

Chapter 2

Talking Through the Design: Supporting Students' Digital Video Composing Processes Through Dialogic Engagement

Nichole M. Barrett

University at Buffalo (SUNY), USA

ABSTRACT

In this chapter the author details the experiences of one high school English language arts teacher, Mr. Jeremiah Johnson, and the literacy pedagogy he enacted in order to support students as they composed with digital video. The author will highlight the ways that a dialogic, design-based pedagogy gave students in an after-school film club the opportunity to explore digital design and navigate compositional challenges, all while retaining autonomy over their projects. The chapter adds to the scholarship by drawing attention to social literacy practices and process as transformational meaning-making opportunities for students that foreground individual identities and literacies.

INTRODUCTION

Educators and researchers continue to explore definitions of literacy learning in order to meet the needs of a rapidly transforming society. Foundations laid by Dewey (1897, 1916), Heath (1983), and Street (1984) succeeded in challenging definitions of learning. By exploring the connections between experience, literacy, and everyday social practices they helped shape and articulate the value of students' literacy practices beyond traditional notions of reading and writing. Furthermore, by challenging these definitions, many of today's educators continue to push the limits of print in order to develop a more holistic understanding of what it means to read and write. Once positioned as a skill rooted in print-based reading and writing, literacy has taken shape as a plural, multifaceted social practice that extends past the confines of the page and into the margins of students' lives.

Beyond school walls, students are engaging in sophisticated digital and print-based literacy practices. Unfortunately, many of these literacy practices are often reserved for free time or utilized as a part of

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-0246-4.ch002

extra credit assignments when they cross into schooled spaces. Instead, students are continually asked to read and write in ways that are disconnected from the world they live in beyond the curriculum. This creates a tension between literacy practices that take place in schools and those students engage in on their own time. Looking outside of the classroom and into the literacies that students rely on as a part of their everyday social activities may shed light on the ways that students make meaning beyond schooled spaces. Albers & Harste (2007) argue that understanding all the literacy practices that students engage with maximizes the potential for students meaning-making processes and is essential to the learning process. Bridging the gap between students in and out-of-school literacy practices can help students recognize their strengths outside of the classroom and encourage them bring them into the classroom as meaning making tools (Alvermann, Moon, & Hagood, 1999; Jenkins & Kelley, 2013; Vasudevan, 2010). Providing students with authentic meaning-making opportunities requires students to have access to all the tools they possess rather than only those valued by the teacher. These predetermined tools may not only seem foreign to many students, but they are also governed by outdated definitions of literacy.

This chapter will discuss the experiences of one secondary English language arts teacher as he enacted a dialogic, multiliteracies pedagogy as a part of digital video composition in an after-school film club. The author will highlight the ways that this approach to literacy instruction fostered opportunities for students to design and redesign meaning throughout the process of composing a digital video. As a result, students retained autonomy over their projects and began to reshape their identities as meaning-makers. The author will draw connections between the research reported here and literacy instruction on a larger scale in order to frame social, process-based literacy instruction as critical tenets of students' learning and identity development.

BACKGROUND

Shifting definitions of literacy, coupled with an increasingly digital world have led researchers to explore the multimodal and digital literacy practices of youth both in and out of the classroom (e.g. Alvermann, 2010; Bruce, Sullivan, Barrett, & Gonzalez, 2019; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Shanahan, McVee, & Bailey, 2014; Wolfe & Flewitt, 2010). This includes a growing body of research that explores multimodal (e.g., Hull & Nelson, 2005; Miller, 2010, Siegel, 2006; Vasudevan, 2006) and digital (e.g., Curwood, Magnifico, & Lammers, 2013; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; Tavers, 2015) literacy practices. In addition, many educators and researchers continue to draw upon the social practices of students within and across classroom, community, and digital spaces. Doing so increases the resources available to students as a part of learning and meaning-making while providing them with opportunities develop and retain learner autonomy. What it means to read and write continues to expand as definitions of literacy absorb modes and texts including film, television, video games, magazines, music, and image.

Although wide spread definitions of literacy have grown to encompass a range of literacies and literacy practices, those most often included and valued within classroom and academic spaces are still inspired by print-based discourses. Rather than relying on the wealth of knowledge that researchers argue students come to classrooms with (e.g., Alvermann, 2002; Gainer & Lapp, 2010; Hagood, Alvermann, & Heron-Hruby, 2010), educators continue to foreground traditional notions of reading and writing that are rooted in words on a page. This is despite the corpus of research that supports and highlights the value of including multiple and multimodal literacies as a part of literacy instruction (e.g., Albers & Sanders, 2010; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Miller & McVee, 2013). Instead, multimodal and digital literacies are

18 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/talking-through-the-design/238421

Related Content

The Relationship between Student Learning Styles and Motivation during Educational Video Game Play

Michael R. Findley (2011). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 63-73).

www.irma-international.org/article/relationship-between-student-learning-styles/55548

Course Design and Project Evaluation of a Network Management Course Implemented in On-Campus and Online Classes

Te-Shun Chou (2018). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 44-56).

www.irma-international.org/article/course-design-and-project-evaluation-of-a-network-management-course-implemented-in-on-campus-and-online-classes/201115

Adapting the TPACK Framework for Online Teaching Within Higher Education

Fan Ouyang and Cassandra Scharber (2018). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 42-59).

www.irma-international.org/article/adapting-the-tpack-framework-for-online-teaching-within-higher-education/190845

A European Evaluation of the Promises of LOs

Robert McCormick, Tomi Jaakkola and Sami Nurmi (2009). *Handbook of Research on Learning Design and Learning Objects: Issues, Applications, and Technologies* (pp. 515-531).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/european-evaluation-promises-los/20899

Speech Cueing on the Web by 'The Little Dude': Multimedia Instruction for Young Children

Bruce L. Mann, Henry Schulz and Jianping Cui (2012). *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design* (pp. 32-44).

www.irma-international.org/article/speech-cueing-web-little-dude/68412