, 1996b), Sherelle used the sketch-to-stretch activity as an example of explicitly connecting image composition with reading and writing practices.

In this study I examine Sherelle's work with drawings as she composed her literacy curriculum, a move that shifts away from the focus on students working with

drawings (Whitin, 1996a, 1996b; Wilhelm, 1997) to highlight how the teacher deals with drawing in the curriculum. I use the term composing here to characterize curriculum as an ongoing, contingent process that is achieved by the teacher in relation to the students and texts located in a classroom context. Composing curriculum assumes that a teacher is constantly reworking the ideas, materials, and activities in the curriculum through interactions with students and texts. The curriculum composition, then, is created while the teacher is working on the curriculum; thus, the curriculum is a path for teaching that is developed over time and in relation to the context in which the curriculum is composed (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman, 2002; Sumara, 1996).

To understand how Sherelle used drawings as she composed her literacy curriculum, I frame her practice in the theory of teacher as *bricoleur* (Huberman, 1993; Lévi-Strauss, 1966). The *bricoleur* is a crafty thinker who uses available materials as tools for solving problems. Any material can become a tool, and the purpose of the material/tool can change to accommodate the goals of the *bricoleur*. In light of Sherelle's interests in using drawing in her literacy curriculum and the problem solving involved in composing that curriculum, I examine the following research question:

How does Sherelle use drawings as tools for achieving her goal of integrating visual art in a middle school literacy classroom setting?

The goal of the study was to understand a *bricoleur* in the process of solving a problem. Sherelle was the *bricoleur*, a teacher thinking, talking, and teaching her way through the problem of using drawing in her literacy curriculum. Her problem solving in composing her curriculum, that is, her *bricolage*, was an on-going, developmental process in which drawing served a number of purposes. I begin my discussion by

defining the concepts of bricoleur, bricolage, setting, goal, and tool. Then, I present the middle school context in which Sherelle worked and discuss her goals for using drawing in the literacy classroom. In the results section I present the different purposes that drawing served in Sherelle's problem solving as she created her curriculum. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of using drawing in literacy curricula. In Sherelle's case, careful documentation was needed to support her use of drawing, lest she be suspected of undermining the academic rigor of the literacy curriculum with an arbitrary inclusion of visual arts activities.

Teacher as Bricoleur, Curriculum as Bricolage Framework

Defining Bricoleur

Leví-Strauss (1966) argues that a bricoleur is a skillful problem solver. A bricoleur is a person who uses available materials to produce a set of potential solutions for emergent problems. The bricoleur at work is

excited about his project. His first practical step is retrospective. He has to turn back to an already existent set made up of tools and materials, to consider or reconsider what it contains and, finally and above all, to engage in a sort of dialogue with it and, before choosing between them, to index the possible answers which the whole set can offer to his problem. He interrogates all the heterogeneous objects of which his treasury is composed to discover what each of them could "signify" and so contribute to the definition of a set which has yet to materialize. (p. 18)

The bricoleur thus assesses what is available at hand: which materials can become tools and which tools can become materials to be put to problem-solving use. A dialogue

emerges between the bricoleur and the materials as the bricoleur imagines new purposes for materials and tools. The range of potential answers or purposes that tools can provide serves as the base for solving the problem at hand. In other words, possible solutions are based on the affordances and constraints of the materials/tools available to the bricoleur (Eisner, 2002).

For Huberman (1993), the bricoleur teacher is an artisan who tinkers with a set of tools. The artisan teacher uses tools strategically, “adopt[ing] on the spot instructional materials that have been bought, given, or scavenged, as a function of the time of day, the degree of pupil attentiveness, . . . the little unexpected breakthrough on a grammatical rule” (p. 15). The teacher bricoleur working in a classroom is attentive to and makes principled decisions about how to compose a curriculum in relation to the classroom setting, the students, the teaching goals, and the tools available. Both the product and the process of creating solutions in any setting is a *bricolage* (Lévi-Strauss, 1966, p. 18). Bricolage, then, is not a static entity or single, simple solution; rather, the process/product combination of bricolage implies that the end product of any problem-solving enterprise can become a viable tool to be used toward solving the next problem that arises.

Levi-Strauss’s (1966) image of bricoleur provides a compelling site to embed a Vygotskian framework for understanding a teacher’s work with a tool such as drawing. A Vygotskian view of bricolage frames a teacher’s process of problem solving and the resulting curriculum as being mediated by tools, oriented toward goals, and situated within a specific sociocultural context (Wertsch, 1991). Sociocultural theory provides a principled view of Sherelle’s curriculum bricolage as a problem solving project that is a situated, goal-oriented activity that involves tools. The assumption underlying the move

toward a sociocultural theory of bricolage is that the examination of Sherelle's work on her curriculum through an image of bricolage alone would not sufficiently explain her problem-solving process/products. I use the sociocultural framework, then, to provide a means for locating the specific qualities of problem solving, i.e., the goals, the tools, and the context involved in a bricoleur's work and to provide a conceptual awareness of the assumptions in this study (Yanchar & Williams, 2006).

I next outline the major concepts of the sociocultural framework that inform this investigation: goal, tool, and setting. Then I reconnect these concepts with the image of bricolage to present the framework with which I analyzed the data.

Defining Setting, Goal, and Tool

I use a sociocultural framework to situate Sherelle as bricoleur because I share the concern that understanding the decisions an individual makes about tools and sign systems for communication is based on experiences in social settings (Smagorinsky, 2001; Wertsch, 1991). The sociocultural perspective affords units of analysis that focus on decisions and tool use (Wertsch, 1991). These decisions and tool usage are construed as components of activity toward attending to goals within specific social, cultural, and historical contexts. The assumption underlying a sociocultural analysis is that "action is mediated and that it cannot be separated from the milieu in which it is carried out" (Wertsch, 1991, p. 18). To understand a teacher as a bricoleur solving problems as he or she works toward the goal of composing a curriculum, sociocultural theory allows for the activity involved in the process of making that curriculum to be the unit of analysis.

A sociocultural framework also affords opportunities to consider the setting in which a teacher bricoleur works. The setting constitutes the physical and social

environment in which the teacher is situated. For example, the physical classroom within the school that Sherelle taught was “nested” (Cazden, 1988, p. 198) within the milieu of a larger county-wide school system within a Southeastern state. The settings in which a teacher composes a bricolage, then, are not limited to the classroom in which the teacher teaches; rather, the setting includes consideration of the larger social, cultural, and historical events and locations in which the curriculum is composed (Kress et al., 2005).

Wertsch (1991) argues that a sociocultural perspective for research is based on understanding an individual’s mediated activity toward achieving goals. The goals an individual works toward may be based in personal concerns, such as Sherelle’s goal of integrating drawing into her literacy curriculum. Goals may also be aligned with larger social concerns or teleological ends involved in the setting (Wertsch, 1998). For example, schools have motives that include preparing students for standardized testing, promoting disciplined student behavior within the school building, and encouraging teachers to employ instruction commensurate with school mission statements. Within Sherelle’s school, for instance, preparation for standardized tests constituted an important consideration in her decisions about the use of drawing in her curriculum. The educational objectives for the standardized tests centered on the students’ knowledge of content in reading and English language arts (e.g., grammar and writing concepts, comprehension skills in reading unfamiliar texts). Sherelle’s educational objectives for integrating drawing include teaching students to see relationships between images and the language and literature content in her class and teaching students to represent their understanding of the content in both language and image. In order to achieve her personal goals for integrating drawing, she also had to attend to the larger school goals of

preparing students to be successful on end-of-year course exams. Meeting the school's goals for student academic achievement on the language arts and reading end-of-course exams necessitated on-going problem solving as Sherelle made decisions about the role of drawing in her curriculum.

Connecting Setting, Goal, and Tool with Bricolage

The setting of Leví-Strauss's (1966) bricoleur is one in which anything within reach of the bricoleur's hands or imagination can be used or reused as a tool for solving emergent problems. Within a sociocultural framework for studying a bricoleur's activity, the environment constitutes a set of affordances and constraints from which to work. That is, the possible uses for a tool are a function of the situated place in which the tools are found. The teacher bricoleur constructing a curriculum has tools available for potential use that may or may not be sanctioned by the school in which she teaches (Smagorinsky, Zoss, & O'Donnell-Allen, 2005; Smagorinsky, Zoss, & Reed, 2006). Drawing, for instance, may be afforded as appropriate for use in a visual art curriculum; however, drawing may be constrained as a potentially unsanctioned tool for use in a middle school literacy curriculum where literature texts and writing activities may be construed as more appropriate tools for teachers and students to use. To envision Sherelle as a bricoleur using drawing in her literacy curriculum is to consider how the setting in which she taught afforded and constrained her use of drawing.

The goals of a bricoleur include attending to emergent problems that arise in the environment in which the bricoleur works. Leví-Strauss's (1966) bricoleur uses materials as tools and any materials can have multiple types of uses. For example, a book can become a solution for a number of problems: a book of poetry can be used as a prop to

hold a table upright, flapped like a butterfly to illustrate movement, or read as a model for linguistic communication. I construe problem solving as a necessary condition for the attainment of goals. With problem solving occurring on a continual basis and the decisions for solutions based on materials and tools at hand, the bricoleur's work is predicated on the notion that constant interrogation of the available materials results in a set of solutions. Moreover, the solutions are constrained by what the bricoleur can construct and imagine for the problem, given the tools available.

Tools are the mediational means with which problems are solved and goals are attained; a tool may include anything that mediates human action. Like goals, tools are situated within settings and individuals draw from cultural tool kits to mediate their decisions (Wertsch, 1991). Cultural tool kits are not limited to language; the tool kits include a number of signs, including images, as means for working toward goals and solving problems. From a semiotic perspective, an individual can use any number of signs or tools to make decisions about the problem at hand (cf. Author A & colleagues, 2006). Kress and his colleagues (2005) argue that a multimodal framework permeates schools: A multimodal framework employs multiple signs or "culturally shaped resources for making meaning" that "never occur by themselves but always with others in ensembles" (p. 2). The bricolage that Sherelle constructed attended to a multimodal framework by including drawing as one of several cultural tools in play within her curriculum.

