Considering Primary-Aged English-Language Learners'

Peripherality and Legitimacy in Multimodal Literacy Lessons

by

Alexandra Bomphray
B.A., University of Michigan, 2002
M.A., University of Michigan, 2006

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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University of Victoria

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

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This dissertation presents findings from a six-month qualitative case study that carefully examined the use of a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) in a 3rd grade classroom made up of Spanish-speaking English language learners (ELLs). The multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) served as a focusing lens in which to investigate the larger complexities of ELLs' classroom membership and participation. The focus of the study was examining whether a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) can be used as an instructional tool to enhance ELLs' perceptions of belonging and acceptance through enhanced participation. Multiple, multimodal opportunities were provided to ELLs to express their sense of belonging, sense of agency, and overall perceptions of acceptance. The findings indicate that multimodal literacy practices can increase ELLs' peripherality in cognitively and socially complex tasks and that this enhanced peripherality can lead to successful participation and engagement in cognitively demanding and socially complex tasks. Additionally, findings suggest that ELLs' successful participation and engagement in cognitively and socially demanding tasks, as a result of the use of multimodal literacy practices, leads to increased legitimacy and peripherality for these ELLs. The findings also provide insight into the best practices for implementing a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) into multilingual classrooms.

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To my former first and second graders from Hightower

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Chapter One: Introduction, Purpose of the Study, and Research Questions

The nuanced complexities of English language learners' (ELLs) membership and acceptance into classroom communities are central to understanding how to create more conducive learning communities for these unique learners. The following dissertation explicitly details a six-month qualitative study in which a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) served as a focusing lens in which to investigate the larger complexities of ELLs' membership and acceptance within their classroom communities. My interest in this area stemmed from my uneasiness regarding the supportive nature of my own classroom community during my time teaching primary-aged Spanish speaking ELLs in a school in the United States. I witnessed firsthand the isolation ELLs can face during learning activities. Many of my ELLs struggled—to a greater extent than my English speaking students—to obtain full membership into the learning community. This struggle led me to actively seek out literacy practices and strategies that would encourage my ELLs' to participate in classroom discussions while also helping to position them as capable classmates.

It was during my search for effective literacy strategies that I first experienced the power of multimodal literacy approaches. During Reader's Workshop one day, I decided on a whim to have my 1st graders act out Mem Fox's Hattie and the Fox. We spent about a week preparing our "play". For each role in the play, multiple students were assigned to cooperatively and in unison act out the lines of the particular character. The students then worked in small groups on their intonation, expression, gestures, and unison while re-reading their part—with the lesson culminating with a performance in front of several first grade and kindergarten classes.

One particular student—Julio, a young ELL who had recently arrived from Mexico—was causing me great concern at this time. Julio was very uncomfortable in the classroom setting—as

his frequent bathroom trips (3-4 times an hour) demonstrated—and he was very quiet during literacy lessons despite opportunities to engage with other ELLs in Spanish. His repeated academic failures also led him to have an unhappy and unconfident demeanor in class. While I was aware that everything in my classroom was unfamiliar to him and his early experiences with school were woefully short of successful—I was at a complete loss in figuring out how to make my classroom a place of learning, comfort, and belonging for him.

For Julio, successfully acting out Hattie and the Fox with his peers marked the first time Julio felt a part of the community that felt so foreign to him. Standing in the back of the classroom during the performance, I remember vividly watching Julio and I will never forget the smile on his face. He stood confidently in front of the classroom as he loudly acted out his lines. Nowhere was the quiet, unhappy Julio that I saw so often in my literacy classroom. In fact, this was the first time that Julio had ever actively participated in a literacy activity. I understood that—for at least this brief moment—Julio felt he was a competent and contributing member of the classroom community.

While I feel that I never fully succeeded in creating the type of learning environment my ELLs needed, successful lessons like the one mentioned above highlighted the possibility of my classroom being a place of refuge and support for my ELLs. This experience has made me passionate about finding teaching strategies and tools that can help to create classroom communities that are more conducive to ELLs' unique strengths and needs. I believe very strongly that many ELLs are unnecessarily delayed academically in English dominant classrooms partly because of a disconnect between our established classroom communities and the unique needs of ELLs. Our classroom communities should be spaces where ELLs are valued and contributing community members able to use their unique set of knowledge, skills, and

interests in their interactions with peers, thus allowing them to experience success on a daily basis. When this is accomplished, a confident smile on Julio's face—and students like him—will no longer be a unique, memorable moment but rather one that is part of the daily routine.

With the experiences of Julio and other former students in mind, I embarked on this study seeking deeper understanding of how ELLs participate, engage, and interact in the classroom community. I also sought to explore multimodal literacy practices—and the possible impact these practices have on ELLs' acceptance and classroom membership—though the implementation of a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels). This chapter introduces this study by situating this study within the socicultural realm and highlighting the essential role of the sociocultural context in learning. The rationale behind conducting this study will then be presented through identification of this study's driving problem—the limited academic success of ELLs in North American classrooms. This will include a discussion of the role unconducive classroom communities play in maintaining and creating the achievement gap between ELLs and native English speakers present in many North American schools. This chapter will then identify where there is a gap in the literature regarding how literacy practices influence the overall achievement of ELLs through their impact on the development of classroom communities. Finally, the central objectives of this study, including the research questions asked, will be identified and discussed.

Situating the Study: The Essential Role of the Sociocultural Context in Learning

This study is situated in the sociocultural realm. Fundamental to a sociocultural approach is the belief that all learning and development occurs as people participate in sociocultural activities within their learning community (Norton & Toohey, 2001). From this perspective, learning and development occur as people participate in the sociocultural activities of their learning community (Norton &

Toohey, 2001). Successful learning requires opportunities to engage in meaningful social interactions throughout the learning process. For example, young students learn to read and write through their social interactions with literate peers and adults. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development highlights that these social interactions assist children in moving from their actual level of development to their potential level of development—a level that can only be reached through cooperative interactions with more capable adults and peers. Learning is therefore enhanced through meaningful social interactions and it is through these interactions with adults and peers that students are able to learn things that they could not learn on their own.

To ensure that all students are afforded equitable opportunities to engage in these important social interactions, supportive classroom communities must be conducive to social interaction and discussion. A student who is provided a safe space within a classroom—a space in which their voice is not only sought but also valued—will more likely to be able to confidently interact with peers, share ideas, and take risks in their learning (Paugh et al., 2007; Hadjioannou, 2007). Environments that are unable to provide a safe space for a student or a group of students deny these students equitable access to actively engage in the social interactions that are so fundamental for learning. These students often feel uncomfortable in social interactions and teachers and peers begin to view these students as 'less capable' contributors in the interaction process. Teachers and researchers must take into account the role the classroom's social environment plays in academic achievement, in addition to the effect it has on student attitudes, interest, productivity, and learning engagement (Hadjioannou, 2007; Walberg & Greenberg, 1997).

Creating supportive and conducive learning environments requires that all students are able to gain access and acceptance into that community. All learners undergo a process of becoming

socialized into classroom communities in which community acceptance is achieved through the familiarization over time with the practices and norms of that community. When the norms and practices of the school community are congruent with the norms and practices of the home community and culture this familiarization process affords access and acceptance. If this is not the case, students are less likely to engage in and enjoy meaningful social interactions with their peers, thus impeding opportunities to actively contribute to the practices of a learning community (Wenger, 1998). The fundamental feelings of safety and acceptance in a learning community serve as a precursor for learning and therefore teachers must proactively monitor perceptions of safety and acceptance.

Statement of the Problem

With the ever increasing number of ELLs in North American classrooms, knowledge about how to support and nurture these students' learning and language development is of utmost importance. In British Columbia, the number of ELLs in BC schools has steadily risen over the past decade from 117,455 in 1999/2000 to 140,391 in 2008/2009—accounting for 9.9% of the total student population (BC Ministry of Education, 2009). Knowledge about how to best educate these students is even more crucial when considering the current academic and literacy success rate of these students. ELLs are at a higher risk of developing reading problems than their English speaking peers (The National Research Council, 1998). In the United States, the *Survey of the States' Limited English Proficient Students and Available Educational Programs and Services 2000-2001 Summary Report* indicated that for the 41 states reporting on both participation and success of English language learners in English reading comprehension, only 18.7% of ELLs scored above the state-established norm (as cited by August & Shanahan, 2006). The results from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2003 demonstrated that while white students in the United States ranked 2 out of 32 countries academically,

African American and Latino Americans ranked 25th (as cited by Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007). Canadian statistics on the achievement of ELLs in British Columbia showed that while 67% of all seventh grade students met or exceeded the expectations for reading only 42% of ESL students met or exceeded these same standards (BC Ministry of Education, 2009). ELLs also have higher dropout rates and are more likely to be placed in lower ability groups, lower academic tracks, and remedial programs than their English speaking peers (August & Shanahan, 2006; Au, 1993; Rose, 1989).

For the current study, I focused specifically on one subset of the larger ELL population of North America—Hispanic school-aged children in the United States. There are two reasons that this particular subset is important to study. First, Hispanic ELLs are the fastest growing minority group within the United States. The number of Hispanic students in U.S. public schools nearly doubled from 1990 to 2006—an increase which accounted for almost 60% of the total student growth in that time period (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). These numbers are expected to continually increase in the long term. It is anticipated that by 2050 there will actually be more Hispanic children than non-Hispanic, white children in US public schools (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). A second reason for focusing on this particular subset of ELLs is that Hispanic children tend to fare slightly worse than other non-Hispanic ELLs. They tend to have lower levels of school readiness when they enter kindergarten and their high school completion rates are substantially lower than all other groups—including other minority groups (Reardon & Galindo, 2009).

Many factors contribute to the achievement gap that Hispanic ELLs' currently face including family background and socioeconomic status, English proficiency, and school quality. For example, more than a quarter of Hispanic students live below the poverty line (Fry & Gonzales, 2008). This is particularly true for first generation immigrants of Mexican descent as 36% of those students are living in poverty (Reardon & Galindo, 2009). Hispanic students are

also more segregated from white students in the US than other minority students and they tend to go to schools with high concentrations of poor and non-English proficient students (Reardon & Galindo, 2009). Additionally, teachers often struggle with meeting the needs of immigrant students because of the instructional methods they rely on and because they are teaching a curriculum that is unfamiliar and often not relevant to these students (Bauer & Arazi, 2010). Thus, Hispanic students are then left without appropriate assistance and their teachers often hold low expectations for their academic performance (Echecarria & Hasbrouck, 2009).

Another significant factor contributing to the achievement gap that Hispanic ELLs currently face is the lack of supportive classroom communities. Within the sociocultural theory of learning, learning communities are considered an important determinant in academic achievement—as it is the learning community that determines the degree of support and opportunity new members have for authentic and meaningful social interactions which are essential for learning. Many ELLs—including Hispanic ELLs—struggle to develop viable social networks with their English speaking peers and are unable to achieve appropriate levels of acceptance and membership within their classroom communities (Toohey, 1998; Iddings, 2005). This difficulty primarily stems from classroom communities not providing ELLs the necessary spaces—spaces in which their voices are sought and valued—to meaningfully connect on an equal level with their English speaking peers.

Instead, classroom communities are established in ways that result in both language barriers and cultural differences acting to prevent ELLs from successfully communicating and connecting with their English speaking peers. For example, during language arts learning, community rapport is built around sharing common understandings and connections made from reading common texts. These texts are almost always situated within North American culture and

understanding. Very rarely are students provided the opportunity to discuss literature that represents ELLs' native cultures and personal identities. It is these types of shared understanding with peers that makes ELLs' acceptance into a classroom community possible thus contributing to their potential to learn (Gillanders, 2007; Kanno & Applebaum, 1995).

Gap within the Literature

Everyday classroom literacy practices, such as literacy discussion practices and assigned writing activities, also contribute to the difficulty ELLs face when it comes to acceptance. Many researchers assert that certain literacy practices—such as focusing on rote memorization of decontextualized skills—can actually prevent the increasing empowerment and active participation of ELLs (Toohey, 1998; Iddings, 2005; Norton & Toohey, 2001). However, few studies provide detailed descriptions of exactly how specific literacy practices impact, inhibit or enhance the empowerment and participation of ELLs (Iddings, 2005; Sharkey & Layzer, 2000). In particular, very little robust research has been conducted examining the use of multimodal literacy practices as a way to increase the empowerment and active participation of ELLs.

Powerful and highly engaging, multimodal literacy approaches can help to extend participation opportunities in the classroom to include all representational and communicational resources. While talking, writing, and traditional reading—all of which rely on basic language understanding—are essential resources for constructing meaning, other important resources are not as language dependent. These resources include images, gestures, colors, shapes, textures, positions in space, sizes, and patterns (Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006). Affording ELLs the opportunity to construct meaning (as well as distribute, interpret, and remake meaning) through many representational and communicational resources could enhance their overall

communication capabilities thus increasing their ability to make important connections with their peers.

Multimodal literacy practices could also provide ELLs with the needed contextual support to engage in cognitively and socially demanding tasks (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). According to Cummins (2000), cognitively demanding tasks can be contextually supported for ELLs in two ways. One way is to make tasks more familiar by connecting the task to an ELLs' prior experience and background knowledge, cultural understandings, and unique interests (Cummins, 2000). This type of contextual support is considered to be *internal* in that the task is modified based on ELLs' own personal—or internal—attributes (i.e. prior experience, motivation, cultural relevance, interests). Adding a multimodal dimension to a task is an example of an *external* contextual support. External contextual support modifies the verbal or written input of a task to make it more linguistically manageable for ELLs (Cummins, 2000). For example, tasks requiring a written or verbal response to literature can be differentiated by encouraging ELLs to use gestures or create visual representations—both examples of non-language intensive modes of communication—as a way to express their ideas.

Anchoring a multimodal literacy approach in the exploration of graphic novels capitalizes on a new, invigorating genre of children's literature while providing ELLs with accessible texts that are rich in meaning. The alluring, invitational dimension of such an approach—conducted in small group literacy discussions—can create a cognitively and socially demanding experience. Though little robust research has been conducted, researchers, teachers, and librarians have highlighted a variety of potential literacy and social benefits of graphic novels for ELLs. As with the general population, graphic novels have the potential to make reading more manageable for ELLs—subsequently increasing their reading motivation and interest. Graphic novels could also potentially create supported openings for ELLs to successfully engage in text discussions thus

positioning ELLs as more capable classroom members. The variety of representational and communicational resources found in graphic novel images —such as colour, size, and shape— could serve as a scaffold for encouraging ELLs' active participation within literature discussions.

Graphic novels could also enhance ELLs' acquisition of important English vocabulary and language—potentially increasing their ability to interact socially in English (Thompson, 2008). The text in graphic novels tends to be rich in authentic, interactional English in comparison to most ELL materials—which offer students a simpler, more fragmented and often awkward view of English. Heavy in dialogue and popular slang, graphic novels model to readers (more or less) authentic conversational English in a variety of social contexts. Subsequently ELLs' pragmatic knowledge about the appropriate use of language in different social contexts could potentially be increased. Enhanced pragmatic knowledge would assist them in becoming more active language learners and perhaps help them engage in more successful social interactions with English speaking peers—ultimately increasing their legitimacy (Cary, 2004).

Graphic novels—like comic books—are also valued resources in the elementary classroom and reading graphic novels is a highly sought after literacy activity. Many ELLs are provided with only simple picture books to read—texts that are often more suitable for younger children and that carry with them the negative stigmatization of being a struggling reader. Graphic novels look like more advanced chapter books and their complex storylines match those found in higher quality children's literature. Reading graphic novels could help to avoid the negative stigmatization connected with traditional ELLs' texts and provide an opening for them to experience the types of texts that lead to vigorous conversation and comprehension.

Many popular chapter books and stories are also being published as language accessible graphic novels—providing ELLs with an opening to participate in discussions around the same

texts that their English speaking peers are reading. For example, a variety of popular fairytales—including *Jack and the Beanstalk, Rumpelstiltskin, and Hansel and Gretel*—are now published as graphic novels. These texts would be particularly effective with ELLs who are often not as familiar with these stories as their North American peers. Providing ELLs with an accessible opening to comprehending and discussing common texts, such as fairy tales, allows them the chance to demonstrate their shared understandings with peers. ELLs who have no English language ability can participate in literature circles involving wordless graphic novels which offer vivid imagery and complex storylines (see for example, Owly, Runton, 2007). Though additional scaffolds would need to be in place–such as allowing an ELL to share ideas in their native language while another student translates—these texts could provide non-English speaking ELLs an opening (i.e. peripherality) to share their common understanding of a text with English speaking peers.

Graphic novels also have the potential to create classroom communities that are more accepting because they often present alternative views of culture, history, and human life and give voice to minorities and those with diverse points of view (Thompson, 2008). As an alternative genre, graphic novel authors tend to represent the voices of minorities. One popular, wordless graphic novel—The Arrival, (Tan, 2007)—uses powerful, imaginative imagery to represent the varied emotions and inevitable hardships experienced by new immigrants. Tan, an immigrant himself, represents the diversity in voices and experiences found in the graphic novel genre. His graphic novel and others provide teachers with an engaging and alluring collection of texts that ELLs and English speaking students could experience together.

In addition to there being a dearth of research regarding the use of multimodal literacy practices as way to increase the empowerment and active participation of ELLs, there also is a

need to investigate ELLs' perceptions of their membership in the classroom community. The voices of ELLs and their experiences, beliefs, and perceptions are all noticeably absent from the literature with only a few studies giving priority to the voices of these students (Toohey, 1998; Iddings, 2005). We do not know from the perspective of ELLs how they perceive their community membership and what meanings they ascribe to the notions of *acceptance* and *membership* in this community. Understanding the perceptions of these students may better inform our decision about how to make our classroom communities more conducive to the strengths and needs of this group of learners. This study extended multiple, multimodal opportunities for ELLs to express their sense of belonging, sense of agency, and overall perceptions of acceptance.

Research Questions

This doctoral study sought to carefully examine the role literacy practices play in relation to the degree of ELLs' community acceptance within a primary classroom with a high percentage of Spanish-speaking ELLs. One specific literacy practice—the use of a multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels)—served as a focusing lens in which to investigate the larger complexities of ELLs' membership and acceptance. I also sought to examine these young ELLs' perceptions of classroom membership and acceptance. Therefore, I extended multiple, multimodal opportunities for ELLs to express their sense of belonging, sense of agency, and overall perceptions of acceptance.

Specifically, this research sought to answer the following questions.

1) How does the implementation of a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) develop and play out in the primary classroom?

2) In what ways might a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) be used to enhance ELLs' sense of belonging and perceptions of community membership?

Through answering these research questions, this study sought to provide insight into how a multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) can be used as an instructional tool to enhance ELLs' feelings and perceptions of belonging and acceptance. The following dissertation provides detailed answers to both research questions and deeply explores the role one literacy practice—a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels)—played in relation to the degree of ELLs' community acceptance.

This dissertation is divided into five additional chapters. Chapter Two focuses on detailing the literature that served as the foundation for this study. Chapter Three details the methodology used in this study and provides a step-by-step description of how the study was implemented in the focus classroom. Chapter Four presents in-depth the data analysis and findings for all whole class data while Chapter Five focuses specifically on the data analysis and findings relating to the four selected focus students. Finally, Chapter Six provides an expanded discussion of how the findings highlighted in Chapters Four and Five relate to the overall purpose of this study including how these findings explicitly answer both research questions.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The following literature review details the extensive research forming the foundation of our understanding of English language learners' (ELLs) language and literacy learning within classroom communities. Key theoretical underpinnings of language and literacy learning will be examined first as they form the well-established theoretical knowledge base that grounds studies examining English language learners. From there, our understanding of the relationship between community and literacy learning will be examined—including what the literature says about ELLs and supportive classroom communities. Next, the concepts of classroom 'membership' and 'community acceptance' will be defined followed by an examination of the integral role community membership and acceptance play in students' academic achievement. The concepts of participation and engagement then will be examined in terms of their role in establishing classroom membership and encouraging successful and active learning. Finally, the particularities and theoretical foundations of the multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels)—the teaching strategy employed in this study—will be examined with a particular emphasis on how this instructional approach can enhance a student's social capital and overall community membership.

Theoretical Underpinnings of Language and Literacy Learning within Communities

The particularities of language and literacy learning within classroom communities can only be understood through extensive reference to the related theoretical knowledge base. This section highlights the theoretical underpinnings informing our understanding of ELL teaching and learning: the sociocultural theory of learning; variation of language and literacy practices across cultures and communities; and theoretical orientations relevant to cross-language relationships including interdependence and the threshold hypothesis, conversational and academic language proficiency, and additive bilingualism.

The Sociocultural Theory of Learning: The Social Nature of Language Learning and Literacy Development

Current theoretical approaches to language learning and proficiency place a high degree of value on the role the social context plays in this learning—with language learning viewed as something that is inseparable from the context in which it manifested. This is a shift from previous conceptions of language learning which focused primarily on specific traits held by individual language learners (Cummins, 2000). Earlier research into language acquisition and what accounted for the difference between a 'good' language learner and a 'poor' language learner focused solely upon the individual language learner and his/her specific personal traits. Many studies were conducted under the assumption that learners had particular individual characteristics—such as cognitive traits, affective orientations, motivations, past experiences— and that these traits more or less determined the success or failure of their second language learning (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Of particular importance were the effects of underlying cognitive abilities, such as working memory, phonological short-term memory, phonological awareness, and phonological recording (Genesee et al., 2006).

Since the mid-1990s the prevalence of sociocultural perspectives on second language learning has highlighted the need to shift away from individual traits to the activities, settings, and social interactions that inevitably accompany the social practices related to language use (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Researchers from this perspective criticize the more traditional second language acquisition (SLA) theorists for focusing almost exclusively on the individual learner (e.g., motivation, innate capabilities) while ignoring or diminishing the role of the social context in learning (Sharkey & Layzer, 2000). Studies supporting this criticism demonstrate that a substantial amount of language and literacy learning occurs during social interaction—making the context of that interaction an essential factor in learning (Baines, Rubie-Davies, & Blatchford, 2009).

Fundamental to a sociocultural approach is the belief that all learning and development occurs as people participate in sociocultural activities within their learning communities (Norton & Toohey, 2001). From this perspective, learning is situated among a social network and occurs through engagement with others within authentic configurations of social practices (Laman & Sluys, 2008; Gillanders, 2007). Learning is therefore viewed as a process of 'becoming'—as the learner moves toward more mature modes of participation in the community (Hannikainen & Rasku-Puttonen, 2010). Meaningful social interactions within communities both support and enhance learning as students are able to learn things socially that they could not have independently. More mature or advanced community members work with new community members though a type of cultural apprenticeship by guiding new members through learning about and participating in the dominant practices of that particular community (Hannikainen & Rasku-Puttonen, 2010). Learning communities are therefore considered an important determinant in academic achievement—as it is the learning community that determines the degree of support and opportunity new members have for authentic and meaningful social interactions.

Current second language research and theories utilizing a sociocultural perspective draw upon the work of L.V. Vygotsky and M.M. Bakhtin, as well as several other contemporary theorists in various fields of study (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Vygotsky (1978) laid the foundation for sociocultural approaches to learning by proposing that learners are interactive agents in socially situated, communicative relationships. During the developmental process, children become active participants in learning through their use of language and their social interactions with others. What he identified as the zone of proximal development highlights the importance of social interaction by demonstrating that this interaction assists children in moving from their actual level of development to

a potential level of development—a level that can only be reached through cooperative interactions with more capable adults and peers (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotksy also theorized that the use of language represents two manifestations of the social realm (Wink & Pitney, 2002). First, language tools and practices are social in the sense that they are products of social, historical, and cultural systems. Individuals only have access to these products through their participation in the cultural practices in which the tools are culturally transmitted. The tools are also social in the sense that they are used in the process of social interaction. Learning and development are therefore situated within an individual's culture and the development of an individual—including their language development—is "a process in which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them" (Vygotsky, 1978, pg. 88).

Vygotsky's understandings of language learning are paralleled in the work of Bakhtin. Bakhtin (1981) envisioned that people learn to speak by literally taking utterances from "other people's mouths" and "other people's intentions" (p. 294). He theorized that people take on other people's words and utterances, appropriate these utterances, and then gradually use them to serve their own needs and communicate meaning (Norton & Toohey, 2001). In this way, social interactions not only provide language learners with a 'context' for learning but also the 'means' to actually learn the language (Soltero-Gonzalez, 2009).

Literacy development—like language development—requires learning a set of social practices through engagement in social literacy practices with other members of a community. It is a process that involves much more than learning how to read and write; it actually involves learning about and becoming a part of the world around us (Gee, 1996; Heath, 1983; Freire, 1970). As Gee (1996) states "literacy is not a single thing but a plural set of social practices—literacies" (pg. 46). These literacies are developed through active participation and social engagement within a particular cultural group or community. At the same time, these literacies also provide a means for members to further engage in their community. Children's early literacy

skills are developed through their social interactions with others through cooperative activity, play, and talk (Soltero-Gonzalez, 2009). Due to the high value placed by communities with regards to learning, sociocultural theories are useful in informing the design of studies—such as the current one—focused on the creation of effective learning communities that support literacy development (Wiltse, 2006).

Differing Language and Literacy Practices Across Cultures and Communities

Heath's (1983) ten year ethnographic study of neighboring communities in the southern United States contributed significantly to understanding that language and literacy practices vary from one culture to another—particularly in the way in which children are involved and brought into these practices. A recent study –conducted by the RAND Reading Study group—concluded that literacy development and skills are a "sociocultural and historical event not just because they are acquired through social interactions, but also because they represent how a specific cultural group or community interprets the world and transmits information" (Snow, 2002, p.11). Language learning is not a gradual or neutral process of internalizing the rules, structures, and vocabulary of standard language; rather, learners appropriate the utterances of others in particular historical and cultural practices, situated within their own particular culture and communities (Norton & Toohey, 2001).

Due to the variance in literacy and language practices among cultures and communities, children and youth from different sociocultural groups bring with them varying experiences and practices to school and these experiences and practices can shape and impact their new classroom experiences (Gillanders, 2007). Students from minority cultures and communities often face large discrepancies between their own experiences and practices and what is expected from them in the classroom (Heath, 1983). These discrepancies can negatively impact a child's learning as they may struggle to understand the unfamiliar norms and practices of their classrooms (see for example Iddings, 2005; Toohey, 1995; Brock, Moore, &Parks, 2007; Ajayi, 2003). Successful learning proceeds best when the literacy and language practices of a

school resemble and connect with the practices of a child's home and community. Research also demonstrates that it is the culture of a child's home—not the culture of the dominant culture—that best supports cognitive development (Nykiel-Herbert, 2010; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, teachers must do their best to minimize the discrepancy between a student's home culture and the one they are exposed to in school to ensure understanding and familiarity.

While a child's language and learning practices may differ from those of their school, home cultures and practices are not intrinsically positive or negative influences on children's academic attainment. Rather, it is the degree of fit between home and school that is important for learning (Goldenberg, Rueda, & August, 2006). This means that when a certain cultural group performs poorly in classrooms (i.e. Latinos in the U.S.) it is often because incompatibilities between their home cultures and the expectations of their schools have created obstacles for successful learning. It is not in any way the result of any deficiency with their home language or culture (Haneda, 2007). The mainstream language, dialect, and literacy practices most commonly used in schools are not 'more advanced' than others; they are simply different and have been developed in differing social contexts (Purcell-Gates, 1995).

Literacy proficiency certainly holds a valued position within our society. Being literate in today's society is a 'social condition'. It can empower some people—those who have attained accepted literacy skills and knowledge—while at the same oppress those who are unable to 'appropriately' participate in the dominant culture's accepted practices (Iddings, 2009). When the way one community interprets and transmits information is privileged over another community's literacy competencies, literacy proficiency becomes a tool of oppression—as certain individuals may not have equitable access to the dominant community and their own literacy practices are deemed unworthy. In school, students quickly learn the forms of literacy and language participation that are valued and not valued by their new classroom community. It is through these normalizing practices that power is constituted and boundaries are

constructed, power is taken up, spaces are constructed, and certain 'kinds of people' are recognized, represented, and constituted while others are not (Hirst & Cooper, 2008). This becomes essential when thinking about the limited power many Hispanic ELLs feel within their North American schools which tend to validate the literacy practices of the more dominant and powerful culture.

More recently, Gutierrez, Bien, Selland, and Pierce (2011) have advocated that it is unproductive for teachers to dichotomize home and school-based literacies. They argue that home and school literacies will grow into one another when they are allowed to 'naturally comingle'. This theory stems from their qualitative research in an after-school setting that employed literacy strategies that valued both informal and formal modes of communication, encouraged code switching, and afforded the space for children to use both their home and school registrars. While many teachers tend to label a student's home literacy and language practices as 'non-standard' or 'non-central', Gutierrez, Bien, Selland, and Pierce (2011) found that when both practices are viewed as legitimate in their own right, home and school literacies can work together to help mediate students' development of new literacy practices. Students begin to develop identities as competent members of multiple literacy and language communities—including their school community—when they are allowed to pull and use what they know from all communities of which they are members. This is important considering that access to exceptional literacy education—one that effectively utilizes a child's home practices—can provide the knowledge, dispositions, and skills for the redistribution of power among those who are typically oppressed or undervalued (Iddings, 2009).

Theoretical Orientations for Cross-Language Relationships

In contrast to monolingual speaking students, language minority students bring with them an additional set of resources and abilities—both oral and written—linked to their first language (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian; 2007). The ways these additional linguistic resources impact or transfer over to the development of second language and literacy skills are key to understanding how best to support ELLs

in the classroom. Cummins' (1979) seminal work has provided an enduring theoretical framework in the area of transfer between languages (Lenters, 2004). This work includes his interdependence and threshold hypotheses as well as understandings regarding the complexity of communicative competence and the benefits of additive bilingualism.

Interdependence and threshold hypothesis. Cummins' (1979) interdependence hypothesis theorizes that acquisition of 1st and 2nd languages is developmentally interdependent. The development of a first language can influence and facilitate development in a second language as developing competence in a second language is partially a function of the competence already developed in the first language (Lenters, 2004; Genesee et al., 2007). However, not all first language competencies are equally facilitating. It is language for higher order cognitive purposes—those that are context reduced and cognitively demanding such as literacy skills—that are developmentally interdependent (Genesee et al., 2007). Cummins (2000) notes that individual cognitive and linguistic abilities (e.g. memory, auditory discrimination, abstract reasoning, etc.) as well as specific conceptual and linguistic knowledge stemming from experience and learning (e.g. vocabulary knowledge) are also highly transferrable. Students who have developed proficient literacy skills in their first language, for example, tend to make stronger progress in acquiring these skills in their second language because they are able to transfer these skills from their first language (Cummins, 2000).

Cummins' threshold hypothesis (1979, 2000) suggests that there are positive linguistic effects when ELLs are able to attain sufficient levels of competence in both their languages. This threshold level of linguistic competence is essential for school success as it allows ELLs to enjoy the positive effects bilingualism can have on their cognitive functioning and language and literacy learning (Lenters, 2004; Genesee et al., 2006). Students will not be able to benefit from these positive effects of being bilingual if they are prevented from achieving this threshold level of competence in their first language. Cummins'

(2000) threshold hypothesis is not specific with regards to the lowest threshold necessary for students to enjoy the benefits of bilingualism while also avoiding adverse developmental consequences. The reason behind this vagueness, according to Cummins (2000), is that conditions vary extensively depending upon individual learners and learning contexts that it is impossible to come up with a standard threshold. Unfortunately, this can make it difficult for educators to know when a student has crossed over this threshold.

Conversational and academic language proficiency. Central to Cummins' interdependence hypothesis is the distinction between conversational and academic aspects of language proficiency. According to Cummins (2000) there is a continuum of language development that begins with basic interpersonal conversational skills (BCIS) and continues toward academic language proficiency known as CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency). To distinguish between these types of proficiencies, Cummins (2000) created a framework highlighting the varying degrees of cognitive and contextual demands between these two types of language development.

Within his framework, context-embedded communication occurs when participants' meaning making and language use is supported by interpersonal and situational cues. Context-reduced communication relies primarily on linguistic cues for meaning and the interpretation of the message depends almost entirely on knowledge of the language itself. While context-embedded communication is more typical of communication outside the classroom, context-reduced communication represents the more linguistically demanding tasks common in the classroom. Communicative tasks also vary depending on their cognitive demands (Cummins, 2000). Cognitively undemanding tasks are those in which the linguistic tools needed to complete the task are largely automatized, thus requiring little cognitive involvement. Conversely, cognitively demanding tasks require linguistic tools that have not become automatized and thus require active cognitive involvement. Casual conversations occurring outside the classroom are generally

cognitively undemanding, while academic communication is generally more cognitively demanding. ELLs first obtain English proficiency in communication that is both context-embedded and cognitively undemanding or BCIS. It generally takes several additional years of second language exposure for ELLs to obtain proficiency in communication that is both context-reduced and cognitively demanding or CALP. Therefore, just because an ELL is demonstrating some competency in English does not mean that they are necessarily competent in the more demanding language skills required in the classroom.

Additive Bilingualism. There has been a long history of debate regarding bilingualism and the role of bilingual education. Misconceptions about the bilingualism of immigrants often results in a monolingual mindset for policy makers and educators (Soltero-Gonzalez, 2009). Opponents of bilingual education argue that ELLs taught in bilingual language programs are being denied access to English and that their academic advancement is slowed as a result. They believe that ELLs' low academic achievement rates are partly due to the fact that their exposure to English was limited (Cummins, 2000). English only supporters also argue that native language instruction delays or interferes with the acquisition of English (Soltero-Gonzalez, 2009). A student's home language is therefore situated as a 'problem'—something that needs to be 'eradicated' in order to learn English successfully.

Concerns about the negative effects of bilingual education, however, are unfounded. There is no indication within the literature that bilingual instruction impedes academic achievement in either the native language or in English (Francis, Lesaux, & August, 2006). Rather, where differences in achievement have been found in comparisons between bilingual education and monolingual English education, the differences generally favor students in the bilingual program. Francis, Lesaux, and August's (2006) recent synthesis of research studies that compared bilingual programs with English-only programs found that students who were instructed in both their home language and English repeatedly outperformed those taught solely in English in terms of English reading ability (Soltero-Gonzalez, 2009). One of the most widely cited studies of bilingual

education included in this synthesis is a longitudinal study by Ramirez, Pasta, Yuen, Ramey & Billings (1991) that compared Spanish-dominant students in English immersion schools with students receiving two forms of bilingual education: early exit (transition to English-only instruction in grades 2-4) and late exit (transition to English-only instruction grades 5-6). Another large-scale program evaluation study included in Francis, Lesaux, and August's (2006) recent synthesis of research was the Impact Study of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title VII Spanish/English Bilingual Program (Danoff, Coles, McLaughlin, & Reynolds; 1978) designed to evaluate bilingual programs. This study was designed to contrast the performance of students enrolled in Spanish-English bilingual programs with comparable students not enrolled in such programs. Both studies found bilingual programs beneficial for the development of English literacy skills.

The literature also demonstrates many advantages to bilingualism, including numerous cognitive, economic, and social benefits (Reese & Goldenberg, 2006). For example, children who have well-developed literacy skills in their first language are able to proceed faster with literacy skill acquisition in their second language (Lanauze & Snow, 1989). Bauer and Gaskell's (2000) case study of a 3rd grade ELL's English literacy development found that valuing of his native language and the inclusion of his language within instruction (i.e. bilingual dictionaries) all supported his English language development and encouraged him to be an active learner. This underscores the importance of maintaining and promoting multiple language skills in our students. The acquisition of English skills in schools, therefore, needs to be done in a way that does not damage or eliminate skills in a child's L1. Eliminating these skills—or not allowing them time to fully develop these skills—denies them the benefits of bilingualism.

Cummins (1989, 2000) distinguishes between two types of bilingualism: subtractive bilingualism and additive bilingualism. Subtractive bilingualism occurs when the acquisition of a second language and culture takes place at the expense of the first language. This type of bilingualism has been associated with "disabling

educational settings for language minority students" (Reese & Goldenberg, 2006, pg. 43). For example, the consistent press towards assimilation and resultant subtractive bilingualism for Latinos in U.S. schools has resulted in a devaluing of the Spanish language, subordination of Spanish speaking populations, and vast underachievement (Garcia, 2002). Conversely, additive bilingualism is when a second language and culture do not displace the first language. It is this type of bilingualism that has been associated with educational advantages, enhanced metalinguistic development, and possibly cognitive advantages (Cummins, 2000). Additive bilingualism positions first languages as a resource—viewing a student's home language and culture as a valued resources that facilitate the acquisition of a second language and a student reach higher academic achievement. Due to these advantages, this type of bilingualism should serve as an underlying goal in our teaching and development of ELLs in our schools.

Understanding the Relationship between Community and Literacy Learning

Today's students live in a world where both their social and economic success depends on knowing not only how to read and write printed texts in isolated situations, but also how to actively participate in collaborative literacy events (Paugh, Carey, King-Johnson, & Russell, 2007). Simply learning a comprehensive set of skills and languages in the classroom is not enough; students need to learn to view themselves as competent, literate participants within the social communities that make up their world (Paugh, Carey, King-Jackson, & Russell, 2007). New conceptions of literacy stress the importance of co-constructing meaning through social interaction. Students who read a book together and then discuss and debate what it means, for example, are co-constructing the meaning of the text together (Bloome, 2001). To obtain these more complex literacy skills, students need to be provided opportunities—within a supportive classroom community—to successfully engage in rich literacy experiences requiring students to apply their basic literacy skills within authentic, social situations.

Meaningful social discourse and engagement in the classroom requires the existence of a community in which members support and assist each other in the development of literacies. Research demonstrates that learners achieve higher rates of success in classroom communities that they like and feel are supportive of them—making access to supportive classroom communities an essential factor and determinant in the literacy development of young students. One example of such research is Schmidt and Cagran's (2006) study of the impact of classroom community on sixth grade special needs students. The researchers found that the classroom climate had both positive and negative effects on these students' literacy development. Unfortunately, many students struggle to find classroom communities that are supportive to their personal and unique needs, interests, and skills. For example, Toohey's (1998) and Iddings' (2005) qualitative research studies of ELLs in English dominant, mainstream classrooms have repeatedly demonstrated that ELLs consistently find classroom communities to be spaces that not only are foreign and unsupportive to them as learners but also that the skills and knowledge sets they bring with them to the classroom are devalued and underutilized.

The following section delves into the relationship between supportive classroom communities and effective literacy learning. First, the concept of 'classroom community' will be explored and defined in terms of how it was used in this study. Then, the general literature on what makes a classroom community supportive will be highlighted. Finally, the particularities of how to make classroom communities more supportive for ELLs will be discussed.

Understanding the Concept 'Classroom Community'

Classroom communities are unique, ever changing social environments formed through social interactions amongst the students and between the teacher and the students (Hadijannou, 2007; Schmidt & Cagran, 2006). It is the participants themselves—along with the interactions they have with one another—that determine community culture (Allard & Cooper, 2001). Through social interaction,

classroom communities become representations of the diverse identities of their participants and the various social practices these participants engage in. These social practices—such as acceptable interactional and participation patterns and the determination and use of valued resources—are what determine the complex inner workings of the community (Laman & Sluys, 2008). Classroom communities also are social entities that exist within a number of wider spheres that influence their nature and the social life they support (Hadjiannou, 2007). The students' and teachers' home communities and state and federal education policies are examples of outside influences on the inner workings of classroom community.

Classroom communities have both typical characteristics that they share with most other classroom communities and unique characteristics that set them apart from all other communities (Hannikainen & Rasku-Puttonen, 2010). Schmidt and Cagran, (2006) found in their research on the integration of sixth graders with special needs into regular classroom communities that all classroom communities share a system of four sets of variables: the physical environment, organizational issues, characteristics of the teacher, and characteristics of the learners. Each of these variables has been shown to play a role in determining the types of social interactions that occur and the social practices that are valued—thus impacting the overall culture of the community. Classroom communities also have more unique characteristics that reflect the individual identities of the community participants. These characteristics are representative of the individual backgrounds, understandings, and needs of its members.

Supportive Classroom Communities

While many educators highlight the importance of creating a friendly, safe environment for learning, it takes much more than this to make a classroom community meaningful and productive (Kovalainen & Kumpulainen, 2007). At a bare minimum, supportive classroom communities ensure

that the emotional and psychological well being of all students is nurtured (Cushman & Cowan, 2010). This is done by fostering students' connection to school (which is the degree to which a student experiences a sense of caring and closeness to teachers and the school environment), helping to establish positive student-teacher relationships, and encouraging prosocial behavior (Raskauskas, Gregory, Harvey, Rifshana, & Evans; 2010).

Supportive communities also foster community and collaboration by placing priority on meeting the affective needs of students—rather than focusing solely on students' academic development and achievement (Morrison & Wlodarcyk, 2009). This requires reassessing what we commonly conceptualize as the goal of education. Rather than having academic achievement as the central goal of instruction, teachers in supportive classroom communities focus on community and relationship building as well as personal and social development. They encourage the development of community values, strive to enhance student motivation, and provide meaningful and engaging learning experiences for their students (Rubie-Davis, 2007).

Supportive classroom communities also effectively balance the importance of supporting students' individual identity and autonomy with their students' strong desire and need to be accepted by their peers (Morrison & Wlodarczyk, 2009). While communities should certainly encourage students to find common ground and share similar personal experiences with peers, the intention of classroom communities should never be to develop a space where all participants are the same. This is especially important when working with ELLs who often feel that they have to leave behind or turn their backs on important aspects of their culture and ways of knowing in order to fit in with a community. Having to compromise on who they are as a person negatively impacts their sense of belonging and identity. When students do not have to sacrifice their individuality to feel connected

with others, they develop a stronger sense of belonging and begin to view themselves as worthy of respect and caring.

Finally, supportive classroom communities provide students with opportunities to successfully participate in a variety of interpersonal interactions during class work. Hadijoannou (2007) found in her qualitative case study examining the features of the environment of a fifth grade classroom, where authentic discussions were frequent, that quality social interaction during instruction bolsters students' involvement and success with their literacy tasks. In Paugh, Carey, King-Jackson, and Russell's (2007) study of a second grade classroom literacy community, it was also found that students tended to be more engaged and motivated when they believe that they are encouraged to work collaboratively with peers, when they perceive their classroom as a place where their ideas are valued, when they view their teachers as caring and supportive, and when their performance is not publicly compared to their classmates' performance. Both studies also found that it is essential for students to be provided choices and to be given the opportunity to learn how to participate in envisioning and enacting new ideas with a social community (Hadijoannou, 2007; Paugh et al, 2007).

The Teacher's Role within Supportive Communities

The teacher plays an essential role in determining and constructing their classroom community because she is the most powerful interactor within the community (Hadijoannu, 2007). Teachers not only take part in group activities—by supporting and encouraging children's participation—they also monitor all group activities, guide the entire learning process, and establish the organizing structures that support learning and social interaction. In Wiltse's (2006) study of community practices in a Canadian junior high school, she found that teachers determine the organization and expectations of learning practices and procedures in classroom communities. These learning practices and procedures are generally well-established within classrooms and can be divided into two distinct subcategories:

explicit rules and guidelines and overall classroom management (Hadjioannou, 2007; Wiltse, 2006; Toohey, 1998).

Explicit rules help to organize the classroom community but also seek to shape community members' behavior in terms of acceptable and unacceptable actions. When these explicit rules are unclear or when they are not based on a basic belief of respecting the rights of all classmates, the classroom community can suffer negative consequences (Wiltse, 2006). Teachers need to explicitly teach students about the rules, explain how each rule ensures that everyone's rights are being respected (and that everyone has the responsibility to protect their peers' rights), and provide students with opportunities to discuss and modify rules if warranted.

Effective classroom management has also been found to be a key characteristic of supportive communities that encourage learning and growth. Another finding from Hadjioannou's (2007) case study of a fifth grade classroom was that teachers should avoid spending considerable amounts of time reprimanding students, handing out punishments, and lecturing the class about misbehavior as this type of classroom management tended to impede the creation of a meaningful, supportive classroom community. Instead, teachers should focus on giving short explicit instruction on how a particular activity is supposed to be performed and on how all students are responsible for ensuring that the rights of the other people are respected during the completion of a task (Hadjioannou, 2007). This type of classroom management eliminates confusion by providing clear instructions and sets learning expectations that focus on collaboratively working together to create a supportive learning space.

Managing social interactions and participation within the community is a large part of effective classroom management. Recent studies indicate that the quantity and quality of interactions between a teacher and her students strongly predict learning and growth—as well the level of investment students feel for their classroom community (Pointz, Rimm-Kaufman, Grimm, & Curby; 2009). Teacher

interactions with students must be positive and engaging and must be managed in a way that is equitable for all students. Supportive interactions with a teacher can result in increased student engagement and participation in particular tasks and activities. Teachers must also be reflective about their interactions with students and how those interactions are perceived by their students. Tensions arise when teachers do not understand or account for the difference in the way their students perceive an interaction with how the teachers themselves experience them (Cushman & Cowan, 2010).

Teachers also have the power to either create spaces for all students to participate or to create spaces that disallow or prevent certain students from participating (Wiltse, 2006). They must take steps to ensure that all student voices are heard in the classroom by considering and making room for multiple perspectives, proposing alternatives for how things could be, and by fully understanding the academic and social consequences of participation (Van Sluys & Reinier, 2006). Cushman and Cowan's (2010) study of students' views regarding self-worth in the primary school learning environment found that students perceive a sense of humor, fairness, consistency, confidentiality, and trust as essential teacher qualities for enhancing their own personal self worth, sense of community, and ability to participate. Continuous meta-cognitive evaluation of student participation practices by the teacher is also required in order to provide flexibility and room for possible change among the classroom members (Kovalainen & Kumpulainen, 2007). If this does not occur students' participative roles could become stagnant in that some students only have access to particular ways of participating and engaging in the community. This limits a learner's ability to gain overall acceptance into the classroom community and can negatively impact their learning.

Engagement between Learners within Communities

The interpersonal relationships amongst the learners of a classroom also play a fundamental role in shaping the community (Hadjioannou, 2007). While teachers can strongly impact the

positioning of students, ultimately it is a student's peers who make final decisions about the degree to which they are accepted into the community. The decision on the degree to which a student is accepted is determined by the 'newness' of that student, by the perceived academic and social capabilities of that student, and by additional characteristics of that student such as race and gender (Wiltse, 2006; Toohey, 1996)

An effective way of conceptualizing the complex engagement between learners with classroom communities is through viewing classrooms as 'communities of practice'. The notion of 'communities of practice' came from Lave and Wenger's (1991) seminal work that studied several informal groups (such as midwives) in order to examine how newcomers or novices to these informal groups became established members of these groups. From a 'communities of practice' perspective, learners undergo a process of becoming socialized into classroom communities (Wenger, 1998). Entrance and acceptance into a classroom community is therefore viewed as a process. New students undergo this process while familiarizing themselves with the norms and practices of the community by observing and engaging with students who are already versed in these norms and practices (Wenger, 1998). This process is referred to as legitimate peripheral participation—with the learner engaging in community practices while being supported by old-time members. The newcomer eventually takes over increasingly complex portions of community practices thus limiting the support needed (Morita, 2004).

During legitimate peripheral participation, students serve as "old timers" providing or denying other students' peripherality and legitimacy into the community. *Peripherality* is the existence of openings or ways of gaining access to sources of understanding which newcomers are given through their growing involvement within the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). An opening in a classroom community refers to accessible moments that allow students to exhibit their knowledge and skills in a way that is appreciated and beneficial for student learning. *Legitimacy* refers to the degree in which a

newcomer is viewed and treated as a "potential" contributing member of the community by other members (Wenger, 1998). The degree of *legitimacy* offered is determined by the extent to which a newcomer is viewed as someone with skills, characteristics, and values that are consistent with and have benefit for the greater community.

Students with low degrees of peripherality and legitimacy in classroom communities are generally considered to be 'newcomers' to that community. The term 'newcomer' is a bit of a misnomer as many times these students have actually been in the classroom for a long time but for whatever reason have not yet been able to achieve high degrees of membership. Perhaps the term 'outsider' is more reflective of their situation: students who despite time and effort still remain on the fringes of a community unable to fully access the tools, norms, and practices of that community.

Classroom communities are certainly spaces where power relations—created through the contested discourse of social interaction—are intertwined with the overall culture of the community (Allard & Cooper, 2001). It is the quality and quantity of social interactions and communication that influence the learner's satisfaction in the community, their self-image, and their learning (Schmidt & Cagran, 2006). Power relations are ongoing, dynamic interactions played out among all participants. When these power relations are not evenly shared, certain community members can be excluded from participating by being ostracized, marginalized, and/or forced to withdraw from the group.

A student's social positioning within the classroom community is typically fluid—going through constant change as it is being built and rebuilt (Hadjioannou, 2007). Despite this fluidity, 'outsiders' often have difficulty breaking into classroom communities (Wiltse, 2006). For these students, their positioning in the community can feel quite static and unchanging. Teachers must work to establish more productive power relations where all children have a say and are encouraged to actively participate and interact in constructing classroom culture (Allard & Cooper, 2001). When

communication is not open or encouraged, students will frequently associate either with students they already know or students who are similar to themselves rather than associating with all community members—making 'subcommunities' more static (Korinek, Walther-Thomas, MClaughlin, & Williams, 1999).

Students are able to continuously re-construct their individual identities through supportive and accessible social interaction and communication (Nuthall, 2007). Meaningful and accessible social interaction is a prerequisite for this reconstruction of identity as it creates a space where students can negotiate their positioning within the community. Therefore, communities must create accessible spaces that allow for meaningful student interaction while fostering all students' communication abilities. Students who struggle to communicate—or are hindered in their efforts to do so—struggle to negotiate their positioning within a community effectively. Additionally, these students are at a learning disadvantage as one's ability to engage in their community has a significant effect on student attitudes, interest, productivity, engagement, and academic achievement (Hadjioannou, 2007; Walberg & Greenberg, 1997).

Unfortunately, there continues to be a reportedly low percentage of classrooms in which this type of high quality discussion occurs. Fostering genuine student engagement in productive and authentic discussions—those that are essential for literacy and language development and social repositioning—has been shown to be a difficult task for teachers (Wiltse, 2006; Hadjioannou, 2007; Kovalainen & Kumpulainen, 2007). Current educational reforms within the United States—where this current study was completed—have resulted in a narrowing of students' opportunities to develop complex literacies through authentic discussions. For example, Paugh, Carey, King-Jackson, and Russell (2008) in their study of a second grade teacher in a high stakes testing environment found that the teacher had to balance conflicting goals—the district goals that related to high stakes testing and

the teacher's ongoing goal to develop their students as critical and social practitioners of literacy. Classrooms are currently operating in an environment of high-stakes testing and standards where classroom communities that encourage social negotiation, collaboration, and innovation, do not necessarily fit within this legislation and are often not encouraged. Instead mandates for tightly scripted, linear, and step-by-step curriculum reinforce practices that sort and divide students and communities (Paugh, Carey, King-Jackson, Russell, 2008). This creates classroom communities which actually discourage the rich literacy experiences that are possible through the interaction of diverse learners.

Creating Supportive Classroom Communities for ELLs

While most ELLs currently find their classroom environments unfamiliar, challenging, and uninviting (see for example Iddings, 2005 and Ariza, 2002), this certainly does not have to be the case. Teachers can adopt strategies and processes to facilitate ELLs' full classroom membership and acceptance. These strategies include emphasizing the inherent richness of their native language and cultural background, encouraging additive bilingualism, engaging and supporting ELLs in cognitively and socially demanding activities, and actively re-positioning ELLs as capable and knowledgeable classmates. The following section focuses on how these strategies can assist in creating classroom communities that are conducive to ELLs' robust learning and engagement.

Teaching ELLs appreciatively. Successful teaching requires modifying the classroom environment to ensure that ELLs are provided opportunities to benefit from their unique strengths and knowledge. Often ELL instruction is approached from a deficit perspective with teachers focusing more on *changing* ELLs' behaviors and beliefs—in order to make them more acceptable to their English speaking peers—rather than on *modifying* the classroom environment (Iddings, 2005). From this perspective, ELLs' limited English skills and differing background knowledge and experiences are

thought of as a 'hindrance' in the learning process. While limited English skills can certainly be a factor in academic development, the deficit perspective ignores the valuable resources and funds of knowledge that ELLs also hold from their native culture and language (Laman & Van Sluys, 2008). By negating these resources, ELLs begin viewing their native language, culture, and experiences as something that is negative in the learning process—once again undermining the richness of their cultural identity (Van Sluys & Reiner, 2006).

An appreciative perspective views linguistic diversity as a classroom resource rather than a detriment by embracing the talents, knowledge, and beliefs ELLs hold (Laman & Van Sluys, 2008). By creating 'openings' for ELLs to make use of their multiple ways of knowing and diverse resources in their literate lives and worlds, teachers avoid focusing on *changing* ELLs and instead focus on *modifying* the classroom environment (Kennedy, 2006; Ajayi, 2003). These openings encourage ELLs to use their unique skills, talents, and knowledge to successfully participate and engage in classroom practices with their peers. Examples of such 'openings' include allowing time for students to write observations and questions regarding their lives and thoughts, extending them the invitation to write in multiple languages, and incorporating culturally relevant texts and materials that connect with ELLs' background knowledge (Laman & VanSluys, 2008). These openings allow all students to use the richness of their own personal experiences and background to enhance their learning.

Making room for other languages. Most ELLs are placed in English-only environments in which English is the dominant language of discourse and the use of other languages is discouraged or devalued. In the well-meaning urgency to achieve academic proficiency in English, teachers often feel that by limiting a student's first language use they are encouraging these students to use English more frequently thus increasing their English abilities. However, what is actually needed is counterintuitive. As Cummins' interdependence and threshold hypotheses demonstrate, the development of a student's

first language can positively influence and facilitate development in a second language as developing competence in a second language is partially a function of the competence already developed in the first language (Lenters, 2004; Genesee et al., 2007). The same is true with regards to developing literacy skills in a second language. Students who have developed strong literacy skills in their first language tend to make stronger progress in acquiring those skills in their second language (Cummins, 2000).

The acquisition of English skills in schools, therefore, needs to be done in a way that does not damage or eliminate skills in a child's L1, thus denying them the benefits of bilingualism. Most ELLs find themselves in classrooms where subtractive bilingualism is practiced and the acquisition of a second language and culture takes place at the expense of their first language and culture. This type of bilingualism has been associated with "disabling educational settings for language minority students" (Reese & Goldenberg, 2006, pg. 43). By refusing to value a student's first language and culture, little to no value is being placed on the competencies and understandings ELLs bring with them into the classroom (Iddings, 2005). As a result of their developed competencies not being accepted, ELLs often suffer from feelings of low self efficacy with regards to their academic abilities. Additive bilingualism, on the other hand, is when a second language and culture do not displace the first language. It is this type of bilingualism that has been associated with the many advantages to bilingualism, including numerous cognitive, economic, and social benefits (Cummins, 2000; Reese & Goldenberg, 2006). One way of making room for all languages is to position all students—even native English speakers—as language learners. This can be done by encouraging thoughtful exploration of languages and incorporating discussions where students share their experiences of using different languages, words, and registrars. Students should also be encouraged to use their native language when needed and

during the creation of written texts students should explore using various modes of representation—including a variety of languages and registrars.

Achieving equitable levels of participation. Literacy instruction for multilingual children continues to be often narrowly focused on learning isolated skills (Gersten & Baker, 2000). In comparison to their English speaking peers—whose instruction affords them the opportunity to engage in cognitively demanding text discussions and comprehension activities—ELLs are more likely to be working individually on cognitively undemanding skills based activities and worksheets. These types of activities are completely disconnected from quality children's literature and meaningful discussion and are neither socially nor cognitively engaging. Effective literacy instruction for ELLs should focus on the development of proficiency and fluency in English through engagement in cognitively and socially demanding tasks—including both social communication and academic communication of concepts and knowledge.

Of particular concern are the limited opportunities for ELLs to produce language, especially in their opportunities to produce *complex* language. Opportunities for ELLs to engage in 'talk' often occurs only within the context of recitation scripts—teacher dominated discourse sequences—that bear little resemblance to the modes of talk that prevail in students' home and communities (Pease-Alvarez and Vasquez, 1994). English speaking peers within the same classrooms are often provided more opportunities to engage in a wider variety of tasks, such as cooperative learning and peer tutoring, which encourage robust student talk (Watts-Taffe & Truscott, 2000). Further, even if ELLs are given the chance to engage socially in a learning activity, English speaking students tend to dominate these activities and conversations, consequently denying ELLs access to participation (Ariza, 2002). While a classroom community may provide opportunities to engage in meaningful literacy tasks this does not

necessarily mean that all students are given equitable access to participate in these activities (Iddings, 2005).

To explore why teachers tend to resort to more remedial instruction practices when teaching ELLs, Gersten (1999) conducted a qualitative study examining the instruction provided by four monolingual English-speaking teachers to ELLs. A focus of this study was to better understand teachers' perceptions of ELLs' learning and abilities. He found that the majority of teachers actually had low expectations for their ELLs, including a belief that ELLs would not be successful in the more robust, cognitively demanding literacy activities that English speaking students participated in. Teachers in the study tended to seek and/or accept simplistic indications of success in activities that involved lower lever thinking skills and did not rely on peer discussion or interaction. Gersten (1999) suggests that teachers need to implement the appropriate scaffolds needed to successfully involve ELLs in more complex and robust activities that promote discussion and higher level thinking skills.

To explore ELLs' perceptions of participation in classroom communities, Ajayi (2003) conducted a study investigating how middle school Hispanic students (re)conceptualized their identities to negotiate learning and participation within their classroom communities. In the study, 209 ELLs responded to a questionnaire about their various school identities and learning practices. He found that while students had a desire to learn English and connect with culture and way of life of their English speaking peers they also had a strong desire to use and preserve their heritage language and culture. Students also indicated a desire to have classroom communities that recognized the benefits of multiculturalism and recognized that they had complex social identities that crossed cultural boundaries. In particular, these students viewed appreciation of multiculturalism—where ELLs' histories, languages, cultures, needs, and desires are valued—as a prerequisite for their effective social participation and engagement in the classroom community.

Repositioning of ELLs. Students with high degrees of social capital have access to important resources as a result of their developed social relationships. Unfortunately, ELLs often experience low social capital in their classroom communities because their knowledge and skills often hold little value in these communities. Many English speaking students disregard ELLs' ideas, skills, and background experiences as being inappropriate or without value (Iddings, 2005). Relegating ELLs to more simplistic literacy activities further encourages English speaking peers to view ELLs as less capable classroom members. Subsequently, English speaking students are often less willing to work with ELLs and to interact with them socially.

Iddings (2005) conducted a qualitative study that investigated the ways in which ELLs included in an English-dominant, mainstream second-grade classroom gained access to the classroom activities and to the language that was conveyed to them, and the ways in which these students came to participate in the classroom context. Her findings suggest several complications for their progression towards meaningful participation. These complications include unequal participation in the classroom activities, ambiguities in the purposes of instruction, and vagueness in communication by teachers. As a result of these complications, Iddings (2005) found a large divide in 'shared knowledge' between ELLs and their English speaking peers leading English speaking students to view ELLs as 'less capable' and further diminishing the social capital offered to ELLs in the classroom community.

While peers will ultimately have the final say, teachers can strongly influence the way that ELLs are positioned in the classroom—and thus the degree of social capital ELLs are offered. One way to do this is through interactional inclusion. Interactional inclusion involves validating and positioning ELLs as capable and knowing classmates (Rex, 2000). An instructional strategy for scaffolding ELLs—along with other at-risk students—described by Tobin (2005) involves positioning them for greater academic success in practical easy-to-implement ways. For example, if an ELL

verbally participates but their response is not fully understood by the teacher and classmates, the teacher can repeat a portion of the ELLs' statement allowing them to either modify or reinforce his/her original intent and meaning. This provides the ELL with an opening to reformulate his/her thoughts and provides them with a second opportunity to articulate meanings. The additional opening to participate demonstrates to ELLs that their opinions and ideas are valued and provides them with the supplemental time needed to overcome any English language difficulties. Interactional inclusion can thus provide the scaffolding needed for ELLs to demonstrate to their peers that they are competent and knowledgeable classmates (Tobin, 2005).

Understanding Classroom Community Membership and Acceptance

The strategies listed above help create supportive classroom communities where ELLs are positioned as capable learners and are encouraged and supported to participate in meaningful ways. These types of communities encourage high degrees of membership and acceptance for all students including ELLs. This section will outline the meanings 'membership' and 'acceptance' hold in this study as well as why attaining full community membership is essential for learning development.

Defining Membership and Acceptance

For the purposes of this study, the robustness of membership in a classroom community is defined as the degree and quality of access a student has to the valued resources, practices, and identities of the classroom community (Wenger, 1998, Iddings, 2005). Resources in the classroom include physical resources—such as books and other learning material—as well as abstract resources like funds of knowledge, ways of knowing, and languages that are valued in a classroom community. Classroom practices are norms, rules, and guidelines that establish the ways in which students learn, participate, and engage in the classroom community. In Laves' (2004) most recent discussion of communities of practice—the sociocultural theory upon which this study is grounded—she

emphasized that by engaging in community practices students not only learn new concepts but also transform themselves by taking up new identities for themselves within the classroom. A student's 'identities' are defined in this study as 'situated self meanings' and refer to the different ways students position themselves—or are positioned by peers—in a classroom community (Owens, 2003; Jaret & Reitzes, 2009). While it used to be believed that a student had one identity that was comprised of a collective set of unique and identifying characteristics, identity is now perceived to be something multiple, complex, and dynamic. Learners actually have multiple social identities that help them take up different social positions in daily interactive behaviors (Luke, 1996). Identities are also viewed as something that is socially constructed by the individual and their peers through the use of language, and it is now recognized that students can contest and modify the identities that are assigned to them through social interaction.

Classroom membership is a complex concept that is closely related to the degrees of peripherality and legitimacy afforded to a student. For the purposes of this study, peripherality and legitimacy will be defined according to the 'communities of practice' theoretical framework—the sociocultural theory which grounds this study. According to Lave and Wenger (1991) who established the foundations of this theory, *peripherality* is the existence of openings or ways of gaining access to sources of understanding which newcomers are given through their growing involvement within the community. An opening in a classroom community refers to accessible moments that allow students to exhibit their knowledge and skills in a way that is appreciated and beneficial for student learning. *Legitimacy* refers to the degree to which a newcomer is viewed and treated as a "potential" contributing member of the community by other members (Wenger, 1998). The degree of *legitimacy* offered is determined by the extent a newcomer is viewed as someone with skills, characteristics, and values that are consistent with and have benefit for the greater community. Students within the same

classroom communities can hold vastly different degrees of legitimacy and peripherality with some students struggling to obtain adequate levels of classroom membership and acceptance.

The more robust the degree of peripherality and legitimacy made available to a student, the more they are accepted into the classroom community and the closer they are to full membership. Community membership is not something that is constant. Rather degrees of membership can fluctuate as students moderate and negotiate their membership through the nuanced student-student and teacher-student interactions that harness such fluid opportunities. Full members of a classroom community are those students who are fully active participants and share responsibility for the learning that occurs (Hannikainen & Rasku-Puttonen, 2010).

Degrees of peripherality and legitimacy afforded to a student are directly tied to how 'accepted' a student is by their peers. Peer acceptance can be defined as the extent to which a student is considered amiable by his or her peers and is closely related to feelings of loneliness and belonging (Goodenaw, 1993; Mouratidis & Sideridis, 2009). A student's sense of acceptance in a classroom community is heavily influenced by the amount of peer support and teacher support they are provided as well as their general sense of belonging to the class (Goodenaw, 1993). A student's pattern of social recognition and social behavior can also influence the amount of social acceptance they receive. For example, problem solving deficits and aggressive behavior are two types of social behavior found to negatively impact one's acceptance. Additional research demonstrates that personal attributes and competencies—including academic competence—also play a role in peer acceptance. Children possessing desirable attributes have been found to have advantage in being accepted by peers.

There is a difference, however, between one's actual level of classroom acceptance and one's *perception* of their acceptance. Every student holds a perception of both their academic competence and their social competence—both of which influence their overall perception of acceptance. A

student's perception of social competence refers to the judgment an individual holds about their ability to behave effectively in their surrounding social and academic environment and to succeed at the tasks that are required of them (Bandura, 1995). Perceptions of academic competence refer to the judgment an individual holds about their intellectual ability to complete a task successfully (Larouche, Galand, and Bouffard, 2008).

Perception of competence is also known as one's belief of self-efficacy. Bandura (1995) describes self-efficacy as 'the personal beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. Efficacy beliefs influence how people think, feel, and motivate themselves' (pg. 2). Perception of one's competence—whether academic or social—has a strong influence on one's motivation, engagement, and determination to actively participate with a task. Indeed, the extent to which a learner perceives that they are competent is often a greater predictor of success than one's actual ability to do a task (Kennedy, 2010).

A student's perception of their competence is not always reflective of their actual ability. Young children generally have a positive bias with regards to their perception of their academic and social competence and tend to hold unrealistically ideal views of themselves (Dunkel, Kistner, & David-Ferdon, 2009; Larouche, Galand, and Bouffard, 2008). This inflated sense of self is generally moderated by middle childhood—when children demonstrate more realistic views of self—due to increased social comparison, consistent feedback, and more mature cognitive abilities. However, many students—even those students who are younger—hold negative perceptions of their abilities. This negatively influences a student's overall perception of membership and acceptance. Larouche, Galand, and Bouffard's (2008) conducted two studies—one in Belgium and one in Quebec—examining whether students' perception of social acceptance and actual social acceptance differ according to the presence of an illusion of scholastic incompetence. In other words, Larouche, Galand, and Bouffard

(2008) were determining whether or not students who had negative perceptions of their academic competency also perceived their social acceptance to be lower than it actually was. Their findings confirmed that children with a negative bias of perception regarding their abilities felt less accepted by peers even when they were just as socially accepted as other peers.

Understanding the Importance of Classroom Membership

Obtaining high degrees of classroom membership is essential for meaningful learning as membership directly influences a student's social capital and their sense of agency. Social capital refers to the resources that individuals have access to as a result of their established social relationships (Moore, Daniel, Gauvin, & Dube, 2009; Boudreau & Ramstad, 1997). Active connections and/or established social networks at school can result in increased 'learning' due to the increase of accessible resources (Anderson, 2008). For example, ELLs' social capital in the classroom defines the opportunities they will have to participate as well as the frequency and quality of interactions with other children who use English (Gillanders, 2007). Low degrees of social capital can limit the social opportunities available and lessen the freedom to share and discuss ideas and feelings. Students with low social capital are often more hesitant to share ideas as their voices during group work are at worst silenced and ignored or at best marginalized.

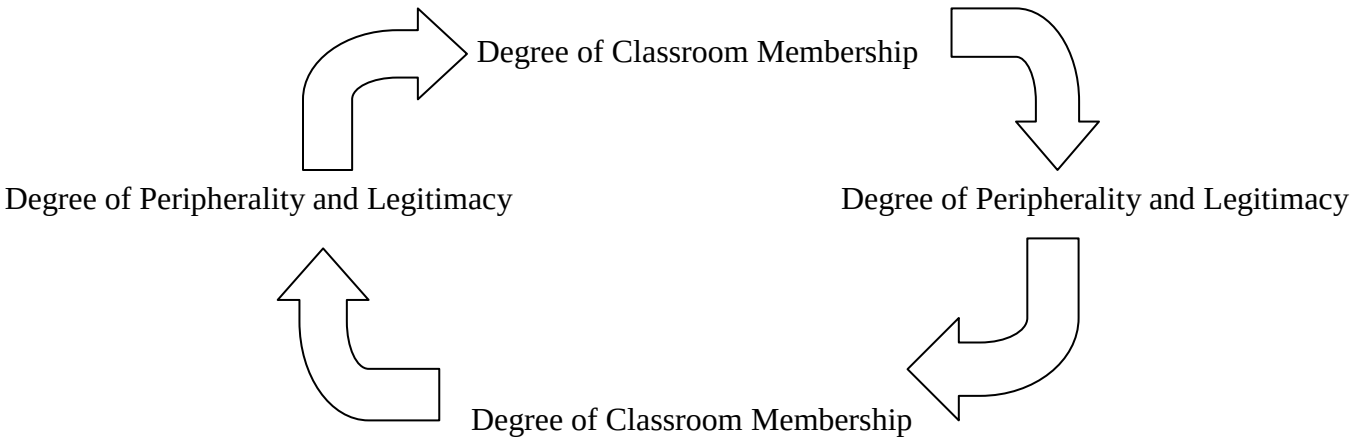
Factors such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, and home language can affect a person's social capital—thus affecting who a person is able to connect with and the opportunities that can result from these connections (Moore et al., 2009). Degree of membership within a classroom community is another determining factor for the degree of social capital offered to students. If a student is not provided openings to demonstrate their knowledge and skills (i.e. limited peripherality) or if peers hold negative preconceived notions about a student (i.e. limited legitimacy) that student will struggle to make the social connections necessary to establish high degrees of social capital. Their access to

important social resources will then be limited, thus negatively impacting their learning. Through its impact on social capital, classroom membership plays an important role in determining the social learning opportunities and resources available to students and can ultimately impact a student's potential to learn (Gillanders, 2007).

A sense of agency is a subjective feeling that one is initiating and controlling one's own actions. Students develop a sense of agency with regards to their learning when they are empowered to talk, are able to make choices about their learning experiences, and when literacy practices are meaningful (Bean et al., 1999). A well-developed sense of agency can positively impact learning by encouraging motivation and engagement in the learning process—encouraging them to take on a more proactive role in their learning (Rogers, 2004; Bean et al., 1999).

The impact of classroom membership on a student's social capital and sense of agency can have a negative spiraling effect. While low classroom membership negatively impacts these variables, lowered social capital, sense of agency, and belief of self-efficacy can then result in even lower degrees of legitimacy and peripherality. Figure 2.1 illustrates this cycle:

Figure 2.1



A student can then be caught in a never ending cycle in which their original low degrees of legitimacy and peripherality go even lower (or at the very least remain equally as low) as a result of decreased social capital and sense of agency. To avoid this, teachers must take proactive measures so that all students successfully engage in the legitimate peripheral participation process—moving quickly from 'newcomer' to 'old timer'—and that any obstacles to classroom membership are overcome through creating lessons that are accessible to all students and that value all students' unique backgrounds, cultures, languages, and understandings. If this is done, students have a much better chance in successfully participating and establishing themselves as 'competent and valuable' members of the community.

Student Participation and Engagement

Conceptualizing Student Participation

Classroom participation—like other forms of social interaction taking place in dynamic and fluid environments— is difficult to succinctly define. Determining what counts as participation and what that participation actually looks like proves challenging to teachers and researchers alike. Examining participation quantitatively often leads to a superficial understanding of participation by focusing solely on the amount of participation or representing an aspect of participation numerically while leaving out rich descriptions of the context of the participation and essential details of the participative interaction that took place. This can lead to a minimal understanding of the participatory practices students undertake—one that encourages little more than basic labeling of students as those who 'actively participate' and those who 'rarely participate'.

For the purposes of this study, 'participation' will be loosely defined as the active involvement, both verbally and non-verbally, of students in learning. To guide the interpretation, analysis, and general understanding of student participation, this study uses the Classroom Literacy Observation

Schedule (CLOS) which highlights five observable student and teacher behaviors related to active participation in learning and Kovalainen and Kumpluainen's (2007) observational protocol which highlights the forms and patterns of participation—including students' discourse moves, communicative functions, and interaction sequences.

In the Classroom Literacy Observation Schedule (CLOS) the dimension entitled 'participation' highlights five observable student or teacher behaviors: student attention (when almost all students are focused on literacy learning), student engagement (when students are deeply absorbed in the literacy lesson/task), stimulation (the degree to which the teacher motivates interest in the literacy task and overall learning), pleasure (the degree to which the teacher creates an enthusiastic and energetic literacy classroom), and consistency (the degree to which strong literacy routines are recognized and understood by the teacher) (Freebody, 2005). When all five behaviors are frequently observed during the course of a task by a large percentage of students, student participation in that task is considered high. When a task elicits few of these behaviors or if these behaviors are only observed in a minority of students, student participation in the task is considered low. In this study, these five observable behaviors not only assist in determining whether or not overall participation was high for a particular task, it also provides as basis from which to create more detailed descriptions of what participation looked like for either the whole class or for an individual student.

In addition to CLOS, this study uses Kovalainen and Kumpluainen's (2007) observational protocol for participation highlighting students' communicative functions, discourse moves, interaction sequences, and participatory roles. In their empirical investigation of student participation, Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) observed 17 third-grade students and their teacher and video recorded instruction in three different subject areas. Detailed, micro- and multilevel analyses were completed on the transcribed video-recordings of whole-classroom interaction. This analysis led to the identification

of 10 thematically different communicative functions: evidence negotiation, defining, experiential, view sharing, information exchange, orchestration of classroom interaction, non-verbal communication, neutral interactions, confirming, and evaluation. Evidence negotiation (EVI) is when a student asks for or presents evidence, justification or reasons. Defining (DEF) consists of asking for and providing definitions, elaboration, clarification or demonstration. Experiential (EXP) focuses on asking for and sharing personal experiences, feelings or examples from one's own life. View sharing (VIEW) includes asking for and expressing views, opinions or perspectives. Information exchange (INFO) comprises asking for and providing information, solutions or observations. Orchestration of classroom interaction (ORC) focuses on taking charge of the interactional management of speaking turns. Non-verbal communication (N-VERB) usually consists of expressions that reflect willingness to participate in classroom interactions. Neutral interaction (NEU) indicates echoing and re-voicing the ongoing interactions. Confirming (CON) signals the acknowledgement and acceptance of the topic of interaction. Evaluation (EVA) offers assessment of contributions to meaning making.

Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) also identify six possible discourse moves: teacher initiations (TI), teacher responses (TR), teacher follow-ups (TF), student initiations (SI), student responses (SR) and student follow-ups (SF). Initiation moves are defined as the opening of a discourse on a particular topic through questioning or by offering comments or suggestions on a new topic. Responsive moves respond to initiations or elaborate other responses. Follow-up moves provide feedback on the ongoing interaction. Eight types of interaction sequences--two of which were teacher initiated and four of which were student initiated—were also identified. Teacher-initiated interaction sequences include two categories: teacher initiated bilateral sequence (TIB) in which one student participates and teacher-initiated multilateral sequence (TIM) in which several classroom members participate. Student-initiated interaction sequences include four categories: student-initiated bilateral

sequence with teacher participation (SIB/T), student-initiated multilateral sequence with teacher participation (SIM/T), student-initiated bilateral sequence between two students only (SIB) and student-initiated multilateral sequence (SIM) between more than two students. In addition, solo initiations—those initiations that were not elaborated upon by someone else---were categorized as solo teacher initiation (STI) and solo student initiation (SSI).

Finally, Kovalainen and Kumpulainen (2007) identified four participatory roles available to students in classroom: vocal participant, responsive participant, bilateral participant, and silent participant. These four modes of participation where determined by the amount of participation of a student, the discourse moves he/she made, the interaction sequences he/she took part in, the communicative functions he/she used, and the nature of teacher participation and guidance required. Kovalainen and Kumpulainen (2007) caution that these exact four modes of participation may not exist across all communities of practice. However, their research did demonstrate that students certainly hold various participatory roles within a community and that not all of these roles are equal. Kovalainen and Kumpulainen (2007) also found that while participatory roles are fluid and ever-changing for some students, these roles can be quite static for other students. Discrepancies in participatory roles accessible to certain students and the level of overall participation can contribute to the development of differential identities of competence between community members (Iddings, 2005). Therefore, the participatory role that a student takes on does play a factor in their literacy development through their feelings of overall competency. The following chart highlights the four aspects of Kovalainen and Kumpulainen's (2007) observational protocol:

Communicative Functions: evidence negotiation, defining, experiential, view sharing, information exchange, orchestration of classroom interaction, non-verbal communication, confirming, and evaluation
Discourse Moves: teacher initiations, teacher responses, teacher follow-ups, student initiations, student responses, and student follow-ups
Interaction Sequences: teacher initiated bilateral sequence, teacher initiated multilateral

sequence, student initiated bilateral sequence with teacher support, student initiated multilateral sequence with teacher support, student initiated bilateral sequence without teacher support, student initiated multilateral sequence without teacher support, solo teacher initiation, and solo student initiation
Participatory Roles: vocal participant, responsive participant, bilateral participant, and silent participant

Conceptualizing Student Engagement

For the purposes of this study, student engagement will be examined through the framework recommended by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004). They propose that overall student engagement is made up of three types of engagement: behavioral, emotional, and cognitive. Behavioral engagement—the type of engagement most often highlighted in studies on student engagement—involves the level of participation and involvement a child invests into a particular activity or task. It involves the correspondence between the child's observable behavior and the actual demands of the situation—including attention and concentration, completion of task, following instructions, persistence, self-control, effort, and verbal contributions (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris, 2004; Pointz, Rimm-Kaufman, Grimm, & Curby, 2009). Emotional engagement is the affective response to a learning activity such as interest, boredom, anxiety, happiness, and a sense of belonging. Cognitive engagement includes elements such as intrinsic motivation to learn, setting goals for learning, harnessing of metacognitive strategies to meet goals, and sustaining effort required to achieve goals.

This study will include one additional type of engagement—social engagement—as recommended by Lutz, Guthrie, and Davis (2006). Social engagement is the degree to which students are actually co-constructing knowledge and effectively benefiting from meaningful social interaction. This additional dimension is being included in this study because it takes into consideration the importance of being socially engaged in the learning process. Social interactions are an essential aspect of effective learning and thus need to be considered when examining the level of engagement of

students. Leaving this dimension out ignores the prominent position the social nature of learning plays in our theoretical understanding of literacy and language teaching and learning.

The literature on student engagement has shown that engagement is a critical variable in overall academic achievement. For example, Kennedy (2009/10) completed a two-year mixed methods longitudinal study in a high-poverty school in Ireland that examined ways of narrowing the achievement gap in students' literacy achievement. Her findings indicate that student motivation, engagement, and self-efficacy are all critical factors in raising students' literacy achievement. Findings from the 2003 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) highlight that after grade level and immigration status, academic engagement has the third largest impact on student performance (as cited by Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007). Engagement is also related to the low achievement cycle that many students find themselves trapped in (Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007). Struggling readers tend to avoid reading and are often disengaged from reading activities. Their disengagement results in a continual decline in their literacy skills in comparison to their peers. Competent readers tend to read more and are more likely to be highly engaged in reading—thus continuously improving their literacy skills. As a result, the achievement gap between these two groups consistently increases over time (Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007).

Studies have also underscored the importance of text engagement on literacy achievement (Morrison & Wlodarczyk, 2009). For example, in one study researchers investigated the impacts of third grade student motivation and text engagement on overall literacy success (Dolezal, Welsh, Pressley, & Vincent, 2003). Nine, third grade teachers in eight different schools were observed and interviewed and student work was collected to determine how the teachers motivated students. They found that engagement dramatically varied between classrooms and that successful student participation in cognitively challenging tasks was much higher when students were highly engaged in

the instruction and texts being used. Another study investigated school and classroom factors related to primary-grade reading achievement within fourteen schools in the United States that had moderate to high numbers of low-SES students (Taylor, Pearson, Clark, & Walpole, 2000). Low level and average readers were tested twice in the study—once in the fall and once in the spring—and teachers were observed five times by researchers. The findings indicate that student engagement in texts was one of the statistically significant factors relating to reading achievement.

Being engaged with a text requires motivation, content knowledge, use of literacy strategies, and social collaboration. Rosenblatt's (1978) groundbreaking work on positioning the act of reading as a 'transactional process' laid the framework for the importance of text engagement. She postulates that reading is a transactional process and that, while reading, the reader transacts with the text to make meaning. The meaning of a text is neither found solely in the text nor solely within the reader. Rather, the meaning that comes from reading is found when the text and the reader transact—with the reader pulling from several interacting sources (such as prior knowledge) to make meaning. Engagement with a text thus requires active thinking and reflecting on the part of the reader as they transact with a text (Morrison & Wlodarczyk, 2009).

High levels of engagement can also go a long way for students from low-SES backgrounds by compensating for low family income and limited parental education—both of which negatively impact achievement (Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007). PISA findings show that students from low SES-backgrounds who were highly engaged readers performed as well as highly engaged middle SES students and as well as high SES students with medium levels of engagement (as cited by Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007). Unfortunately, students from low-SES backgrounds often struggle to achieve these high levels of engagement because they often struggle to recognize themselves in their schools and they feel alienated in their classroom communities because of an inability to succeed in the traditional

classroom and through traditional teaching methods (Zammit, 2011). This alienation makes it very difficult for them to become fully engaged in tasks as they are often unable to access or feel comfortable with these tasks.