Bricolage and Constructing Meaning

One of the affordances of studying a teacher as a bricoleur at work is the opportunity to investigate the meaning of the tools the teacher uses in her problem

solving. In other words, envisioning a teacher as bricoleur is a chance to examine the meanings that she inscribes in the tools that she uses. While tools are mediated by culture and experience, tools also serve the function of mediating the meaning or solutions that are being constructed within the bricolage. This study is designed to investigate the mediated meanings and decisions Sherelle constructed in her process of integrating drawing into her curriculum. I next briefly outline what I mean by meaning construction.

Returning to the image of the bricoleur at work, Lévi-Strauss (1966) writes, “[The bricoleur] interrogates all the heterogeneous objects of which his treasury is composed to discover what each of them could ‘signify’ and so contribute to the definition of a set which has yet to materialize” (p. 18). What the objects (i.e., tools) signify is a matter of constructing meaning. Smagorinsky (2001) argues that meaning is culturally situated and built on a relationship among the sign (material or tool), the meaning of the sign, and the person interpreting both meaning and sign (cf. Peirce, 1931-1958). Meaning in this triadic plane is always contingent on who is making the meaning, with what objects, and in which sociocultural setting (Witte, 1992). Potential meanings can be unlimited and vary with each potential sign/meaning/interpreter relationship. Smagorinsky (2001) stipulates that the construction of meaning is a complex event. He argues:

Initially, meaning emerges through the process of articulation as sense achieves expression through the medium of a psychological tool. This process produces some sort of image, a newly constructed text that provisionally serves as the repository of meaning. This text is protean, changing with new reflection on its form. Its articulated potential thus makes it available as a tool for new transformations. (p. 162)

Psychological tools mediate the process of bringing sense into articulation. Sense is Vygotsky's term used to encompass "the abbreviated syntax and stream-of-consciousness properties of unarticulated, inchoate thought" (Smagorinsky, 2001, p. 145). Articulation, Smagorinsky argues, is the event in which sense is rendered into a sign and a new text is evoked. The new articulation is a "repository of meaning." The text is a makeshift placeholder for the meaning that is "protean, changing" and just becoming articulated. This new text of meaning is now available for repurposing in other texts for further potential meanings to be constructed. The process of sense becoming articulation is fluid and each meaning that is articulated can be subjected to further articulation and change.

Smagorinsky's (2001) fluid quality of meaning construction fits well with Lévi-Strauss's (1966) bricoleur seeking new ways to signify tools toward a set of possible solutions. Both Smagorinsky and Lévi-Strauss are concerned with the potential for multiple meanings given specific affordances and constraints available to produce the tools the bricoleur uses to attain goals. I next describe the setting in which Sherelle constructed her bricolage and then discuss her use of drawing as a tool that had multiple purposes and multiple meanings within her curriculum.

Context of the Investigation

I approached the study with a focus on Sherelle and her curriculum as I observed in the context of her classroom. The case I thus examine was primarily located or bound (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Stake, 2000) with Sherelle and her curriculum goal to integrate visual arts and literacy practices. Sherelle, an Asian-American woman, taught at Central Middle School (all names except Sherelle's are pseudonyms) and was charged with

teaching language arts and reading courses for a cohort of 90 sixth grade students. She was recruited using a purposeful, criterion sample (Patton, 2002) from a group of 59 university students who graduated from a large southeastern university English education program. I selected Sherelle based on her expressed interest in using visual art in her teaching practice and a willingness to participate in a year-long participant observation study.

During the year of data collection, Central Middle School had 520 students, with 42% of those students qualifying for the free or reduced-price lunch program. The population of students recorded on the district website was “4.9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 13.8% Black, 8.5% Hispanic, 71.2% White, and 1.5% multi-racial” (from district website). Led by an African-American male principal, Mr. Wallace, and a European-American female vice principal, Mrs. Roberts, the school advertised on its website that it was “A learning community striving for student success!” The school, like most in the county-wide district, had met all state and federal expectations for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) when the study began.

The school was located in a small town of just over 10,000 people; the city was situated within a county between a large metropolitan area and a university community. The county, which was demarcated by three rivers in the area, had at least 83 churches within the city limits. These churches comprised a wide variety of Christian organizations, including organizations for the African American and Hmong populations in town. A survey of local websites for the city and county, as well as local phone directories showed that temples and mosques for religions other than Christianity were either not present in the community or were not advertised on-line or in phone books. A

local history website reported the area was originally settled by a Creek Native American community and European settlers later renamed the city three times since 1893. Local industry in the area included farming and manufacturing; historically the community was an important site for the rail lines for shipping locally produced goods between the nearby university and the metropolitan area.

Sherelle worked on an interdisciplinary team of three teachers: Sherelle taught English language arts (ELA) and reading, Carrie taught math and science, and Patricia taught social studies and academic enrichment. The latter was a class meant to give students more time with concepts first taught in the other core curriculum areas of math, science, reading, ELA, and social studies. The team was also supported by a fourth teacher, Belinda, who taught inclusion classes for the special education students who were mainstreamed part-time on the team. The youngest of all four teachers, Sherelle was one of only a handful of first-year teachers at the school.

The students on Sherelle's team were diverse in culture and language. Students on the team spoke English, Hmong White and Green, Romanian, and Spanish. Sherelle taught these students on a block schedule in which classes were 90 minutes long and rotated subject matter every other day. Sherelle taught ELA one day and reading the next and so on. Sherelle chose her third period class, a group of 23 students, as the site for my participant observation. The curriculum decisions Sherelle made, especially as those decisions included drawing and as they played out with this third period class over time, comprise the focus of this study.

Method

Data Collection

Data for the study were collected over the course of Sherelle's first year of teaching. I was a participant observer in her third period classes on 66 days in which I took ethnographic field notes (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995) and collected artifacts, including curriculum materials Sherelle gave to students (e.g., graphic organizers, tests, and study guides) and photographs taken of the walls, dry-erase board, and spatial arrangements of desks and chairs in her room. As a participant in the classroom, I worked with students one-on-one and in small groups and I co-taught some of the visual arts activities at Sherelle's request. I frequently met with Sherelle after class to talk about the events that occurred during the observation and to collaborate with her in developing her curriculum. Our conversations were instances in which she talked through her curricular decisions. When time permitted a conversation longer than ten minutes and if the discussion topic was related to Sherelle's thinking about visual art in her classroom, I taped these exchanges. In total, I taped 12 of these "informal conversational interviews" (Patton, 2002, p. 342) that varied in length from 20 to 90 minutes. During the conversations I asked Sherelle to describe events in her class, to evaluate the activities she used, and to discuss the degree to which these events and activities met with her curriculum goals of integrating visual art into her curriculum. Sherelle also used these conversations as idea-generating sessions in which she shared ideas she was interested in trying; she also solicited my opinions and feedback both on the events that had already occurred in class and on the ideas she had for future activities and lessons.

In addition to the taped informal conversations, I also recorded three semi-structured interviews in October, March, and June. I met with Sherelle at a local restaurant for the formal interviews. In each 90 minute interview session, I probed for Sherelle's ongoing understanding of her goals to integrate curriculum and how these goals were situated within the context of what the school expected from her (see the interview protocol in the Appendix). For instance, Sherelle discussed concerns she had about using drawing as a composing tool in her classroom and the need to teach her students the content and test-taking skills necessary to be successful on the standardized tests given in April. During these interviews Sherelle often located the role of drawing within the context of a growing pressure over the course of the year for her students to perform well on the tests.

I use a reduction of the ethnographic field notes (Emerson et al., 1995) to understand Sherelle's use of drawing as a tool as an initial analysis move. Field notes and artifacts composed and collected while I observed in Sherelle's classroom also serve to corroborate statements Sherelle made during the formal and informal interviews (Patton, 2002). The artifacts of Sherelle's use of drawing include photographs of her dry-erase board, instructional materials that she gave to students (e.g., handouts that students used to compose notes or to graphically organize information), and drawings that Sherelle made during the interviews. From the reduction of the field note data, I began the analysis of the interview transcripts. A table summarizing the interview data collection can be found in Figure 3.1.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the interviews and field notes from a sociocultural perspective, one of understanding Sherelle's activity of integrating drawing into her curriculum as akin to a bricoleur who uses the tools available to construct solutions for emerging problems. The sociocultural framework as outlined by Wertsch (1991) focuses on tool-mediated problem solving toward goals. Toward the end of understanding Sherelle's use of drawing as a tool for achieving specific goals within the context of her school, I began by reducing the field notes and artifacts to identify the topics and concepts Sherelle taught in her class as well as observed instances in which drawing was present in the curriculum. This reduction resulted in a list of activities and texts that I then used as codes in the interview data. For example, I identified the composition tool codes of Aboriginal art, anthology, and backpack drawings listed in Figure 4.1 from the reduced field note data. In this report I use data from the field notes to expand the description of events Sherelle talked about in the interviews.

I ultimately analyzed the interview data using goal, setting, and tool as primary categories after working through an open-ended process to identify quotations and codes. Within the set of interviews and informal conversations, I selected quotations based on one discrete unit of thought or decision. For example, as one unit of analysis, I chose a quote in which Sherelle talked about drawing as a form of composing a response about characters in a short story. The quotes within the data were of varying lengths, depending on how long Sherelle spent talking about one idea before moving on to a different aspect of planning, teaching, or her experiences in the classroom.

The development of codes beyond those developed in the reduction of the field note data began with the process of digitizing and transcribing the data. For the 11.2 hours of interview data (i.e., 4.8 hours of formal interviews and 6.4 hours of recorded informal conversations), which were originally captured using analog cassette tapes, I used software to convert the analog audio to digital audio and listened to the full corpus of data during this process. While listening, I took notes of questions and comments that came to mind. Next, I used the digital audio and transcription software to compose transcripts of the data. Within the transcripts, I bracketed information to clarify abstruse pronouns and elaborate on incidents referred to but not fully explicated. I used the perception of the data (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993), including the listening, note-taking, and bracketing of information during the digitization and transcription processes as one of the initial layers of analysis. I then began an open coding analysis in which I identified themes (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) based on the ideas, people, and problems Sherelle discussed and the codes already identified from the reduced field notes. From this open-ended coding I developed a long list of codes. In order to make sense of all the codes I had identified within the data, I worked with a colleague to group the entire corpus of codes according to whether they were commensurate with the larger sociocultural lens.

The collaborative component of my analysis was done with a colleague whose scholarship is also based in sociocultural theory. She read all of my data and the open codes I initially identified. Together we developed the larger categories of goal, setting, and tool in order to analyze Sherelle's situated activity in terms of the tools she used to meet the goals established within her settings. Not all of the initial codes were included within the goal, setting, tool groupings. We negotiated decisions about each of the codes

through discussion, drawing on our experiences working with a sociocultural framework, our working understanding of the data, and our own experiences as English language arts teachers. The first pass at organizing all of the codes was also conducted in an open-coding fashion: We printed the codes and made small slips of paper for each code and spread them out across a large table. With one code for each card, we organized the codes spatially into large groups: goals, settings, and tools. The codes within all three groups needed further categorizing to understand better Sherelle's situated use of drawing as a tool with multiple purposes to meet several types of goals. For instance, the open code *story board* did not fully explain the idea that Sherelle's use of storyboard as an instructional activity and a tool in her curriculum. There were a number of activities such as story board that we then grouped into a larger category, *drawing as multimodal composition tool*.

I next used Atlas.ti software to merge the initial open-ended codes into goal, tool, and setting codes that were specific to Sherelle's discussion of drawing. To create these merged codes I combined the drawing code, which noted any instance in which Sherelle reported on drawing, with the initial codes that were designated as part of the categories goals, tools, and settings. For example, I combined all instances of the code *drawing* with the goal code *student performance*. Throughout the data, there were 62 quotes about student performance and 17 of those quotes also include discussion about drawing in relation to student performance. I include two charts that summarize the codes within the three categories of goal, setting, and tool: Figure 4.1 lists the codes and their frequencies within the entire data set and as combined with the drawing code; Figure 4.2 lists major categories, descriptions, and examples from the interviews. I next describe each of the

three major categories of goal, setting, and tool, along with subcategories and codes housed within each category.

Setting

I coded the data for the contexts in which Sherelle used drawing. Settings included social relationships she had that helped her develop her understanding of her goals to integrate drawing into her curriculum. Two main settings emerged: *professional* and *personal*.

Professional settings were the academic contexts in which Sherelle learned about drawing as a tool in a literacy curriculum. There were two main academic settings: the middle school in which she taught and the university she had attended. With the middle school, Sherelle drew from a number of relationships, including the *administration*, her *teaching team*, and the *language arts faculty*. The school also enrolled Sherelle in a professional development class focused on *middle school learners*. From the university context, Sherelle drew on her experiences as a *student in the English program* and her experiences within the *teacher education program*. She also drew on her ongoing *relationship with me as a researcher* from the university. Finally, Sherelle drew from personal settings. A relationship with *family friend*, who was an art teacher, served as a resource for solving problems in her curriculum. Though the personal setting is not cited as frequently as the professional setting, Sherelle's use of two long term activities in her classroom, the anthology of ghost stories and a collection of reading projects was dependent on what she learned from this art teacher.

Goal

Goals encompassed the concept of problem solving as bricoleur. I construe the notion of problem solving as an activity of working toward a goal. While Leví-Strauss (1966) uses the language of problem solving to describe the bricoleur, I chose to use goals as a larger category to encompass the notion of solving emergent problems toward meeting goals. All of Sherelle's activity could potentially be coded as problem solving because her goal for the year was to compose and implement an integrated curriculum. My intent with using goal as a major category is to delineate the ends that Sherelle was trying to meet.

Context. Sherelle's goal for the school year was to integrate visual art into her curriculum, which meant situating her goal within the context of the school. Sherelle described the school as "a tight ship with love" that required her attention to *accountability* and *expectations of the middle school administration*. For example, there was a building-wide goal to include writing, and specifically the *Jane Shaffer writing method* (i.e., a method for teaching writing that focuses on algorithmic paragraph composition), as part of the curriculum in every classroom. Additionally, Sherelle reported that *test preparation* for students to succeed on the standardized tests was also an important component in her curriculum. Despite the expectations of the school, Sherelle also reported that she needed to teach students that "*there are other things that are important to learn in sixth grade*" that were not encompassed by the state performance standards and the content on the standardized tests. Drawing was a form of composition and a representation of learning Sherelle wanted her students to learn that was not included as a state standard and was not assessed on the end-of-course exams.

Drawing. The ways in which Sherelle worked to integrate drawing into her curriculum were central to this investigation. Sherelle's use of drawing throughout the school year was marked by a number of emergent goals. She drew on a number of visual art education goals that she learned during her university experiences, where she read the work of Eisner (1992) and Siegesmund (1999): *attention to qualities*, *multiple pathways to meaning/problem solving*, and *surprise*. Sherelle also used drawing as a means for making learning *visual*, *hands-on*, and *interdisciplinary*. Drawing represented a means for teaching students about how to *make connections within the curriculum*. Drawing also became a tool for teaching *connections between visual arts and testing practices*, as well as a way to show *relationships between image and text*.

Solution. Sherelle made different moves to meet her goals for using drawing in her curriculum. The approaches to problem solving she used included *documentation* of her use of drawing, *negotiating* her curriculum decisions to fit the expectations she perceived were being placed on her, and *redirecting situations* so that both her goals and the goals of the school could be met.

Drawing as a Tool

I defined four types of tools for drawing within the data: visual, composition, planning, and assessment. Sherelle's work with drawing was not limited to her use of drawing—she certainly employed a number of tools that were not drawing throughout the year. However, the scope of this study is defined by her tool use, and thus I do not include the many other tools that she used and had available to her as she worked toward other professional/instructional goals that were part of her curriculum.

Visual. Drawing was used as a visual tool to illustrate and provide visual cues for concepts in the curriculum. Sherelle used both her *classroom space* and her *dry-erase board* as canvases for incorporating drawings with concepts. Used on the board, in handouts, on the overhead projector, and copied by students onto their own papers, small drawings or *icons* were used as visual cues. *Graphic organizers* were included in the curriculum as means for illustrating the spatial organization of concepts like the development of plot in a story.

Composition. I coded for instances in which drawing was used as a tool for multimodal composition. Multimodal composition, as defined by Kress and his colleagues (Kress et al., 2005), is the development of texts in which more than one sign system is used to represent a complex of ideas. For example, when Sherelle's students composed drawings and paragraphs about characters in a short story as they did in the sketch-to-stretch activity (Harste et al., 1988; Whiting, 1996a, 1996b, 2005), they were working in both pictorial and linguistic sign systems (Suhor, 1984, 1992). This category of tools encompasses the activities that Sherelle implemented in her curriculum that allowed for multimodal composing. Each of the activities included opportunities for students to use language and image: *Aboriginal art; anthology of ghost stories; backpack drawings; reading projects; sketch-to-stretch; story board; and vocabulary.*

Planning. During the interviews, Sherelle and I both drew pictures to illustrate the ideas we were discussing. Knowing I had experience teaching visual art in both art and English classes, Sherelle used the formal and informal interviews as opportunities to use me (*author*) for solving problems in her curriculum. The data show that she talked about *lesson planning* and the role of drawing in her classroom and reported on how drawing

helped her plan lessons and activities to attend to different *learning styles* of the students in her classes and to *model* the types of thinking and composing she valued in her curriculum.

Assessment. As an *assessment tool*, drawing was problematic. On the one hand, Sherelle used activities that incorporated drawing such as sketch-to-stretch (i.e., an activity in which students compose drawings and paragraphs as their responses to literature) to assess students' comprehension of characters within a short story. She reported feeling confident about using drawing in these types of day-to-day assessment of students' progress. On the other hand, Sherelle reported worrying about using drawing as an element on a final exam. Even though she had used drawing as an assessment on multiple activities prior to the final exam, she was concerned that her colleagues might question the inclusion of drawing on a more high-stakes assessment.

Sample of Coded Text

I include here a section of coded text to illustrate how the system of codes for goal, setting, and tool can be found within the data.

So the next thing [the students] are going to do with the writings is do a compare and contrast [essay] where they talk about the similarities or differences of creating the different types of art: the Aboriginal paintings and the backpack drawings. And I haven't thought, I mean, it's kind of open-ended, but I don't know how I want to, how structured I want to make them do their writing. But um basically I just want to see what, which one they enjoyed the most and what they feel like the merits of both drawings are. I don't know. I may have—I'm just

gonna—I think I'll come up with a list of questions that they could attend to in their writing. (Conversation, 5/23)

In this quote, Sherelle was using this taped informal conversation as a *tool* for *planning* an essay the students were going to write about *drawings* as part of the *assessment* for the final exam. The essay was a comparison/contrast piece meant for students to discuss their composing processes while creating two drawings and essays: the *Aboriginal art* and the *backpack drawing*. I coded this piece as *redirecting a situation* because she was thinking through the amount of structure needed for the essay—both in terms of how much guiding structure she would provide for students to compose their essays and how much structure of form would be required of the students in their composition. Her ultimate decision was to provide scaffolding questions to help students address the merits of their multimodal compositions and their feelings about those compositions, with minimal requirements for form (i.e., students were given a two paragraph minimum length for the essay). I also coded this segment of data as illustrating how Sherelle attended to her curriculum *goal* of teaching *relationships between image and text*. Additionally, this quotation shows how Sherelle used this conversation as a space to think about her lesson planning and elicit feedback from me (*author*) as an experienced teacher available to her within her *professional setting*.