One strategy for increasing low-SES student engagement is through the inclusion of multimodal texts and for teachers to modify their views on what count as legitimate literacy practices by expanding beyond the narrow classroom focus on written, paper-based texts (Zammit, 2011). In her 2005 study, Zammit introduced multiliteracy practices and multimodal texts into three low SES, upper elementary classrooms in Australia in an attempt to avoid student disengagement that is frequently observed with more traditional instruction. Data were gathered on an on-going basis for ten weeks with the data being analyzed using an interpretive paradigm. She found that the inclusion of multiliteracies and the allowance of a variety of modes of communication greatly enhanced students' engagement in learning and their view of themselves as learners. Additionally, she found that inclusion of multimodal texts—and the student creation of multimodal texts—changed what was seen as a legitimate text within the classrooms. Thus, when students who struggled to read and create 'regular' texts experienced success with reading and creating multimodal texts, they were credited as literate individuals by their peers. The following section will detail the theoretical foundation behind multimodal literacy approaches and how such approaches can enhance student engagement and social capital.

A Multimodal Literacy Approach

My emphasis in this study is on examining ways to achieve equitable levels of participation which subsequently may influence ELLs' social capital. In particular, I am interested in whether the use of a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) has a positive impact on ELLs' participation opportunities thus increasing the likelihood of increasing their social capital. To better conceptualize what a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) involves and the

language related benefits of this approach, the following section details the theory behind multimodal communication and how this type of communication can enhance learning. This will then lead into a discussion of how incorporating multimodality into our literacy instruction may enhance students' social capital through increased participation opportunities.

Multimodal Theory of Communication

The multimodal theory of communication postulates that people construct meaning–as well as distribute, interpret, and remake meaning-- through many representational and communicational resources, of which language is but one (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). In addition to language, people communicate using images, gestures, colors, shapes, textures, positions in space, sizes, and patterns (Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006). While language-based communication is essential, additional communicational resources enhance and amplify a person's communication repertoire strengthening meaning making (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). A multimodal perspective also conjectures that modes of communication are partial in that they communicate only one part of an entire message (Albers, 2006). The modes work together to represent an overall message with each mode carrying a different part of the message.

Multimodal literacy approaches help to extend participation opportunities in the classroom to include all representational and communicational resources. While talking, writing, and traditional reading—all of which rely on basic language understanding—are essential resources for constructing and co-constructing meaning, other important resources are not as language dependent and can be just as effective vehicles for meaning making (Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006). The technology driven society that we currently live in requires teachers to prepare students with traditional literacy skills as well as new, systematic literacy skills. For example, the internet has created a 'plethora of novel social formations that are mediated by communicative genres and literacy practices that show distinctive

features uncharacteristic of conventional print literacies' (pg. 803, Thorne, Black, and Sykes, 2009). Affording students with limited language skills the opportunity to construct meaning (as well as distribute, interpret, and remake meaning) through a variety of representational and communicational resources can enhance their overall communication capabilities.

The multimodal theory of communication also views writing as a multimodal act. Kenner and Kress (2003) argue that learning to produce and interpret written graphic symbols is a multimodal experience. For example, they state that acts such as writing with a pen on paper or cutting shapes out with scissors are all actions that are linked with cognitive understand of how these representations make meaning. Kenner and Kress (2003) explored this notion further in a study of six years olds who were learning to write in Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, and English. To see how children respond to a variety of multimodal experiences, Kenner and Kress examined instances where students were learning and using more than one script system simultaneously. They found that these young learners were able to conceptualize written symbols as multifaceted and textual space as multidirectional. Kenner and Kress also make the case that the possession of such a range of semiotic resources, and the flexibility of being able to switch between them or combine them, is a considerable advantage in a global context in which communication increasingly occurs through a variety of modes and a variety of languages.

Pahl (2007) also views writing as a multimodal experience and encourages teachers to understand children's texts in the context of the multiple events and practices sedimented within them. This requires a dedication to looking at the histories of children's texts and to hearing out-of school voices within children's composing activities. It also requires an understanding of practice being linked to domains and to previous events and practices out of school. In her two year ethnographic study in elementary schools in England, Pahl (2007) explored how examining creativity in texts and texts practices could serve as a lens for understanding student created multimodal texts. Based on her

findings, she notes that teachers should recognize the link between children's narratives from home and their drawings in school by examining closely the history of a child's text and its origin. Additionally, teachers should encourage a child to talk about their drawings, and then develop literacy activities from that text, as a 'way in' to early writing. One final recommendation is that teachers extend the text as a space for 'possibility thinking', where the child and the teacher could both ask of a text, where is this from, and, also, where is it going?

There are also several studies which have explored the benefits of using multimodal literacy instruction with ELLs. Within this literature are studies indicating the benefits of using multimodal, internet websites and social communities as a means of second language instruction. For example, Thorne, Black, and Sykes (2009) conducted a study investigating how second language teachers can incorporate outside-of-school realms of digital engagement—which their students freely chose to engage with during their free time—within their academic language instruction. Two realms of digital engagement were highlighted in this study: fan fiction, internet interest communities and three-dimensional graphically created virtual environments, including online games. The findings of this study indicate that participation in multimodal, internet websites and social communities can help students by blending the boundaries that have for so long separated language study from their meaningful and engaging, social life.

Another study examining the benefits of using multimodal literacy instruction with ELLs is Lorthington's (2007) investigation of using multimodality in narrative writing. In addition to affording ELLs opportunities to express themselves in various modes, Lorthington's study also encouraged ELLs to create multilingual stories which retell personal stories and include their cultural perspectives. Through the enhanced communication opportunities, Lorthington looked to support home language

maintenance, foster language awareness, and aid English learning in a community of high linguistic diversity. Her study resulted in the creation of rich, varied, multilingual and multimodal narratives.

In a commentary written by Stein (2000) addressing the question of how we can extend our understanding of resources in the ESL classroom, Stein argues that a starting point for addressing this challenge is to reconceptualise representation in the classroom. In line with Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996), Stein argues that this process begins with conceptualizing classrooms as semiotic spaces in which human beings who are agents of their own meaning making produce multimodal texts. In this act of meaning making, learners produce multiple signs in textual forms across semiotic modes and draw on different representational resources in order to succeed in that domain. Key to a multimodal pedagogy is recognition of the limits of language and that when it comes to communication words are often not enough. Stein (2000) argues that it is the teachers challenge to bring *knowing* to the surface and to help students transform what they know, remember, sense, feel, and believe into some form of representation whether it be a paragraph of writing or a scrapbook of images. By broadening representation beyond language heavy writing and speaking tasks, students who struggle with the English language can succeed in generating deep meaning and understanding and become successful communicators.

A study conducted by Orellana and Hernandez (1999) examined taking elementary-aged ELLs living in urban cities on literacy walks within their communities as a way of exploring the ELLs' everyday literacy practices and worlds. The focus of the study was on how the ELLs read multimodal, urban environmental print. They found that the ELLs dismissed much of the print in their world as being written by 'senores'—outsiders, adults, and men. As much of this print was also posted above their eye level, the young ELLs perceived that this print excluded them. On the other hand, the children readily engaged with forms of print that connected with personal experiences such as print at

their parents' workplace, markets where they shop, and the names of their streets. They were also very motivated to read and interpret any graffiti that they came across. Orellana and Hernandez (1999) suggest that teachers of urban ELLs incorporate multimodal urban print into their classrooms by creating journals of different, multimodal forms of environmental print. Additionally, teachers should create opportunities for children to create their own multimodal, public displays of print so that they can leave their imprint on their local community. This study highlights how real-life, meaningful examples of multimodal writings and drawings can be used as a way of engaging students in making meaning from multimodal texts.

Within the research base examining the teaching of multimodal communication practices and texts, several instructional 'best practices' have arisen to guide teachers in implementing multimodal instruction in their classroom. In his review of this research base, Zammit (2011) highlighted several of these instructional 'best practices'. First, instruction should include explicit teaching of the various modes including direct instruction on how to make meaning out of different modes and how to independently create their own multimodal texts or representations. Teachers must also demonstrate flexibility in their pedagogical stance in terms of the types of lessons they teach and the assignments they assign by consistently incorporating and valuing multimodal texts and representation. Finally, teachers must focus on the teaching of metalanguages associated with different modes of representation and mediums so teachers and students can explicitly describe and talk about them in classroom discussions. All of these guiding principles informed the way in which the multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) was implemented in this study.

To encourage the inclusion of multimodal communication modes in K-12 classrooms, Albers' (2006) believes that pre-service teachers need to be immersed in multimodal teacher education courses. In Albers' (2006) article theorizing on the possibilities of a multimodal curriculum design in English Education, she describes her multimodal approach to curriculum design within her teacher

education classes. She argues that encouraging preservice teachers to live through a multimodal curriculum allows these future teachers to begin conceptualizing high school English curriculum design from a multimodal perspective. Her focus on multimodal practices arises from the belief that multimodality provides opportunity for students to express more complex meanings in English education. According to Albers (2006), English instruction that focuses solely on written and verbal means of communication can silence and disempower certain students. In her research with preservice English teachers, Albers has found that these teachers often come with a belief that English instruction is doing book work only. Through immersion in multimodal activities and assignments in her courses, Albers' preservice teachers began to view their English curriculum as opportunities of engagements for high school students to deepen their understanding of themes and topics. As a result, these future teachers develop understanding of the importance of differentiated meanings of literacy and the need for creative openings that enable their high school students to find their voices.

Enhancing ELLs' Social Capital Through Multimodal Participation Opportunities

This section highlights how multimodal literacy approaches can potentially scaffold ELLs' robust participation in cognitively and socially demanding activities—subsequently enhancing their social capital. Multimodal literacy practices provide ELLs with the needed contextual support to engage in cognitively and socially demanding tasks (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). According to Cummins (2000), cognitively demanding tasks can be contextually supported for ELLs in two ways. One way is to make tasks more familiar by connecting the task to an ELLs' prior experience and background knowledge, cultural understandings, and unique interests (Cummins, 2000). This type of contextual support is considered to be *internal* in that the task is modified based on ELLs' own personal—or internal—attributes (i.e. prior experience, motivation, cultural relevance, interests). Adding a multimodal dimension to a task is an example of an *external* contextual support. External

contextual support modifies the verbal or written input of a task to make it more linguistically manageable for ELLs (Cummins, 2000). For example, tasks requiring written or verbal responses to literature can be differentiated by encouraging ELLs to use gestures or create visual representations—both examples of non-language intensive modes of communication—as a way to express their ideas.

By providing this external contextual support, multimodal literacy strategies provide appropriate openings for ELLs' to engage in important socially and cognitively demanding tasks (Cummins, 2000). It is through successful participation in these social tasks that ELLs are able to renegotiate their position with the classroom community. Successful participation in cognitively and socially demanding tasks helps position a student as a capable community member and can increase the number of classmates willing to work with and listen to the student—thus increasing both their legitimacy and peripherality (Cummins, 2000; Wenger, 1998). Enhanced peripherality and legitimacy can increase a student's overall classroom membership and acceptance (Wenger, 1998). With this higher degree of membership, students will also experience more social capital providing them greater access to resources as a result of their newly established social relationships (Moore, Daniel, Gauvin, & Dube, 2009).

Graphic Novels: Dynamic, Engaging Imagery Illustrating Complex Storylines

Anchoring a multimodal literacy approach in graphic novels capitalizes on a new, invigorating genre of children's literature while providing ELLs with accessible texts that are rich in meaning. The alluring, invitational dimension of such an approach—conducted in small group literacy discussions—creates a cognitively and socially demanding experience. After a brief description of what graphic novels are and their use with non-ELLs, the potential benefits with regards to ELL classroom membership and acceptance will be highlighted.

What is a graphic novel? Graphic novels are part of the literacy continuum of multimodal resources that are part of today's increasingly multimodal world (Chun, 2009). For this study, I adopt Gorman's (2003) definition of a graphic novel, which is 'an original book-length story, either fiction or non-fiction, published in comic book style...or a collection of stories that have been published previously as individual comic books' (p. Xii). Graphic novels that are book-length stories have complex narratives that include advanced themes making them rich texts for discussions (Chun, 2009). The vivid imagery and alternative subject matter often set graphic novels apart from other classroom literature. While there are many stand alone graphic novels, graphic novel series—collections of graphic novels about the same character(s)—have gained popularity. Series such as Bone (Smith, 2004), Jellaby (Soo, 2008), and Babymouse (Holm & Holm, 2006) are becoming popular with elementary students.

Using graphic novels with Non-ELLs. Preliminary findings from a small body of literature support a variety of literacy benefits for the non-ELLs from reading and creating graphic novels. Not only do they encourage more advanced reading, graphic novels may actually require more complex cognitive skills than reading text alone (Thompson, 2008). The lessened load of text—combined with enhanced picture support—helps to make reading more manageable and can increase student motivation, engagement, and comprehension (Krashen, 2004). For example, Bitz (2004) launched an arts-based school program (grounded multimodal texts) in 33 after-school sites in New York City that involved students reading and creating multimodal texts. As part of the study, he explored students' overall perception of multimodal texts. He found that students were drawn to the overall medium of 'graphica' as they found the visual representations of the text alluring, comfortable, and engaging.

In their literature review focused on instructional implications for accommodating multimodal texts, Risko, Walker-Dalhouse, Bridges, and Wilson (2011) found evidence that the graphic novels are

useful for motivating students and for connecting with students' real-life experiences. They also found that graphic novels have been found beneficial for reading comprehension through deepening students' comprehension, language, and vocabulary development. However, Risko, et. al. (2011) caution that while multimodal texts hold promise for deepening understandings, these unique text features can also intrude on comprehension. They mention that current research indicates that new forms of texts, including digital texts and graphic novels, have multiple text features that are not typical in conventional texts. For example these texts may include images, sounds, and movements that are all presented 'simultaneously and within dynamic formats to enrich the ideas conveyed' (pg. 376). Therefore, the researchers recommend that teachers include the instruction of a wide variety of text structures and images. This includes the explicit teaching of individual text features during multimodal text discussions. For example, students require instruction of how to read multimodal texts 'holistically' rather than focusing on individual images and they need to learn how to read both illustrations and written text together when comprehending multimodal texts.

White (2011) conducted a literature review examining the potential of graphic novels to help increase reading comprehension for students with hearing loss. He notes that research findings indicate that students who are deaf can benefit greatly from the use of words and pictures together to convey meaning. When they are reading, a student with hearing loss has to first learn a new symbolic system that has no basis in oral language. Therefore, these students benefit when texts provide visual support for the written language. When reading graphic novels, students with hearing loss are able to make meaning from visual features such as facial and body expressions, coloring and shading, and shapes and perspective rather than solely relying on decoding written language.

Not all research findings relating to the use of graphic novels have been entirely positive. One reason for the current increase in graphic novels being created for young children is due to the fact that

they are considered as a potential format to help scaffold beginning readers' efforts. With this in mind, Stanley and Strum (2008) conducted a study to determine if there was evidence that these books were actually scaffolding readers' efforts. In particular, they examined whether pictures could help beginning readers decode unrecognizable words. They found that the graphic novels used in the study did not provide adequate visual support to enable the decoding of difficult words. The reason for this is that the authors of the graphic novels used in their study did not give attention to pairing each difficult word with a corresponding image. However, the researchers note that if more attention was given to ensuring that difficult vocabulary is paired with a specific image these novels could certainly be more helpful in scaffolding the decoding process.

Other studies have examined how the creation of graphic novels, and other multimodal texts, can impact students' written communication. Criller's (2009) article, based on personal experiences, focuses on instructional guidelines for teachers who would like to support their students in writing multimodal texts. An author of graphic novels himself, Criller (2009) discusses that while students readily read comics and graphic novels they are a bit more reluctant to create their own multimodal texts. Among his suggestions for supporting students with the creation of multimodal texts is the importance of devoting instructional time to graphic novel storytelling. For example, learning the importance of conflict or learning how to use dialogue to reveal character can effectively be taught within the medium of graphica when teachers model and scaffold these writing skills through the creation of graphic novel panels. Criller (2009) also highlights the importance of giving students 'assigned elements'—such as speech bubbles, onomatopoeias, facial expressions, and wordless panels—to include in their multimodal texts. Left on their own, Criller (2009) has found that students tend to only create narration boxes with drawings under them which limit their exploration in combining images and words to form new meaning.

Frey and Fisher (2005) conducted a study examining whether the inclusion of graphic novels, anime, and the internet had any impact on urban high school students written communication. In particular, this study was interested in examining the high status of graphic novels of adolescents and how graphic novels could serve as writing prompts. The researchers found that graphic novels were powerful texts for engaging students in authentic writing. In particular, graphic novels provided a scaffold for teaching writing techniques such as dialogues, tone, and mood. One issue that arose in this study is that students were a first reluctant to talk about graphic novels with their teacher and the researchers. The researchers suggest that students believed graphic novels belonged to 'their generation' and did not initially want this genre to be become part of the school dialogue.

Overall, initial research into the use of graphic novels has been mostly positive. Findings have indicated that introducing graphic novels into the language arts curriculum can help motive students to read, engage them in the reading, enhance their comprehension and understanding of complex texts, deepen their language and vocabulary development, and serve as powerful prompts to engage students in authentic writing. On the cautionary side, findings also indicate the importance of explicit instruction of the multimodal text features found in graphic novels and that teachers include the instruction of a wide variety of text structures and image in order to avoid problems in comprehension. It is also been noted that it would be helpful if future graphic novels ensured that difficult vocabulary is paired with a specific image as this would assist more in scaffolding the decoding process.

Potential benefits of using graphic novels with ELLs. As discussed in chapter one, little robust research has been conducted examining the benefits of using graphic novels with ELLs. Much of the literature in this area is published by teachers and librarians touting a variety of potential literacy and social benefits of graphic novels for ELLs based on their personal experiences. In addition to the benefits listed above for non-ELLs, potential benefits of using graphic novels with ELLs include

enhancing their understanding of authentic, interactional English (including learning popular slang), creating supported openings for ELLs to successfully engage in text discussions, and helping them avoid the stigmatization of reading only 'below grade level' texts (see for example Thompson, 2008; Cary, 2004)

In terms of more robust studies, Chun (2009) conducted a study that examined the use of one particular graphic novel, *Maus* (Spiegelman 1986, 1991), in a English as a Second Language high school class. He found that graphic novels were very effective in developing and drawing on students' multiliteracies practices. His students' ability to use and rely on these multiliteracies practices helped to enhance his students' comprehension of the text which then enabled his students to acquire a deeper appreciation for critical literacy. In addition to *Maus,* Chun (2009) lists *Alia's Mission: Saving the books of Iraq* (Stamaty, 2004), *Barefoot Gen* (Nakazawa, 1995), *The Complete Persepolis* (Satrapi, 2007), and *Safe Area Gorazde: The War in Eastern Bosnia 1992-1995* (Sacco, 2000) as graphic novels that are intellectually substantive and useful for creating appreciation for critical literacy in ELLs.

Another study conducted by Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003), which focused on using the graphic novel *The Arrival* with upper elementary aged ELLs, found that the illustrations complicated students overall understanding of the story. While the illustrations captivated the students, there were also many pages that consisted of a variety of images within a single frame. Students tended to focus only on the small details of these frames and tended to read each picture separately, thus, limited their understanding of the text's main ideas. These findings reinforce the finding from Risko, et. al. (2011) that while multimodal texts hold promise for deepening understandings, these unique text features can also intrude on comprehension. This highlights, once again, the importance of providing proper, explicit instruction on how to read and interpret multimodal text features.

Finally, Boatright (2010) concluded a critical literacy analysis of three graphic novels representing immigrant experiences. Boatright discusses how Tan's wordless, graphic novel The Arrival is an opportunity for teachers and students to discuss silences and absences that is not present in regular texts. He suggests that teachers can explore with their students the ways this novel could serve as a site for 'newer understanding when words are not available' such as the complicated emotions underlying the immigrant experience (p.474). This provides some initial evidence towards the appropriateness of graphic novels to accurately represent ELLs' unique experiences and that these texts can be used to bring ELLs' experiences into the instruction of the classroom.

Conclusion

The above literature review highlights the research forming the foundation of our understanding of English language learners' (ELLs) language and literacy learning within classroom communities. This research emphasizes that the existence of a supportive learning environment—one that provides students with meaningful opportunities to engage in socially and cognitively demanding lessons—is a crucial element for effective student learning. Unfortunately, ELL research also indicates that ELLs often find themselves in foreign, unsupportive and unwelcoming classroom communities that limit their ability to learn and participate in meaningful ways. As a result, ELLs are often denied opportunities to successfully engage in socially and cognitively demanding tasks that work to position students as capable, knowing community members. One way of contextually supporting ELLs in socially and cognitively demanding tasks is through the use of a multimodal literacy approach. The current study explores the lived experiences of third grade ELLs during the implementation of such an approach. In the following chapter, the creation, implementation, and methodology of this study will be explained. This explanation will include a detailed description of how a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) was implemented in the focus classroom.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The following chapter outlines the research methodology used in this six-month qualitative, descriptive case study. A brief description of the qualitative paradigm and how the researcher's philosophical beliefs are in line with this paradigm will be presented first. Next, a rationale for why the qualitative paradigm was appropriate and beneficial for this particular study will be provided. Descriptive case study methodology will then be reviewed followed by a detailed articulation of the descriptive theory informing this study. This will be followed by an in-depth description of the case including an overview of how the case was selected. Finally, a detailed, step-by-step description of how both the study and the multimodal literacy approach were implemented will be provided, including an overview of the various types of data collected.

The Qualitative Paradigm

Qualitative research involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach to the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). It seeks to understand the meanings people construct about their world and their experiences within that world. This type of understanding assists us as human beings to better understand ourselves and others—which is a primary goal of this research paradigm. Qualitative research also seeks answers to questions around how social experiences are created and given meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). To find these answers, research often takes place in the real world while relying on multiple research methods that are interactive and humanistic (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

Qualitative research also seeks understanding rather than explanation. While quantitative research seeks 'to control' and 'explain' through a focus on causes and effects, qualitative research seeks to understand the complex interrelationships between all that exists (Stake, 1995). This is done by conducting a naturalistic inquiry into the phenomenon that preserves the natural

context. This natural context is viewed as a critical piece in understanding rather than something that needs to be removed or controlled (Patton, 2002). As a result, qualitative research emphasizes naturalistic interpretations and embraces the notion of multiple realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). This research is especially apt for addressing questions about how social experiences are created and given meaning as it seeks to better understand the complex interrelationships between various influencing factors in a specific situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Questions such as "how" and "in what ways" are common to qualitative research as they encourage in-depth study and do not assume one correct answer.

Qualitative Philosophical Assumptions and Beliefs

The decision to conduct qualitative research can only properly be made after reflecting on one's personal philosophical assumptions and how those assumptions naturally impact the way in which one views and conducts research. The belief in particular philosophical assumptions is what leads a researcher to use the qualitative paradigm. These philosophical assumptions consist of a stance toward the nature of reality (ontology), the language of research used (rhetoric), the process used in the research (methods), and how the researcher knows what she or he knows (axiology) (Creswell, 2003). The following section describes my stance on these philosophical assumptions and highlights how my philosophical stance fits within the qualitative paradigm.

Ontological beliefs. As a researcher, I embrace the notion of multiple realities (Creswell, 2007). I believe that reality is subjective and that no one true reality exists for researchers to observe and study. Rather, reality is something that is constructed by individuals while they are interacting with their social worlds (Merriam, 2001). This fits with the qualitative stance toward the nature of reality—that it is something unstable, configured internally, and variable according to the person apprehending it (Preissle & Grant, 2004). When conducting research, I am aware

that the social conditions and perceived meanings found within communities are fluid and changeable (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This requires me to become a part of the social, meaning-making activities of the community I am researching for an extended period of time. For the current study, my six months in the field granted me perspective on how specific classroom community events developed, changed, and adapted in one context. My ontological beliefs also led me to listen to the varying perspectives held by my participants to get a sense of how they construct the 'reality' of their positioning within the classroom community.

Beliefs of research rhetoric. Qualitative researchers tend to use a more narrative rhetoric—one that relies on first-person pronouns and participants' direct quotes—rather than the strictly scientific rhetoric commonly used by quantitative researchers. This type of rhetoric provides room for what Erickson (1986) refers to as *particular description*. Particular description consists of quotes from people interviewed, quotes from field notes, and narrative vignettes in which "the sights and sounds of what was being said are done in the natural sequences of their occurrence in real time" are featured (Erickson, 1986, pg. 150). This study is written in a narrative, informal style using my personal voice because I believe that a particular description of my study is most effective in portraying the lived experiences of the ELLs in the focus classroom (Creswell, 2007). The use of a narrative rhetoric also reminds my readers—as well as me—that gaining an understanding and appreciation of the human experience is central to this study and that these experiences are most effectively (re)told using more humanistic language rather than formal, scientific language.

Methodological beliefs. In terms of methodology, I strongly believe in using a flexible and emergent research design because this type of design leaves room for consideration of participants' changing needs, desires, and situations. Qualitative research design is considered

flexible as it is responsive to the changing conditions of the study in process (Merriam, 2001). This flexibility ensures that researchers are able to identify any unanticipated outcomes that otherwise may not have been noted (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Flexibility also helps researchers ensure that the participants and their needs are the driving force behind the research and not solely the researcher's needs.

I also believe that researchers should affirm and develop "membership" roles in the communities they study (Patton, 2002). This more personal researcher role is encouraged within the qualitative paradigm and is viewed as an attempt to mitigate the power relations within research that have sometimes caused participants to lose power throughout the research process (Tisdale, 2004). In the current study, I developed a cooperative and reciprocal relationship between myself and my participants with the goal of minimizing the distance or objective separateness between myself and my participants (Merriam, 2001; Creswell, 2007). As my study was focused on understanding human experience within its natural context, I felt that this closer relationship with my participants was needed.

It is also my belief that researchers should always position their participants as knowledge holders by seeking out and valuing participants' ideas, perspectives, and understandings. The qualitative paradigm encourages researchers to constantly remind themselves that they learn from one another during the research process. The qualitative research process is viewed as collaborative with the researcher and participants working together to construct understanding and with the participant playing an essential and equally powerful role. Patton (2002) refers to this type of relationship as an 'I-Thou' relationship which includes the personal voice of participants and acknowledges the humanity of both self and others. This creates the development of relationship, mutuality, and genuine dialogue between participants

and researchers. Through mutual dialogue and collaboration, my participants were aware that I not only valued them but also that they had understandings and knowledge that I did not. For example, the teacher and I worked collaboratively to implement the multimodal literacy approach used in this study and her input and expertise were both valued and essential to the way this approach was eventually implemented.

Axiological beliefs. Qualitative researchers take on the axiological assumption that all research is value-laden with biases always present. It is the researcher's job to bracket their assumptions while fully acknowledging the complexities inherent in understanding human phenomenon. Positioning oneself in a study requires recognizing that one's background—including one's personal, cultural, historical, and professional experiences—shapes your interpretation of what is being found and seen in their research. I firmly agree that who I am, as well as my personal beliefs and biases, will inevitably impact the research I conduct no matter how careful I am (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). It is my responsibility to carefully tease out my biases and frames of reference that mediate my interpretations and understandings of my research when reporting my findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The following section reflects my effort in identifying my biases and personal background that most certainly shaped the way in which I undertook this research.

Researcher's positioning within the study. Fundamental to my research epistemology is my belief that knowledge is socially constructed and mediated by our interactions with the world and people around us (Creswell, 2007). I believe that understandings of lived experiences never represent an all encompassing 'truth' of what happened in a particular situation—rather they represent individuals' perceptions of what happened. This study is situated in a social constructivism worldview—one in which how individuals make sense of meanings in context is

highly valued (Creswell, 2007). It is acknowledged that unique, individual perceptions are moderated by the social interactions, as well as the historical and cultural norms, that operate in an individual's life.

In the current study, I rely on participant's perceptions of their classroom experiences. I listened to these perceptions with the understanding that these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically and that individual perceptions of events are varied and multiple. I also sought to examine the inherent complexity of personal views about an experience in order to develop more coherent insights about a phenomenon. My emphasis on participant perspectives supports my belief that one's reality is subjectively defined through social contexts and interpersonal relationships and that there are multiple 'realities' (McMillan & Wergin, 2002).

Like Creswell (2007), I highly value more cooperative and reciprocal relationships between myself and my participants. It is my belief that participants, including young children, are experts of their own reality and their words must be privileged throughout the research process. In seeking understanding of what a phenomenon means to someone—including how that phenomenon affects them, what they think about it, and what actions they want to take—it is necessary to ask them questions and actively listen to their stories (Patton, 2002). I view research as a collaborative process with the researcher and participant constructing understanding together and the participant playing an essential and powerful role.

In terms of my personal background, I come from an upper-middle class, Caucasian background with both my parents being university educated. While born in Canada, I have spent the majority of my life living in the United States. Growing up I struggled greatly with learning to read and was consistently in the lowest level reading groups. Even as a child, I was aware that

my academic struggles affected my positioning in the classroom and I often felt uncomfortable and self-conscious during classroom activities due to what I perceived to be 'my inadequacies'. This led me to be quite shy and reserved in the classroom community for much of my time in elementary school. As a teacher and researcher, this negative personal experience has led me to be drawn to those students who—for one reason or another—are not fully comfortable in the classroom. It has also encouraged me to develop ways of ensuring that students who are 'struggling' to obtain literacy skills feel supported and encouraged in their classroom community rather than ostracized or embarrassed.

All of my K-12 teaching experience has been in public schools located within low socio-economic neighborhoods with my students primarily coming from Latino backgrounds. During this time, I became quite close to my students and their families and became passionate about meeting the needs of my Spanish-speaking ELLs. It was my early struggle to create spaces in my classroom for these students to flourish academically and socially that has driven my passion for finding ways to make language arts instruction meaningful, engaging, and accessible for all ELLs. This passion eventually motivated me to attend graduate school as well as to pursue the line of research that is of focus in this study. Additionally, I have also always placed a strong emphasis on students' personal development in my classroom. It is my belief that developing one's self-confidence, as well as a strong understanding of self and an appreciation for others, is just as important as developing more academic-based skills. This belief has undoubtedly led me to focus on acceptance and classroom membership in this study as I feel that a sense of belonging within the classroom community is essential for both academic and personal development.

To conclude, the following statements represent my epistemological beliefs and designate my position within my study:

1. Participants, including children, are experts of their own reality.
2. A powerful way to understand the perceptions and realities of participants is to get as close as possible to the participants by spending time where they spend time (i.e. classroom).
3. Field based data are value-laden in nature and the researcher must actively reflect on and document their own values and biases through the research process.
4. Learning is socially constructed and can be facilitated through supportive and engaging classroom communities.
5. Children have the right to be consulted in matters regarding their well being and their learning.
6. The research approach and processes in this study aim to give a voice to unique and complex experiences in classroom communities.
7. All students have the right to optimal opportunities to experience feelings of belonging and group membership while at the same time being able to express and develop their individuality.

How the Qualitative Paradigm Facilitated the Current Study

The following section highlights how framing the current study within the qualitative paradigm was beneficial for answering the study's research questions as well as in achieving the study's overall purpose—which was to create a space where young ELLs' voices are heard and validated. In particular, the use of the qualitative paradigm afforded me the ability to emphasize my participants' voices and allowed me to focus on human experiences through listening to the

perceptions held by ELLs. Additionally, it provided me with the opportunity to create contextual understandings within the natural setting of a classroom and encouraged me to develop robust, in-depth understandings of ELLs' classroom membership, participation, and engagement.

Ability to emphasize my participants' voices. A central purpose of this study was to create a space where the voices of young Spanish-speaking ELLs could be heard. Spanish speaking ELLs are part of a marginalized population making it crucial for researchers to give these young learners a voice within their research. Conducting research certainly involves issues of power and—depending on the methods used and the researcher's orientation and disposition—research can continue to reinforce a level of marginalization of the population being studied. Traditionally conducted social science research has more often than not silenced many groups that are marginalized and oppressed in society, including ELLs, by making them the passive objects of inquiry (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The qualitative paradigm supported my desire to emphasize participant voices as this paradigm encourages researchers to focus on participants' perspectives—rather than their own perspectives—when seeking understanding of a phenomenon (Merriam, 2001). This type of understanding is referred to as the *emic* or insider's perspective versus the *etic* or outsider's view of a phenomenon. Within the qualitative paradigm, participants are also no longer viewed as passive 'subjects'. Instead, the researcher and participants work collaboratively together and the participants are provided more equal degrees of power throughout the research process (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). Qualitative research also encourages researchers to closely examine how they represent participants in their work by carefully scrutinizing the "complex interplay of our own personal biography, power and status, interactions with participants, and the written word" (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). It also relies heavily on direct quotes and narratives

from participants in the research report, thus providing a forum for readers to hear the voices of participants. For these reasons, positioning my study within the qualitative paradigm facilitated my ability to focus on ELLs' voices, perceptions, and experiences within a classroom community rather than on my own *outside* perspective of ELLs' experiences.

Ability to focus on the human experience and participants' perceptions. Understanding ELLs' lived classroom community experiences—as well as the *perceptions* and *meanings* that they ascribe to those experiences—requires clear descriptions of the experiential reality of ELLs within North American classroom communities. A qualitative design is very appropriate for research seeking to understand the human experience as this paradigm is interested in the complexities of social interactions expressed in daily life as well as the meanings participants' ascribe to these interactions (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). The qualitative paradigm also recognizes that it is the perceptions that human beings hold about their experiential reality that are of crucial importance to understanding human experiences—not some external reality that may or may not exist (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The use of the qualitative paradigm thus allowed me to acknowledge that reality is socially constructed and that attempting to find one single reality that all ELLs experience is both impossible and unhelpful. This subjective nature of reality—as well as the emphasis on understanding human experience—supported my focus on understanding ELLs' perceptions as a way to better understand their lived experiences.

The qualitative paradigm also supports the belief that human beings must be understood in a manner different from other objects of study because humans have emotions, make plans, construct cultures, and hold values and motivations that affect behavior (Patton, 2002). Qualitative researchers, therefore, place a high priority on direct interpretation of events and a lower priority, if any, on the interpretation of measured data (Guba & Lincoln, 1982).

Prioritizing direct interpretation includes having the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis rather than some inanimate inventory, questionnaire, or computer that is often used in more quantitative research (Merriam, 2001).

A human researcher—unlike an inanimate research instrument—can be responsive to the context, can adapt techniques to the circumstances, can consider the total context, can process and clarify the data while the study evolves, and can explore anomalous responses (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Being the primary instrument for data collection in this study afforded me the opportunity to spend in-depth time with my participants while listening to their stories and experiences. It also allowed me to adapt the implementation of my multimodal literacy approach based on the needs and specific characteristics of my learners. For example, rather than waiting to implement this approach until the second phase of the study—as was initially intended—aspects of this multimodal literacy approach were implemented in phase one based on the immediate needs of students in the class.

Opportunities for contextual understandings within natural settings. A central objective of the current study is to gain greater understanding of the complexity found within nuanced threads of social interaction during language arts instruction. Literacy practices which shape social interaction and participation can often only be examined authentically—as a whole—because there are so many dynamic variables interacting in real time. Social phenomena—such as human interaction and participation—are intricately related through many coincidental actions and that understanding them requires examining them within a wide range of natural contexts (Stake, 1995). This requires extensive observation within the natural context of classroom communities.

The qualitative paradigm encourages researchers to engage in naturalistic inquiry which is a discovery oriented approach that minimizes researcher manipulation of the study thus preserving the natural context of the phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Rather than artificially controlling variables by removing the natural setting—which is commonly done in quantitative research— the qualitative paradigm encourages researchers to seek contextual understanding of complete situations by examining the uniqueness of situations or interactions within a variety of natural contexts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). This deeper contextual understanding assists researchers in revealing how all the parts of a phenomenon work together to form a complete whole (Merriam, 2001). Through the use of the qualitative paradigm, I was able to examine the complexity of social interactions that took place within the natural setting of the classroom community and to explore how these complexities impacted ELLs' language and literacy learning experiences.

Opportunities for robust, in-depth understandings of phenomena. Intricate aspects of classroom membership and participation—a focus in this study—are best examined through in-depth, long term classroom observations as these variables are fluid and ever changing. Qualitative research facilitates this type of in-depth observation by encouraging researchers to conduct focused and detailed studies that require extensive time spent in the field (Patton, 2002). Extensive time in the field provides qualitative researchers with ample time to fully understand the nature of a setting including what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, and what the world looks like in that particular setting (Patton, 1990). In the current study, I spent six-months observing and engaging with my participants making it possible for me to develop rich descriptions of the

social interactions that influence classroom membership and participation in that particular community.

The qualitative paradigm also provided me with the opportunity to create a more robust understanding of ELLs and their classroom experiences by encouraging the creation of thick descriptions of ELLs' social interactions within classroom communities. Qualitative researchers seek empathetic understanding for their readers by providing thick descriptions that convey to the reader what the experience itself would have conveyed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Empathy is thought of as the knowledge and understanding of a plight of another without experiencing it yourself (von Wright, 1971, as cited by Stake, 1995). This empathy develops from the in-depth personal contact with the people being interviewed and observed during qualitative fieldwork (Patton, 2002). The detailed thick descriptions and detailed observations that arise from seeking empathetic understanding contribute to the depth, openness, and detail of qualitative inquiry. The level of depth and detail in this study resulted in an overall more robust and empathetic understanding of ELLs' learning and classroom acceptance for the readers of my study.

Understanding the language and literacy learning experiences of ELLs also requires a deeper understanding of both common and unique experiences of individual ELLs. It is critical to recognize that language learning experiences can result in drastically different outcomes depending on the particular ELL. These outcomes depend on how a particular ELL approaches an experience, the unique needs and skills of that ELL, and which parts of an experience are found to be most stimulating by that ELL (Patton, 2002). Qualitative inquiry encourages researches to capture and report individualized outcomes and experiences allowing qualitative researchers to identify and describe the complexity of social problems (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). In the current study, detailed descriptions of ELLs' individual experiences within the

classroom community assisted me in finding inconsistencies, conflicts, and uniqueness within the overall lived experiences of ELLs—providing me with a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of these learners.

Descriptive Case Design

A descriptive, case study approach was used in this study to examine how a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) may shape ELLs' sense of belonging and perceptions of classroom membership. Descriptive case studies are focused studies with understandings and questions about a phenomenon carefully studied and articulated from the extant literature. Two differentiating features of descriptive case studies—in comparison to other case studies—are a) the articulation of a descriptive theory at the onset of a study and b) the emphasis on seeking particularities, patterns, and connections in relation to theoretical constructs (Yin, 2003).

Unlike exploratory cases—which seek to develop knowledge about a relatively unexplored topic—descriptive studies are created based on previously developed understandings. It is this articulation of what is already known about a phenomenon that primarily distinguishes descriptive case studies from other types of case studies (Tobin, 2009). Descriptive case studies also seek in-depth, field based, and holistic descriptions of the particularity and complexity of a phenomenon (Yin, 2003). This level of particularity is something which can often best be discovered through the deep exploration of a single descriptive case. While explanatory case studies seek *reasons* for why something happened, descriptive case studies are focused on describing the particularities and complexity of the phenomenon. Rather than evaluating this phenomenon—as an evaluative case study does—descriptive case studies seek to reveal patterns and connections in relation to theoretical constructs.

Articulation of descriptive theory used in this study

The principal aim of this study was to provide a robust description of ELLs' lived experiences of membership in literacy learning classrooms to reveal patterns and connections that can advance theory development—a differentiating component of descriptive case studies. Three theories relating to the connection between literacy practices and ELLs' classroom membership bear scrutiny for my study: Lave and Wenger's (1991) sociocultural 'communities of practice' theory, Cummins' (1979, 2000) framework highlighting the importance of engaging ELLs in contextually-embedded, cognitively demanding communication tasks, and the multimodal theory of communication (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). After brief descriptions of these theories, I will discuss how these theories intersect to form the theoretical foundation of my study.

The sociocultural 'communities of practice' theory proposes that classroom acceptance is a process. This process—known as legitimate peripheral participation—involves interaction and engagement with community oldtimers as a way of familiarizing newcomers with the practices and ways of the community. The length and success of this process are dependent upon the degree of legitimacy (social capital and credibility) and peripherality (openings) offered to the newcomer. Communities offer differing degrees of legitimacy and peripherality and particular members of the same community may be given varying degrees of legitimacy and peripherality.

Cummins' (2000) theorizes that language and content knowledge are acquired most effectively when ELLs are provided contextual linguistic supports to assist them in successfully engaging in cognitively challenging activities. Cummins' influential foundational work, published in 1979, delineates a continuum of language development beginning with basic interpersonal conversational skills (BICS) and moving towards cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). While most

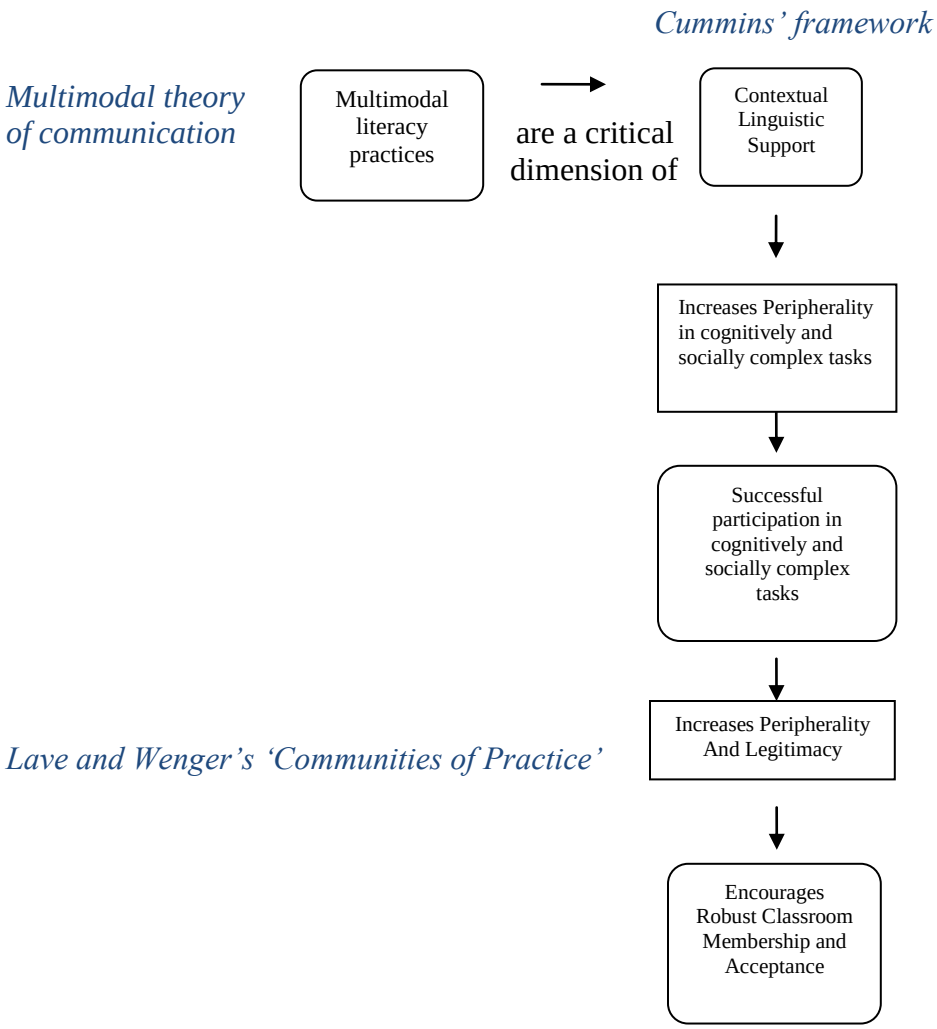
ELLS achieve proficiency in BICS within 12-24 months, CALP may take up to seven years to obtain. Some degree of CALP is generally required for participation in cognitively challenging classroom activities—including activities requiring interpretation, analysis, and application of knowledge and understandings. ELLs often need additional scaffolding—in the form of contextual linguistic supports—for many years in their new language to ensure their robust participation in these meaningful classroom activities. Successful engagement in socially and cognitively demanding tasks is crucial for ELLs' academic development and eventual transition to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).

The multimodal theory of communication postulates that people construct meaning–as well as distribute, interpret, and remake meaning-- through many representational and communicational resources, of which language is but one (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). In addition to language, people communicate using images, gestures, colors, shapes, textures, positions in space, sizes, and patterns (Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006). Students benefit when afforded opportunities to conceptualize meaning through a variety of modes. While language-based communication is essential, additional communicational resources can enhance and amplify a student's communication repertoire (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001).

At the intersection of these three theories, lies my compelling question: In what ways may a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) be used to enhance ELLs' sense of belonging and perceptions of community membership? Figure 3.1, entitled Using Multimodal Literacy Practices to Encourage Robust Classroom Membership, demonstrates how these theories intersect:

Figure 3.1

Using Multimodal Literacy Practices to Encourage Robust Classroom Membership



As shown in Figure 1.2, multimodal literacy practices are a crucial aspect of providing contextual linguistic support for ELLs. These contextual linguistic supports can provide appropriate openings for ELLs' to engage in important cognitively demanding tasks (Cummins, 2000). Successful participation in cognitively and socially demanding tasks assists in positioning a student as a capable community member and can increase the number of classmates willing to work with and listen to the student—thus increasing both their legitimacy and peripherality

(Cummins, 2000; Wenger, 1998). Enhanced peripherality and legitimacy can increase a student's overall classroom membership and acceptance (Wenger, 1998). Examining—and uncovering—patterns, connections, and particularities related to the interconnection of these theories will enhance our theoretical understanding of the nuances of classroom membership for ELLs.

Details of Selected Case

Case selection. One bounded case—a third grade classroom—was selected for this study (Creswell, 2007). Criteria for the selected case were that it be an elementary classroom with a high percentage of Spanish speaking ELLs. Consistent with the socio-demographics of this population, most Spanish speaking ELLs in these classrooms would come from low SES backgrounds. Once ethical approval from the University of Victoria was gained, I located a school district with a student population meeting the needs of my study. The school board was contacted and permission granted to conduct my study within their school district and to contact potential teacher participants. A work colleague of my brother—who taught in the district—was able to recommend teachers that might be interested in taking part in the study.

The recommended teachers were then contacted through a written letter sent via e-mail. This letter provided teachers with the important details of my study and informed them of the anticipated benefits and inconveniences related to participating in this study (See Appendix A). I then corresponded with several teachers via e-mail until it was determined that the selected classroom best fit the needs of the study. This selection was made based on the student demographics of the classroom, the willingness of the teacher to introduce multimodal instruction and texts to her students, and the flexibility of the school to allow room for the multimodal literacy approach to be implemented. Once the classroom was selected, I visited the teacher in her classroom to discuss the study in more detail and provided the teacher time to ask

questions. After this meeting, I gained the teacher's written consent to participate in the study (See Appendix B).

Case Description. The selected case was a 3rd grade classroom located within a large, urban school district in the Western United States. At the time of the study, the district served 26,945 students—with 17,327 of those students on a free or reduced lunch plan due to their low socioeconomic background. In the district, 9,827 students were identified as Latino, 8,647 were black, 4,093 were Asian, and 1,968 were white. A smaller percentage of students were listed as Filipino (240), Native American (83), Pacific Islander (309), and Unspecified (1778).

On the last standardized test—given three weeks after the completion of the study—31% of all students in the district scored in the 'well below basic' or 'below basic' categories on the language arts portion of the test while 41% of the students scored in the 'proficient' or 'advanced' categories. In terms of Latinos, 36% scored in the 'well below basic' or 'below basic' categories and 32% scored in the 'proficient' or 'advanced' categories. These numbers were well below the scores of the district's white students in which only 8% scored in the 'well below basic' or 'below basic' categories while 83% scored in the 'proficient' or 'advanced' categories. The district was also in the midst of a funding crisis due to education cutbacks at the federal and state level. This crisis was causing the closing of schools, teacher layoffs, and increased class sizes. Rumblings of teacher strikes were brought up several times to me by the classroom teacher.

The focus school had a population of 340 students that was almost exclusively Latino. In grades K-2, instruction was primarily in Spanish with students being instructed in English only during science and social studies time. Grade 3 was a transition year with all instruction in English except for science instruction. This meant that students in this study were experiencing

language arts instruction in English for the first time. Immediately before the study began, the school made the decision to no longer teach 3rd grade social studies in Spanish due to concerns about students' English competencies. Grades 4 and 5 instruction was entirely in English.

The school was also working under a special grant that made it possible for them to keep their class sizes lower than the other schools in the district. In grade three, for example, the maximum class size was 18. On the most recent standardized tests, 34% of students at the school scored in the 'well below basic' or 'below basic' categories while 27% scored in the 'proficient' or 'advanced' categories—slightly below district average for Latinos. Interestingly, 67% of K-5 students living in the school's neighborhood DID NOT attend the school, opting instead to attend another school. Additionally, 49% of students who did attend the school actually lived in other neighborhoods opting to attend this school rather than their neighborhood school (Oakland Unified School District, 2011).

There were no published findings regarding the reasons for why so many parents in the neighborhood opted not to send their child to this school or why the school was such a draw for students from other neighborhoods. However, based on one of my first conversations with the classroom teacher, it appears that many of her Latino parents were attracted to the school due to the inclusion of Spanish instruction as well as the school's large Latino student population. The school's homogenous Latino population was unique in the district as other schools were much more racially diverse and instruction was always in English. Additionally, the classroom teacher stated that non-Latinos in the neighborhood had voiced a desire for their children to be instructed in only English—making the school an unsuitable choice.

The fact that so many students at the school travelled from other neighborhoods for the sole purpose of attending the school repeatedly came up in the focus classroom. Two of the

students in the class left for short periods as their parents felt it would be more convenient for their children to attend schools closer to home. Both of these children returned after a week due to their expressed unhappiness with their new school and a desire to come back to the focus classroom. These parents mentioned to the classroom teacher that their child felt uncomfortable being one of only a few second language learners in the class. Other students discussed struggles in getting to school such as getting up extremely early, trouble finding a ride to school, and having to stay at the school late into the evening before someone could travel the long distance to pick them up.

The focus classroom had 18 students—11 girls and 7 boys—all of whom were on the district's free lunch program and were from low socioeconomic backgrounds. All students in the class were Latino with seventeen students coming from Mexican backgrounds and one student coming from a Guatemalan background. Three students were born outside the United States while the rest of the class was born in the United States; however, none of their parents were born in the United States. Spanish was both the home language and first language of all students. When asked at the beginning of study what language should the parental consent form be sent home in, all students responded that their parents were more fluent in Spanish. Parents that came into the classroom or attended field trips spoke entirely in Spanish with the exception of one father who was quite fluent in English. The classroom teacher also mentioned that all teacher-parent communication was done entirely in Spanish.

Outside of structured, academic learning time, all students—with the exception of one—used Spanish more frequently than English to communicate with peers and the teacher. This was determined by observing student interactions before and after school, during lunch and recess, and during transition times between lessons. Interestingly, the one student who tended to speak

English more than Spanish was new to the school that year. He had previously attended schools where instruction was only in English and often expressed the desire to talk and read in English during their Spanish language, science lessons.

All students had acquired basic conversational skills in English however their English language abilities still varied greatly. Two students had noticeably lower English skills than the rest of the class, having just acquired basic conversational English skills with no academic English skills. These students would always use Spanish when provided an option and almost always engaged with peers in Spanish—even during group work in language arts when the expectations were to speak English.

Since almost all students in the school were ELLs, there were no ESOL classes. Instead, all students took part in 30 min of English language development daily. In the third grade, all students were grouped according to their English language abilities—determined by intermittent testing of their oral and written English skills—and then divided into three classes. Each third grade teacher was then responsible for teaching one language-leveled group. Five students in the focus classroom consistently tested into the 'low' English language ability group, six were in the 'middle' English ability group, and seven were in the 'high' English language ability group. All three third grade, native English speakers—none of whom were in the focus classroom—were placed in the highest English language development class.

The classroom teacher was a Mexican-American female in her early thirties. This was her third year teaching 3rd grade in the United States. Prior to that, she taught high school science in Mexico. Her father is Mexican and her mother American and she has spent time living in both countries. While the majority of her childhood was spent in Mexico, she attended university in the United States. In this way, she was culturally very similar to her students who had roots in

both American culture and Mexican culture. She also continuously engaged in code switching much like her students. The language she used to communicate in professionally depended on the faculty member she was speaking with and it was quite common for her to use both English and Spanish in the same conversation. She did mention to me in an unstructured interview that faculty members that did speak Spanish rarely used English to communicate with other Spanish speaking faculty members. In the classroom, she had a tendency to speak to students in Spanish outside of instruction time—meaning before and after school and at lunch. Also, any important instructions she gave students—such as descriptions of notes to be taken home to parents—were given entirely in Spanish. When asked about this, she mentioned that if she wanted to be sure that her students would understand it was easier to speak in Spanish to them.

Gaining Access to the School and Establishing Trust within the School Community.

Once the case was selected, access to the school was gained through the principal. I spoke in person with the principal about the purpose of the study as well as potential benefits and inconveniences for the teacher and students involved in the study (Yin, 2003; Creswell, 2007). During this meeting, I made it clear that I was available to discuss my study as well as any findings with her at any point she desired. She stated that she was more than happy to have me work with her teacher and students and did not raise any concerns about the research.

I then spent one week volunteering in the classroom as a means of gaining the confidence and trust of my participants—as well as familiarizing myself with the school and classroom. My ability to speak some Spanish assisted me in gaining access to the classroom as they viewed me as someone who—at a bare minimum—was interested in engaging with their culture and language. One of the most commonly asked questions by students during my first day was whether or not I spoke Spanish and students were openly excited to hear that I spoke Spanish.

During this week, I also worked with all the students on an individual basis, familiarized myself with the classroom routines, and began establishing a working relationship with the students and teacher. I also gained written consent at this time from all eighteen students and their parents—after verbally discussing with students what I would be doing in their classroom and what their participation would entail (See Appendices C and D for English versions of the consent form).

Selecting Focus Students

During the first week of actual observations, four ELLs were identified as focus students—with a fifth student selected to be an alternate in case one of the focus students left the school or chose to no longer participate in the study. The classroom teacher's knowledge of her students, as well as knowledge gained during classroom pre-observation time, was used in this selection. The following criteria were used to ensure that the focus students fit the needs of this study:

1) Participants have been officially designated under district guidelines as an English language learner.
2) Participants' first language will be Spanish.

In addition to these basic criteria, the following exclusion criteria were used:

1) No participants identified under district guidelines as having a learning disability will be selected.
2) No participants identified as experiencing traumatic or stressful life events will be selected.

These criteria were aimed at adherence to the principal nature of my study. ELLs fitting these criteria were representative of the specific population that is of interest in this particular study. Once it was determined which students in the class met these criteria, the classroom

teacher and I worked together to select five students. We selected a group of five students that we felt represented the diversity of ELLs—a group that is often mistakenly thought to be homogenous. In reality, ELLs vary greatly depending on their English language competencies, their academic abilities, home backgrounds, and their level of classroom membership. Each focus student—including the alternate—was then studied in-depth to learn about their situational uniqueness in relation to the case as a whole (Stake, 2006).

Implementation of the Study and the Multimodal Literacy Approach

The following section provides specific details about how this study and the study's multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) were implemented. First, a broad overview of the study will be provided through an explanation of the study's three phases. Next, detailed descriptions of the specific multimodal activities included in this study's multimodal literacy approach—as well as how these activities were implemented—will be presented to provide the reader with an understanding of what this approach looked like. Finally, the data collection process will be discussed in terms of what was collected, how often it was collected, and the purpose of collecting it.

Overview of the study

Field based observation and data collection took place over a period of six months. This six month period was organized into a series of three phases. Figure 3.2 briefly summarizes the three phases of data collection. A more detailed description of each phase follows.

Figure 3.2

Phase one (End of October, November, December): daily observation of language arts instruction, focus student selection, initial interviews and group interviews conducted, implementation of daily comic activity
Phase two (January, February, March): implementation of whole class and small-group graphic novel discussions, individual interviews and group interviews conducted
Phase three (End of March, Beginning of April): daily observation of language arts instruction, additional group interviews, student creation of graphic novel, implementation of small-group

chapter book discussion groups

Phase one was focused on developing a complex and comprehensive understanding of the classroom's language arts instruction. I spent time familiarizing myself with the classroom and participants and I completed daily observations of language arts instruction with the intent of establishing a detailed understanding and description of how the students engaged and participated in the different language arts activities and discussions. Additionally, the degrees to which students were accepted in particular lessons and how students negotiated their individual classroom membership were explored. Initial, individual interviews with the teacher and focus ELLs—as well as one group interview—were also conducted.

While I originally intended not to incorporate any multimodal literacy instruction during phase one, this changed once I was in the classroom due to the immediate needs of the students. Based on initial observations and a consultation with the classroom teacher, it was determined that students were struggling with answering basic reading comprehension questions and that immediate intervention would be beneficial. The classroom teacher and I collaboratively decided to incorporate a daily comic activity immediately as a way to scaffold students through the process of understanding and answering reading comprehension questions. I felt that it would be unethical on my part to not intervene when there was an immediate need on the part of the students and a desire for help on the part of the teacher. Details of the daily comic activity will be provided in the next part of this section.

During phase two, I spent three months implementing graphic novel based language arts lessons. This included one whole class graphic novel read aloud, several lessons introducing the elements of graphic novels, student participation in small-group graphic novel discussions, and independent reading of graphic novels. All graphic novel discussions—including the whole class

discussions—were audiotaped and transcribed. I also wrote in my researcher notebook immediately following any graphic novel instruction. Daily observation of non-graphic novel related language arts instruction continued and additional interviews were conducted.

Phase three included the student creation of graphic novels and was also used to complete final observations and interviews. While I continued using my observational protocols for one week during this phase, it quickly became apparent that data saturation had been reached as nothing new was observed and all observations fully supported previous data. I did conduct one final semi-structured group interview with my students and one semi-structured interview with the teacher during this phase.

Details of the Implementation of the Multimodal Literacy Approach

This section provides detailed descriptions of the specific multimodal activities included in this study's multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) and how these activities were implemented. It is necessary to provide these descriptions prior to the explanation of this study's data collection as much of the data collected relates back to the specifics of this multimodal approach. The five activities of this multimodal literacy approach were the daily comic; whole class instruction of visual elements; small group, graphic novel literature circles; independent reading of graphic novels; and the student creation of graphic novels. Each of these parts will be described in detail.

Daily comic activity. The daily comic activity—implemented in phase one—involved students reading a short comic every morning and then answering three, reading comprehension questions (see appendix E for example). Student responses were always collected and I provided them with written feedback. Each day I would orally share with students a few exceptional answers from the previous day's comic. While this was primarily an independent activity, I

would frequently engage students in brief discussions about a specific visual element found in a particular comic before they got started on their questions. I would also periodically discuss strategies for answering the different types of comprehension questions. Midway through the implementation of the daily comic—once students demonstrated increased comprehension skills—I also began discussing with students how these comics could assist them in visualizing text that does have picture support. This included a discussion about how students can visualize written sentences or paragraphs as 'comic frames' in their minds.

There were several types of reading comprehension questions asked during the daily comic. For the first four weeks, the first question required students to 'write a couple of sentences telling what happened in the comic'. This question was included as a way to model the reading strategy of periodically stopping during reading and asking oneself 'what just happened?'—which was something the teacher was currently emphasizing. The rest of the questions were divided between closed, fact-based and open-ended, opinion questions. Fact-based questions were modeled after the types of questions students were expected to answer as part of their homework, as well as on the questions that would be on their upcoming standardized test. Open ended and opinion based questions—those with no right or wrong answer—required students to make inferences, predictions, or connections to their own lives. These types of questions were less common in the classroom than fact-based questions and proved to be challenging early on. Frequently, one of the open-ended questions would ask students to visually represent their answer rather than complete a written response as a way to increase the multimodal nature of the activity.

Students read Garfield comics (Davis, 1985) during the first four weeks of the daily comic activity. Garfield was selected based on its limited written text and because the subject

matter was generally something students could easily relate to. During these four weeks, I intentionally eased students into the degree of English language skills needed to complete the daily comic activity. This allowed them to first get used to the activity in their native language before adding in more difficult English language demands. To do this, all comics in the first week of the daily comic were wordless and all comics in the second week were in Spanish. By the third and fourth week, comics were in English though I selected these comics carefully based on the difficulty of the language used and how helpful the images were in representing what was happening in the comic. All reading comprehension questions for the Garfield comics were in both English and Spanish and questions were read out loud for those students struggling to read the questions. Students also had the option of writing their reading comprehension answers in Spanish—although only two students chose to do this consistently.

After Garfield, the students moved on to Calvin and Hobbes comics (Watterson, 1988)—which tend to have more complex storylines and include a higher degree of written text. All of these comics were provided to the students in English and all reading comprehension questions were in English. However, students were still encouraged to respond in Spanish if they wanted to and questions were still read aloud to students struggling to read the questions. The comprehension questions became slightly more challenging at this time and students were often asked to come up with the main idea of the comic and create a suitable title for the comic. The daily comic activity ended at the end of phase one due to the start of small-group, graphic novel discussions. I was allotted a very specific amount of time each week to engage students in multimodal activities and unfortunately that time was not enough to do both the daily comic and the graphic novel discussions.

Whole class instruction of visual elements. At the beginning of phase two, students took part in several whole class lessons introducing them to the various visual elements found in graphic novels and comics. The first lesson involved students looking at a wide range of graphic novels and independently writing down all of their 'noticings' or observations. Students then discussed their 'noticings' in small groups and then participated in a whole class discussion where a class list of 'Things Found in Graphic Novels' was complied. During this discussion, students also expressed their initial thoughts about the differences between graphic novels and regular novels.

After this first lesson, students took part in two whole class read-alouds of the graphic novel Jack and the Beanstalk (Hoena, 2008). This graphic novel was selected because of the author's dynamic use of colour and vivid imagery as well as the limited, simplistic text that made the novel accessible to all students. During the two read alouds—each lasting 30 minutes—students were introduced to a 'visual element chart' that listed and described all of the important visual elements found in graphic novels. The graphic novel Jack and the Beanstalk served as an example to highlight how these different visual elements are used and how to make meaning out of these elements. The 'visual element chart' was then posted on the wall for students to refer to throughout their work with graphic novels.

Students also participated in two follow-up, comprehension based lessons on Jack and the Beanstalk. In the first lesson, students considered the following scenario: 'Jack has asked you to go up the beanstalk with him. What are the three most important things that you will bring with you? All things must be small and lightweight and must either help you to survive or protect you from danger.' After orally discussing their ideas in small groups, students independently listed their three items along with a written explanation for why they selected each item. The

second lesson served as practice for the future independent work that students would complete alongside their small group, graphic novel discussions. During this lesson, students answered reading comprehension questions and completed short activities that were similar to those they would complete during their future graphic novel work.

Small-group, graphic novel discussions. The bulk of the multimodal instruction took place during small group, graphic novel literature circles conducted by both the researcher and classroom teacher. All graphic novels used in these literature circles were selected based on student interest and reader accessibility. In addition to the grade level suggestions on the text, reader accessibility was determined in several ways. First, I selected five pages from each novel and examined that number of words on the page, the frequency of Dolch sight words used, the frequency of difficult vocabulary, and the frequency of complex sentences. Additionally, I closely examined the relation between the words and the text. Additionally, I purposefully selected novels where the graphic images provided enough robust support that any inability to access the written text would not necessarily prevent overall comprehension of the novel. After identifying seven appropriate graphic novels, I had the classroom teacher make the final decision regarding which four would be best for her class. The four graphic novels selected for the literature circles were *Babymouse: Queen of the World* (Holm & Holm, 2006), *Jellaby* (Soo, 2008), *Stone Rabbit: BC Mambo* (Craddock, 2009), *and Lunch Lady and the League of Librarians* (Krosoczka, 2009).

There were two cycles of literature circles with each cycle lasting three weeks. During each cycle, students were divided into four mixed ability groups and assigned one graphic novel to discuss as a group. At the end of both cycles, each student had read and discussed two graphic novels. Mixed ability grouping was used so that students with varying English reading and

speaking skills had the opportunity to work together. This addressed the problem of students with limited English skills being placed only in low-level groups and unable to engage with students with higher level skills. Mixed ability grouping also provided a space to observe students of varying English reading abilities socially interacting and discussing the same, accessible text. To maximize the number of peers students had the opportunity to engage with, the grouping changed between cycles.

For the literature circles, all graphic novels were divided into three parts: beginning, middle, and end. For each part, students would independently read up to an assigned page number and then participate in two literature circles focused on those assigned pages. Students thus participated in a total of six literature circles for each of the graphic novels that they read. Three of those six literature circles were teacher led and three were student-led. The following table provides an explicit example of how this worked:

Babymouse: Queen of the World
Week 1 (beginning of novel): First teacher led literature circle, First student led literature circle
Week 2 (middle of novel): Second teacher led literature circle, Second student led literature circle
Week 3 (end of novel): Third teacher led literature circle, Third student led literature circle

All teacher led literature circles were facilitated by either the researcher or the classroom teacher and were structured around researcher-created teacher guides that provided specifics of what was to be discussed. These teacher guides divided the discussion into three distinct sections (see an example of the teacher guide in appendix F). The first section focused on discussing difficult vocabulary words and provided students time to ask questions about things they found confusing in their reading. The second section of the discussion was focused on an important visual element and often had students delving deeper into the meaning of particular images. The third and final section of the discussion worked on a specific reading comprehension strategy.

The classroom teacher was consulted about which reading strategies she would be working on in regular language arts during this time and I then made sure that these literature circles reinforced those particular reading strategies. For example, instruction within the teacher-led discussions included learning to identify theme, determining problem and solution, and clarifying meaning. Explicit connections were also made to previous regular language arts lessons in the teacher guides whenever possible. It was essential to me that these literature circles supported not only the teacher's instruction but also the state and district language arts objectives that were required by law.

Student led literature circles were something that arose out of phase one observations and an unstructured teacher interview. Phase one observations demonstrated that students never actually cooperatively discussed ideas and topics during whole class literacy conversations and they rarely commented on or built upon what was said by another peer. Rather, the teacher was always the focal point of the conversation with students directing all comments to her and looking at her and not their peers for direction, acceptance, and guidance. It often appeared that students were not even listening to each other in these discussions and were instead focused on telling the teacher what they themselves thought about a question. This finding was reinforced during one of my unstructured interviews with the teacher when she mentioned her concern that students were constantly looking to her to answer questions and to validate their answers rather than relying on peers. She also noted that her students struggled to discuss questions and topics on their own without teacher guidance.

After this unstructured interview, we collaboratively decided to incorporate student led graphic novel literature circles instead of just teacher led literature circles. We had two goals for our student led literacy circles. First, we wanted to engage students in discussions of open-ended

questions that provided space for students to create their own meaning from the text. Secondly, we wanted to encourage *actual* conversation between the peers. Rather than a series of individual answers, we wanted students to collaboratively discuss each other's answers and build upon the ideas and opinions of their peers.

During student led literature circles, students took control of the discussions while the teacher was either not there or monitoring quietly. They worked together to discuss two very open ended questions that often required them to make self-to-text connections (see appendix G for sample of student-led questions). Topics for these questions were always relevant to students' lives and interests and were often about the more controversial or surprising aspects of the novel. To assist students in successfully participating and conducting these discussions, I created two student roles for them to use: a facilitator role and a commentator role. Different students were assigned these roles for each discussion ensuring that all students had the opportunity to try both roles.

The facilitator was the leader in the conversation and was charged with the task of reading the assigned questions, calling on people to participate, ensuring that everyone participated and that the commentators were fulfilling their role, and getting the discussion back on track when needed. They were provided the following 'card' to guide them through the completion of their role:

Figure 3.3

ROLE: Facilitator

All discussions need a leader! Your job as a facilitator is to make sure that the questions get answered and that everyone has a chance to participate.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

1) Read question one out loud.
2) Say **'who would like to participate first?'** and call on one person
3) After someone participates, say **'Commentators, what would you like to say?'**
4) Say **'who would like to go next?'** or **'does anyone have anything else to say?'** and call

on another person. Keep going until everyone has participated and the question has been answered.
5) Read question two out loud.
6) Repeat steps 2, 3, and 4 until everyone has participated and question two is answered.
7) If you have time, call on people to share one of their activities.

It should be noted that I attempted to make these cards accessible to all students in the following ways. Prior to using them, I sat with the discussion groups and read the cards aloud. I also made sure that students with a higher reading ability took on the role during the first discussion. Therefore, students with lower reading ability were able to watch their peer use the card and were then able to use this experience to help them read and remember what was on the card. I also provided the cards in Spanish to both Mia and Camila, the two students that often benefited from the inclusion of Spanish in English lessons. In terms of the commentator card which will be discussed next, students quickly memorized the prompts after the first discussion and rarely needed to refer to their card.

Two students were also assigned to be commentators for each discussion. The commentator role was created to scaffold students through the process of building upon and making connections with comments made by their peers. It was the commentator's job to immediately respond to or follow up on all comments made by their peers. The primary purpose of this role was to get students used to actually discussing and building upon each other's ideas rather than simply sharing individual ideas. They were provided with the following 'card' to guide them through the completion of their role:

Figure 3.4

ROLE: COMMENTATOR

Discussions are only exciting when people comment about what someone says. Your job as a commentator is to make thoughtful comments about what other group members are saying.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:
1) After someone participates make a comment about what was said. For example:

- I like that idea because....
- I agree with that because....
- I disagree with that because....
- I like that picture too because....
- Why do you think that? (only ask this if the person has not fully explained their answer)
- Why do you like that picture?

Independent reading of graphic novels. Throughout phases two and three, I had a library of graphic novels from which the students could borrow. Students were able to 'check out' one book at a time and I consistently added books to this library based on student demand. There was also one week during phase two that was devoted to the independent reading of graphic novels. During this week, students spent two-30 minute blocks reading silently and completing two short activities related to their novel. All students read different graphic novels during this time.

Student creation of graphic novels. The final aspect of the implementation of this multimodal literacy approach was the student creation of graphic novels. Prior to this activity, students in the focus classroom had almost no opportunity during my six months of observation to engage in the writing process. Writing instruction in the classroom tended to be very structured with topics always being assigned by the teacher. Students were expected to focus their writing on the regurgitation of specific information by strictly following an assigned outline and were not encouraged to use creativity or voice. As a result of the students' inexperience with topic selection and creative writing, I had to modify how I implemented this aspect of my multimodal literacy approach to include additional supports and scaffolds. See Appendix H for the detailed student guide that took students through the process of selecting a writing topic, creating characters, and determining a problem and solution. Once students went through the structured pre-writing process, they then spent three 45 minute blocks creating their graphic

novels. Several students also took their graphic novel homes to work on. This activity ended with an author's celebration where students shared their stories and celebrated their achievement with snacks.

Data collection

Data were collected from a variety of sources to ensure data triangulation. Figure 3.5 highlights the sources from which data were collected.

Figure 3.5

Data Source	Tool	Description/Purpose	Duration/Frequency/Context
Observations	Structured and unstructured observational protocols	All language arts lessons were observed to establish a detailed understanding of the types of activities and social interactions ELLs participate in during language arts	Throughout entire study, daily
Audiotaped Literacy Discussions	Two digital voice recorders (Olympus: VN-700 and Sony: ICD-BX800); recorders were placed on a desk or on the floor in the middle of the discussion.	Selected whole class and small group literacy discussions were audiotaped; all graphic novel literacy circles were audiotaped. The intent was to establish detailed understandings of the conversations and participative roles and interactions ELLs take up.	**Phase I & III**: approx. one whole class discussion a week (depending on instruction); selected small group discussions **Phase II**: various whole class discussions; all graphic novel, small-group discussions (8 a week)
Interviews	Interview Protocols	The classroom teacher and focus students took part in semi-structured and unstructured individual interviews (all semi-structured interviews were audiotaped); all students took part in group interviews (all group interviews were	**Semi-structured interviews w/ focus ELLs and teacher**: 2 times **Group interviews all students**: 3 times **Unstructured interviews**: almost daily with the teacher; varied for students

		audiotaped); all interviews were opportunities to probe experiences in graphic novel lessons and perceptions of classroom membership and experience	
Photographs	Cannon Powershot SD1200 IS	Photographs of students involved in literacy lessons were taken; photographs were used in the initial, individual interviews with focus students to facilitate recall of experiences being discussed; photographs were also meant to capture in-the-moment images of ELLs involved in literacy activities to amplify and enrich written descriptions and observations of literacy events	Throughout entire study, frequency varied depending on instruction
Student Drawings	N/A	During initial individual interviews, focus students were asked to draw pictures of what happened during a recent literacy lesson as a way to make them more comfortable in the interview as well as to provide them with something concrete to discuss; all students were asked to create drawings about their feelings and perceptions about participation; drawings provided a multimodal outlet for ELLs to express their feelings and perceptions of participation and acceptance	**Phase I:** once during focus students' initial interview and one additional time during whole class language arts instruction
Reader's Notebooks and Comprehension Guides	N/A	All students completed short activities related to their graphic novel in a reader's notebook; all	**Phase II:** every student completed two activities in their reader's notebooks and answered three questions in their comprehension guide

		students answered questions on their graphic novel in their comprehension guides; these data were used to enrich and extend observational and interview data	every week. All reader's notebooks and comprehension guides were collected and photocopied.
Classroom Artifacts	N/A	Photographs of classroom and bulletin boards; copies of blank language arts worksheets and assignments; these items were collected to enhance the rich description of the classroom community and to support observations	Throughout entire study, frequency varied

Observations and Audio-Recorded Literacy Discussions for Phases One and Three

During phases one and three, all language arts instruction was observed daily. As a participant-observer, I recorded data on structured and unstructured observation protocols. The structured protocol (see appendix I) was used once a week and consisted of filling out the protocol in ten minute intervals while taking observational notes the rest of the time. I relied on the unstructured protocol (see appendix J) the rest of the week to record observations. A total of ten whole class literacy discussions—as well as selected small group literacy discussions—were audio-recorded and transcribed. Due to the limited number of small group literacy discussions held in the focus classroom, short one to two minute occurrences of small-group talk within whole class lessons were often audiotaped in the place of actual small group literacy discussions.

Observations and Audio-Recorded Literacy Discussions for Phase Two

During phase two, all whole class discussions related to the graphic novel elements—including the two Jack and the Beanstalk read alouds—were audio-recorded and transcribed. Detailed observational notes were also taken in the researcher's notebook immediately following all multimodal lessons taught by the researcher or teacher. All small-group, graphic novel

literature circles were also audiotaped and transcribed. Daily language arts observation continued during this phase using the same observation protocols as in phase one and three.

Individual and Group Interviews

Throughout all three phases, individual and group interviews with the teacher and focus student were conducted. Each focus student was interviewed twice individually—once during phase one and once during phase two. The classroom teacher took part in two semi-structured interviews and almost daily unstructured interviews. Individual interviews were held during convenient times during the day and lasted ten to fifteen minutes.

All students participated in three group interviews. Originally, only the focus students were going to participate in group interviews, however, it was determined after class observations and the fist individual focus student interviews that engaging all students in group interviews would provide a richer data set. Additionally, non-focus students expressed a desire to be interviewed and out of an interest in fairness all students were provided the opportunity to be interviewed. Group interviews lasted 15-20 minutes and took place during lunch—as this was the only time suitable to pull four to five students aside. The students did not mind spending their lunch completing the interview as they still participated in recess and were able to eat their lunch in the classroom while being interviewed which was seen as a special treat. Students were given the option to not participate in the group interviews; however, they all eagerly agreed to participate. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed.

Photographs

Photographs were taken throughout all three phases. A total of 122 photographs were taken. These photographs were then coded and used as visual support for the study's findings. Photographs were also used during the first individual interviews with the focus students. In

these interviews, students were presented with a picture of the whole class—including them—during a language arts lesson. They were then asked to describe what was happening during the lesson and what they were doing, including whom they were talking to and how they were participating.

Student Drawings

During phase one of the study, the focus students completed drawings of themselves during a language arts lesson during their individual interviews. These drawings were used as a way to make them more comfortable in the interview as well as to provide them with something concrete to discuss. During phase two of the study, all students completed drawings about their classroom participation. They drew pictures of the four most common ways that they participated in class. They then determined which way of participating in the class was most difficult for them and which way was the easiest for them. I was originally planning for the whole class to do two more sets of drawings on classroom acceptance, however, this had to be adjusted as the teacher was feeling pressed for time due to the upcoming standardized tests. The time I was allotted to work with the students was therefore limited and did not allow for this to take place.

Reader's Notebooks and Comprehension Guides

During phase two of this study, all students worked independently in their reader's notebooks and reading comprehension guides that accompanied the graphic novel they were assigned to talk about in small-groups. During graphic novel time, students were either engaged in a small-group discussion or were independently working on their notebook or guide. In their reading comprehension guide, students wrote answers to reading comprehension questions. See an example of reading comprehension guides in Appendix K. They were always given more questions than they were required to answer so that they would have a choice in which questions

to work on. Sample questions include: Where does Stone Rabbit land after falling through the hole?; What gets all over his face and body? (pg. 14); Make up a funny reason for why there was barbecue sauce in the bathroom; Look at page 8 and name one thing you learned about Babymouse on this page.

In their reader's notebooks, students completed more in-depth activities related to their graphic novel where there was no right or wrong answer. Activities were divided into two different groups: Group A and Group B. Group A activities were considered sentence starters where students completed a sentence based on their personal opinion and feelings about what they read. Sample Activities include: I wonder why Stone Rabbit did/said _____ because _____; If I were being chased by dinosaurs and bugs I would _____ because _____; When _____ happened in the story, it reminded me of when _____; Babymouse seems like a _____ character, because _____.

Group B activities took longer to complete and required students to come up with a detailed written response or visual representation to answer the question. The following are examples of Group B activities: Babymouse has a very good imagination. Draw a picture of what you like to imagine when you are daydreaming. Be sure to use lots of details and label your picture; Pretend that you are Babymouse. Write a short letter (at least three sentences) to Felicia Furrypaws and try to talk her into being your friend; Draw a picture of what you think Jellaby's REAL home might look like. Add lots of details and label your picture; Write a paragraph (at least three sentences) describing what Jellaby might be thinking on page 20.

At a minimum, students had to complete one group A activity and one group B activity. They were provided with multiple options allowing them to choose which activities they

completed. There was always at least one option within the group B activities for students to draw a visual representation of their answer rather than completing a written response.

Additional Student Work

In addition to the reader's notebooks and comprehension guides, I collected additional examples of students' language arts work during throughout all three phases. This included collecting several sets of answers to daily comics as well as the student created graphic novels.

Classroom Artifacts

Two types of classroom artifacts were collected. First, several photographs were taken throughout the six months of the classroom layout, classroom bulletin boards, and posted student work. These photographs provide contextual evidence of the type of classroom students were learning in. A second type of classroom artifact that was collected was blank worksheets and activity sheets that students worked on during regular language arts instruction. These worksheets were always accompanied with detailed descriptions of student participation and engagement in the activity related to the completion of the worksheet or activity sheet.

Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of the methodology used in the current study, detailed the data collection process, and explained the implementation process of the multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) in the focus classroom. A qualitative approach was used for this six-month descriptive case study that explored the lived experiences of 3rd grade ELLs before, during, and after the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach. The multimodal literacy approach was implemented in three stages with students engaging with comics, discussing graphic novels in small groups, and independently creating their own graphic novels. Data were collected throughout the study from various sources—including observations,

interviews, and transcribed literature discussions—to ensure triangulation. The next two chapters will now highlight the data analysis process and detail the themes that arose from this analysis.

Chapter Four: General Data Analysis and Results

This study sought to carefully examine the implementation of a multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) in a primary classroom with a high percentage of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The multimodal teaching approach served as a focusing lens with which to investigate the larger complexities of ELLs' membership and acceptance. Specifically, this research sought answers to the following questions:

- How does the implementation of a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) develop and play out in the primary classroom?
- In what ways might a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) be used to enhance ELLs' sense of belonging and perceptions of community membership?

In terms of data analysis, this study focused on whole class' language arts instruction, participation, and engagement and subsequently on a subset of students identified as focus students at the beginning of the study. To aid readers in understanding this study's complex and detailed data analysis process, description of the data analysis and findings will be divided into two chapters. Chapter four focuses solely on the analysis of data related to the classroom as a whole and highlights all whole class trends and themes, while chapter five details the lived experiences of the four focus students and provides an in-depth analysis of each student's participation and social interactions.

Three major data sets were analyzed for this study: observational data, audio-recorded whole-class and small-group literature discussions, and participant interviews. Several minor data sets—including student work and photographs— also were collected and analyzed to further support data triangulation. Prior to coding and analyzing these data sets, the researcher determined which students in the class were perceived to hold high degrees of classroom membership and which students were

perceived to hold very low degrees of classroom membership during regular language arts instruction (see below for details on how this was determined).

Topic Map of Chapter Four

The first section of the current chapter details the process of determining which students were perceived to be on each end of the classroom membership spectrum. This is followed by a detailed description of the open coding analysis that was completed for all observational data and an in-depth discussion of the trends and themes arising from this data set. Next, the various stages of coding for the audio-recorded whole-class and small-group literature discussions (including graphic novel discussions) are presented in detail. After each stage of coding, an explanation of the results for that particular stage of coding is described as well as how these results relate to the trends and themes found in the observational data. This is followed by a detailed description of the coding process for related interview data and an explanation of all trends and themes. Additionally, there is a detailed discussion of how the findings within the interview data support and/or contradict the findings that emerged from the observational and discussion data sets. Finally, the student work collected is examined through detailed descriptions of how these data minor sets support and/or contradict the findings within the main data sets. This includes drawing explicit connections between individual pieces of student work with specific trends and themes previously discussed. Photographic data are utilized when appropriate to support and/or challenge findings within the other data sets. The main sections of this chapter are as follows:

1) Identification of Students with High and Low Degrees of Classroom Membership
2) Observational Data Analysis
3) Audio-Recorded Literature Discussion Data Analysis
4) Interview Data Analysis
5) Collected Student Work Data Analysis

Identification of Students with High and Low Degrees of Classroom Membership

As described in the literature review for this study, the robustness of membership in a classroom community is defined as the degree and quality of access a student has to the resources, identities, and practices of the classroom community (Wenger, 1998, Iddings, 2005). Classroom membership is a complex concept that is closely related to the degrees of peripherality and legitimacy afforded to a student. *Peripherality* is the existence of openings or ways of gaining access to sources of understanding which newcomers are given through their growing involvement within the community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). An opening in a classroom community refers to accessible moments that allow students to exhibit their knowledge and skills in a way that is appreciated and beneficial for student learning. *Legitimacy* refers to the degree in which a newcomer is viewed and treated as a "potential" contributing member of the community by other members (Wenger, 1998). The degree of *legitimacy* offered is determined by the extent a newcomer is viewed as someone with skills, characteristics, and values that are consistent with and have benefit for the greater community. The more robust degrees of peripherality and legitimacy made available to a student, the more they are accepted into the classroom community and the closer they are to full membership. Full members of a classroom community are those students who are fully active participants and share responsibility for the learning that occurs (Hannikainen & Rasku-Puttonen, 2010).

It is important to identify at the onset of coding which students had low membership status and which students had high membership status as each data set will be further examined in relation to these two groups. The first step in the process of identifying students on both ends of the classroom membership spectrum began during a formal interview with the teacher during my first week in the classroom. There were two main purposes for my interview: to determine her perceptions about her

students' membership levels and to determine her initial perceptions and understanding about her established classroom community and how that community influences her language arts instruction.

In this initial interview, I enquired about which students the teacher felt were perceived by peers as being less capable in language arts tasks, which may have contributed to their struggle to be fully accepted during these tasks. She immediately responded that Camila and Alex tended to struggle the most during language arts instruction and were the students most frequently left out of partner and group work. For Camila, she mentioned that her limited English capabilities were perhaps the most influential factor in her inability to complete many language arts activities—something that the teacher felt the other students were keenly aware of. Camila was also described as very quiet and the teacher viewed her as a silent participant during language arts lessons, further noting that Camila rarely participated in group and partner talk. She did mention, however, that Camila's female cousin—who was boisterous and more accepted by peers—was also in the classroom and that this assisted Camila in being included more with her female classmates during non-academic time (i.e. recess).

For Alex, the teacher mentioned that he was the most easily distracted student in the class and that the majority of his academic struggles stemmed from this struggle to pay attention and stay focused on completing a task. The teacher felt that she constantly had to 'hound' Alex to pay attention and that the other students were very aware that he was rarely able to complete work without additional assistance. While Alex was also in the lowest group in terms of English abilities, the teacher did not feel that his lack of English skills was the largest factor in his struggle for acceptance. Rather, the teacher noted that the way Alex interacted with other students was often problematic. She described it as "he often tries too hard to get people to like him, especially the boys". Overall, the teacher felt that students were easily frustrated with both Camila and Alex and would often 'leave them behind' during group work.

The teacher then explained that Lucia and Mia also appeared to have low social status in the classroom. She felt that Mia, like Camila, really struggled socially and academically because of her limited English. As language arts instruction was entirely in English, Mia was often lost and unable to participate because of the language barrier. This resulted in her being a silent participant in group and partner work. While students viewed her as a 'struggling student', the teacher mentioned that students appeared to like Mia. For Lucia, the teacher explained that she was the quietest student in the classroom and was working with a speech pathologist to increase her ability to express her ideas and thoughts orally. She felt that students were aware that Lucia was extremely shy and quiet and as a result often chose not to partner up with her. The teacher also felt that Lucia was the most left out during non-academic time (i.e. recess) and that her social interactions with peers were minimal. Academically, however, Lucia was at a slightly higher level in terms of English language ability—according to beginning of the year English language testing—than the other three students highlighted by the teacher as having low status.

I then enquired about which students she felt were perceived as highly competent during language arts tasks and were offered high levels of acceptance by their peers during these tasks. She immediately stated that both Tomas and Emma were extremely well-liked by both the girls and boys and were consistently asked by others to partner up. The teacher felt that both students excelled during language arts tasks and that their 'thoughts and ideas were often insightful'. Both students were also in the highest English language ability group and the highest reading group. She mentioned that while Tomas was confident in his abilities, he was not over talkative and 'hyper' like many of the other boys and this made him someone that 'the girls found easy to work with'. For Emma, the teacher mentioned that she was extremely outgoing and 'got along easily with both the girls and boys'.

In addition to Tomas and Emma, the teacher drew my attention to Lucia and David who were also extremely well liked although it had taken her ‘longer to notice this than it had with Tomas and Emma’. For David, the teacher mentioned that the boys really seemed to admire him and enjoyed his sense of humour. For Lucia, the teacher said her overall kindness as well as her warm and friendly personality attracted other students to her and made her a desired person to work with—especially with the shy students that often were intimidated by other students. While both Lucia and David were in the highest English language ability group they were both in the middle group in terms of reading ability.

It was important that the teacher’s well-informed understandings and perceptions of her students be the starting point for determining classroom membership due to the extensive amount of time she spent working with the students. After capturing her insights, the next step was to obtain observational and student interview data that either supported or conflicted with her opinions. Overall, the teacher was accurate in her assessment of classroom membership. The four students (Alex, Camila, Mia, and Lucia) identified as struggling with classroom membership and acceptance were the same students that consistently came up in observational data as lacking legitimacy (the degree of valued and recognized skills, characteristics, and values held by a student) and peripherality (the presence of accessible openings to sources of understanding and appropriate opportunities for a student to exhibit their knowledge and skills). For example, when the observational data relating to regular language arts instruction were coded for instances of lower peripherality and legitimacy, these four students were almost always the students that were lacking the necessary peripherality and legitimacy. Additionally, these four students also were the ones most frequently ‘unsuccessful’ in their participation during lessons where the other students experienced high degrees of success. With the exception of Alex, they were the students least likely to verbally participate during a lesson and often were silent listeners during partner talk.

In terms of interview data, students rarely said explicitly negative things about their peers and, for ethical reasons, questions such as 'who do you like to work with least?' were viewed as inappropriate and therefore not asked. However, not one of the four students identified as having low status was mentioned in interviews as being someone that was good to have as a partner. During one interview, a focus student did mention that he is often partnered with Alex 'because Alex always wants to work with him'. He expressed a bit of displeasure about this as Alex would often 'distract' him and 'get him in trouble'. I also had students on several occasions tell me that Alex 'lies a lot' and that they 'don't believe anything that he says'. In one instance, I was sitting at a table group during the Halloween party when two boys started telling me about Alex's lying and that he probably does not 'have all the things at home that he says he has'. Since Alex is a focus student in this study, I will go into more detail about Alex's social interactions in chapter five. However, this brief description does confirm the teacher's perception that the way Alex interacts with peers is problematic.

The teacher's perceptions regarding the students with the highest degree of acceptance and classroom membership also were confirmed by the observational and student interview data. The students identified by the teacher, more so than any other students—appeared well liked and admired by peers. In the formal interviews with focus students, Lucia was mentioned in four of the five interviews as someone that was good to work with while Emma and Tomas were mentioned three times and David was mentioned twice. These students also were observed as being very successful during language arts tasks. They made insightful comments, knew the answers when others did not, always had a partner to talk with, and played an integral role in all group work.

The teacher's descriptions of the individual students also were accurate. The only contradiction between what was observed and the perceptions of the teacher was with Emma. While observations did support her high status in the classroom, data also suggested that Emma did not necessarily

perceive herself as someone with high status. Many of her behaviors—such as covering up her work and feeling uncomfortable when someone disagreed with her answer—indicated that she held some self- doubt with regard to her abilities. These behaviors increased during math, which was the subject she tended to struggle with most. It is also important to note that Tomas was by far the quietest student out of the four students identified as having the highest status during language arts lessons. The teacher did comment that Tomas was not 'as talkative' as other boys; however, observational data demonstrated that there were times when he was almost silent during language arts. While he almost always participated in group and partner talk, he was less likely to raise his hand and participate in a whole class setting.

Despite these minor discrepancies between the teacher's perceptions and the observational and interview data, the teacher's perceptions of which students were at either end of the classroom membership spectrum were supported by data. Camila, Alex, Mia, and Lucia were confirmed by evidence to be the four students with the lowest degree of classroom status and Tomas, Emma, David, and Lucia were confirmed as the students with the highest degree of status. In the following sections of data analysis, these two groups of students will be used to further examine how emerging trends and themes relate to the degree of classroom membership a student holds.

Observational Data Analysis

The following section outlines the data analysis process for this study's observational data. The main parts of this section are as follows:

1) Description of Observational Protocols
2) Open-Coding Process Description
3) Regular Language Arts Instruction Trends and Themes from Observational Protocols
4) Multimodal Literacy Approach Trends and Themes from Observational Protocols

Description of Observational Protocols

Observational protocols (structured and unstructured) were filled out daily during language arts instruction for fifteen weeks. Structured observational protocols were used once a week and included a section which focused on making direct observations of the selected focus students (see appendix 4.1). Unstructured observational protocols were used for all other observations (see appendix 4.1). All protocols were analyzed through an open coding process that emphasized student and teacher actions and presumed intentions. Prior to coding, each week was color coded to facilitate tracking and comparisons. Observational data from regular classroom language arts instruction were then separated from observational data from the implemented multimodal literacy instruction. This was done to distinguish the codes related to regular language arts instruction from codes connected to the multimodal literacy instruction.

Open-Coding Process Description

Three distinct rounds of open coding were then completed in order to delineate and focus the analysis as well as to ensure the accuracy of the coding. Each round will be explained in detail below followed by a discussion of the trends and themes that arose from this open coding.

First-round of open coding for observational protocols. During the first round of open coding of these data a total of 72 codes were identified. These codes then were organized into seven larger categories: participation, acceptance and respect, excitement/enthusiasm, engagement, stimulation, and placing value. The following chart is a list of these codes according to category:

First-round of open coding codes for Participation: very loud participation, embarrassment, reluctance, quiet, high percentage of participation, focus on task and not quality, focus on directions, unsure of one's self, use of Spanish, struggle, supporting answers, avoidance of 'negative' (instances of students using strategies to avoid looking bad to peers or to avoid demonstrating not understanding), looking ahead, working fast, marking where they got answers, control, lack of homework, non-successful participation, sitting in front, accountability, wanting credit for answer, simplistic/decontextualized task, impatience, limited time to do task, lack of hand raising, correcting, focus on right and wrong, reference to task being easy, successful

participation, picking up on what others say, confidence, low percentage of participation

First-round of open coding codes for Acceptance and Respect: rejection, recognition of peer, legitimacy (+), legitimacy (-), peripherality (+), peripherality (-), wanting legitimacy/peripherality, fear of looking bad

First-round of open coding codes for Excitement/Enthusiasm: excitement (+), excitement (-), motivated (+), motivated (-), flexibility/straying from routine, enjoyment/interest

First-round of open coding for Engagement: attention (+), attention (-), working in groups (+), working in groups (-), active listening, accountability, engagement (+), engagement (-), limited application, reference to standardized testing

First-round of open coding for Stimulation: hand motions/gestures, teacher use of Spanish, teacher use of drama, teacher enthusiasm

First-round of open coding for Placing Value: red pens, commenting during spelling, bilingual, humor

Second-round of open coding for observational protocols. During the second round of coding, related codes were collapsed into one code while other codes were removed due to limited instances of these codes actually appearing. In the 'Participation' category the following codes were dropped due to limited relevance: very loud, supporting answers, and impatience. It was also determined that several codes were actually indications of one's legitimacy and peripherality rather than simply being related to one's participation. Therefore, they were combined as subsets of these codes in the acceptance and respect categories. The following chart summarizes once again the conceptual meanings of both legitimacy and peripherality:

Legitimacy: the extent to which as student is viewed as someone with beneficial skills, characteristics, and values. Negative legitimacy codes are instances where someone's skills, characteristics, and values are positioned in a negative light.
Peripherality: the existence of openings or ways of gaining access to sources of understanding in the community. These openings are accessible opportunities to exhibit knowledge and skills in a way that is appreciated and beneficial for student learning. Negative peripherality codes are

instances where these openings are limited or not provided for a student or group of students.

Specifically, the codes embarrassment, reluctance, quiet, unsure of one's self, avoidance of negative (instances of students using strategies to avoid looking bad to peers or to avoid demonstrating not understanding), correcting, marking where they got answers, and lack of homework all became subsets of the 'negative legitimacy' code. The codes 'picking up on what others say' and 'confidence' became subsets of the 'positive legitimacy' code; the code 'reference to task being easy' and 'wanting credit for an answer' became a subset of the 'wanting legitimacy' code; and the code 'struggle' became a subset of the 'negative peripherality' code.

Other codes within the participation category were combined with one another. The codes 'focus on right and wrong', 'focus on task and not quality', and 'focus on directions' were all combined together as they represented the same idea—student attention focused on directions and mechanics of the task and not on the content of the task or growth and learning. 'Looking ahead' and 'working fast' were also combined and it was determined that 'lack of hand raising' was actually a subset of the code 'low percentage of participation' while 'sitting in the front' was a subset of 'accountability'. This left a total of 10 codes in the Participation category after the second round of coding.

Second-round codes for Participation: high percentage of participation, low percentage of participation, focus on task not quality/focus on directions/focus on right or wrong, using Spanish, working fast/looking ahead, control, non-successful participation, successful participation, accountability, simplistic/decontextualized task

In the Acceptance and Respect category several codes were combined together. Both 'rejection' and 'fear of looking bad' were added as a subset of the 'negative legitimacy' code and the code 'recognizing peers' was combined with the 'positive legitimacy' code. This left a total of 5 codes in the Acceptance and Respect category after the second round of coding.

Second-round codes for Acceptance and Respect: positive legitimacy, negative legitimacy, positive peripherality, negative peripherality, wanting legitimacy or peripherality

In the Excitement and Enthusiasm category, the codes ‘excitement/enthusiasm’ and ‘enjoyment’ were combined as they were not distinguishable from one another. The ‘motivated (+) and (-)’ codes were combined with the ‘engagement (+) and (-) codes’ in the Engagement category as motivation was deemed to be an indicator of engagement. This left a total of 3 codes in the Excitement and Enthusiasm category.

Second-round codes for Excitement and Enthusiasm: excitement/enthusiasm/enjoyment (+), excitement/enthusiasm/enjoyment (-), flexibility/straying from routine

In the Engagement category, the codes ‘limited application’ and ‘reference to standardized testing’ were combined with the ‘simplistic/decontextualized task’ code in the Participation category. The code ‘active listening’ was also added under the ‘attention (+)’. This left a total of 7 codes in the Engagement category.

Second-round codes for Engagement: attention (+), attention (-), working in groups (+), working in groups (-), accountability, engagement (+), engagement (-)

At the end of the second round of coding, it was determined that the categories Stimulation and Placing Value did not provide relevant information for the focus of this study nor were there enough codes in the category to make these categories meaningful. Both categories were therefore removed. This left a total of 25 codes after the second round of coding.

Third-round of open coding observational protocols. During the third round of coding, I re-read all observational protocols for a last time to ensure the accuracy of my codes and determine if anything was left out. No new codes or categories were added or modified during this third-round of coding. I then shared sample data and corresponding codes to the classroom teacher to check the fit of the codes to my data sample.

After the third round of open coding, I began determining the trends and themes arising from the coded observational data. This was done through the process of pattern coding. Pattern coding is

appropriate for developing major themes from the data—especially in studies such as this which are examining social networks and patterns of human relationships (Miles & Huberman, 1994). During this process, similar codes established in earlier coding were collected together to analyze their commonality and to create a larger pattern code. Pattern codes were then used to develop statements that describe a major theme of my study, an observed pattern of action, or a network of interrelationships.

The following sections of this chapter describe all observational data trends and themes that emerged from pattern coding and provide detailed examples of each major theme. First, the trends and themes related to the focus classroom's regular language arts instruction are discussed. It is essential to look at these themes prior to examining themes relating to multimodal instruction as the regular language arts themes establish a basis of what typical language arts instruction, student participation and engagement, and classroom membership looked like in this focus classroom. After the overview of trends and themes relating to regular language arts instruction, all trends and themes relating to the multimodal literacy approach will be highlighted.

Observational Data for Regular Language Arts Instruction: Trends and Themes

This section details the themes related to the observational data gathered during regular language arts lessons. These trends and themes are divided into three categories: regular language arts instruction, regular language arts participation/engagement, and regular language arts classroom membership. A classroom overview—including a detailed description of typical, daily language arts instruction—is provided first so readers can develop a general understanding the focus classroom and typical instruction that occurred. The following topic map outlines the major parts of this section:

1) Classroom description, daily instructional schedule, and language arts instruction overview
2) Regular language arts instructional themes
3) Regular language arts participation and engagement themes
4) Regular language arts classroom membership themes

Classroom description, daily instructional schedule, and language arts instruction overview. The focus classroom was structured around small clusters of four individual desks. Students sitting in the same cluster—referred to as a table group—worked together as a team for 6-8 weeks until the teacher reassigned students to new desks. The classroom also had a carpet area utilized for read alouds and class discussions and meetings, a kidney-shaped table used for small group meetings with the teacher, a classroom library with books organized according to Accelerated Reading (a progress monitoring software assessment in wide use by primary and secondary schools for monitoring the practice of reading) level, a whiteboard and an ELMO (an interactive document camera which projects images of documents onto whiteboards) used for whole class direct instruction, a row of computers used for Accelerated Reading tests and recess games, and a teacher work space. The following two photographs highlight the overall layout of the focus classroom:

The following is an example of a typical daily instructional routine (October 18, Researcher's Notebook). Daily schedules were written on the board each day so students knew what to anticipate for the day's activities.

8:30-9:00—English Language Development (ELD)
9:00-9:10—Homework Check
9:10-9:15—Word Knowledge (Focus on synonyms and irregular verbs)
9:25-9:40— Determining the main idea and details from the story Teammates
9:40-10:30— Spelling (Mondays and Fridays); Additional skills based and grammar work
10:30-10:45—Recess
10:45-11:20—Reader's Workshop
11:20-12:20—Social Studies or Science
12:20-1:00—Recess and Lunch
1:00-1:35—Calendar and Basic Math Facts
1:35-1:45—Recess
1:45-2:45—Math

A more detailed explanation of the typical language arts instruction in a day follows. This explanation is a summary of my notes taken on October 21st in my researcher's notebook:

8:30-9:00—ELD; Students in the 3rd grade are ability grouped according to their English language development skills and divided among the three teachers (the focus teacher works with students with the highest level of English skills). During ELD, students worked in the Language for Writing (SRA/McGraw Hill) workbooks and textbooks and learned through direct instruction and independent

work. The first part of instruction focused on listening to oral English and providing choral responses (i.e. the teacher reads a sentence out loud and the students chorally respond whether the sentence was a question, statement, command or exclamation). The second part of instruction included independent writing or workbook activity completion (i.e. students write short sentences based on pictures of clues like 'write a sentence about those oranges' or students put the correct punctuation into sentences that have no punctuation). Students then orally shared their writing or answers with the whole class or with a partner. Students' English language abilities were periodically assessed and the grouping is adjusted for ELD based on student growth.

9:00-9:10—Homework Check; only language arts homework was checked during this time. This homework always consisted of reading short informational paragraphs and answering several, fact-based reading comprehension questions. In addition to these readings, students also completed skills based worksheets every night focused on spelling, word knowledge, and grammar. While the teacher always left 10 minutes for the homework check on the daily calendar, it was not unusual for this task to take 25-30 minutes. It was noted on several occasions in the researcher notebook that nearly all students answered the majority of their reading comprehension homework questions incorrectly. The classroom teacher mentioned that she took the extra time for homework check to try to clear up confusion and improve the students' ability to answer reading comprehension tasks. This extra time also meant that other activities were either left out or the time spent on them was shortened.

9:10-9:15—Word Knowledge: This activity was completed in the carpet area and came directly out of the Open Court program. Open Court is a language arts instructional program that is quite commonly used in elementary schools in the United States. In particular, this program is often implemented in Title One Schools—schools with a high percentage of students from low-SES backgrounds. It is a basel reader program that is very heavily focused on phonics instruction. In the program, there is a

story of the week with accompanying worksheets focused on phonics development and reading comprehension strategies. Additionally, there are supplemental worksheets that address language arts skills in a decontextualized manner—meaning that these skills are taught without being in the context of actual reading and writing.

For the word knowledge activity, the teacher would have six different lines of words and four sentences written down on chart paper. Each line of words represented a word category such as 'words with –ed endings' or 'compound words'. Students had to either chorally or individually read the words on each of the lines and then talk with a partner in English about what the words had in common and guess what the category was. For the sentences, one student was generally called on to read each sentence and then the teacher worked with the whole class to underline spelling words and words that fit in the categories discussed in the above lines. The sentences came directly out of the Open Court story students were reading that week. Students would work on these same lines and sentences every day for a week. The following is an example of the Word Knowledge activity from October 25th:

L1: hollered, whispered, grinned, frowned
L2: vacant, empty, bare
L3: streetlight, playground, tiptoe
L4: spiky, cottony, smelly, silvery
L5: unbelievable, undecorated, untied, uneaten, unoccupied
L6: started, apartments, dark, car, air
S1: Tony stopped and made believe his sneaker was untied to see what King was going to do.
S2: "Well, come on, man," King whispered, and they started down the street.
S3: Just after the friends passed some of the apartments, they came to a vacant lot.
S4: An indigo car is a dark blue color.

9:15-10:00—Open Court Work: students were generally at their desks either listening to the story of the week through a teacher read aloud or on audiotape. They would also complete activities related to that story of the week such as filling out story maps, making predictions, identifying the main idea and details, and completing short writings. These activities were very repetitive with students undertaking the same activities for multiple stories.

10:00-10:30—Spelling and Grammar: instruction during this time really varied. Monday and Friday were spent taking spelling tests while the other days generally included grammar based activities such as listing present tense verbs and then changing them to past and future. Additional time was also spent on working on students' word knowledge such as homophones, synonyms, and antonyms.

10:30-10:45—Recess

10:45-11:20—Reader's Workshop: the third grade students were once again divided into three groups this time according to their guiding reading level (the focus teacher worked with students in the highest reading levels). During this time, the teacher ran guided reading discussions at her kidney table while the other students worked collaboratively in groups to read a shared text while using reciprocal teaching strategies to go through the process of predicting, making connections, clarifying words, asking questions, and summarizing.

The above descriptions provide a general understanding of the focus classroom and the typical language arts instruction that occurred. With this understanding established, the themes that emerged from observational data relating to regular language arts instruction will now be discussed. These themes have been divided into three categories: instructional themes, participation and engagement themes, and classroom membership themes.

Regular language arts instructional theme: Decontextualized, skill-based instruction. The literature review for this study highlighted that language arts instruction for ELLs continues to be decontextualized and skill-based in North American classrooms; the focus classroom was certainly no exception. Almost all regular language arts lessons and tasks were heavily routinized and focused around learning basic skills in a decontextualized manner. The school district used Open Court as their language arts program and the focus teacher rarely strayed from this program—meaning that almost all stories read aloud came from the basal reader and extension activities came from the supplemental

Open Court workbook. In an informal interview (February 24th), I asked the teacher about the use of Open Court as well as expectations of use by the district. She mentioned that all schools—aside from the two high achieving elementary schools in the district—were required to strictly follow the Open Court program. Schools scoring exceptionally well on the standardized test were allowed to select their own language arts program. Despite the strictness on the part of the district, the teacher mentioned that her principal was okay with some 'flexibility' in the program. She stated that this 'flexibility' on the part of the principal was what allowed us to implement the multimodal literacy approach.

The following is a sample of the 'simplistic/decontextualized task' codes that arose in the observational data. These codes are representative of typical language arts tasks in the focus classroom.

> **Simplistic/Decontextualized Tasks—**students had to copy the definition of synonym in notebooks from the board, then they made a list of synonyms for the word 'good' but this was not in the context of real writing
> **Decontextualized/Focus on Skills**—good example on Nov 29th, did a worksheet in Open Court on organizing expository text; less than 50% engagement because the worksheet included a confusing dense chart about what elements are found in expository text that students did not fully understand; is it worthwhile to find the main idea when you are only looking at two sentences?
> **Decontextualized/Focus on Skills and No Application—**good example on Dec 2nd with the quotation mark lesson; The worksheet has students circle places where quotation marks are used correctly; only about 25% understand the skill at the end; no mention of how and why students should use quotations in their own writing
> Simplistic/Decontextualized Task—difference between fact and fiction on a worksheet, very dense chart with rules for both fact and fiction, students had to write fact or fiction after each sentence, students had to underline main idea of each sentence
> Simplistic/Decontextualized Skill—students had to write an F next to sentences that were about fantasy
> Simplistic/Decontextualized Skill—read three sentences in a workbook and then say what the main idea is (most paragraphs have the first sentence as the main idea)
> Simplistic/Decontextualized Skill—students had to punctuate sentences, add commas, and capitalize proper nouns on a worksheet

These types of skills-based, decontextualized activities tended to fill up anywhere between 60-70% of daily language arts instruction time. Even the classroom read alouds were very skill-based—though in this case the skills were at least within the context of a story. Read aloud questions tended to

be fact-based questions that had a right or wrong answer and often addressed a language arts skill. Sample read aloud question include: So what does expository text do? (November 17th); what is the type of city wildlife that we saw in the story? (November 10th); what are wild animals? (November 16th); how do we know that spring is here and winter is gone? (November 1st); so who is Tony Polito? (November 1st); and what does Frankenstein have in his house that Dracula also has? (October 29th). Follow-up activities to the read alouds also were very repetitive and routinized with students completing basic story maps for fiction stories and filling out main idea and details worksheets for non-fiction stories. There was very little room in these activities for students to use their imaginations, make connections to the texts, and share personal opinions and understandings about the characters and events.

In January, simplistic/decontextualized tasks took up an even larger percentage of time with the addition of the 'Do Now' activity. 'Do Now'—a daily worksheet created by one of the third grade teachers—was essentially a test preparation activity where students answered 3-4 language arts questions that were similar to those on the upcoming standardized test. During this time, the teacher would give students test taking advice such as 'there is generally one answer that is ridiculous, two answers that try to trick you, and one right answer' and 'you should cross out the wrong answers and you should always read to the end of the sentence before answering' (January 19th). Students would first answer the questions independently and then students would be called on to 'be the teacher' and explain to the class how they got their answer. While this activity was originally planned to take no more than ten minutes, I documented many cases where this activity took thirty-five to forty minutes (see for example January 19th, January 20th, and February 28th). The following is a sample of a Do Now question on January 10th:

Directions: Read the box below and answer the question

The spelling bee was about to begin, and all ten spellers sat waiting nervously.

Which word is an ANTONYM for begin?

a. open
b. start
c. finish
d. set up

Not surprisingly, these heavily routine, skills based tasks did not result in experiences of success for the classroom's struggling readers and writers. As mentioned in the literature review, one of the reasons teachers over rely on skills based tasks is a belief that ELLs will not be successful in higher level thinking activities or lessons that require meaningful and purposeful application of skills. Rather than engage ELLs in lessons they believe will prove unsuccessful for them, teachers opt for these more simplistic tasks at which they feel ELLs will have a better chance of success. In reality, the four students in this study identified with the lowest English reading and writing skills were consistently unsuccessful during these skills-based tasks. Rather than being a task where they could demonstrate their competency, these 'more simplistic' lessons actually worked against that goal and further positioned these students as 'struggling learners'. The following are examples from the observational data supporting this finding:

> Unsuccessful participation—Camila does not know the main idea of an expository text after listening to it three times; said the main idea was 'racoons'
> Unsuccessful participation—Alex unable to do worksheet on his own
> Reasons for not participating—filling out a t-chart on fantasy vs. real for Make Way for the Ducklings there were four students not participating at all (other than filling in their chart based on what the teacher wrote on the ELMO without really thinking); Camila because she did not seem to understand what was going on or what to do; Mateo because the task was too easy for him and he appeared bored; Lucia because she is often too shy to raise her hand or talk to her peers; Alex because he was too distracted to stay focused on participating and he struggled to understand what was going on
> Struggle—Camila and Mia struggle when the class is given a sentence in the present tense and they are to change it to the future and then the past (very difficult because of their English as well they do not really understand that they are taking the same sentence and making only small verb changes)
> Unsuccessful participation—Mia could not provide an example for why she said the story was in first person

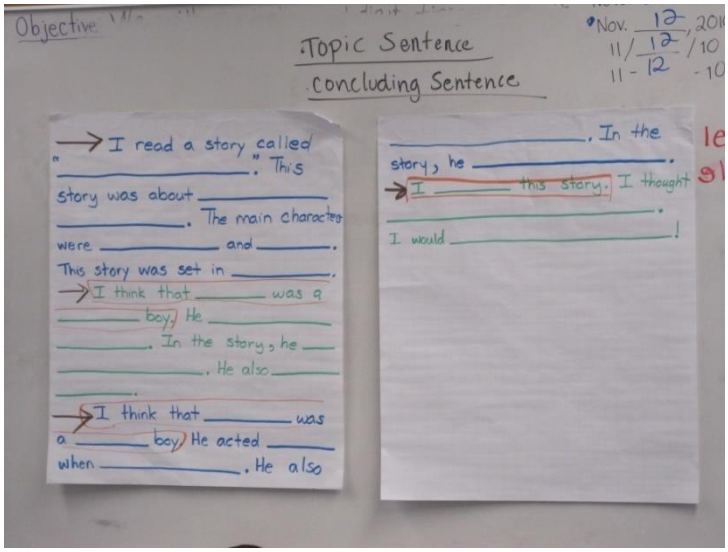
Low participation—Lucia would not work with anyone during partner talk during word knowledge despite several reminders to participate

The only times these students demonstrated themselves as 'competent' in these skills based tasks were instances where 'success' could be achieved by simply copying what the teacher was writing on the board or on the ELMO. Yet, even in these instances these students would rarely successfully verbally participate in the lesson and often they did not appear to understand what they were copying and why the answers were correct. So while there were instances when these skills-based tasks resulted in 'minimal' demonstrations of success for all students, this success was determined solely based on whether or not a worksheet was completed correctly and not on the level of verbal input, engagement, and student understanding of the lesson.

The overreliance on decontextualized, skills based activities—as well as a focus on directions and mechanics of tasks—certainly had implications for how students acted during lessons as well as on how they interacted with each other. Themes that arose in terms of implications of heavily routinized, skills-based tasks were: bare minimum of effort and completion accepted, reluctance to go out on their own and take a risk, focus on speed of task not on quality of output, and blind following along with task without thinking. Corresponding examples of each of these themes are provided below:

Bare minimum of effort and completion accepted. There were many instances where students put the minimum amount of effort into the task. This was often because the students were fully aware of the expectations of tasks they completed routinely—including an awareness of the level at which they would be held accountable for their work. Students would then adjust their effort in a task accordingly. For example, students knew that when working on an Open Court worksheet simply copying down the answers that the teacher was writing down on the ELMO was enough to 'get them through the lesson'. They were familiar enough with this task to realize that they would not be held accountable to know *why* they were writing something down as long as they had it written down. This

'bare minimum of effort' was also seen in structured, simple writing tasks where students were asked to write sentences about a picture or idea. Students were aware that the amount that they wrote and the content of their writing were not as important as using proper punctuation, grammar and spelling. Rather than improving the quality of their writing, this overemphasis on basic skills resulted in students writing only the bare minimum number of sentences and creating overly simplistic sentences despite an ability to write more. The following photograph highlights one structured writing task that lead to student doing a bare minimum of writing:



The essay structure provided to students in this photograph turned an open writing task—one that required students to summarize their feelings about the characters and overall plot of a story—into a 'fill-in-the-blank' writing activity. Students simply had to copy down what was written on the chart paper and 'fill in' a few words where needed. No students in the class strayed from this structure and no one added any additional sentences or ideas.

The following are additional examples of this theme from the observational data:

> Low participation—Alex only wrote 'The 3 day i dint go to school. On Friday i went to a party' when provided 15 minutes to write about what they did over the break.
> Low accountability—the class is creating a suffix chart by writing a base word and then the word with several different suffixes. A few students, including Camila, are just copying down what the teacher writes even though they clearly do not comprehend what she is doing (e.g. Camila asks

me where she should write something and she also makes several copying mistakes that she does not even notice). Once the teacher stopped filling out the chart on the ELMO and told students to do it on their own when students shared a new word, several students stopped filling out the chart (Alex was not even able to do it correctly when the teacher was doing it on the ELMO)
Control—always given a sentence structure to follow when writing 'my eraser is ____ and _____. It smells _____. It tastes _____. It feels _____. Another example 'In my classroom, I (heard, smelled, felt) _____. Students then only do the minimum amount of writing.
Low attention—no students really listen when other students are reading, especially when that student is struggling to read the text. The students are not held accountable for listening for following along.

Reluctance to go out on their own and take a risk. Another implication for simplistic, skills based tasks was a reluctance to take a risk in answers or comments. During these tasks, there was really no benefit or encouragement for students to be creative with answers or stray from the given example or structure. Rather, there was an overemphasis on following specific instructions—including structured writing prompts—and ensuring the correctness of language arts skills (i.e. spelling). For example, during a writing task that involved students writing a summary about a story they had read, the teacher provided students with sentence starters and gave them a structure for their paragraph. When one student commented that you could write 'City Critters is a fantastic story' as a topic sentence she was not complimented or encouraged to write that down. Rather, students were encouraged to use the sentence starter they were already given which was 'Last week I read the story City Critters.' Students also had a tendency to write down exactly what the teacher was writing on the ELMO in response to open ended questions—even when told they could write down their own answers. The following are additional examples of this theme from the observational data:

Unsuccessful Participation—reluctance to go out on their own when writing answers to more open ended questions...students like to copy exactly what the teacher writes on the ELMO; students do not take initiative even when encouraged to; teacher encourages them to write the main idea in their own words rather than copying her but they do not.
Unsuccessful participation—when the teacher asks students to use their own words they often struggle; for example Emma is asked to repeat the directions in her own words she just repeats exactly what the directions say

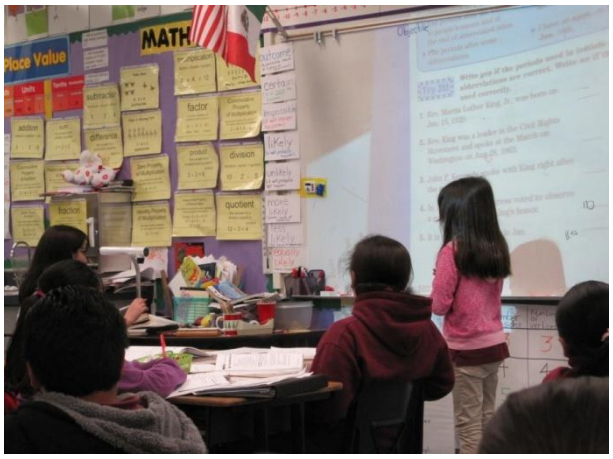
Unsuccessful participation/focus on right or wrong: students are asked to turn a sentence about reality into a sentence about fantasy. Rather than coming up with their own unique fantasy idea they simply take ideas from the sentences they just worked on...students still thought there was a specific way to change the sentences that the teacher was looking for and were therefore reluctant to stray from the examples given them.
Not willing to take a risk—when students are making up sentences for an activity they often use variations of the example that was done as a whole class. For example, if they are given the sentence 'I had a sweater' and are asked to come up with other sentences using has and have. They will just write 'She has a sweater' or 'we have a sweater'.

Focus on speed of task and not on quality of output. Since completion was often the goal in these more simplistic, skills based tasks, students also tended to work quickly without regard for the quality of their work. For example, students knew that when they had to answer fact based reading comprehension questions that they were not necessarily held accountable for the quality of their answers and therefore often completed them as quickly as possible. It was clear that there was nothing inherently motivating about these skills-based tasks to get them to want to do the best work they were capable of. The following are additional examples of this theme from the observational data:

Working fast-Emma looking ahead at the Teammates story; wanting to get started right away on her writing; not necessarily paying attention to detailed directions
Working Fast—Alex does not even read the spelling sentences to see which is misspelled, he just fills in the bubbles.
Speed/bare min—students answered comprehension questions with the just the bare min; just wanted to be finished
Speed—Camila completes spelling test really fast with most answers wrong

Blind following along without thinking. Many of these skills-based tasks were heavily routinized and repetitive as students did the same tasks over and over again. With these routines, there was evidence that students got in the mindset about what type of answers and participation were expected. For example, during a word knowledge lesson a student is called on to identify the pattern in a row of words. The student quickly says 'they are all compound words' because in previous weeks this has been the focus of word knowledge. This particular student was actually quite capable of recognizing that all the words actually had –ed endings and were not compound words but he had not

stopped to really consider the words. Students also 'blindly followed along' when completing Open Court Worksheets. As the below photograph demonstrates, the teacher almost always had the worksheet on the ELMO and had individual students come up and complete questions.



If a student was not called to come up to the front of the class, they simply had to copy down answers from the ELMO without providing evidence that they actually knew why that was the answer. The following are additional examples of this theme from the observational data:

> **Choral Participation—**Camila's choral participation is always a few seconds behind because she is just repeating what other's our (sic) saying without thinking about what she thinks the answer is...this is evidence that choral participation does not mean a student is engaged
> **Picking up on what other's say—**when a person or persons say something many students just pick up on what is said and repeat the same answer without thinking...even if they originally had something different...this often happens when the original person or pair says the wrong answer (e.g. for L3 in word knowledge Miguel and Kate said that the words were all opposites when they were actually synonyms for large....all other students around them start saying 'opposite' too)

Regular language arts participation and engagement themes. The major themes within this category are 'high student attention with minimal student engagement and active participation', 'a high frequency of unsuccessful participation in lessons', and 'shared commonalities among lessons actually had a high degree of successful student participation'. Each theme is discussed in detail below.

Regular language arts participation and engagement theme one: High student attention with minimal engagement and participation. Within the observational data, instances where a high

percentage of students (a min of 70% of the class) were ‘attentive’ in a lesson were very common. During the first few weeks of observations, I noted several times in my researcher’s notebook my surprise at how attentive students were during very simplistic, repetitive tasks. However, during the majority of these instances, it was also noted that despite student attentiveness, only a low percentage of students were actually actively participating and highly engaged in the lesson. While students were clearly following along and ‘completing’ a task, most students were not verbally participating and there was little evidence that they were engaged in the task. In fact, during regular language arts lessons there were few instances where a high percentage of students were observed to be actively participating and instances where a high percentage of students were highly engaged in a task were even less frequent.

The following three photographs are representative of the typical, whole class instruction language arts lesson. In both photographs, students are sitting silently at their desks while following along and filling out a worksheet as the teacher filled out an example on the ELMO. The third photograph is of a read aloud right after a question was asked. Only five students are raising their hand to verbally participate despite the fact that all students are fairly attentive to the story.

As these photographs demonstrate, throughout these lessons there were few students off task and attention was very focused on the board. However, when students were asked what they thought the answer was to a question, there were generally only 3-5 hands raised and the same students tended to raise their hands every time. Students also did not ask engaging questions, offer higher level thinking comments, demonstrate feelings of interest and enthusiasm, or take participation risks (i.e. straying from task structure, being creative with answers, and taking leadership roles). The following are additional instances of this theme from within the observational data:

> High percentage—when students are asked to copy what the teacher is writing there is always a high percentage of participation (100%); but there is no evidence that the students are actually thinking about what they are writing and few students are verbally participating
> **Participation—**When the participation calls for copying down what Ms. Lara is writing on the ELMO or board students are always actively writing but if I asked a student why a particular answer was correct they often did not know the answer (esp. Camila, Mia, Alex)
> Low engagement—writing a paragraph on painting with shaving cream, students are told to focus on main idea and details rather than expression and creativity, as well this type of painting is not something they have done before making it difficult for them to connect with the topic.
> Low engagement—when creating their opposite cat poems students filled in the blanks quickly and really only used the example words provided to them in the box
> **Not Engaged—**despite the above attentiveness, students are not engaged with answering three questions after the story (Dec 1) and instead do the bare minimum and do not spend much time thinking about an answer...if they do not know right away, they immediately stop trying and want help from the teacher (this was especially the case with the question 'What does the title of the story have to do with what happens in the story?')

Regular language arts participation and engagement theme two: High frequency of unsuccessful participation in lessons. Observational data also demonstrate that instances of non-successful participation were quite common during regular language arts lessons. In fact, the data show

that it was very rare for the entire class to successfully participate in a lesson. There were a total of 62 instances of codes highlighting problems with participation and these codes were then pattern coded to determine specific themes related to unsuccessful participation during regular language arts instruction in the focus classroom. The following themes were found: unwillingness/inability to work and/or talk with or listen to peers, inability to do the task/task too difficult/limited background knowledge, boys and girls paired together, and personal reasons (task too easy, too shy/not comfortable, and too distracted). Each of these codes will be discussed in detail with supporting examples from the data.

Unwillingness/inability to work and/or talk with and listen to peers. Throughout the 'unsuccessful participation' codes, there was evidence that particular students struggled during their limited opportunities to work with and engage with peers. These cooperative opportunities were most often in the form of brief—30-45 seconds—opportunities to talk with a partner. The students identified as having low degrees of classroom membership (Camila, Alex, Mia, and Lucia) were the students most often struggling to participate in partner talk. Instances where the majority of the class was not participating in partner talk tended to be times when there was either confusion over the task or when students simply did not know the answer to the question they were discussing. This indicates that students with middle and high degrees of classroom membership were generally successful in their participation during partner talk unless there was something inherently confusing or difficult with the question they were to discuss. Students with low degrees membership, however, would often struggle to verbally participate in small groups or with partners—even in instances where the rest of the class was successful. The following are instances where these students struggled:

> Unsuccessful participation—Camila, Mia, and Lucia tend to be talked to during carpet pair time, they rarely talk to their partner
> Unsuccessful Participation—Mateo and Kate talk to each other about homophones but Camila does not talk and is not included
> Unsuccessful Participation—Camila silent and not listening to group during Fable discussion despite the fact that pretty much everyone else was participating

Unsuccessful Participation—during partner talk in a read aloud Camila, Lucia, and Emily do not talk to their partner, they only listen to their partner; the teacher then mentions to Sofia to include Camila but Camila makes no effort to include herself
Unsuccessful Participation—Camila is reluctant to discuss events in a book with Sofia—this is during a very engaging story
Unsuccessful participation—Lucia would not work with anyone during partner talk during word knowledge despite several reminders to participate
Unsuccessful participation—Lucia not working with anyone during read aloud partner talk
Unsuccessful participation—Mia, Camila, Tomas, Miguel, and Emily all listening but not participating in partner talk during an enjoyable read aloud

*Inability to do the task/task too difficult/limited background knowledge***.** Not surprisingly, there was also evidence that the difficulty of a task also influenced the level of successful participation. Once again, most of these instances involved one of the four students identified as having a 'low' status struggling to participate. The following instances from the observational data highlight this theme:

Unsuccessful participation—Camila does not know the main idea of an expository text after listening to it three times; said 'racoons'
Unsuccessful participation—Alex unable to do worksheet on his own
Struggle—Camila struggles when the class is given a sentence in the present tense and they are to change it to the future and then the past (very difficult because of her English as well she does not really understand that they are taking the sentence and making only small verb changes)
Struggle—Camila could not do her bird report, her topic/idea webs were way off, she just wants to randomly copy things down from her book, Alex, Camila, and Mia simply could not access this task
Struggle—Alex, Camila, and Mia need constant assistance in doing their opposite cats poem, especially when they were then asked to do another one for another animal; often it is the structure/scaffold in place that is supposed to make a task easier that actually trips Alex and Camila up

There were instances where the majority of the class struggled with a task. For example, some literacy tasks required a deeper English vocabulary than the students held. One such task had students brainstorming sensory adjectives to go along with the five senses. Very few students were able to come up with adjectives and even those students who participated struggled to come up with more than one. Other times the class would struggle with Open Court worksheets that again were pitched slightly higher than the ability level of the class. For example, during the completion of a quotation worksheet

it was evident that less than 25% of the class actually understood what they were doing and how quotations work. However, these instances made up the minority of cases; it was much more common for only a few students to struggle with the difficulty of a task while all other students were successfully able to demonstrate their academic competency.

*Boys and girls paired together***.** Observational data also highlight that the success of student participation often decreased when boys and girls were paired together. There was a trend in the classroom for students to simply not talk during pair talk if they were paired up with someone of the opposite sex. The following are examples from with the observational data:

> **Not Fully Successful Pair Sharing—**not all students talk to a pair during time given during word knowledge (e.g. Victoria and Samuel not talking to each other during word knowledge....so common that when a boy and a girl have to pair up they are not very talkative...even if those students are usually talkative when in a group or paired with a member of the same sex)
> Unsuccessful participation—Victoria and Samuel not talking to each other; common among boys and girls
> Unsuccessful participation—during a read aloud in partner talk Isabella and Tomas not really talking to each other

Personal reasons (task too easy, too shy/not comfortable, and too distracted). In addition to the above themes, there were times where a student's unsuccessful participation was the result of a personal reason. Personal reasons were causes of unsuccessful participation that impacted only one student in the class. For example, there was one student in the classroom who was going through the process of being placed in the talented and gifted program. He often withdrew himself from lessons because the pacing was too slow for him or the content was something he was already quite familiar with. He often voiced his frustration to the classroom teacher that a lesson was 'too easy'. During a group interview, he also mentioned that he preferred to work alone than in a group because he felt he could 'do things faster that way'. Observational notes demonstrate that he was the only student in the class that commonly felt that tasks were 'too easy'. Another student struggled with staying focused on a task and his unsuccessful participation was often a result of him not following along or listening.

While there were of course times when other students were distracted, he was the only student for which 'paying attention' was a daily struggle. Another student exhibited signs of extreme shyness both inside the classroom and outside the classroom (i.e. recess). Her shyness led to unsuccessful participation when a lesson required her to engage in social interactions or verbally participate in front of her peers.

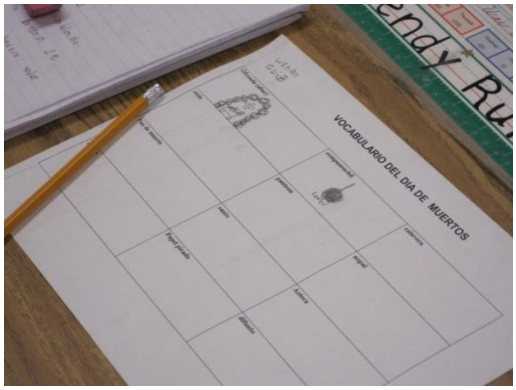
Regular language arts participation and engagement theme three: Shared commonalities among lessons that had a high degree of successful participation. The final theme in the regular language arts participation and engagement category is that there were several commonalities found within lessons that had a high degree of successful participation. As mentioned above, instances where all students in the class experienced a high degree of successful participation were rare. These few instances of participation success were collected together and pattern coded to determine if there were any specific themes related to lessons with high quality participation and engagement. Three commonalities were found: these lessons tended to stray from the routine, they tended to connect more to the student's Hispanic culture, and they were more open ended.

Any time a lesson either focused on Hispanic culture or a connection was made to their native language or country there was an immediate shift in participation and engagement. One good example of this was during Dia de los Muertos. To celebrate this holiday, students engaged in a series of four lessons over four days. During this time, they wrote poems, explored Spanish vocabulary related to the holiday, decorated sugar skulls, and added to the school's Dia de los Muertos display. Lessons were much more open ended in terms of the modes of communication used and the types of questions asked. Notes taken in my researcher's notebook demonstrate that all students were highly enthusiastic during all four lessons, were much more active in their participation (even shouting out answers in

excitement), and made genuine connections to the content. The following three photographs are from these lessons.

The first photograph shows a student proudly showing off her sugar skull.

The second photograph shows the lesson where students completed drawings to represent their understanding of the vocabulary they were learning. Drawing was not something done very often in the classroom and there was an immediate shift in motivation for this task. Students really took their time on drawings and created their own individual images rather than copy down what their peers were drawing. All students, including the students with lower membership status, were successful in this task and they all actively took part in sharing and explaining their visual representations with their tablemates. During individual interviews with the focus students, both Camila and Alex mentioned that this was their favorite language arts activity of the previous two weeks.



The third photograph demonstrates the poetry lesson where students created poems in Spanish that were popular in Mexico for this holiday. If we look at the positioning of students in this picture, it is clear that their body language indicates that they are engaged and enthused in the lesson.

The teacher in this photograph is clapping her hands to get the students' attention to finish up their group work. They had just spent a few minutes brainstorming ideas in their groups for characters and situations that they could add to the class poem. One student is standing up writing down her group's ideas. Standing up at their desks was something students only really did when they were excited—aside from the two students who almost always stood at their desks because they appeared to pay attention better when standing. For this particular student, she was observed jumping up from her seat several times during their group talk when she got excited about a new idea. Two other students are seen in this pictures laughing and sharing one last idea that could be added to the poem. It is noted in the researcher's notebook that all students in the class actively participated in the small group discussions and all students demonstrated excitement in the lesson.

While this was the only language arts lesson entirely focused on Latino culture that was observed, there were several instances where students' excitement level and degree of success increased with the inclusion of Spanish into a lesson. The following are examples of this from the observational data:

Spanish—engagement also increases briefly when the conversation turns to Spanish cognates or to discussing how an English language arts rule is different in Spanish, they also seem to leave the lesson with a greater understanding of that English language arts rule
Enthusiasm—during word knowledge the teacher gave a Spanish example of vowel diagraphs with the word 'guittara'; students very enthusiastic about this and were laughing at pronouncing both the u and i
Excitement—students very excited when the teacher makes a connection to how words are pronounced in Spanish; students immediately start participating more in the lesson and their understanding is certainly enhanced due to their higher interest from what they are learning

The above activities were unique in that they connected with students' Latino culture and language rather than on mainstream American culture and the English language, which was the focus in the Open Court lessons. These lessons were also unique because they strayed from the more typical, heavily routine activities that made up the bulk of the language arts instruction—which is another trend found within lessons where there was a high degree of successful participation. Whenever a task or lesson strayed from the typical routine or incorporated a more open-ended aspect to the lesson, student enthusiasm and motivation increased and this lead to an overall increase in successful participation. The following are examples of this from within the observational data:

Successful Participation—Students enjoyed practicing changing their voice to sound like characters, all students successfully participated in doing this
Successful Participation—Students really seemed to be engaged with text to self questions; text to self questions tend to be popular and a lot of students raise their hands to answer them
Successful Participation—Rather than doing a character map on an Open Court character, Ms. Lara had students write a paragraph using a character map of Garfield the main character of the comics of the day; very successful with many creative sentences and all students motivated and engaged...all students completed the task successfully
Successful Participation—students do well when asked deeper level thinking questions like 'Is boasting a good thing or a bad thing?' Mariana said that it is good only if it is true and Emma shared that she was concerned that boasting would make other people feel bad even if it was true
High engagement—for the story The Cat Who Became A Poet there was higher engagement than usual, 100% attention and engagement for most of the read aloud (wide eyes, laughter, comments of surprise); they were also engaged in answering questions about imagination in small groups
High attention/engagement—for an engaging read aloud (the teacher was reading all students are very attentive, staring at book, laughing, reacting to what was read, tons of hands up to participate
High engagement—when teacher asks more open ended questions in a read aloud and the story is interesting for the students

High engagement—when students are asked to identify which part of a story could happen in real life

Flexibility-Students more excited when correcting homework when they were able to come up with additional words that fit the spelling pattern

Regular language arts classroom membership themes. The themes arising from the observational data in this category include 'low peripherality and legitimacy offered to particular students', 'limited opportunities to negotiate classroom membership', and 'student desire to get credit for an answer or idea'. Each of these themes will be discussed in detail below.

Regular language arts classroom membership theme one: Low peripherality and legitimacy offered to particular students. There was a high frequency of 'low peripherality' codes connected to regular language arts tasks and activities. Arising from these codes was a theme for regular language arts tasks to be commonly inaccessible for a small percentage of students—in particular those students identified as having low degrees of classroom membership. The reason for this inaccessibility tended to vary. Some lessons required a level of English language competency that certain student simply did not hold. For example, the level of English vocabulary needed to complete their written, informational bird reports was simply too high for Camila and Mia, making successful completion of the task impossible for them. At other times, a lesson progressed too quickly for certain students to keep up. This often occurred when worksheets were being completed as a whole class and students needed to keep up with the pace set by the teacher. Any struggle a student had with following along or understanding of what they were supposed to do often resulted in that student remaining confused and behind for the rest of the lesson. This theme does highlight that many of the regular language arts tasks—even those that were not cognitively and socially demanding—were inherently inaccessible for certain students. The following are examples of this theme from within the observational data:

Lack of Peripherality—when a topic is extremely foreign struggling readers have no chance, i.e. the paragraph about both Roosevelt cousins being elected president (Camila, Mia, and Alex really struggled with this)
Peripherality—Camila unable to do guided writing activity even though it is step by step; she looks over to what her peers are writing and asks adults for more help; Camila crossed out the beginning of her writing and started over, missed a few steps, was the only one not successful
Low peripherality—The bird writing report, including the idea webs, are not accessible for Camila, Alex, and Mia even with teacher support

Certain students' inability to 'properly' complete a task or lesson—due to limited peripherality—also negatively impacted these students' legitimacy as well. Consistently being unsuccessful in lessons is something that their peers noticed and it worked to further position them as 'less capable' members of the community. The following are examples of instances where a student's constant struggle with a language arts task or lesson was readily apparent to others:

Legitimacy—Alex always needs to be told things 2-3 times before doing something, students are very aware of this, he is constantly being reminded in front of the entire class
Low legitimacy—whenever Alex, Camila, Lucia, or Mia goes to the board they generally need additional assistance
Low legitimacy—language arts activities are a constant struggle for both Camila and Alex; Mia too but to a slightly lesser degree
Low legitimacy—Camila and Alex cannot do a writing task, their peers must notice their lack of ability as they can easily see that their paper is almost blank
Low legitimacy—being one of the few students that always needs assistance must lower Alex's and Camila's legitimacy and Mia and Lucia but to a smaller degree

Beyond any inherent inaccessibility within the language arts lessons, students in the class also played a part in lowering the legitimacy and peripherality of certain students. While there was little evidence within the observational data to demonstrate that students actively and directly denied legitimacy to certain peers, students in the classroom did deny legitimacy and peripherality to their peers indirectly. For example, during group work if a student was being quiet and taking part in a discussion they would often just be left out and no one would attempt to include that student in the discussion. Other times it would be quite noticeable that a student was struggling with completing a task. Rather than stopping and assisting their peer, students in the same table group as the struggling

student would often move forward with the task and leave that student behind. The following photograph highlights what group work looked like when all students were offered legitimacy and all students were involved in the cooperative task.

As the photograph demonstrates, when all students were included in group work students would place their heads close together and their attention was always on the same thing—whether it be the paper they were working on or a student who was verbally participating. Unfortunately, these instances tended to be rare during regular language arts instruction especially when a student with low membership status was in a group as these students were almost always left out of group work.

Actions related to leaving a peer behind were commonly noted in my researcher's notebook and the students themselves brought these actions up during the first group interviews as an answer to the question 'what does it look like if someone is not being accepted during group work?' The following are additional examples of students indirectly denying other students legitimacy:

> Low legitimacy and peripherality—in group work with Kate and Mateo, Camila is always left behind, students do not try to include her
> Low legitimacy and peripherality—Camila and Lucia are examples of students that are left behind in their groups because they either are slow at finishing their individual work or they do not understand the task...students do not reach out and help them and they do not ask for help
> Low legitimacy/peripherality—when Camila, Lucia, and Mia are not talking students do little to include them and they do little to include themselves
> Low Legitimacy—when students are reading aloud and there is a lower level of engagement especially when Emily, Lucia, Camila, Alex, or Mia are reading
> Low legitimacy—the class stops listening when particular students read; Lucia, for example, reads so quietly that no one is even trying to listen

Unfortunately, the low degrees of peripherality and legitimacy offered to Alex, Lucia, Camila, and Mia during regular language arts lessons worked to further negatively position them in the classroom community.

Regular language arts classroom membership theme two: Limited opportunities to negotiate classroom membership. A second theme from within this category is that regular language arts lessons provided limited opportunities for lower status students to negotiate classroom membership. The degree of peripherality and legitimacy offered to these students during typical language arts lessons was too low for them to even begin to actively negotiate their membership in a positive way. Many tasks were simply too difficult or too disconnected from their lives for them to demonstrate any form of competency. Their peers also demonstrated too little desire to help and understand them in these lessons. Unfortunately, there was simply no room (i.e. peripherality) within these lessons for these students to display their skills, knowledge, and abilities in a positive light. In order for students to negotiate their classroom membership there must be space for students to display these positive attributes to their peers and to rely on their strengths to successfully complete a task and these spaces were rarely observed.

Rather than negotiating their membership in a positive way, these students were observed employing 'coping strategies'—such as hiding their work, participating quietly, or lying about their difficulties—as ways of minimizing opportunities for others to notice their mistakes or struggles. The following are examples of these types of actions from within the observational data set:

> **Fear of looking bad—**Camila cheated on a pretest for spelling....was writing down words before they were even read and were all right...which is generally unable to do...she fears having them all wrong...someone may notice...evidence that legitimacy does impact participation
> Low legitimacy/peripherality—when Camila is not talking, students do little to include her and she does little to include herself
> Legitimacy—Camila has an easier time participating with Lucia, perhaps because she sees her as at the same level of legitimacy

Quiet-when Camila was sharing her spelling sentence she put her hands over her mouth and spoke very quietly, she was clearly uncomfortable sharing
Quiet Participation—Whenever Lucia participates she is SO quiet (e.g. when reading a sentence during work knowledge); students appear to have stopped trying to listen to her and have stopped paying attention when it is her time to talk. This positions her poorly in the class
Reference to being Easy—Alex mentions that this is easy during the spelling test even though he is getting most wrong.

The alternative to these types of 'coping strategies' was to simply shut down and not participate at all which was also an action frequently observed of lower status students especially with Camila and Lucia.

Regular language arts classroom membership theme three: Student desire to get credit for answer or idea. One final theme from this category is the emphasis students put on being the first one to answer a question as well as the strong desire they frequently expressed to get credit for an idea or answer. Expressing a desire to answer a question first or to get credit for an idea was the most popular way students indirectly appealed for legitimacy in this community. One way this desire manifested itself in the classroom was the frequency with which students 'shouted out' answers. Despite the fact that students were supposed to wait until they were called on to participate in whole class discussions, many students resorted to shouting out their answer because they had learned that more often than not they would be validated for that answer rather than chastised for shouting something out. Observational notes indicate that when a student shouted out an answer their body language (i.e. jumping up and down and waving hand wildly) and tone of voice (i.e. speaking fast and high pitched) indicated that they were very excited about answering the question. This excitement over their having their answer heard first certainly motivated them to take a risk and shout out an answer. Students would also directly and verbally express their desire to get credit for an idea or answer. The following are examples of this:

Wanting Credit for Answer or Idea—Julio was upset that Emily said 'fantastic' before he did during the synonym lesson

Wanting Credit for answer—Samuel tells David 'I was telling you that' during dictation
Wanting credit for an idea—Julio gets made when someone said the main idea out loud 'I said it first!' but Kate responds by saying that 'it does not matter, you do not have to get mad.'
Wanting credit for answer—Kate yells at David and then at Julio 'you are not supposed to shout things out'. There is a tension here between students' desire to be the first one to give an answer and get credit for that answer and the rule of not shouting out.

This finding indicates that students did place value on getting answers right during whole-class, language arts lessons as well as on being the first person to get the answer right. Being able to confidently express a good idea—as well as to provide an answer before all other students—was certainly one way that students achieved legitimacy.

Observational Data for Multimodal Literacy Approach: Trends and Themes

The multimodal literacy approach used in this study focused on providing spaces for students to communicate their understandings through various modes of communication (i.e. gestures and visual representations) and incorporated multimodal texts (comics and graphic novels) into the classroom. Trends and themes arising from the coded observational data connected with the implemented multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) also were determined through the process of pattern coding. Observational themes relating to this multimodal literacy approach once again are organized into three categories: instructional themes, participation/engagement themes, and classroom membership themes.

Multimodal literacy approach instructional themes. The instructional themes arising from multimodal lessons are 'time needed for students to modify expectations and assumptions' and 'using multimodal texts is an effective way to teach skills authentically'. Each theme is described below after first being introduced with a corresponding vignette.

Multimodal instructional theme one: Time needed for students to modify their expectations and assumptions.

Wait, but what is the right answer? *During the second 'comic of the day' lesson, students are asked to answer the question: 'Come up with a good reason for why Garfield's food bowl is out in the middle of nowhere.' As I roam the room, I have numerous students tell me that they are not sure what the 'correct' answer is to this question. After gathering the attention of the whole class, I explain that authors do not always explain everything about their story to their readers and that sometimes readers have to infer things or make educated guesses about why things happened. I then lead them through a discussion about possible answers and have students offer their own ideas for why Garfield's bowl is out in the field. As the students are about to get back to work, a student raises his hand and in a bit of panic asks 'wait, but what is the right answer?' I tell her that there is no right answer and that they are to come up with their own creative answer for the question. The student accepts my answer but by her bewildered look I can tell she doubts my 'no right answer' response. For her—and many of the students in the class—there is still a 'more right' answer that I must be looking for.*

This vignette is representative of the initial struggle students had with the more open-ended instruction that was found in these multimodal lessons. Instruction within the implemented multimodal literacy approach varied from the regular language arts instruction in more ways than the acceptance and use of multiple modes of communication. As the goal of these multimodal lessons was to encourage ELLs' participation in socially and cognitively demanding tasks, there was also an intended avoidance of simplistic, decontextualized skills based tasks and an emphasis on higher level thinking skills including the use of creativity, personal opinion, and the synthesis and application of understanding. As the above vignette highlights, this meant that the reading comprehension questions asked during multimodal lessons strayed from the closed ended, right or wrong questions the students were accustomed to.

Not surprisingly, the students initially found this more open ended instruction difficult as they struggled to put aside the routines and beliefs that they had developed during their typical language arts instruction which was more structured and closed ended. During the first few weeks of the daily comic, I noticed that students were inclined to write the same answers as their neighbor in response to open ended questions. There was also a notable lack of creativity in students' answers and students were still clinging slightly to their 'finish fast' mentality. The following instances are additional examples from within the observational data:

> Oct 26th: the first question was difficult for them as they struggled to understand that they had to write more than one sentence for one question
> November 2nd: during the daily comic, I noticed that students struggled with being creative and coming up with answers to really open ended text questions (What might be a reason that Garfield's food bowl is out in the middle of nowhere?)
> November 15th: I did notice that almost everyone wrote the same thing in terms of which type of food they would want to be in a play…they heard someone say what they were putting and so they then wrote the same thing…perhaps they are still stuck on there being a right answer.

During week two of the daily comic, I started sharing with students the most creative and detailed answers from the previous day's comic hoping that this would provide students with good examples and would shift emphasis away from 'completion' to 'writing high quality responses'. This strategy appeared to help and by week three there was a notable shift in the way students approached the comic. Students started to really enjoy the open ended questions—rather than stressing about correct answers—they began proudly sharing their answers with their tablemates. Additionally, students stopped copying answers from their neighbors and spent the time necessary to think of their best answer.

By the time students started participating in the graphic novel discussions, they had already shifted their expectations and understandings—due to their experience with the comics—helping to prepare them to meaningfully engage in the cognitively and socially demanding conversations. So while ELLs were more than capable of making the shift from the routine, skills based tasks to the more

socially and cognitively demanding multimodal lessons, it is important to note that there was a shift that needed to be made and making it was not instantaneous.

Surprisingly, students needed very little time to familiarize themselves with the visual elements of multimodal texts. Students were provided very little instruction on these elements during the daily comic routine since visual elements were not taught until the first week of graphic novel lessons. Despite their lack of direct instruction, students were able to easily read and draw conclusions from facial expressions, sizes of text, and various colours. This finding indicates that students can be immersed in multimodal texts immediately without front loading all visual element instruction. Instruction on the visual elements of multimodal texts is still essential—as it does enhance their overall comprehension—it is just not necessary for the instruction to occur immediately. In this study, delaying the teaching of visual elements actually made this teaching more effective when it did occur because they already had an established knowledge base to draw from. I noted in my reader's notebook, that students were already able to talk effectively about certain elements—in particular colour and facial expressions—and this freed them up to focus on learning the new elements they were being introduced to such as the gutter, frames, perspective, and shapes used.

Multimodal instructional theme two: Effective way of teaching language arts skills and strategies authentically.

Mateo, you are being SO dramatic right now. *When the character Calvin announces in a comic strip that playing an onion in a school play is a 'dramatic' role, students immediately ask what the word 'dramatic' means. I act out examples of 'being dramatic' for students using small actions and varying the intonation of my voice: 'I am SO sick right now that I cannot possibly go to school. I have never felt so bad!' 'It is SO cold outside Ms. Lara that if you make us go out to recess we will die!' Encouraged by my examples and the use of actions and voice intonation, several students stand up and*

act out their own example of being dramatic: 'These vegetables are SO disgusting that I am going to puke!' Three days later, Mateo comes into class and states to a small group of students that he 'studied his multiplication facts for like ten hours last night'. Another student says 'Mateo, you are being SO dramatic right now!'. All the students laugh and Mateo proudly states, 'Yeah, I was being dramatic like Calvin.' Scenes such as this are repeated over and over again as students find ways to incorporate the words they learn in their comics and graphic novels into their daily lives.

Despite the avoidance of skills-based tasks during multimodal instruction, English language arts skills were certainly taught during multimodal lessons and as the above vignette highlights, multimodal texts were very conducive contexts for learning these skills. These skills were taught more organically with the students often determining areas of interest that were then explored further. While certain language arts skills were brought up by the teacher, in most cases students were the ones that demonstrated an interest to learn a new word or to discuss the meaning behind a particular visual element.

Students' high levels of enthusiasm and interest for learning language arts skills within multimodal lessons appeared directly attributable to the nature of these lessons as these positive feelings for learning language arts skills were not observed during regular language arts lessons. It appears that when taught within the context of a multimodal text, language arts skills benefited from the high degrees of enjoyment and motivation students felt towards these texts. For example, the above vignette demonstrates that the word 'dramatic' became viewed as something 'cool' because of its association with the comic Calvin and Hobbes—a text that was highly valued by the class. Due to this association, the students were more likely to both remember the word and to use it in conversation.

In addition to greater student enthusiasm, multimodal texts also served as a more supportive space to introduce new and complex language arts concepts due to the enhanced multimodal

contextual support. This finding was observed most frequently in the teacher-led graphic novel discussions as this was the time when most language arts skills were explicitly taught. During these discussions, difficult vocabulary words were considered, visual elements and the meaning behind these elements were highlighted, and students practiced reading comprehension strategies within the context of specific pages of their graphic novels. Prior to conducting the teacher-led discussions, I enquired about which reading strategies and skills the teacher was going to be focusing on next during regular language arts instruction so that I could tie these strategies and skills into our discussions. Due to this, several language arts skills were actually taught first in the graphic novel discussions prior to being taught in regular language arts instruction and this proved to be a successful way of introducing new language arts skills.

A good example of the effectiveness of multimodal texts for introducing language arts concepts is how students in this study were taught to identify the 'theme' of a story. Identifying theme was something the students had no previous experience with and it was first introduced in the graphic novel, teacher-led discussions. The teacher mentioned that students in the past had struggled with learning to identify themes within stories making it a good skill to introduce and reinforce in teacher-led discussions. The following excerpt was pulled from the second round, second teacher led discussion of *Babymouse*. While students had been introduced to the idea of 'theme' during round one of the graphic novel discussions, this was the first time that theme had come up in their discussions on *Babymouse*.

Teacher: Who can tell me what theme means?
Lucia: theme is what the story teaches you
Emily: and it is a message and it is not found right in the book
Teacher: yeah, it is not immediately in the book…you cannot turn to page 25 and read 'the theme of this book is…', that is not how it works. So, who can tell me what one of the themes of this book might be? What is this book trying to teach you?
Lucia: that population (meaning popularity) is not always good
Teacher: yeah, popularity is not always a good thing. Why isn't popularity a good thing?

Victoria: because some of those people can be mean and they can still be popular
Emily: and some popular people do not do homework or read or do things to learn
Teacher: so they do not set a good example. So are popular people always nice?
Students: no
Teacher: what else could this book try and teach us?
Emily: that all people can be queens of the world. You do not have to be popular
Teacher: okay, that you could be queen of the world, right, as long as you were happy in your own life.

The students in this discussion were able to easily define what a theme was and were able to identify possible *Babymouse* themes with very little teacher support. Additionally, all students in the group were able to successfully participate in the discussion (Kate was absent for this discussion) indicating that talking about theme in the context of a graphic novel was something that was accessible for all students. One reason for students' success with identifying theme is that all students came to this discussion with a very strong understanding of the story—as indicated by their high quality discussion responses and their completed independent work related to this novel. This strong understanding of the story allowed students to concentrate solely on what 'theme' means and how to identify themes rather than being caught up with an underdeveloped understanding of the story. It is much more difficult for a student to identify and understand a theme if the text they are reading is inaccessible to them. Multimodal texts are inherently more accessible to students due to the contextual support the images provide students. In this way, the graphic novels served as a transitional text where skills were first taught, thus preparing them to work on the skill in texts without multimodal support.

During an informal interview with the teacher, she mentioned how quickly students were able to pick up the meaning of 'theme' with the graphic novels and how she noticed that even students who 'typically had problems with language arts skills' were able to identify themes quite quickly. She noted that in the past years she did not experience success 'so quickly when teaching this language arts skill'. When it was time to introduce theme during regular language arts instruction—which was done every year through the use of Aesop's Fables—the teacher made connections back to the graphic novels. In

my researcher's notebook, I noted that students at first struggled to identify a theme in the first fable they read. However, once the teacher guided them through a discussion about the different types of themes they found in their graphic novels students had a much easier time identifying the challenging themes.

Multimodal literacy approach participation and engagement themes. The themes relating to participation and engagement during multimodal lessons include 'a high degree of enthusiasm', 'a high degree of successful participation', and 'a high level of engagement' in multimodal texts and lessons. Each theme is described below after being introduced with a corresponding vignette.

Multimodal participation and engagement theme one: High degree of enthusiasm

Did that new Stone Rabbit come in yet?!? *When I arrive in the classroom 30 minutes before the start of instruction, I have little time to prepare for the upcoming day of research. The teacher allows students to come into her class as soon as they get to school and the students now know that I arrive early. They also know that I have an extremely valuable resource with me—graphic novels. Within five minutes of arriving, the onslaught of students coming up to me begins. Their motivation varies. Some come up to me asking for a new novel to read as they finished reading the one they had last night at home. These students quickly select their next novel and immediately return to their desks to begin silently reading their new one. (I learned early on that the small number of graphic novels I had at the start of my research was nowhere near enough to keep up with my students' interest to read these novels. Thus, I began consistently adding new books to my collection to keep up with their demand.) Other students want to chat. They view me as someone deeply interested in all things 'graphic novel' and have come to discuss what they read last night. These students hang around me until the start of the school day showing me—and the other students who have gathered—exciting pictures from their novel, retelling funny things characters did, and bragging about how much time they spent reading*

their novels last night. For these students, sharing is an integral part of the graphic novel experience as they enjoy expressing their enthusiasm to others. They also feel that when someone laughs at a picture they show or says 'how cool' in response to their retelling that these positive reactions are, in a way, directed towards them—as they were the one reading the novel and the one who found 'the funny page'. This is noticeable from the confident smile they produce as they share their latest findings.

The above vignette is just one example of the sheer enthusiasm students expressed for graphic novels. Within the observational data relating to multimodal lessons, the 'excitement/enthusiasm/enjoyment' code was by far the most frequent code. Student excitement was determined by verbal expressions (yay! I am excited!), notable increases in energy and talking, eagerness to get started on task or to read a text, desire to share what they are reading or what they think about a text, and physical indications such as smiling, wildly waving hand to participate, and clapping. These indicators were frequently found throughout every multimodal lesson—with notable enthusiasm over both the lesson and the multimodal text being read or created—and there were no students who did not regularly demonstrate this enthusiasm. Student enthusiasm also did not wane as time went on rather it continued throughout the entire implementation with students still eagerly reading multimodal texts even after the implementation process had concluded. The following are examples from the observational data demonstrating excitement/enthusiasm/enjoyment:

> Oct 26th: I really noticed a huge difference in excitement when we did the comic of the day and the Squidward story: all on task, more hands were up wanting to share, and high degree of success
> Oct 26th: all students very excited about taking copies of the comic and the story home
> Oct 26th: there was a noticeable shift in energy for both the comic and the graphic novel work
> Oct 27th: students were again excited to read the SpongeBob story
> January 17th: A lot of excitement, high energy, lots of talking, showing pictures to people and laughing. No reminders to get back on task, no talking about something else, lots of smiles, lots of talking to partners and sharing of findings
> January 30th: once again they cannot wait to get their hands on the novels

January 25th: the first teacher led graphic novel discussions: students were very excited and there was a lot of enthusiasm
February 17th: independent reading of graphic novels, students still very excited to read their books.
February 17th: Alex showed a lot of enthusiasm for reading his Stone Rabbit Ninja story. He was really excited about what page he had read to already, made a point of telling me and several other students and even checked to see which page Camila was on to compare
February 18th: many students read their graphic novels for their reading logs. Tomas mentioned that he read some to his little sister. David was quoting funny parts from his book. A few students already read their entire book while others were happy to learn that they could take them home over the weekend to finish them. Camila immediately came in and started to read hers.
February 22nd: David told me this morning that he was on page 90 of Bone; he also mentioned some of his favourite parts and that he was really enjoying reading it.
February 22nd: the teacher mentioned that she noticed how Camila was taking out her Jellaby book to read at any spare second that she had
March 1st: students still very enthusiastic about the graphic novels; always happy to see that it is on the schedule
March 1st: Alex is pretty much always reading a graphic novel, he almost always takes a graphic novel with him to read during workshop.
March 1st: Students shout 'Yes!' when they are told that we are going to do graphic novel work
March 16th: students were very enthusiastic about creating their own graphic novels. They were very talkative at times they were very loud but all of their talking had to do with their ideas of what they were going to write about.

Student enthusiasm also encouraged students to engage with multimodal texts during non-academic time. The following photographs show students during indoor recess. Rather than playing games, these three students opted to read their graphic novels.

Students also frequently read multimodal books at home and during group interviews several students mentioned that graphic novels actually made them 'read more'. For example, students mentioned

things like ‘I read my graphic novel for like an extra hour every night’ and ‘I am getting better. Like I read for 20 minutes for my reading log but then when my time is up I just read my novel again’ and ‘I like the graphic novels because it takes more time to read and then you can just re-read is all over again’. Students were also getting their parents to take them to the library so they could check out comic books and graphic novels. Several students brought their library multimodal texts into the classroom to share with the other students. By the end of the study, all students in the class had read a minimum of ten graphic novels—many more than the three they were given class time to read.

Multimodal participation and engagement theme two: High degree of successful participation

Another theme that arose from the observational data was the frequency of ‘successful participation’ codes within data related to multimodal instruction. In fact, it was quite common during multimodal lessons for all students in the class to actively and successfully participate. The following is a transcript from a small-group, graphic novel discussion that is representative of the type of success experienced within multimodal lessons:

(Transcript from second round, first student led discussion for Babymouse)
Victoria: Do you think Babymouse should keep trying to be friends with Felicia? What problems might happen if Babymouse keeps trying to be friends with Felicia?
Lucia: I think that ummm…she is going to get in trouble because Felicia Furrypaws is going to take a note because Babymouse is trying to be her friend and then the teacher says to Babymouse she caught the card that she got.
Victoria: Commentators what would you like to say?
Kate: I agree with Lucia because she might get into trouble because if Felicia could blame her like if she does something to Babymouse like if she did something like put something in her locker and say that Babymouse did it and she might get in trouble
Lucia: Can I say something? I agree with you Kate because Felicia Furrypaws is the
Kate: populist (meaning popular)
Lucia: yeah, the populist one
Teacher: the most popular
Lucia: yeah, the most popular one and the teacher is not going to blame her she is going to blame Babymouse
Teacher: oh because everyone likes Felicia she is not going to get blamed
Kate: yeah, and everybody don’t like Babymouse because she has (pointing to her face and making a gesture to show whiskers)
Victoria: crooked whiskers

Kate: yeah, crooked whiskers
Emily: I agree with Lucia and Kate because Felicia Furrypaws will never get in trouble because she is the most popular
Victoria: I think that Babymouse is gonna give up because she is trying to be her friend. Like she is trying everyday and Felicia is just ignoring her and you give up after trying and trying

There are several ways in which this discussion excerpt demonstrates student participative success. First, all students in the group are actively verbally participating in the discussion without being encouraged to do so. Additionally, all students' comments are of a high quality meaning that each student is positioning him/herself as a 'very capable' contributor to the discussion. Students are also able to fully answer the question as a group and effectively follow the student-led discussion procedures with very little teacher support. Overall, the brief discussion indicates that all students in the group have a solid understanding of both the plot and characters in their novel and are confidently able to express their ideas to the group and build on one another's comments.

Observational data indicates that these types of successes were quite common during multimodal lessons. The following are additional examples from the observational data demonstrating 'successful participation':

> Oct 26th: appears all students successful with first comic, although Camila still seemed unsure of herself and needs someone to guide her through each question—even when she actually knew the answer
> Oct 26th: all students were able to answer the reading comprehension questions
> Oct 27th: students were able to use context clues to figure out some of the English slang such as 'tickled pink'
> Nov 10th: instead of making a character map from an open court story, the teacher switched at the last moment and had students use the character map they did with Garfield and had them write a paragraph describing Garfield. This was very successful. All students are motivated and engaged and they ended up writing very creative sentences. [Garfield is a cat in a comic book. He is ___ because __. He is also _____ because _____. Reading Garfield is fun!]
> Dec 9th: Students did an excellent job with the comprehension question to Luke's Trip to the Park
> December 1st: students doing excellent with comics at this point; really pushing themselves to use quality vocabulary (emotion, energy, and other words that we have gone over during the daily comic)
> January 30th: answering comprehension questions on Jack and the Beanstalk; all students did quite well

> February 16th: all graphic novel discussions went well today, students are not only eagerly participating but they are getting better at providing really unique and meaningful answers
> March 16th: Camila actually opted to do her own topic for her graphic novel creation, she was very focused and with just a little guidance was successfully able to complete the task

The above examples indicate that students were able to successfully answer reading comprehension questions based on multimodal stories, were able to use context clues to determine the meaning of slang, were able to use high quality vocabulary in their written and verbal responses, were able to create multimodal texts with little teacher support, and were able to give thoughtful and insightful answers to higher level thinking questions. Additionally, in contrast to regular language arts instruction, multimodal lessons frequently had all students successfully completing *and* participating in the lesson.