Results

I now present four ways Sherelle used drawings as tools in her work as a bricoleur: visual tool, multimodal composition tool, planning tool, and assessment tool. Her use of drawing as a mediating tool was always situated within the goals that Sherelle had for her teaching and the goals and context of the school. While the coding system

parses out the goals, settings, and tools as discrete units, these three elements were intricately tied to Sherelle's work on her curriculum. Thus, as I present Sherelle's work with drawing as a tool, I do so with the intent of showing how her problem solving was situated within the sociocultural contexts of the school and the goals both she and the school had for student and teacher performance.

Drawing as a Visual Tool

In Sherelle's classroom there were two long dry-erase boards that dominated the front wall. On the far right was a section cordoned off by wavy paper borders that housed information about the daily agenda and curriculum questions for students to record in their weekly planners. All the teachers in the school were to provide this organizational and curricular information as part of the school's focus on "striving for student success" (school website). Sherelle credited the daily routines as playing an important role in the school's success. In our first interview I asked Sherelle to describe her school. She said the principal called Central "a tight ship with love" (Interview 1, 11/2). Sherelle interpreted this statement as a directive for structure and discipline as part of the expectations of students and teachers. That is, Sherelle said she was expected to be "discipline oriented...so that [teachers] can keep our kids in school and we can keep [students] engaged in what they're doing in school" (Interview 1, 11/2). Likewise, teachers were expected to use "every bit of [their] class time and [to use] it as wisely as [they] can" (Interview 1, 11/2). While this description may make the school sound regimented, Sherelle reported that the principal expected teachers to keep students "engaged" by "using lots of different ways to teach kids" (Interview 1, 11/2). She continued: "Our principals are always happy to see us being creative. . . . If we have ideas

they'll expect us to run with it and they don't want us just to be up there lecturing. That's not what they expect" (Interview 1, 11/2) Within the space of Sherelle's classroom, then, the dry-erase board became a canvas for attending to the school's expectations for academic success as well as a means for exploring drawing as a way to show visual relationships and cues for concepts. Sherelle attended to the specificity and regularity that was expected of her by relegating the agenda and essential questions to one part of the board and leaving the other, larger, space to compose language and images.

As a tool for creating an "engaging" and "hands-on" curriculum (Informal conversations, 10/19, 10/26, 1/17, 3/10, 3/22), the dry-erase board served as a canvas for Sherelle to compose drawings. The drawings composed on the board with a large palette of markers served purposes including showing spatial relationships and small sketches to illustrate concepts. An example of spatial relationships occurred when Sherelle taught students about how to use the space on a piece of paper to draw a chart or graphic organizer. She drew a large piece of notebook paper on the board, complete with a red vertical line, blue horizontal lines, and three holes along the left edge (Field notes, 8/25, 1/5, 1/17, 1/27, 3/15). She used the drawing of paper to show students the spatial layout of different forms of writing: friendly letters, two-column notes, graphic organizers, and essays. The attention to spatial relationships of drawings and language on paper is an example of Sherelle's goal to attend to qualities. That is, she used the drawings of pieces of notebook paper on the board to model for students how to use their own paper as tools to organize information in specific spatial organizations.

Sherelle also used the dry-erase board to compose small drawings and icons. For example, when teaching students about prepositions, she drew a number of items on the

board: a girl, an open door, a ladder, a road, a house, and a car (Field notes, 2/24). From these drawings, she asked students to generate sentences using prepositions that described the girl in the drawing encountering these objects while traveling. The drawings for the preposition activity served as a multipurpose tool: first, Sherelle used the drawings to teach the function of prepositions and prepositional phrases in sentences; second, students used the drawings to compose sentences spoken aloud in small groups and written on paper. The drawings, then, were referenced by Sherelle and the students to make any number of prepositional phrases. Thus, the drawings in this activity were repurposed by both teacher and students in each oral language composition of a sentence to meet their idiosyncratic needs for composing linguistic descriptions with prepositions.

Sherelle also used the dry-erase board as a visual means for solving problems. She used the board to show students what concepts meant, illustrate relationships between ideas, and model multiple ways to think about the content in the curriculum. The board was a tool to show ideas in process. For instance, on January 13, Sherelle drew a basic graphic organizer illustrating different types of verbs. The branching organizer bifurcated action verbs into the categories transitive and intransitive. On January 20, she added to this organizer a branch for linking verbs. The linking verb branch split into predicate adjective and predicate noun branches. Sherelle drew circles linked together like a chain as the connecting lines for the linking verbs.

Sherelle's goals for drawings as visual tools for making connections within the curriculum fit with Dewey's (1916/2004) concept of education. Dewey argued that education has three distinct qualities: (1) education is a "fostering, a nurturing, a cultivating process" (p. 10); (2) education involves problem solving from an experimental

disposition; and (3) education involves and values experiences to the extent that those experiences afford opportunities for “the perception of relationships” (p. 134). In short, education in a Deweyan framework is a process of cultivating dispositions to solve the problems of perceiving relationships among the environment and human beings using experimental means. She said she wanted to help students with “those connections from the words to [the] mind [that] are hard for some students and [show] how we can bridge that gap using the images” (Interview 1, 11/2). When Sherelle used drawings as visual tools in her classroom, she did so with the goal that drawings could help her to make language concepts visual for students, that drawings could be used to help students see how ideas within the curriculum related to each other, and that drawings could illustrate the processes involved in composing texts and making meaning of those same texts.

Sherelle’s goal for drawings, then, was to use them as provisional texts (Smagorinsky, 2001) for constructing meaning about concepts in the curriculum. That is, drawings were “logographic cues” (Beers, 2003, p. 129) for developing language. For example, the objects illustrated on the board when Sherelle taught prepositions (i.e., the girl, ladder, door, etc.) provided multiple possibilities for students to use a variety of prepositions. The preposition drawings demonstrate how Sherelle fostered a problem solving process for students: They could use any combination of prepositions to explain the relations they perceived among the objects drawn on the board. The preposition drawing example was typical of the ways Sherelle used and reused the board on a daily basis to show students how visual images aid literacy practice and language use, thus reinforcing her goal of teaching students relations between image and text.

One last quality of drawing as a visual tool in Sherelle's curriculum is important to note. Drawings on the dry-erase board, whether composed by Sherelle or her students, represented a quick means for generating solutions for problems, specifically illustrations of complex ideas like character conflicts. In all of our conversations, Sherelle never expressed concern about the role of drawings generated on the dry-erase board, drawings that could be erased with the swipe of a hand. There was no mention in the formal and informal interviews about drawings on the board being problematic in the way that drawings composed on paper by students were, as I will discuss in the next section. I attribute Sherelle's lack of concern about the presence of drawings on the dry-erase board as visual tools in her curriculum as an indication that this type of drawing was acceptable for her to use in her school. That is, drawings as visual tools were most often created by Sherelle as instructional tools. When drawings appeared on papers given to students, the images were used as part of a graphic organizer for teaching students how to take notes (Field notes, 11/4) or how to organize the characteristics of two genres of literature (Field notes, 4/24).

It was *apropos* for Sherelle to use drawing as a tool for making her teaching "engaging" and visually appealing to her students, especially since the drawings that were used as a visual tool were often impermanent (i.e., when drawings were used on the dry-erase board). Once these drawings had been composed and used to illustrate a problem or concept, they were erased from the dry-erase board or put away into notebooks. These drawings were not published anywhere in the school and could be used at Sherelle's discretion to teach test preparation, note-taking skills, and sentence and paragraph composition as well as visual qualities and multiple pathways to making

meaning. Drawings as visual tools could be repurposed whenever needed and were not problematic because they were ephemeral tools for teaching processes and problem solving tactics.

Drawing as a Multimodal Composition Tool

Drawing as a tool for composing text in Sherelle's curriculum was always tempered by the need to document or explain why drawing was being used. That is, Sherelle said that bringing drawing into the curriculum meant going "out on a limb" (Interview 3, 6/22). Teaching drawing in her language arts and reading classes was a stretch, according to Sherelle, because she was not formally educated as a visual artist. She said, "I'm not an art teacher" (Interview 3, 6/22) and had concerns that teaching drawing might impede her students' performance on the end-of-course exams. Her goals for teaching with visual art also had to attend to the school's expectations for test preparation and student performance on the exams. Despite her lack of formal education in visual art, however, Sherelle was a experienced musician and actor and she used her background in these performing arts as reference points for teaching throughout the year (e.g., she taught students how to develop skits to perform vocabulary words and used music selections to teach students about rhythm in poetry). Likewise, she was keen to "to make parallels between the [visual] art world and language arts" (Interview 3, 6/22). Making connections between language and image, between reading and drawing was possible with the various multimodal activities she planned. I turn now to four activities: sketch-to-stretch, vocabulary, graphic organizers, and backpack drawings.

Sketch-to-Stretch

Harste, Short, and Burke (1988) introduce *sketch-to-stretch* as an activity for elementary students to prepare compositions; Whitin (1996a, 1996b, 2005) repurposes this same drawing and writing activity to a seventh grade context and uses sketch-to-stretch as a response to literature. In Sherelle's classroom, a sketch-to-stretch began with a drawing students composed using symbols, colors, lines, and any level of realistic rendering to illustrate some aspect of their comprehension of a piece of literature. The students then discussed the drawing in writing by providing an explanation of the symbols, colors, lines, and other decisions made in the drawing. Students subjected both the drawing and the writing to revisions and produced multiple drafts. The two texts were produced in tandem in the linguistic and pictorial sign systems, thus producing a multimodal composition.