It should be noted that success in multimodal lessons was not immediate for all students. Observational data demonstrate that Mia, Camila, and Alex all struggled at the beginning of the implementation of the multimodal literacy strategy—which focused on answering reading comprehension questions on comics and short, graphic novel excerpts. The following are instances from within the observational data indicating this struggle:

> Oct 26th: appears all students successful with first comic (it was wordless), although Camila and Mia still seem unsure of themselves and need someone to guide them through each question—even when they actually know the answer.
> Oct 27th: there was a high level of engagement during the reading of a short excerpt of the Spongebob graphic novel —except for Camila, Alex, and Mia. Alex very distracted and wastes times, has trouble reading the dialogue (interesting because I know that Alex loves Spongebob and did seem more motivated to read it…although he was not motivated at all to answer the reading comprehension questions). Camila and Mia were impacted by the English barrier (as this reading was in English). Camila immediately says 'I need help!' and then does this for every question. However, often after reading things with her and going over it she actually does know the answer.

In addition to the above struggles, Mia and Camila also chose to answer all comprehension questions in Spanish and all daily comic questions were written in both English and Spanish for students. So it is important to note that if Spanish had not been allowed in this lesson, this activity may

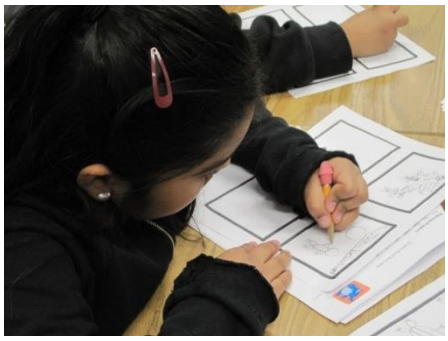
have still been inaccessible for them. The above struggles noted in the observational data were temporary, however, and these students quickly increased their success in multimodal lessons. In fact, there were no consistent struggles observed for these students during the small-group, graphic novel discussions. For example, during an informal interview with the teacher on February 24th, the teacher mentioned that she was extremely impressed with Camila's participation in the small group graphic novel discussions. She felt that Camila's participation and engagement was completely different than her participation and engagement in regular language arts discussions and lessons and that Camila was actually an active participant in these discussions rather than a silent one. The only area where Mia, Camila, and Alex were still not as successful as their peers was in answering reading comprehension questions about multimodal texts—as this task remained slightly less accessible for these students as compared to their peers. This minor struggle will be discussed in the 'collected student work data' section of this chapter.

Multimodal participation and engagement theme three: High degree of student engagement

Can I stay in and keep working? *I had been in the focus classroom several times with a substitute teacher and not once had it been a good day. To put it simply, all previous substitutes were inexperienced, disinterested, and biding time until the day was done. Of course, this meant that the students quickly became disengaged with instruction and the classroom became quite chaotic. So when there was a substitute in the classroom on the third day of students creating their graphic novels, I was worried that the lesson would not go well. The day had been going quite poorly and by the time the afternoon rolled around, the students were hyper and inattentive. I quickly handed out the students' works in progress, gave brief instructions for continuing their writing, and braced myself for the onslaught of inattentive and off task students. After all, forty five minutes was a long time for these students to write independently under the best circumstances let alone with a substitute. After telling*

students to get started, I remained in such a state of increased alert—anticipating the worst—that it took me a moment to even realize what was happening. The students were actually working. And not just working, they were intently working. The room was silent. There was not one student off task. I watched them in amazement—their faces scrunched in a way that shows extreme concentration—as they proved my doubts wrong. While I would occasionally be asked for advice, 'What do you think the prince should do next?' or called over to admire the completed frame of a proud student, for the most part the students worked without interruption for 45 minutes. Some of them even asked to stay in for recess so they could continue working after time was up. While I knew the importance of students being intrinsically motivated and engaged in their work, I had never been witness to such a powerful example.

Related to a high degree of excitement and successful participation was a theme of high quality engagement in multimodal tasks. The above vignette demonstrates that most multimodal lessons were inherently motivating and students needed little encouragement or reminders to stay focused on the assigned task. The following photographs highlight the focus and concentration students exhibited while working on their multimodal stories:



The more negative behaviors that were commonplace in the routine, skills based lessons were seldom present during multimodal lessons. Students were not in a rush to complete the task, they were not putting in a bare minimum of effort, and they were not blindly writing answers without thinking. Rather, their written, verbal, and drawn responses demonstrated that they were taking their time to really think about their answer and they were willing to take a risk. The following photograph shows a student answering reading comprehension questions. Rather than quickly answering her questions, she is carefully going back to the story to confirm whether her answers are correct.

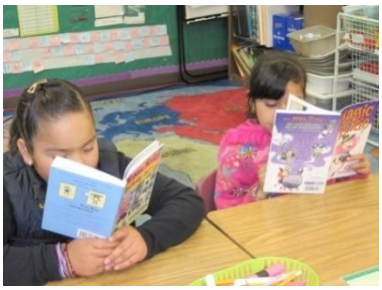
The following examples are additional instances from within the observational data indicating students' high quality engagement during multimodal lessons:

> Oct 26th: I really noticed a huge difference in excitement when we did the comic of the day and the squidward story: all on task, more hands were up wanting to share, and high degree of success
> November 4th: Students still excited each day for the comic (immediately come in and say 'yeah, the comic!' and flip it over. They are very focused when completing their comic despite the chaotic time with everyone coming into the classroom at varying times. Very excited about doing a character map of Garfield; thought more seriously about the adjectives they were writing

November 19th: students have begun making some very creative answers—they seem to be doing a bit better with writing answers that are creative and not focusing on right or wrong answers
January 17th: Illustration Detectives Lesson; A lot of excitement, high energy, lots of talking, showing pictures to people and laughing. No reminders to get back on task, no talking about something else, lots of smiles, lots of talking to partners and sharing of findings
February 17th: students were very focused on silent reading and they all seemed quite engaged with the reading

There was also some indication that students were able to more effectively complete independent and partner multimodal literacy work than they were during regular language arts time due to this increased engagement. For example, on March 1st I noted in my reader's notebook that the students seemed to work better during graphic novel independent work time as compared to independent work during regular language arts instruction in that they were rarely off task and that they were quite helpful to other members of their novel group. On January 17th, I also noted that during partner work during a lesson on graphic novel elements there was a lot of excitement, high energy, no reminders to get back on task, no talking about unrelated topics, lots of smiles, and lots of talking to partners and sharing of findings. These types of behaviors were not as common during regular language arts independent and partner work where students often needed reminders to get back on task and were easily distracted by their peers.

The following photograph—taken February 20th—shows two students independently reading graphic novels.



Anytime students were provided time in class to read their graphic novels, they were very focused as are the students in the photograph. The only talking that occurred would be students briefly stopping to show a peer a 'funny picture' or a 'cool part' of their story.

Multimodal literacy approach classroom membership themes. The two themes in this category are increased legitimacy being offered and increased peripherality. Together, these two themes indicate that multimodal lessons evened out classroom membership—at least temporarily—and helped close the gap between those with full membership and those struggling to be accepted. Each theme will be discussed in detail below.

Multimodal classroom membership theme one: Increased legitimacy

Hey, Alex, I am on page 43! *Camila enters the room at the beginning of the school day. Out of the corner of my eye, I watch as she empties her backpack and prepares for the day ahead. Pleasantly surprised, I notice that Camila has prominently placed her Jellaby novel on the top of her desk. She sits with a proud look on her face telling anyone who passes by which page she read to last night and showing them the bookmark she is using to keep her place. Later in the day, Camila proudly hugs the graphic novel to her chest as she heads out to her reader's workshop. She proudly states to me that she is going to read her novel in workshop. The teacher—witnessing this interaction—comments to me that 'that is the first time all year I have seen her motivated and engaged in reading anything.' In the afternoon, Camila is 'caught' reading Jellaby during a math lesson. The connection Camila has to Jellaby is clear to me. Graphic novels are certainly valued resources in this classroom but they are not all equally valued. While Stone Rabbit is the clear class favorite, Jellaby holds the distinction of being perceived as being the longest and most difficult of the graphic novels to read in the class. Camila knows this. She is also keenly aware that not only is she in possession of this valued text but that she is*

also successfully reading it. This is also most likely the first time Camila has been able to successfully take part in a shared experience around a difficult text.

The above vignette demonstrates the feelings of confidence, self-assuredness, and social connection that students with lower membership status experienced during multimodal lessons. In particular, these students excelled during the small-group, graphic novel discussions and thrived during the independent reading of graphic novels. These experiences of success quickly resulted in changes in these students' overall attitudes during these lessons. They were much more optimistic about their abilities and when they participated they did so loudly and confidently. There were also many non-verbal clues indicating that these students were much more confident and self-assured about themselves. For example, during graphic novel discussions these students were observed sitting up straight, smiling, and sitting right next to their peers rather than positioning themselves slightly back from the group.

Observational data indicate that the success of these four students during multimodal lessons helped to increase their legitimacy in two ways. First, their peers were able to see them successfully complete tasks and participate in lessons and this likely encouraged their peers to view them as 'more capable'. The following examples are instances from within the observational data where these students are positioning themselves as capable members of the classroom community during multimodal lessons:

> November 15th: Alex was very successful [with] today's daily comic; he had one of the best answers for the final questions and so his answer will be shared with the class tomorrow
> November 18th: Camila did quite well today—I think because the pictures really demonstrated the entire story and there were only a few words, certainly the best I have seen her with comprehension questions
> November 19th: Alex is at least completing the entire daily comic every day at this point and is getting most answers correct; though many of his answers are still very basic.
> January 25th: Alex did an excellent job with his prediction and certainly was more successful than in a lot of other tasks.

> February 7th: When they got to discussion problem and solution on their homework, the teacher made a connection to the graphic novels as two of the groups were talking about that. This immediately resulted in more enthusiasm and a deeper discussion of problem and solution. Lucia and Mia able to accurately participate in identifying the problem
> March 18th: Alex really got to work right away on his graphic novel with very few reminders to stay on task.

The other way these four students' legitimacy was increased was by their peers witnessing their increased confidence and self-assuredness. When Camila walked confidently to reader's workshop with her graphic novel and talked confidently about Jellaby with peers she was beginning to position herself as a capable member of the community. Her peers were able to see her as someone who was confident in not only her academic skills but also herself—which helped reinforce her positioning as a 'capable' community member. In this way, the confidence and self-assuredness that came with successfully participating worked to further increase Camila's positioning within the classroom. The following instances are additional examples from within the observational data indicating these students' enhanced confidence:

> November 15th: Alex was very successful today; he also confidently shared some of his answers with his table group—it appeared he knew that his answers were very creative.
> January 25th: very pleased with how much Camila and Lucia participated in their group; they seemed genuinely happy, confident, and were enjoying themselves
> January 25th: the first teacher led graphic novel discussions: students were very excited and there was a lot of enthusiasm; all students attentive and engaged in the reading of the first part (based on their facial expressions, short verbal reactions to what they were reading, and brief talking about a page or picture with a peer); Alex showed a lot of confidence when he shared his ideas…he was almost positioning himself as an expert in reading visual images.
> Feb 22nd: when asked which graphic novel she was reading, Camila said Jellaby—the one she read independently—she is very proud that she is reading Jellaby. She also confidently shared what she liked about the story.
> March 16th: Camila actually opted to do her own topic for creating her graphic novel, she was very focused and with just a little guidance was successfully able to complete the task, she confidently shared a part of her story with her table group

One final feeling that became commonplace for these students was an enhanced feeling of connection with their peers. Related to the theme 'enhanced legitimacy' is the high value students placed on multimodal texts—in particular graphic novels. Graphic novels were considered 'cool' and

'funny' and 'challenging to read' by students and as a result anyone reading a graphic novel or discussing what they read in a graphic novel benefited from doing so as they were engaging in highly valued practice. For the students with lower degrees of membership, they often struggled to take part in valued classroom practices because they were either left out entirely or the practice exceeded their academic or language abilities. Being able to engage with graphic novels and discuss the characters and stories with their peers therefore worked to enhance their legitimacy because they were able to take part in an important, valued social practice with their peers. The following instances are examples from the observational data indicating the enhanced connections these students felt with their peers:

> Feb 22nd: when asked by a peer which graphic novel she was reading, Camila said Jellaby—the one she read independently—she is very proud that she is reading Jellaby
> February 17th: Alex showed a lot of enthusiasm for reading his Stone Rabbit Ninja story. He was really excited about what page he had read to already, made a point of telling me and several other students
> February 18th: David was quoting funny parts from his book to his classmates.
> March 1st: Alex is pretty much always reading a graphic novel, he almost always takes a graphic novel with him to read during workshop
> March 22nd: I overheard David speaking Spanish to Victoria, Miguel, and Alex telling them that I had the new Jellaby and Lunch Lady graphic novels. Alex said, 'I know!'

Multimodal classroom membership theme two: Increased peripherality

Writing tasks were always the most difficult for Camila, Alex, and Mia. I often witnessed them getting frustrated as they were simply unable to adequately write detailed paragraphs or short informational essays. These writing tasks were very structured with very specific expectations and little opportunity for creativity or choice. Topics were teacher assigned and typically stemmed from an Open Court story. These Open Court stories were often inaccessible to these students meaning that they were at a disadvantage even before the writing task began. Even additional teacher support was generally not enough to make these writing tasks accessible for these three students. Unfortunately, these students were doomed to fail right from the start when these tasks were assigned. For this reason, I was eagerly anticipating having the students create their graphic novels as I felt it was

essential to provide these students with a writing task at which they could be successful. While I felt that these students still may need some additional support throughout the writing process, I was confident that they would be able to create a high quality graphic novel. All three students certainly met and exceeded my expectations. They were able to create high quality story lines while effectively using the graphic novel elements without teacher guidance. In fact, they ended up not being the students in the class that needed the most teacher assistance. Camila and Alex even took a risk and did not follow any of my story topic suggestions. Instead, they both created their own unique plot idea and characters. This was such a large difference from other writing tasks where they looked to be told exactly what they should write. While Mia did use one of my topic suggestions, she voluntarily paired up with another student to collaboratively write two stories. This was quite surprising as Mia often avoided social interactions during academic lessons and was often very reluctant to share her ideas and work. In the end, all three students had created graphic novels that they were proud to share and were representative of the quality of work that their peers were doing.

The creation of graphic novels was one instance where the peripherality to communicate and share ideas was increased for students who generally lacked this type of peripherality during regular language arts lessons. By incorporating multiple modes of communication into the writing process, these students were able to successfully communicate their creative ideas in their graphic novels. Within the multimodal observational data there were very few instances of students experiencing low degrees of peripherality and instances where a student benefited as a result of enhanced peripherality were common. The following are examples of students' enhanced peripherality:

> Dec 9th: while still asking for help Camila was able to answer all questions by reading the visual story (many of the words she was unable to read). This was an example of the images helping her to be successful in a task where she otherwise could not have been.
> November 18th: Camila did quite well today—I think because the pictures really demonstrated the entire story and there were only a few words, certainly the best I have seen her with comprehension questions

> January 25th: Alex did an excellent job with his prediction and certainly was more successful than in a lot of other tasks. The fact that he actually understands what he is reading and can actually complete the assigned activities is really helping his focus.
> January 30th: answering comprehension questions on Jack and the Beanstalk; all students did quite well although you could tell that this was the first time they were able to choose which questions and activities to do. All students were able to complete the tasks and the text was clearly accessible for all of them.

A related finding to 'increased peripherality' is that the farther a lesson strayed from the use of multiple modes of communication the less peripherality these students had. For example, some students still struggled at time answering reading comprehension questions on multimodal texts because this task still required them to read and write English text. This struggle will be discussed in detail later in the student work data section.

Interview data also supported the finding that multimodal lessons enhanced student peripherality. Lower status students mentioned in the third group interview that they perceived the process of writing a graphic novel to be 'easier' than the other writing they did in the class. For example, Camila shared that it was 'more easy if you draw with pictures and it was harder if you were just writing and not drawing pictures'. These students also remarked that they not only enjoyed writing their graphic novel but that they were also very proud of their completed story.

Whole-Class and Small-Group Literature Discussions

In this study, two types of literature discussions were audio-recorded: whole-class literature discussions that took place during regular language arts instruction and small-group discussions about graphic novels that took place during the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach. These literature discussions were audio-recorded to establish detailed understandings of the students' social interactions within conversations and to examine the ways in which a student's classroom membership status impacts the complexity of their participation and engagement in these discussions. Both regular language arts literature discussions and graphic novel discussions were audio-recorded to determine if there were any differences in students' participation and engagement within these two types of discussions.

A deep analysis of these discussions was completed to achieve an understanding of the complex interactions. Discussions were coded and analyzed on multiple levels to create a complete and complex picture of these interactive and dynamic, social discussions. This section provides details of these discussions, breaks down the coding process used for analyzing these data, and describes the themes and trends that emerged from this data set. The following are the main sections in this chapter:

1) Description of Audio-Recorded Literature Discussions
2) Coding of Literature Discussions
    a. Number of turns taken
    b. Conversation initiation
    c. Open coding
    d. High quality participation and engagement coding
    e. Quality of responses in literature discussions

Description of Audio-Recorded Literature Discussions

A total of nine whole-class, literature discussions—all held during regular language arts instruction and implemented by the teacher—were audio-recorded and transcribed. Originally, the plan was to audio-record several small-group literature discussions as well, however, these types of

discussions were not done within regular language arts time. There were very short periods of one to two minutes within the whole class discussions where students collaboratively discussed ideas in their table groups and several of these brief discussions were audio-recorded as part of the larger whole class discussion. The time length of whole-class discussions varied; however they were typically between 35-45 minutes. All together a total of 366 minutes of whole class discussions were audio-recorded. These discussions either took place on the community rug or with the students sitting at their desks with the teacher at the front of the classroom.

A total of 48 small-group, graphic novel discussions—all part of the multimodal literacy approach implemented in this study—also were audio-recorded and transcribed. Both the classroom teacher and the researcher lead discussions. The time length of each of these discussions was approximately 15 minutes and all together a total of 694 minutes were audiotaped. Each individual student took part in twelve discussions for a total of approximately 180 minutes. This means that students spent less time overall in the audio-recorded graphic novel discussions than they did in the audiotaped, regular language arts literature discussions. The graphic novel discussions either took place on the community rug or with the students sitting together at one of the table groups.

Coding of Literature Discussions

Literature discussion data went through several levels of coding and analysis. First, all discussions were analyzed according to the number of turns students took as well as to identify which students initiated topics of conversation during these discussions. Next, open coding of the discussions was completed with a focus on student actions and intentions. As a subset of open coding, all discussions were then coded for evidence of high quality participation and engagement. Finally, all student participative turns were coded in terms of quality of response in relation to the topic of discussion. Additional coding and analysis were completed on the focus students' participative turns

during these discussions and these findings will be discussed in chapter five. The following list highlights the major parts of this section:

1) Number of turns taken
2) Conversation initiation
3) Open coding
4) High quality participation and engagement
5) Quality of responses in literature discussions

Number of turns taken in discussions. The number of turns individual students took during these discussions was determined and analyzed as a way to highlight the frequency with which individual students participated and whether or not there was a discrepancy in the rate of participation between different students. Participation rates demonstrate which students are frequently verbally participating and which students are not. These rates are also one of many indicators of the varying degrees of peripherality and legitimacy students hold. When a student is not offered a high degree of peripherality either in the classroom or a particular task or discussion, that student will likely struggle to actually take part and participate in that task. For example, if a reading task is beyond the academic or language skill set of a student (i.e. low peripherality) they will not be able to comprehend what they read and will be unable to participate in comprehension activities—thus lowering their rate of participation. Additionally, if a student believes their peers do not value their ideas (i.e. low legitimacy) they will most likely be less inclined to verbally participate. Thus, the number of participative turns taken is one indicator of how comfortable and accepted a student feels during a task or discussion.

The following chart highlights the number of turns each student took during all nine of the regular language arts, whole class discussions. The students with lower membership status have been highlighted in yellow and the students with higher membership status have been highlighted in green.

Total number of turns during nine whole class discussions (not including brief small group turns)

Julio—70 turns	Kate—68 turns	Alex—54 turns	Miguel—52 turns
Samuel—47 turns	Sofia—28 turns	Mariana—26 turns	Isabella—22 turns
Emma—20 turns	David—20 turns	Lucia—19 turns	Victoria—13 turns
Camila—13 turns	Tomas—12 turns	Mateo—10 turns	Lucia—7 turns
Mia—5 turns	Emily—5 turns		

Note: Mariana, Mateo, and Sofia were actually absent for 3 of these discussions. This is especially important to note for Sofia and Mariana because even with three absences the number of turns they took was rather high in comparison to the class as a whole. It is likely that their number of turns would have been much closer to those of Samuel had they been there for all 9 discussions. For Mateo, the number of turns he took really varied between discussions—unlike Sofia and Mariana—making it difficult to predict where he would have ranked without these absences. Miguel, Mia, Tomas, David, and Kate were each absent for one discussion and Emily was absent for two discussions. Again, if these students had been present for all discussions their number of turns would likely have been higher.

The most important finding arising from these data is the drastic difference between the number of turns taken by students who were actively participating in these discussions and the number of turns taken by students who tended to be quiet participants. Julio—the most frequent participant—participated 70 times while Emily and Mia—the least frequent participants—only participated *five* times in the nine discussions. This large difference demonstrates that students' voices were certainly not heard on an equal basis in regular language arts literature discussions. While this finding alone does not fully explain why some students rarely participated in these discussions, it does indicate that there was something in the whole class discussions or the classroom community in general that was preventing or discouraging particular students from verbally participating in these literature discussions.

If we take into consideration the degree of classroom membership individual students held, it is clear that students identified as lacking peripherality and legitimacy tended to also be the students with the fewest number of turns taken. This implies that there was a correlation between low classroom membership and low participation rates. Both Mia and Lucia were in the bottom three in terms of turns taken and Camila was only slightly higher with just 13 turns. The number of turns Camila took most

likely would have been lower but the teacher mentioned that she was making a concerted effort to increase Camila's participation during these discussions by calling on her even when her hand was not raised and by scaffolding her through the answering of questions. Alex was the one exception to this as he was actually the third most frequent participant despite his low membership status. This is important as it indicates that low classroom membership does not necessarily impact all students in the same way. For Alex, his low status certainly did not limit his verbal participation. However, as will be demonstrated later on in the analysis of the audiotaped discussion data, his low status did impact his participation in other ways.

Interestingly, none of the students identified as having the highest degrees of classroom membership were at the top of the class in terms of participation rates. Rather the students with the most turns—Julio, Kate, Alex, and Miguel—were students identified within observational data as being the most talkative and boisterous both in academic settings and non-academic settings (i.e. recess). These students were also the most likely to 'shout out answers' in these discussions without waiting to be called on. This indicates that holding the highest degree of membership in the class does not necessarily correlate with being one of the most frequent participants in discussions. This is especially true with Tomas, who only took 12 turns in nine discussions. The number of turns Tomas took does confirm the finding from the observational data set that Tomas was often quiet during whole class instruction. These students' high status did impact their participation in other ways and this will be discussed later on in the further analysis of the audiotaped discussion data.

The number of turns individual students took in their small group, graphic novel literature circles was also calculated. These turns were divided according to whether they were in teacher-led or student-led discussions as well as whether they were in first round discussions or second round discussions. This division was important as it would highlight any potential differences between

teacher-led and student-led discussions as well as whether or not the rate of participation changed at all from the first round of discussions to the second round. The following five charts highlight individual students' turns according to these divisions. Once again, students identified as having low degrees of membership have been highlighted in yellow and students identified as having high degrees of membership have been highlighted in green.

Total number of turns during ALL small group, graphic novel discussions

Sofia—191 turns	Kate—186 turns	Lucia—174 turns	Emma—167
Emily—163 turns	Alex—159 turns	Miguel—154 turns	Mariana—152 turns
David—150 turns	Camila—142 turns	Julio—139 turns	Isabella—137 turns
Victoria—127 turns	Samuel—126 turns	Mateo—118 turns	Tomas—109 turns
Lucia—99 turns	Mia—90 turns		

Total number of turns during first round, teacher-led, small group graphic novel discussions (approx. 45 mins):

Sofia—57 turns	Alex—51 turns	Kate—47 turns	David—45 turns
Julio—43 turns	Camila—41 turns	Isabella—35 turns	Mateo—34 turns
Samuel—33 turns	Lucia—32 turns	Mariana—32 turns	Emma—29 turns
Miguel—25 turns	Emily—25 turns	Victoria—23 turns	Tomas—19 turns
Lucia—15 turns	Mia—8 turns		

Note: Miguel and Mia were absent once meaning their total number of turns was for two discussions rather than three.

Total number of turns during second round, teacher-led, small group graphic novel discussions (approx. 45 mins):

Emily—74 turns	Lucia—61 turns	Kate—51 turns	Victoria—48 turns
Julio—45 turns	Isabella—36 turns	Camila—33 turns	Samuel—32 turns
David—27 turns	Alex—25 turns	Tomas—22 turns	Lucia—22 turns
Mia—21 turns	Sofia—17 turns	Mariana—16 turns	Emma—12 turns
Miguel—10 turns	Mateo—8 turns		

Note: Kate, Miguel, Mariana, Sofia, and Emma were all absent once meaning their total number of turns was for only two discussions rather than three. Mateo was absent twice so his eight turns represent the number of turns he took in the one discussion he was present for.

Total number of turns during first round, student-led, small group graphic novel discussions (approx. 45 mins):

Emma—89 turns	Miguel—84 turns	Sofia—60 turns	Alex—58 turns
Mariana—56 turns	Tomas—42 turns	Camila—38 turns	Lucia—36 turns
David—36 turns	Emily—36 turns	Lucia—33 turns	Julio—32 turns
Mateo—28 turns	Isabella—28 turns	Samuel—26 turns	Kate—25 turns
Victoria—19 turns	Mia—16 turns		

Note: Kate was absent for one of the discussions meaning her total number of turns was for only two discussions.

Total number of turns during second round, student-led, small group graphic novel discussions (approx. 45 mins):

Kate—63 turns	Sofia—57 turns	Mateo—48 turns	Lucia—48 turns
Mariana—48 turns	Mia—45 turns	David—42 turns	Isabella—38 turns
Emma—37 turns	Victoria—37 turns	Miguel—35 turns	Samuel—35 turns
Camila—30 turns	Emily—28 turns	Lucia—26 turns	Tomas—26 turns
Alex—25 turns	Julio—19 turns		

The most important finding to come from this data set is that students who rarely participated in whole class literature discussions were much more actively involved in these small-group, graphic novel discussions. Lucia, Mia, and Emily—the three students with the least number of turns during whole-class discussions—all increased the frequency of their participation during these discussions. Emily was actually the fifth most frequent verbal participant with 163 turns in the graphic novel discussions. While Mia (90 turns) and Lucia (99 turns) were once again the students with the fewest number of turns, they were clearly more verbally involved in these discussions than they were in the whole class discussions where they took only five turns. All three of these students' voices were certainly heard much more frequently than they were in the regular language arts discussions. A related finding is that while there was still a difference in the number of turns taken between the frequent participators and infrequent participators this difference was not nearly as large as it was in the regular language arts discussions. This indicates that—at least to a degree—the graphic novel discussions minimized the large discrepancy between students in terms of turns taken.

The smaller difference between the number of turns taken by the most frequent participants and the number of turns taken by the least frequent participants—as well as the increase in turns taken by quieter participants—could be a result of the change from whole class discussions to small group discussions. Students often feel more comfortable in small group settings than they do in whole class settings. While this may have been a minor factor, observational data demonstrates that the students

who rarely participated during whole class, regular language arts discussions were also among those least likely to take part in regular language arts partner or small-group discussions. Lucia, Camila, and Mia were frequently mentioned in observational notes as students who either took on a passive role during these talks—by only listening and not talking—or were entirely left out and ignored during the discussion. Likewise, those students who dominated whole class discussions tended to be the same students who dominated and took charge of partner and small-group discussions. The one exception for this was Alex who, despite being a frequent participator during whole class discussions, was often quieter during partner and small-group discussions. This evidence suggests that the size of a literature discussion group was not the main factor in determining how much a student verbally participated.

Another finding from these turn taking data is that individual participative rates tended to fluctuate from discussion to discussion. For example, while Lucia and Mia were at the bottom for the first round, teacher led discussions, their participation rates increased for the other discussions placing their number of turns in the middle or near the top of the class. Mia was actually the fifth most frequent participant in the second-round, student led discussions while Lucia was ranked sixth in the second-round, teacher led discussions. Additionally, different students tended to dominate each of the graphic novel discussions. This is quite different from regular literature discussions where a select few students tended to dominate every conversation and there was little change in students' individual rates of participation from discussion to discussion.

As a group, students tended to have a slightly higher rate of participation in student-led discussions compared to teacher-led discussions—although this difference was quite small. This finding was anticipated as the absence of turns taken by the teacher frees up time for students to say more about the topics being discussed. The slightly higher rate of participation during student-led discussions also indicates that these discussions were not inherently more difficult for particular

students to participate in. For example, it was possible that the absence of the teacher would lead to certain students dominating conversations or ignoring particular students; however, students' overall participation rates demonstrate that this was not the case. As a group, there was no significant difference between the participation rates of the first round compared to those in the second round.

In terms of examining these findings according to students on either end of the membership spectrum, there was really no correlation between those identified as having low status and those taking a limited amount of participative turns in graphic novel discussions. While Lucia and Mia were still the least frequent participants overall, there were several discussions where both of them actually ranked among the most frequent. Additionally, Alex and Camila were right in the middle of the class in terms of turns taken. This supports the finding from the observational data set that in general there was higher degree of success of all students during multimodal discussions and that the degree of peripherality offered to students—especially to those who tended to lack peripherality during regular language arts instruction—was much higher in these lessons. Rather than discussing a text that is inaccessible to these students—making it difficult for them to participate—the graphic novel discussions were centered on a text that was accessible and understood by all students thus increasing the peripherality offered in these lessons. Once again, there was no correlation found between having high membership status and taking the most turns in a discussion.

Conversation initiation. All literature discussions were then coded for instances where students initiated a discussion or introduced a new topic of conversation to an ongoing discussion. Initiations that asked simplistic, task based questions such as 'do we have to write the date?' were not counted as conversation initiations. Initiating conversation or a new topic of conversation is evidence of there being a high level of comfort and confidence on the part of the student in their positioning in the classroom. There is a degree of risk in attempting to change the course of discussion rather than simply

following the teacher established topic. This risk is rarely taken by students who feel unsure or self-conscious about themselves or their abilities during discussions. The frequency with which students initiate discussions or topics can also indicate the amount of control students have in determining the course of a discussion in a particular conversation. Discussions where topics are solely determined by the teacher do not offer students the needed peripherality for them to share what is important to them or to ask off topic questions.

The following charts highlight how many times conversation topics were initiated by students—as well which students initiated topics the most—during the regular whole class literature discussions. High membership status students are highlighted in green and low membership status students are highlighted in yellow.

Regular Whole Class Discussions

Student	# of Initiations
Julio	5
Miguel	4
Kate	3
Lucia	2
Alex	2
Emma	2
Isabella	2
Sofia	2
Victoria	2
Mia	1
Samuel	1

Overall, the regular language arts literature discussions did not encourage students to take control of conversation and determine the course of the discussion. Compared to the large number of teacher initiated conversations, the total number of student initiations is quite small. Over the course of nine whole class discussions, seven students never once initiated a topic of conversation and the eleven students that did initiate topics of conversation rarely did so. Additionally, when a student did initiate a topic these initiations almost never led into lengthy discussions. Instead, student initiations would be

followed by a comment or two by the teacher with the teacher then moving forward with the her predetermined topic of conversation. Rarely, if ever, were student initiations taken up by the class for deeper discussion. For example:

Teacher: That was his theme. He had hired the hottest Ghoul band. Okay, the Ghoul's Night Out.
Julio: And Ghoul is like a ghost.
Teacher: yes, you saw that in your English class, yeah! It is a different…colorful word.
Miguel (Initiation): Wait, so Dracula lives in a coffee shop?! Why?
Teacher: yeah it looks like he does. So his party looks like you know…really cool
(October 29, 2010)

A correlation was found between taking a high number of turns in a conversation and the frequency of initiating conversation. Julio, Kate, Alex, and Miguel were all at the top of the class in terms of both the number of turns taken and the frequency of times they initiated conversations. Julio, the most frequent participator in whole-class discussions, also had the most initiations. Lucia, Emily, and Mia—students with the fewest number of turns during whole-class discussions—never once initiated conversation. While students identified as holding low membership status tended not to initiate conversations, there was once again no correlation found between conversation initiation and high membership status. This indicates that the frequency with which one participates may be a better indicator for who will initiate conversations than classroom membership alone.

The following charts highlight students' conversation initiations for the small-group graphic novel discussions. Turns when facilitators read teacher-created questions aloud during student-led discussions were NOT counted as initiating a topic of conversation. Once again, high membership status students are highlighted in green and low membership status students are highlighted in yellow.

Round One (*represents that the student was a facilitator for one discussion)

Student	# of Initiations
Lucia*	8
Mateo*	8
Alex	7
Tomas*	6
Sofia*	6

Isabella*	5
Emily*	4
Samuel*	4
Julio*	3
David*	3
Miguel	1
Camila	1
Mariana	1
Mia	1
Emma	1

Round Two (*represents that the student was a facilitator for one discussion)

Student	# of Initiations
Victoria*	6
Kate*	5
Mateo*	5
Miguel*	3
Lucia	3
Isabella*	3
David	2
Lucia	2
Tomas*	1
Emily	1
Samuel	1
Camila	1

Overall, there was an increase in the number of student initiations in these discussions in comparison to the regular language arts discussions. However, there are indications that the structure of these discussions was more responsible for this increase rather than the fact that the discussions were focused on multimodal texts. The role of facilitator—created for the student-led discussions—certainly encouraged students to take the lead of the discussion. During both rounds of discussions, students who were the facilitator were generally the students who had the most initiations. Since the reading aloud of teacher created questions was NOT counted as initiating a topic of conversation, the high number of initiations was not simply attributable to turns that were required of them because of their assumed role. Rather, these students took it upon themselves as the facilitator to take additional turns to help lead the discussion. Additionally, the teacher-led discussions created space for students to

ask questions and to share thoughts and ideas that were not necessarily related to the teacher determined topics of discussion. This was very different from the whole class discussions which seldom strayed from the predetermined topics and allowed little time for students' questions—especially those that were seemingly 'unrelated'.

Another finding related to these conversation initiation data is that a wider variety of students initiated conversations in these discussions and the students who most frequently initiated conversations in these discussions were different from the students who initiated during whole class discussions. Additionally, while the top initiators in the whole class discussions were the same students who took the most turns in those discussions, this was not the case in the graphic novel discussions. In graphic novel discussions, there was no correlation found between the frequency of turns taken and the number of times a student initiated a conversation or discussion topic. This indicates that the graphic novel discussions created spaces that encouraged all students to initiate conversations and topics rather than just students with a high percentage of participative turns.

Open coding. The number of turns a student takes during a classroom discussion and whether or not they initiate topics of conversations is only one aspect of the complex social interactions within these discussions. Simply because a student participates a lot and their voice is heard on a regular basis does not mean that their participation is viewed as successful, that their turns are deemed appropriate, or that they are afforded high levels of legitimacy because of their frequent turn taking. Additionally, students who have lower rates of participation are not always quiet due to lack of legitimacy or peripherality. It was necessary to delve deeper into the transcripts of these whole class and small group literature discussions in order to develop a more complete picture of the complex relationship between classroom membership and participation and engagement within discussions.

For this reason, all audio-recorded literature discussions also underwent open coding. During this process, students' actions—in terms of how they participated and interacted with their peers and engaged in the discussion—were the focus. During the first round of open coding, a total of 30 codes were identified. These codes were:

agreeing with a peer, disagreeing with a peer (in a constructive way), building on a peer's response, referencing a peer, desire to understand a peer, assisting a peer, encouraging a peer, asking a question, admitting not knowing or understanding, using Spanish to assist with understanding, disagreeing with a peer, unsure of one's self, being rude to a peer, demonstrating frustration with a peer, not responding when invited to participate (either because of choice or inability to answer), dominating the conversation, demonstrating excitement, demonstrating anticipation, being silly, distracted, getting the discussion back on track, being serious, facilitator confusion, commenter confusion, teacher needing to step in, need for teacher assistance, simply repeating peer with limited thinking, referencing the element chart, praising peer, and talking about picture as a whole

During a second round of coding, several codes were collapsed into one code and other codes were removed based upon limited relevance (very few instances of them appearing). The following codes were combined: 'referencing a peer' with 'building on a peer's response'; 'assisting a peer' with 'encouraging a peer'; 'asking a question' with 'admitting not understanding/knowing'; 'being rude to a peer' with 'frustration with peer;, 'anticipation' with 'excitement'; 'being silly' with 'distracted'; 'facilitator confusion' with 'commenter confusion'; and 'teacher stepping in' with 'teacher assistance'. The following codes were removed based on limited relevance: 'referencing element chart', 'praising peer', and 'talking about picture as a whole'. This left a total of 18 codes.

Data underwent one final round of coding to ensure that nothing was left out and that the coding was accurate. No codes were added, dropped, or modified during this round of coding. With coding completed, the codes were then grouped into six larger categories relating to classroom membership (legitimacy and peripheriality) and classroom participation and engagement. The categories are recognition and inclusion of peer (positive legitimacy and peripherality), feeling comfortable (positive

legitimacy and peripherality), lack of legitimacy and/or peripherality, student attention on discussion, and problems with discussion. A few codes fit into more than one category.

The following sections will describe the codes within each category and provide examples of each code. Additionally, an analysis of all themes or trends found in each open coding category—as well as within open coding in general—will be explained in detail.

Recognition and inclusion of peer category. The codes in this category are: agreeing with a peer, disagreeing with a peer (in a constructive way), building on a peer's response/referencing a peer, desire to understand a peer, and assisting/encouraging a peer. All codes are indicators of instances where a student offered another student both legitimacy and peripherality—either explicitly or implicitly. As there were no instances of students *explicitly* offering other students legitimacy (i.e. 'what a great answer') during discussions, all codes in this category indicate *implicit* offerings of legitimacy where a student demonstrated that they valued their peer enough to listen to what they said and that they had an invested interest in understanding and learning from them. Students did, however, *explicitly* offer other students peripherality during these discussions. These instances tended to involve one student asking another student what they thought about something or one student offering another student time to speak on a topic. The codes 'desire to understand a peer' and 'assisting/encouraging a peer' are indicators of *explicit* offerings of peripherality. The other three codes were minor indicators of *implicit* peripherality being offered as they represent instances where a student would be provided an implicit opportunity to further elaborate on an idea or answer they had already shared.

When a high percentage of these codes are found in a discussion it indicates that the discussion not only created the space for students to negotiate legitimacy and peripherality with one another, but also that the students seized the opportunity to legitimize each other's ideas and encourage the participation of their peers. A low percentage of these codes indicate that the discussion either did not

create the space for students to negotiate legitimacy and peripherality or that the students did not seize the opportunity to do so. The following is a list of examples for each code:

Agreeing with a peer:

Example One—'I agree with that because the librarians want to destroy the video games and the librarians think that they are not reading and they have come to destroy the games' (Lunch Lady, first round, second student led meeting)

Example Two—'I agree with that idea because she might not feel sad anymore because she might play with some other kids.' (Jellaby, second round, first student led meeting)

Disagreeing with a peer:

Example One—(after a student comments that Portia is a good friend) 'I disagree because Portia does not allow Jason to feed the things he wants to feed Jellaby and then she hits Jason on the head.' (Jellaby, first round, second student led meeting)

Example Two—(after a student comments that the dinosaurs are chasing Stone Rabbit) 'wait, I disagree because maybe they are scared of something…maybe the dinosaurs are also scared and they are running away too' (Stone Rabbit, second round, first teacher led meeting)

Building on a peer's response/referencing a peer:

Example One—First peer: 'because your real friends treat you good and like the popular kids you know they treat you like popular and that is all.'

Second Peer: 'and they might say bad words to you.' (Babymouse, first round, third teacher led meeting)

Example Two—'I want to add on to what Camila said…I agree with her but they want to attack him because they are looking over there.' (Stone Rabbit, second round, first teacher led meeting)

Desire to understand a peer:

Example One—First peer: 'I kinda disagree with Babymouse.'

Second Peer: 'you kinda disagree with Babymouse? Why?' (Babymouse, first round, first student led meeting)

Example Two—'Why do you like that picture so much?' (Jellaby, second round, first student led meeting)

Assisting/Encouraging peer:

Example One—(after a student demonstrates that they are confused with what lettering is) 'like here where it says lunch ladies and it used really big words' (Lunch Lady, first round, first student led meeting)

Example Two—(after a student was silent and did not know what to say as the commenter) 'you could say that you disagree and that you do not like that picture…I like that picture too…or you could say I disagree with that because it is not my favorite' (Lunch Lady, second round, first student led meeting)

The following charts represent the number of times these codes were found in whole class discussions and small-group graphic novel discussions.

Whole Class Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Agreeing with Peer	10
Disagreeing with Peer (constructively)	13
Desire to Understand Peer	1
Assisting Someone/Encouraging Peer	14
Building on Peer's Response/ Referencing Peer	30

Teacher Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Agreeing with Peer	27
Disagreeing with Peer (constructively)	16
Desire to Understand Peer	1
Assisting Someone/Encouraging Peer	9

Building on Peer's Response/ Referencing Peer	58

Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Agreeing with Peer	89
Disagreeing with Peer (constructively)	23
Desire to Understand Peer	33
Assisting Someone/Encouraging Peer	28
Building on Peer's Response/ Referencing Peer	69

Overall, students in this classroom most frequently offered degrees of legitimacy and peripherality during literature discussions by building on another student's idea and by agreeing with an idea presented by a peer. Both of these actions would highlight to a student that their peer not only listened to them but also that they deemed their comment to be worthy of further discussion—thereby enhancing their legitimacy. These actions also provide the student who made the original comment with a chance to elaborate on what they had said—thereby enhancing their peripherality. Alternately, the least common ways students negotiated peripherality and legitimacy were by showing a desire to understand one of their peers or by assisting or encouraging their peer. This was especially true when the teacher was the one viewed as 'in charge' of the discussion as there was a notable increase in these codes during student-led discussions. Students also appeared to be much more reluctant to respectively disagree with a student than agree with them. There were many students who would simply never disagree with a peer while a few students—most notably Samuel—commonly and comfortably would disagree. These few students who were willing to disagree made up for all the codes in this category.

The codes in this category also indicate that the small-group, graphic novel discussions—in particular those that were student led—provided more opportunities overall for students to negotiate peripherality and legitimacy. The way graphic novel discussions were structured certainly impacted the degree to which students took part in verbally negotiating their peers' legitimacy and peripherality. Student-led discussions were structured in a way that provided not only the space for this type of

negotiation but also encouraged and scaffolded students through the process of acknowledging comments made by peers. Having two students serve as commentators that were tasked with 'commenting' on ideas shared by peers set the expectation that students should be commenting on and building upon ideas from peers throughout discussions and often students carried this expectation with them into the teacher-led graphic novel discussions. Additionally, the small number of students in the graphic novel groups allowed students time to enquire about their peers' ideas or ask them to elaborate on their ideas.

While informative, the numbers of codes found in each type of discussion tells an incomplete picture of how students offered each other peripherality and legitimacy during these discussions. It is necessary to further examine the instances where these codes were found and to examine which students were connected to these codes (i.e. which students were most commonly being offered degrees of peripherality and legitimacy). When further examining instances where students agreed with a peer's idea during regular language arts discussions, it became clear that all of these instances involved the teacher actively encouraging students to agree. The teacher would frequently ask 'class, do you agree?' after a student made a correct statement in these discussions. Based on past experience with this question, students knew that their peer's answer was correct and thus appropriately agreed with this peer. Additionally, the teacher had a habit of asking the question 'what do you guys think, is that correct?' after a student provided a wrong answer. This question would indicate to students that the answer was wrong and students would immediately disagree. Without these two prompts, students rarely agreed or disagreed with one another during regular language arts discussions—instead it was generally the teacher commenting on student ideas and answers. This type of repetitive—and often mindless—agreeing and disagreeing is quite different from the more spontaneous, student motivated agreeing and disagreeing that was found in the graphic novel discussions.

The way in which students built on one another's responses also differed in regular language arts discussions as compared to graphic novel discussions. I was initially surprised to find so many 'building on someone's response' codes in the regular discussions as my observations had led me to believe that this was a practice in which students rarely participated. After examining all of the instances of this code within regular language arts discussions, I found that during these discussions students would frequently build on someone's answer in a very simplistic way but would rarely build on a response in a meaningful, 'moving the conversation forward' way as was done during the graphic novel discussions. For example:

(October 29, 2010)
Emily: I predict that they are not going to come because they did not get their invitations.
Alex: that is cause and effect!
Teacher: yes, that is cause and effect. Yes, Dracula stole Tomasenstein's invitations. Okay, would you do that to your friends?

In the above interaction, while the second student does build upon the first student's comment—by pointing out that her prediction was an example of cause and effect—it does not lead into a meaningful discussion and it also does not deepen or enhance the first student's comment in any way. These types of 'off of the cuff' comments on peers' responses were the most common way students built on another student's response during regular language arts discussions.

This was not the case in the graphic novel discussions where students more frequently built on each other's ideas to create a deeper group understanding of the text they were reading. While there were certainly still 'off the cuff' comments, these comments were much less frequent than higher quality comments. For example:

(Second round, second student led Jellaby discussion)
Teacher: look at Jellaby. What do you think the parents think of Jellaby?
Emma: they are surprised
Alex: yeah, they are asking themselves 'who is that?'
Teacher: right….do you guys see those question marks right there that the author drew? That means that they are asking themselves questions and are confused about who Jellaby is.

Mariana: oh yeah!

In the above interaction, the first student's very general idea that the parents are 'surprised' is expanded upon by the second student to include *why* the parents are surprised—that they have never seen anything like Jellaby and are wondering *'who is that?'*. This moves the discussion forward into a discussion about how the author drew question marks to show readers that they were confused. This finding was supported by interview data as well. During the second and third group interviews, students expressed feelings that listening to their peers' ideas during graphic novel discussions enhanced their enjoyment and understanding of the graphic novels. For example, one student mentioned in the third group interview that 'when you were with your groups you would learn things and be like WOW I just love this book'. This indicates that students perceived that their peers' ideas during these discussions were not only valid but that they learned new things about their novels from their peers.

It is also important to consider which students were being offered peripherality and legitimacy in these discussions. Observational notes highlight that Alex, Camila, Mia, and Lucia were the students that were most commonly left out of collaborative literacy activities—including literature discussions—during regular language arts lessons. The audiotaped discussion data confirms that these students were rarely implicitly or explicitly offered peripherality and legitimacy by their peers in regular language arts discussions. Clearly, the infrequent number of participative turns Mia, Lucia, and Camila took limited the possibility of other students validating their ideas. Alex—while very active in the whole class discussions—was still rarely legitimized or recognized for his comments during regular language arts discussions. In fact, it was quite common for him to shout out answers and ideas that were completely ignored—by the teacher and students.

Students also rarely made an effort to include these four students in a discussion by asking them what they thought of a question or topic and there was only one 'encouraging/assisting peer' code connected with them. Instead, Alex, Camila, Mia, and Lucia were often left behind in whole class discussions with no peers expressing a desire to hear what they had to say. During group interviews, there was a consensus among the students that when a peer was 'not accepted' in the classroom that peer would be ignored or would be left behind during group work. Ignoring a peer involved actions such as turning their back to the peer, not providing an opening for them to participate, and not listening to them when they spoke—all of which were actions continuously observed in relation to these four students during regular language arts literature discussions.

During graphic novel discussions, however, there were many instances where Alex, Camila, Mia, and Lucia were offered legitimacy and peripherality by their peers. Not only did the increase in their participation rate create more opportunities for peers to validate their ideas and comments but their peers also demonstrated an increased desire to hear what these students had to say during these discussions. For example, when Camila was being quiet during the beginning of student-led discussion a peer asked, 'Camila, what do you think?' The following are two additional examples of low membership students being offered legitimacy by their peers:

(Jellaby, second round, first student-led discussion)
Tomas: I am going to read question number two. Each of you should pick your favorite picture and explain to the group why you like that picture so much. (time passes while students find a picture) Who would like to participate first? Alex?
Alex: on page 29 the last part…when Portia comes and Jellaby was sleeping and then on page 30 Portia says my mom is going to freak out if she finds out about this!
Tomas: why did you like that picture so much?
Alex: because ummm…Jellaby was caught by Portia eating the plant.

(Babymouse, first round, first student-led discussion)
Teacher (stepping in): so Camila I would love to see your picture that you shared. Which one did you find? Point to the face. okay, I will hold it up for everyone. So this is page 38 and she is carrying the carriage. What is her face?
Camila: like kinda mad because she has to do all of the things for Felicia

Teacher: yeah, you are right she is kinda mad because she has to do all those things
Camila: and the car is heavy.
Emma: I agree with Camila, I like that idea because like it is too heavy and what person is able to carry that by herself.
Mariana: I agree with Camila because my picture is when everyone stepped on her. They are both bad stuff happening to Babymouse.

In the first example, Alex is being offered legitimacy and peripherality by Tomas. First, Tomas is offering Alex legitimacy by showing that he is interested enough in what Alex is saying that he wants him to elaborate on his idea. Tomas is also offering Alex peripherality by providing him the opportunity to say more in the discussion before moving on to another student's favorite picture. With this enhanced peripherality, Alex is able to hone in on exactly why he picked the picture—the fact that Jellaby was caught by Portia eating her mother's plant—making his comment more effective. Elaborating on his initial comment thus worked to further position himself as a capable participant in the discussion. Tomas was also not a commentator in this discussion indicating that his desire for Alex to elaborate on his comment was out of genuine interest to better understand what Alex was thinking.

In the second example, Camila discusses her favorite example of a character's facial expression. Two students then validate Camila's choice and description of Babymouse's facial expression by agreeing with her comment. Emma in particular really validates Camila's ideas by specifically stating that the car 'is too heavy' and agrees that carrying it would be hard. By being so specific in her agreement, Emma demonstrated that she really listened closely to Camila and that there were particular points Camila made that Emma truly connected with. This is much more meaningful than providing superficial agreement of a comment by saying something like 'I agree with that idea because it is true.' In this example, Emma was a commentator but Mariana was not.

Additionally, all four students also took on the role of assisting and encouraging other students—including those with high membership status. Taking on the role of 'helper' also assisted these students in gaining higher degrees of legitimacy as it positioned them as someone who can help others rather

than someone who always needs help themselves. This is very different from regular language arts discussions when they were most often the ones needing assistance and were never able to be the ones providing help to someone else. The following is an example of a low membership status student assisting a higher membership student:

(Lunch Lady, first round, second student-led discussion)
Sofia: I think they should help them too because the lunch ladies are only two and the librarians are more
Tomas: yeah…they need more
Miguel: they need three more. And they are little kids. They could sneak up and then maybe the librarians would not see them
Lucia: I agree with that idea because umm…
Alex: you think the same thing or you agree with it?
Lucia: yeah, I agree with that. I did not think about that before.

In the above interaction, Lucia, a student with high membership status, struggles slightly to complete her thought. Alex, a student with lower membership status, steps in and assists Lucia by providing her two options to explain why she agrees with the idea that the lunch ladies need more people to help them. Lucia accepts this help and explains that while she did not think of that idea before she does agree with it. During this interaction, Alex is positioning himself as someone who is not only a capable participant but someone able to assist and guide students who might be struggling.

The student-led discussions also proved to be fertile ground for students to demonstrate their 'desire to understand someone' and to 'assist a peer' in participating or fully expressing an idea. As the below photograph highlights, students were very willing to step in and help a peer who might be struggling to express their idea.

In this photograph, a student is assisting another student who is struggling to select one of her completed activities to share with the group. The assisting student is mentioning that she really likes one particular picture because it is very creative and is advising that the student pick that activity to share with the group.

The fact that there were still very few of these codes in teacher-led graphic novels discussion implies that it was the structure of the student-led discussions—including the absence of the teacher—that encouraged students to participate in these actions. This indicates that students perhaps view the teacher as the one responsible to help other students and to clarify students' ideas. With the teacher's absence, however, students demonstrated themselves as very capable of taking on this role themselves. This is certainly a benefit for involving students in student-led discussions as it provides them with an additional responsibility and—for ELLs in particular—it encourages them to use different language for an additional purpose (i.e. words related to clarifying ideas and assisting others).

Feeling comfortable category. This category includes codes indicating that a student had achieved high enough degrees of peripherality and legitimacy to feel comfortable enough to take certain risks in the discussions. These codes included admitting not knowing/understanding (often by asking questions), using Spanish to assist with understanding, and disagreeing with a peer. Observational notes highlight that students avoided admitting that they did not know or understand

something if they were uncomfortable or lacking confidence in a lesson. A student's level of comfort in a lesson was determined by whether or not the student exhibited certain non-verbal clues such as holding their head down, avoidance of eye contact, covering up work, and speaking quietly. Similarly, observational notes demonstrate that students tended to 'blindly agree' with other students when exhibiting these same non-verbal cues rather than taking the risk to disagree with someone. The use of Spanish—which technically was not supposed to be used during language arts—was also noted to fluctuate based on the comfort level of students. Observational notes indicate that students actually used more Spanish when they were caught up in a lesson that they felt comfortable in and were enjoying themselves. Exemplars representing examples of each code in this category follows:

Admitting not knowing/not understanding (often by asking questions):

Example One—'Why are the librarians so mean?' (Lunch Lady, first round, second teacher led meeting)

Example Two—(after being asked if there was anything they did not understand) 'I don't understand why Portia is mad at Jason when Jellaby is watching Godzilla.' (Jellaby, first round, third teacher led meeting).

Using Spanish:

Example One—(after the teacher says something in English, a student repeats in Spanish for another student) 'like como que hace?'

Example Two—'I think that the first problem is that Portia does not listen to Jason so then Jason…he…uhh..can I say it in Spanish? (says 'sticks out tongue' in Spanish)'

Disagreeing with a peer:

Example One—(after a student comments that Portia is a good friend) 'I disagree because Portia does not allow Jason to feed the things he wants to feed Jellaby and then she hits Jason on the head.' (Jellaby, first round, second student led meeting)

Example Two—(after a student comments that the dinosaurs are chasing Stone Rabbit) 'wait, I disagree because maybe they are scared of something…maybe the dinosaurs are also scared and they are running away too' (Stone Rabbit, second round, first teacher led meeting).

The following charts represent the number of times these codes were found in whole class discussions and small-group graphic novel discussions.

Whole Class Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Admitting Not Understanding/Knowing	35
Using Spanish to Assist with Understanding	10
Disagreeing with Peer	13

Teacher Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Admitting Not Understanding/Knowing	92
Using Spanish to Assist with Understanding	4
Disagreeing with Peer	16

Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Admitting Not Understanding/Knowing	61
Using Spanish to Assist with Understanding	10
Disagreeing with Peer	23

These data demonstrate that students were clearly more inclined to admit not understanding something during graphic novel discussions than they were during regular discussions. This indicates that the graphic novel discussions created a space where students not only felt comfortable enough to ask questions and admit not understanding but were actually encouraged to do so. There were several factors influencing students' increased comfortableness during graphic novel discussions to admit not

understanding something. First, the structure of these discussions once again played a role in creating this space. All teacher-led graphic novel discussions began by asking students if they had any questions or if they found anything confusing, providing an opening for them to ask questions. Students often seized this opportunity and it was not uncommon for multiple students to ask questions at this time. Even the four students identified as having lower degrees of classroom membership took part in asking questions at this time. The following example is from the first round, third teacher-led discussion on Babymouse:

Teacher: do you guys have any questions about the end or about what you read?
Lucia: yes, I do!
Teacher: what is your question?
Lucia: why is Babymouse a queen?
Teacher: yeah, why is Babymouse a queen? At the end, she realizes that you know what…I am a queen. why? What does Babymouse realize about her life at the end of the story?
Camila: that ummm…that she is a queen.
Teacher: yeah, she does, she thinks she is a queen at the end, she realizes that she has a good life. Why? Why is she all of a sudden a queen? Mariana?
Mariana: because she is dreaming in her own mind
Teacher: yes, she is dreaming about her own life. Actually, this is great Lucia. This is the page that shows it. Open up to page 84 and 85 because this is where she realizes..she thinks wait a minute what did she have in her life? Tasty cupcakes, a sassy style…that means that she is really stylish
Camila: good friends
Teacher: yeah, good friends and exciting books and then what does she say right here…this is so important.
Students: my life is great
Teacher: she realizes that she does not need to pretend she does not have to be friends with Felicia she is queen already because she has a great life. Is she really queen of anything?
Students: no
Teacher: yeah, so that was an excellent question Lucia. Why is she all of a sudden queen? She is not really queen but she realizes that she does not need to be anything more than she already is…she realizes that she has got a great life.
Camila: she just thinks that she is a queen

In this interaction, Lucia—a silent participant in regular language arts literature discussions—seizes the opportunity to ask a question about something that confuses her with regard to the end of the novel. Like many of the questions students asked during this time, Lucia's question is not something that the other students can easily answer. Instead, her question leads into a meaningful question with

students and the teacher working collaboratively to develop the best answer to the question. Not only do her peers validate her question by participating in the accompanying discussion, Lucia is also explicitly told by the teacher that it was an important question worthy of time being spent discussing it. In this way, the way in which students' questions were handled during graphic novel discussions (i.e. fully accepted and validated) encouraged students to ask more questions.

The transcribed discussion data also show that students asked questions and admitted misunderstandings throughout the discussions –not just at the beginning of discussions when they were directly asked if there was anything confusing. This indicates that the structure of the graphic novel discussions was not the only reason for the high number of 'admitting not understanding/knowing' codes. The following excerpt is from the first round, third teacher led discussion of Lunch Lady:

Teacher: so what were these two boys doing at the end of the book?
Students: reading!
Teacher: yeah, and they still have their video games, right? But does that stop them from reading?
Alex: yeah, they want to read because it can get boring playing the same game everyday
Lucia: wait!! I have a question! What did happen to the other librarians?
Teacher: well, let's take a look.
Alex: I think they went to jail.
Tomas: yeah, they went to jail. It says right here.
Teacher: yeah, they have been arrested. Tomas found it. It says the librarians have been arrested…and that means that they are in jail.

In this excerpt, the student asks her question right in the middle of an unrelated discussion. When asking her question, the student demonstrates a lot of enthusiasm and gives the impression that she 'really wants to know the answer'. Observational and discussion data indicate that this type of excitement and desire to completely understand everything was quite common when students asked questions during graphic novel discussions. Students appeared to be interested enough in what they were reading that they wanted to know something 'so badly' that they would ask questions without thinking about whether or not it was a good question or whether the answer would be obvious to their peers. Often times when a student is so enthusiastic about a task or lesson they are able to put aside

fears they have about ‘looking dumb’ or ‘saying something wrong’ and this appears to be the case here.

Despite there being evidence that indicated students were more comfortable in graphic novel discussions, students were only slightly more inclined to disagree with a peer during the graphic novel discussions. As discussed above, students were reluctant to disagree with one another and their continued lack of ‘disagree’ codes within graphic novel discussions indicates that even though they were more comfortable in graphic novel discussions, students still hesitated to disagree with one another. Even when a student disagreed with a peer it was clear that they were hesitant to do so. Many students tempered their disagreement by saying something like, ‘I kinda disagree with that idea’ or ‘I disagree a little’.

The main finding coming out of the ‘using Spanish to assist with understanding’ code was that students would most often use Spanish when the teacher was not present and when they were casually discussing something with a peer. For example, during a student-led discussion on the novel *Lunch Ladies* students were asked to select a funny picture and describe how the author used various visual elements to make the picture funny. While selecting their pictures, many students engaged in casual, side conversations with a peer about the pictures they were looking at and most of these conversations were in Spanish. However, as soon as the facilitator asked if everyone had found a picture and students started to share their pictures, everyone switched back to English. When examining the instances where Spanish was used, there was no indication that Spanish was used more or less frequently by students with lower classroom membership. This means despite Mia and Camila having the most limited English skills in the classroom they were not any more likely to use Spanish in comparison to other students. However, other students were more likely to use Spanish when

communicating with them. If either of them hesitated to answer a question, their peers would often translate the question for them without being asked to do so.

Lack of legitimacy and/or peripherality category. Codes in this category either demonstrate student behavior that reflect feelings of low legitimacy and peripherality or demonstrate direct actions by a particular student to deny or take away another student's legitimacy or peripherality. These codes included unsure of one's self, being rude to a peer or demonstrating frustration with a peer, not responding when invited to participate (either because of choice or inability to answer), and dominating the conversation. Examples of each code in this category follow:

Unsure of One's Self/Hesitation:

Example One—Teacher: 'She is trying to convince Felicia to let her go to the party…she gives her cupcakes and what else does she try to do?'

Student: 'umm…ummm…she gives her a book' (Babymouse, first round, second teacher led)

Example Two—Student one: 'they are connected because they can find some friends of Jellaby and then they will not be lonely anymore' Student two: 'I think that umm…I think that ummm..Jason might be lonely.' (Jellaby, first round, second teacher led)

Not Responding:

Example One—Student one: 'Oh I think that he should not go so he could help his bunnies, help his friends'

Teacher: 'okay, Julio, what do you think about that?'

Julio: silent, does not respond (Lunch Ladies, second round, second student-led)

Example Two—Student: 'why do you like that picture?'

Teacher: 'Well, she just said why she liked it. Say something else.'

Student: silent, does not respond (Lunch Ladies, second round, first student led)

Being rude to a peer/Frustration with peer:

Example One—(a student gets frustrated after another student is being silly and disagreeing with everything she says): First Student—'I think that at the end that just being popular does not mean…that it is not that important, it is more important to be friends'

Second Student—'I know but you said that yesterday. I am looking right here. Ha ha!' First student—'I said that yesterday?!? I don't even know what you are talking about!!'

(Babymouse, first round, third student-led)

Example Two—Student one: 'I agree with that umm…'

Second student—'I don't hear her!!!'

(Babymouse, first round, third student-led)

Dominating Conversation:

Example One—(a student is the first to answer both questions in the student led discussion and talks by far the most for each question): Facilitator—'Does Felicia actually like Babymouse?'

Other student (after already participating six times)—'Felicia actually does not like Babymouse because on page 19 she ignores her in front of everybody and Felicia is like talking about her she is all like blah, blah, blah and she is like ignoring her and stuff.

(Babymouse, first round, second student-led)

Whole Class Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Unsure of One's Self/Hesitation	2
Not Responding (Choice or Unable to)	22
Being Rude to Peer/Frustration with Peer	4
Dominating Conversation	3

Teacher Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Unsure of One's Self/Hesitation	22
Not Responding (Choice or Unable to)	6
Being Rude to Peer/Frustration with Peer	0

Dominating Conversation	4

Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Unsure of One's Self/Hesitation	24
Not Responding (Choice or Unable to)	8
Being Rude to Peer/Frustration with Peer	11
Dominating Conversation	5

One initially surprising finding from these data is that there were many more instances of students being unsure of themselves or being hesitant to participate during graphic novel discussions than during regular language arts discussions. At first, it appears that this finding contradicts the previous finding that students appear more at ease during small-group, graphic novel discussions. However, when further examining the instances where the code 'unsure of one's self/hesitation' was found, it was clear that there was a reason for there being so many instances of this code in the graphic novel discussions.

While many students would simply choose not to participate during the whole class discussions when they experienced feelings of uncertainty—thus limiting instances of participative turns indicating a lack of confidence—students would still participate in graphic novel discussions even if they were still exhibiting signs of doubt. In general, there was a lack of accountability for participating in whole class discussions. If someone was feeling unsure of themselves or their comprehension of the text that student could just choose not to participate. The teacher rarely sought out the participation of students who were not raising their hands or engaged in the discussion. During the graphic novel discussions, however, there was a greater degree of accountability. Due to the small number of students in the group, there was often time to hear everyone's response to a question and students had the added responsibility to fulfill the duties of their assigned role during student led discussions. Additionally, the transcribed discussion data demonstrate that hesitant students often participated in the graphic novel discussions even when they were not being held accountable. The following excerpt from the

transcription of the first round, first-student led discussion of Babymouse highlights Camila's desire to participate—at a point in the conversation when she is not expected to—despite the hesitation she is feeling about what she is going to say:

Teacher: okay, good. Let's go back to question number one because you guys answered that one quickly and I would like to hear what you said. Do you think Babymouse should keep trying to be friends with her?
Camila: (raises her hand)
Teacher: Camila?
Camila: ummm….wait…
Teacher: do you think she should keep trying to be friends with the cat that stepped on her and ignored her?
Camila: no
Teacher: no, why?
Camila: because Felicia is not her friend and she is mean to Babymouse

In this interaction, Camila took the initiative to participate by raising her hand despite the fact that her answer demonstrated that she was not entirely confident about what she was going to say. She even needed the additional support and encouragement of the teacher in order to fully share her answer. This was quite common for Camila during the round one, student-led discussions as it often took Camila a little while to get comfortable in these discussions. During round two of discussions, this was less of an issue for her and she was often comfortable and confident in these discussions right from the beginning. (As a focus student, Camila's participation in these discussions will be detailed extensively in chapter five). What is so important in this interaction, however, is that Camila still wanted to share her answer with the group despite the hesitation she was feeling. This indicates that while graphic novel discussions may not have fully eradicated all feelings of self-doubt they did temper the impact this doubt had on her participation. Additionally, the fact that there were so few instances where students did not respond (either by choice or an inability to do so) in the graphic novel discussions—despite increased expectations to participate—further supports the finding that students were more motivated to overcome their doubts and hesitations.

Observational and interview data support this finding as these data sets indicate that hesitant students—most commonly Camila, Lucia, and Mia—were often motivated to overcome their doubts and participate due to an invested interest in the book and/or discussion. Students' enthusiasm in these multimodal texts was a common theme and as a result students had more motivation to understand what they were reading. For example, during the second group interview, Mia expressed that she felt 'happy' reading graphic novels because 'they have beautiful pictures and because they are funny'. Camila shared that she felt 'good' reading graphic novels because 'they have so many words you can learn' and 'you can read them faster because sometimes there are pictures there and no words'. Lucia also expressed enthusiasm for graphic novels by stating that she felt 'happy reading them' and that they were easier to understand because 'when you like them they are easier for you but when it is harder maybe you do not like them as much'. These students clearly had an invested interest in graphic novels because of the enjoyment they experienced when reading them.

In terms of the code 'being rude to peer/frustration with peer', observational data indicated that while there were many instances of students being outwardly rude to a peer outside of instructional time—especially at lunch time—they would rarely do so during instructional time. Most often students would be more passive in their mistreatment of peers by simply ignoring or leaving out someone who was viewed as incompetent or frustrating. This same finding was found in the literature discussions as students were rarely explicitly rude to one another during these conversations. The limited instances of the code 'being rude to peer/frustration with peer' indicated that denying a student's legitimacy by explicit, verbal rudeness was not something commonly done in literature discussions. Instances where students were explicitly rude to or frustrated with a peer were most commonly found in student led graphic novel discussions and it appears that the absence of a teacher does increase the chances of these types of negative interactions. However, even these instances rarely involved blatant rudeness to

a peer who was either struggling to participate or whose participation was seen as poor. Rather, the majority of these instances stemmed from one student becoming distracted from the discussion and preventing the rest of the group from engaging in discussion. Generally, another student would then get frustrated and voice their concerns about the off task peer. The following example is from the first round, third student led Babymouse discussion:

Emma: oh, she learned that when someone does not want to be your friend…she learned that when someone does not want to be your friend don't go with them…like don't go with them
Mariana: I kinda disagree with that
Emma: (in Spanish and laughing) you do not disagree with me
Mariana: maybe a little bit because I think that at the end..
Emma: I disagree with Mariana, ha ha…so you disagree?
Mariana: I think that at the end that just being popular does not mean…that it is not that important, it is more important to have friends.
Emma: I know but you said that yesterday, I am looking right here, ha ha
Mariana: (frustrated) I do not even know what you are talking about!
Lucia: why is it important to love yourself and love your life the way it is?
Emma: I disagree with this! Ha ha! I disagree with Lucia.
Mariana: (frustrated) now what!

In the above interaction, Emma is clearly getting off task and acting silly—perhaps in response to her discomfort with Mariana disagreeing with her. While Mariana ignores this silliness at first, she becomes very frustrated with Emma near the end of this excerpt. While there are most certainly better ways to get the conversation back on track than being rude or acting frustrated, this is still quite different than blatant rudeness to a struggling peer.

Degree of student attention category. Codes in this category identify instances where students were either distracted and off task or engaged and focused. These codes include demonstrating excitement/anticipation, being silly or distracted from task, getting the discussion back on track, and being serious. It was decided that including the code 'paying attention' was overly general and redundant. Instead, instances where students were not paying attention were coded as 'being silly/distracted from task' as an indicator of the level of student attention during discussions. The codes

'excitement/anticipation', 'getting the discussions back on track', and 'being serious' were viewed as instances where a student's attention on the discussion was raised to a higher level. Examples of each code in this category follow:

Demonstrating Excitement/Anticipation:

Example One—(after the facilitator tells peers to find interesting examples of facial expressions) 'I got one!' (Babymouse, second round, second student led discussion)

Example Two—'I want to read the whole book!' (Babymouse, second round, first student led discussion)

Being Silly/Distracted:

Example One—(after a student points out that everyone is saying 'why do you think that?' and that commentators all need to say something different) 'why do you think that? ha ha ha.' (Lunch Lady, second round, second student led discussion)

Example Two—(talking about the audio recorder) 'Oh no! The battery is dying!' (Lunch Lady, first round, third student led discussion)

Being Serious/Taking Conversation Seriously:

Example One—(after a student gives a silly answer) 'no, what do you really do when someone bullies you?' (Lunch Lady, first round, first student led discussion)

Example Two—(after all other students get distracted by the audio recorder) 'let's just focus on the book!' (Lunch Lady, first round, third student led discussion)

Getting Discussion Back on Track:

Example One—(after a student says that they are bleeding) 'hey, do not get distracted…yes Alex what were you saying?' (Jellaby, second round, second student led discussion)

Example Two—(after a student does not really answer the question asked by the facilitator) ‘yes, but why is this a bad idea?’ (Babymouse, first round, second student led discussion)

Whole Class Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Demonstrating Excitement/Anticipation	22
Being Silly/Distracted	13
Being Serious/Taking Conversation Seriously	0
Getting Discussion Back on Track	0

Teacher Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Demonstrating Excitement/Anticipation	66
Being Silly/Distracted	18
Being Serious/Taking Conversation Seriously	0
Getting Discussion Back on Track	0

Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Demonstrating Excitement/Anticipation	29
Being Silly/Distracted	51
Being Serious/Taking Conversation Seriously	5
Getting Discussion Back on Track	11

The above data support the finding from the observational data that students demonstrated a much higher degree of excitement and enthusiasm during multimodal lessons. Instances of the code ‘demonstrating excitement/anticipation’ were much more common in the graphic novel discussions than in the regular language arts literature discussions. Overall, students demonstrated the most excitement and enthusiasm during teacher led graphic novels. This was surprising as the types of questions asked during student led graphic novel discussions were actually meant to be the most engaging for the students as these questions focused on student opinion of events and characters and inquired what they would have done if they were in a similar situation. The questions in teacher led discussions—while still higher level thinking questions—were much more focused on developing reading comprehension skills. It was believed that students would need extra incentive in the form of

engaging questions to remain on task during student-led discussions when the teacher was not present. However, these data demonstrate that the teacher-led discussions resulted in the most excitement.

It is also important to remember that these numbers only represent the enthusiasm demonstrated within the literature conversations. If you take into account the enthusiasm students demonstrated when they were told it was time to work on their graphic novels, instances of enthusiasm for the graphic novel discussions would be much higher. Observational data indicate that students often greeted graphic novel discussion time with cheers of 'yes!' and 'about time!' Additionally, I noted in my researcher's notebook that students often asked me at the beginning of school if we were going to be doing the graphic novel discussions today. If I told them no, they always appeared disappointed and wanted to know when the next time was going to be. This indicates that the graphic novel discussions were something that they looked forward to and enjoyed.

Clearly, the students were the most distracted during student-led discussions. It is not surprising to find that when a teacher is not directly observing a group of students they are more likely to be off task. One of the major arguments for not engaging students in more student-led group work is that students tend to waste too much time. This finding does demonstrate that the engaging nature of graphic novels is not enough to entirely eradicate the temptation to 'misbehave' when the teacher is not listening. However, it should be noted that instances of distraction during student-led, graphic novel discussions were often very short and sporadic. Most often if one or two students got distracted another student—generally the facilitator—would say something to try and get them to refocus. For example:

Mariana: okay, what about you two guys?
Tomas: Portia helped Jellaby by bringing him food and…
Mariana: what?
Tomas: bringing him food and taking care of him
Emma: that is a nice speech
Mariana: now Alex needs to go

Alex: I like that idea because…
Emma: oh no! Someone get it…I am bleeding
Alex: whoa
Mariana: hey, do not get distracted…yes Alex.
Alex: I like that idea because I think the same thing, she did help him a lot.

In the above interaction, students were only distracted for a moment. Mariana—who was the group's facilitator that day—immediately stepped in to get the students back on track. The other students respected Mariana's desire to 'not get distracted' and immediately refocused on the discussion and not Emma's cut. The fact that students generally stayed distracted for such a short time period—and that students were willing to step in and get the conversation back on track—does indicate that students were fairly motivated to complete the discussion and resisted the desire to 'play around' during these discussions.

Problems with the discussion category. Codes in this category indicate instances where there was a breakdown in the quality of the discussion. These codes include facilitator/commenter confusion, teacher needing to step in or the need for teacher assistance, a student dominating the conversation, and simply repeating what a peer said with limited thinking. Two of the codes in this category—'facilitator/commenter confusion' and 'teacher stepping in/need for teacher assistance'—only applied to the student-led discussions. Examples of each code in this category follow:

Facilitator/Commenter Confusion:

Example One—(Commenter struggle; after the facilitator reads a question, a commenter tries to comment on the questions rather than waiting for a student to respond first) Facilitator—'Portia is lonely. What does it feel like to be lonely? What can she do to make herself feel better?' Commenter—'Como…I like that idea because….no' (Jellaby, first-round, first student led)

Example Two—(Commenter struggle; facilitator always asking ‘why do you think that?’) Student—‘and if you want to be popular you get in trouble because if you give all your homework to a popular person you get in trouble’

Facilitator—‘why do you think that?’

Teacher ‘well, she already explained why she thought that.’

(Babymouse, first round, third student lead)

Teacher Stepping In/Need Teacher Assistance:

Example One—(student not completely answering question) Student—‘I also agree because there is a lot of action and the monsters are trying to kill Stone Rabbit’

Teacher—‘what about the lettering? Because the facilitator said examples of lettering or facial expressions that make you scared.’

(Stone Rabbit, first-round, second student led)

Example Two—(student not providing a complete answer) Student—‘I think that people who are bullies are mean and if you are bullied you often become mean.

Teacher—‘why?’

(Stone Rabbit, first-round, third student led)

Simply Repeating Peer:

Example One—(after the class shouts out the wrong answer the student who is called on repeats answer without thinking) Teacher—‘what is the genre of the story?’

Students—‘Non-fiction!’

Teacher—‘Sofia, what kind of story is this and what does it say in your table of contents?’

Sofia—‘it says non-fiction’ Teacher—‘no, it does not say non-fiction’

(regular discussion, Nov 16th)

Example Two—(during a small-group discussion a student shares an answer that does make sense and all other student go along with it) Teacher—'what are some details that support that city wildlife are those animals that do not have owners?'

Student—'a grizzly bear'

Other students—'yeah! a grizzly bear'

(regular discussion, Nov 17th)

Dominating Conversation:

Example One—(a student is the first to answer both questions in the student led discussion and talks by far the most for each question) Facilitator—'Does Felicia actually like Babymouse?'

Student (after already participating six times)—'Felicia actually does not like Babymouse because on page 19 she ignores her in front of everybody and Felicia is like talking about her she is all like blah, blah, blah and she is like ignoring her and stuff.

(Babymouse, first round, second student-led)

Whole Class Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Facilitator/Commenter Confusion	N/A
Teacher Stepping In/Need Teacher Assistance	N/A
Simply Repeating Peer	8
Dominating Conversation	3

Teacher Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Facilitator/Commenter Confusion	N/A
Teacher Stepping In/Need Teacher Assistance	N/A
Simply Repeating Peer	1
Dominating Conversation	4

Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Code	Number of Times Found
Facilitator/Commenter Confusion	6
Teacher Stepping In/Need Teacher Assistance	29

Simply Repeating Peer	2
Dominating Conversation	5

The main finding from the problems with discussion category is that students picked up the facilitator and commentator roles quite quickly. The six instances of the code 'facilitator and commentator confusion' were all in the first two student-led discussions. However, there were many more instances where the teacher needed to step in and guide the discussion. When re-examining these instances, there were several cases where the teacher stepped in when teacher support was not actually needed. For example, in one example the researcher had been helping another group and upon returning to the discussion group determined that students had not spent enough time on the question and pushed them to re-share their answers. However, the transcript indicates that the students had fully answered the question and all students had participated despite the limited time that it took them to do so. Other times, teacher assistance was needed. In most instances teacher assistance was needed because a group was not fully answering a question or the group had failed to bring up an essential point. This was especially true in the case where there were two parts to a question. For example,

(Jellaby, second round, first student led discussion)
Tomas: I am going to read question number one. Portia is really lonely. How does it feel to be lonely? What can she do to make herself feel better? Emma?
Emma: to not make her feel lonely she could just ask like boys and girls if they want to like play with her and yeah…
Tomas: commentators, what would you like to say?
Alex: I like that idea because she might not feel sad anymore because she might play with some other kids.
Mariana: I agree with Alex and Emma because she is gonna ask them if she can play with them and she is going to be more happy when she plays with someone
Tomas: I agree with Mariana because sometimes when you do not have a friend you can play with someone you know
Teacher: but you did not answer how does it feel to be lonely? You only mentioned what she could do to be less lonely.

These two-part questions were the most problematic aspect of the student led discussions.

There was no real difference in the number of instances of the ‘dominating the conversation’ code between regular language arts discussions and graphic novel discussions. However, the students dominating these conversations were different in the two types of discussions. In the regular literature discussions, the students who were identified as taking the most participative turns (Julio and Kate) were the ones that dominated conversations. However, in the graphic novel discussions, there was greater variety of students dominating conversations (Emma, Kate, Miguel, Sofia, Lucia, Alex, Mariana, and David).

Students were also slightly more likely to ‘simply repeat a peer’ during regular literature discussions. The ‘simply repeating a peer’ refers to instances where a student mindlessly repeated something another peer said—even when the answer was obviously not correct. Observational data indicated that this type of behavior was typical during regular language arts lessons that were highly routine and skills based but much less common in graphic novel lessons that were more cognitively and socially demanding. The above data indicate that trend did carry over slightly into regular literature discussions.

High Quality Participation and Engagement in Whole Class and Small Group Discussions.

This section details the open coding process that explored instances of high quality participation and engagement within the transcribed literature discussions. High quality participation and engagement are other important indicators of the degrees of legitimacy and peripherality students hold. If a student is not provided an appropriate opening (i.e. peripherality) within a task—an opening that addresses the unique needs of the student and utilizes their individual strengths—both their participation and engagement will be of low quality or nonexistent. The same is true with legitimacy as the degree of legitimacy a student holds determines how confident and comfortable they are in a task.

High quality participation and engagement are hard for students to achieve when they are overly concerned with how their ideas and behaviors are being negatively viewed by their peers.

As defined in the literature review, engagement goes beyond simple attention and mindless completion of simplistic tasks (automation). It requires student thoughtfulness, a degree of self motivation—including a desire to complete quality work and give full effort—and authentic interest in the topic or activity. There is also a deep connection between participation and engagement and it can be difficult to separate one from the other—especially when that participation and engagement are of high quality. Any level of engagement with a task does require some degree of participation. However, participation in a task does not necessarily mean that a student is engaged in that task. Observational data from this study illustrate a plethora of instances where students were participating in a task without being engaged. For example:

> High percentage—when students are asked to copy down what the teacher is writing down there is always a high percentage of participation (100%); but there is no evidence that the students are actually thinking about what they are writing
> **Not Engaged—**despite the above attentiveness, students are not engaged with answering three questions after the story (Dec 1) and instead do the bare minimum and do not spend much time thinking about an answer
> **Following along but not engaged**—students are to spell words in the air with their finger...many students just waving their finger not really spelling the word

This type of participation is minimal and certainly cannot be described as active and high quality. High quality participation in a task, however, does correspond with a student being engaged on some level with that task.

The coding process began by highlighting sections of the transcripts that represented areas of high quality discussion and areas of low quality discussion. The identified discussion strands then were examined for shared student actions and behaviors that were commonly found in the high quality

discussions but absent in the low quality discussions. A total of 16 actions were identified and all discussions were then coded for these actions.

The identified actions/codes were:

Confidence, asking questions, disagreeing, holding to a stance, admitting not understanding, taking a leadership role, moving the conversation forward, unique thought or idea, evidence of higher level thinking and thoughtfulness, well thought out question, excitement, anticipation, desire to understand peer, desire to understand in general, no 'bare minimum' mentality, taking time to complete task

During a second round of coding, several codes were combined based upon similarity. First, the codes including: asking questions, disagreeing, holding a stance and admitting not understanding were all found to be evidence of risk taking. As risk taking is an indicator of confidence all of these codes were combined under the confidence code. This code was then renamed 'confidence and/or risk taking'. Additionally, 'excitement' and 'anticipation' were combined and 'no bare minimum mentality' and 'taking time to complete the task' were combined. The reason for these combinations was that rarely did one code occur and not the other since the codes actually highlighted very similar student behavior. Finally, 'desire to understand a peer' and 'desire to understand in general' because it was decided that the subtle difference in the codes was not relevant for the study.

At this point, the codes were divided into two categories: high quality participation and high quality engagement. Codes placed in the high quality participation category represented participative actions that exceeded basic expectations (i.e. went beyond the basic sharing of ideas/answers or completion of a task). Codes placed in the high quality engagement category represented participative actions that indicated high levels of interest, motivation, and thoughtfulness. The following is a list of codes after the second round of coding:

High Quality Participation: Confidence/Risk Taking (asking questions, disagreeing, holding stance, and admit not understanding), taking leadership role, moved the conversation forward, and shared unique thought or idea

High Quality Engagement: Evidence of higher level thinking (HLT) and thoughtfulness, no 'bare minimum' mentality/taking time, well thought out question, excitement/anticipation, desire to understand (peer or general).

One final round of coding was completed to ensure that the coding was accurate and that nothing had been missed. No codes were added, modified, or removed during this round.

The following is a list of exemplars for all of the high quality participation and engagement codes.

Confidence/Risk Taking:

Example one—(after a student says 'he is a hero because at the end of the story they built a statue of him') 'I disagree with Emily because they call him a superhero because when he was somewhere and then he passed through time people thought that Stone Rabbit since he fell out of the sky that he was a god.' (Stone Rabbit, first round, third student led)

Example two—'no it is not about that…it is about her facial expressions…see look at the picture because she is feeling her anger…arghhh!' (Babymouse, second round, second student led)

Example three—'why is Babymouse always messing things up?' (Babymouse, second round, third teacher led)

Taking Leadership Role:

Example one—(after a student shares their answer) 'okay…Emily what do you want to say?' (Babymouse, second round, first student led)

Example two—(after students spend time looking for their favorite picture) 'are you guys ready?' (Lunch Lady, first round, first student led)

Moving Conversation Forward:

Example one—(after other students struggle to answer the question 'what tells you that he is falling, what can you see in the picture?) 'because it is like round but it is far away and some of the clocks are

smaller, far away and some are larger, closer' (Stone Rabbit, second round, first teacher led). In this example, the student moves the conversation forward by drawing attention to the varying size of the objects and how this indicates distance and perspective.

Example two—(answering what is happening on these two pages? this student is able to make a connection between Babymouse's space dream and what is happening with the slumber party invitation) 'Wilson, he is calling Babymouse Captain and it is like this invitation that I think they are trying to find but it is happening in space because it is a dream' (Babymouse, second round, second teacher led). In this example, the student moves the discussion forward from a simplistic description of what they are seeing on the page to a deeper discussion that connects the page to the larger storyline as well as the 'reoccurring dream' theme that is part of the novel.

Unique Thought or Idea:

Example one—(after being asked 'how did getting picked on all the time turn Willie into a mean adult?') 'he just got annoyed by people and so he just made a decision to be an evil man and just be evil because he cannot help anymore that people tease him' (Stone Rabbit, first round, second teacher led)

Example two—(answering another student's question of 'why is Portia mad at Jason when Jellaby is watching Godzilla?') 'because umm….because if Jellaby watches Godzilla he will want to go to the…he will want to destroy things and kill people' (Jellaby, first round, third teacher led)

Evidence of higher level thinking:

Example one—(answering the question of whether or not they think the lunch ladies will be able to save the day) 'I think they are going to stop the librarians because the librarians do not actually have any powers and the lunch ladies do.' (Lunch Lady, second round, first teacher led)

Example two—‘but, why is Felicia so mean to Babymouse? It does not make sense.’ (Babymouse, second round, second teacher led)

No ‘bare minimum’/taking time:

No ‘bare minimum’ refers to instances where students exceed the bare minimum of effort that is expected by the teacher. When a student avoids working from a ‘bare minimum’ mentality, they are motivated to put in extra effort and time and tend to focus more on the content of their work than on quickly meeting minimum expectations and turning in their work fast.

Example one—(answering the question of whether or not Stone Rabbit should go home and make the other bunnies stop Willie on their own or should he stay and try to protect his new friends) ‘I agree with that because they should stop him before he does something evil and destroy the rabbits and the world because the world has to be a safe place.’ (Stone Rabbit, first round, second student led)

Example two—(example of taking time answer a question. The question was ‘what did Babymouse learn about herself at the end of the story?’) ‘Oh, she learned that when someone does not want to be your friend…she learned that when someone does not want to be your friend you should just like not go with them anymore…yeah, like don’t go with them or hang out with them because it will not be fun’ (Babymouse, first round, third student led)

Well thought out question:

Example one—‘Why are the librarians so mean?’ (Lunch Lady, first-round, second teacher led)

Example two—‘I have a question…why are a lot of the people mean in the school and just the three kids are nice?’ (Lunch Lady, second round, second teacher led)

Excitement/Anticipation:

Example one— (said while looking ahead in the book) ‘Oh, look at this page! It’s got an onomatopoeia!’ (Lunch Lady, first-round, second teacher led)

Example two—(after the facilitator mentions that they can share a completed activity) 'oooh! I have got one to share!' (Stone Rabbit, first round, third student led)

Desire to Understand:

Example one—(asking a student to clarify) 'but do you agree or disagree with Emma?' (Babymouse, first round, second student led)

Example two—'but why do you like the picture so much?'(Jellaby, second round, first student led)

The following two charts highlight the number of times each code was found in the regular, whole class discussions.

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions (9 Discussions) (Each discussion lasted an average of 45 mins for a total of 6.75 hours of discussion)

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
All Students	22	2	37	12

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions (9 Discussions) (Each discussion lasted an average of 45 mins for a total of 6.75 hours of discussion)

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
All Students	126	39	8	27	6

Considering the extensive amount of time spent in these whole class discussions, the number of high quality participation and engagement codes is quite low—with the exception of the HLT/Thoughtfulness code. The overall number of codes is even lower when you take out two of the discussions—October 29th and January 6th. These two discussions alone accounted for more than half of the total codes. In comparison to the other regular language arts discussions, these discussions had a higher frequency of open ended questions and the observational data highlight that the stories being

discussed on these days were of higher interest for students and more accessible to students. Additionally, these discussions were also the most open in that there was no language arts 'skills' focus for the discussion such as 'determining the main idea and details'. Rather, these discussions focused more on enjoying the story, reflecting on the character and events, and making personal connections with the text. This is clear evidence that the way these discussions were structured was partially responsible for limiting students' high quality participation and engagement.

However, even the October 29th and January 6th discussions had a relatively low number of high quality participation and engagement codes indicating that something else also influenced the low frequency of high quality participation and engagement codes. There is additional evidence within these discussions that point to classroom membership status as another influencing factor in the frequency of participative turns that reflect high quality participation and engagement. Students identified as holding low membership status tended to have the fewest percentage of their turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement codes while students identified as having very high membership status had a higher percentage of their turns reflecting this level of participation and engagement. Only 20% of Lucia's turns, 8% of Camila's turns, and 0% of Mia's turns reflected a high level of participation and engagement. Once again Alex was not as negatively impacted by his low status during whole class discussions with 40% of his turns reflecting high levels of participation and engagement. This re-emphasizes that while there are general trends in the impact low membership status has on participation and engagement in discussions, not every student reacts the same. Students identified with high membership status fared much better although there was certainly room for improvement. Fifty-seven percent of Lucia's turns, 55% of Emma's turns, and 52% of David's turns reflected a high level of participation and engagement. Again, the one exception was Tomas who only had 33% of his turns reflecting this level of participation and engagement. The above findings indicate

that classroom membership certainly plays an important role in determining the frequency of a student's high quality participation and engagement—though it is certainly not the only influencing factor.

The following four charts highlight the number of times each code was found in the small-group, graphic novel discussions. Codes are divided into teacher-led discussions and student-led discussions to highlight any differences between the two types of discussions.

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in *Teacher Led* Graphic Novel Discussions
(Each student involved in 6 -15 min discussions for a total of 1.5 hours)

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
All Students	41	1	63	53

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in *Student Led* Graphic Novel Discussions
(Each student involved in 6 -15 min discussions for a total of 1.5 hours)

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
All Students	28	96	29	36

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in *Teacher Led* Graphic Novel Discussions
(Each student involved in 6-15 min discussions for a total of 1.5 hours)

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
All Students	345	162	18	67	18

Number of HQ Engagement Codes in *Student Led* Graphic Novel Discussions
(Each student involved in 6 -15 min discussions for a total of 1.5 hours)

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or

			question		general)
All Students	185	136	1	36	40

General discussion of focus students' high quality participation and engagement. Overall, there was significantly more evidence of high quality participation and engagement in small-group, graphic novel discussions in comparison to the whole-class discussions. This is not surprising as these discussions had a lot more in common with October 29th and January 6th discussions that also had a high frequency of these codes. Additionally, there were more instances of high quality participation and engagement in teacher-led discussions in comparison to student-led discussions. The two exceptions were the 'leadership' and 'desire to understand' codes. It is interesting to note that when the teacher stepped back from a discussion the students in this study showed a greater desire to understand their peers. This finding indicates that student-led discussions create an additional opening for students to negotiate legitimacy in a way that is not often possible in teacher-led discussions. Instances of the leadership code significantly increased from round one to round two. Students appeared to be more familiar and comfortable with the facilitator role and non-facilitators were more comfortable to step in as leaders when they saw fit. This finding supports the earlier theme that arose during the open coding process that students were more relaxed and comfortable during graphic novel discussions making the students more willing to take risks such as taking the initiative to lead the discussion.

Several additional findings arise from this data set when examining the data in terms of students' classroom membership status. All four of the students identified as having lower classroom status had an impressively higher percentage of participative turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement. For Camila, 56 out of her 142 (39%) turns reflect high quality participation and engagement—much higher than the 8% of turns found in the regular language arts discussions. Mia had 36 out of her 90 turns (40%) reflecting high quality participation and engagement which was up

from the surprisingly 0% of her turns in regular language arts discussions. Lucia also improved from 20% of her turns in regular language arts discussions reflecting high quality participation and engagement to 51% of her turns (50 out of 99) in graphic novel discussions. Finally, Alex's participative turns also improved in this category—though at a slightly smaller percentage rate. He went from 40% of his turns to 54% of his turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement. These findings indicate that the graphic novel discussions did increase the quality of these students' participation and engagement.

For many of the higher status students, the number of turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement increased dramatically as well. However, this increase was due to an increase in their number of turns taken as the percentage of their turns reflecting high quality participation stayed approximately the same. Tomas was the one exception to this with the percentage of his turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement increasing from 30% in the regular language arts discussions to 50 % (55 out of 109) in the graphic novel discussions. David and Lucia also experienced an increase although their increases were quite small. The percentage of David's participative turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement went from 52% to 60% (90 out of 150) while Lucia's percentage went from 57% to 63% (110 out of 174). Interestingly, the percentage of Emma's participative turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement actually decreased, going from 55% to 44% (73 out of 167) in the graphic novel discussions.

The above findings indicate that rather than noticeably increasing the quality of all students' participation and engagement, the graphic novel discussions actually worked to even out the discrepancy that was found in the regular language arts discussions between the high and low membership status students. While these data do not explain why these discussions evened out this discrepancy rather than simply increasing the quality of all students' participative turns, the interview

data provides some indication of why this happened. During the second group interviews, students were asked whether they felt graphic novels were easier, harder, or the same to read and talk about. Students with lower membership status—who also tended to have lower level English literacy skills—all stated that they perceived graphic novels to be easier to both read and to discuss. Reasons provided included graphic novels 'being more interesting', 'not having as many words', and 'there were pictures to help you'.

This was not the case with students with high membership status. These students stated that they found graphic novels to be either the same or even harder to read and discuss. Reasons provided included graphic novels having things 'that we have never seen before' and having 'harder words'. This suggests that perhaps a reason for why high membership status students' percentage of participative turns did not noticeably improve is that they did not necessarily need the increased peripherality that the graphic novels provided. For these students, they were already able to engage in high quality participation during discussions using non-multimodal supports because they already had high degrees of peripherality. They were able to access these texts due to their high English skills and they also had the confidence and skills to successfully participate in discussions on these texts.

In addition to classroom membership and the accessibility of the text, there was evidence indicating that additional factors also influenced the level of high quality student participation and engagement found in literature discussions. For example, there was one round of student led discussions that took place during a day that the teacher was absent. As mentioned earlier, students were often off task and easily distracted when a substitute was in charge in the class and observational notes indicate that this day was no different. The student-led discussions that day also had significantly fewer high quality participation and engagement codes with the exception of one group which engaged in an exceptional discussion. This indicates that the overall mood of the day—as well as any earlier

events—also contribute to the frequency of students' high quality participation and engagement. Again, this finding points to the inherent complexity—due to a multitude of influencing, uncontrolled factors—that needs to be taken into consideration when examining participation and engagement in an ever changing, social environment. Interestingly, the one code that was still quite frequent during these discussions was the 'no bare minimum' mentality indicating that students still firmly understood that the expectations and goal of these discussions were not to simply answer questions as quickly as possible.

The high quality participation and engagement codes also demonstrated student improvement from the first round of graphic novel discussions to the second round—especially with regards to the frequency of the 'thoughtfulness' and 'no bare minimum mentality' codes. This indicates that students' familiarity with the teacher-led discussions—and the higher level questioning associated with these discussions—also impacted the frequency of students' high quality participation and engagement. Another interesting finding is that students appeared to benefit when all other group members were actively participating and highly engaged. When this occurred all students increased the number of actions representing high quality participation and engagement. This means that when there were a lot of high quality participation and engagement codes found in a discussion ALL the students were demonstrating these actions at a high frequency. When a discussion was lacking in high quality codes all the students in the discussions were lacking theses actions. It was much less common to find a discussion where one or two people had lots of high quality actions and others had few. This indicates that all students benefit when steps are taken to ensure that all students have the opportunity to be actively engaged and participating in the classroom.

Quality of responses in literature discussions. The final step in the coding process was to code all the literature discussions according to the quality of student responses. There were four levels of

quality: Exceptional, Standard, Simple, and Very Limited. Exceptional responses are those that demonstrate unique thinking, ability to synthesize information, ability to challenge the common idea, and/or ability to draw understanding where others cannot. Standard responses are those that demonstrate good, solid thinking and understanding, demonstrate effort, and sufficiently answer the question. Simple responses are acceptable responses—at the most basic level—though they are not representative of high quality thinking or effort and they do not provide any rationale behind an answer. Yes and no answers were coded as simple responses if the question asked could be answered by a simple yes or no. Very limited responses are responses that demonstrate little to no thinking, are limited to only a word or two, and **do not** fully answer the question. The following chart highlights the four 'quality of response' categories.

Exceptional Response	demonstrates unique thinking, ability to synthesize information, ability to challenge the common idea, and/or ability to draw understanding where others cannot
Standard Response	demonstrates good, solid thinking and understanding, demonstrate seffort, and sufficiently answer the question
Simple Response	acceptable response—at the most basic level—though not representative of high quality thinking or effort and does not provide any rationale behind an answer (yes or no answers to yes or no questions were simple responses)
Very Limited Response	demonstrates little to no thinking, limited to only a word or two, and **does not** fully answer the question

Students' turns were not coded for quality if they were extremely off topic, related to directing the conversation (including facilitator questions and calling on group members), or were questions that are related to discussion expectations (i.e. are we supposed to read this? On this page?). Additionally, one coded response could be made up of multiple turns if a peer or teacher encouraged that student to further elaborate on their idea. This means that the total number of responses coded for quality will not be equal to the total number of participative turns taken by students.

The quality of responses during these discussions was calculated to help determine how particular students presented and positioned themselves in the discussions. For example, if a student's responses in a discussion mostly fell in the exceptional and standard categories they would have demonstrated themselves to be very competent. Their responses most likely would have been praised by the teacher and recognized by peers as being successful responses. Alternatively, if a student's responses primarily fell in the basic and very limited categories they would have presented themselves to be not fully competent in the discussion. Many of their responses would have been either brushed over quickly or ignored entirely.

The following chart highlights the quality of responses each student gave during the regular language arts discussions. Once again, students identified as holding lower membership status are highlighted yellow and those identified as holding higher membership status are highlighted green.

Regular Language Arts Discussions

Name	Exceptional	Standard	Simple	Very Limited
Kate	10	21	26	5
Sofia	8	16	4	0
Alex	4	18	27	4
Camila	0	3	6	4
Isabella	3	9	8	2
Lucia	1	3	1	2
Tomas	1	5	4	1
Mia	0	2	2	1
Julio	4	40	25	1
Samuel	7	17	25	3
Victoria	1	9	1	0
Mariana	8	10	4	0
Mateo	1	5	3	1
Miguel	3	20	30	1
David	2	14	3	1
Emily	0	4	1	0
Emma	2	9	8	1
Lucia	1	11	5	0
Total	56	216	183	27

During regular language arts discussions, students most commonly gave standard and simple responses. The high number of simple comments is partially related to the basic line of questioning that was representative of language arts discussions. Simple comments were often the result of simple questions in that these questions only require—and in many ways encourage—one word answers. At the same time, students who were reluctant to participate but were subsequently called on by the teacher often provided simple answers to questions demanding longer answers. This was either because they actually did not know the complete answer or because an additional factor was preventing them from providing a more expanded answer (i.e. confidence, lack of interest).

The four students identified as holding lower degrees of legitimacy and peripherality within the classroom—Camila, Alex, Mia, and Lucia—tended to have more 'simple' and 'very limited' responses than they did exceptional and standard responses—further solidifying their low status in the classroom. Camila had ten out of a total of thirteen responses in the simple and very simple categories, Alex had thirty-one out of a total of fifty-three responses in the simple and very simple categories, and Mia had three out of a total of five responses in the simple and very limited categories. Lucia was the one exception as she actually had more responses in the exceptional and standard categories with four out of seven responses in the higher two categories. However, with only seven turns, Lucia simply did not participate enough to be able to reach the higher numbers of exceptional and standard responses that other students had, and her overall lack of participation most likely clouded the fact that her turns were fairly successful. Likewise, although Alex actually had quite a few (22) exceptional and standard responses, these quality responses were muted by the overwhelming number of simple and very limited response he also gave (31).

The students (Emma, Tomas, David, Lucia) identified as holding high degrees of legitimacy and peripherality tended to have more exceptional and standard responses than simple and very limited

responses—further solidifying their high standing in the classroom. This was particularly true for Lucia and David who all had many more exceptional and standard responses than they did simple and very limited responses. Both Emma and Tomas also had more exceptional and standard responses than they did simple and very limited responses, however, the difference was much smaller. It is also notable that when all four of these students are grouped together they only had three very limited responses between them. In comparison, the four students indentified with lower degrees of legitimacy and peripherality had eleven very limited responses between them.

This indicates that the regular, whole class literature discussions were generally not spaces where students with limited legitimacy could demonstrate themselves as competent, knowing classmates. Rather, these discussions most often worked to solidify legitimacy standings already in place. Students who held high standing in the classroom further demonstrated their competence by giving a high percentage of high quality answers while students who held lower standing were not able to use these discussions to demonstrate their competency as the majority of their answers were not of higher quality.

The following chart highlights the quality of responses each student gave during the regular language arts discussions. Students identified as holding lower membership status are highlighted yellow and those identified as holding higher membership status are highlighted green.

Graphic Novel Discussions

Name	Exceptional	Standard	Simple	Very Limited
Kate	28	53	29	1
Alex	27	44	31	0
Sofia	40	47	11	1
Camila	11	41	27	6
Isabella	23	40	15	0
Lucia	8	34	20	2
Tomas	15	33	15	0
Mia	1	25	18	3
Julio	20	44	17	1
Samuel	24	41	10	2

Victoria	17	48	15	1
Mariana	24	38	13	0
Mateo	13	30	10	0
Miguel	5	28	15	2
David	30	42	18	1
Emily	15	54	35	0
Emma	22	34	16	1
Lucia	25	62	24	0
Total	348	738	339	21

During graphic novel discussions, students most commonly gave exceptional and standard responses—with an extremely high number of standard responses. Additionally, only 1.5% of responses were in the very limited category meaning that very rarely did students give a response that demonstrated little to no thinking. This is in comparison to the whole class discussions where 5.6% of the responses were very limited. There were also a larger percentage of responses in the exceptional category within the graphic novel discussions—with 24% of responses being exceptional as compared to only 12% in the regular language arts discussions.

Perhaps more important than the whole class findings is the fact that all four of the students with lower membership status had more exceptional and standard responses than they did simple and very limited responses in the graphic novel discussions—a complete turnaround from the quality of their responses in regular language arts discussions. This indicates that these students were able to position themselves as contributing and capable members of the classroom during these discussions as their responses were of much higher quality and were more similar in nature to the quality of responses of the higher status peers. These higher quality answers would certainly be beneficial to them as they tried to negotiate higher status in the community. However, there still is room for improvement in terms of the number of ‘exceptional’ responses these students had. Together Camila, Mia, and Lucia only had 20 exceptional responses between them. These numbers were still drastically lower than those of their peers. So while it was beneficial that these students increased the number of standard responses

they gave and decreased the number of simple and very limited responses they gave, they were still slightly below the rest of the class in their ability to produce exceptional responses.

Unlike the findings from the high quality participation and engagement codes, the high membership status students did show improvement in the overall quality of their responses. While they already had more exceptional and standard responses than they did simple and very limited responses in the regular literature discussions, in the graphic novel discussions they had a much larger percentage of exceptional responses. Tomas's percentage of exceptional responses went from 9% to 24%, Emma's went from 10% to 30%, Lucia's went from 5% to 23%, and David's went from 10% to 33%. These improvements did keep them at slightly higher levels in terms of the quality of their responses than their lower status peers. This also indicates that the graphic novel discussions did help these students improve their responses. So while graphic novel discussions did not really increase the frequency of Emma's, Tomas's, Lucia's, and David's high quality participation and engagement, the graphic novel discussions did impact their participation in terms of the quality of their responses.

Interview Data

A variety of types of interviews were conducted during this study. All students in the class participated in three formal, group interviews. In addition, informal interactions occurred almost daily when I would engage students in discussions about what they were working on and their feelings related to activities and actions. The focus students also took part in two additional individual interviews for a total of five formal interviews. The teacher participated in two formal interviews as well as daily informal, interactions where she instigated conversations about her feelings about student acceptance, academic achievement, and the success of lessons and activities. This section will detail all

findings related to the interview data except for the focus student individual interviews which will be highlighted in chapter five.

In-vivo coding was used for all interviews as the focus of this data set was on gathering participant perspectives and these perspectives are best understood through the actual words and language used by participants. This section will first highlight all themes arising from the group interviews while describing how these themes connect to the previous findings from the observational and literature discussion data sets. Group interview themes are examined further through the inclusion of supporting and/or conflicting data collected from informal, student interviews. Next, a discussion of themes related to the teacher's formal and informal interviews is provided. Once again the themes related to the teacher interviews are placed within the context of the findings of previous data sets.

Student Group Interviews

Three group interviews were conducted: one prior to the implementation of the multimodal literacy strategy, one during the implementation of the multimodal strategy, and one after the implementation was complete. For each group interview, students were interviewed in groups of 4-5 with all students participating in all three interviews. The first group interview focused on students' perceptions of acceptance, participation, and their overall enjoyment of language arts. The second group interview focused on students' perceptions of graphic novels as well as their perceptions of their ability to participate and engage in small-group literature discussions. The third and final group interview focused on students' perceptions of creating graphic novels and whether or not they perceived that their ability to discuss texts had improved. Rather than discussing each group interview separately, the following section presents the themes that arose from all three interviews. Several themes incorporate students' perceptions from more than one interview.

Students' perceptions of acceptance. To better understand ELLs' perceptions of acceptance in the classroom community, the researcher engaged students in a conversation about what acceptance looked like in their classroom. Students were first asked what they did to show someone—in particular a new classmate—that they accepted them. Overwhelmingly, students responded that 'friendship', 'showing respect', and 'being helpful' were the main ways to demonstrate acceptance. The theme of 'demonstrating friendship' arose 20 times during the group interviews in connection to acceptance. According to students, friendship was most commonly demonstrated by 'asking them to be their friend' and inviting them 'to play outside'. Other friendship related actions included 'sharing', 'telling them that you like them', 'smiling at them', 'being nice to them' and 'saying hi'. Students also emphasized that showing someone 'friendship' was most often done during recess rather than during time spent in the classroom. This outside of class focus was in spite of the fact that students were told that part of acceptance was determining whether or not that person was a good person to work with in class.

In terms of instructional time, students mentioned that they would show someone that they were accepted by testing them on their academic knowledge (i.e. spelling words or math facts) and by 'showing them everything in the classroom'. When working in small-groups students said that they showed that they accepted their table mates by 'putting their heads together so we can talk to each other' and by 'looking at them' when they are talking. When asked what it would look like if someone in their table group was not accepted students mentioned things like 'no one would be helping them' or that student would 'just be left back'. One student mentioned that students would not 'put their heads together' when working and other students would not 'face that student when they were talking'. This fit with observational data within the researcher's notebook where I noted students demonstrating these very actions during group work and discussion. Unfortunately, the four students identified as having

low membership status were the ones most often observed being left behind in the exact ways that the students mentioned above. The students also emphasized that they would accept someone as long as that person respected them back and were nice to them. One student mentioned 'if they show respect to me, I will respect them' while another student said that students in the class will accept someone as long as 'they are not mean to us'.

When asked how they show their peers that they appreciate and accept their ideas or comments, the students' answers actually conflicted with the findings from the observational and literature discussion data. Within these data sets, students rarely—if ever—explicitly offered their peers legitimacy. For example, students never said things like 'good answer' or 'great idea' after someone verbally participated. Yet, in the group interviews, almost all students stated that saying things like 'good job', 'wonderful idea', and 'you are awesome' after someone participated was what they did to show peers that they accepted and appreciated their peer's participation. This indicates that students perceive that these are the types of things they should say or do when someone participates even though it is not a practice they take part in. Additionally, it indicates that they would perhaps like to hear these types of things from their peers. Students were then asked how they knew that they themselves were accepted by their peers. Their answers were very similar to those discussed above and nothing new arose from this question.

Students' perceptions of English competency. In the first group interviews, I also enquired about whether or not they thought a student who did not speak English or spoke limited English would be successful in their classroom. I asked this question because while I noted in my researcher's notebook that the class highly valued Spanish—and the use of Spanish during instructional time did not appear to be viewed negatively—three of the four students identified as having low membership status were also the students with the lowest English language abilities. In the interviews, students

overwhelming perceived that if a peer had very limited English skills they would do poorly in the class. Most students felt that these students would 'do bad', 'feel confused', and 'have a hard time'. When asked why they felt these students would not do well, the students appeared to think the answer was obvious and said things like 'because they do not know English', 'because it is 3rd grade and you need to speak English', and 'so you can talk and stuff, you need to know English'.

Despite the consensus that limited English speakers would struggle in their classroom, there was some recognition among students that these students could rely on their Spanish skills to help them. One student mentioned that 'the ones who knew English could write in English and the ones who know Spanish could write in Spanish'. A few students also mentioned that limited English speakers would do 'kinda bad' and 'kinda okay' because 'I would be able to translate for them' and 'the teacher speak both languages so she can stop and speak in Spanish to them'. When asked how they would feel if they did not speak English very well and were in a language arts class taught entirely in English they were equally negative. Students said things like 'I feel like I would not understand anything' and 'I would feel like getting up and leaving the school'. These comments further emphasized students' negative perceptions of limited English skills. A few students were slightly more positive saying that they would have to 'try their best' but these students were certainly in the minority.

While there was clear evidence from within the observational and literature discussion data sets that the students in the class that had the lowest English abilities were the ones viewed as 'least capable' by peers, it was still unclear why this was the case. The group interviews did shed some insight into this. Student responses indicate that the students perceived a lack of English as evidence that the student would be lacking in other skills. For example, one group mentioned that limited English speakers would not only need time to learn English but that they would need time 'to learn how to read'—discounting any literacy skills that student had in Spanish. Another student mentioned

that limited English speakers in their classroom ‘would have a bad memory of what they were saying and not be able to participate’. This finding fits with previous research findings that students tend to perceive a lack of English skills as a lack of academic skills in general.

Students’ perceptions of participation. To better understand the impact of unsuccessful participation on classroom membership, students were asked—during the third round of group interviews—about how they felt when they did not understand something or when they got an answer wrong in class. Their responses indicated that they place a lot of importance and value in always getting things ‘right’ and understanding classroom concepts and activities. Students mentioned that they feel ‘sad’, ‘disappointed’, ‘bad’, and ‘angry’ when they are unable to do something correctly. Many students were even harsher on themselves mentioning that they would feel as if they were a ‘failure’ or like ‘I do not know anything’. Students also expressed a sentiment that they would be turned off of a task or activity if they were unable to do something successfully by mentioning that they ‘would not want to do it anymore’. Only two students—both of whom were academically successful students—demonstrated that they perceived wrong answers and misunderstandings to be part of the learning process. One student thought that not understanding was ‘no big deal’ and that you could ‘just ask your neighbour if they know’. Another student said that getting something wrong was ‘just fine’ because you would learn from it and you would ‘get it right the next time’. However, the majority of students did not share this sentiment and focused on the immediate negative feelings they felt when they were unable to do or answer something in class.

Students were also asked what they did when they did not understand something in class. They were given the following options: do you do nothing, do you ask your neighbour for help, do you ask the teacher, or do you try to figure it out on your own. The majority of students stated that they would try to figure it out on their own. This of course is reflective of the emphasis in classrooms to not rely

on help and to be self-sufficient by following particular steps to solve problems before asking the teacher for help. Teachers often tell students to use strategies to figure out answers on their own and then encourage them to ask a neighbour before relying on teacher support. One student mentioned that in her workshop class her teacher told them to 'first try it on their own and then to ask three peers before asking the teacher'. Students also mentioned that it often took 'too long to wait for help from the teacher' and that when they grow up they 'will not have a teacher or neighbour to ask' so they need to learn to do it on their own. Several students also mentioned individual strategies that they had been taught to use when they were stuck on something such as using context clues, using other reading comprehension strategies, and studying more.

What was surprising is that the majority of students preferred to ask a teacher over asking a neighbour for help if they were unable to figure something out on their own. Students mentioned that teachers 'know the answers' and were 'smart' and that their neighbours were 'kids too' and 'did not know much'. Only a few students disagreed with this sentiment by expressing that their 'neighbour might be smart and can get the right answer'. This finding does support the findings from the observational and literature discussions data sets that students tended to look to the teacher for validation and support more than they looked to their peers. In my researcher's notebook, I noted on several occasions that the students always spoke to the teacher in literature discussions rather than to each other. When students were talking in small-groups the cooperative discussions would immediately end when a teacher came to their group to listen because students would stop talking to each other and would turn to the teacher to share their idea. This was also seen when students were struggling with a task. I rarely observed a student asking a student for help beyond asking for clarification of directions. Instead, students would instead immediately raise their hand for the teacher if they needed assistance.

To further examine students' perceptions of participation, students were asked to draw pictures of the four most common ways they participate during language arts (December 10th). To do this, students first brainstormed as a whole class all the ways in which they participated. This was guided by the researcher to ensure they had an exhaustive list ,written on the board, to refer to. They then chose the four ways of participating listed on the board that they felt they did the most. After completing their pictures, they were asked to put a star next to the one they felt they did the most often. Finally students were asked to look at the list on the board again and select which way of participating was the most difficult for them to do. Sixteen students were present for this activity with Mia and Sofia being absent.

The following chart highlights the different ways of participating that were mentioned as well as the number of students who felt that they frequently used that way to participate.

Raise my hand—13 students
Listen to my teacher—9 students
Show work on the board/ELMO—7 students
Talk to my group—7 students
Talk to a partner—6 students
Chorally respond—5 students
Gesture—5 students
Listen to another student—4 students
Work together as a group—3 students
Read Aloud—3 students

It is interesting that the top two ways students perceive themselves participating are teacher focused. Waiting to be called on by the teacher (i.e. raising hands) and 'listening to the teacher are ways of participating that are teacher controlled. During the brainstorming process, 'listen to your teacher' was actually the first thing mentioned. This was surprising as this is a very passive way of participating and may in fact not even be considered active enough to constitute participation in the lesson. However, this finding does support findings from the observational data set that indicate that most tasks and discussions were 'teacher-driven' with few opportunities to cooperatively work with

other students. In teacher-driven tasks, generally the only ways available to participate are raising your hand, listening, and chorally responding or gesturing (i.e thumbs up if you agree) when asked.

The three students who did not list 'raise my hand' as one of their top ways of participating—Tomas, Mateo, and Lucia—were actually three students who rarely raised their hands. However, several other students—including Camila and Mia—listed raising their hands as one of their top four ways of participating even though they rarely took part in this practice. This indicates that these students still viewed this way of participating as essential in their classroom despite the fact that they rarely utilized it. Overall, however, the students' answers did reflect the types of activities students were involved in most during language arts.

The following chart highlights students' answers for 'which way of participating do you do the most often?' (Camila chose not to respond to this question so there are only 15 responses):

Raise my hand—5 students
Listen to my teacher—4 students
Gesture—2 students
Talk to my group—2 students
Show work on the board—1 student
Work together as a group—1 student

Once again 'raise my hand' and 'listen to my teacher' were the top ways of participating with nine students picking one of these two participation methods as the way in which they participate most often. This further supports the finding that these two ways of participating were the most common in the class. It is interesting that three students mentioned with 'talking to my group' or 'working together as a group' even though the class did not engage in this practice very often. When talking to the students who wrote these answers they mentioned that it was 'easier' for them to talk to their table group than in front of the whole class. This made sense as observational notes indicate that Tomas, Lucia, and Victoria—the students who put 'talking to my group' as their answer—all tended to talk more in small group discussions than they did in whole class lessons.

The following chart highlights the way of participating that students perceive to be the most difficult (Alex and Camila did not respond so there are only 14 responses):

Show work on board or ELMO—8 students
Chorally Respond—2 students
Read Aloud—2 students
Gesture—1 student
Listening to another student—1 student

It was not surprising that showing work on the board or ELMO was the task that the majority of students found to be the most difficult. During a group interview, students shared that they were slightly 'nervous' when called on to do work at the board or on the ELMO. Reading aloud to the class was also something that was expected to be on the list although it was surprising that only two students mentioned this way of participating. Above all other tasks, observational data indicate that reading aloud resulted in the most non-verbal clues that students were uncomfortable and unsure of themselves. When a student was called on to read—even if that student was a good reader—they would immediately become rigid and when they read their voice was generally a bit hesitant and shaky. Students that struggled to read English text also tended to read very quietly and would often put their hand in front of their mouth to further limit their peers' ability to hear them. Observational notes also indicated that students often struggled to listen to their peers. The reason for this struggle varied but most frequently it was due to a student talking too quietly. Also, I noted in my researcher's notebook that students placed a much higher emphasis on listening to the teacher than they did in listening to their peers. When a peer talked—in particular a lower membership status peer—attention tended to decrease immediately. This does indicate that students viewed listening to the teacher as essential for participating in a lesson whereas listening to a student was perhaps not as important.

The other two tasks on this list were rather surprising to see as observational notes indicate that students were able to chorally respond and gesture quite easily. One student who put 'chorally

respond' as the most difficult way to participate mentioned that is was difficult 'because some people get the answer wrong making it hard to say your answer'. The student who put 'gesture' as the most difficult way to participate mentioned that he 'never knew whether to give a thumbs up or a thumbs down' and that he 'felt scared when he gave a thumbs up when everyone else was giving a thumbs down'. This particular student was actually someone with quite high membership status but his comments here indicate that he was still concerned about getting an answer wrong or being different from the rest of the class.

The overall findings from this 'participation survey' are important when considering the ways in which students were expected to participate in multimodal lessons. These lessons actually required students to engage in ways of participating that they did not frequently do. During these lessons students were required to work together as a group, listen to and respond to their peers, and talk to their peers. Despite being less familiar with these interactive and proactive ways of participating, the observational data demonstrated that students experienced a high degree of 'successful participation' in these lessons. This indicates that ELLs are certainly more than capable of engaging in a variety of participative practices—including those that are more socially and cognitively demanding.

Student's perceptions of graphic novels. As the observational data indicated, students demonstrated an immediate enthusiasm and interest in graphic novels and the interview data certainly supports this finding. During the second group interviews, students were asked to describe their thoughts and feelings regarding graphic novels. Overwhelming, students described the books as 'exciting', 'funny', and that you always 'wanna know what happens next'. Students commented that they 'liked' or 'loved' them and that they felt 'good' and 'happy' while reading them. One student mentioned that he felt like he was 'alone in the world just reading the book'. Students also appreciated the creative nature of graphic novels and often mentioned that they perceived graphic novels to be

more creative than regular books. For example, students mentioned that graphic novels 'use a lot of creative things' and 'that so many neat things are created from the author'. My informal discussions with students supported this as they would often tell me that graphic novel authors were 'more creative' than regular authors. During the third whole class graphic novel lesson, I tried to explain to students that authors of 'regular books' were also creative but in different ways. However, many students were still set on the opinion that graphic novels had 'much more creative stuff' in them.

The following is a list of the other thoughts and feelings that arose during the group interviews.

Thoughts and Feelings of Graphic Novels:
Lots of action, show you what you can do, bright, lots of colors, help you read, beautiful pictures, brain calming you down when you read, learn more vocabulary and other things, fantastic, more interesting

While it was not surprising to learn that the 3rd graders enjoyed reading graphic novels, it was surprising that many students did not perceive graphic novels to be any easier to read than regular books. In fact, several students even perceived graphic novels to be harder to read. When asked during the second group interview if graphic novels were easier, harder, or the same to read as regular books seven students thought they were the same, eight thought they were easier, and three students thought they were harder. Those that thought they were harder reasoned that graphic novels had things 'we have never seen before' and often had 'harder words' than regular books. Reasons for why graphic novels were easier were that they were 'more interesting' thus motivating them to take more time in reading them, that they 'did not have as many words', and that there was 'picture support'. Students who found no difference in difficulty between graphic novels and regular books mentioned that both graphic novels and regular books 'had a lot of words' and 'had hard vocabulary'.

One trend found in how students answered this question is that the students who were reading at a lower English level tended to be the ones who said that they found graphic novels to be easier than regular novels. Alternatively, students reading at a higher English level were the students that found

graphic novels either harder than regular books or of the same difficulty. This finding has important implications for classroom membership as it demonstrates that graphic novels—while more accessible to ELLs' with lower level English—do not come with the negative associations that are found with other accessible texts. Due to their lower English reading skills, ELLs are often relegated to reading very simple books that are more appropriate for much younger students. These books are viewed by other students as being 'babyish' and students who are viewed reading them are positioned by peers as being 'incapable' of reading the more valued texts of the community. Graphic novels, on the other hand, are perceived by students to be valid, difficult texts and are positioned within the classroom as a valuable resource and reading a graphic novel is seen as something 'desirable' in the community. Therefore, when reading a graphic novel ELLs are able to read a text that is accessible to them while being validated by their peers for reading it.

During the second group interview students were also asked if it was easier, harder, or the same to talk about graphic novels. The majority of students did perceive that it was easier to talk about graphic novels. Ten students mentioned that it was easier to talk about graphic novels while two said it was harder and six felt it was the same difficulty level. The consensus was that with graphic novels 'instead of just telling about it, you can show them the pictures and then they will know what you are talking about'. Students also mentioned that it was 'easier to remember more the story' when reading graphic novels—thus making it easier to discus. Students who felt talking about graphic novels or regular novels were equally difficult mentioned that you needed 'to think really hard' when discussing both types of novels and that sometimes 'you forget what you have read'. These students also felt that both types of books have equally advanced words making them both difficult to talk about at times. Students who referred to talking about graphic novels as 'more difficult' once again mentioned graphic novels had 'new and interesting stuff' that they were not used to talking about. As with reading

graphic novels, the students with the lowest English literacy skills all said that graphic novels were easier to talk about than other books. This supports the finding from the transcribed discussion data that graphic novel discussions were more accessible to students with limited English skills.

Students' perceptions of small-group text discussions. During the second round of group interviews, students were asked whether they thought their class was 'good' at talking about books or if they had a 'hard time' talking about books in small-groups. At this point, students had participated in six small group graphic novel discussions. Students had overwhelmingly positive perceptions of their class' ability to talk about books in small groups with all but one student saying that they were 'good' at talking about books. When asked to provide evidence to support their perception that they were good at talking about books, students mentioned that during discussions students 'learned more about the book' from their peers. Students also mentioned that as a class they were good at summarizing a book and were improving in their ability to ask question about what they read. Literature discussions were also recognized to be 'challenging them to become better readers'. Four students mentioned that there was room for improvement because at times 'we will talk about other stuff', 'some people just play around' and 'students have a hard time concentrating'.

These positive perceptions changed drastically when asked how they felt their class did when discussing books during student led discussions—when the teacher was either not present or silent for most of the discussion. In addition to their student led graphic novel discussions, students were also taking part in reciprocal teaching in their reading workshops where they worked in small groups—guided by a student facilitator—to cooperatively read and discuss primarily non-fiction books. The overwhelming consensus was that the class 'needed more work' on discussions without teacher guidance. Some students went as far as to say their class was 'kinda bad' when the teacher was not

leading the discussion. However, students did perceive their behaviour to be worse during reciprocal teaching than it was during student led graphic novel discussions.

When asked specifically about the problems in the student led graphic novel discussions they mentioned the following issues:

Problems with Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions:
Sometimes we do not know what to say, we get off topic, we struggle to read words, some students always want to be the facilitator, lots of disagreement, we talk too much about other stuff, we do not track the talker, people do not participate, people can be bossy, people get nervous, and we forget what we are supposed to be doing

Students were then asked if they perceived that certain students talked more than others in their small group graphic novels discussions. The results were mixed with eight students responding yes that some peers did talk more than others and ten students thinking that all students talked about the same amount. In actuality, there were certain students in the class that consistently had more conversational turns than their peers. Students who responded yes (they believed some peers did talk more than others) were then asked why they felt some students spoke more and why some students may not talk very much during these discussions. In general, students provided positive reasons for why a student might 'over' participate. Reasons included 'wanting to say something exciting and were excited', they were 'paying attention', because they 'really liked the book', and because they 'knew the answers'. There was some sentiment that students can 'over' participate for more negative reasons like 'wanting to be bossy', that they were 'just making things up', or that they were 'not tracking the talker' but overall students tended to have more positive feelings when it came to over participating.

In terms of why a student would not talk very much, students' perceptions were much more negative. Overwhelmingly, students' responses demonstrated that they blamed a student—at least to a certain degree—for not participating more. They felt that if a student was relatively quiet in a discussion they were most likely 'not paying attention' or 'not trying'. One group of students all

agreed that many times these students just ‘wanted other people to do all the work’ and that they were looking to ‘copy answers from the students who were talking’. Other reasons provided for not talking were that a student simply ‘did not want to participate’, was too busy ‘talking about other stuff’, or that they ‘did not know the answer’ and had ‘nothing to say’. On the more positive side, a few students mentioned that maybe students were simply ‘too shy’ or ‘nervous’ to talk. Yet, when this answer was brought up in one of the interviews, another student jumped in and strongly disagreed that this could possibly be a reason. Interestingly, one of the students who tended to dominate conversations mentioned that perhaps the quiet student was just ‘letting the other students talk first because they usually talk a lot’. This sentiment demonstrated that students partially answered these questions in relation to themselves by thinking about reasons for why *they* might not participate.

The finding that students perceived a lack of participation as something ‘negative’ is important when thinking about classroom membership. As the transcribed discussion data indicated, students lacking legitimacy and peripherality in discussions also tended to participate the least. While their lack of participation was most often a result of this low membership, the interview data indicates that their peers perceived their quietness in a much more negative light. Their peers did not just perceive these students to be struggling with the content of the discussion—meaning that they would be unable to answer a question—they also appeared to ‘blame’ that student for their lack of participation by assuming that they were not paying attention or that they were being lazy and wanting others to do all the work. Even the students who tended to be quieter in literature discussions readily provided negative reasons for why someone would not participate. These negative connotations that were associated with not participating would certainly work to further position quieter students as ‘less capable’ members of the classroom community and would make their peers less likely to want to work collaboratively with them.

In the third group interviews (which took place about four weeks after the second group interviews), students were asked one last time about their ability to talk about books. At this point, students had participated in a total of twelve small group graphic novel discussions. Overall, students perceived that they were much better at talking about books than they were prior to participating in the graphic novel discussions. There was a reoccurring sentiment in the interviews that engaging in discussions about graphic novels had resulted in them 'reading more' which resulted in them being 'more smart' and improved their ability to answer reading comprehension questions. Several students expressed that they reread their graphic novels 'a bunch of times' and that comments made by peers in discussions often motivated them to 'read them all over again'. In fact, the sentiment that the discussions increased their interest in the graphic novel they were reading was expressed repeatedly. Several students mentioned that they were often more interested in the book after discussing it with peers. As one student stated, 'When you were with your groups you would learn things and you would be like WOW I just love this book'.

Students' perceptions of creating graphic novels. The final multimodal activity students took part in for this research study was the creation of their own graphic novel. In total, students were given five, thirty minute blocks of time to brainstorm and complete their graphic novels—though several students also worked on their novels at home. The activity culminated in an authors' celebration and sharing time. Students were asked about their perceptions of this process during the third group interviews. All students expressed the view that they perceived the creation of graphic novels to be easier than having to write a regular story with limited accompanying visual representations. Being able to 'show' the events of their stories through pictures instead of relying solely on written text was the main reason given for why graphic novels were easier to write. Once again students also connected the perception of a task being easier with how motivated they were to do the task. Several students said

that creating a graphic novel was easier because the use of both pictures and words made the activity more interesting and more exciting than regular writing. There was also recognition that students were provided with an ample amount of time to complete the task and that this assisted them in being successful. Observational notes indicate that students were often given a very short amount of time to complete writing tasks in regular language arts lessons so five, thirty minutes blocks was quite long for these students.

When asked about their thoughts and feelings about creating their graphic novels, the most common responses were that they were 'proud of their work', that they found the experience 'fun' and 'enjoyable', and that their story turned out 'good'. Many students mentioned that they were nervous at first because this was such a new task and they were unsure if they would be able to create their own graphic novel. While students perceived creating graphic novels to be easier than writing a story relying solely on written text, students still expressed that the process was not easy and that they have to 'think a lot' about what to write and draw. Students also noted that the entire process took a long time and that they had to really use their 'imagination' to complete their story. One student commented that the completed stories really showed people 'how your brain works' and that they were able to see 'the different imaginations of their peers'.

Teacher Interviews

The classroom teacher participated in two formal interviews although most of the important data came from daily, informal discussions I had with the teacher. These informal discussions were often initiated by the teacher as she brought up specific concerns she had about a lesson or particular students as well as moments of success she noticed during language arts. The following section will highlight the teacher perceptions of student acceptance, student participation, and multimodal lessons.

Teacher's perceptions of student acceptance. Formal and informal interviews with the classroom teacher revealed that the establishment of a strong and supportive community was something that she valued. She seemed keenly aware of the importance of student acceptance—though she tended to emphasize its impact on emotional well-being more than its impact on academic achievement. During the first formal interview, she mentioned that it was important to her that her students 'feel comfortable at school and enjoy being in the classroom'. As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the teacher also had a strong understanding of students' positioning within the classroom community. When asked in the first interview which students had high and low membership status she was able to immediately and correctly identify both groups of students. She was also able to go into great detail talking about each individual student and where any problems associated with peer acceptance stemmed from.

The teacher also expressed her feeling that, for the most part, her 'students treated each other well' though she did concede that some students were 'perhaps not as well liked as others'. This supports findings from the observational and transcribed discussion data sets that students were rarely, explicitly rude or mean to each other during academic learning time. A superficial observation of the classroom would most likely result in a determination that there were no apparent social issues in the classroom and that everyone was treated the same. However, as the previous data sets indicated, there were subtle differences in the way in which students treated one another. For example, when a student with lower English reading skills and lower membership status was called on to read aloud, students immediately became disengaged and made no effort to actually listen to that student read. If we take into account the fact that several students in the class were often left out of group work or were ignored when participating, it becomes clear that perhaps not all students were 'treated well' in the classroom.

Teacher's perceptions of student participation. A reoccurring theme in the formal and informal interviews was the teacher's concern over the lack of participation of certain students. The teacher mentioned on several occasions—including during the first formal interview—that she was concerned with a few students in the classroom that rarely verbally participated in lessons. She mentioned that Camila, Mia, and Lucia were all reluctant participators and that she struggled to get them to join discussions. In particular, the teacher seemed the most concerned with Camila. During the first formal interview, she mentioned that she was trying to encourage Camila to participate by calling on her more frequently—even when she was not raising her hand. I noted in my researcher's notebook that while the teacher rarely called on a student without their hand up, she frequently did this with Camila. Not all of these attempts were successful as Camila frequently denied these requests to participate by remaining silent. In these instances, the teacher would tell Camila that she would 'come back to her in a minute' and would move on to other students. Generally, upon returning to Camila it would still take additional encouragement and support for her to participate. However, as demonstrated by the transcribed discussion data, this strategy was successful in getting Camila to participate more than the other reluctant participants. The focus on Camila lasted several months and it was not until February that the teacher switched her focus from Camila to Mia. During an informal interview on February 7th, the teacher mentioned that she 'needed to work a bit more on getting Mia involved in class lessons'. Once again the teacher began purposefully calling on Mia without waiting for her to instigate participation.

The teacher's concern for how much students participated also arose when she commented on the success of a lesson. She would say things like 'everyone was talking' or 'I was happy to see that Camila and Mia involved themselves'. When a lesson was not successful she often expressed frustration with 'seeing the same four students' raising their hands. During an informal interview on

January 10th, the teacher mentioned that she was going to rely on volunteer participants a bit less as a way to ensure that all students were participating. To do this, she started drawing the students' names—which were written on popsicle sticks—at random. She also assigned each table group a letter and each student in a group a number. She would then draw a random letter—indicating the table group that would participate—and a number—indicating which person at the table would speak for the group. I noted in my researcher's notebook that these strategies would even out participation rates in the lessons in which they were used and they reduced the number of students who would 'shout out' answers. However, I also noted that these strategies resulted in certain students being 'unsuccessful' in their participation. If one of the lower status students' name was drawn they were often either unable to participate without support from the teacher or their peers or they offered an 'incorrect' response. So while these strategies did increase lower status students' participation it was not effective in increasing the quality in their response and their ability to actually effectively participate.

While the teacher never explicitly said that she disliked the decontextualized, skills based instruction encouraged by the Open Court program, there were several things she mentioned that indicated that this was the case. First, she mentioned that she was frustrated with the lack of cross-curricular opportunities within Open Court and would prefer a language arts program that encouraged connections to science and social studies. She also mentioned that there was some disconnect between the program and the California standards. In addition to these direct comments, the teacher mentioned to me on February 22nd that she wanted to involve her students in 'more critical thinking during language arts'. She felt that this was an area of her instruction that needed improvement and asked if there were any suggestions I could give her.

Her interest in critical thinking was spurred by a teacher development program that she had participated in that focused on supporting students' higher level thinking skills. The discussion we had

on critical thinking within the language arts eventually led her to add to readers' workshop 'activities' similar to those the students had done during graphic novel work. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, these activities required deeper and longer answers and often had students synthesizing large aspects of a text to draw a conclusion or develop an opinion. The teacher also began adjusting the type of questions she asked in read alouds to reflect the more open-ended questions found in the teacher-led graphic novel discussions. Her desire to explore more open-ended means of instruction that supported and encouraged critical thinking indicates that she was aware that this was missing from the established program.

The teacher also indicated in our informal discussions that she valued the increase in creativity that she had seen in students during the open ended instruction within the multimodal lessons. On December 4th after I read out loud the exemplary student comic of the day answers from the previous day, she approached me and said 'Those were great! The students had some really funny and unique answers'. She also commented on one particular student's answer by saying 'I could just hear him saying that. It really fits with his sense of humor which he gets from his older brothers.' Her comments really reflected the fact that students' individual voices were coming through in their unique answers and that this was something that she valued. This was an interesting finding as the majority of her language arts instruction did not allow much room for students' personal voices and personalities to come through.

Teacher's perceptions of multimodal lessons. The teacher was overwhelmingly positive when it came to the multimodal lessons. From the very beginning, she was very accepting of multimodal texts and excited about having her students participate in these lessons. During my first meeting with her where we discussed the details of my study, she mentioned that she had heard about graphic novels and had begun noticing them in stores but was not entirely sure how to use them in the classroom. She

added that she was concerned about the lack of age-appropriate reading material for her struggling readers and perhaps graphic novels could be a solution. The teacher also predicted during this early meeting that her students would be very excited about graphic novels and that she hoped that the few students she had who resisted reading would become more motivated to read.

Her positive perceptions of multimodal literacy lessons continued throughout the implementation process. The classroom teacher was very receptive to introducing an additional multimodal aspect—the daily comic—after I mentioned that we could use comics to assist students in learning how to effectively answer reading comprehension questions. In a way, she was perhaps the most excited about the work students did with comics as this part of the multimodal literacy approach was easiest for her to envision implementing on her own. On multiple occasions the teacher also lauded the small group graphic novel discussions and at times was even more positive than I was about their success. Immediately after the first student-led discussion, I was actually a bit concerned over how students did without teacher support. Students appeared a bit distracted and at times struggled to successfully complete the assigned facilitator and commentator roles. In my mind, I was already reassessing how to run the student-led discussions. However, as soon as the students stepped out for recess the teacher mentioned how impressed she was with the discussions. She felt that 'the students took on the extra responsibility quite well' and 'were able to answer all of the questions with very little teacher support'. When transcribing the student-led discussions, I found that she was correct and that the students were not nearly as distracted as I had originally perceived them to be.

During our final, formal interview, I asked the teacher to discuss her feelings about how the multimodal lessons impacted the lower membership status students. She mentioned that 'Alex, Camila, and Mia appeared to benefit the most' from the inclusion of multimodal text. All three of these students had been 'resistant to reading' at the beginning of the year and she noticed a notable increase

in the amount of reading they did once they were introduced to graphic novels. She also mentioned that she was happy to see the enthusiasm these students demonstrated for the graphic novel lessons and that it was nice to see them 'excited about something in language arts'. In the small-group, graphic novel discussions, the teacher mentioned that she was surprised at the confidence with which all four lower status students participated. Alex, in particular, demonstrated himself to be a 'leader' in these discussions and the teacher stated that 'it was nice to see him focused and engaged without reminders'.

During this interview, we also discussed if there were any behavioral changes in lower membership status students during regular language arts lessons. While the teacher noted that the multimodal lessons 'gave these students something to look forward to' and 'encouraged them to read more—including reading more regular books', she did not perceive any noticeable behavioral changes. While these students 'perhaps participated a bit more' in regular literature discussions, they remained quiet participants and struggled to stay actively engaged in lessons. She did mention, however, that in more general terms all students in the class seemed 'much more capable of having discussions with one another'. She noticed that students were now 'frequently building off of each other's ideas and agreeing and disagreeing with ideas presented'.

My informal discussions with her also brought up an inner struggle that she was experiencing between preparing students for the upcoming state standardized test and incorporating meaningful literacy lessons that were cognitively and socially demanding. At the beginning of February, she mentioned that she was struggling during the 3rd grade planning meetings—in which all three third grade teachers would work together to create the upcoming week's plans—to explain that she would not be able to do all the activities due to the small-group graphic novel discussions. She mentioned that her colleagues did not necessarily see the value in what 'we were doing with the graphic novels'. The activities that she was 'skipping' were what she described as 'lessons that work on skills the students

would be tested on at the end of the year'. It appeared as though while she saw the value in what we were doing in the multimodal lessons there was still some doubt on her part in terms of whether or not these lessons would actually help the students get high scores on the standardized tests.

Collected Student Work

Throughout the course of the study, various samples of student work were collected from the multimodal lessons. This work includes student answers to reading comprehension questions, completed graphic novel activities, and student-created graphic novels. All three of these categories of student work will be discussed in detail below with explicit connections being made back to the findings from the main data sets.

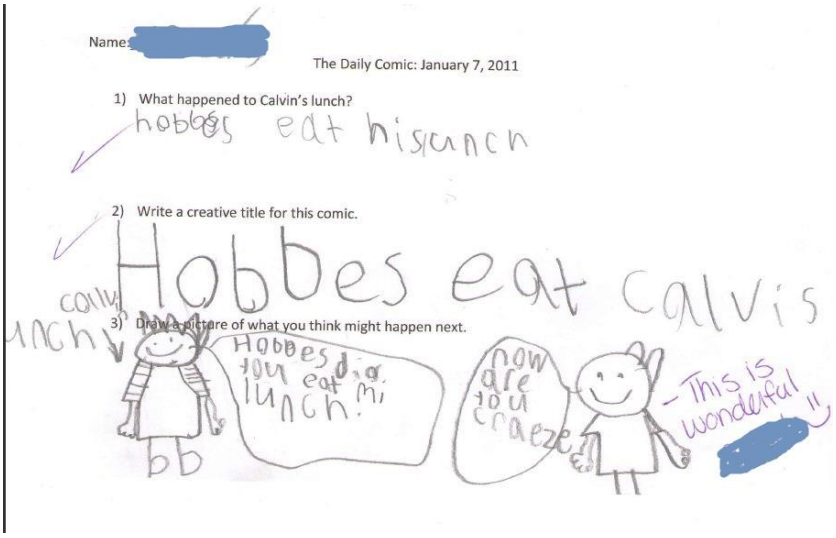
Student Answers to Reading Comprehension Questions

One type of student work collected was students' answers to reading comprehension questions. I noted several times in my researcher's notebook that students really struggled with answering reading comprehension questions from regular texts. Classroom observations noted that when correcting answers to reading comprehension questions—either assigned as homework or completed as an in-class activity—most students were getting 50% or fewer of the questions correct. It was not uncommon for almost all students in the class to get a particular question wrong and a few students would frequently get 0% of the questions correct. This struggle with answering reading comprehension questions was the motivation behind implementing the daily comic at the beginning of the study and for incorporating reading comprehension questions in the independent work students completed in relation to graphic novels.

This section highlights the degree of success students had in answering reading comprehension questions about multimodal texts. First, several examples of students' answers to the daily comic are presented with accompanying descriptions of how these examples illustrate commonalities found in

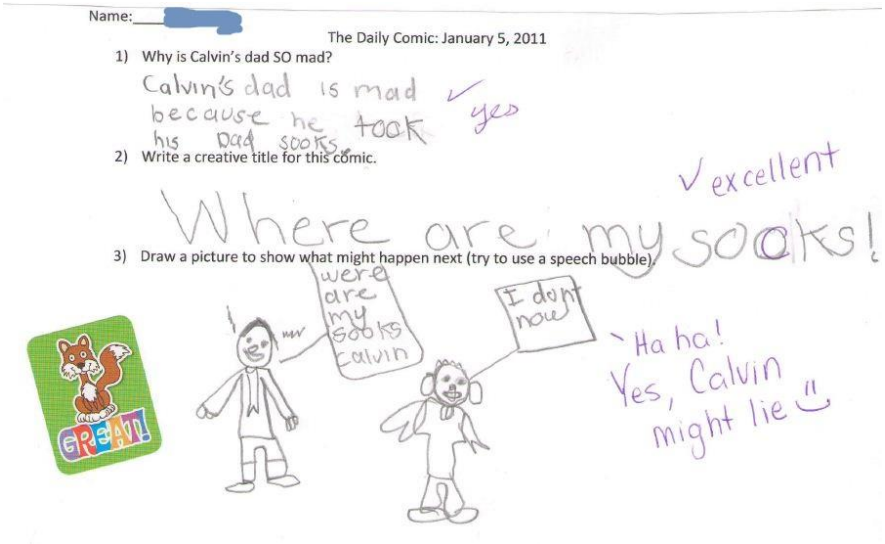
the students' overall responses. Next, the students' overall success with answering questions about graphic novels is discussed. These data will add to knowledge gained from the observational and transcribed discussion data sets about the impact of the multimodal literacy approach on students' successful participation within the classroom.

Daily comic. As mentioned earlier, it took students a couple of weeks to get used to the open-ended nature of the reading comprehension questions asked during the daily comic. However, once students were familiar with the expectations of these questions, students became quite competent in producing accurate, detailed, and creative answers. The following are examples of the typical answer students provided to the daily comic:

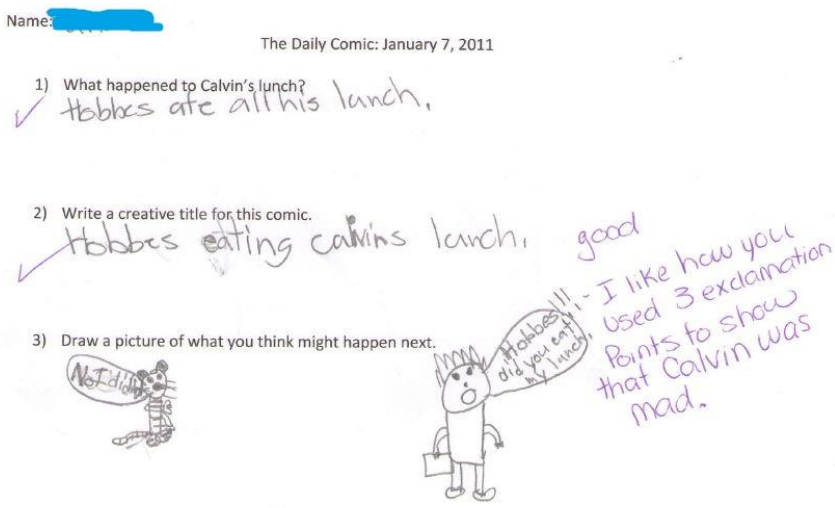


The above daily comic was completed by Alex—a lower membership status student. Not only was he able to correctly and effectively answer all three questions, his answers also reflected a high degree of thoughtfulness and creativity. For example, when Calvin asked Hobbes if he ate his lunch Alex has Hobbes answer in a way that was very appropriate for his character by writing in a speech bubble 'Now, are you crazy!!'. This demonstrates that he not only understood the character but also spent time thinking about what that character might actually say. These types of answers were very typical during the daily comic with all students demonstrating a deep understanding of the story line

and characters. This finding also supports the finding from the transcribed discussion data that multimodal lessons tended to have more evidence of higher level participation and engagement.



The above comic was completed by a student who was a high achiever in language arts. Like Alex, she was able to correctly and effectively answer all three questions and her answer also reflected a high degree of thoughtfulness and creativity. When compared to Alex's completed daily comic, Sofia's answers are on part with Alex's. This supports findings from with the transcribed discussion data set that lower level status students were able to achieve similar levels of success as their higher status peers.



The third comic was completed by a student with fairly low membership status—though not quite as low as the four students identified at the beginning of the chapter. Again, all three of her answers were correct and thoughtful. Her response also indicates that she was beginning to use some of the visual elements that she noticed in the comics. For example, she used three exclamation points to show just how mad Calvin was that his lunch was eaten by Hobbes. This mimicking of visual elements that students had seen in previous comics was something quite common in students' responses to the daily comic.

Graphic novel reading comprehension answers. In addition to the daily comic, students answered reading comprehension questions for three graphic novels—one that was read aloud to them (*Jack and the Beanstalk)* and two that were read independently and discussed in small groups. The following chart highlights how many reading comprehension questions each student was able to get correct during the *Jack and the Beanstalk* lesson. Students answered these questions after taking part in two whole-class read alouds that focused on teaching students about the different visual elements found within graphic novels. Each student had to complete a minimum of three questions.

Jack and the Beanstalk Comprehension Answers

Emily—3/3 correct	Mateo—3/3 correct	Kate—4/5 correct	Emma—3/3 correct
Julio—5/5 correct	David—5/5 correct	Mariana—3/3 correct	Lucia—5/5 correct
Miguel 3/3 correct	Mia—3/3 correct	Sofia—3/3 correct	Camila—4/4 correct
Isabella—3/3 correct	Alex—4/5 correct	Victoria—3/3 correct	Tomas—3/3 correct
Lucia—3/3 correct	Samuel 5/5 correct		

The next chart highlights how successful each student was in answering reading comprehension questions during each round of small-group graphic novel discussions. In the chart, each student's success rate will be listed according to round one (1) and round two (2).

Graphic Novel Reading Comprehension Answers

Name	Wrong	Partially Correct	Correct
Victoria 1	15%	15%	62%
Victoria 2	10%	30%	60%

Julio 1	13%	6%	80%
Julio 2	12%	18%	65%
Lucia 1	13%	25%	63%
Lucia 2	27%	18%	55%
Emma 1	0%	17%	83%
Emma 2	14%	0%	86%
Mia 1	45%	36%	45%
Mia 2	33%	13%	53%
Mariana 1	0%	0%	100%
Mariana 2	11%	0%	89%
Mateo 1	0%	0%	100%
Mateo 2	0%	11%	89%
Kate 1	22%	44%	33%
Kate 2	0%	0%	100%
Sofia 1	9%	0%	91%
Sofia 2	0%	0%	100%
Alex 1	22%	44%	33%
Alex 2	9%	27%	64%
Lucia 1	22%	11%	67%
Lucia 2	5%	17%	83%
Samuel 1	0%	22%	78%
Samuel 2	11%	0%	89%
David 1	13%	9%	78%
David 2	6%	10%	83%
Camila 1	9%	36%	55%
Camila 2	13%	25%	63%
Miguel 1	33%	33%	33%
Miguel 2	14%	18%	68%
Tomas 1	0%	20%	80%
Tomas 2	0%	20%	80%
Isabella 1	17%	17%	67%
Isabella 2	36%	11%	54%
Emily 2	0%	22%	78%

Other notes: Alex's answers both times were not in complete sentences and were very limited. Mateo also seemed to not give his full effort. Emily's first cycle responses were lost before she was able to hand them in.

Overall, students were much more successful in answering reading comprehension questions that related to multimodal texts than they were when answering questions relating to regular texts. In fact, all students had a much higher percentage of correct answers when working with a multimodal text. Most students' answers to the graphic novel questions also improved slightly from cycle one to cycle

two. The only students that this did not apply to were Julio, Lucia, Isabella, Mariana, and Mateo. This indicates that students' ability to answer reading comprehension questions was still in the process of developing and most students were making continuous progress. Additionally, while the amount of detail in students' answers certainly varied, on the whole students provided complete answers and included important details. This indicates that students were taking their time and providing accurate, complete answers.

While there are multiple factors involved in students' improvement with reading comprehension questions—such as the degree of interest in a story and the type and length of instruction provided for a story—there is evidence that students did rely on the contextual support provided by multimodal texts when answering their questions. Students' answers indicate that they used their memory of the pictures in the graphic novel to answer questions. For example, despite the fact that the written part of the *Jack and the Beanstalk* graphic novel mentioned that Jack hid in a 'stove' most students mentioned that he hid in a 'chimney' as the picture of the stove actually resembled a chimney more than the 'stoves' students were used to.

Despite students' overall improvement there were still several students that had a large percentage of their reading comprehension questions wrong. These students tended to be the students with lower level English literacy skills. Students with less than 60% answers correct for one or both cycles were Victoria, Lucia, Mia, Kate, Alex, Camila, Miguel, and Isabella. While Miguel and Isabella were initially placed in the higher level reading classroom, their reading ability plateaued during the middle of the school year while their classmates continued to improve, and they were switched into the middle reading level classroom. Victoria, Lucia, Mia, Alex, and Camila were all placed in the lowest level reading classroom for the entire school year. Kate, placed in the middle reading level classroom for the entire year, is a bit of an anomaly because while she only got 33% of the questions correct

during the first cycle, she got 100% of the questions right during the second cycle. This does fit with observations of her during language arts as her attention and engagement tended to vary a great deal and she would often get off task thus impacting the quality of her work.

The fact that lower reading level students did not perform as well on reading comprehension questions does not necessarily mean that graphic novels did not offer additional support in answering these questions. These students still demonstrated a greater ability to answer these types of questions than they were able to when reading normal text. Additionally, the transcribed graphic novel discussions demonstrated that these students actually had high levels of understanding and comprehension of the novels they were reading—as they were able to successfully take part in discussions and verbally answer similar questions that they then got wrong in their reader's notebooks. This supports the notion that while reading comprehension was supported by the graphic novels, the task of writing answers in English or Spanish to English reading comprehension questions was still partially inaccessible.

Several written observations noted that both Mia and Camila had trouble actually reading the written comprehension questions and often relied on a peer or teacher to read it to them. If no one was available—or if they did not feel comfortable asking for help—they would often incorrectly guess what the question was asking and write what they felt to be an appropriate response. Camila in particular relied on having a teacher read the question to her and needed the question to be rephrased in several different ways before she would attempt to answer the question. Camila and Mia were also encouraged to complete answers in Spanish if they wanted to and the questions were often read to them in Spanish as well. While both students did complete their daily comic and the *Jack and the Beanstalk* questions in Spanish, they appeared more reluctant to do so during the independent graphic novel work. On the other hand, Alex, while able to read the questions without support, struggled to

write his ideas correctly. Often when verbally discussing one of the questions with Alex he would demonstrate that he actually knew the answer despite the fact that the answer he wrote down was wrong.

The fact that answering reading comprehension questions was still a struggle for lower reading level students is significant for two reasons. First, it demonstrates that additional scaffolding was needed to make the standard activity of 'writing answers to reading comprehension questions' more accessible. While basing these questions on graphic novels did improve their ability to answer these questions, the graphic novels were not quite enough for these students to fully succeed in answering reading comprehension questions. Second, it demonstrates that the less a task relies on multimodal modes of communication, the less likely it is for that task to be accessible for all students. For the reading comprehension questions, students did not have the option to visually represent or act out their answer using gestures—they had to write their answers using English or Spanish. This really limited the multimodal nature of the task. In contrast, during small group discussions students could point to pictures to support what they were saying and they could also use gestures and actions to further explain their comments. Observational notes indicate that students used both of these strategies frequently in these discussions. The photograph below shows a student sharing her thoughts while pointing to a picture that related to her comment:

Completed Graphic Novel Activities

Another type of student work collected was students' completed graphic novel activities that accompanied each graphic novel that the students read in their small groups. These activities required more detailed and lengthy answers than the reading comprehension questions and provided students with the option of visually representing their answer as opposed to completing a written response. The activities were unlike any other literacy task found in the focus classroom due to the open-ended nature of the questions and that they required the student to think beyond the text—pulling from personal experience, beliefs, and creativity—to answer the questions. The only exposure students had to similar questions were during the comic of the day activity, although the comic of the day questions were much more simplified and did not require as much detail or thought.

As with the reading comprehension questions, students were given a choice of which activities they wanted to complete. For each section of activities, students were provided with an option to draw a visual representation for their answer. I used three categories to assess the quality of their responses: degree of critical thinking, provides rationale for answers, and creativity. Students were awarded a 1, 2, or 3 for each category based on the quality of their answers—with a three being the highest score. Examples of quality answers that reflect a three for each category are listed below.

<u>Critical Thinking</u>
Emily: Making a list of attributes of a good friend—respectful, make a good decision, solve problems, show respect, make agreements, and be respectful

Samuel: When I learned that the librarians wanted to destroy video games I felt sad because other kids are not going to have video games to play and they are going to be bored.

Lucia: I think Babymouse is nice because on page 89 it says that she does not want to be with Felicia she wants to be with Wilson who is not popular.

Tomas: (asked to say what Jellaby is thinking about on a page with no words) I think Jellaby is thinking about his home that he misses. I also think that Jellaby is thinking about having a friend. Finally I think that Jellaby is thinking about returning home.

Mariana: If I wasn't invited to a big slumber party I will be so sad because everybody will go to the slumber party but I will not and it will not be fun.

Mateo: I think that Willie's plan to take world domination is bad because if he kills the rabbits he will not have anyone to rule.

Miguel: Character Traits of Web—evil, little, awful, tyrant, worst, unpleasant, bum, naughty, rotten

Provides Rationale

Samuel: Jellaby would like to watch Godzilla because he is like a dragon and Godzilla is a dragon and also he would like to see Drago because it is all about monsters.

Isabella: When Jack sold the cow I felt sad because they were not going to get food anymore and I felt sorry for them and I was about to cry.

Emma: Jason and Portia think that Jellaby came from the fair because they say that weird animals come from the fair.

Kate: My favorite part of the third section was when she threw popcorn at Felicia because Felicia has been treating Babymouse badly.

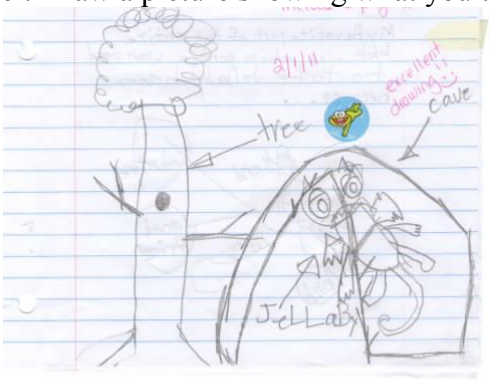
Mia: I think Babymouse's idea to give her book report to Felicia was a bad idea because she will get in trouble.

Alex: I liked the ending because the librarians get sent to jail.

Creativity

Emily: Where do you think Stone Rabbit will land after her fell off of a cliff?

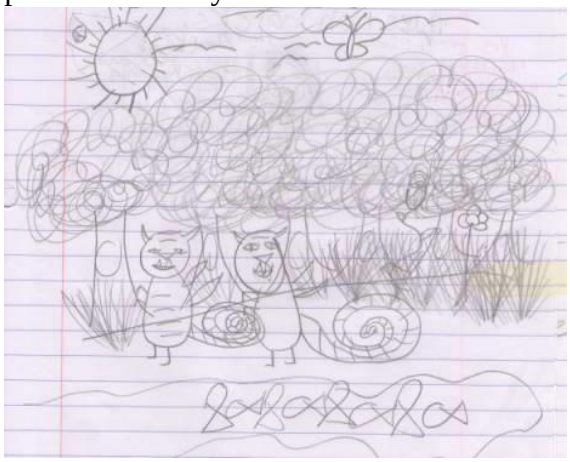
Samuel: Draw a picture showing what you think Jellaby's real home might look like.



Sofia: Aaaah! Please do not eat me!! Man, that is why I hate Mondays! (What do you think Stone Rabbit is thinking on page 24? She uses language that is very representative of the character.)

Miguel: Draw a picture of what the Superhero Lunch Ladies might do next. (He shows the lunch lady helping a little boy getting his cat down from a tree.)

Mariana: Draw a picture showing what you think Jellaby's real home might look like. (She drew a picture of Jellaby and his mom at their home in the woods by a nice lake with fish.)



The following chart highlights the scores students achieved for their completed activities. Based on each student's scores in the three categories mentioned above a final score of overall quality was also assigned.

Graphic Novel Independent Activities

Name	Critical Thinking	Provides Rational	Creativity	Overall Quality
Samuel	3	3	3	3
Isabella	3	3	3	3
David	3	3	3	3
Sofia	3	3	3	3
Emma	3	3	3	3
Lucia	3	3	3	3
Tomas	3	3	3	3
Mariana	3	3	3	3
Emily	3	2	3	3
Miguel	2	3	3	3
Camila	2	3	2	2.5
Victoria	2	3	2	2.5
Julio	2	2	3	2.5
Kate	2	2	3	2.5
Mateo	2	3	2	2.5
Lucia	2	2	2	2
Mia	1.5	2	2	1.5
Alex	2	2	1.5	1.5

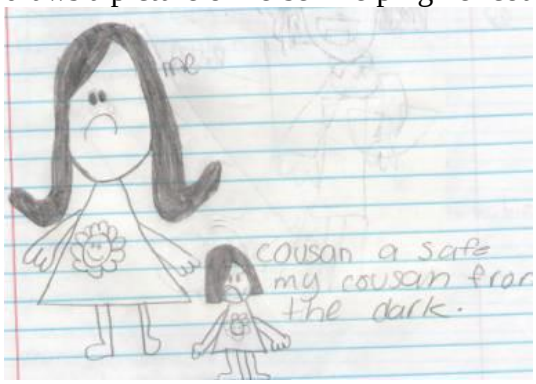
Overall, students were very successful with the graphic novel activities with eight students getting the highest mark in all three categories, and only two students receiving a mark lower than a two. This finding supports the earlier finding within the observational and transcribed discussion data sets that there was a high degree of 'successful participation' during multimodal lessons. However, students with lower reading skills and lower membership status were once again the students with the lowest scores on these activities. Lucia, Mia, and Alex all had the three lowest scores with none of them scoring a three. The lower status students were much more successful in activity completion, however, when they selected the option that allowed them to visually represent their answer rather than

write it. The following are examples of lower status students' success in creating visual representations for their graphic novel activities:

Lucia: Babymouse loves daydreaming! Draw a picture of what you like to daydream about. (She draws a picture of herself as a princess who is smiling and dancing.)

In this picture, Lucia is effectively able to represent her daydream. She also labels her pictures to ensure that viewers understand the meaning of her picture.

Camila: The lunch ladies spend their time helping other people—even when they are scared. Draw a picture representing a time when you went out of your way to help someone despite being scared. (She draws a picture of herself helping her cousin when the power went out and it was dark.)



In this picture, Camila is able to use facial expressions to show that both she and her cousin are scared. She also draws her younger cousin much smaller than she draws herself. This highlights to viewers that her cousin is younger than her. She then adds 'I save my cousin from the dark' to make it clear what she and her cousin are scared of.

All students had a tendency to pick the visual representation option over the other options when completing their activities. However, every student—even the lower English skills students—selected

the non-visual representation option from time to time. It was interesting to see that the lower English skills students did not pick this option more frequently than the higher English skills students. Rather, the frequency with which the lower English skills students selected the visual representation option was equal to the frequency with which other students selected this option.

One interesting finding was that students' creativity—while encouraged in every activity choice—tended to be expressed most when they drew a visual representation. This connects with interview data where students emphasized the 'creativity' in graphic novels and expressed the perception that graphic novel authors were 'more creative' than regular authors. It appears as though images and creativity went hand in hand in the minds of the students. This could suggest that students felt greater freedom to creatively express themselves when they were able to visually represent their ideas.

Student Created Graphic Novels

One final type of student work collected was the students' completed graphic novels. To create their graphic novels, students first completed a brainstorming process that had each student select a setting, a plot, and possible characters. The students then wrote a short outline for their graphic novel. Below are the four lower membership status students' outlines and two of the higher membership status students' outlines. It is clear from these outlines that all students were successful in this short, open writing task.

Camila
Beginning (Problem)
First, Camila was plaing in the glaygrown plaing the monke bars.
Then, the puma came and he was mad and he was angry.
Next, Camila was what happen are you okay.
Middle
First, He said, 'I want to catch a jaguar but I can't'.
Then, Camila said don't worry we will catch a jaguar so you ca eat it.
Next, Camila and the Puma we go to catch jaguar.
Ending (Solution)

First, Camila and the puma we see a jaguar and he fill good because he eat the jaguar.
Next, he was fill good because he eat the jaguar delyshes.
Last, we were all friends and we play thogethere.

Mia
Beginning (Problem)
First, we met Veronica she wanted to go see Justin Bieber
Then, Veronica was going to take use in her new clean car.
Next, so she took us to go buy tickets.
Middle
First, whe get dress up for Justin Bieber.
Then, whe put are high heels.
Next, whe do are heer (hair)
Ending (Solution)
First, we get into the car.
Next, Mia starts draving
Last, we are in the concert to see Justin Bieber. And Ms. Lara shows up and she gets mad and we get detention for two weeks. And Ms. Lara enjoys the concert but we are in truble.

Alex
Beginning (Problem)
First, David and Alex are paying the PS3.
Then, they see a ufo.
Next, David turn into ultimet Swampfire and Alex turn into Alienx.
Middle
First, they got in the ufo.
Then, they fight whit the aliens.
Next, they find out that they turn big.
Ending (Solution)
First, they use ther powers and it doesn't work.
Next, they try again and David saves Sofia
Last, then they kill the alien and Alex save Lucia.