Sherelle was familiar with Whitin's work and had tried sketch-to-stretch in her teacher education program. This drawing/writing activity embodied Sherelle's goal to use drawings that connected to language; thus, there were parallels between image and language built into the sketch-to-stretch activity. Sherelle said, "With the sketch-to-stretch in particular, it can show how much [students] understand and how much they got or even didn't get out of the story. As opposed to if I said, 'Draw a scene from the story'" (Informal conversation, 11/30). The drawing for a sketch-to-stretch was not meant simply to illustrate a story or render a portrait of a character; instead, a sketch-to-stretch was an opportunity to explore ideas about a story in both image and language. Sherelle used sketch-to-stretch during class five times during the year with short stories (Field notes, 11/16, 12/17), with students' independent reading texts (Field notes, 1/31), and with a

screen play (Field notes, 3/31, 4/17). Because Sherelle was not trained in what she called “the technical aspect of [art],” (Interview 3, 6/22) the sketch-to-stretch allowed her to see how her students were composing ideas in one medium with which she was less comfortable (drawing) and in one medium she was more confident in assessing (writing). Sherelle reported that she could look at the drawing and the writing and learn more about what a student was trying to convey than if the student were to only draw a picture or only write an essay.

In terms of problem solving, the sketch-to-stretch exemplified Sherelle’s goal of teaching students about the relationships between image and language. She described her students as “visually oriented now, especially because they play video games; they are on the computer, cell phones, all that good stuff. So they’re used to creating meaning from images already” (Interview 1, 11/2). That is, her goal was to bring into her classroom the learning that students already did with images. Assuming that students were savvy about constructing meaning about images before they arrived in her classroom, Sherelle said she wanted to give students opportunities to talk about images and make images about what they read. For instance, she talked about students using a drawing to describe character: “So, we can talk about this [drawing] and how [students] know about a character” (Interview 2, 3/29). Communicating an idea in one medium as a response to a text in a different medium is a form of transmediation (Siegel, 1995; Suhor, 1984, 1992); the sketch-to-stretch in Sherelle’s class required students to communicate in a drawing and in writing to a literature text. Whitin (1996b) argues that the transmediation involved in composing a sketch-to-stretch “helps readers move beyond the “who, what, when” of a story to personal interpretation” (p. 12). The sketch-to-stretch activity, then, served at

least two purposes within Sherelle's curriculum: 1) the drawings and the writing were means for students to explore ideas in literature via transmediation of language and image; and 2) the resulting multimodal compositions served as texts for Sherelle to teach the concept that a student could perceive relations between image and language. Relating image to language, however, was not relegated solely to the sketch-to-stretch compositions.

Vocabulary

The need to have drawings always accompanied by language was an important aspect of the way Sherelle taught vocabulary. Each week students were given five or six words for which they were to provide definitions, write sentences illustrating use of the given words, list synonyms and antonyms, and compose small drawings to illustrate each word. She required students to illustrate at least one word on the weekly vocabulary test; thus, Sherelle did not leave drawing to be used only in the studying process for vocabulary development. She described the role of drawings in vocabulary activities:

For their vocabulary [the students] had to draw the picture to describe the word. And sometimes it wouldn't just be like one symbol. It might have been a little scene that they drew and that's why—and they had to include the language with that, too, because I told them, “There's no way for me to read this picture and get what you want me to get out of it. You know, I need to know that what you're drawing is what this word is and you know what the word means.” (Interview 1, 11/2)

This quote shows how Sherelle needed language to justify the drawings used in her vocabulary assessment. It was not enough for her students to draw a scene of a dark

creature peering from behind a rock to illustrate the word “lurk”; students also had to describe that scene and how they understood the word to satisfy Sherelle’s requirements. Having language attached to the drawings, however, did not make the students’ work redundant (Eisner, 2002); rather, it added a layer of specificity that Sherelle needed to be assured that students comprehended the vocabulary.

Graphic organizers

Sherelle used graphic organizers to show students spatial relationships among concepts. Graphic organizers were used on the dry-erase board (e.g., the drawings of pieces of notebook paper to show students how to spatially organize their work) and on papers given to students (e.g., story plot diagrams). One graphic organizer focused on the purposes students identified for reading. Sherelle led a discussion with the class in which students talked about the many reasons and ways in which they read texts. Sherelle told students that texts could include anything students felt they “read” in their daily lives (cf. Witte, 1992). She described the graphic organizer that students composed with images they found in magazines

for the graphic organizer they did this week, they pulled out images and I think that that graphic organizer turned out to be more visually oriented because the pictures are really what takes center stage and when you get closer, then you read what each image is for. (Interview 1, 11/2)

From the work on the reading purposes graphic organizer, the sketch-to-stretch activities, and the vocabulary work, Sherelle introduced more drawings into various handouts that she gave students.

When developing her unit on the elements of a story, she used a linear graphic organizer to teach students about plot. On a sheet of paper, she drew a line formed like a mountain (i.e., Freytag's pyramid) with boxes at various points along the line identifying different parts of plot development (e.g., character introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and dénouement). When teaching plot to students, she used the graphic organizer both as a handout and as a transparency on the overhead projector. She explained each part of the plot and added a small drawing to her transparency. Students added their own drawings or to use Sherelle's drawings on their copies of the plot map. Sherelle's drawing showed a series of traffic lights moving through the progression of green to red (Field notes, 11/14). She used this linear graphic organizer after she spent a day using a handout she had borrowed from another teacher. The borrowed handout required students to identify the same plot structures but was organized in a question and answer format (e.g., What was the rising action? What was the climax?). She said, "Do you remember how hard it was for them to get plot [before]? This is another revisiting" (Interview 2, 3/29). Sherelle repurposed the questions from the borrowed material and reorganized them into a plot map. The tool she originally used in class was insufficient to teach students about plot, so she reused the language from the borrowed handout and repurposed that language with a spatial layout and small drawings into a new graphic organizer. Sherelle used the new visual tool to both revisit and reteach students about the progression of events in a story.

Backpack drawings

In May, Sherelle introduced an activity that redefined the role of drawing as multimodal composition in her curriculum. Up to this point, all the drawings produced in

class had been sandwiched by language: Sketch-to-stretch compositions began with reading a piece of literature, then drawing, then writing; vocabulary lessons began with the words students needed to learn, followed by illustrations and then verbal descriptions of the words; graphic organizers were often located initially in concepts tied to literature, grammar and writing (e.g., elements of a story, composing sentences with direct objects, and the Jane Shaffer writing method) and then produced using images and words before the students returned to their literature texts or writing activities. By the last few weeks of year, however, after the students completed their end-of-course exams that were tied to the school's Adequate Yearly Progress reports required by the federal government under the No Child Left Behind legislation, Sherelle brought the backpack drawing into her curriculum.

The backpack drawing was an activity originally designed by a middle school teacher in California (Siegesmund, 1999) and it was used in Sherelle's teacher education program as an activity for teaching pre-service teachers about inclusive notions of literacy (cf. Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998; Smagorinsky, Pettis, & Reed, 2004). The backpack drawing activity required students to compose large drawings of their actual school bags using charcoal. Following two class sessions of drawing, the students composed essays about the tangible and intangible things they carried in their bags. (They were introduced to the concept of tangible and intangible during the second day of drawing when Sherelle read excerpts from Tim O'Brien's (1990/1992) short story, "The Things They Carried.") The multimodal composition in this case did not begin with language; it began with image and ended in language. Sherelle said she was pleased with the results of the drawings and the essays, noting that the essays were "more descriptive

and rich and personal writing” (Informal conversation, 5/23) than she had seen all year.

Figure 4.3 shows one student’s solution for the backpack lesson and essay. She talked about the progression of drawing throughout the year:

I learned how to really bring the arts into language arts and do it effectively. And I think it really was nice, at the end, [it] kind of all came together with the backpack drawings . . . It all made sense, and I think it all made sense to the kids, too: the purpose of doing this drawing and then doing the writing to go with it.
(Interview 3, 6/22)

From this statement, I infer that Sherelle wanted drawing to be included in her curriculum as a multimodal tool and not simply as a supplementary activity for those times when students finished their work early or when Sherelle needed a filler activity, a fate drawing can commonly face in English language arts classrooms. I also infer here that Sherelle’s confidence in the backpack drawing in particular exemplifies the goal of using drawing as a tool to be used for multiple purposes and toward multiple solutions for teaching her curriculum. Drawing was not simply used once to illustrate a concept or to create a response to literature; rather, drawing was used on a regular basis as part of several composition and visualization activities.

Despite the confidence with which Sherelle talked about the sketch-to-stretch compositions, the vocabulary drawings, the graphic organizers, and the backpack drawings, she also reported that she was worried what might happen if her principal or mentor in the school saw her students creating these drawings. Sherelle was afraid of getting caught with her students drawing at their desks using their crayons and colored pencils and markers. She said, “What is my principal gonna think if he comes [in] and

we're drawing?" (Interview 3, 6/22). The irony is that Sherelle's first official observation by the principal was on November 1, a day when students were working on vocabulary drawings. When she met with Mr. Wallace, the principal, to discuss the observation, she said she was "scared" before the meeting, but reported that during their conversation "[Mr. Wallace] said so many good things. It gave me so much confidence" (Interview 3, 6/22). According to Sherelle's description of the meeting, Mr. Wallace was pleased to see drawing in use in her classroom. At the two subsequent observation meetings Sherelle had with Mr. Wallace, she was told again that her teaching was exemplary and embodied the expectations set forth for all the teachers in the school. After the school year ended, Sherelle said "I feel a lot more confident about this school year" (Interview 3, 6/22). Sherelle's confidence about her decisions to include drawing as a multimodal composition tool was buoyed through these meetings with her principal and when her students performed well on the end-of-course exams.