Lucia
Beginning (Problem)
First, Billy's little sister was asking, she wanted to go camping.
Then, her family went to camp.
Next, when her family went for a walk they hered a noise
Middle
First, the noise was little.
Then, the noise starded to hair (hear) all over the wood's.
Next, when they got closer their was a house.
Ending (Solution)
First, they looked at the house and at the windows.
Next, the bear starded to follow Billy's family to eat them and they got lost in the woods.

Last, they opened the door and saw the bear then they went running and the bear followed them, they found their car and got home and when they were asked to go camp they so no because the bear was going to eat them.

Emma
Beginning (Problem)
First, the princes is going to play with the unicorn.
Then, the princes is doing something and the unicorn escape.
Next, the princes askes the prince to go help her find the unicorn.
Middle
First, the princes and the prince are going to the unicorns favorit place Wonderland too look for the unicorn.
Then, the unicorn is not theire so the princes and the prince said were can she be.
Next, the princes and the prince check out two more places and the unicorn is not there.
Ending (Solution)
First, the prince and the princes find the unicorn in candy land eating lots of candy and the unicorn is laying down with a stomac ache.

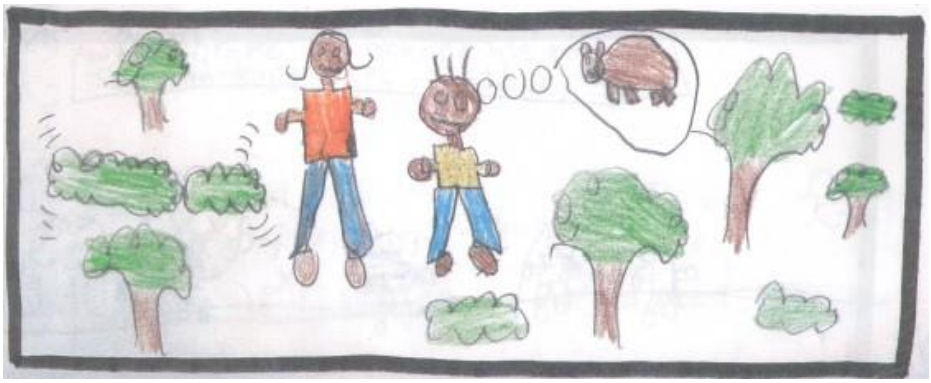
Tomas
Beginning (Problem)
First, two zombies are playing by there selfs in a haunted house.
Then, they lost there ball in one of the rooms.
Next, they split up to find the ball.
Middle
First, one of the zombie went into a room.
Then, another one went to another room.
Next, one zombie got lost.
Ending (Solution)
First, the zombie who got the ball went to find the other zombie
Next, the zombie found him.
Last, they played and they said that ‘lets not do that again’

Content wise all of the students’ outlines are at a similar level, however, there were small differences when comparing the outlines of the lower status students to the outlines of the higher status students. For example, Mia, Camila and Alex’s outlines were slightly shorter and they used simpler sentences—especially in comparison to Emma’s outline. Observational notes also indicate that Camila and Alex took a bit longer to write their outlines. Overall, though, all four of the lower membership status students were just as successful as the higher membership students.

This was slightly surprising as this portion of the graphic novel creation process did not include any multimodal support. However, observational notes indicate that students were very enthusiastic about writing their own graphic novels and this enthusiasm certainly resulted in increased motivation to complete their outlines. Additionally, all other language arts writing observed had been very formulaic—with students unable to select topics and having to write structured paragraphs. Classroom writing also tended to be non-fiction. This activity marked the first time students were able to create a narrative text on a topic of their choice, and were provided the opportunity to be as creative as possible. It appears that this freedom allowed students to work at their own level—for the lower English ability students this meant not worrying about spelling, punctuation, and paragraphs—making it easier for all students to be successful.

As mentioned in the observational data section, students were very motivated and engaged during the graphic novel creation process and the completed graphic novels demonstrate that all students were successful in creating their graphic novels. Unlike other writing tasks, observational notes indicated that lower status students did not require extra assistance from the teacher and, as with the written outlines, the lower status students' work was of similar quality as that of the higher status students. The only difference is that the lower status students relied more on their pictures to tell their story and less on their words while higher status students tended to use more narrative boxes and longer speech bubbles. For example:

In Camila's first page of her graphic novel, she uses no narrative boxes and instead relies on short speech bubbles and visual elements to tell her story. In the first box, she draws herself in front of the monkey bars saying 'I love recess'. This shows readers that the story will take place at recess. She then introduces the puma to the story with a very sad face saying 'I am hungry.' In the third and final frame of the page, she draws herself asking 'What happen? Are you okay?' The puma responds 'No I don't (I am) not feeling well. I try to catch a jaguar but I couldn't.' She places the characters next to a building labeled school to reinforce the fact that the story is taking place at recess outside of the school. As this example indicates, Camila tended to use very few words in her story but was still able to tell a complete story.

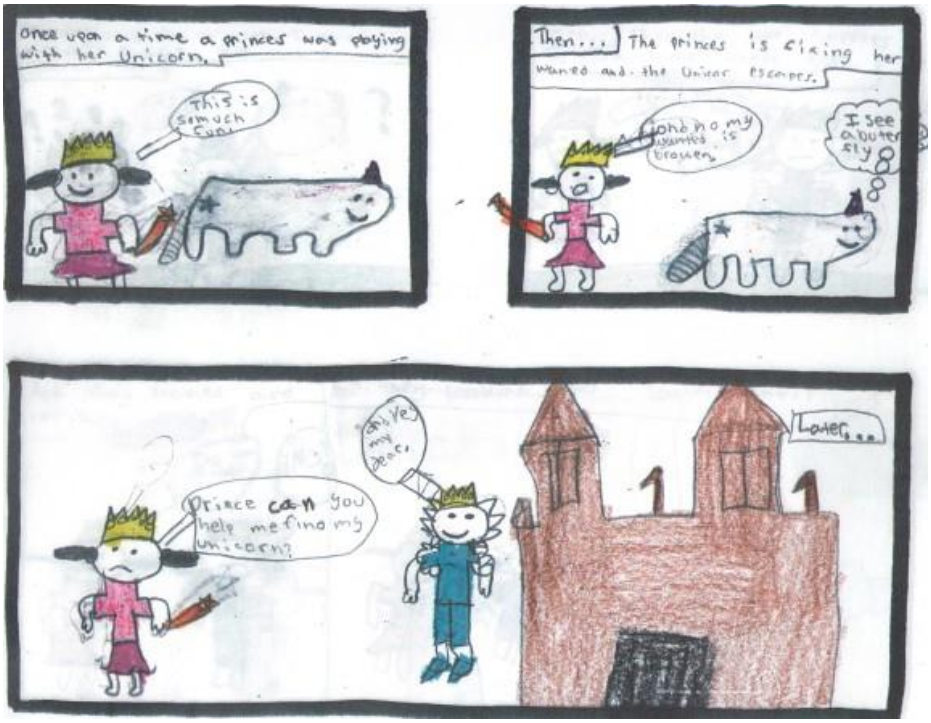


The frame above is from the first page of Lucia's story about a camping trip. In an earlier frame, one of the characters said 'I think I hear something'. Then, rather than using words to describe what happens next she includes a wordless frame. In the frame, we can tell that at least one of the characters think that the noise might have been made by a bear—as is shown by the bear drawn in the thought bubble. She also used 'three wiggly lines' to surround the tree to not only show where the noise is coming from but also to demonstrate that the noise is quite loud. Again, even though Lucia is not using words in this frame she is able to effectively continue her story in a very suspenseful and creative way.

The class' completed novels also indicate that students had developed a strong understanding of how to use visual elements to convey meaning. The following are sample frames from the students' final drafts that indicate how students used visual elements to effectively enhance their story.

The above frame, created by Victoria, shows the use of an ellipse and onomatopoeia. The student also used large letters to write the onomatopoeia 'cleeck' to demonstrate that the sound made by

grandfather's magical appearance was quite loud. Victoria was in the lowest English ability and lowest reading level groups indicating that the effective use of visual elements was accessible to all students.

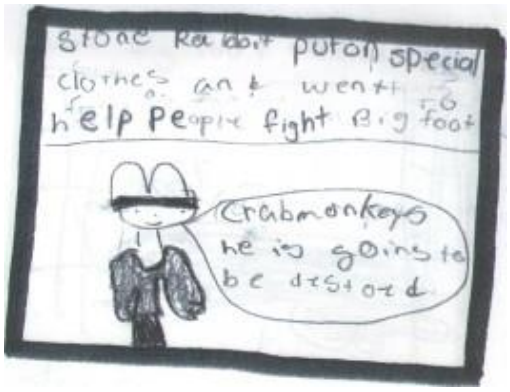


The above frames are from Emma's first page of her graphic novel. Like Victoria, she uses ellipses and she also mimics the use of 'time' indicators—for example 'later…'—that were used in *Jack and the Beanstalk.* This indicates that there was a certain degree of mimicking occurring in the students' work. Like writing 'regular' stories where students mimic the writing of their favorite authors when learning to create stories, the students in the class relied on this strategy to create their first graphic novels. Emma also effectively used a 'thought bubble' to show readers why the unicorn runs away (because she was chasing a butterfly).

The above frame was completed by Alex. Alex was experimenting with typography when he wrote ‘boom’. I spoke with him about his and he mentioned that at first he wrote a really big ‘B’ but changed his mind and wrote a big ‘M’ so that the sound would start off quiet and end really loud.

The above frame was created by Mariana. She also used a thought bubble; in this case she actually drew a picture in her thought bubble. Her thought bubble shows readers that the wolf is worried that Little Red Riding Hood might fight back if he tries to eat her. She then uses another strategy that shows the passage of time that was commonly used in their graphic novels. She writes ‘so he ran…’ ‘and he ran…’. Students were taught in class that using ellipses in this way not only showed the passage of time but also built up suspense in the story. She mentioned to me that she wanted people to wonder ‘like where is the wolf going?’.

The above two frames were completed by Sofia. She demonstrated awareness that in graphic novels you can use print in various ways to tell readers a complete story. She uses speech bubbles and narrative boxes but also creates signs and labels. For example, there is a sign that says 'JB sold out' to let readers know why the girls cannot get tickets. She also labels her picture of the 'concert tickets' to show students exactly where the tickets were found.



This final frame was created by Miguel. Miguel actually created a story about Stone Rabbit, one of the characters from the students' favorite graphic novels. While his story line is entirely unique, he does use language similar to that used in the graphic novel. For example, he has Stone Rabbit say 'crabmonkeys' which is one of the students' favorite sayings.

All students in the class were more than successful in the creation of their graphic novels — including those students who struggled with all other assigned story writing tasks. The completed graphic novels demonstrated the class' well-developed understanding of how to use various visual

elements to create meaning. Additionally, students who had struggled in the past to express their ideas and creativity in written form were successfully able to express themselves in a detailed and effective way using a combination of words and visual representations. The process of creating graphic novels was highly enjoyable and engaging for all students.

Conclusion

This chapter provided in-depth descriptions of the analysis of data related to the class as a whole and highlighted all whole class trends and themes that arose from this analysis. Prior to the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels), the following themes were found relating to regular language arts instruction in the focus classroom: decontextualized skill-based instruction, high student attention with minimal engagement and active participation, high frequency of unsuccessful participation in lessons, low peripherality and legitimacy offered to particular students, and limited opportunities for students to negotiate their classroom membership. This was in stark contrast with the themes relating to multimodal lessons that were implemented as part of this study. These themes were high degree of student enthusiasm/excitement, high degree of student engagement, high degree of successful participation in lessons, and increased peripherality and legitimacy for lower membership status students. Taken together, these themes provide strong evidence that the multimodal lessons did provide spaces for lower membership ELLs to feel like competent and contributing members of the classroom community. Additional themes relating to the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach were that visual elements were quickly learned by students, multimodal texts were not perceived as easier, reading multimodal texts did not lead to a lack of reading of other texts, and the multimodal literacy approach proved to be an effective way to introduce students to more cognitively and socially demanding discussions and tasks. These

themes provide instructional implications for implementing a multimodal approach successfully. These implications will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five: Focus Students' Data Analysis and Results

The following chapter details the lived experiences of the four selected focus students—Camila, Alex, Emma, and Tomas—and provides an in-depth analysis of each student's participation and social engagement in the classroom community. This chapter also highlights how each focus student's lived experiences share commonalities and differences with the whole class findings described in the previous chapter. The goal of detailing the experiences of these four students is to properly represent the uniqueness of individual ELLs' experiences during the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach. While there were certainly whole class tends and themes, these trends and themes alone do not represent a complete picture of the unique, personal experiences which make up these larger themes.

This chapter begins with an introduction of each focus student—including a review of the previous chapter's findings specifically relating to each focus students. The introduction is followed by further analysis of the focus students' participation and social engagement during the audio-recorded literature discussions. Next, interview data relating to each of the focus students are highlighted. Finally, detailed summaries of focus students' participation, engagement, and acceptance during regular language arts lessons and graphic novel lessons are then provided.

1) Introduction of Focus Students
2) Further Analysis of Focus Students' Participation and Engagement in Literature Discussions
3) Summary of Individual Interview Data
4) Detailed Summaries of Focus Students' Participation, Engagement, and Acceptance during Regular Language Arts Instruction
5) Detailed Summaries of Focus Students' Participation, Engagement, and Acceptance during Multimodal Literacy Instruction

Introduction of Focus Students

The following are brief introductions to the four focus students in this study. These introductions are intended to provide readers with a very basic and initial understanding of these students. All points

raised in the introductions will be expanded upon later on in the detailed summaries section of this chapter.

Alex

Alex was identified as one of the students with a low degree of classroom membership in the previous chapter. His test scores had placed him in the lowest English language and reading ability groups at the beginning of the school year. Periodic grade level testing resulted in his continual placement in the lowest groups and his placement did not change throughout the course of the study. Despite this, his English skills did not appear to impact his interactions with peers or his ability to complete most language arts tasks. Rather, according to interview and observational data, it was his inability to concentrate and stay focused during language arts that had the most negative impact on his academic performance and social interactions. He also struggled to follow along when the whole class was being guided, by the teacher, through the completion of a worksheet or task. Outside of class time, Alex struggled socially to gain the approval of the boys in the classroom. His peers often appeared frustrated with Alex and he was often left out of the boys' activities. The following is a summary of the findings in the previous chapter that relate to Alex:

Alex

# of turns in whole class discussions: 54 # of turns in graphic novel discussions: 159
# of initiations in whole class discussions: 2 # of initiations in whole class discussions: 7
Quality of responses in whole class discussions: Excep. 4 Stand. 18 Simple 27 V. Limited 4
Quality of responses in graphic novel discussions: Excep 27 Stand. 44 Simple 31 V. Limited 0

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Alex	3	0	4	2

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Alex	5	4	0	3	1

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Alex	6	3	6	5

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Alex	21	20	0	18	6

The previous chapter's findings suggest that Alex was often the exception among the other students with low degrees of classroom membership in that his participation in literature discussions was not as negatively impacted by his low degrees of membership. Alex established himself as a very vocal participant throughout regular whole class literature discussions and the quality of his responses—including degree of high quality participation and engagement found in responses—was much higher than other low membership status students. However, the quality of his responses still lagged in comparison to students with higher degrees of classroom membership. For Alex, the implementation of multimodal instruction and texts into the classroom had a large impact. Not only did the quality of his participation increase in graphic novel discussions, he was also able to position himself as a leader in these discussions and his ability to connect with peers improved in these lessons.

Camila

Camila also was identified as one of the students with a low degree of classroom membership. Like Alex, she was placed in the lowest English language and reading ability group and she remained in these two groups throughout the course of the study. Unlike Alex, her limited English skills did negatively impact her ability to socially interact with peers and complete language arts tasks. Along with one other student in the class (Mia), Camila struggled to read basic directions and questions during language arts and she often needed someone to translate these directions and questions into Spanish for her. Outside of the classroom, Camila appeared to be liked by the other students and to have lots of friends—including her boisterous cousin who was also was in the focus classroom. Almost all of her social interactions outside of class time took place in Spanish. Her behavior outside of academic time was quite different from her behavior during instruction. She was much more talkative and assertive outside the classroom and would at times say rude things to other peers. This was in stark contrast to her quiet and unsure demeanor portrayed during academic time.

The following is a summary of the findings in the previous chapter that relate to Camila:

Camila

# of turns in whole class discussions: 13 # of turns in graphic novel discussions: 142
# of initiations in whole class discussions: 0 # of initiations in whole class discussions: 1
Quality of responses in whole class discussions: Excep. 0 Stand. 3 Simple 6 V. Limited 4
Quality of responses in graphic novel discussions: Excep 11 Stand. 41 Simple 27 V. Limited 6

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Camila	0	0	0	0

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Camila	1	0	0	0	0

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Camila	4	0	0	4

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Camila	26	13	1	6	7

Unlike Alex, Camila's participation during regular language arts literature discussions was very similar to other students with lower degrees of participation. She rarely participated in these discussions and if it had not been for the teacher's concerted effort to call on her frequently, despite Camila's hand not being raised, the number of turns she took would have been even lower. The quality of her responses—including the degree of high quality participation and engagement found in her responses—was also very low. For Camila, the implementation of multimodal instruction and texts into the classroom had a large impact. Not only did the frequency and quality of her participation increase in the graphic novel discussions, she also gained a lot of personal confidence through being able to successfully read and create graphic novels.

Tomas

Tomas was identified as one of the students in the class that enjoyed a very high degree of classroom membership. He was well liked by both the girls and the boys in the class and he was very

competent academically in all subject areas. Tomas was placed in the highest English and reading language ability groups and he remained in these top groups throughout the course of the study. Unlike most of his other high achieving peers, Tomas had a more reserved demeanor and he was rarely loud and boisterous. His peers seemed to find him very approachable and they eagerly wanted to work with him during academic time.

The following is a summary of the findings in the previous chapter relating to Tomas:

Tomas

# of turns in whole class discussions: 12	# of turns in graphic novel discussions: 109
# of initiations in whole class discussions: 0	# of initiations in whole class discussions: 7
Quality of responses in whole class discussions:	Excep. 1 Stand. 5 Simple 4 V. Limited 1
Quality of responses in graphic novel discussions:	Excep 15 Stand. 33 Simple 10 V. Limited 0

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Tomas	0	0	0	0

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Tomas	3	1	0	0	0

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Tomas	1	6	3	3

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Tomas	25	10	0	4	3

Unlike the other students with high degrees of classroom membership, Tomas was fairly quiet during regular language arts literature discussions. Observational data indicate that this was particularly true in whole class discussions as Tomas tended to be more vocal when talking to a partner or in a small-group. While not all of his participative turns were of a high quality, there were certainly instances where Tomas's comments demonstrated impressive understanding and higher level insights. Additionally, he was often able to answer questions that the rest of his peers were unable to. For Tomas, the implementation of multimodal instruction and texts into the classroom had less impact than it did on Alex and Camila. The area that it impacted him most was his ability to take on a leadership role during student-led discussions. When Tomas was assigned to be a facilitator in these discussions, he really flourished and was able to position himself as a confident leader.

Emma

Like Tomas, Emma was identified as one of the students with a high degree of classroom membership. She also was placed in the highest English language ability and reading groups at the beginning of the year. However, she was in the lowest guided reading group within that top reading class and the teacher mentioned that she was 'on the bubble' in terms of remaining in the top reading group. There was also evidence within the observational data that Emma was a bit unsure of herself at times and that she may not fully perceive herself as having a high degree of classroom membership. Emma was well liked by her peers and—like Tomas—was a highly sought after partner during instructional time. She had a very outgoing personality and enjoyed talking and laughing with her peers during lessons.

The following is a summary of the findings in the previous chapter relating to Emma:

Emma

# of turns in whole class discussions: 20	# of turns in graphic novel discussions: 167
# of initiations in whole class discussions: 2	# of initiations in whole class discussions: 1
Quality of responses in whole class discussions:	Excep. 2 Stand. 9 Simple 8 V. Limited 1
Quality of responses in graphic novel discussions:	Excep 22 Stand. 34 Simple 16 V. Limited 1

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Emma	1	0	2	0

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Whole Class Text Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Emma	5	1	1	1	0

Number of HQ Participation Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	Confidence and/or Risk Taking	Leadership role	Unique thought/idea	Move conversation forward
Emma	0	4	6	4

Number of HQ Engagement Codes found in Graphic Novel Discussions

Student	HLT/Thoughtfulness	No 'bare min'	Well thought out question	Excitement and/or Anticipation	Desire to understand (Peer or general)
Emma	33	20	1	1	4

Emma's participation in regular, whole-class literature discussions was quite similar to the participation of other high membership status students. Unlike Tomas, Emma was fairly vocal during these discussions—although there were still quite a few students more vocal than her. She was also very vocal during any partner or small-group talk. The quality of her participation was quite high and she often added unique ideas to discussions. For Emma, the implementation of multimodal instruction

and texts into the classroom had even less impact than it did on Tomas. While she was certainly enthusiastic about graphic novels and the quality of her participation during graphic novel discussions increased, her behavior did not really change during multimodal instruction. During multimodal lessons, her confidence level and her ability to successfully participate and engage in lessons remained quite similar to what they were during regular language arts instruction. Emma also chose to read fewer graphic novels independently than most of her peers and instead continued to read 'regular' books at home.

Further Analysis of Focus Students' Participation and Social Engagement in Audio-Recorded Literature Discussions

The focus students' participation and social engagement in literature discussions underwent two additional levels of analysis. Their participation in these discussions was further analyzed according to Kovalainen and Kumpluainen's (2007) observational protocol for participation and their social engagement was further analyzed using a coding scheme created for this study that focuses on analyzing one's legitimacy and peripherality in specific discussions. Both of these analyses are discussed in detail below.

Further Analysis of Focus Student Participation in Literature Discussions: Communicative Functions, Discourse Moves, Interaction Sequences, and Participatory Roles

To further analyze the complexity of the focus students' participation in literature discussions, Kovalainen and Kumpluainen's (2007) observational protocol for participation was used. This protocol highlights students' communicative functions, discourse moves, interaction sequences, and the participatory roles that a student takes up when verbally participating in a classroom community. The following section details the types of communicative functions, discourse moves, and interaction sequences each focus student took part in during the audio-recorded literature discussions. The

participatory role each student took up in the classroom community and whether these roles changed during multimodal lessons will also be discussed.

Communicative functions. A student's communicative functions refer to the different purposes or reasons behind their participative turns. For example, one reason a student might participate is to share or express their views, opinions or perspectives. In this case, the purpose of the student's participative turn is 'view sharing'. Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) assert that determining students' communicative functions 'sheds light upon the thematic nature of interaction and its moment-by-moment construction in ongoing interactions' (pg. 145) The 10 thematically different communicative functions identified by Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) are evidence negotiation, defining, experiential, view sharing, information exchange, orchestration of classroom interaction, non-verbal communication, neutral interactions, confirming, and evaluation.

To review, evidence negotiation (EVI) is when a student asks for or presents evidence, justification or reasons. Defining (DEF) consists of asking for and providing definitions, elaboration, clarification or demonstration. Experiential (EXP) focuses on asking for and sharing personal experiences, feelings or examples from one's own life. View sharing (VIEW) includes asking for and expressing views, opinions or perspectives. Information exchange (INFO) comprises asking for and providing information, solutions or observations. Orchestration of classroom interaction (ORC) focuses on taking charge of the interactional management of speaking turns. Non-verbal communication (N-VERB) usually consists of expressions that reflect willingness to participate in classroom interactions. Neutral interaction (NEU) indicates echoing and re-voicing the ongoing interactions. Confirming (CON) signals the acknowledgement and acceptance of the topic of interaction. Evaluation (EVA) offers assessment of contributions to meaning making.

The following chart highlights the communicative functions found in the focus students' participation in whole class literature discussions.

Name	EVI	DEF	EXP	VIEW	INFO	ORC	NEU	CON	EVA
Alex	4	5	6	9	25	0	3	2	1
Camila	0	0	0	3	9	0	0	0	0
Emma	2	1	0	4	17	0	0	1	0
Tomas	0	0	4	3	5	0	0	0	1
Total	**7**	**6**	**10**	**19**	**56**	0	**3**	**3**	**2**

Clearly, the most common communicative function for verbal participation by the focus students in whole class discussions was information exchange. This is reflective of the types of questions asked by the teacher and the types of activities students were engaged in. Generally, students were asked closed, fact based questions—questions that require students to respond by providing information. These questions did not leave openings for more advanced responses or responses that used a variety of communicative responses. After information exchange, the second most common communicative function by focus students during whole class discussions was view sharing. Once again this finding is reflective of the types of questions and discussion led by the teacher. During observations, it was very clear that in addition to fact based questions the teacher tended to ask questions where the students could offer their opinion on an event or character. For example, the teacher would often ask the question 'Would you have done the same thing?'

There was very little variety in terms of communicative functions with 71% of the focus students' turns being either information exchange or view sharing. The focus student with the greatest variety of communicative functions was Alex who took part in every function except orchestration. Unlike the other lower membership status students (Camila, Lucia, and Mia), the communicative functions of Alex's participative turns did not appear to be effected by his lower status. Camila, on the other hand, had the least variety of communicative functions—with all of her participative turns being either information exchange or view sharing. A careful look at the participative turns of Mia and Lucia

indicate that they too only had these two forms (information exchange or view sharing) of communicative functions. Emma and Tomas had a greater variety of communicative functions than Camila but the variety of their communicative functions did not surpass Alex's. Despite the slight amount of variety in Alex, Emma, and Tomas's turns, however, all four focus students' participative turns were still dominated by the communicative functions information exchange or view sharing.

Information exchange or view sharing are the communicative functions that tend be the most basic and easiest ways into a discussion and are reflective of the functions most commonly used by more silent participants (Kovalainen and Kumpluainen, 2007). The fact that all students in the focus classroom—including those students with high membership status—had little opportunity to engage in other communicative functions indicate that there were few openings in these discussions for these ELLs to engage in higher level turn taking. For example, opportunities to evaluate a comment or idea—or to provide justification or reasoning for an idea—were very rare in these discussions. Camila's participative turns (as well as those taken by Lucia and Mia) suggest that there were even fewer of these opportunities for students with lower membership status. There were also zero focus student participative turns that fit the communicative function of orchestration. This means that within whole class discussions there was little to no encouragement or openings for students to take charge of a discussion. Essentially this finding demonstrates that during these discussions it was the teacher and only the teacher that facilitated discussion.

The following two charts highlight the communicative functions found in the focus students' participation in the small-group, graphic novel discussions. Data are divided into teacher led discussions and student led discussions.

Communicative Functions of Focus Students during Teacher Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Name	EVI	DEF	EXP	VIEW	INFO	ORC	NEU	CON	EVA
Alex	14	7	11	23	24	0	5	1	0
Camila	20	6	2	17	19	0	1	3	2
Emma*	16	9	4	11	7	0	0	0	0
Tomas	13	4	3	10	12	0	0	2	1
Total	**63**	**26**	**20**	**61**	**62**	**0**	**6**	**6**	**3**

*Absent for one discussion

Communicative Functions of Focus Students during Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Name	EVI	DEF	EXP	VIEW	INFO	ORC	NEU	CON	EVA
Alex	11	14	11	19	13	5	2	4	2
Camila	20	4	7	16	10	0	1	7	2
Emma	27	7	10	21	9	4	2	2	10
Tomas	17	8	3	16	7	11	0	4	8
Total	**75**	**33**	**31**	**72**	**30**	**20**	**5**	**17**	**22**

The most notable difference in terms of the focus students' communicative functions between regular literature discussions and small-group, graphic novel discussions is that there was more variety in the types of communicative functions used in the graphic novel discussions. Students were much more likely to have 'evidence negotiation', 'defining', and 'experiential' as the communicative function of their participative turns rather than solely relying on 'view sharing' and 'information exchange'. In fact, there were more instances of 'evidence negotiation' in both the teacher-led and student-led discussions than instances of 'view sharing' or 'information exchange'. This finding was not surprising because the questions asked during these discussions were quite different than those asked during regular literature discussions.

Questions asked during the graphic novel discussions were much more open-ended, required a deeper level of thought and analysis, and touched on a larger variety of topics (i.e. having students infer the motivation behind a character's actions). The success of the focus students in answering these questions suggests that ELLs are more than capable of engaging in a wide variety of questioning that requires them to use diverse communicative functions when provided external textual support (i.e. the

picture support in multimodal texts). The regular literature discussions unfortunately rarely created spaces for students to use most communicative functions and instead limited them to only the most basic communicative functions. However, when provided the peripherality to engage with a variety of questions that demand different communicative functions the ELLs in this study were more than capable of being successful.

On an individual level, all four focus students used a greater variety of types of communicative functions and they were all less likely to rely on information exchange or view sharing—although these two communicative functions were still quite common. There were also no extreme differences in the communicative functions used by the lower membership status students (Camila and Alex) and those used by the higher membership status students (Emma and Tomas). The one slight difference that was found is that both Alex and Camila relied a bit more on 'view sharing' and 'information exchange' than Tomas and Emma—especially in the teacher led discussions. While this difference is quite small is does suggest that the lower status students were more likely to answer questions that required 'view sharing' and 'information exchange' (the two communicative functions indentified by Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) as being the 'most basic' and most commonly used by silent participants). At the same time, both Alex and Camila still successfully participated using a variety of communicative functions. This suggests that the more complex questions asked during graphic novel discussions were accessible enough to these students to not overly impact which questions they answered and which communicative functions they used.

To conclude, the data analyzed above suggests that the communicative functions of students' participative turns were first and foremost determined by the organization and expectations of the discussions as well as the types of questions asked and the amount of freedom the students had to determine the course of the conversation. Membership status appeared to play a much smaller role in

determining the communicative functions a student used. There was evidence that students with lower membership status were more likely to have 'view sharing' and 'information exchange' as their communicative function, however, this difference was rather small. Additionally, the wide variety of communicative functions used by all four of the focus students in the graphic novel discussions indicate that these discussions were accessible to all four students and encouraged them to use more complex communicative functions.

Discourse moves. Discourse moves refer to the participatory roles a student takes up during their participative turns in a discussion. Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) identify six analytic categories for discourse moves: teacher initiations (TI), teacher responses (TR), teacher follow-ups (TF), student initiations (SI), student responses (SR) and student follow-ups (SF). For the purposes of this study, only focus student discourse moves were coded in three categories: student initiations (SI), student responses (SR) and student follow-ups (SF). Student initiation turns are defined as turns where the student opens discourse on a particular topic or switches the discussion to a new topic. This can be realized via questions or via thematically new comments or suggestions. Student response turns respond to student or teacher initiations or elaborate on other student or teacher responses. Follow-up turns provide feedback on the ongoing social interaction. In addition, a fourth category—unable to respond—has been added to indicate times when a student was invited to participate but ultimately did not.

The following chart highlights the discourse moves found in the focus students' participation in whole class literature discussions:

Discourse Moves of Focus Students in Whole Class Discussions

	Student Initiation	Student Response	Student Follow-up	Unable to Respond
Alex	7	47	0	0
Camila	0	12	0	3
Emma	2	18	0	0
Tomas	0	12	0	0

Almost every single focus student participative turn was a student response. The only exceptions were Alex's seven student initiations and Emma's two initiations. As with the communicative functions, the limited variety of discourse moves suggests that student participation in these discussions were limited to very specific roles—mainly the role of a responsive student. Students rarely had the opportunity to take on the role of initiating new topics or the role of assessing the conversation by providing feedback. Additionally, when students did initiate a new topic these topics were generally not taken up for discussion. For example, Emma's two initiations resulted in the teacher briefly responding to her and then getting back to the teacher established topic. The same was true for Alex's initiations although three of his initiations were completely ignored by both the teacher and his peers.

The following chart highlights the discourse moves found in the focus students' participation in graphic novel discussions. Data are divided into teacher-led discussions and student-led discussions.

Discourse Moves of Focus Students in Teacher Led Graphic Novel Discussions

	Student Initiation	Student Response	Student Follow-up	Unable to Respond
Alex	8	64	0	0
Camila	5	62	0	0
Emma	2	36	1	0
Tomas	2	40	0	0

Discourse Moves of Focus Students in Student Led Graphic Novel Discussions

	Student Initiation	Student Response	Student Follow-up	Unable to Respond
Alex	8	35	6	0
Camila	2	46	0	0
Emma	4	68	17	0
Tomas	2	24	24	0

As in the regular literature discussions, the focus students' discourse moves were primarily responsive. However, there was certainly an increase in the number of focus student initiations and student follow-ups and these were not limited to students with high degrees of classroom membership. Interestingly, it was Camila and Alex (the lower membership status students) who had the most initiations in the teacher-led discussions. This suggests that initiating topics of conversation was equally accessible to the lower membership status students as it was for the higher membership status students in the graphic novel discussions. It is also important to note that Camila was always able to respond when called on to participate. In the regular discussions, she was 'unable to respond' three times which is quite a few considering that she only participated thirteen times in these discussions. This suggests that the graphic novel discussions—including the topics and questions discussed—were accessible enough for Camila to always be able to participate.

The main difference between the low membership status students (Alex and Camila) and the high membership status students (Emma and Tomas) is that the higher membership status students had many more follow ups in the student-led discussion groups. This is partially a result of the fact that both Emma and Tomas were assigned to be facilitators of their group during one discussion while Camila and Alex were not. However, many of Tomas and Emma's student follow-ups took place when they were not facilitators. This indicates that these students were taking on a leadership role by helping to guide the discussions even when they were not expected to. Alex also appeared to take on a leadership role as he had seven follow-ups despite never being assigned the role of facilitator. While

Alex took on this leadership role less frequently than Tomas and Emma, his seven follow ups do suggest that he was feeling quite confident in his positioning in the discussions. In these follow ups, Alex would call on students who had not participated, would tell the group that it was time to move on to the next question, and would remind commentators to fulfill the expectations of their roles. Camila, on the other hand, did not have any follow ups. Like the other lower membership status students (Lucia and Mia) who also did not have any follow ups, the position of discussion leader was still not accessible to them. While the frequency and quality of their participation suggested that these discussions were much more accessible than regular literature discussions, there was still something preventing them to take on the role of leader—even if only for a brief moment.

Interaction sequences. Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) define interaction sequences as thematically and interactionally connected message units. Through their detailed analysis of these connected message units, they identified eight types of interaction sequences, two of which were teacher initiated and four of which were student initiated. Teacher-initiated interaction sequences include two categories: teacher initiated bilateral sequence (TIB) and teacher-initiated multilateral sequence (TIM) in which several classroom members participate. Student-initiated interaction sequences include four categories: student-initiated bilateral sequence with teacher participation (SIB/T), student-initiated multilateral sequence with teacher participation (SIM/T), student-initiated bilateral sequence between two students only (SIB) and SIM sequence between more than two students. In addition to the above sequences, solo initiations that were not discursively elaborated upon were identified in teacher and student interactions—although these were quite rare. These rare instances were categorized as solo teacher initiation (STI) and solo student initiation (SSI).

The following chart highlights the interaction sequences that the focus students' participated in during whole class literature discussions. When coding for interaction sequences, each interaction

sequences was coded only once. This means that if a student took multiple turns in the same interaction sequence it would count as just one sequence.

Interaction Sequences of Focus Students in Whole Class Discussion

	Teacher Initiated Bilateral	Teacher initiated Multilateral	Student Initiated Bilateral	Student Initiated Multilateral	Student Initiated Bilateral (T)	Student Initiated Multilateral (T)	Solo Student Initiation
Alex	8	26	3	0	4	3	3
Camila	6	3	0	0	1	0	0
Emma	2	13	0	0	1	1	0
Tomas	4	6	0	0	0	0	0

All four focus students had little variety in the interaction sequences they participated in during regular language arts discussions with almost all of the interaction sequences they participated in being either teacher initiated bilateral or multilateral sequences. This is not surprising considering how few student initiations focus students had for discourse moves. It is also important to note that when a student did engage in student initiated sequences, it was always with teacher support (other than Alex's three student initiated bilateral sequences). This indicates that there was almost no student discussion that was not influenced or guided by the teacher. It is also interesting that Camila is the only student with more teacher initiated bilateral sequences than teacher initiated multilateral sequences. This suggests that when Camila did participate it was generally only when the teacher initiated conversation with her individually and that often times her participation did not result in other students joining the conversation. The other students, including Alex the other lower status student, were more likely to engage in discussions that involved several of their peers.

The following two charts highlight the interaction sequences that the focus students' participated in during graphic novel discussions. Data are once again divided into teacher-led discussions and student-led discussions.

Interaction Sequences of Focus Students in Teacher Led Discussions

	Teacher Initiated Bilateral	Teacher initiated Multilateral	Student Initiated Bilateral	Student Initiated Multilateral	Student Initiated Bilateral (T)	Student Initiated Multilateral (T)	Solo Student Initiation
Alex	12	38	2	0	8	6	2
Camila	25	28	0	0	8	2	0
Emma	10	22	1	0	2	1	0
Tomas	10	28	2	0	0	3	0

Interaction Sequences of Focus Students in Student Led Discussions

	Teacher Initiated Bilateral	Teacher initiated Multilateral	Student Initiated Bilateral	Student Initiated Multilateral	Student Initiated Bilateral (T)	Student Initiated Multilateral (T)	Solo Student Initiation
Alex	1	8	10	34	0	1	0
Camila	7	13	0	10	1	6	1
Emma	1	20	14	31	0	14	1
Tomas	0	7	7	35	1	0	0

While there was a bit more diversity in the focus students' interaction sequences in the teacher-led discussions, teacher initiated bilateral and multilateral sequences were still the two most common sequences focus students took part in. This suggests that while there was a bit more opportunity for student to initiate topics of conversation, these discussions were still primarily teacher initiated. Additionally, Camila was still the focus student who participated in the most teacher initiated bilateral sequences. In fact, she participated in 25 teacher initiated bilateral sequences which is more than double the number of teacher initiated bilateral sequences her peers had. This suggests that Camila—more than the other focus students—still relied on her one-on-one interactions with the teacher to participate.

Clearly, the student-led discussions were quite different. The most frequent interaction sequences in these discussions were the student initiated multilateral and bilateral sequences (no teacher support).

This is not surprising because for these the discussions the teacher was either absent from the group or taking on a more silent role—stepping in only to provide assistance when needed. In terms of important findings from the above data set, there is some evidence that Camila still relied slightly on the teacher during student-led discussions. First, Camila participated in a limited number of student initiated bilateral and multilateral sequences (no teacher support) in comparison to her peers. She only had ten of these sequences while all three of the other focus students had more than thirty of these interactions. Additionally, she participated in seven teacher-initiated bilateral sequences while the other focus students rarely engaged in these sequences. This suggests that when the teacher was briefly listening into the students' discussion, she found a reason to engage with Camila on a one on one basis. For example, the teacher may have noticed that Camila was not talking and would then ask Camila directly what she thought about a question. It is noted in the researcher's notebook that Camila often took time to 'warm up' during student-led discussions, often remaining silent in the beginning and working her way up to participating more frequently. This suggests that Camila was still lacking slightly in peripherality and legitimacy during these discussions.

It is also interesting that Camila never once engaged in a student initiated bilateral sequence without teacher support during the teacher-led and student-led graphic novel discussions. Student initiated bilateral sequences (no T) were actually quite important when it came to establishing connections with individual peers. These sequences involved two peers engaging solely with one another either about a question that that was posed to the group or—more commonly—discussing a slightly different topic related to the graphic novel (i.e. discussing a picture or section of the novel that they enjoyed). During these one-on-one interactions, the students involved were able to share a connection with one another and build a rapport that helped to increase the degree of legitimacy they

offered each other. By not engaging in these bilateral sequences, Camila was missing out on this important opportunity to build her legitimacy.

Another important finding is that Camila participated in fewer interaction sequences in the student-led discussions than the other focus students. Since the number of turns she took during these discussions was on par with her peers, Camila clearly had several sequences where she participated more than once. When examining her participatory sequences in student-led discussions, it is clear that Camila still needed peer and teacher assistance or encouragement when participating. She often gave very simple answers at first and then was encouraged to elaborate more through peer questions like 'why do you think that?'. This need for encouragement resulted in her taking more than one turn to fully express an idea. She also still had a tendency to be a bit hesitant when first participating and there were several participatory sequences where she would begin to participate but would not complete her thought. Her peers would then have to support her by saying things like 'do you agree because you think the same thing?'.

To conclude, both the regular literature discussions and the teacher-led graphic novel discussions were dominated by teacher initiated sequences. The student-led discussions were dominated by student initiated sequences (no T). In terms of individual differences among the focus students, Camila distinguished herself from the group by relying the most on teacher initiated bilateral sequences—even during the student-led discussions. This indicates that despite the fact that these discussions offered Camila more peripherality than the regular literature discussions, she still frequently relied on teacher support during the graphic novel discussions suggesting that the discussions were perhaps not as accessible for her as they were for the other focus students.

Participatory roles. In Kovalainen and Kumpluainen's (2007) study of the interactional and thematic nature of classroom discussions in an elementary classroom, four prevalent modes of student

participation in the classroom community were found: vocal, responsive, bilateral and silent. These modes of participation become clear to Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) through their examination of the amount of student participation in classroom interaction, the forms and functions of classroom interaction, and the directions of conversational exchanges among the classroom community. The following chart defines the characteristics of each participatory role (Kovalainen and Kumpluainen's, 2007, pg. 150).

Modes of participation	**Vocal participants**	**Responsive participants**	**Bilateral participants**	**Silent participants**
Discourse moves	Initiating responding engaging in follow-up moves	Responding	Initiating responding	Responding
Interaction sequences	Student-initiated multilateral interaction (SIM) student-initiated multilateral interaction with the teacher (SIM/T) teacher-initiated multilateral interaction (TIM) teacher-initiated bilateral interaction (TIB)	Teacher-initiated multilateral interaction (TIM) teacher-initiated bilateral interaction (TIB) student-initiated multilateral interaction with the teacher (SIM/T) student-initiated bilateral interaction with the teacher (SIB/T)	Student-initiated bilateral interaction with the teacher (SIB/T) student-initiated bilateral interaction (SIB) teacher-initiated bilateral interaction (TIB)	Teacher-initiated bilateral interaction (TIB)
Communicative functions	Asking for or sharing evidence (EVI) definitions (DEF) experiences (EXP) views (VIEW) information (INFO) neutral feedback (NEU) confirming feedback (CON) evaluating feedback (EVA)	Sharing evidence (EVI) definitions (DEF)	Asking for or sharing evidence (EVI) non-verbal utterances (N-VERB) experiences (EXP) information (INFO)	Sharing views (VIEW) information (INFO)
Amount of participation	High amount of participation	High medium or low amount of participation	Medium or low amount of participation	Low amount of participation

The nature of teacher participation	Providing structural support by concluding interaction sequences by providing neutral (NEU) or confirming (CON) feedback orchestrating the discussions (ORC) initiating evidence negotiations (EVI) asking for definitions, clarifications or elaborations (DEF)	Providing analytic support by initiating evidence negotiations (EVI) asking for definitions, clarifications or elaborations (DEF)	Providing social support by orchestrating the discussions (ORC)	Encouraging participation by asking for views and opinions (VIEW) information (INFO)

Participatory roles in regular literature discussions. This section describes the participatory roles that all four focus students took up during the regular literature discussions. When using the four types of participatory roles to analyze student participation, Kovalainen and Kumpluainen (2007) caution that many students will not fit perfectly into a role and that some classrooms may not offer all four participatory roles. Indeed, while one focus student in this study fits perfectly into the silent participatory role the other three students' participation varies slightly from the participatory role they have taken up in classroom discussions.

Camila is clearly a silent participant in the regular literature discussions as she matches every single characteristic of that category. Her discourse moves are all responses, she engages the most in teacher initiated bilateral sequences, her communicative functions are all 'view sharing' and 'information 'exchange', and she has a low amount of participation (13 total turns in 9 whole class discussions). Additionally, the teacher frequently encouraged Camila's participation by asking for her views and opinions and by asking her to provide fact-based information. Camila's silent participant role is reflective of role taken up by students with low degrees of classroom membership. Both Mia and Lucia's participation also fit all of the characteristics of a silent participant.

Alex is the exception within the group of lower status students. Despite having low membership status, he is clearly a vocal rather than a silent participant. He has a high amount of participation and

his participation is not limited to teacher initiated bilateral sequences but rather he participates in a wide variety of sequences. Additionally, he has more variety in his communicative functions and his discourse moves include responses and initiations. While Alex does not have as large of a variety of communicative functions as the typical vocal participant, this is not a result of him being unwilling or unable to do so. Rather, the regular literature discussions simply do not provide him much opportunity to go beyond 'view sharing' and 'information exchange'. Had the discussions afforded him the opportunity to do so, there is every indication that Alex would have had more variety in his communicative functions as he already established an ability to use many of these functions. Similarly, students in the class were also not afforded the opportunity to engage in student follow ups. However, it is a bit less clear whether Alex would have engaged in student follow ups had he been provided the opportunity to do so. There is nothing within his participation that indicates that he would have taken up a leadership role and commented on the discussion by providing feedback on the ongoing social interaction.

Like Alex, Emma is also a vocal participant. She has a high amount of participation, she engages in a variety of participative sequences, and she initiates and responds. Again, she is somewhat limited by the way the discussions are structured and this results in her having less variety in her communicative functions and prevents her from participating in student follow ups. However, her participation indicates that if provided the opportunity to engage in follow ups and other communicative functions she would have been successful. Unlike Alex, she did position herself as a leader in discussions by frequently participating first, ensuring that everyone had a partner during partner talk, and freely asking questions. These actions indicate that she most likely would have engaged in student follow ups if provided the opportunity to do so. Emma's vocal participant role is also reflective of the role taken up by students with high degrees of classroom membership. The other

two students identified as having high membership status, Lucia and David, also were vocal participants.

Tomas is the one exception in the group of higher status students. Despite his high status, he was not a vocal participation but rather a responsive participant in whole class discussions. He had a medium amount of participation, his discourse moves were all responses (no initiations), he participated in only teacher initiated bilateral and multilateral sequences (the two most common sequences for responsive participants), and he had less variety in his communicative functions than his vocal participant peers. Like Alex and Emma, Tomas is not a perfect match for a responsive participant. In his case, his communicative functions do not match the typical communicative functions of a responsive participant, which are most commonly 'evidence negotiation' and 'defining'. Again, since the discussions provided students with little opportunity to engage in communicative functions other than 'view sharing' and 'information exchange', it is not surprising that Tomas does not meet this characteristic.

Participatory roles in graphic novel discussions. In the graphic novel discussions, Tomas, Emma, and Alex were all vocal participants. They all had a high amount of participation, engaged in a variety of interaction sequences, used a large variety of communicative functions and they used all three discourse moves (initiation, response, and follow-up). For Tomas, his move from responsive participant to vocal participant meant that he was participating more and in more diverse ways. In particular, Tomas was now someone who would initiate topics of conversation and would help guide the discussion through his follow-ups. Emma and Alex, while remaining vocal participants, still made some progress. The variety of their communicative functions now matched that of the typical vocal participant and they both effectively engaged in follow ups.

Camila was the focus student whose participatory role changed the most from the regular literature discussions to the graphic novel discussions. No longer a silent participant, Camila had a high degree of participation and used a variety of communicative functions. She also engaged in a greater variety of interaction sequences—though she still tended to participate more in teacher initiated and teacher supported sequences. She also moved beyond just responding and began initiating. However, Camila was the only focus student to still not engage in student follow-ups. Camila's participatory role during the graphic novel discussions did not really fit into one category as she was somewhere in between a responsive and verbal participant. She was not necessarily a responsive participant as she did initiate topics of conversation however she was also not quite a vocal participant as she did not engage in follow-ups and she still relied on teacher initiated and teacher supported interaction sequences. However, the fact that Camila went from being a silent participant to a participant that almost fit the characteristics of a vocal participant is a very large jump and indicates that she completely changed the participatory role that she took up.

Further Analysis of Focus Students' Social Interactions in Literature Discussions: Peripherality and Legitimacy

Central to this study is an exploration of the ways in which a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novel) influences students' membership status (peripherality and legitimacy). A student's membership status is in a constant state of change. As students socially interact with one another, they take part in direct and indirect negotiations of their peripherality and legitimacy. In this study, the main way students socially interacted with each other during language arts was through literature discussions. These discussions were important spaces where students actively negotiated their membership status by appealing for peripherality and legitimacy. To analyze these negotiations,

the researcher created a coding scheme directly relating to peripherality and legitimacy. The following codes were used:

Appeals of Legitimacy/Peripherality
Indirect Appeal for Legitimacy: e.g. sharing an idea, engaging another student in conversation
Direct Appeal for Legitimacy: e.g. saying something like, *'Do you think that my idea is good?'*
Indirect Appeal for Peripherality e.g. sharing an idea without being called on or asked to talk
Direct Appeal for Peripherality: e.g. saying something like, *'Can I say something?'*; raising hand

Offers/Denials of Legitimacy
Indirect Offer of Legitimacy: e.g. commenting on something someone said, actively listening to someone
Direct Offer of Legitimacy: e.g. saying something like, *'wow, that is a great idea'*, laughing at someone's joke
Indirect Denial of Legitimacy: e.g. not listening to someone, ignoring someone
Direct Denial of Legitimacy: e.g. saying something like, *'I do not care what you think.'*, laughing at someone in a mean way

Offers/Denials of Peripherality
Indirect Offer of Peripherality: e.g. when someone brings up a new topic a peer or teacher allows space for that topic to be discussed
Direct Offer of Peripherality: e.g. saying something like, *'Would you like to sat something?'* or *'I would like to hear what you think.'*
Indirect Denial of Peripherality: e.g. to ignore what someone says and continue on with a conversation
Direct Denial of Peripherality: e.g. to not call on someone who is raising their hand; saying something like *'no, you cannot talk'* or *'I do not want to hear you talk'*

The following two sections highlight how each focus student negotiated their peripherality and legitimacy in literature discussions. First, the focus students' negotiation in regular literature discussions are described. This is followed with how the focus students' negotiated their peripherality and legitimacy in the graphic novel discussions and how this negotiation differed in terms of success with the regular literature discussions.

Peripherality and legitimacy in regular literature discussions. While there was room within the regular literature discussions to appeal for peripherality and legitimacy, these discussions were very teacher controlled and left very little room for students to offer or deny other peers legitimacy and/or peripherality. Instead, the teacher seemed to have the sole power to directly or indirectly offer

legitimacy and/or peripherality to the students. There were two exceptions to this. First, there were times when student reaction to another student's comment (directly or indirectly) offered or denied the legitimacy of the participating student. For example, if a student shared a funny idea and the rest of the class laughed the students were directly offering that student legitimacy by showing recognition that their peer had an idea funny enough to make them laugh. Similarly, students would also get distracted or not listen when a peer was speaking, thus indirectly denying that student legitimacy by indicating that their peer's idea was not valuable enough to listen to. The other exception would occur after partner or small-group talk. Students would be called on to report what their group talked about and often they would reference what another peer said by saying 'Well, David said….'. By repeating what another peer said—and by giving that peer credit for the answer—the student was indirectly offering that peer legitimacy by indicating that they thought their answer was good enough to be repeated to the whole class.

The following sections include whole class, literature discussion excerpts that represent the typical ways each of the focus students appealed for and were offered and/or denied peripherality and legitimacy. These excerpts also highlight how successful each focus student was in socially interacting with peers during these discussions.

Camila. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Camila engaged in during regular language arts discussions.

Nov 16th
T: Camila? What did your table say? What is a real cool thing about expository text?
Camila: silent

This type of one-sided interaction was quite common for Camila. In this example, the teacher was directly offering Camila peripherality by calling on her and asking her to share what her table talked about. As she often did, Camila did not accept this offer of peripherality and remained silent.

Clearly, the teacher's direct offer of peripherality to Camila was not enough to actually create an accessible opening for Camila to participate in the discussion. She was still feeling too uncomfortable to share her thoughts, or the content matter that was being discussed was presented in an inaccessible way limiting her understanding. This does highlight that calling on a student who is not raising their hand—a common practice the teacher used to increase Camila's participation—may not be the most effective way to effectively increase a student's peripherality. Instead, the teacher may need to address what is making Camila uncomfortable and disconnected to these discussions. By remaining silent when called on, Camila was unfortunately reinforcing her peers' belief that she was a less capable contributor to the classroom community (i.e. low legitimacy).

Nov 1st
Teacher: Camila, what do you think? Do you think it is an animal?
Camila: (shakes head no)
T: what do you think is inside? What could be making the noise? It is a car that is nobody's. Okay, Camila is going to give me her prediction. What do you think? What could be inside the car making that noise? They even got scared when they head that. Do you think that it is an animal?
Camila: no
T: no, what do you think? It is a person?
Camila: no
T: what do you think? I will come back to you. Julio?
Julio: it is an animal like a raccoon.
Teacher: okay it is an animal, raccoon, squirrel. Camila?
C: umm…like a squirrel.

Another common interaction for Camila would involve the teacher repeatedly returning to Camila in an attempt to encourage her participation. In this example, Camila—who was not raising her hand—is again hesitant to participate after directly being offered peripherality by the teacher. Rather than remaining silent, Camila continuously says no to the ideas being offered by the teacher suggesting that she was not feeling confident in her understanding of the question to commit to an answer. It is not until Julio—a student with high status—shares his prediction that an 'animal like a raccoon' is in the car that Camila feels comfortable enough to commit to answering that she too thought it was animal.

Also, it is notable that Camila simply repeats one of the animals (a squirrel) that the teacher offered as an example answer. Simply repeating a teacher's example is not something that helps a student gain higher degrees of legitimacy. Instead, this interaction most likely reinforced her low legitimacy as she presented herself as hesitant to answer and in need of additional teacher support.

Nov 1st
Teacher: so what wildlife did we see in the story?
Kate: eggs
T: what else? Birds.
Camila: plants
T: those plants right?

There were times when Camila chose to participate without waiting to be called on. However, Camila voluntarily participated only on rare occasions and when she did volunteer her answers were generally very simple, one word answers. In the above example, the teacher did indirectly offer Camila legitimacy by confirming that her answer was correct before moving on to call on other students. However, these simple, one word answers most likely had very little impact on the amount of legitimacy offered to her by her peers. Her answer was quite obvious (plants were very visible in the picture on the page they were discussing) and she generally only volunteered to participate when there was a very easy question posed by the teacher, as was the case in this example.

Oct 29th
T: so when they get bored what do they do Camila?
Alex: prank people
Camila: silent
T: what are they doing to the people Camila?
Camila (a few seconds waiting, you can barely hear her) they are scaring them.

This is another example of the teacher directly offering Camila peripherality to the discussion. In this example, Camila is silent at first—while Alex shouts out his answer—but then provides a very quiet response after being prompted for the second time. This interaction again works to further position Camila as a less capable peer despite the fact that her eventual answer is the correct one. Her

initial hesitation and her very quiet response—one that most of her peers most likely did not even hear—did not indicate to students that she was a confident, fully contributing member of the classroom. Additionally, this interaction further reinforced that Camila consistently needed teacher support (in this case rewording the question to guide her thinking) to answer basic reading comprehension questions, further positioning her as someone with low legitimacy.

Nov 17th
T: Camila, what is a supporting detail that supports the main idea that your group came up with?
C: a grizzly bear (she is reporting what her group decided in their small group discussion although she did not verbally participate in the small group talk)
T: but they are not in the city they are in the forest
Kate: oh, a raccoon
T: what?
C: a raccoon
T: okay, where does it say that?

The above interaction is a much more positive one for Camila despite the fact that she initially answers the question wrong. While Camila did not verbally participate in her group's discussion, this interaction indicates she was able to share the answer that her group had decided upon—a grizzly bear. Additionally, there is a sense in this interaction that Camila is connecting with her group—in particular with Kate who has stepped in to assist Camila (indirectly offering Camila legitimacy). These connections can provide Camila with small degrees of legitimacy although there was still limited peripherality for Camila in this discussion as she did not find a way in to verbally participate in the small group talk.

Alex. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Alex engaged in during regular language arts discussions.

Nov 1st
T: crops are just plants that you can grow.
Alex: mushrooms!!
T: like corn or wheat, crops.

This is an example of one of the most common interactions for Alex during whole class, literature discussions. In these interactions, he would shout out a short add-on to what was said by the teacher or a peer—in this case he adds that he thinks 'mushrooms' are an example of a crop. These add-ons were Alex's attempt at indirectly appealing for legitimacy and peripherality from the teacher and his peers. Unfortunately, his appeals were frequently indirectly denied as these appeals were often ignored by the teacher and students. In this example, the teacher indirectly denies Alex both legitimacy and peripherality by continuing on with her thoughts and not commenting or recognizing what Alex shouted out.

Nov 1st
T: I am going to go get some spring he said, what did he mean by that? Tell your partner.
(students talk)
T: Alex, what did you talk about with David?
A: umm…David said that the boy wanted to know what spring was
T: yeah, but he said he is going to go get…find some spring, what does he mean by that?
A: I think he means like seeing things changing

In this interaction, Alex engages in the practice of repeating what another peer said during partner talk thus indirectly offering legitimacy to David (a high status student). What is intriguing in this interaction is that Alex first repeats what his high status peer said (despite the fact that David's answer was wrong) prior to taking a risk and providing his own answer to the question, which in this case was actually the correct answer. This does suggest that Alex gives more weight to the ideas of higher status peers than to his own ideas and that he 'trusted' their answers more than he 'trusted' his answers. His reluctance to trust and share his own ideas during is one way that his low legitimacy impacted the way he participated and engaged in these discussions.

Nov 1st
T: who likes the smell of bread baking? Fresh baked bread
Miguel: I like Cheesecake
Alex: and chocolate cake!
Miguel: yeah!

This is an example of another common interaction that Alex would take part in during whole class literature discussions. In these instances, Alex would engage in a one-on-one interaction with another peer—most commonly with Miguel or Julio. During these interactions, Alex would be indirectly appealing for legitimacy by trying to connect with a peer through commenting or adding on to something they said. This tended to be successful (meaning that the peer then commented on what Alex said) only about 50 % of the time. The other times Alex's indirect appeal for legitimacy would be ignored by the peer and the discussion would go on as if Alex had not participated. In this example, Miguel indirectly offers Alex legitimacy by commenting that he too likes chocolate cake.

Jan 11th
T: but who has been in [a] place where it is extremely dark, where you cannot see anything in front of you?
Miguel: my room is dark
A: mine too
T: but what if you were blind? Could you tell if a place was dark?

This is another example of Alex indirectly appealing for legitimacy by engaging in a one-on-one interaction with a peer during a whole class, literature discussion. In this example, Miguel (and the teacher) indirectly deny Alex's appeal for legitimacy and ignore what he said.

Oct 29th
T: what are some things that you have in your own house that he has in his?
Alex (shouting out): I got two bathrooms!!
Lucia: a bathroom?
T: give me a complete sentence
Lucia: I see a bathroom in the picture that I have in my house.
T: yeah, okay. You have a bathroom. What else?
A (shouting out): I have two bathrooms in my house!!
T: but what does he have in his house?
A: one bathroom. And I've got two!!

This interaction highlights Alex's tendency to shout out answers during whole class, literature discussions. While shouting out was common for students with high membership status, it was quite uncommon for students with lower membership status. This example also highlights Alex's insistence

in being heard. Most other students would not repeatedly shout out things until they were acknowledged but Alex frequently used this strategy to gain peripherality to the discussion. Additionally, as mentioned before, Alex would often 'brag' about what he had or what he had done as a way to indirectly appeal for legitimacy. While having two bathrooms may seem like a strange thing to 'brag' about, Alex was clearly insistent on everyone knowing that he had two bathrooms—despite the fact that this does not really answer the teacher's question. Another interesting aspect of this interaction is that Lucia, a high membership status student, appears to indirectly offer Alex legitimacy. After Alex shouts out about his bathrooms, Lucia answers the question by saying 'a bathroom'. While it is possible that she was going to provide this answer anyway, her answer does indirectly legitimize what Alex was shouting out. This was actually quite rare, as Alex's shouting out was often ignored by peers (indirectly denying him legitimacy and peripherality).

Nov 10th
T: let's put that of course. It can happen in real life.
Miguel: but is it a true story or not?
Alex: it could happen but it is from your imagination
Miguel: Ahhhh….okay.

This interaction occurred after a class discussion on whether or not a story was fiction or non-fiction. It was determined that the story was actually realistic fiction. Miguel was clearly still a bit confused about what the conclusion of this discussion was as he was frustrated when he asked whether it was a 'true story or not'. Alex, who is sitting in the same table group as Miguel, explains to Miguel that while the story could happen in real life it is actually from your imagination. In this interaction, Alex actually takes on a leadership role and effectively assists another peer. While this type of interaction was certainly not common, Alex did take on this leadership role on occasion. The other students identified as having low membership status never took on the role of assisting someone so Alex was unique in this regard. Miguel did indirectly offer Alex legitimacy by accepting his help and

trusting that Alex was correct. In this interaction, Alex is also positioning himself as someone in the community who is knowing and helpful.

Nov 17th
T: skyscrapers are those really high buildings that are like touching the sky
Students: Wow! Cool!
Alex: I see one in a video game
Julio: in a video game…really Alex (sounding annoyed)?
Alex: yup

The above example highlights the most negative type of interaction that Alex experienced during these discussions. Once again, Alex is indirectly appealing for legitimacy from his peers by 'bragging' that he has seen skyscrapers—a topic that his students are clearly enthused about. Rather than gaining legitimacy from his peers, Julio directly denies Alex legitimacy by responding in way that suggests that not only does he not believe Alex, but that he is also frustrated with him. There was a sense in the classroom—especially among the boys—that Alex's peers were fed up with his 'bragging'. While this most often meant that he was ignored when he 'bragged' (indirectly denying him legitimacy) there were also instances, such as the one above, where students would be blatantly rude to him (directly denying him legitimacy).

Jan 6th
T: but what does imagination mean? Alex?
Alex: umm, you can imagine a talking frog
T:but what does imagination mean?
Alex: that it is not real
Julio: and that you wish
Alex: yeah, you wish it were real
Miguel: I wish I was rich
Alex: yeah, me too.
Miguel: yeah, that would be cool

In contrast to Alex's more negative interactions—at least in terms of gaining legitimacy and peripherality—the above interaction is an example of the positive interactions Alex would have during whole class language arts discussions. In this example, Alex not only successfully answers the

question, he also connects with and builds on what two of his peers say. First, Julio indirectly offers Alex legitimacy by adding onto something that Alex said. Alex then effectively takes what Julio says and expands the idea to 'you wish it were real'. By doing this, Alex is certainly positioning himself as a capable and knowing member of the community. Alex and Miguel then engage in a one-on-one interaction where they connect with one over the idea of 'wishing they were rich'. Miguel indirectly offers Alex legitimacy by adding 'yeah, that would be cool' after Alex comments that he too wishes he was rich. Unfortunately, these types of very successful interactions were not very common for Alex.

Feb 7th
T: what is this a painting of?
Sofia: I see like a party or something maybe like when he died
L: maybe some part of his life?
Alex: it looks like a talent show
L: so at first he painted real people like that, he painted a lot of people having fun…that is what he painted. But then there comes the blue period.

In the above example, Alex is once again shouting out an idea without waiting to be called on. While many other students also 'shouted out' answers and were validated for doing so, Alex was rarely validated by his teacher and peers for shouting out answers. In this example, Alex shares that he thinks the painting looks like 'a talent show' but the teacher does not validate his response by recognizing it or discussing his idea (indirectly denying him peripherality and legitimacy). It is also important to note that this interaction took place a few days after the school talent show. Alex was telling everyone how he was going to be in the talent show and then when he did not try out he told everyone that his parents were going to take him to the talent show. Unfortunately, Alex did not come to the show. However, as this interaction suggests, Alex was still holding onto a desire to connect with his peers over their shared excitement of the talent show. This unsuccessful attempt to connect with something that was popular with the class was quite common for Alex.

Emma. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Emma engaged in during regular language arts discussions.

Nov 16th
T: what is the really cool thing about expository text? Mateo?
Mateo: there is umm…it is divided into like parts
T: parts or sections and they are all related to the title
Emma: or like the chapter tell you kinda what the story is about…the information
T: yes, Emma. Very good.

Emma generally did not need a direct offer of peripherality from the teacher to participate in whole class discussions as she felt quite confident raising her hand and/or shouting out her answer (high peripherality). Emma's verbal participation also often worked to reinforce the high degree of legitimacy offered to her by her peers. In this example, Emma is able to effectively build on Mateo's idea and explain why dividing a story into 'parts' or 'chapters' is helpful (because they give you information about what the story is about). This is something that very few students were able to verbalize during the small group talk that took place prior to this interaction. The teacher also directly offers Emma legitimacy by complimenting her on her 'very good' answer. Through this interaction, Emma is able to further position herself as very capable and knowledgeable classmate.

Nov 10th
T: what are some things you can do to help city wildlife?
W: making sure that city wildlife have a house
T: okay, finding habitats for wildlife. Very nice!

In this interaction, the teacher directly offers Emma legitimacy by recasting what she said and commenting that her idea was 'very nice'. As the answer to this question required more than simply restating simple facts from the story, her answer indicated to students that she was fully capable of answering the more cognitively demanding questions. These types of interactions—where Emma provided an answer that was praised by the teacher—were quite common and certainly worked to reinforce her standing in the classroom (high legitimacy). Additionally, the fact that Emma answered

these more cognitively complex questions frequently suggested that Emma had enough peripherality (i.e. all questions and topics were accessible for her) to verbally participate at all times in these discussions.

Nov 1st
T: okay, why do you think that King Shabazz did not believe in spring. Tell your neighbor.
Students talking
T: Okay, Lucia
Lucia: umm…that Emma said that the boy did not believe in spring because he did not like flowers.

In this interaction, Lucia indirectly offers Emma legitimacy by choosing to share an idea that Emma brought up when they were engaging in partner talk. By acknowledging to the class that Emma was the one who came up with the idea and indicating that she thought highly enough about the comment to share it, Lucia is further positioning Emma in the classroom as a highly contributing and valuable member of the classroom. This type of interaction—where one student indirectly offers a peer legitimacy by repeating what they said to the whole class—was the most common way students indirectly offered each other legitimacy. Unfortunately, it was generally higher status students such as Emma that were 'quoted' by their peers while lower status students' ideas were rarely repeated by a peer.

Jan 6th
T: a lot of people have guide dogs to help guide them. Emma?
W: I have a question. Do blind people use guide dogs?
T: what do you guys think? Do all blind people use guide dogs?

In this interaction, the teacher is indirectly offering Emma both legitimacy and peripherality. She is offering her legitimacy by acknowledging her question and validating it by having the rest of the class consider her question. At the same time, she is offering Emma peripherality by opening up the discussion to include her topic of interest (whether all blind people use guide dogs). This interaction also suggests that Emma already had high degrees of peripherality and legitimacy in that she had the confidence (i.e. high legitimacy) to take a risk to ask a question and that the discussion was accessible

enough (i.e. high peripherality) for Emma to engage with the content enough to be able to formulate a meaningful question. Asking a question can be an indication to peers of 'not knowing', however, Emma was clearly confident enough in her standing in the discussion and of her understanding of the content to know that the answer to her question was not 'obvious' and thus knew her question would not negatively position her.

Nov 1st
T: okay, what do you think he is doing?
Emma: maybe he thinks the boy…maybe he did not like him
T: maybe. What else could he doing class?

As mentioned earlier, Emma did at times seem unsure of herself despite her high membership standing and this did come out occasionally in her participation during whole class literature discussions. In this interaction, the teacher directly offers Emma legitimacy by asking her what she thinks the boy in the story is doing. While Emma accepts this offer of peripherality, she also slightly denies her own legitimacy by indicating that she is not fully confident in her idea. She adds 'maybe' twice in her answer to limit her commitment to her answer in case she was wrong. The teacher's response is also quite neutral indicating that perhaps her answer is wrong or incomplete.

Tomas. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Tomas engaged in during regular language arts discussions.

Oct 29th
T: why would he do that? Tomas?
Tomas: because maybe he wants to go to the party
T: oh that is a really interesting idea! Good Tomas!

Like Emma, Tomas's verbal participation during regular literature discussions also worked to reinforce the high degree of legitimacy offered to him by his peers. Tomas did not need a direct offer of peripherality from the teacher to participate in whole class discussions as he felt comfortable raising his hand and voluntarily participating during whole class, literature discussions. The success of

Tomas's participative turn in the above example is indicative of most of his participative turns. He frequently shared unique thoughts and ideas and the teacher would directly offer Tomas legitimacy by complimenting his answer. Being praised by the teacher and confidently participating certainly helped to reinforce Tomas's status in the classroom community. Additionally, the question which Tomas answered in the above example is slightly more difficult than the typical questions asked during regular literature discussions as it requires students to make inferences about the motivations behind a character's actions. Tomas's ability to answer this question indicates that he has enough peripherality and legitimacy to answer even the more difficult questions in the regular literature discussions.

Nov 1st
T: Tomas, what did your group say about wildlife?
Tomas: there's umm…that…there…it is something that you do not have or own….they surround you.

In this interaction, Tomas is successfully able to re-tell what his small group talked about after directly being offered peripherality by the teacher. Tomas had previously established himself as someone who could effectively represent his group and, if given the choice, students would often pick him to summarize their group's ideas to the rest of the class (indirectly offering legitimacy and peripherality). His success in properly representing his group's answer in the above interaction worked to reinforce his peer's positive perceptions of him. On a slightly more negative note, Tomas would occasionally show some hesitation in his participation, like he does in the above example. Generally, hesitating when participating indicates to peers that a student is uncertain or unsure of their answer and this can lead peers' to offer less legitimacy to that student. However, Tomas's hesitations often appeared to be the result of him collecting his thoughts and carefully selecting his words rather than because he doubted his answer. As a result—and because he would still answer the question correctly and without assistance—Tomas's legitimacy was likely not lowered as a result of these minor hesitations.

Jan 11th
T: and what is the boy doing here? Isabella?
Isabella: he is smelling the flowers
T: yes, Tomas?
Tomas: he is also doing the clock like the grandfather
T: good, he is also doing the clock

In this example, Tomas is once again directly offered legitimacy from the teacher for his high quality response. During this interaction, most students were offering answers that could be directly seen in the pictures (like Isabella's answer about smelling the flowers). Tomas not only gave an answer that was not found in the picture he also connected the boy's action to the page's overall main idea—that the boy is doing things 'like the grandfather'. His answer—and the fact that the teacher directly offers him legitimacy by saying that his answer is 'good'—helps once again to reinforce his high standing in the class.

Jan 6th
Teacher: does anybody know someone who is blind?
Tomas: my aunt
T: was she born blind?
Tomas: no
T: something happened?
Tomas: she um got glasses because she was too close to the television
T: oh but is she blind (says blind in Spanish)?
Tomas: no
T: so class remember that blind (repeats the word in Spanish) is when someone cannot see at all. Some people just have a bit of trouble seeing and need glasses. But they are not blind.

As did all students in the class, Tomas made mistakes—though these were much rarer than his more successful participative turns. In the above example, Tomas misinterprets the meaning of the English word 'blind'—which he thinks means 'having a hard time seeing'—and mistakenly identifies his aunt as being blind. It is not until the teacher says the Spanish word for blind that he realizes his mistake. However, Tomas's mistakes were generally not obvious mistakes and often highlighted misunderstandings that many other students in the class also held. In the above example, the teacher—realizing that Tomas's English skills are quite high—clarifies the meaning of the word for the entire

class because she is aware that Tomas is most likely not the only one unfamiliar with the English word 'blind'. By doing this, the teacher helps alleviate any negative feelings (i.e. low legitimacy) towards Tomas's mistake.

Peripherality and legitimacy in graphic novel discussions. The graphic novel discussions—including the teacher-led discussions—were not as teacher controlled as the regular literature discussions. Instead, these discussions created ample space and freedom for students to offer or deny other peers legitimacy and/or peripherality. In the teacher led discussions, the teacher made sure that there was time for students to ask questions and to enquire about topics that interested them. Additionally, students were encouraged to build on one another's ideas and to collaboratively construct knowledge. By creating spaces for students to take the lead and interact with one another directly, the teacher-led discussions created more opportunities for students to offer and/or deny their peers legitimacy and/or peripherality. The student-led discussions were entirely controlled by students with the teacher only briefly stepping in when she was checking in on the group. By taking the teacher out of the discussion, students had to interact with one another to create the discussion rather than directing all their comments to the teacher (like they frequently did in the regular language arts discussions). Additionally, two students in each discussion were assigned the role of commentator. Commentators were assigned the task of commenting on their peers' ideas by agreeing or disagreeing with their peers' comments or by asking their peers questions about their comments. The commentator role encouraged students to interact with each other's ideas and to indirectly validate their peers' ideas by indicating that they were listening to and valuing what their peers had to say. However, the additional spaces created in the graphic novel discussions for students to offer and deny peripherality and legitimacy did not guarantee that *all* students would be offered high degrees of peripherality and legitimacy.

Additionally, the structure of these discussions did not guarantee that certain students wouldn't be denied peripherality and legitimacy more than others.

The following section includes excerpts from the graphic novel discussion that represent the typical ways the focus students appealed for and were offered and/or denied peripherality and legitimacy in these discussions. These excerpts highlight how successful each focus student was in socially interacting with peers during these discussions.

Camila. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Camila engaged in during graphic novel discussions.

First round, first teacher led
Teacher: how does that make Babymouse feel?
Students: bad
Camila: she wants to be with them but they do not want to play with her
Teacher: yeah, she wants to be with them but they do not let her
Camila: and Babymouse says sigh
Teacher: yeah, and what does sigh mean?
Camila: that she is sad

The above interaction is an example of the very successful participative turns that Camila took during graphic novel discussions. Not only does she voluntarily add on to a group answer—by adding on to her peers' answer of 'bad'—she also continuously and confidently adds thoughts as the teacher works through describing the picture. This indicates that Camila is entering the conversation with a suitable amount of legitimacy and peripherality. The teacher also indirectly offers Camila additional legitimacy by agreeing with and repeating Camila's first comment and then again by asking a question about Camila's second comment. Interestingly, Camila is also able to correctly define the English word 'sigh'. This is important because Camila's limited English skills are one reason that she is positioned in the classroom as someone with low membership status. In this case, Camila is able to effectively use the picture clues—which show that Babymouse is looking very sad when she sighs—to

appropriately determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word. This interaction certainly works to position Camila as a knowing and actively contributing member of the discussion group.

First round, third student led
Mariana: I would not want to be friends with someone who is mean but if someone does it is just so they can be popular
Camila: I agree with Mariana
Teacher: okay, who went first? And did we comment?
Camila: I agree with her because some people can be like that

In this example, Camila is demonstrating herself to be fully competent at fulfilling her role as commentator. The teacher, who comes over to the group mid-discussion, asks about whether or not a commentator had responded to the first person's idea. Camila confidently repeats that she agreed with Mariana and effectively adds why she is in agreement. By being able to successfully take on her assigned role without assistance or being reminded, Camila is again positioning herself as a competent and contributing member of the discussion, which helps to raise her legitimacy in the group. It also indicates that the role of commentator is accessible to her (i.e. peripherality) and that the role is able to provide her with an effective way into the discussion.

First round, first teacher led
Teacher: raise your hand if you can tell me what just happened in the last couple of pages? Camila?
Camila: they love her dress (points to the part of the picture she is talking about)
Teacher: yes, that is part of it. All the other girls love her dress.

This interaction is an example of how being able to use the picture support offered by the graphic novels did provide Camila with additional peripherality to effectively express her thoughts and ideas during the discussions. In this example, she points to the picture to support her short verbal answer about the other girls loving Felicia's dress to indicate exactly what part of the story she was talking about. The teacher then indirectly offers Camila legitimacy by confirming that her answer is part of the overall answer and by agreeing that it was important to mention that all the girls love Felicia's dress. Without the picture support, Camila would have needed additional support by a teacher or peer to

elaborate on her answer (for example ‘who is the ‘her’ she is referring to’ and ‘which exact part of the story is she talking about’?). Her need for additional support would have lowered the positive legitimacy she gained from her correct answer. However, with the picture support Camila is able to effectively answer the question on her own thus increasing her legitimacy.

First round, second student led
Teacher: so who wants to go first? Camila?
Camila: I picked this page (holds up page 38)
Teacher: okay, so Camila, you picked page 38 and she is carrying the carriage. Everyone turn to that page. Camila, what is her facial expression?
Camila: like kinda mad because she has to do all of the things for Felicia (pointing to the pictures of what Babymouse is doing for Felicia)
Teacher: yeah, her face is kinda mad because she has to do all of these things for Felicia.
Emma: I agree with Camila I like that idea because like it is too heavy and what person is able to carry that all by herself
Mariana: I agree with Camila because my picture is when everyone stepped on her and she is mad too.

In this example, Camila is once again using the picture support offered by graphic novels to enhance her verbal participation. This discussion excerpt also highlights how peers frequently commented on Camila’s ideas in a very positive way. In this example, Emma is a commentator but Mariana is not. This means that while Emma was supposed to comment on Camila’s idea, Mariana was under no obligation and instead her interest in Camila’s picture motivated her to comment. By doing this, Mariana is indirectly offering Camila legitimacy by validating that Camila’s picture was interesting and by connecting Camila’s selected picture to the picture that she herself had selected. This example also highlights that Camila is now the one that is initiating her own participation. Rather than waiting to be called on, Camila is actively raising her hand because she wants to be the first one to share her picture. This suggests that Camila is feeling comfortable and confident in the discussion (i.e. has sufficient legitimacy) and the questions are very accessible to her (i.e. has sufficient peripherality).

First round, second student led
Mia: I agree with Emma because she was supposed to do everything in her homework.
Mariana: Camila, do you agree with Emma?
Camila: I agree with Emma because I think that…
Emma: that she is going to get in trouble because she have her homework away?
Mariana: do you agree or disagree?
Camila: I agree, it is a bad idea

In this example, Camila is directly being offered peripherality by Mariana. Mariana, who was the groups' facilitator, noticed that Camila had not participated yet and took the initiative to invite Camila into the discussion. In doing this, Mariana is also indirectly offering Camila legitimacy because she is indicating that she has a desire to hear what Camila thinks about the question. When Camila struggles at first at completing her thought, both Emma and Mariana step in to assist her. While there are many instances where Camila does not need assistance to participate in the graphic novel discussions, there are times when Camila is still in need of peer or teacher assistance. The difference though is that during graphic novel discussions her peers appear more committed to assisting Camila and in hearing her ideas which indirectly offers her legitimacy. During regular discussions, only the teacher would offer assistance and the students would often stop paying attention when Camila hesitated to express herself. So while needing assistance still indicates that she does struggle at times with the discussion (lowering her legitimacy), her peers are actually offering her legitimacy by valuing her idea enough to help her through completing her answer. This additional peer assistance was also always successful in that Camila was then able to complete her thought.

First round, first teacher led
Teacher: so how is this page different from this page? What do you see a lot of?
Camila: pink!!
Teacher: pink! Camila, excellent!

In the above excerpt, Camila confidently and excitedly answers a teacher's question. This type of enthusiasm towards participating—commonly found in the graphic novel discussions—certainly was not demonstrated by Camila in the regular literature discussions. Additionally, Camila was never the

first student to participate when a question was posed to a group in the regular discussions. By jumping and exclaiming her correct answer, Camila is demonstrating to her peers that she is engaged and fully comprehends the story and the discussion, which works to increase her legitimacy. The teacher then directly offers Camila additional legitimacy by genuinely commenting that her answer was excellent.

Second round, third teacher led
Teacher: yes, and you have another question?
Camila: why is Willie mean to other people?
Teacher: yeah, why is Willie mean to other people?
Samuel: because…Willie is mean to other people because when he was little other kids hit him and said bad things that is why Willie is being the same as bullies

In this excerpt, Camila is able to take a risk and ask a question—something she never did during regular literature discussions. Camila clearly has enough legitimacy and peripherality in this discussion to take part in participative risks such as question asking. It also indicates that Camila is highly engaged in the discussion and is able to think critically about the story by questioning the motivation behind a character. Camila's well thought out question also shows peers that she is able to add to the ongoing discussion (i.e. high legitimacy). The teacher then indirectly offers Camila additional legitimacy and peripherality by allowing her question to become a main topic of discussion, which validates her question as a 'good question'. Samuel also indirectly offers Camila legitimacy by validating her question through commenting on her question, which indicates that he views the question important to discuss.