Drawing as a Planning Tool

Sherelle's goals for her curriculum included accountability for attending to the state curriculum while integrating visual art. Her strategies for planning the curriculum to integrate visual art began with the state standards:

I'd look at the [state] standards and I'd think about what's a good way to incorporate all the [students'] different styles of learning. So we would do some seatwork stuff, we [would] do some note-taking because [students] need to learn those skills. We would do some get up and walk around the school or go outside or let's draw this or let's act this out [activities]. (Interview 3, 6/22)

Sherelle took advantage of this research study conducted in her classroom as a sounding board for her planning. Her participation in the study meant having access to a teacher with experience in visual art and English language arts. During the formal interviews and the many conversations we had after third period, Sherelle and I often talked about her plans and what she was interested in doing for future classes. Sherelle used these sessions, both those that were recorded and those that were not, as a sounding board for her ideas, her concerns, and her questions about integrating visual art with the state standards and the end-of-course exams. Sometimes these conversations needed drawings to illustrate the ideas Sherelle was envisioning. The following is an exchange from the formal interview in March in which Sherelle was trying to figure out how images could help her teach about the elements of a story, a concept tested on the end-of-course exam and an expected outcome for students to identify as part of the state standards, as those elements are represented in drama and prose:

Sherelle: So, like, [a piece of paper is unfolded] if for each of these [elements of story]—okay. Like if I had a drawing on the board [draws on the paper].

Okay. And this represents character. [draws a female figure with stick legs and arms] Notice she's wearing a dress. [laughs]

Author: Lovely.

Sherelle: And we'll just do a big compare/contrast.

Author: Cool. Between what two things?

Sherelle: So this is on the drama side and this is on, what would we call it? Maybe just novel/short story. What would that, what could that be?

Author: Prose.

Sherelle: Prose. (Interview 2, 3/29)

This verbal exchange shows how Sherelle pitched her working ideas of how to compose a graphic organizer to teach students literature concepts. The pattern of these exchanges was often the following: Sherelle proposed an idea, I asked follow up questions, Sherelle revised her idea and asked more questions, I responded with ideas, anecdotes from my own experience, and more questions. In fact, questions drove much of the conversations we had—questions posed by me and posed by Sherelle.

Drawing in these exchanges served as a tool for helping Sherelle to construct meanings about what she was trying to teach in her curriculum. In the excerpt from the March interview, Sherelle asked for a pen to draw what she was thinking about illustrating a spatial combination for genre and character. Later she added setting and conflict as other elements of story that manifest differently in drama and prose genres. The drawing she began and to which I contributed during this interview was an example of a provisional text that acted as a repository for the meanings Sherelle was constructing about the concepts of genre, story elements, and drawing. Drawing was a tool to help her illustrate ideas for her students and for herself. That is, she clarified what she knew about character, setting, and conflict as those elements were represented in two genres of literature (drama and prose) and in the drawings we co-created.

Sherelle used drawings as a tool to help her solve the problem her students were having with differentiating between internal and external conflict: “It was hard for them to see that an internal conflict is separate from an external [conflict] because *they really [need] to see* how this [conflict] could come from outside [or] can become something inside or vice versa” (Interview 2, 3/29, emphasis added). To help her to use a drawing to

clarify the difference between internal and external conflict, I drew a picture of a face being reflected in a mirror. Sherelle then took this drawing as a feasible solution for the problem of illustrating internal conflict and talked about how she would add this to her graphic organizer:

I might do this [graphic organizer] with the tree [draws a tree on the paper to symbolize setting] and then here is the guy in the mirror [draws below the tree a square with a simplified image of a face looking in a mirror to symbolize conflict]. And then [students] can talk about those [setting and conflict] and then move on. (Interview 2, 3/29)

In this instance, Sherelle took a drawing I showed her of a face looking in a mirror and repurposed it into a graphic organizer to teach students about internal conflict as one of the elements of a story.

The discussion about Sherelle's goals for drawing a tool to integrate visual art within her curriculum was a regular topic of our formal and informal interviews. I always had blank paper and pens with me for these conversations because I often relied on drawing to clarify my own ideas. Eventually, drawing became a sort of shorthand that we used to communicate ideas for and about Sherelle's goals for her curriculum. In our informal interview on December 16, I asked Sherelle about how her planning was going because she had mentioned earlier in the conversation that she was spending less time planning:

[I]t took me so much longer last year to plan [during student teaching]. And I think it was because I was thinking in terms of, many times "What do I need to teach today?" And I've shifted that now to "What do my kids need to learn?" And

then things like, “Okay, how am I gonna use this lesson to___?” You know? And it was just kind of scripted out. And now, I’m able to think more spatially almost about what’s going on and what I need to teach and what my kids need to learn.

(Informal conversation, 12/16)

Like the graphic organizers that Sherelle used to show students relationships among concepts like the elements of a story, Sherelle’s planning for her classes was now done in terms of the relations among what her students needed to learn and the requirements of the state standards. By using drawings and graphic organizers in her planning sessions, she repurposed the graphic organizers for student work into her own work. That is, to “think more spatially” indicates that rather than simply a linear progression from one state standard to the next, Sherelle envisioned her planning as a spatially organized activity that involved multiple links and pathways among the content of her curriculum and the needs of her students. Her shift toward spatial planning and attending to the learning needs of students demonstrates Huberman’s (1993) vision of the teacher as artisan: the teacher bricoleur is one who adapts materials “on the spot” (p. 15) to accommodate the immediate environment of students and curriculum. The spatial comment also indicates that the meanings Sherelle constructed over the course of the year about drawing and about the whole of her curriculum were provisional and contingent on the setting and the goals both she and the school had for students. Drawing served as a marker or placeholder for Sherelle’s ongoing development of her curriculum, thus mediating her concept of curriculum.

The role of drawing in the curriculum was also mediated by her evolving understanding of how to use image as a tool for planning curriculum lessons and

materials (Smagorinsky, 2001; Smagorinsky & O'Donnell-Allen, 1998). Thus, Sherelle's concept development around drawing was complex and shifted based on her interactions with students, with me, and with her administration (Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003). I construe the conversations and reflections about drawing as examples also of Sherelle's constant dialogue and interrogation of her use of drawing to solve problems in her curriculum. As a bricoleur, Sherelle used drawing to visualize concepts, create connections between language and image, and to plan her teaching practice and curriculum materials. The solutions Sherelle came up with for integrating drawing in her curriculum were always subject to questioning and evaluating as she reflected on her teaching. The constant evaluation of drawing was part of her development of the meaning of drawing in a literacy context.

Drawing as an Assessment Tool

As an assessment tool, drawing was both problematic and promising. Sherelle used the sketch-to-stretch compositions students created after reading three short stories as indicators of how the students understood the plots, characters, and conflicts within the stories. She later created a lesson that involved students creating large scale drawings that were then used on the final exam. Going into the second semester, I thought that Sherelle would continue to use drawing as a means for assessing student progress; however, this was not the case.

At the end of the first semester, Sherelle was finishing up her unit on short stories and wanted to create a lesson that would involve a large scale mural drawing to be composed by an entire class. Her goal with the mural was two-fold: She wanted more data about how her students understood plot, character, conflict, and setting elements in

literature, and she wanted to have a student-created visual text from which language could be generated. That is, she wanted to have a drawing composed by students that could be repurposed as a text for reading and generating writing. Only she and I knew that the students would be using the murals to generate specific types of language—possessive, common, plural, and proper nouns. The students worked collaboratively composing the murals with crayons, marker, pencils, and pens. Then, the completed drawings were prominently displayed in the classroom.

For the final exam, Sherelle put four different colors of sticky notes on the dry-erase board with written directions instructing students to use the sticky note they were given to identify the type of noun associated with the color of the note. For example, green sticky notes were used to write plural nouns, pink were for possessive nouns. Sherelle randomly distributed two sticky notes to each student. Using the mural as a repository for language, the students labeled items within the mural according to the color of the sticky note. The students wrote their noun or noun phrases on the sticky notes and then posted them directly onto the mural. They also composed sentences using the noun or noun phrase on their written final exam materials (Field notes, 12/14).

In using the mural as an extension of the sketch-to-stretch activities, Sherelle was able to repurpose the mural as a second assessment of students' understanding of elements of a story as well as a measure of the development of their visual composition skills. In an informal conversation on December 15 that was not taped, Sherelle said she was pleased with the results of the murals. Her positive opinion about the murals increased when the students generated what she said was “descriptive and thoughtful language” about what they saw in the murals (Field notes, 12/15). At this point, the end

of the first semester, drawing was a useful assessment tool in Sherelle's discussion of her curriculum. However, as the second semester began, Sherelle reported concerns that drawings were "inflating" the grades she gave students in her classes (Field notes, 1/17). She said she was concerned that the grades students received for drawing were not indicative of whether the students comprehended the stories they read. These concerns arose after Sherelle graded the students' final exams and found that they did not do as well on the comprehension questions on the test as they had done while working in her class composing multimodal drawings and writing about their comprehension of texts.

The role of drawing as an assessment tool was problematic, in part, because Sherelle's final exams were created by using a bank of questions generated by the other sixth grade ELA teacher, Jane. Most of what the students were tested on for their final exams was based on material Sherelle did not necessarily implement in her curriculum. Sherelle said the final exam was meant to assess what her students had learned in the semester and the content that was covered in the assessment was based on the content found in the end-of-course exams for language arts and reading. However, Sherelle's use of the final exam points to a problematic use of an assessment that was not aligned with the goals in her curriculum. Jane was a colleague with experience who Sherelle looked to for guidance. The influence of Jane's advice was strong enough to convince Sherelle, a first year teacher, to use a final exam that did not fully assess the form and content she taught her students. Smagorinsky, Lakly, and Johnson (2002) argue that the power of colleagues to affect a novice teacher's curriculum decisions can supersede the influence of a supportive administration and the principled preparation of novice teachers in university education programs. Sherelle had her principal's support to use drawing as a

teaching and assessment tool and she was taught arts-based approaches to teaching English while completing her university teacher education program. Despite the support and the preparation, she used Jane's final exam and the grades resulting from that decision indicate that the exam was a mismatched tool for assessing the curriculum Sherelle used during the first semester.

While Sherelle had used drawing often in her curriculum as a compositional and visual tool, drawing was only used as a visual tool in the final exam. The students used their drawing in the murals as texts to generate short written compositions on the final exam (e.g., sentences using the nouns identified in the murals); they had to represent the bulk of their learning for the semester by answering multiple choice questions in response to varying lengths of texts they read in the exam materials. The disconnect between drawing and testing appeared in the grades Sherelle calculated for the students: the majority of her students received A grades for their class work and near failing grades for their exam scores. The disparity between class and exam grades concerned Sherelle and during the second semester, drawing took a backseat to test preparation during the first few weeks of school. Eventually, drawing was used again as an assessment tool when students composed character sketches, a form of sketch-to-stretch compositions that focused on characters and their traits from a script for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. These sketches, however, were not introduced until April.

Discussion

By the end of the school year, a theme of purpose emerged in Sherelle's discussion of her curriculum. She reported that her goals for curriculum and teaching included teaching students about the purposes for reading, writing, and visual art.

However, only the visual art aspect, particularly drawing, required that Sherelle fully document and explain her purposes for instructional and curricular decisions. At different points of the year, Sherelle said that she was “out on a limb” (Interview 3, 6/22) with her decisions to teach with drawing, that she had to “cover [her] ass a little more” (Interview 2, 3/39) by always displaying drawings with explicitly related written essays, and that documentation of her decisions and rationales to include drawing always had to be included in her lesson planning materials. The need to document and rationalize the role of drawing in Sherelle’s curriculum raised several questions for me: Did she want or need the same kind of documentation for linguistic activities in her curriculum? Did she need documentation when students were doing SSR (silent sustained reading), writing an anthology of ghost stories, or writing a research essay about an invention? Was documentation required because drawing was not tested on the end-of-course exams and not required as an objective on the state’s performance standards? Why did she need to cover her ass when art was involved? The use of drawing as a form of composition and assessment was a curriculum move that Sherelle worried that, if observed by another teacher or an administrator, could lead to reprimands for her teaching. However, her concern for what the principal would think if she and her students were observed drawing was met with praise for her teaching after each of the principal’s observations. The principal, according to Sherelle’s report of her interactions with him, was supportive of her goals to integrate visual art in her literacy curriculum.

One possibility for Sherelle’s continued concerns, which extended to the interview after school had ended, could be an issue of perception. She expressed concern about how people in her setting perceived her, specifically her principal, her teaching

team members, and the other sixth grade English language arts and reading teacher. She worried how these people might react if they found out that drawing was part of her curriculum and then could decide that she was a bad teacher or that her students were not performing well as a result of using drawing. The perception of drawing as something to hide was tied to Sherelle's understanding that success in the school was tied to student performance on standardized tests, attendance, and appropriate behavior. Her performance as a teacher was reflected in the students' scores on end-of-course and final exams, when students walked through the hallways, and when they worked in her classroom. Sherelle worried that she gave too many A's in her classes, fearing that her colleagues would think she had not taught challenging enough material or that her methods were not in keeping with other teacher practices in the school. Smagorinsky et al. (2002) argue that pressure from colleagues, more so than principals, can affect the curriculum decisions teachers make. Sherelle attributed the students' low performance on the final exams and their high performances in class grades to giving too many grades for drawing and not enough for other reading responses (e.g., comprehension questions, identification of story elements, in short answer and multiple choice formats like those found on the final exams). After the scores were distributed for the end-of-course exams, she was relieved and then said that it was important that sixth graders learn things that were not listed on the state's performance standards or tested on the end-of-course exams. She had test scores to prove that what she had done was working—with the caveat, she said, that the students' development over time was based on their growth in a number of areas and could not be fully explained by the integration of visual art.

Huberman (1993) argues that the context in which teachers are situated is a contingency for teachers to become bricoleurs. Teachers working in school settings that allow for autonomy with responsive but not overbearing leadership can become attentive artisans of education. In Sherelle's case, she had an encouraging leader in Mr. Wallace and enough autonomy to use, reuse, and seek out multiple purposes for drawing in her curriculum. Despite her autonomy, however, she still reported that drawing introduced a new sense of pressure with respect to the standardized tests. That is, she reported concerns that drawing was an activity that might compromise her students' performance on the standardized exams and, by extension, might also compromise her relationships with the leaders in her school.

Concerns aside, Sherelle saw some success in her curriculum. Nearly all her students passed the standardized exams and their writing and drawing texts improved with complexity and richness over the course of the year. The work Sherelle did with drawing in her curriculum was aided by her willingness to find new purposes for her relationships, her experiences, and her available materials. She was an opportunist in her approach to curriculum. She took advantage of this study and resources that I could offer as an art and English language arts teacher; she drew on her experiences in music and drama to help her imagine alternative modes for thinking and composing ideas; and, she used lessons, activities, notes, drawings, and other texts provided by colleagues and friends both in and outside of the university and middle school as tools to be repurposed to meet her goals.

Sherelle's case is an example of a literacy teacher working strategically and purposefully to integrate visual art; Sherelle's is a case of a teacher using any and all

means appropriate to meet her goals. She did not have to be a trained visual artist and literature scholar to bring meaningful uses of drawing into her literacy curriculum, but she did have to be a savvy thinker and resourceful planner. For a teacher to become a bricoleur, then, it is less a matter of having a specific set of knowledge than it is a matter of being able to become an imaginative and responsive thinker in the moment to the environment and the problems at hand. To imagine literacy teachers using images and language as ubiquitously in their curricula as they encounter language and image in their lives outside of school is to imagine literacy teachers as resourceful and pragmatic thinkers willing to re-imagine literacy as a multimodal curriculum.

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Figures

Category	Frequency: Entire data set	Frequency: Drawing + code
Goal: Context: Accountability	10	3
Goal: Context: Expectations of middle school	24	6
Goal: Context: Jane Shaffer writing method	14	2
Goal: Context: Student performance	62	17
Goal: Context: Test preparation	20	2
Goal: Context: “There are other things that are important to learn in 6 th grade”	7	1
Goal: Context: Tight ship with love	2	1
Goal: Drawing: Attention to qualities	12	4
Goal: Drawing: Hands-on	33	15
Goal: Drawing: Interdisciplinary	34	17
Goal: Drawing: Making connections between arts-based practices and testing	7	4
Goal: Drawing: Making connections within the curriculum	50	24
Goal: Drawing: Multiple paths to meaning/problem solving	26	14
Goal: Drawing: Relationship of image and text	29	19
Goal: Drawing: Surprise	14	3
Goal: Drawing: Visual	47	10
Goal: Solutions: Documentation	6	3
Goal: Solutions: Negotiation	8	3
Goal: Solutions: Redirect a situation	45	9
Setting: Professional: University: Experiences as student (English literature program)	9	2
Setting: Professional: University: Experiences as student (English education program)	23	5
Setting: Professional: University: Relationship with author	71	20
Setting: Professional: Middle School: Relationship with administrators	13	10
Setting: Professional: Middle School: Relationship with teaching team	26	6
Setting: Professional: Middle School: Relationship with language arts faculty	25	3
Setting: Professional: Middle School: Professional development courses: Middle School Learners	4	1
Setting: Personal: Family friend (art teacher)	3	3
Tool: Visual: Classroom space	10	2
Tool: Visual: Dry erase board	3	3
Tool: Visual: Graphic organizer	11	11
Tool: Visual: Icons	4	4
Tool: Composition: Aboriginal art	5	5
Tool: Composition: Anthology (ghost stories)	4	4
Tool: Composition: Backpack drawings	12	12
Tool: Composition: Reading projects	17	17
Tool: Composition: Sketch-to-stretch	6	6
Tool: Composition: Storyboard	1	1
Tool: Composition: Vocabulary	27	9
Tool: Planning: Lesson planning	83	25
Tool: Planning: Learning styles	2	2
Tool: Planning: Modeling	14	5
Tool: Planning: Role of author in planning	59	17
Tool: Assessment: Assessment practices	58	20

Figure 4.1. Table of codes and frequencies for entire data set within goal, setting, and tool, then configured

with the “drawing” code.

Code	Definition	Example
Setting		
Professional	Academic setting, professional relationships	“[T]here's a big influence on using every bit of your class time . . . using it as wisely as you can, and . . . using lots of different ways to teach kids. So our principals are always happy to see us being creative”
Personal	Non-academic setting, personal relationships	“[T]he anthology was supposed to be based on a lesson that [my boyfriend's] mother taught several years ago to seventh graders . . . based on stories, folk tales, which turned out to be mostly just ghost tales. And so, I tried to do the same thing”
Goals		
Context	Compose an integrated curriculum within the school context	“[W]e would do some seatwork stuff, we do some note taking because they need to learn those skills. We would do some get up and walk around the school or go outside or let's draw this or let's act this out”
Drawing	Compose an integrated curriculum with drawing	“I definitely kind of went out on a limb with trying to incorporate visual arts . . . into the language arts classroom”
Solutions	Find solutions for problems of integrating curriculum	“I'm learning now that I'm teaching more and having to work with people, I'm learning . . . how to redirect a situation.”
Drawing as Tool		
Visual	Drawing as visual cue/illustration tool	“that just really intrigued me because of how those connections are made and how language arts and reading, which are so full of words, how those connections from the words to your mind are hard for some students and how we can bridge that gap using the images.”
Composition	Drawing as multimodal composition tool	“I think maybe once we do a lot more, like some more connecting to writing, connecting the sketch-to-stretch to writing, I think it'll be a little bit more concrete for them, like what the purpose of this is.”
Planning	Drawing as a planning tool	“And then for setting, I don't know. We could draw stage, although setting in a novel isn't necessarily on a stage.”
Assessment	Drawing as an assessment tool	“It shows me that they didn't just memorize that one word and that one drawing and do that. And also, I think that they might enjoy pushing themselves to do different words and show them and draw them. And that might be, that might have made it easier to connect with the word and learn the word.”

Figure 4.2. Table of major categories, definitions, and examples.