Second round, third teacher led
Teacher: what is lettering?
Julio: lettering is like this
Samuel: like this one!
Julio: it is like this one too
Camila: it is when the letters are big
Teacher: oh okay so when the author changes the size of letters

In this excerpt, Camila voluntarily enters into a multi-person conversation and offers the best answer to the teacher's question. Her participation indicates that she has high enough degrees of

peripherality to enter into an ongoing discussion with her peers and enough legitimacy to feel confident to express her idea—an idea that is actually quite different from those of her peers. While her peers focus on showing the teacher examples of lettering, Camila mentions that lettering is when the author changes the size of letters. The teacher then indirectly offers Camila legitimacy by taking up and repeating her answer. Her successful answer helps position Camila as an active and capable member of the discussion as her peers are able to witness her successful answer.

Second round, first student led
Camila: my favorite part of the whole thing….
Teacher: picture. What is your favorite picture?
Camila: my favorite picture is on…
Teacher: on what page? Page 11? Okay, why is this your favorite picture?
Camila: silent
Teacher: do you want to think about it?
Camila: yeah
Time passes
Camila: I like the part….(long pause)
Teacher: why do you like the picture? Is it because of the lettering or because of the color or facial expressions…? Why do you like it?
Camila: because it has a funny face and he stopped his friend (very quiet)
Sofia: I like that picture too because it has a big mouth like he is scaring you.

While Camila's participation was much more successful in the graphic novel discussions, there were still instances when Camila would be hesitant to participate. The above example is actually quite similar to Camila's interactions during regular literature discussions when the teacher would have to return to Camila after providing her additional time to think. These instances, however, were much less frequent during graphic novel discussions, suggesting that while there were still times of hesitation, overall, she still felt much more comfortable in these discussions. The above interaction also ended quite positively. Sofia indirectly offers Camila legitimacy—once Camila successfully completes her thought—by commenting that she agrees with Camila. Sofia's comment indicates that despite Camila's quietness, Sofia was listening to Camila. It also indicates to Camila that Sofia found her comment valuable enough to discuss further.

Alex. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Alex engaged in during graphic novel discussions.

First round, first student led
Alex: I like the taco one (to no one in particular)
Miguel: me too, I like the taco one
Alex: she puts taco over her face, ha ha
Tomas: I am going to get this one
A: I am going to pick this one
R: I am going to get this one
A: I am going to get this one
Miguel and Alex (laughing): I am going to get this one

Alex continued his habit of having one-on-one interactions or side conversations with students as a way of connecting to his peers in the graphic novel discussions. The difference in graphic novel discussions was that these interactions were much more successful in that his peers always accepted his appeal for peripherality and legitimacy by engaging with him. In this example, Miguel and Tomas accept Alex's appeal for peripherality and legitimacy by commenting on what Alex initially said. Miguel and Alex then go back and forth for a while sharing an inside joke as they repeatedly point out different pictures they are going to pick. This shared interaction helps to increase the legitimacy Alex is offered by his two peers, Miguel and Tomas, as it helps to establish a positive connection between the three students.

First round, first student led
Alex: I like the part…I like this one…I like the part when they ran into the bully
Miguel: I cannot see the picture Alex
Alex: whoops here it is.
Miguel: cool

In this example, Miguel indirectly offers Alex legitimacy by expressing a desire to understand what Alex is saying and to see the picture that Alex has selected. This showed Alex that Miguel was indeed paying attention and that he cared about which picture Alex had selected. Miguel also legitimizes Alex's favorite picture by commenting that is was 'cool'. In general, Alex's peers seemed

much more interested in listening to what he had to say during the graphic novel discussions as compared to the regular literature discussions.

First round, first student led
Alex: what about you Miguel?
Miguel: me?
Alex: yeah, you know like the lettering if it is big…

Alex was one of the only students in the class to take on a strong leadership role when not assigned to be the facilitator of the group. In the above example, Tomas is actually the facilitator of this small group discussion. Despite this, Alex confidently calls on Miguel because he notices that Miguel is the one student who has not shared his idea of how the author used lettering and onomatopoeia effectively. He also assists Miguel in answering the question—by giving Miguel an example of something he could say—when Miguel stalls by saying 'me?'. By taking on this leadership role, Alex is establishing himself as very confident participant in the discussion and a peer that not only has good ideas but can also assist and encourage his peers.

First round, second student led
Lucia: I agree with that idea because ummm…
Alex: you think the same thing or you agree with it?
Lucia: I agree
Alex: you agree, okay next question!

Once again, the above example highlights the leadership role that Alex took during the small group, graphic novel discussions. In this example, he assists Lucia—a high membership status student—when she hesitates to fulfill her role as a commentator. He then directs the group, after Lucia participates, to move on to the next question. As with the previous example, Alex demonstrates his ability to assist and encourage his peers. The confident way in which Alex participates in the graphic novel discussions suggests that these discussions are very accessible (i.e. high peripherality) and that he feels good about his positioning within the discussion (i.e. legitimacy). With these higher degrees of

peripherality and legitimacy, Alex is able to have very successful social interactions—similar to the one above—which further increase the amount of legitimacy that he holds.

First round, first teacher led
Lucia: what are gadgets?
Teacher: gadgets are special machines or tools…
Alex: like spies use!!
Lucia and other students: Oh yeah!
Teacher: yes, like spies use but they make lunch lady gadgets so they make special bananas and tacos that have special powers.

In the graphic novel discussions, Alex continued his tendency to shout out small add-ons to a teacher or student's comment. Unlike the regular literature discussions, Alex was almost always recognized for these comments because these comments tended to be of a much higher quality. In this example, Alex supports the teacher's description of what gadgets are by saying that they are things spies use. Not only do his peers indirectly offer him legitimacy by verbally indicating that his comment helped them to understand the word, the teacher also indirectly offers him legitimacy by agreeing with him and then connecting the lunch lady gadgets to typical spy gadgets.

First round, first teacher led
Teacher: Alex, what did you find confusing?
Alex: umm…why is she like cares more about reading than playing video games?
Teacher: okay, yeah, that might be confusing because you would care more about what?
Alex: playing video games
Teacher: right, ha ha.
Sofia: yeah, but some people like other stuff

Another indication that Alex was feeling comfortable and confident in the graphic novel discussions is that he frequently asked questions. As mentioned earlier, asking questions was a bit of a risk for students as it does involve an admission of not understanding. If a student is not confident in themselves or their understanding of the content of the discussion they might hold back questions out of fear that they would ask something obvious or look 'dumb'. In the above example, the teacher asked students if anything was confusing about the two pages they just read. Alex immediately raised his

hand and asked his question. The teacher then indirectly offered Alex legitimacy (by agreeing that 'caring more about reading' might be confusing) and peripherality (by allowing Alex's question become the focus of the discussion). Sofia then indirectly offers Alex legitimacy by valuing his question enough to listen to and comment on his question.

Second round, third teacher led
Alex: I think the big problem is that they need to get Jellaby like away from like…
Mariana: the other people
Alex: yeah, like the other people
Tomas: I agree with Alex because if somebody like Portia's mom see him ummm…she would have to stop caring for him and about him

In the above example, both Mariana and Tomas are indirectly offering legitimacy to Alex. Mariana offers legitimacy by stepping in to assist Alex in verbalizing his idea. If a peer does not care what another peer says or thinks that it is unimportant, they are not likely to step in and help that peer. However, Mariana was clearly paying attention to Alex and had a desire for him to finish his thought. Tomas then steps in and offers Alex additional legitimacy by demonstrating that he too was listening and that he valued the comment enough to add on to what Alex said.

Second round, third teacher led
Teacher: what is the theme of Jellaby?
Mariana: that friends can like help you with problems
Teacher: okay
Tomas: and friendship and loneliness
Teacher: give me a sentence
Tomas: loneliness…
Alex: can affect your life
Teacher: okay…great
Tomas: friendship can help you
Alex: yeah, it can help you to not feel lonely anymore

The above example highlights how Alex would actively take part in the co-construction of knowledge during graphic novel discussions. Tomas struggles at first to put his two themes, 'friendship and loneliness', into sentences. Alex aptly steps in to add that loneliness can affect your life. This leads Tomas to saying that friendship can help you. Again, Alex steps in and effectively

states how the two themes are actually connecting by stating that friendship 'can help you to not feel lonely anymore'. This type of co-construction of knowledge was quite common in graphic novel discussions especially when they were student led. The above example indicates that Alex had enough peripherality and legitimacy to confidently participate in these more high quality social interactions.

Second round, first student led
Emma: if you are lonely you feel like sad, like you are like I will just play by yourself and that is like sad
Mariana: I agree with Emma because when you are lonely you do not have anyone to play with
Alex: why do you think that?
Mariana: I think that because sometimes I see things like the first graders over there and I ask them who is their friend and they just say they are playing alone and they look sad

The above interaction highlights another example of Alex taking on a leadership role in a discussion. In this discussion, Alex was neither a facilitator nor a commenter and yet he still steps in and asks Mariana to elaborate on her idea. This suggests that he is once again engaged in the conversation and extremely motivated to listen to and understand his peers. It also suggests that his level of peripherality is high enough for him to participate outside assigned discussion roles. Mariana also indirectly offers Alex legitimacy by answering Alex's question instead of ignoring him or brushing him off by saying 'I already said why'.

Second round, second student led
Alex: my favorite part is on page 29 the last part….when Portia comes and Jellaby was eating the mom's plant and then on page 30 Portia says my mom is going to freak out if she finds out about this.
Tomas: and why do you like the picture so much? (not a commentator)
Alex: because Jellaby was caught by Portia being bad

The above interaction is another example of Alex indirectly being offered legitimacy and peripherality by his peers. In this case, Tomas asks Alex to explain why he likes the picture so much. Since Tomas is not a commentator, his question to Alex indicates that he is honestly interested in what Alex has to say. By encouraging him to elaborate, Tomas is actually indirectly offering peripherality as his question creates an opening for Alex to further explain his reasoning. Additionally, Tomas's

question indicates to Alex and the other peers that he was listening to Alex and that he valued Alex's idea enough to comment on it.

Tomas. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Tomas engaged in during graphic novel discussions.

Second round, third teacher led
Teacher: so what is happening in these two pages and how do you know? Tomas?
Tomas: I see Jellaby looking around and looking around and then he saw a bag of food. Ummm…but it was from the bag of the lady who was knitting the scarf. And then Jellaby tried to get something but the lady screamed and started hitting Jellaby.
Teacher: yes, and how do you know that is what is happening?
Tomas: you can tell what Jellaby is doing by the pictures
Alex: yeah, I was going to say the same thing as Tomas

Tomas was generally very successful in his participation during graphic novel discussions. In the above example, he successfully describes the events on two, wordless pages in Jellaby. Tomas was also often the first student to participate during these discussions after a question was asked. This suggests that Tomas was engaged and motivated in the discussion and that he had enough confidence (i.e. legitimacy) to voice his ideas first. In this example, Alex also indirectly offers Tomas legitimacy by stepping in and agreeing with Tomas and stating that he was going to say the same thing. Alex's comment also indicates that he valued Tomas enough to listen to his comment.

First round, first student led
Miguel: oh and what is your favorite part Tomas?
Tomas: my favorite part is when she puts a taco on her face
Miguel: Que Bueno! Let me try!
Tomas: because she looks funny

In the above interaction, Miguel is directly offering Tomas peripherality into the conversation by asking him what his favorite part was. Tomas was the assigned facilitator in this discussion and students assigned to be facilitators often forgot to give their own answers to the question and instead focused on 'running' the conversation. By Miguel noticing that Tomas had not had his turn yet, Miguel is also indirectly providing Tomas with legitimacy because he is indicating an interest in hearing what

Tomas has too say. Miguel provides Tomas with additional legitimacy when he gets excited about Tomas's favorite part and says a quote on the page out loud. His enthusiasm over Tomas's selected part suggests to Tomas and the other peers that Tomas has selected a very good part of the book.

First round, first student led
Tomas: what else?
Alex: if this was in the calle, I would say a bad word
Miguel: I would get angry because…because ha ha
Tomas: no what do you do when somebody bullies you?
Miguel: I say…hey don't do that to me anymore. Ha ha! You better fix that really well or I am going to get you in trouble!
Tomas: really, Miguel! What would you do? They are really bad people.
Miguel: ummm…they have to say sorry and if they don't say sorry then I will go and tell an adult.

In the above interaction, Tomas is once again the facilitator of the discussion. Tomas took this role very seriously and he often took control when students got distracted or were behaving silly. In this interaction, Tomas continuously encourages Miguel to provide a serious answer. He clearly has enough confidence (i.e. legitimacy) to keep after Miguel until he provided a serious answer.

First round, second student led
Lucia: I think that they should help them because they are doing the right thing.
Sofia: yeah, okay
Alex: yeah they might get beat otherwise
Tomas: I think they should help them because there are only two of them and there are too many librarians
Sofia: I think they should help them too because the lunch ladies are only two and the librarians…
Tomas: yeah, they need more

Like Camila, Tomas was able to effectively enter multi-person conversations during graphic novel discussions. What is key here is that Tomas is able to point out the reason that the lunch ladies will 'get beat' without the help of the kids—because there are only two lunch ladies and lots of librarians—which is something his peers had not yet brought up. As in this example, Tomas would often be able to add valuable ideas to on-going conversations or re-word things slightly in order to effectively summarize the ideas of his peers. His ability to do this certainly reinforced his high

membership status. In this example, Sofia indirectly offers Tomas additional legitimacy by repeating his important point that the lunch ladies are outnumbered without the kids.

Emma. The following discussion excerpts represent the typical social interactions that Emma engaged in during graphic novel discussions.

Second round, first student led
Teacher: but you guys did not answer how does it feel to be lonely? You only mentioned what she could do to be less lonely.
Tomas: Emma?
Emma: If you are lonely you feel like sad, like you are like I will just play by yourself and that is like sad and you feel bad about yourself
Mariana: I agree with Emma because when you are lonely you do not have anyone to play with and that is sad

As in the regular literature discussions, Emma established herself as a successful participant in the graphic novel discussions. She was always very confident in her ability to answer the discussion questions and she often took the risk of being the first one to answer a question. In the above example, Emma is the first to participate after the teacher points out that the group had not fully answered the entire question. The answer that she provides is detailed and thoughtful which helps to reinforce her positioning as a competent and contributing community member. Additionally, Mariana indirectly offers Emma legitimacy by agreeing with Emma's comment. Mariana's agreement indicates that she was listening to Emma and supported her idea that being lonely would be sad, as you would not have anyone to play with.

First round, first student led
Emma: do you think Babymouse should keep being friends with Felcia?
Mariana: I kinda disagree with Babymouse
Emma: you kinda disagree with Babymouse? Why?
Mariana: because if she keeps trying to be friends with Felicia she is going to be mean
Emma: like if she keeps trying to be friends with Felicia she is still going to like ignore her
Mariana: like she is still going to ignore her still

Like Tomas, Emma was also able to position herself as a very successful facilitator. In the above excerpt, Emma goes beyond her obligations as a facilitator by helping another peer elaborate on her

idea. She also works to clarify what Mariana is saying to ensure that she—and the other members of the group—fully understand Mariana's thoughts. Her success as a facilitator certainly worked to reinforce her high positioning in the classroom.

Second round, second teacher led
Teacher: okay, so let's continue on with the frames. What is happening here?
Emma: Portia is telling (asking) Jellaby what about if his wings…if he can fly with his wings
Teacher: oh interesting! Very good.

As in the regular literature discussions, Emma's comments during the graphic novel discussions were often high quality and were frequently complimented by the teacher. In the above example, the teacher directly offers Emma legitimacy by stating that Emma's interpretation of the picture was interesting and very good. This type of successful interaction was very common for Emma during teacher led graphic novel discussions.

Second Round, third teacher led
Teacher: so, how are you feeling when you read those pages?
Mariana: Portia is kinda feeling scared because…
Teacher: but how do you feel? How does that make you feel?
Mariana: kinda like….(gestures…shaking)
Emma: when I read the pages I felt scary and spooky because there are shadows and it is dark and there are colors like black and purple with scary people and evil creatures

The above discussion excerpt is another example of Emma giving a very high quality answer. In this case, Emma is able to appropriately describe her feelings and to connect those feelings to the illustrations—in particular to the color and shadowing used. Mariana struggled slightly with answering the question but was eventually able to gesture that she felt scared. While Mariana's comment is correct, it is clear that Emma's comment is much more thorough. By providing slightly more detailed and clearer responses than her peers, Emma is once again reinforcing her high membership status.

round second student led
Mariana: why was it a bad idea for Babymouse to give her book report to Felicia for an invitation to the slumber party?

Emma: Babymouse wanted to give her homework actually to Felicia just so like Felicia would like invite her.
Mariana: yes, but why is this a bad idea?
Emma: could you repeat the question?
Mariana: why was it a bad idea for Babymouse to give her book report to Felicia for an invitation to the slumber party?
Emma: it was a bad idea because she could get in trouble because she was just giving her homework away even though she was the one who did it.

There were certainly times when Emma provided an answer that was incorrect or an answer that did not answer the question. In this case, Emma misunderstands the question and instead provides motivation for why Babymouse gave her book report to Felicia. When Mariana asks 'but why is this a bad idea' Emma does not get flustered and instead asks Mariana to repeat the question. This suggests that she is not overly concerned with the slight mistake she made and is very aware that she simply misunderstood the question. Additionally, Mariana is actually offering Emma legitimacy and peripherality by letting her know that she had not answered the question and by providing the opportunity for Emma to go again. This indicates that Mariana was listening to Emma's answer (so she was able to tell that it did not answer the question) and that she wanted to hear what Emma thought about the actual question.

First round, third student led
Emma: oh, she learned that when someone does not want to be your friend…she learned that when someone does not want to be your friend, do not go with them…like do not go with them
Mariana: I kinda disagree with that because…
Emma: (in Spanish) you do not agree with me, ha ha!
Mariana: maybe just a little!

This interaction highlights Emma's negative feelings toward someone disagreeing with her. While disagreeing with a peer was not overly common during graphic novel discussions, when it did happen, the person who was being disagreed with generally did not appear bothered by this disagreement. Emma was the one exception and she often turned it into a joke if someone disagreed with her by saying things like 'you do not agree with me, haha' or 'well I disagree with you'. Her

desire to deflect the disagreement suggests that she was uncomfortable with having someone disagree with her idea and that she did lack some confidence in her belief that her initial idea was correct. This is interesting because by disagreeing with Emma, Mariana is actually indirectly offering Emma legitimacy for her idea because her disagreement indicates that she was listening and thinking about what Emma was saying. However, Emma viewed disagreement as a denial of her legitimacy and actively worked to temper that denial and save face.

To conclude, Camila and Alex were much more successful in negotiating their peripherality and legitimacy in positive ways during the graphic novel discussions in comparison to the regular literature discussions. They both were able to establish themselves as capable and knowing community members and their peers frequently offered both of them degrees of legitimacy and peripherality. Additionally, Camila and Alex entered the discussions with sufficient degrees of legitimacy and peripherality to effectively participate in all questions, to successfully take on assigned roles, and to voluntarily participate in the co-construction of knowledge. Tomas and Emma were able to effectively negotiate their legitimacy in both the regular literature discussions as well as the graphic novels. This indicates that the additional external contextual support provided by the pictures in graphic novels was not necessarily needed by these students to effectively position themselves as knowledgeable and knowing classmates. The one exception to this is that both students—in particular Tomas—were able to position themselves as effective leaders in the graphic novel discussions whereas they did not have the opportunity to do this in regular discussions. By positioning themselves as effective leaders, they were certainly reinforcing their high membership standing.

Individual Interviews

In addition to the three group interviews that the whole class participated in, all four focus students took part in two additional individual interviews. The first individual interview explored

students' perceptions about particular literacy activities they took part in during language arts. At the beginning of the interview, students were asked to draw themselves during a particular literacy lesson. They were then asked to describe what they were doing during the lesson, who they talked to (if anyone), and how they were feeling during the lesson. Students were then shown a photograph of themselves during a different literacy lesson. Once again they were asked to describe what they were doing, who they talked to, and how they were feeling. Finally, students were provided with a list of literacy activities that occurred in the past week of instruction. They then discussed which activities they liked the most and why and which activities they liked the least and why.

The second individual interview focused on students' perceptions of acceptance and how they determined who they wanted to work with during class. At the beginning of the interview, students were asked to name who they worked with the most in the class. They were also asked about which peers they enjoy working with most and which peers made good partners. Students were then asked to explain how they determine whether or not they want to work with someone and how they decide who is a 'good partner'. Finally, students were asked to talk about their perceptions about their English and Spanish language abilities and to identify the language they preferred their instruction to be in. This final interview topic was intended to further examine students' perceptions of English language skills and the role these skills play in determining classroom membership status. During a previous group interview, students already spoke about their perceptions of how successful a student would be in their classroom if they had limited English skills.

The following section highlights the findings from these individual interviews and further examines the feelings and perceptions focus students expressed during group interviews. The findings will are into four overall themes: perceptions of regular language arts lessons, perceptions of English competency, perceptions of acceptance, and perceptions of multimodal lessons and texts. Each focus

student's perceptions regarding each of the themes are highlighted individually. Prior to discussing these themes, the students' demeanor during individual interviews is briefly discussed as the students' level of comfort can influence the authenticity of their answers.

Interview Demeanor

While Alex was often very outgoing in class and frequently spoke with me on a one-on-one basis, you could tell he was a bit nervous during individual interviews and this limited the amount of detail in his answers. He also appeared a bit worried that he would give a wrong answer despite my assurances that I was learning from him and that there were no right or expected answers. Alex would relax a bit once he got into the interview and he was a bit more talkative during the second interview. Out of the focus students, Camila was the most reluctant and it was difficult to get her to give more than one word answers. In both individual interviews, I encouraged her to answer in Spanish and I asked her questions in both English and Spanish. This invitation to use Spanish, however, did not appear to assist her in opening up. Tomas's demeanor during individual interviews was similar to how he presented himself during whole class discussions. He was quite reserved although when he spoke he appeared quite confident and was always fully capable of expressing his thoughts and perceptions. Emma was the most open student during individual interviews. She was excited to spend time talking and actually resisted going back to class when the interview was complete. Like Tomas, she talked about things quite confidently and was fully capable of providing elaborate explanations of her thoughts and perceptions.

Interview Theme One: Perceptions of Regular Language Arts Lessons

Alex. There were several themes arising from Alex's first interview that related to his perceptions of regular language arts lessons. First, Alex indicated during the interviews that he most enjoyed literacy tasks that included drawing. When asked to select his favorite language arts lesson

from a list of recent activities, Alex selected the Dia de los Muertos lesson—the only lesson on the list to include the creation of various visual representations—as his favorite. Additionally, when Alex was asked to draw a picture of what he and his classmates were doing during the Dia de los Muertos vocabulary chart lesson, Alex focused on the fact that he was able to draw pictures during the lesson that represented the vocabulary words. He said that 'we (the students) were putting pictures of the Day of the Dead' and that he 'liked' the lesson because 'it was fun because we needed to draw'. Alex was also asked during the first interview if he enjoyed writing or drawing more and he immediately said drawing because 'it was more fun'. This was the one answer during the first interview that Alex provided with no hesitation, suggesting that it was an easy question for him to answer. While he did not mention that drawing was easier for him, this was most likely the case as Alex often appeared reluctant to write and often struggled with even the simplest writing task. Unfortunately, opportunities to create visual representations such as drawings were rare in the focus classroom.

Another theme arising from the first interview is that Alex was surprisingly positive about regular language arts lessons considering his frequent struggles during these lessons. Not once during the individual interviews or group interviews did Alex indicate that he disliked language arts or that he felt lost during language arts lessons. During the first interview, he was shown a picture of himself raising his hand during the read aloud of The Boy Who Did Not Believe in Spring. After describing what he was doing in the picture, Alex mentioned that he was 'really interested' in the story and that he had 'fun' listening to the story. He also mentioned that he liked read alouds in general although he could not verbally express why he liked them. Additionally, when it came to ranking the list of recent literacy activities, Alex was quite positive about all of the activities. In addition to enjoying the Dia de los Muertos lesson, Alex said that enjoyed writing the summary of the story Teammates and that he really liked listening to read alouds.

It was particularly surprising that Alex mentioned that he enjoyed writing his summary of the story Teammates as this was a task that he did not successfully complete. Not only was he in need of constant teacher assistance, his final summary did not make sense and many of his sentences were incomplete. I initially thought that this activity would rank quite low for Alex due to these struggles. However, it was noted in my researcher's notebook that many of the students had mentioned out loud how much fun they were having writing their paragraph and several students were bragging about how much they had written. Alex joined in on this bragging once by mentioning 'yeah, we are writing a lot'. Alex's insistence that he really enjoyed this activity may reflect his desire to be 'like his peers' and to connect with them on their shared enjoyment of the writing activity. This does fit with Alex's over eagerness to be well liked by his peers.

One final theme that arose in this category for Alex is that he did feel comfortable in admitting that some lessons were difficult for him despite his positive review of the Teammates writing lesson. Out of the list of activities Alex had to rank, he mentioned that he 'kinda disliked' two of the activities because he had struggled with them. He did not like answering reading comprehension questions for homework because the stories were 'kinda long' and the questions were 'kinda hard'. Alex also mentioned that he does not like spelling because 'it is kinda hard'. It is possible that it was more acceptable to admit difficulties with these two activities since the entire class—even the high achievers—frequently struggled with answering the reading comprehension questions and students often complained about getting spelling words wrong.

Camila. Unlike Alex, Camila indicated in her individual interviews that she strongly disliked many of the regular language arts lessons that she participated in. While she said that she did like the Dia de los Muertos lesson and the Teammates summary writing lesson, she waved her hand over the rest of the activities on the list and shook her head to indicate that she did not like any of the remaining

activities (read alouds, spelling activities, and reading comprehension questions). Unfortunately, she was unable to explain why she did not like the other activities other than to say that she did not 'like the story' of The Boy who did not Believe in Spring because 'it was not real'.

In terms of the two activities that she did like, Camila enjoyed the Dia de los Muertos activities the most. Like Alex, she appeared to enjoy the drawing aspect of the lessons and she said that she enjoyed these lessons 'because you do much activities and because you can color and you can make the thingy…the skull'. It was surprising once again that Camila, like Alex, liked the Teammates writing lesson because she also was unsuccessful in writing a coherent paragraph and often appeared frustrated during the lesson. Unfortunately, Camila was unable to verbally express why she liked the activity. However, it does appear as though Camila, like Alex, was aware that this was an activity that her peers enjoyed and this positioned this activity as something that she should enjoy as well—even if she actually did not. In fact, during both individual interviews there was some indication that Camila was fully aware of the things she should enjoy and should find easy as a member of the classroom community. For example, when Camila was asked during the second interview whether or not she enjoyed correcting her spelling tests in class she said 'yes', she did enjoy this because 'you can do a test and you can correct the homework by yourself and if you do it wrong you can change the word'. While other students did seem to enjoy correcting their spelling words, Camila actually often resisted correcting her misspelled words and if she did correct a word she became self-conscious and covered up her paper so that no one can see that she misspelled some words. Her interview answer, however, makes it clear that Camila viewed this as something she should enjoy and thus answered the question in the way she thought her peers would answer it.

Another reoccurring theme in Camila's individual interviews was her avoidance of admitting that any task was hard for her or that she struggled with anything during language arts. In the first

interview, after mentioning that she enjoyed answering the reading comprehension questions on the Dia de los Muertas readings, I asked her if she had answered a lot of the questions correctly. She confidently responded 'yes, it was easy' despite the fact that most of them had been marked as wrong. In the second individual interview, I asked her why she liked answering reading comprehension questions for homework so much and whether or not she thought that activity was easy or difficult. While she was unable to tell me why she liked the activity, she mentioned that answering reading comprehension questions was 'facile' (easy) for her. This certainly conflicted with observational data that indicated that she was often uncomfortable when correcting her reading comprehension answers and that she seldom got a question right. It appears as though Camila was maintaining an outward appearance that things were 'easy' for her despite the fact that she was actually struggling.

One final finding relating to Camila's perceptions of regular language arts lesson comes from her first individual interview when she was asked to draw a picture of the Tomasenstein and Dracula are Friends read aloud. She drew a picture of the teacher holding the book and her 'sitting there and paying attention to the story'. Interestingly, Camila did not draw any of her peers who were actually seated next to her during this read aloud. When describing what happened during the lesson, she focused on the teacher reading the story and her listening to the teacher. She did not mention that students also answered questions asked by the teacher and participated in partner talk during the read aloud. When asked if she talked to anyone during the lesson she said 'no' and observational notes confirm that Camila did not talk with anyone during this lesson, even during partner talk. Camila was the only focus student to draw only the teacher and herself when asked to draw a lesson—all other focus students included several students in their drawing. Her description of what was happening in the read aloud was also very isolating in that she said only that she was 'sitting there and paying attention to the story'. Her drawing and description of the lesson suggest that Camila does not view these read alouds

as a collaborative, active discussion—in fact her peers do not even appear to be involved in Camila's mind. Rather, Camila views these as passive discussions where a 'good' student sits and pays attention. Camila's isolating perception of read alouds suggests that she views her role in language arts lessons as passive but attentive.

Tomas. Tomas held surprisingly negative views about the regular language arts lessons considering his successful participation in these lessons. When asked to rank the list of recent language arts activities, Tomas said that the Dia do Los Muertos lesson was his favorite because 'we did Calaveras (poems)' and 'we got to do words that rhyme which was a lot of fun'. However, when asked if he liked any other lessons, Tomas simply waved his hand over the list to indicate that he did not like the rest of the activities. This was surprising because observational notes indicate that Tomas was successful in participating in all of these lessons and was able to complete all assigned tasks. Additionally, there was no indication in the interview and observational data that these lessons were too easy for him. There was indication that two other students—Mateo and Kate—were at times bored with the activities because they were way below their ability level, however, this was not the case for Tomas. This suggests that despite the activities being accessible but still challenging, Tomas still did not enjoy the activities.

Despite his dislike for the rest of the activities on the list, Tomas was able to highlight aspects of the lessons that he liked when prompted to do so. Tomas mentioned that while he did not like writing the Teammates summary because 'we had to write a lot and my hand hurts every time I go fast', he did like the part of the story when 'the person named Pee Wee Reese hugged Jackie Robinson'. He also mentioned that while he liked read alouds in general because 'the teacher shows us pictures', he did not like the Boy Who Did Not Believe in Spring read aloud because of the fact that the boy did not believe in spring when 'everyone believes in spring'. For spelling, Tomas mentioned that he enjoyed

when ‘we check answers all together’ but that he does not like the spelling overall because ‘when I get it wrong sometimes my mom gets mad at me’. Tomas’s least favorite activities were reading out loud and answering reading comprehension questions. He mentioned that he disliked having to ‘read the story out loud’ to the class because he ‘sometimes gets nervous’ and that he disliked answering reading comprehension questions because they can be ‘hard’ and the stories can be ‘confusing sometimes’. However, he did mention that he enjoys that ‘we check our answers pens and if we get something wrong we check it with our red pens’. Clearly, Tomas held well-developed and specific feelings about the regular language arts lessons and he was fully capable of verbalizing his thoughts (unlike Alex and Camila who often struggle to explain why they did not like something). Tomas also appears willing to admit that he does struggle sometimes during three of the activities—spelling, reading aloud, and answering reading comprehension—and that these struggles are part of the reason he does not like these activities. The fact that he even mentions these ‘minor’ struggles is interesting because, despite his ‘struggles’, he is more successful at all three activities than the majority of his peers.

Tomas’s individual interviews also indicate that Tomas was very aware of his somewhat limited verbal participation in whole class lessons. When asked to describe the picture he drew of the word knowledge lesson, Tomas mentioned that he did not raise his hand during the lesson but that he did talk to Alex who was sitting next to him during partner talk. I followed his answer by asking him if he frequently raised his hand in class. Tomas confidently responded ‘no, not very much’. This supports observational and literature discussion data that demonstrated that he did not raise his hand very often and that the number of turns he took during whole-class literature discussions was quite low. The confident way he provided his answer suggests that Tomas not only is aware that he does not raise his hand very often but also that he is not necessarily embarrassed by this. Tomas made no attempt to

'hide' his lack of participation—as Camila often hid her perceived 'shortcomings'—rather, Tomas appeared comfortable with his somewhat limited verbal participation in whole class discussions.

One final interesting finding related to Tomas's perceptions of regular language arts lessons came from his drawing of a 'word knowledge' lesson during his first individual interview. In his picture, he positioned the teacher—who was drawn standing next to the chart paper—as the focal point of the picture and positioned the students—who were drawn sitting on individual squares on the carpet—off center and near the bottom of the picture. Interestingly, he did not single himself out in the group and instead just presented a picture of anonymous students. He was the only focus student to not draw himself as the focal point of the picture or label himself in the picture. The central placement of the teacher in his picture suggests that he views the teacher as the most important person in these lessons with the students playing a secondary role. Additionally, the fact that he drew a group of anonymous students—rather than labeling himself and a few of his peers—perhaps indicates that he views this lesson as a group task rather than an individual task. Indeed, this activity involved a lot of choral participation—which involved the students chorally saying an answer all together as a whole class.

Emma. Emma was overwhelmingly positive about regular language arts lessons—much more so than the other three focus students. When it came to discussing which activities she liked the most, Emma repeatedly mentioned 'creativity' being a reason for why she liked an activity. For example, Emma commented that she likes read alouds 'that are creative' and that she liked the short stories they read for homework because they 'be creative'. Emma also stressed the importance of learning as the reason why she liked particular language arts tasks. She mentioned that liked spelling because 'the homework is kinda hard and it is good for me to learn and try and work hard and I like kinda hard stuff because you learn it more faster'. When discussing writing the Teammates summary, Emma

mentioned that she liked the fact that she 'needed to write a lot…and I wanted to try my best'. Overall, Emma enjoyed the read aloud and Dia de los Muertos lessons the most while she liked writing the Teammates summary and reading out loud the least. However, she was still very positive about the activities that she liked the least mentioning only that her 'hand hurt because of writing' during the Teammates paragraph and that when other students read aloud she could not 'concentrate because it is too much and too hard when they read out loud'.

Emma was also very confident talking about lessons and she remembered specific, active things her and her peers did during the story. For example, when describing the picture that she drew of the Boy Who Did Not Believe in Spring read aloud, she really emphasized 'making predictions' as a central activity in this lesson. For example, she mentioned that 'we were like making predictions about what was going to happen next, and what the boy…did the boy like spring, And the most part I like of the book was predicting what was making the sound of the car. And King John and the other boy found blue big eggs and we were talking to a partner and we were making predictions like I am going to predict this is going to happen'. It is also very clear from her responses that students played an integral role in read aloud lessons as they actively talked to one another about what they thought might happen. For example, when describing why she likes read alouds so much she says 'because we can talk to our partners, and we can make predictions, and we also make questions when we are up there like what is going to happen, like I predict.' This is very different than describing the lesson as 'the teacher read while we listened' (which is how Camila described the lesson) or 'we raised hands and said the answer'. It also fits with the observational data of Emma, which indicates Emma was very active in partner talk and that she always seemed to enjoy opportunities to talk with peers.

Interview Theme Two: Students' Perceptions of English Competency

Students' perceptions of English competency were discussed once during individual interviews and once during group interviews. During the second individual interviews, the focus students were asked if they felt they were better as English or Spanish (or both) and if they preferred lessons to be in English or Spanish (or both). During the first group interview, all students were asked about their perceptions on how important English competence was in their classroom and how a non-English speaker would do if they were to come into their classroom.

Alex. During the second individual interview, Alex mentioned that he thought he was better at English than Spanish. This was surprising as his English skills were actually lower than most of his peers and he was placed in the lowest English language ability group. While the students were not tested on their Spanish skills, it is quite possible that his Spanish language skills were actually higher than his English. Observational notes indicate that during informal talks with students, Alex's peers often talked about how they wished science was in English and that they were 'forgetting their Spanish'. Once again, Alex's answer to this question—that he was better at English than Spanish—might actually reflect what he thinks his peers would say rather than what he himself actually thinks is the answer. Alex also added that he liked doing activities in both languages and that he had no preference for one language over the other. In the group interview, Alex agreed with the majority of his peers that a non-English speaker 'would have a hard time' in their class. When asked why he thought so, he looked at me as if the answer was obvious and said 'because they do not know English and you need to talk and stuff in English'. Clearly, Alex believed that having well developed English language skills was a necessary component of being a contributing, capable community member.

Camila. Camila was the only focus student to say that she felt she was better at Spanish than English. This fits with observational data which indicate that Camila would often struggle with

understanding English in language arts lessons and, when provided a choice, would choose to speak and write in Spanish. In this interview, she also mentioned that 'it is easier to read and write in Spanish' than English for her. However, Camila added that she liked reading and writing in both English and Spanish and that it did not matter to her which language the language arts lessons were in. In the group interview, Camila indicated that she believed that being able to speak English was a prerequisite for doing well in the class. When asked how a non-English speaker would do in the class, she just shook her head—indicating that they would not do well—and quietly said because 'you have to learn in English'. Like Alex, it appears that she believes that having well developed English language skills was a necessary component of being a contributing, capable community member.

Tomas. During his second individual interview, Tomas mentioned that he felt that his Spanish and English skills were at an equal level and that he was not better at one language than the other. However, Tomas also said that he likes lessons that are in English more than those in Spanish because he 'talks more in English'. His answers fit with observational data that indicate he frequently socialized with his peers in English during non-instructional time. In the group interview, Tomas was more positive than his peers and said that a non-English speaker would do 'okay' in the class. He also added that he could 'teach them a little English'. It appears as though, unlike the other focus students, Tomas does not believe that having well developed English language skills was a necessary component of being a contributing, capable community member.

Emma. Like Tomas, Emma perceived that her Spanish and English skills were at an equal level and that she was not better at one language than the other. She also mentioned that she had no preference on whether lessons were in English or Spanish and that she felt 'fine' no matter what language a lesson was in. In the group interviews, Emma was very adamant that if someone came into their class that did not speak Spanish they would do 'bad'. Not only was she the first one to answer the

question in her group, she also disagreed with another student who felt that they would do okay. When disagreeing, Emma said 'because they might do bad because on the first day they might…they do not know like anything and they would be like I am struggling with this and I am doing bad'. Her comments suggest that she equates not knowing English with 'not knowing anything'. This belief—shared by several of her peers—is one reason why students with limited English language skills are often provided lower degrees of legitimacy by classmates: because they are viewed as 'not as capable' in all areas.

Interview Theme Three: Student's Perceptions of Acceptance

Student's perceptions of acceptance were discussed once during individual interviews and once during group interviews. During the second individual interview, all focus students were asked about who they liked to work with and why those peers made good working partners. In the first group interview, students were asked about how they show someone they are accepted and how they know if they themselves are accepted.

Alex. During his second individual interview, Alex stated that he most frequently worked with his 'friends David and Samuel'. When asked who he likes to work with most, he said Lucia because 'she is nice' and Tomas because 'he could help us'. Alex's answers suggest that he values partners who are his friend, who are nice to him, and who are able to help him. The fact that he mentioned that Tomas 'could help us', indicates that he does view Tomas to be of high standing in the class and that he perceives Tomas as a more capable student than himself. However, Alex does mention that Tomas can 'help *us'* rather than just '*me'* suggesting that he believes that other students also benefit from Tomas's assistance. Alex also mentioned that he talks a lot to Mateo and Kate during language arts because they are in his table group. Interestingly, he does not mention Emily, a very quiet student, who

is also in his table group. His omission of Emily suggests that being 'talkative' is another of Alex's attributes necessary to be a good partner.

In the group interview, Alex was fairly quiet during the discussion on acceptance. He did indicate that 'when students help you' you know that you are accepted by then. Additionally, he mentioned how important it was in their class to 'learn from other kids' and that a new student would need to be able to talk a lot in order to be successful and accepted in their classroom. This does suggest that Alex perceives peer interaction to be an important part of learning in his classroom community and that 'being quiet' is something that can negatively impact learning.

Camila. Camila named Emma and Kate, her cousin, as the two students that she liked working with the most. While she struggled at first to give a reason for why she liked working with these students, she eventually said that 'they get A+ on the quiz' and because 'we can do fun stuff'. Her answers indicate that she viewed being smart and getting things right (i.e. getting A+s) as important aspects of a good partner. This is interesting as it suggests that she values 'getting things right' in her partners despite the fact that she struggles to do that herself. It appears as though she knows that being right is important and it is perhaps something that she wishes she was better able to do. It is also interesting that Camila selected the two students she is closest with outside of class. She clearly values friendship and having fun as two other traits that make a good partner to work with during instructional time.

When the group was asked about how they showed another student that they were accepted she at first only mentioned that she would tell them the rules like 'you cannot run in the class.' Later on, she mentioned that 'you could move your stuff to another table to show her stuff' or 'you could test them on stuff'. When Camila was asked 'how do you know if you are accepted by your peers', she said 'if they are friends with you'. For Camila, acceptance is demonstrated by assisting each other and

through friendship. This is quite similar to the answers that the rest of her peers gave. Camila also mentioned, in the second group interview, that sometimes people in the focus classroom are not accepted because they are not allowed to participate. During this interview, Camila expressed frustrations with people not getting to participate by saying that 'sometimes when people raise their hand and then they…do not get to talk. They (the other students) do not let them talk'. While Camila does not say that she is one of those students who is not 'allowed to talk', observational notes indicate that she was often very silent during group discussions and group work. Most likely, she does feel that she is one of the students who is not fully accepted because her peers do not allow her to participate as much during group work.

Tomas. During his second individual interview, Tomas was very reluctant to list students that he most enjoyed working with. Instead, when asked about which peers he enjoys working with most and which peers made good partners he chose to mention who he worked with that morning and said that sometimes he sits with 'somebody new' and sometimes with 'somebody old'. Tomas also repeatedly mentioned that he 'talks to everybody' and that there was not someone at his table group that he talked to more than the rest. When prompted one additional time, he did say that he frequently sat with David and liked to work with him. Later in the interview, when discussing a different topic, he mentioned that Julio is a good partner for him because 'he talks more and I talk more' and that the two of them 'talk at the table more' than the rest of his table group. He also mentioned that Samuel is a good partner because 'we play together in school'. This fits with observational notes that indicate Tomas seemed to get along with all students and that he never acted unhappy when paired with someone with lower academic skills. During the first group interview, Tomas mentioned that he would show someone that he accepted them by 'being friends with them' and 'showing them that you like them'. He also mentioned that he knew when someone accepted him when they told him 'good job' after

participating. Like many of his peers, Tomas perceived acceptance to be related to friendship, encouragement, and helpfulness.

Emma. During her second interview, Emma stated that she most frequently worked with David, Camila, Lucia, or Miguel. However, when asked who she would most like to work with she said 'Camila and Lucia if we were ever working on a project because they help me a lot and they be creative and they add more stuff to it'. Her comment indicates that she values peers who are able to assist her in improving her work. The fact that she listed Camila as one of the two people who could help her in work is interesting as observational data indicate that Emma was always the one helping her. By including Camila, Emma appears to suggest that she values friendship—as she and Camila play together after school—as much as she values being academically capable. This also suggests that outside class friendships can at times outweigh negative perceptions about one's academic abilities. Throughout both of her individual interviews, Emma also demonstrated concern over peers who were left without a partner during partner talk. She mentioned several times that she would always include someone who was left out and at one point she said, 'we were doing a group of three 'cause Camila did not have a partner and Miguel did not have a partner so I went with both of them instead of just one'. When asked how she decides who to work with, she mentioned 'if they do not have a partner then we all go together as a group'.

During the first group interview, Emma mentioned that she would show someone that she accepted them by saying 'you are welcome here' and by 'showing them respect'. She also mentioned that she would 'review stuff with them like show her my notebooks and stuff'. Her answer was quite similar when asked how she knew if she was accepted by others. She said 'they like show you respect and like show you what you have to do if you do not know' and 'they can help you with stuff'. When Emma was asked 'what does it look like when someone is not being accepted in a small group?', she

said ‘when you are not helping them and you are just leaving them back’. She then added that ‘if they show me respect, I will respect them’. Overall, Emma felt very strongly that helping someone is one of the main ways to show someone that they are accepted and by not helping someone you are indicating that they are not accepted. Her answers also suggest that ‘respect’ plays an important role in determining whether or not she accepts someone.

Interview Theme Four: Student’s Perceptions of Multimodal Lessons and Texts

The focus students were asked, in the second and third group interviews, about their perceptions of multimodal lessons. During the first group interview, students were asked about their feelings about graphic novels and lessons that included graphic novels and comics. They were also asked about whether or not reading and talking about graphic novels was easier or harder than reading regular books. During the third interview, students were asked about their perceptions of creating their own graphic novels and their feelings about their completed novel. Students were also provided time to discuss whether or not their ability to talk about graphic novels had improved and to elaborate on their feelings about multimodal texts. The following section summarizes the focus students’ responses to these questions and highlights their perceptions of multimodal lessons and texts.

Alex. Observational data indicated that Alex was extremely enthusiastic about reading and creating multimodal texts and his interview data certainly support this. During the second group interview, Alex said that he ‘loved’ graphic novels because they have ‘funny’ in pictures. Additionally, he mentioned that he liked them because they have ‘more pages’ than the other books that he read. He also said that he preferred lessons with graphic novels and comics more than other lessons because they were more fun and the stories were ‘funnier’. When asked if he found graphic novels easier or harder to read than regular books, Alex said that graphic novels were ‘easier’ for him to read because he found them so ‘interesting’ which made him more motivated to read. Later in the interview he again

mentioned that graphic novels were easy by adding that he could ‘read them all’. He then added that they were easier because ‘you can tell and see things…you can tell the emotions that they are feeling’. Alex also felt that talking about graphic novels was easier than talking about regular books because ‘you can look at the pages’ to help you remember what happened and you can ‘show people what you are talking about’. During the third interview, Alex said that he had improved at talking about graphic novels in small-groups because he could ‘find the theme and other stuff in them’ now.

In terms of creating graphic novels, Alex said that he liked creating his own graphic novel because ‘it took your imagination to write it’ and because ‘you had to check your work like a real author’. He also mentioned that he was ‘proud’ of his graphic novel and that he thought ‘it was fun and that you could show people how your brain works’. In terms of difficulty, Alex said that perceived writing a graphic novel to be easier than writing a regular story because regular books ‘do not have pictures just words’. Clearly, Alex perceived the reading and creation of multimodal texts to be much more accessible and enjoyable for him than reading and creating regular, non-multimodal texts.

Camila. Like Alex, Camila was very enthusiastic about reading and creating multimodal texts and she was very excited to talk about her love of graphic novels during the second group interview. She immediately said that she ‘loved them’ because ‘they are funny with all the pictures’. Camila also said that she felt ‘good’ reading them ‘because they have so many words that you can learn’. She re-emphasized the fact that she ‘learned a lot’ from graphic novels in the third group interview when she said that she loved graphic novels because ‘you learn from them’. Like Alex, Camila felt that graphic novels were easier to read than regular books because ‘you can read fast because sometimes there are pictures there and no words’. Camila also added that regular books were harder because ‘sometimes I have to skip parts because I do not know that word’. Unlike Alex, Camila felt that talking about graphic novels was about the same difficulty as talking about regular books. She said ‘it is kinds the

same because some words are hard and some words are easy in both books and some questions are hard and easy too'. During the third interview, Camila added that she was getting better at talking about graphic novels because 'I am getting more smarter…more smart and like after school we have twenty minutes to read and then in here we have all the time reading graphic novels so like it get more easier to read and then we talk about them.' This comment suggests that Camila's confidence level has increased at least slightly with the addition of multimodal texts as she views herself to be 'smarter' as a result of reading them.

In terms of creating her own graphic novel, Camila felt that it was 'easy' because her story 'was not hard' and that she could 'write easy and the pictures were easy to draw.' She also said that she was 'proud' of how her story turned out' and that she enjoyed making her graphic novel. Additionally, Camila felt that it was 'more easy' to write a graphic novel then to write a regular story because 'you get to draw with pictures and it would be hard because if you were just writing and not drawing pictures it is just hard to see in your mind and use words'. Like Alex, Camila perceived the reading and creation of multimodal texts to be much more accessible and enjoyable for her than reading and creating regular, non-multimodal texts.

Tomas. Tomas also had very positive feelings about reading and creating multimodal texts. In the second group interview, Tomas mentioned that he liked graphic novels because 'they are funny and there are some funny pictures'. He also said that he felt 'good' when reading them because he learned 'more vocabulary'. During the third group interview, Tomas added that he liked graphic novels 'because it takes more time to read them and then you can re-read it all again and see new stuff'. Unlike Camila and Alex, Tomas did not perceive graphic novels to be easier to read than regular books. Instead, he felt that they were about 'the same because both have a lot of words.' Tomas did feel, however, that graphic novels were easier to discuss because he was able to 'remember more of the

story'. During the third group interview, Tomas added that he was getting better at discussing graphic novels because he would 'reread them all a bunch of times and would understand them better'

In terms of creating his own graphic novel, Tomas said that he initially was a bit nervous because he 'thought it was going to be hard'. However, when asked about how he felt his novel turned out, he said 'I think mine turned out good because umm..first I thought it was hard and then I felt confident'. He also perceived creating a graphic novel to be a bit easier than creating a regular narrative story because 'if you write a regular story it would take more longer because there would be more writing'.

Emma. Like the other focus students, Emma had very positive feelings about reading and creating multimodal texts. In the second group interview, Emma said that she 'liked' reading graphic novels because they 'show you what is happening' and because 'they are like exciting'. She also said that she felt 'really good' when reading graphic novels because it was 'fun reading them'. Later in the interview, Emma expressed a desire to read a mix of graphic novels and regular books instead of just graphic novels. She said that she 'likes a mix' because 'sometimes it is nice to see all the pictures and sometimes you want all the words'. Emma also said that she did not prefer lessons with graphic novels or comics more than regular lessons. Instead, she said that the lessons 'were about the same' in terms of her preference. Like Tomas, Emma did not perceive graphic novels to be easier to read and instead felt that reading graphic novels and reading regular books were about the same in terms of difficulty. She said that she agreed with Kate who stated that both types of books 'were long and both have chapters'. Later in the interview, she did concede that graphic novels did have 'a lot of pictures' and that perhaps that made them 'a bit' easier to read.

Emma also did not find graphic novel discussions easier than regular literature discussions. She said that graphic novel discussions were 'medium difficulty…like hard and easy at the same time…some of the questions are hard to answer.' In the third group interview, Emma expressed how

much she enjoyed listening to her peers during the small-group graphic novel discussions. She said 'when you were with your groups you would learn things from people and you would be like WOW I just love this book'. Additionally, Emma did feel that she was getting better at talking about graphic novels because she would 'read for like 20 minutes for my reading log and when my time was up I would just keep reading and then I could talk about it better.'

In terms of creating her own graphic novel, Emma said that she enjoyed it but that it took 'a long time to do'. Emma said that she was 'very proud' of herself after she completed her graphic novel and that she felt she made her story interesting by 'adding both pictures and words'. She also perceived writing a graphic novel to be easier than writing a regular story because they had 'more time to finish it instead of like one day'. This referenced the lack of time students were generally provided to complete writing activities while, in contrast, they had four, 45 minute blocks to complete their graphic novel. When other students mentioned that sometimes they did not like their drawings or that drawing was hard for them, Emma said 'you just need to get used to it'. This was interesting because Emma actually demonstrated the most hesitation with her drawing of all her peers. During the writing process, she consistently needed to be told that her pictures were good and to keep going.

Summaries of Focus Students' Participation, Engagement, and Acceptance during Regular Language Arts Lessons

Alex

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, Alex was one of four students identified by the teacher at the beginning of the study as having lower degrees of classroom membership. He was placed in the lowest English ability group as well as the lowest reading level group and that placement did not change during the course of the study. Despite having lower English skills than many of his third grade peers, his English skills were higher than the other students identified as having lower classroom

membership status. With the exception of one other student (Lucia), Alex was the student who stood out the most for his lack of acceptance from his peers. During my first week of observations I noted in my researcher's notebook that peers often ignored Alex when he spoke during lessons and that students appeared reluctant to pair up with him. Additionally, I noted that students appeared to get easily frustrated with him and often had little patience for his attempts to socially interact with him.

Alex was also the only student about which I heard any direct criticism and was the only student who students would be explicitly rude to during academic time—though this explicit rudeness was infrequent. For example, during a Halloween party, a group of students—unprompted—began telling me that I should not believe anything that Alex says because he is always lying and showing off. What stands out most with Alex was his strong desire to be well liked by his peers—in particular by the other boys in the class. It was almost as if Alex 'tried too hard' to be liked. He often tried to distract his peers during lessons to talk with them.

During informal interviews with the teacher, the teacher mentioned several concerns for Alex. Her primary concern appeared to be his lack of attention during lessons and his inability to complete any written work (i.e. paragraph writing, worksheet completion, copying notes from the board). Alex was also the only student who consistently did not do his homework and when he did complete his homework it was generally messy, incomplete, and full of errors. The teacher also mentioned that Alex was the only student she felt whose ability was drastically higher than what his work demonstrated. She mentioned that she found Alex to be quite bright when speaking with him and that she thought his lack of attention and inability to transfer ideas into written form were the root cause of his academic troubles. Throughout the study, the teacher met consistently with his mother to address concerns and at one point the mom even switched Alex to another school due to his mother's concern that the 'after

school program was not helping with him his homework'. Alex returned to the focus classroom after only three days because he was miserable in his new school and refused to go.

Despite being in the lowest reading group, Alex demonstrated himself to be a very active classroom participant during text discussions. In the ten transcribed whole class text discussions, Alex consistently was among the top three participants in terms of the number of turns taken—including one discussion where he took the most turns. With that said, there was a noticeable drop in the number of Alex's turns during the two text discussions that were centered on a non-fiction reading. His attention and focus during text discussion also varied markedly based on his interest and ability to comprehend the story. This is something that was noted in observation notes and was reflected in the fact that he would often go long stretches during discussions without participating only to increase his participation when the focus of the discussion switched to something that he found more interesting.

Alex was one of the students most likely to 'shout out' answers, meaning often he would verbally participate without being called on. Not only would Alex 'shout out' answers to a question asked by a classroom teacher, he frequently made verbal personal connections to the discussion topic. These personal connections often appeared to come out of nowhere as the focus of the discussion at the time would not be to make text-to-self connections. These personal connections were reflective of a larger trend. Alex's main strategy to gain more legitimacy among his peers was to establish himself as someone who has done a lot of 'cool things' or who knows someone who has done these things. To Alex, these 'cool things' tended to be anything that came up during classroom discussions for which peers demonstrated a high degree of enthusiasm. For example, during the November 17th text discussion the classroom teacher was defining 'skyscrapers' after a student asked what the word meant. Her description was met with verbal 'oohs' and 'aahs' from the class at which point Alex mentioned that he 'see one in a video game'. Immediately, Julio—with a tone of strong annoyance—

said ‘in a video game...really Alex?’ Negative reactions from peers generally appeared to go unnoticed by Alex and they did not appear to deter Alex from using this strategy in the future.

On a related note, many of Alex’s participative turns during regular language arts discussions were little side comments that he would make in which he would add a small bit of additional information to something that either the teacher or a peer said. For example, during the November 1 discussion several students answered that ‘flowers’ had been found in the vacant lot and Alex added ‘green pointy flowers’. While his additions were generally correct, they usually did not add to the discussion and were most often not recognized by either the teacher or his peers. Alex’s tendency to add-on little bits of information did encourage one very positive result. He was one of the first students to start effectively building upon peer’s responses—a skill that was worked on during graphic novel discussions. While his small ‘add-ons’ were too simplistic to count as ‘building upon a peer’ during regular language arts discussions, it appears that this routine prepared Alex to more effectively build upon peer’s responses by providing him with practice listening to peers and responding accordingly. For example, during the January 6th discussion Alex was able to successfully build upon Julio’s contribution during a conversation about what ‘imagination’ means. At first Alex stated that imagination is something that is ‘not real’ but upon hearing Julio say that it is something that ‘you wish for’ Alex was able to combine both ideas and say that imagination is ‘not real but something you wish was real’. At this point of the year, other students were not yet fully listening to their peers during conversations and their comments tended to be more isolated and not related to what was previously said by another peer. Therefore, while the above example was rather simple, it did demonstrate that Alex was beginning to use a skill regularly that most of his peers were not using at all.

Another interesting finding from this data set is that Alex had a surprisingly large number of high quality responses. While the majority of his responses tended to be out of place personal connections

and small add-ons, Alex was more than capable of making comments that really moved a discussion forward. For example, on November 10th Alex participated in a discussion about animals living in the vacant lots of a city. He mentioned that 'some animals could die in vacant lots because there is not a lot of water'. This comment demonstrated that he was using critical thinking skills and was analyzing whether or not vacant lots were a suitable habitat for wildlife. This higher level thinking was something that Alex initiated himself as the focus of discussion at this point was fact recall and summarizing. While these high quality comments did not occur in every discussion—and his high quality comments were still overshadowed by his less successful comments—they still demonstrate that when interested and focused Alex was capable of establishing himself as a very successful participant. Unfortunately, it seemed that students gave very little legitimacy to the comments made by Alex and they often ignored him when he was offering an idea to the whole class.

Alex demonstrated that he was not hesitant to admit that he did not understand something, which is something the other lower status students were very reluctant to do. For example, during the February 7th discussion Alex asked the class what the word 'controversial' meant. While asking the meaning of English words was an accepted and valued practice, Alex was the only one in the lower reading group to participate in this practice. The other lower lever readers tended to be more focused on saving face and were worried about admitting any lack of understanding.

In summary, Alex struggled to be accepted by his peers despite a strong desire to be well liked. He struggled with most language arts tasks and had difficulties completing tasks that were easily completed by most of his peers. His inability to concentrate and follow along during lessons certainly negatively impacted his status in the classroom—as students witnessed the teacher constantly reminding him to get back on task and saw that he often needed additional support to complete activities that the rest of class were able to do independently. Despite his low membership status, Alex

was a frequent participator in whole class discussions and the quality of his participative turns—while lower than high status students—was much higher than the rest of his low status peers.

Camila

Camila was another student identified by the teacher at the beginning of the study as someone with low classroom membership status. Like Alex, Camila was placed in the lowest English language ability group and the lowest English reading ability group. She was also one of two students in the classroom who consistently struggled to express themselves in English. Her English language abilities were actually quite a bit lower than those of the other students placed in the lowest language ability group, setting her apart from the rest of the class. Students were quite aware of her limited English skills and would often jump in and translate for her if she ever hesitated in answering a teacher question. Outside of instructional time, Camila appeared to be well liked by the other students—especially the girls—and always had someone to play with. All outside social interactions for Camila took place in Spanish.

Observational data indicate that Camila was frequently unsuccessful in her participation in language arts and often struggled to appropriately and successfully complete assigned tasks. On several occasions, I noticed that Camila had developed a habit of immediately raising her hand for teacher help when students were assigned to do independent work such as paragraph writing or worksheet completion. She generally sought out help before even attempting a task by saying things like ‘I do not know how to do it’ or ‘I cannot read it’. She was also very concerned with doing things ‘right’. For example, during one instance I helped her read a reading comprehension question that she was struggling with. When she was able to successfully provide an accurate verbal answer to the question, I told her to write down what she had just said. She immediately panicked and said ‘No! I do

not know how to spell it.' I told her to just sound out the words and do her best but she continued to refuse to write down any words that she did not know how to spell correctly.

Camila was also consistently among the group of students who were least likely to verbally participate in literacy lessons and discussions. Out of the nine text discussions in this data set, Camila took one or less turns in five of those conversations. She was very reluctant to raise her hand or to initiate participation. When she did participate it was primarily because the teacher called on her despite the fact that her hand was not raised. Even when she was called on by the teacher, this did not always mean she ended up participating. In fact, Camila was the only student who would consistently remain silent when called on by the teacher, even with additional encouragement from the teacher. If Camila did participate she was usually very quiet, making it nearly impossible for anyone but the teacher to understand what she was saying.

Due to her reluctance to participate, it often took the teacher multiple attempts to get Camila to say something. During one particular conversation on November 1st, Camila was asked what she thought was making noise in the abandoned car. She was silent until the classroom teacher prompted her with 'do you think it is an animal?' and then she only shook her head no. The teacher then had a lengthy turn in which she tried many prompts to encourage Camila to participate: 'what do you think is inside? What could be making the noise? It is a car that is nobody's. Okay, Camila is going to give me her prediction so everyone listen. What do you think? What could be inside the car making that noise? The even got scared when they heard it. Do you think it is an animal?'. The teacher paused between questions but Camila remained silent until the last question when she replied 'no'. After asking her if she thought it was a person—to which Camila also said no—the teacher moved on stating to Camila that she would come back to her later on. At this point another student predicted that it was an 'animal

like a raccoon' to which the teacher responded 'okay, an animal, raccoon, squirrel'. Camila was called on once again and she said 'a squirrel', taking the teacher's idea.

The above example is very representative of Camila's usual participation in several ways. First, Camila generally needed to be asked a question more than once and the teacher almost always had to rephrase a question in several ways before she would say anything. Camila appeared almost defiant at attempts to facilitate her participation. If a teacher or peer gave her 'ideas' of what to say---such as 'do you think it is an animal?'—she would most often disagree with that idea. Finally, Camila felt most comfortable repeating things she already heard in partner talk or small group discussions instead of coming up with her own idea. This often took the form of her simply saying 'I agree with so and so'.

In summary, Camila was one of two students whose English language skills noticeably impeded their success in language arts lessons on a daily basis. Her struggles with English led her to be quite self-conscious about her work and resulted in her over reliance on teacher assistance. Camila was a silent participant during most regular literature discussions and would frequently remain silent even after being encouraged by the teacher to participate. Outside of instructional time—when Camila could rely on Spanish—she was very vocal and outgoing with her friends and she appeared to be well liked by her peers.

Tomas

Tomas was one of four students that the teacher identified as having very high membership status in the classroom community. Not only was Tomas in both the highest reading group and highest English language ability group, he was also one of the highest academic achievers in all subject areas. He was often the top scorer on tests and quizzes and he was always fully successful in completing assigned language arts tasks such as paragraph writing and worksheet completion. Observational and

interview data indicate that Tomas was well liked by his peers and his thoughts and ideas were well respected.

Despite his higher membership status, Tomas was surprisingly silent during whole class text discussions and he would often take only one or two turns during a read aloud. Tomas rarely spoke out of turn and was very reluctant to 'shout out' answers despite the fact that many of his peers were validated for doing so by the teacher. When Tomas did participate, his turns often reflected his high academic skills and Tomas was able to reinforce his position as a highly valued classroom member through his higher level responses. For example, during a November 17th discussion Tomas only had two turns but in those turns he demonstrated he was the most skilled in the classroom at finding the main idea. After several failed attempts by his peers at finding a section's main idea, Tomas stated that the main idea was 'that any animal you see that is not a pet and does not depend on people to take care of it a wild animal'. This turn demonstrated his ability not only to identify the main idea but also to rephrase it into his own words—something very few students were able to do at this point.

Another frequent observation about Tomas's classroom participation is that he often spoke very quietly and appeared a bit hesitant. While it did not necessarily come across as a lack of confidence, Tomas did seem a bit shy when talking to the whole class and often took some time to collect his thoughts. He was much more active during small group discussions and partner talk, suggesting he was not as shy around smaller groups. Despite taking few turns in whole class text discussions, Tomas's voice never seemed to be missing from the class. He was almost always engaged and paying attention, including actively participating in choral responses and speaking to a neighbour when instructed to do so.

In summary, Tomas was very successful during language arts lessons. While quiet at times, Tomas had established himself as a community member that was more than capable of providing

thoughtful insights on a question and was frequently able to figure out an answer that the rest of his classmates were struggling with. He also appeared to have a 'quiet confidence' during instructional time in that he felt good about his academic abilities but not to the point of thinking he was overly special. Outside of instruction time, Tomas's demeanor remained pretty much the same. While his peers clearly liked him and he always had someone to play with, he was not overly outgoing and was generally not the one taking control of the group.

Emma

Like Tomas, Emma was identified by the teacher as having very high classroom membership status. She was in the highest English language ability group and the highest English reading group. Despite her high placement, Emma was not among the highest achievers in class and there were times when she would struggle slightly with a task or question. This was especially true in mathematics, the subject in which she struggled the most. Observational and interview data indicate that Emma was well liked by her peers and was someone people liked to work with during instruction time. She was also very boisterous in class and was often joking and laughing with her peers. Her demeanor during language arts suggested that she was enthusiastic about the activities and that she was enjoying herself.

Emma activity in text discussions varied. During some, she would be among the students with the most turns while in others she would be among those with the fewest. She showed no signs of being shy or hesitant when she did participate. In fact, Emma she was willing to 'shout out' answers rather than waiting to be called on and she was one of the loudest participants during choral responses. In small group work, Emma was one of the most active students and at times would dominate the conversation. She would often say to me, 'opps, I talked too much' indicating she was aware she tended to dominate conversations.

Like Tomas, Emma was more than capable of giving high quality responses during language arts lessons and discussions. In the November 10th discussion, Emma had two turns that demonstrated an excellent ability to infer and synthesize information when listening to a story. When determining whether the story was fiction or non-fiction she stated that it was 'realistic fiction because it was not something that really happened but is could have happened in real life…but it didn't'. She gave this answer after several of her classmates gave wrong answers. During the same discussion she expressed that she would 'make sure that city wildlife have a house' when asked how we can help city wildlife. This response demonstrated that she was able to synthesize what she learned in the current story as well as generalize to the needs of wildlife in general. Additionally, in a November 16th discussion she was able to describe the unique thing about expository texts by saying 'the chapters and headings… they tell you what the story is about... you know, the information'. Not only was she able to use the correct vocabulary in her answer, she was also able to accurately describe the purpose of chapters and headings.

Despite the confident manner in which she often participated, Emma was the only student identified as having high membership status that seemed to doubt her competencies and doubt her high standing. First, Emma felt uncomfortable whenever someone disagreed with her. She would often deflect the disagreement by turning it into a joke, by laughing and saying things like 'you disagree with me! But I disagree with you!' She had a tendency to qualify some of her responses with things like 'I don't know if this right' or 'I don't know what I am saying'. While these behaviors were viewed during all subjects including language arts, they were observed most frequently during math—the subject with which she struggled most. This does indicate that her perceived doubts about her abilities were at least partially responsible for her sporadic lack of confidence.

In summary, Emma was very successful in language arts lessons. Emma had established himself as a community member that was more than capable of providing thoughtful insights on a question and she was almost always actively participating during lessons. She was quite boisterous and would at times dominate small group discussions by taking charge of the discussion and then talking much more than the rest of her peers. Despite her confident demeanor throughout most language arts lessons, there were instances where Emma indicated she did have some doubt about her academic abilities and that she was worried about giving a 'wrong' answer. Outside of instruction, Emma's demeanor continued to be boisterous and she was often the leader of games played during recess.

Summaries of Focus Students' Participation and Engagement in Multimodal Literacy Lessons

Alex

A glimpse of Alex during multimodal instruction: Peer connection. *When Alex entered the classroom in the morning, he would almost always begin engaging in 'graphic novel talk' with his peers. During these 'talks', Alex's voice would boom with confidence and enthusiasm as he shared his latest noticings from his current graphic novel and commented on the noticings of his peers. One morning, David—a high membership status student—entered the room with a graphic novel in hand and immediately came over to Alex. David exclaimed 'Oh man, Alex did you read this yet?' (referring to the graphic novel Stone Rabbit: Ninja Slice). Alex excitedly responded, 'oh yeah, it was so awesome! I liked the part when the ninja master was slicing up the vegetables with a sword. It was so funny!' David then added, 'Yeah, me too…Did you see Stone Rabbit's face? This is my favorite' (holding up a page from the novel for Alex to see). The boys continued in this manner until the school day started.*

For Alex, graphic novels and comics became a way for him to connect meaningfully with his peers—something he struggled to do during regular language arts instruction. Alex's experience with the multimodal literacy approach was one grounded in fruitful and meaningful social interactions with his peers. His enthusiasm for multimodal texts and his strong ability to discuss all aspects of these texts helped position Alex as someone who his peers desired to talk with. His peers began seeking him out—as David did in the above example—rather than it always being the other way around. The implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) provided Alex with the peer connection that he so clearly desired and this peer connection helped to make the classroom a more welcoming and enjoyable place for Alex.

Enthusiasm and social connections are the two most relevant characteristics to describe Alex's participation and engagement in multimodal literacy lessons. Alex's enthusiasm for the graphica genre in general was evident from the very beginning. He was the first student to approach me about borrowing a graphic novel to read at home and this was after only a brief introduction to graphic novels for the purpose of gaining the students' participation to conduct the study. Throughout the four month implementation of graphic novels, Alex read every single graphic novel (35 total) that I brought into the classroom. He was also one of two students that actively sought out graphic novels and comics outside of the classroom. For example, Alex brought in several comic anthologies to share with peers that he had checked out of the public library.

There were several ways in which Alex's participation and engagement in multimodal lessons improved over his participation and engagement in regular language arts lessons. During graphic novel discussions, the quality of his answers increased, there was more evidence of high quality participation and engagement in his responses, and his peers offered him increased degrees of peripherality and legitimacy. Alex also excelled at understanding and discussing the important visual elements found in

multimodal texts. For example, during the first student led discussion when his group members were still struggling slightly to identify what 'lettering' was, Alex stepped in and showed his group examples of lettering in their novel. Alex then said that one particular use of lettering 'was really scary because the letters are so dark and yet bright too'. His ability to gain meaning from the images he read was higher than most of his peers and this helped make his participation even more valuable.

Alex also took up a leadership role in multimodal lessons, which was something he had never done in regular language arts lessons. For example, during the student led, graphic novel discussions, Alex would often ask students what they thought about a topic and would help ensure that all students had an opportunity to participate, despite the fact that he was not assigned to be the facilitator of the group. He also frequently offered assistance to students struggling to answer a question, which was something he rarely did during regular classroom discussions. Another way Alex demonstrated leadership was by initiating conversation with peers. For example, during the completion of the daily comic, he often instigated discussion about the comic among his table group, which would lead to a sharing of thoughts about what was happening in the comic. Additionally, during graphic novel discussions, Alex was often the first person in his small-group to offer an answer to a question—leading the way for others to comment or provide their own answers. Finally, Alex also served as a recommender of graphic novels to other students.

As the above vignette demonstrated, Alex's ability to meaningfully connect with his peers was enhanced by the inclusion of multimodal instruction. While his peers seemed reluctant to accept his attempts to connect with them during regular language arts, his peers seemed very open to talk with him when Alex initiated conversation about the graphic novel he was currently reading. For example, David—a student identified as having very high membership status—would often eagerly get into conversations with Alex about their graphic novels. Like Alex, David also read all 35 graphic novels

available and their shared love of graphic novels was something that helped them to connect with one another. These meaningful social interactions were perhaps the most important benefit for Alex from the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels).

In summary, the inclusion of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) had a large impact on Alex. Not only did it give him something to look forward to during language arts time, multimodal lessons and texts also assisted him in raising the quality of his responses and increased the quality of his participation and engagement in lessons. Most importantly, however, the multimodal literacy approach—in particular the inclusion of comics and graphic novels—created spaces for Alex to meaningfully engage with his peers. These connections made with his peers through graphic novel and comic 'talks' helped to make the classroom a more welcoming and enjoyable place for Alex.

Camila

A glimpse of Camila during multimodal instruction: New found confidence. *Camila liked graphic novels and comics because she could read and understand them—just like her peers. Before reader's workshop every day, when Camila would leave to go to another classroom, she would always grab her current graphic novel—a bookmark proudly marking her spot—and hug it closely to her chest. She would then confidently tell me that she was going to read her novel during workshop. Many days she would also stop and show several peers which page she read to. One day the classroom teacher and I watched her as she confidently walked to her reader's workshop classroom with a large smile on her face. The teacher remarked, 'I have never seen Camila so excited about reading and so confident about herself!'*

For Camila, the simple fact that these texts—so valued by all of her peers—were something that she could read and enjoy without assistance provided her with new confidence in herself and her

abilities as a student. Unfortunately, regular language arts instruction left little room for Camila to experience success and feel competent as most lessons were above her ability level. Camila also struggled to engage in social interactions that included jokes and banter referencing the class' favorite books as these texts were always inaccessible for her. The implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) provided Camila with a chance to feel successful and capable and this resulted in a much needed confidence boost for her. It also provided her with a chance to connect with her peers over a shared, valued text and to experience the positive feelings that come from being able to join in on shared conversations.

Enjoyment and confidence are the two most relevant characteristics to describe Camila's participation and engagement in multimodal literacy lessons. Like Alex, she read almost all of the graphic novels I had available and she certainly expressed an enthusiasm for reading multimodal texts. During an informal discussion, the focus teacher mentioned that she was so happy to see Camila enthusiastic about reading. She noted that up until that point she had shown little interest in reading in school or at home and that it was often a struggle to get her to read a book each night for her reading log. With the addition of graphic novels, Camila was now a student who would sometimes be 'caught' reading during 'non-reading' times (such as during a math lesson). Her demeanor during multimodal lessons also suggested that she enjoyed herself during these lessons. For example, she smiled more, laughed with her peers, and her body language was much more animated.

While Camila's enthusiasm for reading and enjoyment of lessons was important, the multimodal literacy approach's impact on her confidence and ability to connect with peers made an even bigger difference on Camila's life in the classroom. As the above vignette demonstrated, Camila began to view herself as someone who was a capable reader and she was proud of herself and her ability to read graphic novels. The inclusion of graphic novels as a valuable community resource provided Camila

with a space to gain confidence, to enjoy reading, and to connect with peers over sharing experiences. Camila also alluded to her enhanced confidence in interviews. In the third group interview, when she was asked about her feelings about the graphic novel that she wrote, she commented 'I was surprised that I did it because I did not think I could'. She later added that she was 'proud' of herself because her graphic novel was 'good'. She also volunteered to read her graphic novel out loud to her peers and she did so in a very confident manner.

There were several additional ways in which Camila's participation and engagement in multimodal lessons improved from her participation and engagement in regular language arts lessons. First and foremost, she moved from being a silent participant to an active and capable participant that almost fit the requirements of a vocal participant. This was drastic change—a much larger change than the other focus students experienced—as she went from having little involvement in discussions to being a central participant in discussions whose answers added to the overall discussion. Additionally, during graphic novel discussions, the quality of her answers increased, there was more evidence of high quality participation and engagement in her responses, and her peers offered her increased degrees of peripherality and legitimacy. While there was still some room for improvement as she still relied on teacher support more than other students to participate and there were still times when she displayed feelings of doubt and hesitation, Camila's participation and engagement during multimodal lessons was much more similar to that of her peers—unlike during regular language arts lessons when her low quality participation and engagement stood out.

In summary, the inclusion of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) made a large impact on Camila. This instruction created the much needed space for her to feel confident and successful. It also opened the world of reading to her. For example, at the conclusion of the graphic novel discussions groups, I established chapter book discussion groups as a way to

transition student interest in graphic novels over to chapter books. Camila was assigned to read the first book in the Amelia Bedelia series and she loved it. Like her graphic novel, she would hug her chapter book close to her chest with her bookmark proudly sticking out. In my last week in the classroom, Camila came up to me and said 'I thought this book was going to be hard. But is easy!'. While I am sure the book was not necessarily easy for her, her increased confidence did help motivate her to spend the extra time reading a book that was much longer than anything she had tried to read before.

Emma

A glimpse of Emma during multimodal instruction: Enjoyment. *Emma always appeared happy during regular language arts lesson and she was often observed talking and laughing with peers while actively engaging in activities. However, when graphic novels and comics were implemented into the classroom, Emma's enjoyment of language arts clearly increased. One morning Emma entered the room and immediately asked me if we were doing graphic novel groups that day. I responded, 'No, remember we do them every Tuesday and Thursday and today is Wednesday'. Emma, clearly disappointed, replied, 'Ahhh…man. I was hoping that we were going to do it today. Why can't we do them every day?' Laughing, I said, 'Well, there are lots of other things that you guys need to do in language arts.' Emma responded, 'Yeah, but we do not get enough time for graphic novels. It should be like the daily comic and we should do it every day'*

For Emma, lessons incorporating multimodal texts were something that she looked forward to as she thoroughly enjoyed reading and talking about graphic novels and comics. Emma was clearly already happy and thriving during regular language arts instruction—unlike Alex and Camila. She was successful in these lessons, was almost always engaged in assigned tasks, and had a positive attitude throughout these lessons. However, as many of these activities were quite repetitive and rarely included open-ended, creative tasks, Emma never showed any signs of anticipation and she never

expressed that she was looking forward to doing something. This changed with the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) as Emma finally had something that she truly looked forward to.

Enjoyment and anticipation are the two most relevant characteristics to describe Emma's participation and engagement in multimodal literacy lessons. As the above vignette demonstrates, Emma looked forward to and anticipated multimodal lessons more than she did any other language arts activity. While she always seemed quite happy during language arts, there was no other activity that she would get excited about when learning that the activity was on the daily schedule. Her enthusiasm and anticipation for these lessons was certainly not typical for her.

Emma's lived experiences throughout the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach were really representative of the other students who enjoyed high degrees of classroom membership and acceptance—she enjoyed multimodal lesson but did not really *need* them. Unlike Camila and Alex, who relied on the multimodal literacy approach for much needed social interaction and self-confidence, Emma did not necessarily *rely* on the multimodal literacy approach for anything—despite the fact that she enjoyed multimodal lessons and texts. Quite simply, Emma did not need the additional, supportive spaces created by the multimodal lessons and texts to successfully participate and engage in language arts or to be a fully contributing and accepted community member—she was already successful and accepted. While Emma certainly enjoyed these spaces and these spaces allowed her to participate in a greater variety of ways and in more high quality ways, they were not as crucial as they were for both Camila and Alex.

The largest impact of the multimodal literacy approach on Emma actually had to do more with the structure of these lessons rather than the inclusion of multimodal texts and response options. The small-group, graphic novel discussions afforded students the opportunity to engage in higher level

thinking that required them to synthesize, infer, and apply their knowledge through the use of open ended questions. Emma was certainly one of the students in the class who believed that there was always a right answer and her answers during regular language arts would at times lack creativity and thinking. After a short period of adjustment, Emma became quite skilled at discussing higher level thinking questions and the quality of her answers certainly improved.

The student-led, graphic novel discussions also provided students the rare chance to engage with one another without teacher support or control. Emma really seemed to thrive when provided the opportunity to engage in discussions with peers without the teacher being present. She was always highly engaged in these discussions and often asked follow-up questions to her peers so that she could fully understand their opinions. Emma also appreciated the fact that she was learning a lot from her peers during these discussions. For example, during the third group interview, she said 'when you were with your groups you would learn things from people and you would be like WOW I just love this book…you know, you learn a lot from your friends'.

In summary, the inclusion of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) made a much smaller impact on Emma's classroom experiences than it did on Alex's and Camila's. While she certainly enjoyed these lessons and she looked forward to reading, discussing, and creating multimodal texts, they did not drastically improve her lived experiences during language arts as her experiences during regular language arts lessons were already quite positive. However, the way in which the graphic novel discussions and independent work was structured did have an impact on Emma as she had the opportunity to engage in higher level thinking discussions with her peers without the teacher controlling the conversation.

Tomas

A glimpse of Tomas during multimodal instruction: Leadership. *During multimodal lessons, Tomas moved from being a confident, capable participant who was still slightly reserved (as indicated by his limited turns in whole class discussions) to a confident and capable leader who was quite verbal during discussions. During the first round of student-led discussions, I witnessed Tomas confidently and skillfully lead his group's discussion. While monitoring Tomas's group, I was quite impressed at how Tomas so adeptly took on the role of facilitator despite very little instruction on how to facilitate a discussion. He called on all group members to participate equally, he encouraged his peers to expand their thoughts through prompts such as 'what else?', he assisted peers that were struggling, and he helped get the conversation back on track when his peers got distracted. Throughout all of this, I noticed the strong and confident tone that Tomas had in his voice as he led the discussion. This was quite different from the more restrained, quieter Tomas that was observed during regular literature discussions.*

For Tomas, the openings created by the multimodal lessons for students to take on leadership roles were what had the biggest impact on him. Facilitating discussion among his peers was something he really thrived at. As indicated above, Tomas was clearly already successful and well accepted during regular language arts instruction. However, the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) provided Tomas the opportunity to take on a leadership role that ended up enhancing his overall ability to participate and engage with his peers.

Leadership and enjoyment are the two most relevant characteristics to describe Tomas's participation and engagement in multimodal literacy lessons. Like Emma, Tomas really enjoyed the multimodal lessons and texts and he was often heard saying, 'yes!!' when it was announced that it was time to get into their graphic novel discussion groups. Additionally, Tomas, like Alex and David, read

all 35 graphic novels available to him and checked additional graphic novels out of the public library. The implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) clearly provided him with enjoyment and gave him something to look forward to.