In my purse I carry a lot of things. I carry pens, pencils, erasers, and []. I also carry things that make me look nice and smell nice. These things are hair bows, deodorant, lipstick, baby lotion, and chapstick. I also carry love notes, notes from friends, and money in my tinkerbelle wallet. Another thing I carry is very important to me. This thing is my cellphone that sits in my pocket, inside my purse.

In this purse I also carry dreams that become memories. Some dreams have come true, and now they can't be considered a dream any more. Now it's a memory that I can cherish for the [rest] of my life. I also carry questions about whose going to act like my friend or what's going to happen in class. I also carry my success and my reputation. I carry my success of being at school every day of the year and making good grades. I also carry my hope with me every where I go, inside my purse.

I carry all these tangible and intangible things in my purse that means so much to me.

Figure 4.3. Madison's backpack drawing and essay.

Appendix

Interview Protocol

- Please describe your teaching experiences thus far.
- What made these experiences positive and/or effective?
- How did your teaching strategies inform these experiences?
- Please describe a visual arts-based strategy you have deployed in your class.
- What is your evaluation of the visual arts-based strategy? What is your evaluation of the process involved with the strategy? What is your evaluation of the products resulting from this strategy?
- How do your experiences in school contradict or confirm your ideas about the use of visual arts in language arts classrooms?
- How have our discussions helped you think about how you might use visual arts in your practice?
- What kinds of advice can you give a teacher about facilitating discussions around literacy that values visual arts-based ways of learning in the classroom? What has worked in your experience? What has not worked?

CHAPTER FIVE

INTEGRATED CURRICULUM AS A PATH TO BE LAID AND DOCUMENTED WHILE WALKING

Being able to embrace the idea of multiple points of entry and multiple ends for learning in any classroom requires flexibility on the teacher's part (Eisner, 1994; Huberman, 1993). Eisner (2002) calls this "flexible purposing," a term that is originally Dewey's (1938/1988), to describe "the improvisational side of intelligence as it is employed in the arts...the ability to shift direction, even to redefine one's aims when better options emerge in the course of one's work" (p. 77). Being able to shift and respond to the needs of students with the flexibility of using language and image, as a teacher in a semiotics-based literacy classroom may do, is a valuable educational end in a world in which the media used to communicate changes frequently. A teacher of integrated curriculum uses flexible purposing to choose appropriate texts and activities that students can then transmediate into suitable media for representing their understandings. Furthermore, a teacher who employs flexible purposing can model for students a responsive and inclusive approach to literacy, rather than a dismissive and exclusionary approach to composing and reading texts both in and out of school. In other words, a flexible teacher can model for students the means for attending to their rapidly changing environment in ways that are suitable to their own idiosyncratic needs.

The multiple pathways for learning and meaning-making presented in Sherelle's case and in studies reviewed throughout this dissertation show that the role of visual art

in literacy classrooms can vary with the setting, the students, the teacher, and the activity. Compositions using visual art and language in these secondary literacy classes fostered the development of multiple meanings for texts. Unlike literacy classes in which texts are read for one essential meaning (Faust, 2000), students in these studies were afforded opportunities to express their ideas in dynamic ways similar to the shifting and fast-paced modes of communication they use outside of school. A challenge for teachers embracing multiple pathways for learning and a transmediation approach to students' composing of responses is the nearly singular pathway and lack of opportunities for a transmediation included in standardized assessment practices. As teachers face the requirements of Adequate Yearly Progress reports via student performance on standardized tests, there may be less room for the visual arts in literacy classrooms. Teachers who desire dynamic teaching and learning in their classes may need to strategically use and seek out curriculum tools that will allow them to be both responsive to the needs of their students (Huberman, 1993) and the demands of a culture of testing that posits reading as being at-risk in the U.S. (National Endowment for the Arts, 2004; Smith, Marshall, Spurlin, Alvermann, & Bauerlein, 2004).

Learning from Sherelle's Curriculum Composing

By the end of the school year, a theme of purpose emerged in Sherelle's discussion of her curriculum. She reported that her goals for curriculum and teaching included teaching students about the purposes for reading, writing, and visual art. However, only the visual art aspect, particularly drawing, required that Sherelle fully document and explain her purposes for instructional and curricular decisions. At different points of the year, Sherelle said that she was "out on a limb" (Interview 3, 6/22) with her

decisions to teach with drawing, that she had to “cover [her] ass a little more” (Interview 2, 3/29) by always displaying drawings with explicitly related written essays, and that documentation of her decisions and rationales to include drawing always had to be included in her lesson planning materials.

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One possibility for Sherelle’s continued concerns, which extended to the last interview after school had ended, could be an issue of perception. She expressed concern about how people in her setting perceived her, specifically her principal, her teaching team members, and the other sixth grade English language arts and reading teacher. She worried how these people might react if they found out that drawing was part of her

curriculum and then could decide that she was a bad teacher or that her students were not performing well as a result of using drawing. The perception of drawing as something to hide was tied to Sherelle's understanding that success in the school was tied to student performance on standardized tests, attendance, and appropriate behavior. Her performance as a teacher was reflected in the students' scores on end-of-course and final exams, when students walked through the hallways, and when they worked in her classroom. Sherelle worried that she gave too many A's in her classes, fearing that her colleagues would think she had not taught challenging enough material or that her methods were not as rigorous with other teacher practices in the school. Smagorinsky et al. (2002) argue that pressure from colleagues, more so than principals, can affect the curriculum decisions teachers make. Sherelle attributed the students' low performance on the final exams and their high performances on class grades as showing she gave too many grades for drawing and not enough for other reading responses (e.g., comprehension questions, identification of story elements, in short answer and multiple choice formats like those found on the final exams). When the scores came out for the end-of-course exams, she was relieved and then said that it was important that sixth graders learn things that were not listed on the state's performance standards or tested on the end-of-course exams. She had test scores to prove that what she had done was working—with the caveat, she said, that the students' development over time was based on their growth in a number of areas and could not be fully explained by the integration of visual art.

Huberman (1993) argues that the context in which teachers are situated is a contingency for teachers to become bricoleurs. Teachers working in school settings that

allow for autonomy with responsive but not overbearing leadership can become attentive artisans of education. In Sherelle's case, she had an encouraging leader in Mr. Wallace and enough autonomy to use, reuse, and seek out multiple purposes for drawing in her curriculum. Despite her autonomy, however, she still reported that drawing introduced a new sense of pressure with respect to the standardized tests. That is, she reported concerns that drawing was an activity that might compromise her students' performance on the standardized exams and, by extension, might also compromise her relationships with the leaders in her school.

Concerns aside, Sherelle saw some success in her curriculum. Nearly all her students passed the standardized exams and their writing and drawing texts improved with complexity and richness over the course of the year. The work Sherelle did with drawing in her curriculum was aided by her willingness to find new purposes for her relationships, her experiences, and her available materials. She was an opportunist in her approach to curriculum. She took advantage of this study and resources that I could offer as an art and English language arts teacher; she drew on her experiences in music and drama to help her imagine alternative modes for thinking and composing ideas; and, she used lessons, activities, notes, drawings, and other texts provided by colleagues and friends both at and outside of the university and middle school as tools to be repurposed to meet her goals.

Sherelle's case is an example of a literacy teacher working strategically and purposefully to integrate visual art; Sherelle's is a case of a teacher using any and all means appropriate to meet her goals. She did not have to be a trained visual artist and literature scholar to bring meaningful uses of drawing into her literacy curriculum, but

she did have to be a savvy thinker and resourceful planner. For a teacher to become a bricoleur, then, it is less a matter of having a specific set of knowledge than it is a matter of being able to become an imaginative and responsive thinker in the moment to the environment and the problems at hand. To imagine literacy teachers using images and language as ubiquitously in their curricula as they encounter language and image in their lives outside of school is to imagine literacy teachers as resourceful and pragmatic thinkers willing to re-imagine literacy as a multimodal curriculum.

There are potential lessons to be learned in the case of Sherelle and her integrated curriculum about what it means to teach in a school with a vision of student success and teacher creativity, with teacher colleagues that are more and less interested in teaching with similar goals, and with a research colleague and mentor to serve as a resource for reflection as the teacher composes the curriculum. Sherelle's story is not an unusual one within the context of teachers faced with desires to be innovative within the affordances and constraints of a system designed to focus on Adequate Yearly Progress through standardized measures and attending to the needs of all children in crowded classrooms.

Certainly the idea of bringing visual art into a language and literacy course is not a new idea: Integration of arts-based strategies in English language arts curricula was suggested as a teaching strategy in the publication of the National Education Association's Committee of Ten Report (1892), when the committee advocated the use of drawing as a means of generating responses for literature. An article in *English Journal* from the early twentieth century argues that images, including photographs, postcards, and "moving pictures" should be used as tools for teaching literature (Howard, 1916). Since then, arts-based strategies for teaching subjects outside visual arts or music

classrooms has been problematic due to national reports marking U.S. schools and reading practices in the nation as at risk (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; National Endowment for the Arts, 2004). What can be gained, then, from Sherelle's case?

Sherelle's work on her curriculum can be considered a composition of *currere*, of laying down a path while walking (Sumara, 1996). Sumara argues that "*currere* is not the course to be run but the running of the course. . . . The path depends on everything, and everything depends on the path" (p. 174). The integrated curriculum that Sherelle worked on and that worked on her was a path she laid down as she walked and taught and documented her progress. She started with ideas about what integrated curriculum might mean, but her curriculum and the relationships within her context shaped her ideas. The integrated curriculum in Sherelle's classroom was laid down each day given what was present: the students, the texts to be read and composed in language and image, the colleagues, the principal, and the observer from the university. Sherelle's case is one that illustrates that curriculum, especially integrated curriculum, is not a fixed entity with a set number of solutions. Rather, integrated curriculum is continually composed, marked with multiple pathways for attending to relationships with people and texts, and never perfect.

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