While Emma's lived experiences represented the norm of high membership status students, Tomas's lived experiences throughout the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach were a bit more complicated. As mentioned before, Tomas was often quiet during whole class literature discussions and he took on the role of a responsive participant rather than a vocal participant, unlike the rest of his higher membership status peers. For this reason, the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach actually had a larger impact on Tomas's participation during discussions than it did on the other high membership status students. During graphic novel discussions, Tomas's rate of participation increased, he began initiating topics of conversation and assessing that conversation, and the overall quality of his participation improved. No longer a responsive participant, Tomas was able to take on the role of a confident, vocal participant during these discussions

As indicated in the brief vignette above, Tomas also benefited from the opportunity to take on a leadership role during the graphic novel discussions. As was the case with Emma, it was the structure of these lessons rather than the inclusion of multimodal texts and response options that provided Tomas with this leadership opportunity. In regular language arts discussions, students rarely had the opportunity to engage in open-ended discussions with each other without teacher intervention. With the addition of student-led discussions, Tomas found new space to use the leadership skills that he clearly already held but was unable to apply during regular literature discussions.

In summary, the inclusion of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels) made a slightly larger impact on Tomas than it did on Emma and the other high membership status students. However, this impact was still much smaller than the impact of this approach on Alex and

Camila. Tomas was already successful and fully accepted by peers during regular language arts lessons and did not necessarily need the supportive spaces created in multimodal lessons to have a positive classroom experience. However, Tomas's participation was positively impacted—most notably by his moving from a responsive participant to a vocal one. Additionally, the way in which the graphic novel discussions and independent work were structured provided Tomas with the opportunity to demonstrate his strong leadership skills, which further positioned him as a strong and capable member of the classroom community.

Conclusion

This chapter provided details of four students' unique lived experience before, during and after the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (grounded in graphic novels). Their lived experiences demonstrate that while all students were positively impacted by the multimodal literacy approach, this impact differed depending on the needs, skills, and social positioning of each individual student. For Alex, his ability to socially connect with his peers is where he felt the largest impact while a much needed boost in confidence is where Camila benefited most. For Emma, a student already highly positioned and highly successful in language arts, the addition of multimodal lessons gave her something to look forward to and created the space where she wanted to discuss higher level thinking questions with her peers, while Tomas benefited from the opportunity to take on a leadership role.

This chapter also highlights that membership status can impact students in varying ways. While most lower-status students, including Camila, tended to be silent participants that only reluctantly participated in literature discussions, Alex was quite verbal during these discussions—with his number of turns taken being more similar to higher status students. The quality of Alex's participation in these discussions was also higher than that of the other lower status peers. Alex's lived experiences suggest that the degree to which low membership status negatively impacts a student's participation and

engagement can vary. Tomas's lived experiences indicate that high membership status also impacts students in varying ways. While most high status students were very vocal in discussions, Tomas was quite reserved and he rarely initiated topics of conversations. The instructional and social needs of students also can vary. For example, while Camila and Alex were both low membership status students, their immediate needs differed. Alex needed space to meaningfully connect with peers while Camila needed space to be successful at tasks and gain personal confidence. To conclude, there is little doubt that one's membership status impacts one's lived experiences in the classroom. However, the particular form and the extent of that impact can differ from student to student.

Chapter Six: Discussion

The multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) implemented in this study led to positive changes in students' participation, engagement, and enthusiasm in language arts instruction. While all students appeared to benefit from this implementation, the resulting impact on individual students' lived experiences was dependent upon each student's unique needs and interests. This chapter discusses the key findings relating to the two research questions that drove this study. During this discussion, the fluid connection between a student's level of acceptance and the type of literacy instruction they receive is explored. This is followed by a discussion of the instructional implications for implementing a multimodal literacy approach successfully. Finally, this chapter will review the limitations of this study as well as possible directions for future research.

Findings: Major Themes Relating to Research Questions

This study addressed the following two major research questions:

1) How does the implementation of a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) develop and play out in the primary classroom?
2) In what ways might a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) be used to enhance ELLs' sense of belonging and perceptions of community membership?

The following sections explore each of these questions by discussing the themes relating to each question.

How does the Implementation of a Multimodal Literacy Approach (Anchored in Graphic Novels) develop and play out in the primary classroom?

The multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) that was implemented in this study involved the following activities: the daily comic, independent reading and creation of graphic novels, small-group, graphic novel discussions, and opportunities to respond to literature through visual representations and drawings. In terms of how the ELLs responded to the multimodal literacy approach—and how the implementation process played out in the focus classroom—the following themes were found: high student enthusiasm/excitement; high levels of student engagement and student success,; visual elements were quickly learned by students; multimodal texts were not perceived as easier; reading multimodal texts did not lead to a lack of reading of other texts; and the multimodal literacy approach proved to be an effective way to introduce students to more cognitively and socially demanding discussions and tasks. Each of these themes is discussed in detail below and together they create a complete picture of how the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach was received and taken up in the focus classroom.

High student enthusiasm/excitement. The implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) in this study—which began with the daily comic—was met with enthusiasm and excitement by all students. This enthusiasm started during my initial discussion with students about multimodal instruction and texts when I was getting their permission to participate in the study. Immediately following my brief introduction of what I would be doing in the class, I had several students come up to me and ask to borrow one of the graphic novels I had shown them as an example. From that moment on, students were

enthusiastic about reading graphic novels and I had to continually add to the classroom graphic novel collection to keep up with their increasing demand.

Student excitement was determined by verbal expressions (i.e. yay! I am excited!), notable increases in energy and talking, eagerness to get started on a task or to read a text, desire to share what they were reading or what they thought about a text, and physical indications such as smiling, wildly waving hand to participate, and clapping. These indicators were frequently found throughout every multimodal lesson—with notable enthusiasm over both the lesson and the multimodal text being read or created—and there were no students who did not regularly demonstrate this enthusiasm. Student enthusiasm also did not wane as time went on; rather it continued throughout the entire implementation with students still eagerly reading multimodal texts even after the implementation process had concluded. During group interviews, students described multimodal texts as 'exciting', 'funny', and that you always 'wanna know what happens next'. They also mentioned that they 'loved' them and that they felt 'good' and 'happy' while reading them. The finding high student enthusiasm and excitement supports other research literature in this area (see for example Bitz, 2004; Risko, Walker-Dalhouse, Bridges, and Wilson 2011; and Frey and Fisher, 2005).

High levels of student engagement and student success. Student enthusiasm led to high degrees of student engagement in multimodal lessons. As discussed in chapter four, regular language arts lessons resulted in high student attention but very low student engagement. While students were clearly following along and 'completing' tasks, most students were not verbally participating and there was little evidence that they were engaged in the task. This completely changed during multimodal lessons. Most multimodal lessons were inherently motivating to students and they needed little encouragement or reminders to stay focused on the assigned task.

The more negative behaviors that were commonplace in the routine, skills based lessons were seldom present during multimodal lessons. Students were not in a rush to complete the task, they were not putting in a bare minimum of effort, and they were not blindly writing answers without thinking. Rather, their written, verbal, and drawn responses demonstrated that they were taking their time to really think about their answers and that they were willing to take risks—such as asking questions and sharing unique thoughts—that are representative of being highly engaged in a task. These findings are in line with Zammit's (2011) study which found that the allowance of a variety of modes of communication greatly enhanced students' engagement in learning.

Along with high degrees of engagement, all students—including those who were seldom successful during regular language arts instruction—experienced high degrees of success during multimodal lessons. For example, students were able to successfully answer reading comprehension questions based on multimodal stories, they were able to use context clues to determine the meaning of difficult English vocabulary or unfamiliar English slang, they were able to use high quality vocabulary words in their written and verbal responses, they were able to create multimodal texts with little teacher support, and they were able to give thoughtful and insightful answers to higher level thinking questions. Additionally, in contrast to regular language arts instruction, multimodal lessons frequently had all students successfully participating in lessons *and* completing assigned tasks.

These findings reinforce the notion that affording students with limited English language skills opportunities to construct (as well as distribute, interpret, and remake) meaning through a variety of representational resources can enhance their overall communication capabilities (Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006). Additionally, these findings support current research literature that indicates that graphic novels are beneficial for reading comprehension (see for

example Risko, Walker-Dalhouse, Bridges and Wilson, 2011; and Thompson, 2008). Finally, when combined with the findings regarding increased engagement, the findings of increase student success in multimodal lessons supports the large literature based which has consistently shown that engagement is a critical variable in overall academic achievement (see of example Morrison and Wlodarcyk, 2009; Bronzo, Sheil, and Topping, 2007).

It is important to note that success in multimodal lessons was not immediate for all students. Observational data demonstrate that Mia, Camila, and Alex all struggled at the beginning of the implementation of the multimodal literacy strategy—which focused on answering reading comprehension question on comics and short, graphic novel excerpts. During this time, these students struggled more than their peers did with correctly answering reading comprehension questions and often lacked the confidence to complete the task independently. These struggles were temporary and these students quickly increased their success in multimodal lessons. Additionally, there were no consistent struggles observed for these students by the time the small-group, graphic novel discussions were implemented.

Part of the students' success during multimodal lessons can be attributed to the flexible approach taken to which language (Spanish or English) could be used by students during these lessons. For example, in an attempt to make the daily comic more accessible for students with limited English skills, wordless Garfield comics were used for the first week of the daily comic. This was followed by a week of Spanish Garfield comics. After two weeks, students were introduced to English Garfield comics—although I ensured that the English text in these comics was limited and that the images communicated the most important information presented in the comic. As time went on, the comics progressed with more advanced English text. Had the daily comic begun with the more advanced Calvin and Hobbes comics that were used towards the end

of implementation, the success of students most likely would have been more limited and students with limited English skills may not have found the activity all that accessible. Additionally, the reading comprehension questions throughout the daily comic sessions were in both English and Spanish and students were encouraged to write their answers in the language with which they felt most comfortable. For two students (Camila and Mia) the invitation to write in Spanish helped afford them the opportunity to be successful in the daily comic as they would have struggled to write their answers in English. This suggests that adding in a multimodal dimension alone may not be enough; teachers still need to take into consideration any written and verbal language demands of multimodal tasks. Students also really appreciated the flexibility with language and thoroughly enjoyed reading Garfield in Spanish. As one student exclaimed, 'Hey, this is in Spanish. Cool!'

Visual elements were learned quickly by students. The ELLs in this study were able to quickly learn how to make meaning from the visual elements of multimodal texts with very little instruction. One reason for this is that students spent two months doing the daily comic activity prior to being introduced to graphic novels and this time provided students the opportunity to familiarize themselves with a variety of visual elements. During the daily comic, I would periodically point out a visual element to students. For example, I would discuss with the class the difference between speech bubbles and thought bubbles or I would draw students' attention to a particular character's facial expression and discuss with them what that facial expression told us about the character. However, other than this short, impromptu instruction, students were provided no explicit instruction on analyzing visual elements. Despite this, students were able to read and analyze visual elements on a very basic level. The two areas where students were most

successful, prior to more explicit instruction, were analyzing the meaning behind the use of color and reading characters' facial expressions to determine feelings and emotions.

At the beginning of the implementation of the graphic novel, small-group discussions, students were provided more explicit instruction on the visual elements used by authors of multimodal texts. This instruction resulted in the completion of a 'visual element' chart that highlighted the definition of each visual element and provided an example of the use of each element from the graphic novel Jack and the Beanstalk. As a whole, the students proved themselves to be very adept at identifying and making meaning from the provided Jack and the Beanstalk visual element examples. Their participation indicated they were already familiar with many of the visual elements—as they had seen them during the daily comic—and that prior to this discussion they were simply lacking the correct vocabulary words to effectively engage in a meaningful discussion about these visual elements. For example, while students had seen many different examples of lettering and onomatopoeia and had subconsciously gathered meaning from both of these visual elements while reading comics, they were unfamiliar with both of these terms and the definition of these terms. Learning the appropriate terms made it possible for students to not only discuss these visual elements with peers but also to consciously and purposefully make meaning from these elements. In other words, the meaning making process behind reading images was brought to the forefront of the students' minds and they were now much more aware of what they were 'reading'.

After two lessons of direct instruction of the visual elements, students made a habit of referring to the 'visual element' chart (created in these two lessons) during their discussions until they had a firmer understanding of the visual elements and knew the correct vocabulary to use. Throughout the course of the graphic novel discussions, minor misunderstandings of visual

elements did arise making it necessary to periodically give a refresher on the visual elements throughout the course of implementation. However, on the whole, the ELLs in this study established themselves as very capable in analyzing and discussing the meaning of visual elements found in their multimodal texts. This finding supports previous students that have underscored the importance of some explicit instruction of visual elements in order to ensure that students are able to properly view and construct meaning from these elements (see for example Risko, Walker-Dalhouse, Bridges, and Wilson, 2011; Criller, 2009). At the same time, this study indicates that students also bring with them some implicit knowledge of how to view and interpret some visual elements.

Multimodal texts were not perceived as easier and reading multimodal texts did not lead to a lack of reading of other texts. One concern for introducing and valuing multimodal texts in the classroom is the perception that these texts are perhaps 'easier' to read than regular texts. There remains a negative perception that students reading comics and graphic novels are not having to use important reading skills and strategies and thus are not making progress in their reading ability (Thompson, 2008; Cary 2004). However, there were several findings in this study that suggest that these negative perceptions of multimodal texts are unwarranted. First, multimodal texts were not 'perceived' as an easier option to read than regular books by most of the ELLs in this study. Students who had high and average reading skills perceived the reading of multimodal texts to either be the same level of difficulty as reading regular books or to be *harder* to read than regular books. These students felt that graphic novels had 'things' the students had 'never seen before' and they had 'harder words' than their regular books. They also felt that they were learning to 'read pictures' for the first time and this 'newness' made reading these books more challenging. Students who had lower reading skills were the only students who

perceived multimodal texts to be easier to read. These students felt that the 'picture support' and the fact that these books 'did not have as many words' helped them to successfully read graphic novels. The students' interview answers suggest that while graphic novels do provide meaningful contextual support to struggling readers they still provide sufficient challenge for competent, successful readers

Additionally, both comics and graphic novels proved to be effective texts to both introduce and practice using important reading skills and strategies. In multimodal lessons, these reading skills were taught more organically with the students themselves often determining areas of interest that were then explored further. Students' high levels of enthusiasm and interest for learning language arts skills within multimodal lessons were particular to these lessons as these positive feelings for learning language arts skills were not observed during regular language arts lessons. It appears that when taught with the context of a multimodal text, language arts skill development benefited from the high degrees of enjoyment and motivation students felt towards these texts.

In addition to greater enthusiasm, multimodal texts also served as a more supportive space in which to introduce new and complex language arts concepts due to enhanced multimodal contextual support. This finding was observed most frequently in the teacher-led graphic novel discussions as these discussions included time for students to practice reading strategies within the context of specific pages in their graphic novel. A good example of the effectiveness of multimodal texts for introducing reading skills and strategies is how the students in this study were taught to identify the 'theme' of a story. Identifying theme was something the students had no previous experiences with and it was a skill that was first introduced to them in the graphic novels, teacher-led discussions. The teacher mentioned that students in the past had

struggled with learning to identify themes within stories, making it a good skill to introduce and reinforce in teacher-led, graphic novel discussions. Findings from the transcribed teacher-led discussions suggest that students were very successful in learning the purpose of themes and in identifying themes in their graphic novels. One reason for students' success with identifying theme is that all students came to the discussions with a very strong understanding of the story—as indicated by their high quality discussion responses and their completed independent work. This strong understanding of the story allowed students to concentrate solely on what 'theme' means and how to identify themes rather than being caught up with an underdeveloped understanding of the story. The transcribed teacher-led, graphic novel discussions clearly indicate that not only do students use reading skills and strategies when reading multimodal texts but also that these texts are actually effective spaces for authentically teaching these skills and strategies.

Another concern with introducing multimodal texts into the classroom is that students will begin reading only multimodal texts and will become reluctant to read other texts (Thompson, 2008; Cary 2004). In this study, ELLs who were in the high or middle reading level groups continued to read regular texts at the same rate as they did prior to the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach. However, students who were placed in the lowest reading group did rely a bit more on graphic novels during the implementation process. For example, Camila, Alex, and Mia consistently brought their current graphic novel with them to read during reader's workshop and graphic novels tended to be the only books they read at home. It is important to note, however, that these students were all very reluctant readers before implementation and they rarely filled out their home reading log previous to the introduction of graphic novels. The teacher mentioned that all three of these students showed little to no interest

in reading prior to the introduction of multimodal texts and that it was a struggle to get them interested in reading. Introducing multimodal texts, therefore, resulted in these students actually being engaged in reading in a way that they had previously not been.

At the end of the implementation process, the teacher and I collaboratively planned a way to get students to transfer some of their excitement for multimodal texts to non-multimodal, chapter books. We did this by creating small-group, chapter book discussions that we ran in the exact same way that we did the small-group, graphic novel discussions. I also presented a mini-lesson (of approximately 10 minutes duration) discussing how chapter books are similar to graphic novels and how students can visualize in their minds what these books would look like in graphic form. During this time, I also mentioned that these books were about the same length as graphic novels, hoping to lessen the intimidation factor of these books. While we did not want to squash any of their excitement for graphic novels, we also wanted students to begin expanding their reading repertoire to include chapter books, as this was something that would be required of them in fourth grade. This was quite successful and students took quickly to the chapter books. While the chapter books were not as inherently motivating as the graphic novels, the way we introduced the books provided enough incentive for students to give them a chance. For example, in a group interview, one student mentioned that when she saw the Amelia Bedelia book she 'thought it was going to be boring' but then when she started reading it she 'thought it was really funny and Amelia was doing all these crazy things'. By the time I left the classroom, the students in the lowest reading group were still very interested in graphic novels but they were also beginning to add short chapter books and other books to their reading repertoire. This finding suggests that while some students may start off wanting to read only graphic novels these students will eventually add more variety to their reading if encouraged and helped to do so.

It is important to note that not everyone working with these students was as positive about graphic novels as the focus teacher and I were. The third grade teacher who ran the reader's workshop for the lowest reading level third graders did complain that both Camila and Alex were bringing graphic novels to her classroom and that they appeared to be interested only in reading graphic novels. This complaint occurred just after the first round of small-group, graphic novel discussions. While the teacher and I valued the enthusiasm these students held for graphic novels—especially since they had shown no enthusiasm for other texts—the third grade teacher held the belief that these books were getting in the way of more 'traditional reading'. However, this study found that both Camila and Alex's 'I will only read graphic novels' attitude was temporary and that by the end of the study they were becoming more open to other texts. While there clearly remains a concern in schools about students wanting to read only multimodal texts, this study found that even those students most interested in multimodal texts eventually incorporate a variety of texts into their reading.

The multimodal literacy approach is effective for introducing students to more cognitively and socially demanding tasks. Recent studies have shown that literacy instruction for ELLs continues to be narrowly focused on learning isolated skills (see for example Toohey, 1998; Norton & Toohey, 2001; Sharkey & Layzer, 2000). In comparison to their English speaking peers—whose instruction affords them the opportunity to engage in cognitively demanding text discussions and comprehension activities—ELLs are more likely to be working individually on cognitively undemanding skills based activities and worksheets. These types of activities are completely disconnected from quality children's literature and meaningful discussion and are neither socially nor cognitively demanding. As described in chapter four, the literacy instruction in this study's focus classroom was no exception. Regular language arts

instruction was dominated by decontextualized, skills based instruction and students—especially those with lower English literacy skills—had few opportunities to engage in cognitively and socially demanding tasks.

The multimodal literacy approach implemented in this study proved to be an effective approach for scaffolding ELLs in successfully participating in cognitively and socially demanding instruction and tasks. This supports Cummins' (2000) theory that ELLs are more than capable to successfully in cognitively and socially challenging tasks when provided with appropriate contextual linguistic supports. During multimodal lessons, students answered higher level thinking questions (rather than fact-based, right or wrong questions), developed personal opinions about characters and events, synthesized and applied their developing understanding, and cooperatively constructed meaning from texts with peers. The ELLs were more than capable of doing these more complex tasks within the context of multimodal instruction and multimodal texts and many students were actually more successful in these cognitively and socially demanding tasks than they were in more the simplistic, skills-based tasks.

Not surprisingly, students initially found the more open ended instruction of these demanding tasks difficult as they struggled to put aside the routines and beliefs they had developed during their typical language arts instruction that was more structured and closed ended. During the first few weeks of implementation, I noticed that students were inclined to write the same answers as their neighbor for open ended questions and there was a notable lack of creativity in students' answers as they were still clinging slightly to their 'finish fast' mentality. However, after spending time sharing with students the most creative and detailed answers from their peers, there was a notable shift in the way students approached these demanding tasks. For example, students started to really enjoy open ended questions and, rather

than stressing about correct answers, they began proudly sharing their unique answers with their tablemates. By the time students started participating in the graphic novel discussions, they had already shifted their expectations and understandings, and this helped them to appropriately engage in the cognitively and socially demanding discussions immediately. So while ELLs were more than capable of making the shift from the routine, skills-based tasks to more demanding lessons, it is important to note that there was a shift that needed to be made and it was not instantaneous.

In What Ways Might a Multimodal Literacy Approach (Anchored in Graphic Novels) be Used to Enhance ELLs' Sense of Belonging and Perceptions of Community Membership?

Prior to discussing the themes relating to the second research question, the meanings used in this study for the terms belonging, acceptance, and community membership are reviewed. This is followed by a brief review of the theoretical foundation of this study—which lays out the connection between multimodal instruction and acceptance. These three essential terms (belonging, acceptance, classroom membership) along with this study's theoretical foundation are essential aspects of this second research question and the arising themes directly relate back to both.

Meanings of Belonging, Acceptance, and Classroom Membership. For the purposes of this study, the robustness of membership in a classroom community is defined as the degree and quality of access a student has to the valued resources, practices, and identities of the classroom community (Wenger, 1998, Iddings, 2005). Classroom membership is a complex concept that is closely related to the degrees of peripherality and legitimacy afforded to a student. To review, *peripherality* is the existence of openings or ways of gaining access to sources of understanding which newcomers are given through their growing involvement within the

community. An opening in a classroom community refers to accessible moments that allow students to exhibit their knowledge and skills in a way that is appreciated and beneficial for student learning. *Legitimacy* refers to the degree to which a newcomer is viewed and treated as a "potential" contributing member of the community by other members (Wenger, 1998). The degree of *legitimacy* offered is determined by the extent to which a newcomer is viewed as someone with skills, characteristics, and values that are consistent with and have benefit for the greater community. Students within the same classroom communities can hold vastly different degrees of legitimacy and peripherality with some students struggling to obtain adequate levels of classroom membership and acceptance.

The more robust degrees of peripherality and legitimacy made available to a student the more they are accepted into the classroom community and the closer they are to full membership. Community membership is not something that is constant. Rather degrees of membership can fluctuate as students moderate and negotiate their membership through the nuanced student-student and teacher-student interactions that harness such fluid opportunities. Full members of a classroom community are those students who are fully active participants and share responsibility for the learning that occurs (Hannikainen & Rasku-Puttonen, 2010).

Degrees of peripherality and legitimacy afforded to a student are directly tied to how 'accepted' a student is by their peers. Peer acceptance can be defined as the extent to which a student is considered amiable by his or her peers and is closely related to feelings of loneliness and belonging (Goodenaw, 1993; Mouratidis and Sideridis, 2009). A student's sense of acceptance in a classroom community is heavily influence by the amount of peer support and teacher support they are provided as well as their general sense of belonging to the class (Goodenaw, 1993). A student's pattern of social recognition and social behavior can also

influence the amount of social acceptance they receive. There is a difference, however, between one's actual level of classroom acceptance and one's *perception* of one's acceptance. Perception of competence is also known as one's belief of self-efficacy. Bandura (1995) describes self-efficacy as 'the personal beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. Efficacy beliefs influence how people think, feel, and motivate themselves' (pg. 2). Perception of one's competence—whether academic or social—has a strong influence on one's motivation, engagement, and determination to actively participate with a task. Indeed, the extent to which a learner perceives that they are competent is often a greater predictor of success than their actual ability to do a task (Kennedy, 2010).

Review of this Study's Theoretical Foundations. Three theories intersect to form the theoretical foundations of my study: Lave and Wenger's (1991) sociocultural 'communities of practice' theory; Cummins' (1979, 2000) framework highlighting the importance of engaging ELLs in contextually-embedded, cognitively demanding communication tasks; and the multimodal theory of communication (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). Each of these theories will be briefly reviewed and then a description of how they intersect will be provided.

The sociocultural 'communities of practice' theory proposes that classroom acceptance is a process. This process—known as legitimate peripheral participation—involves interaction and engagement with community oldtimers as a way of familiarizing newcomers with the practices and ways of the community. The length and success of this process are dependent upon the degree of legitimacy (social capital and credibility) and peripherality (openings) offered to the newcomer. Communities offer differing degrees of legitimacy and peripherality and particular members of the same community may be given varying degrees of legitimacy and peripherality.

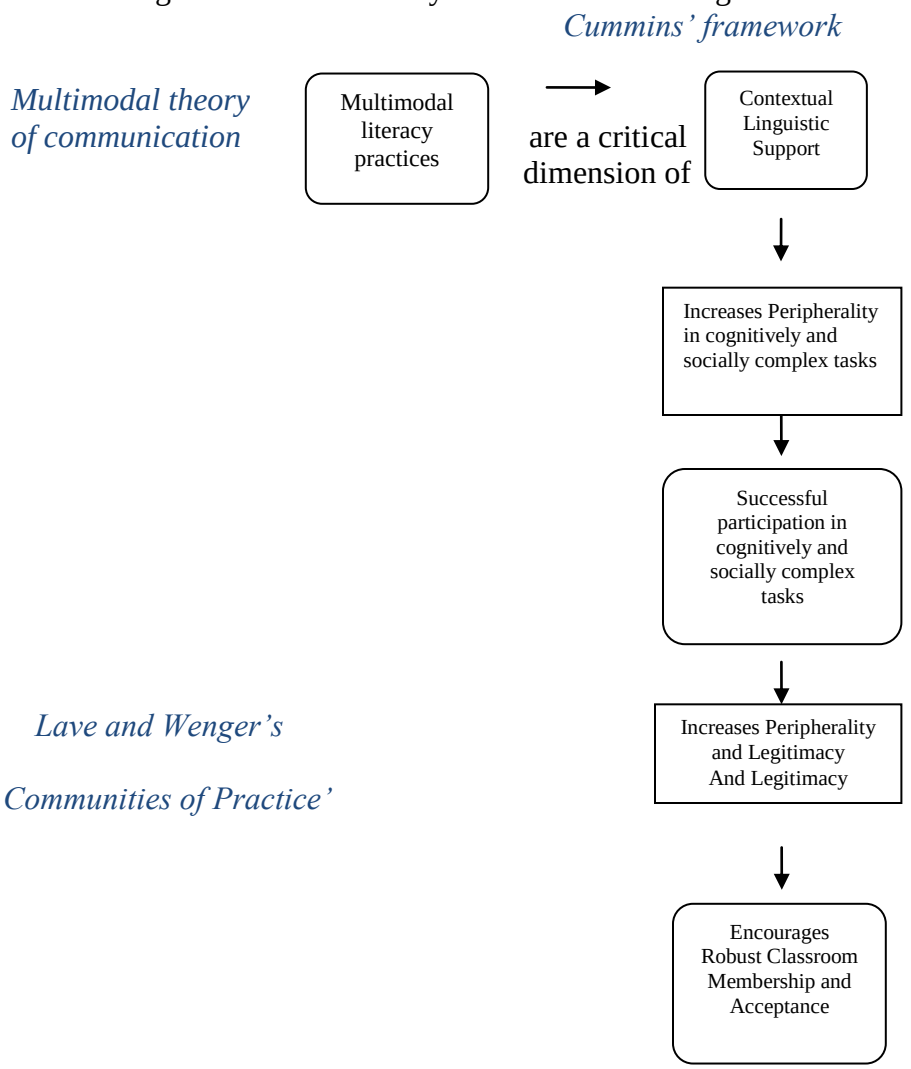
Cummins (2000) theorizes that language and content knowledge are acquired most effectively when ELLs are provided contextual linguistic supports to assist them in successfully engaging in cognitively challenging activities. Cummins' influential foundational work, published in 1979, delineates a continuum of language development beginning with basic interpersonal conversational skills (BICS) and moving towards cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). While most ELLS achieve proficiency in BICS within 12-24 months, CALP may take up to seven years to obtain. Some degree of CALP is generally required for participation in cognitively challenging classroom activities—including activities requiring interpretation, analysis, and application of knowledge and understandings. ELLs often need additional scaffolding—in the form of contextual linguistic supports—for many years in their new language to ensure their robust participation in these meaningful classroom activities. Successful engagement in socially and cognitively demanding tasks is crucial for ELLs' academic development and eventual transition to cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP).

The multimodal theory of communication postulates that people construct meaning–as well as distribute, interpret, and remake meaning-- through many representational and communicational resources, of which language is but one (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001). In addition to language, people communicate using images, gestures, colors, shapes, textures, positions in space, sizes, and patterns (Schwartz & Rubinstein-Avila, 2006). Students benefit when afforded opportunities to conceptualize meaning through a variety of modes. While language-based communication is essential, additional communicational resources can enhance and amplify a student's communication repertoire (Kress & van Leeuwan, 2001).

Figure 6.1 demonstrates how these theories intersect:

Figure 6.1

Using Multimodal Literacy Practices to Encourage Robust Classroom Membership



As shown in Figure 6.1, multimodal literacy practices are a crucial aspect of providing contextual linguistic support for ELLs. These contextual linguistic supports can provide appropriate openings for ELLs' to engage in important cognitively demanding tasks (Cummins, 2000). Successful participation in cognitively and socially demanding tasks assists in positioning a student as a capable community member and can increase the number of classmates willing to work with and listen to the student—thus increasing both their legitimacy and peripherality

(Cummins, 2000; Wenger, 1998). Enhanced peripherality and legitimacy can increase a student's overall classroom membership and acceptance (Wenger, 1998).

Overall, the patterns and particularities that arose in this study's focus classroom further support the intersection of these three theories in the way presented in figure 6.1. The following sections will include a step-by-step discussion of how the data supported and enhanced each aspect of figure 6.1 as well as a discussion of all findings that indicate limitations or cautions in relation to figure 6.1.

Multimodal literacy practices increase ELLs' peripherality in cognitively and socially complex tasks. Beginning at the top of figure 6.1, it was hypothesized that the implementation of a multimodal literacy approach would increase ELLs' peripherality in cognitively and socially complex tasks by providing necessary contextual support. The findings of this study indicate that the contextual support provided by the multimodal literacy practices did increase ELLs' peripherality in these complex tasks. This contextual support was provided in two ways. First, the picture support in multimodal texts helped support the reading comprehension of ELLs who struggled to understand the more typical classroom texts (i.e. texts that the entire class was reading). During regular language arts instruction, ELLs with limited English reading abilities often struggled to read classroom texts. Their lack of comprehension of these texts placed a barrier up that prevented them from actively participating in and completing activities and discussions that required a solid understanding of these texts. Multimodal texts proved to be much more accessible for these ELLs due to the enhanced contextual support provided by the images and the reduced amount of English text . Their enhanced understanding of multimodal texts provided them with more accessible openings (i.e. peripherality) to participate in activities and discussions that required this deep understanding of a classroom text.

The second way the implementation of a multimodal approach provided contextual support was by reducing the English communication skills needed to share thoughts and ideas with teachers and peers. Previous to the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach, the ELLs in this classroom were often limited to written and verbal forms of English communication. This proved to be an obstacle for those students with limited English skills—in particular Camila and Mia—and often prevented these students from being able to appropriately access tasks. In multimodal lessons, students were encouraged to use various modes of communication when answering questions or communicating ideas. For example, students who struggled with written and verbal forms of English communication were able to use gestures and visual representations in order to successfully express their ideas. The inclusion of multiple modes of communication created more accessible openings (i.e. peripherality) for ELLs to express ideas to their teachers and peers.

It should be noted that while the implementation of a multimodal literacy strategy did enhance students' peripherality, the farther a lesson strayed from the use of multiple modes of communication the less peripherality these students had. For example, some students still struggled at times to answer reading comprehension questions about multimodal tasks because this task still required them to read and write in English text. This finding suggests that adding one multimodal element to a lesson may not be enough if there are other parts of a lesson that require students to still rely on written or spoken forms of communication.

Enhanced peripherality led to successful participation and engagement in cognitively and socially complex tasks. In figure 6.1, it was hypothesized that the enhanced peripherality provided to ELLs by the contextual support provided by multimodal literacy strategies would lead to successful participation and engagement in cognitively and socially

complex tasks. There was the possibility that the contextual support provided by a multimodal literacy approach would not provide ELLs with enough peripherality to result in their success in these complex tasks. However, the findings of this study do indicate that the enhanced peripherality provided by the multimodal contextual support was enough to lead to successful participation and engagement by all students in cognitively and socially complex tasks. Student success was noted on various levels including increased participation rates, higher quality work, increased instances of high quality participation and engagement, and more advanced participative roles taken up by all students. Each of these areas of success will be discussed in detail below followed by an overall discussion of student success in cognitively and socially complex tasks.

Increased participation rates. The most obvious and concrete way ELLs achieved success in cognitive and socially complex tasks was the increase in the rate of participation of students during literature discussions especially for students who held lower membership status. The data found that students who rarely participated in whole class literature discussions were much more actively involved in the small-group, graphic novel discussions. For example, Lucia, Mia, and Emily—the three students with the least number of turns during whole-class discussions—all increased the frequency of their participation during these discussions. A related finding is that while there was still a difference in the number of turns taken between the frequent participators and the less-frequent participators in the graphic novel discussions this difference was not nearly as large in graphic novel discussions as it was in regular literature discussions. In other words, all students' voices were being heard at relatively the same rate in the graphic novel discussions while higher status students tended to dominate regular literature discussions. Additionally, observational data suggest that all students –including lower

membership status students—actively participated in other non discussion-based multimodal lessons (i.e. lessons involving the student creation of graphic novels). While most low membership status students were quite silent and passive during non discussion-based lessons within regular language arts instruction, these students were all quite involved in multimodal lesson and their voices were frequently heard from.

Higher quality work. Another way that the ELLs achieved success in cognitively and socially complex tasks was through the production of higher quality work. This high quality work took on various forms: correct answers to reading comprehension questions, enhanced verbal responses in literature discussions, and completed written/created stories. First, students' ability to answer reading comprehension questions—in particular those questions that required higher level thinking skills—improved when the questions related to multimodal texts. This improvement was most notable in the ELLs who tended to struggle the most during regular language arts instruction. It should be noted, however, that lower reading level students still had fewer correct answers than the higher reading level students. While their reading comprehension was adequately supported by the graphic novels, these students still found the task of writing answers to English reading comprehension questions to be partially inaccessible—even if they were given the option of writing answers in Spanish. It was not uncommon for these students to verbally answer similar questions correctly that they got wrong in their reader's notebook. These students were also much more successful in answering reading comprehension questions when they were able to visually represent their answer rather than write.

The verbal responses ELLs gave during literature discussions also increased in quality when the discussions involved a multimodal text. As described in chapter four, all transcribed literature discussions were coded according to the quality of student responses. There were four

levels of quality: exceptional, standard, simple, and very simple. All students experienced an increase in the quality of their responses in graphic novel discussions when compared to their responses in regular literature discussions. The most important finding here, however, was that all four of the lower membership status students had more exceptional and standard responses than they did simple and very limited responses in the graphic novel discussions. This was a complete turnaround from the quality of their responses in regular literature discussions where the majority of their responses were either simple or very limited.

Finally, students showed improvement in their ability to write stories. During regular language arts lessons, writing was an area that clearly distinguished capable learners from those 'less capable'. Students with lower English literacy skills were often unable to complete even the most simplistic writing tasks and they often became frustrated and disengaged when asked to complete longer writing tasks. This was not the case when students were asked to create their own graphic novels. The first step in this process was to write short outlines for their imagined stories. While lower ability students had shorter outlines that used more simplistic sentences, with respect to content, these students were just as successful in writing a coherent and creative outline as the higher ability students. Observational notes indicate that student enthusiasm for writing a graphic novel and the fact that this was an open-ended writing task contributed to their success. When it came to creating their actual graphic novel, all students were very successful. Unlike other writing tasks, lower ability students did not require extra assistance from the teacher and the quality of their work was on par with higher ability students. The only difference is that the lower status students relied more on their pictures to tell their story and less on their words, while higher ability students used more narrative boxes and longer speech bubbles.

Increased instances of high quality participation and engagement. Another way that the ELLs achieved success in cognitively and socially complex tasks was through an increase of high quality participation and engagement in these tasks. As discussed in chapter four, all audio-recorded literature discussions were coded for evidence of high quality participation and engagement. The following is a review of the codes that were used:

High Quality Participation: Confidence/Risk Taking (asking questions, disagreeing, holding stance, and admit not understanding), taking leadership role, moved the conversation forward, and shared unique thought or idea

High Quality Engagement: Evidence of higher level thinking (HLT) and thoughtfulness, no 'bare minimum' mentality/taking time, well thought out question, excitement/anticipation, desire to understand (peer or general)

Overall, there was markedly more evidence of high quality participation and engagement in small-group, graphic novel discussions in comparison to the regular literature discussions. All four of the lower status students identified had a higher percentage of participative turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement during the graphic novel discussions than they did in regular discussions. For many of the higher status students, the number of their turns reflecting high quality participation and engagement increased as well. However, this was due to an increase in their number of turns taken as the percentage of their turns reflecting high quality participation stayed approximately the same.

These findings indicate that rather than considerably increasing the quality of all students' participation and engagement, the graphic novel discussions actually worked to even out the discrepancy that was found in the regular language arts discussions between the high and low membership status students. While these data do not explain why these discussions evened out this discrepancy rather than simply increasing the quality of all students' participative turns, the interview data provide some indication of why this happened. During the second group

interviews, students with lower membership status—who also tended to have lower level English literacy skills—all stated that they perceived graphic novels to be easier to both read and to discuss. This was not the case with students with high membership status. These students stated that they found graphic novels to be either the same or even harder to read and discuss. This suggests that perhaps a reason for why high membership status students' percentage of participative turns did not drastically improve is that they did not necessarily need the increased peripherality that the graphic novels provided. For these students, they were already able to engage in high quality participation during discussions using non-multimodal supports because they already had high degrees of peripherality. They were able to access these texts due to their high English skills and they also had the confidence and skills to successfully participate in discussions on these texts.

More advanced participative roles taken up by all students. One final way that the ELLs achieved success in cognitively and socially complex tasks was through taking up more advanced participative roles in graphic novels discussions than in regular literature discussions. In chapter five, the four focus students' participation in literature discussions was further analyzed according to communicative functions, discourse moves, interaction sequences, and participatory roles (Kovalainen & Kumpluainen, 2007). The results of this analysis suggested that all four focus students increased the types of communicative functions, discourse moves, and interaction sequences they participated in or used in the graphic novel discussions in comparison to regular literature discussions. In terms of communicative functions, the success of the focus students in using a wider variety of communicative functions during the graphic novels discussions suggests that, when provided external textual support (i.e., picture support in multimodal texts), ELLs are more than capable of engaging with a wide variety of questions that

requires them to use diverse communicative functions. For discourse moves, the students went from being primarily responsive participants to initiating topics of discussion and evaluating and guiding the course of the discussion. One interesting finding from the discourse moves data set was that Camila and Alex, the two lower status focus students, actually had more initiations in the teacher led, graphic novel discussions than their higher status peers. This suggests that initiating topics of conversation was equally accessible to the lower membership status students as it was for the higher membership status students during graphic novel discussions.

With regards to interaction sequences, there was some evidence that Camila was still struggling to gain the level of peripherality enjoyed by her peers. Overall, both the regular literature discussions and the teacher-led, graphic novel discussions were dominated by teacher initiated sequences while the student-led, graphic novel discussions were dominated by student initiated sequences (no T). Camila distinguished herself from the group by relying the most on teacher initiated bilateral sequences—even during the student-led discussions. This indicates that despite the fact that these discussions offered Camila more peripherality than the regular literature discussions, she still frequently relied on teacher support during the graphic novel discussions suggesting that the discussions were perhaps not as accessible for her as they were for the other focus students.

The focus students' positive changes with regards to communicative functions, discourse moves, and interaction sequences resulted in all four focus students taking up very vocal participative roles in graphic novel discussions. Three of the students—Alex, Tomas, and Emma—fit perfectly into the vocal participant category as they all had a high amount of participation, they were engaged in a variety of interaction sequences, they used a large variety of communicative functions, and they used all three discourse moves examined. Camila was the

focus student whose participatory role changed the most from regular literature discussions to the graphic novel discussions. While she was not quite a perfect fit for the vocal participant category, she was certainly no longer a silent participant. In graphic novel discussions, Camila had a high degree of participation, used a variety of communicative functions and engaged in a larger variety of interaction sequences. Unlike her peers, however, Camila still relied on teacher initiated and teacher supported sequences and she still did not engage in follow-ups. Overall, all four focus students made progress in terms of taking up more advanced participatory roles in the graphic novel discussions as compared to the roles they took up in regular literature discussions.

Overall discussion of student success in cognitively and socially complex tasks. Student success in cognitively and socially complex tasks was observed through increased participation rates, higher quality work, increased instances of high quality and participation and engagement, and more advanced participative roles taken up by students. Lower status students made noticeable strides in their achievement levels in multimodal lessons. For example, the large increase in their participation rates during graphic novels meant that they were no longer standing out as the 'non-participants' or the 'students who never talked' and instead they blended in with their classmates as equal contributors. While lower status students' achievement did not necessarily 'catch up' to the higher status students' achievement, the achievement and success levels of lower status students was much more similar to the achievement of their higher status peers during multimodal lessons than they were during regular language arts lessons. Additionally, observational data indicate that it was common for all students to be very successful in the cognitively and socially complex multimodal lessons. This high level of success was quite rare in the less demanding regular language arts lessons.

Successful participation and engagement in cognitively and socially complex tasks led to increased legitimacy and peripherality. As predicted in Figure 6.1, success in these tasks did further increase the degrees of legitimacy and peripherality ELLs were offered during these tasks. The data suggest that the success of lower status students in these complex tasks helped to increase their legitimacy in three ways. First, their peers were able to see them successfully complete tasks and participate in lessons and this encouraged their peers to view them as 'more capable' classroom members. For example, during the daily comic the lower status students were able to come up with some very creative answers to the comprehension questions and they were often among the three students selected daily to share their answers to the whole class. By witnessing lower status students' successes, the other students were able to see these students in a more positive light and as a result they offered those students higher degrees of legitimacy.

The second way in which lower status students' legitimacy was increased was by their peers witnessing their increased confidence and self-assuredness. Observational data indicate that the success of the lower status students during multimodal lessons quickly resulted in changes in the overall attitudes of these students during these lessons. They were much more confident and self-assured. During graphic novel discussions these students were observed sitting straight up, smiling, and sitting right next to their peers rather than positioning themselves slightly back from the group. For example, when Camila walked confidently to reader's workshop with her graphic novel and talked confidently about her novel with peers she was beginning to position herself as a capable member of the community. Her peers were able to see her as someone who was confident in not only her academic skills but also herself—which helped to reinforce her positioning as a 'capable' community member. In this way, the

confidence and self-assuredness that came with successfully participating worked to further increase Camila's positioning within these tasks.

One final way in which lower status students' legitimacy was increased was through the enhanced feeling of connection with their peers that resulted of being able take part in the enjoyment of shared classroom text (i.e. one that the entire class is reading and enjoying together). Students in the focus classroom placed a high value on multimodal texts. Graphic novels were considered 'cool', 'funny', and 'challenging to read'. As a result of the high status of graphic novels, anyone reading a graphic novel or discussing what they had read in a graphic novel benefited from doing so as they were engaging in a highly valued practice. For the students with lower degrees of membership, they often struggled to take part in valued classroom practices because they were either left out entirely or the practice exceeded their academic or language abilities. Being able to engage with graphic novels and discuss the characters and plots with their peers worked to enhance their legitimacy because they were finally able to take part in an important, valued social practice with their peers.

The observed actions of the lower status students also provided evidence they were indeed being offered higher legitimacy in the above mentioned ways. As already discussed, lower status students began participating more, were more confident in their abilities, and participated in ways that indicated that they were feeling comfortable about their status in multimodal lessons (i.e. asking questions, sharing unique thoughts, defending their answers, and taking on leadership roles). All of these actions are evidence that they were benefiting from higher degrees of acceptance (i.e. legitimacy) in these lessons as compared to regular language arts lessons.

The actions of the higher status students also provided evidence that lower status students were being offered higher degrees of legitimacy. For example, as discussed in chapter five, the

focus students' social engagement in literature discussions was coded and analyzed for evidence of legitimacy and peripherality. The findings in this data set suggest that higher status students frequently offered legitimacy to lower status students during graphic novel discussions. They offered this legitimacy in several ways. First, higher status students showed increased interest in what lower status students were saying by commenting on what they said, agreeing or disagreeing with what they said, or asking questions about what was said. Higher status students also seemed more eager to help lower status students. If a student was struggling to participate, instead of ignoring that student or moving on to someone else, students would step in and help that student participate. This showed that they had a genuine interest in what the struggling students had to say. Additionally, higher status students would include lower status students if they were being quiet. Rather than continuing a discussion without input from a quiet student, students would take time to ask the quiet students what they thought about an idea or answer. All of these actions taken by higher status students are additional evidence that lower status students were benefiting from higher degrees of acceptance (i.e. legitimacy) in multimodal lessons as compared to regular language arts lessons.

In terms of peripherality, lower status students were already enjoying enhanced peripherality in cognitively and socially complex tasks due to the contextual support provided by multimodal literacy practices. However, their success in these complex tasks also resulted in them being providing additional peripherality. Much of this additional peripherality was due to the enhanced legitimacy they were being offered (as discussed above). For example, due to the enhanced interest of higher status students, lower status students were more likely to be asked questions about their ideas or to be called on to participate. Both of these situations provided additional openings (i.e. peripherality) for lower status students to take part in the discussion.

Additionally, questions or topics raised by lower status students were more likely to taken up for discussion due to the higher degree of legitimacy being offered to these students. This created yet another opening (i.e. peripherality) for lower status students to take part in and impact the discussion.

There are two additional findings regarding the increased legitimacy and peripherality of lower status students in multimodal lessons. First, the increase in the participation rates of lower status students in graphic novel discussions was found to be essential when it came to the negotiation of legitimacy and peripherality. During regular literature discussions, higher membership status students such as Tomas and Emma were successfully able to appeal for and gain higher degrees of legitimacy through their frequent and high quality participation. Unfortunately, many lower membership status students were not as successful in their negotiation attempts due to the very limited amount of participation some lower membership status students had—in particular Lucia, Mia, and Camila. These three students participated so little that there was really no opportunity for them to gain higher degrees of peripherality and legitimacy. Instead, their limited participation worked to reinforce the status quo and indicated to the other students that they were indeed 'less capable' community contributors. During graphic novel discussions, Lucia, Mia, and Camila participated to the extent that they were finally able to negotiate their lower status. The more turns these three students took the more opportunities there were for their peers to hear their ideas and to comment and validate those ideas.

One final finding is the important role student-led discussions played in the negotiation of membership status. In comparison to teacher-led, graphic novel discussions, there was a higher percentage of 'desire to understand peer' codes found in student led discussions. Any action that indicated interest in what a peer was saying or thinking—such as commenting on what someone

said or asking someone what they thought of an answer—was included under the ‘desire to understand a peer’ coding category. The fact that there was a higher percentage of these codes found in student-led discussions indicates that when the teacher stepped back from a discussion the students in this study showed a greater desire to understand and listen to their peers. This finding indicates that student-led discussions create an additional opening for students to negotiate legitimacy in a way that is not often possible in teacher-led discussions. With students in control of the conversation, they were encouraged to engage with each other in ways they were not expected to in teacher-led discussions. For example, they were responsible for calling on students to participate, for asking follow-up questions that clarified their peers’ answers, and for monitoring the course of the discussion. By encouraging these actions, the student-led discussions created spaces for students to interact with one another in new and more meaningful ways.

Increased legitimacy and peripherality impacted overall classroom membership status. In the final box of Figure 6.1, it is predicted that that increased legitimacy and peripherality would positively impact students’ overall classroom membership. Unlike the other sections of Figure 6.1, the findings of this study do not necessarily support that this impact occurred—at least to the degree that was anticipated. Throughout the implementation process, multimodal literacy instruction remained an add-on to the more traditional instructional approach that still dominated overall instruction. For students like Alex and Camila—whose lived experiences drastically improved during multimodal instruction—this meant that the majority of their instruction remained inaccessible and that they continued to experience a lack of success. Unfortunately, the positive changes in their behavior, such as increased confidence and engagement, did not carry over to regular language arts instruction. Lower status students still

found themselves to be woefully unable to access these tasks and thus resorted back to the same avoidance strategies seen prior to the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach. These avoidance strategies included being a silent participant, covering up their work so others could not see it, seeking teacher assistance before attempting a task, and shutting down. Additionally, the other students appeared almost reluctant as they were before to work with lower status students during regular language arts instruction.

There were two exceptions to this. First, outside instructional time (i.e. before and after school and at lunch) lower status students were still benefiting from their enhanced membership status that they gained during multimodal lessons. For example, Alex was still sought out by peers to discuss graphic novels and to share findings in new graphic novels. Additionally, Camila continued to confidently independently read graphic novels and she did carry with her an enhanced confidence in her ability to independently read books—including short chapter books. These positive changes certainly benefited these lower status students during non-instructional time and do indicate that their overall classroom membership status was slightly impacted by the addition of multimodal literacy strategies.

Another exception was when the classroom teacher made an explicit connection between a regular language arts task and the multimodal lessons. For example, one morning during homework check the class was discussing the problem and solution in the short story they read at home. Students were clearly struggling to identify both the problem and solution so the classroom teacher made a connection to the graphic novels that were read in small groups. She took them through a review of all the problems and solutions in those graphic novels as a way to remind them how to identify problem and solution. This immediately resulted in more enthusiasm as well as a deeper discussion of problem and solution and led to Lucia and Mia—

two lower status students—to raise their hand and correctly identify the problem and solution in their homework. The students' reactions in this example were quite typical any time the teacher would make connections between a current task and the multimodal lessons or tasks.

Overall, however, the classroom still remained a difficult and unwelcoming place for lower status students most of the time. It appears as though these students were provided much higher classroom membership status during multimodal lessons than they were during regular language arts lessons. This suggests that not only is classroom membership status in constant flux—a notion that was understood before this study—but also that students can hold varying levels of classroom membership at the same time depending on a given task or activity. Students appeared to distinguish that while lower status students were fully competent during multimodal lessons this did not mean that they were fully competent during regular lessons and they acted accordingly. For example, while students were eager to listen to and discuss lower status students' ideas in the graphic novel discussions, they were still reluctant to do so during regular literature discussions. The actions of the lower status students differed as well. During regular literature discussions they regressed to being quieter participants further reinforcing their position in these discussions as 'less capable'.

Instructional Implications: Key Factors for Implementing a Multimodal Literacy Approach Successfully

There were several important instructional implications that arose from this study with regard to implementing multimodal literacy approaches in classrooms similar to one in this study (i.e. high percentage of ELL students in a low SES school). First and foremost, teachers should take measures to fully integrate the multimodal literacy approach within their general, more typical instruction. To do this, a teacher should consistently incorporate and value multimodal

representation (Zammit, 2011). Unfortunately, this was not done in the focus classroom. The focus teacher in this study was under tremendous pressure to 'prepare' her students for the upcoming standardized tests. Her school approached this preparation by emphasizing traditional methods of instruction as well as doing repeated test preparation. This included answering test prep questions (referred to as the 'Do Now' activity) as part of daily language arts instruction and it was not uncommon for this activity alone to take upwards of 30 minutes a day. Multimodal instruction—while valued with regards to its success in getting students motivated and engaged while working on higher level thinking skills—was not viewed by the teacher as something that would help prepare students for the standardized tests. Quite simply, any time spent on multimodal instruction was viewed as time spent away from preparing for the test—which of course was decidedly not multimodal.

As a result, there remained two types of instruction in the focus classroom—multimodal instruction and regular instruction. The inclusion of a multimodal literacy approach provided spaces within the classroom community where both high and low status students could finally experience feelings of success, competency, and enjoyment. However, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the enhanced classroom membership that lower status students experienced in multimodal instruction did not fully transfer over to regular instruction. This meant that the overall benefits of the addition of multimodal literacy strategies were limited. Due to this, the lower status students (Camila, Alex, Lucia, and Mia) still spent much of their day participating and engaging in the ways they had prior to the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach. Their feelings of success, competency, and enjoyment were somewhat limited to multimodal lessons and those lessons sharing a connection with multimodal instruction. Clearly, the goal of our classrooms should be to establish communities where these feelings are the norm

for all students rather than the exception. The findings in this study indicate that this requires multimodal literacy methods to be fully integrated into instruction rather than added on as a supplement. Unfortunately, this integration can be challenging when working within a climate that values and relies upon more 'traditional' methods of instruction as the means of best preparing students.

In addition to fully integrating the multimodal literacy approach, this study found that explicit instruction about the various modes of communication, including direct instruction on how to make meaning out of different modes, was essential to advance students' ability to effectively discuss multimodal texts and to move their interpretation of modes beyond a basic level. This explicit instruction does not need to be lengthy and it does not all have to be front loaded when implementing multimodal literacy practices. As mentioned earlier, the ELLs in this study were quite competent at deriving meaning from the visual elements in multimodal texts on a very basic level without much initial direct instruction. For example, students were able to derive meaning from the colors used and the facial expressions of characters during the daily comic with very little teacher intervention. However, the two-day instructional read aloud of Jack and the Beanstalk, which included direct instruction of visual elements, was essential to move students' understanding of visual elements from basic to advanced. After the direct instruction, students were able to describe the way perspective was used to create meaning, to describe the variety of uses of font sizes used to express emotion, and to describe the way shapes were used to reinforce the important elements of the story.

As with all literacy instruction, this direct instruction should take place within the context of an authentic, high quality multimodal text. In this study, all visual elements were taught within the context of reading the graphic novel Jack and the Beanstalk. This book was selected due to

its effective and clear use of visual elements along with the limited amount of text used to tell the story. The students found the visual element examples within Jack and the Beanstalk extremely helpful and they often referred back to these examples when finding similar visual elements in other graphic novels. By placing the direct instruction of visual elements within the context of a rich and engaging, multimodal text, the visual elements were brought to life for the students—making it easier for students to remember and use these examples in their future instruction.

The direct instruction of visual elements also does not need to be completely front loaded and instead can be something that is elaborated on over time. In this study, student misunderstanding of a specific visual element arose periodically throughout the implementation process. This emphasized the importance of reviewing the different visual elements found in multimodal texts. Additionally, as students' understanding of visual elements developed they were capable of more elaborate interpretations and ongoing direct instruction helped to support this development. All small-group graphic novel discussions in this study included time to discuss particular visual elements. This ongoing discussion of visual elements helped support ELLs' ongoing development of their capacity to make meaning from visual elements.

This study also found that the explicit teaching of a metalanguage was essential for students to be able to discuss the meanings behind different visual elements. While students may have previously seen many of the visual elements found in multimodal texts, they did not come into these lessons knowing the technical language to describe these elements. Without a shared metalanguage, it would have been difficult for students to fruitfully discuss the meanings they were deriving from the visual elements found in graphic novels. Additionally, in order for a multimodal literacy approach to enhance a student's classroom membership status and increase their acceptance, their experience with this approach must be a social rather than a solely

independent one. In this study, social interaction and shared discussions were an important part of the multimodal literacy instruction experience for so many students, making it essential for students to acquire the necessary language to communicate with one another effectively. For example, the most important benefit of multimodal instruction for Alex was his enhanced ability to connect with peers through discussing multimodal texts. By not teaching students a shared metalanguage, Alex and his peers would have struggled to create this beneficial, shared experience.

Once the class has collaboratively agreed upon a metalanguage, it is important for the teacher to monitor and enforce the use of that language. When the ELLs in this study were new to using this metalanguage they would often forget to use the metalanguage and would say things like 'and then the author used those three little dots to get you excited' rather than using the proper vocabulary word, 'ellipses'. Therefore, in the beginning, it is important for the teacher to remain vigilant in enforcing a policy of using the proper metalanguage. It did not take long for the ELLs to get into the habit of using these words and they even started using this metalanguage during regular language arts instruction when possible. For example, some of the stories in the students' regular language arts instruction used ellipses and onomatopoeia. Each time students found an example they readily shared their finding with the class using the proper vocabulary.

Limited English skills did not appear to impede any ELL's ability to pick up and understand this metalanguage. Students with limited English skills sometimes struggled with the pronunciation of this new vocabulary; however, they were often able to say something that was close enough to the word that their peers knew which word they were referring to. Additionally, these students fully comprehended the meaning when another student used the word in a

discussion. Clearly, students with limited English skills knew the meanings of these words, once introduced, even if they did struggle to pronounce them.

To conclude, the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) in this study resulted in several instructional implications. Most importantly, this implementation process highlighted the importance of fully integrating multimodal literacy practices into instruction rather than solely using these practices as an add-on to more traditional instruction. Additionally, the findings of this study indicate that direct instruction—taught within the context of authentic, multimodal texts—is a key factor in advancing students' ability to effectively discuss multimodal texts and moving their interpretation of modes beyond a basic level. This direct instruction does not have to be front loaded and should instead be ongoing to better support student learning. Finally, students must be taught and encouraged to use shared metalanguage associated with visual elements to enhance their ability to discuss these elements with their peers.

Limitations of Current Study

Although this research was carefully prepared and conducted, I am aware of some limitations. As a qualitative researcher, I have taken on the axiological assumption that all research is value-laden with biases always present. It is thus my job to bracket my assumptions while fully acknowledging the complexities inherent in understanding human phenomenon. Positioning oneself in a study requires recognizing that one's background—including their own personal, cultural, historical, and professional experiences—shapes their interpretation of what they find and see in their research. I firmly agree that who I am, as well as my personal beliefs and biases, inevitably impacts this research I conducted no matter how careful I was (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2000). In chapter two, I clarified my past experiences, biases, prejudices, and

orientations that have likely shaped my interpretation and approach to this study (Creswell, 2007). In particular, I acknowledged that in my teaching I have always placed a strong emphasis on students' personal development in my classroom. It is my belief that developing one's self-confidence, as well as a strong understanding of self and an appreciation for others, is just as important as developing more academic-based skills. This belief has undoubtedly led me to focus on acceptance and classroom membership in this study as I feel that a sense of belonging within the classroom community is essential for both academic and personal development. I kept all of my identified past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations in mind throughout the research process and continuously questioned how I perceived events and analyzed data.

With my biases in mind, I also took various steps to ensure the validity of my findings. First, my study involved prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the focus classroom for six months. This provided me with ample time to build trust with my participants, learn the culture of the class and school, and to check for misinformation or misunderstandings through daily conversations with participants (Creswell, 2007). I also made use of multiple sources of data collection (observational data, literature conversations data, interview data, student work data, and photographic data) and multiple levels of data analysis (i.e. going through three distinct coding rounds for opening coding and employing various coding strategies to analyze each data set) to provide corroborating evidence and ensure triangulation. I also attempted to make my coding process extremely transparent for readers. To do this, I included a detailed trail of how my codes evolved throughout the three stages of coding. I also ensured that all conflicting data and disconfirming evidence were included in my findings. Additionally, the teacher and I made a habit of reviewing and discussing data as they were collected. During these

discussions, the teacher and I discussed our interpretations of the data collected and I was able to check the accuracy and credibility of my accounts of student participation and engagement.

As an individual case study that focused on one classroom (18 students), I also recognize that it is difficult to make large generalizations based on the study's findings. However, I have created a rich, thick description of this case by detailing the participants, setting (the focus classroom), and teacher and student actions within this study. With this detailed description, readers can determine whether the findings can be transferred because of shared characteristics between their case and the case highlighted in this study. There were also several delimitations that I imposed at the beginning of the study to narrow its scope. This study was delimitated to 3rd grade Hispanic ELLs from low-SES backgrounds. Additionally, while there were a few native English speaking students in the school, there were no native English speakers present in the focus classroom. Results may have varied if working with a different subset of ELLs (i.e. Asian ELLs) or if there was mix of Hispanic ELLs and native English speakers. It is also important to note that the focus classroom was situated in a school that valued the Spanish language and that instruction was, to a degree, bilingual. More than half of all teachers and staff spoke Spanish fluently. Additionally, as mentioned in chapter three, all language arts and math instruction was taught in Spanish in grades K-2 with science and social studies being taught in English. In grade 3, all instruction other than science was taught in English. Results may have varied if the study took place in a school where instruction was taught entirely in English or a school where the Spanish language was not valued.

Future Research

This study provides insight into the role multimodal literacy practices play in enhancing ELLs' classroom membership through increasing the degrees of peripherality and legitimacy of lower status students. However, there is still much that is not known with regards to using multimodal literacy practices with ELLs. First and foremost, additional intensive case studies are needed to further elaborate on the findings of this study. This includes yearlong studies that examine the ways in which ELLs' participation, acceptance, and classroom membership are impacted when a multimodal literacy approach is fully integrated (by consistently incorporating and valuing multimodal representation) within regular instruction. Future avenues include: exploring how best to fully integrate a multimodal literacy approach within regular language arts instruction, exploring how a multimodal literacy approach impacts ELLs' participation, acceptance, and classroom membership in various grade levels (i.e. will findings differ in first grade as opposed to third grade?), and exploring longer term impacts on incorporating a multimodal literacy approach.

This study also examined multimodal literacy practices within the context of a classroom entirely made up of ELLs. Future research should include contexts where there are both ELLs and native English speakers learning in the same classroom to determine how the implementation of a multimodal literacy approach develops and plays out within that context. It is possible that additional barriers to classroom membership might be in place in contexts where ELLs are truly in the minority and their language is not valued as highly as in the focus classroom in this study. If additional barriers are in place this might impact if and how a multimodal literacy approach benefits ELLs' lived experiences in language arts instruction. The implementation of the multimodal literacy approach in this study was grounded in graphic

novels. While the findings indicate that the use of graphic novels proved to be very successful in enhancing student participation, engagement, and acceptance in discussions, it is possible to ground a multimodal literacy approach in another multimodal literacy practice. For example, grounding a multimodal literacy approach in drama may impact student participation and engagement in different ways and may be more appropriate in certain circumstances.

While this research study focused on multimodal literacy practices and their impact on classroom membership, there is also a need to examine the impact of multimodal literacy practices on other areas, such as student achievement. In particular, this study indicated that graphic novels and comics were excellent texts for teaching reading comprehension strategies and skills. Future research can examine the overall impact on reading comprehension when instruction includes introducing and reinforcing reading comprehension skills and strategies within the context of multimodal texts. Finally, this study highlighted that there remains a large gap between preparing students for standardized tests and incorporating multimodal instruction and texts in the classroom. There remains a belief that this form of instruction does not 'prepare' students for these tests. If the importance of these tests remains, future research could explore how, or if, teachers could use a multimodal literacy approach to prepare students for these tests. Additionally, future research could examine the benefits of incorporating multimodality to our assessment and testing methods as a way to represent our students understanding in a more accurate and authentic manner.

Conclusion

This study provide insight into the role one literacy practice—the multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels)—plays in relation to the degree of ELLs' community acceptance within a primary classroom with a high percentage of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The

findings provided a rich description of the implementation of a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) develop and play out in a 3rd grade, multilingual classroom and provided insight into how teachers can successfully implement a multimodal literacy approach into similar classroom contexts. As a descriptive case study, the findings of this study also identified particularities, patterns, and connections in relation to the descriptive theory that was articulated at the beginning of this study—the intersection of the theory of multimodal communication, Lave and Wenger's (1991) sociocultural 'communities of practice' theory, and Cummins' (1979, 2000) framework highlighting the importance of engaging ELLs in contextually-embedded, cognitively demanding communication tasks. While these findings supported the initial intersection of these three theories, it also identified that in order for a multimodal literacy approach to have a meaningful impact on ELLs' overall classroom membership the approach most likely needs to be fully integrated within language arts instruction and serving as a driving force behind instruction.

At the onset of this study, I sought a deeper understanding of how ELLs participate, engage, and interact in the classroom community. I was driven by the possibility of creating classroom communities that were spaces where ELLs were valued and contributing community members were able to use their unique set of knowledge, skills, and interests in their interactions with peers, thus allowing them to experience success on a daily basis. It was my hope that when this was accomplished a confident smile like the one I saw on Julio's face (my former student discussed in chapter one) and students like him would no longer be a unique, memorable moment but rather one that was part of the everyday, normal routine. For the ELLs in this study who struggled to attain high degrees of classroom membership, the implementation of the multimodal literacy approach certainly positively impacted their lived experiences during

language arts instruction. Not only did they participate in and engage with language arts lessons in ways they had not previously done, these students also experienced success and increased respect from their peers. These findings have reinforced my belief that not only are supportive and conducive learning communities a possibility for ELLs in North American classroom but that they are essential for the growth and development of these learners. While this study still did not fully achieve the creation of classroom community where these successes were a part of the everyday, normal routine it certainly provided insight into how this can be achieved.

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Appendix A

Dear (Teacher's Name):

My name is Alexandra Bomphray and I am a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. As part of the requirements for a doctoral degree in Educational Studies, I am required to conduct research. Currently, I am looking for a grade 1-3 classroom in which to conduct my study *Considering primary-aged English language learners' peripherality and legitimacy in small group discussions about graphic novels.* I am contacting you because your classroom fits the characteristics needed for this study. These characteristics are a primary classroom in which there are several—no less than five—Spanish speaking, English language learners.

The purpose of my research is to understand the role literacy practices play in determining the degree of English Language Learners' (ELLs) community acceptance and participation. I am seeking to carefully examine the use of a multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) in a primary classroom with high percentage of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) will serve as a focusing lens in which to investigate the larger complexities of ELLs' membership and acceptance. I intend to extend multiple, multimodal opportunities for ELLs to express their sense of belonging, sense of agency, and overall perceptions of acceptance. This descriptive case study will provide insight into how a multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) can be used as an instructional tool to enhance ELLs' feelings and perceptions of belonging and acceptance.

Your participation in this research project would include opening up your classroom for six months of observations. I would be observing only the language arts block of your instruction. Individual and group interviews would be conducted with you and several of your students. Additionally, I would be implementing several multimodal literacy lessons using graphic novels—including teaching three graphic novels to the whole class and facilitating several small group graphic novel studies. At the end of the project, your students would be provided the opportunity to create their own graphic novels.

My interest in this area of research stems from my time teaching first and second grade in a school with a high percentage of Spanish speaking, English language learners. During this time, I observed that many of my ELLs were often isolated during learning activities and did not achieve full membership into the learning community as easily as my English speaking students. I believe very strongly that many English language learners are being left behind academically in English dominant classrooms because the instructional practices being used are often not supportive of the unique needs of these learners. Therefore, I am very passionate about finding teaching strategies and tools that teachers can use to assist these students in gaining full membership into classroom communities.

If you are interested in participating in this study and would like to discuss the project further, please contact me by e-mail at XXX or by phone at XXX. Thank you so much for your consideration and I look forward to speaking with you further about this project and opportunity.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Bomphray, PhD Candidate

Appendix B

[Your department letterhead]

Teacher Participant Consent Form

Considering primary-aged English language learners' peripherality and legitimacy in small group discussions about graphic novels

You are invited to participate in a study entitled *Considering primary-aged English language learners' peripherality and legitimacy in small group discussions about graphic novels* that is being conducted by Alexandra Bomphray.

Alexandra Bomphray is a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions by e-mail at XXX or by phone at XXX.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree in Educational Studies. It is being conducted under the supervision of Alison Preece and Ruthanne Tobin. Dr. Preece may be contacted at XXX or by phone at XXX. Dr. Tobin may be contacted at XXX or by phone at XXX.

Purpose and Objectives

This research study will carefully examine the use of a multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) in a primary classroom with high percentage of Spanish-speaking ELLs. The multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) will serve as a focusing lens in which to investigate the larger complexities of ELLs' membership and acceptance. I intend to extend multiple, multimodal opportunities for ELLs to express their sense of belonging, sense of agency, and overall perceptions of acceptance. This descriptive case study will provide insight into how a multimodal teaching approach (anchored in graphic novels) can be used as an instructional tool to enhance ELLs' feelings and perceptions of belonging and acceptance.

Importance of this Research

With the ever increasing number of ELLs in North American classrooms, knowledge about how to support and nurture these students' learning and language development is of utmost importance. Knowledge about how to best educate these students is even more crucial when considering the current academic and literacy success rate of these students—which is notably lower than their English speaking peers. One contributing factor to ELLs' lower achievement rates is that these students are not achieving appropriate levels of acceptance and membership within their classroom communities. Many of our classroom communities do not provide ELLs with the necessary spaces—spaces in which their voices are sought and valued—to meaningfully participate and connect on an equal level with their peers. Gaining a better understanding of how to make classroom communities more conducive and supportive for these learners—an underlying objective of this research—is essential for achieving higher rates of academic success.

Research demonstrates that everyday classroom literacy practices can be a contributing factor to the difficulty ELLs face when it comes to acceptance. However, few studies provide detailed descriptions of how specific literacy practices impact the increasing empowerment and participation of ELLs. Additionally, while many teachers, researchers, and librarians have noted the potential benefits of using multimodal, graphic novels with ELLs –a relatively new classroom resource—there has been little to no robust research in this area. This study will provide insight into how ELLs respond to graphic novels and

how a multimodal literacy approach (anchored in graphic novels) could be used to enhance ELLs' sense of belonging and perceptions of community membership.

Participants Selection
You are being asked to participate in this study because you teach in a primary classroom where there are several (no less than five) Spanish speaking English language learners.

What is Involved
This research study is a qualitative, descriptive single case study with field based observation and data collection occurring over a six month time period. During this time, all language arts instruction in your classroom will be observed. This six month period will be divided into three phases of data collection:

Phase I: (September-October) daily observation of language arts instruction, focus student selection, initial interviews and group interview conducted

Phase II: (November-January) implementation of whole class and small group graphic novel lessons, individual interviews and group interviews conducted

Phase III: (February) daily observation of language arts instruction, additional interviews conducted if needed

During all observations, the researcher will be taking written notes and filling out observational protocols that you will be able to look at ahead of time. Several of your whole class and small group literacy discussions will also be audiotaped. A transcription will be made of these discussions. Additionally, you will be engaged in four semi-structured interviews and additional informal interviews throughout these six months. I will also be collecting student work—including student journals, reader's notebooks, and drawings—as well other classroom artifacts (such as lesson plans and seating charts).

Phase II of the study will include the implementation of multimodal, graphic novel lessons. With your consent, I will be teaching several whole-class and small-group graphic novel lessons to your students throughout the study. These lessons will be audiotaped and later transcribed.

There is a possibility that photos will be taken of you—with your permission—while you are teaching. These photos will be used in my interviews with English language learners as a way of helping them to remember a particular lesson or activity.

Inconvenience
Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you—including a loss of planning time when interviews are scheduled and the presence of an additional adult (the researcher) in the classroom that may cause brief distractions to young students. Formal interviews will be conducted with you four times and each interview will take approximately 15-20 minutes. The researcher will also be pulling out five focus students from your class for interviews. These students will participate in four individual 10-15 minute interviews and four group 10-15 minute interviews. To lessen the inconvenience from pulling these students out of your class, the researcher will meet with you to discuss the least disruptive time to conduct interviews.

You will also be asked to give up some of your language arts instructional time so that the researcher can implement graphic novel lessons. The researcher will give you lesson plan outlines prior to teaching this lessons. Finally, at times the researcher will need to have access some classroom artifacts (i.e. lesson plans, student work). This will require you to perhaps organize, collect, or prepare this material for the researcher**.**

Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

Benefits
There are several potential benefits for your participation in this study—including exposure to the use of a multimodal literacy strategy (anchored in graphic novels) which is a new literacy strategy with the potential to be particularly effective with struggling readers and ELLs. After their participation in this study, you will most likely be able to effectively implement this strategy into their own classroom as you will have gained the knowledge and skills set needed to successfully add this strategy to your teaching repertoire. The researcher will also be willing to discuss the knowledge she has regarding acceptance and classroom membership of ELLs and the use of graphic novels in the primary classroom. Research articles and books will be shared with you if you wish to educate yourself further. A potential direct benefit to your classroom environment is that the implementation of this multimodal literacy strategy (anchored in graphic novels) will help to improve the social status and participation success of ELLs within the classroom community. This may positively impact your overall classroom community.

For your ELLs, they will be exposed to a multimodal literacy strategy (anchored in graphic novels) that will help to create spaces for ELLs to interpret and make meaning using various modes of communication—including non-language intensive modes such as images, space, and colour. It is anticipated that by varying the modes of communication available to ELLs this literacy strategy may help to scaffold ELLs in more successful and robust participation and interaction in small group literacy discussions. By successfully engaging in these literacy discussions, there is a potential for ELLs to gain greater acceptance into the classroom community due to their ability to demonstrate themselves as capable learners. For your English speaking students, research demonstrates that graphic novels are effective with native speaking students in terms of increasing reading motivation and supporting the reading success of struggling readers.

This study also has the potential to benefit the greater society. At a minimum, this study might encourage teachers and researchers to reflect upon how classroom communities are established and the role classroom communities play in the academic success of ELLs. The detailed description of the study will have the potential to assist other teachers in better understanding how to make their own classroom community more conducive and could perhaps encourage and inspire teachers to make changes in their classroom. Additionally, this study may provide teachers and researchers with the information needed to successfully implement graphic novels in their classrooms and assess whether or not this literacy strategy is successful with their ELLs. Finally, the rich description of ELLs' perceptions and understanding of classroom acceptance and membership could potentially assist teachers and researchers in better understanding the experiences of these learners.

This research will also contribute to the foundation of knowledge regarding experiences of ELLs within North American classroom communities. As a qualitative, descriptive single case study, the detailed descriptions of the inclusion of graphic novel lesson in a multilingual, primary classroom will also provide researchers with a detailed foundation from which to engage in further research. This research will also add to our understanding of ELLs' perceptions of their own membership and acceptance within classroom communities and whether or not they perceive that classroom communities are not conducive to their needs and learning.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. <u>If you do withdraw from the study, most of your data will be destroyed. If any of your data is linked to group data (observations, group</u>

discussions), it will only be used in summarized form with no identifying information. ANY PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN OF YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY BE DESTROYED AND/OR DELETED—AS PHOTOS ARE BY NATURE IDENTIFYING.

On-going Consent
To gain your on-going consent, I will meet with you at the midpoint of this study to discuss the progress of the research and remind you of your rights as a participant. At any other point of the study, the researcher will be available to meet with you and discuss any questions or concerns that you may have.

Anonymity
In terms of protecting your anonymity, your identity will be known to the researcher during the data gathering phase of this study. As this is a single case study, you will be the only teacher involved in the study and therefore it will be impossible for the researcher to not know which responses and data are associated with you. Additionally, as the only researcher involved in this study, Ms. Bomphray will be completing all data collection, including interviews, herself. However, to protect your anonymity from anyone beside the researcher a pseudonym will be used in place of your name on all data that is collected. Any data that are collected that already have your name on them (i.e. lesson plans) your name will immediately be removed or covered up and replaced with your pseudonym.

Your anonymity will be protected in the dissemination of results. A pseudonym will be used in place of your name in my dissertation, all articles published, and any academic presentations that result from this study. Additionally, the school in which you teach will not be identified in these reports and any identifying information regarding the school will be changed. The only time that your anonymity will not be protected is during the presentation we will give at your school to other staff members about the study. Staff members at this meeting will be aware of your identity.

Confidentiality
Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by storing all electronic data on a password protected computer that will be stored in a locked house or office. All other data will be organized and kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked house or office. As the only investigator, I will be the only one who will have direct access to this data.

As mentioned above, a pseudonym will be used on all data collected and stored. This pseudonym will also be used on all coding sheets created throughout the analysis stage of this study.

Dissemination of Results
It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: dissertation, published article, presentations at scholarly meetings, and directly to participants at a staff meeting. It will be your choice if you would like to work with the researcher to present the findings from this study to your colleagues.

Disposal of Data
Data from this study will be disposed of two years after the completion of the study. All electronic data will be erased and all paper copies will be shredded.

Contacts
Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include the researcher and her supervisors. Contact information for these individuals has been provided at the beginning of this consent form.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

Name of Participant	*Signature*	*Date*

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Visually Recorded Images/Data Participant or parent/guardian to provide initials:

- Photos may be taken of me for: Analysis _____ Dissemination* _____

*Even if no names are used, you may be recognizable if visual images are shown in the results.

Appendix C

Student Participant Consent Form

Project Title:

Considering primary-aged English language learners' peripherality and legitimacy in small group discussions about graphic novels

Researcher: Alexandra Bomphray, PhD Candidate, Curriculum and Instruction, University of Victoria, Phone Number: XXX, E-mail: XXX

Supervisors: Dr. Alison Preece, Curriculum and Instruction
Dr. Ruthanne Tobin, Curriculum and Instruction

What is this Research about?:

- This research is interested in how students—especially those students that speak a second language—participate in literacy lessons and how they are accepted into classroom communities. The researcher will look at how reading and talking about graphic novels changes this participation and acceptance. Also, the researcher is interested in what students think about acceptance and membership and what students think those words might mean.

This Research is Important because:

- It will help other teachers and researchers to better understand how to use graphic novels with English language learners and determine any benefits that may come from using these graphic novels.
- It will help other teachers and researchers to better understand English language learners and their feelings about classroom membership, participation, and acceptance.

Participation:

- You are being asked to participate because your classroom is a grade 1-3 classroom with several Spanish speaking, English language learners.
- It is completely your choice if you would like to particpate or not.
- There will be no negative consequences for you in the classroom (you will not get in trouble or be left out of fun activities) if you decide not to participate. Both your teacher and the researcher will be just as happy with you if you decide not to participate.

Procedures:

- During the next six months, the researcher will watch your language arts class everyday. She will be taking notes during this time and audiotaping (recording your and your classmates' voices) several small-group and whole-class literacy discussions. You will also take part in several graphic novel literature circles that that will be led by the researcher. These lessons will also be audiotaped. There is a chance that you will also take part in interviews (which are similar to a discussion or conference with the researcher). These interviews will also be audiotaped. If you say that it is okay, the researcher will also be collecting some of your language arts work including your journal, reader's notebook, and drawings. At times, your photo may be taken while you work on literacy activities (if you agree that this is okay).
- **How long with the researcher be in your class:** Six months
- **Where will the research take place:** Your classroom and school

- **Inconvenience:** If you are interviewed you will have to leave your classroom for about 10-15 minutes for each interview. There will be four individual interviews and four group interviews that selected students will participate in. The researcher will talk to your teacher about the best time for you to leave the classroom to make sure that you are not missing something important in your class. It may also take you and the students in your class a few days to get used to the researcher being in your classroom.

Benefits:

- You will have the opportunity to read and discuss graphic novels. Graphic novels have been found to help students with their reading skills. There is the chance that more students will start participating more in your classroom and that more students will be accepted into the community—especially English language learners. Also, your teacher will will learn more about how to use graphic novels in the classroom and how to create better learning environments for all students.

- Outside of your classroom, this research will help teachers and researchers to better understand what ELLs think about classroom membership and acceptance. This may help teachers better understand how to make their own classroom community more supportive of all learners and could perhaps encourage and inspire teachers to make changes in their classroom. If the use of graphic novels is found to encourage ELL participation and acceptance, this study could encourage teachers and researchers to use graphic novels with other ELLs, helping to improve their learning as well.

Risks:

- You will not be in any danger or risk by participating in this research.

Withdrawal of Participation:

- You can stop participating in this study any time you want to. The researcher completely understands if you want to stop participating and you will not be in trouble should you decide to change your mind.
- If you decide that you do not want to particpate any more, most of your data will not be used and will be destroyed or deleted. Some of your data might be connected to other students' data. For example, you might have had a discussion with your peers that was audiotaped. If this happens, your data will be summarized only and all personal information—such as your name—will be removed. ALL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN OF YOU WILL BE DELETED AND/OR DESTROYED IMMEDIATELY.

Continued or On-going Consent:

- This research project will take six months. You can change your mind about participating at any time. After three months, the researcher will meet with your entire class to talk about the project and remind you that you can change your mind about participating. You will then have the chance to meet with the researcher to talk about your feelings about the project and if you still want to participate.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

- As the researcher will be in your classroom, she will know which responses and data collected are from you. If you agree to allow photos of you to be taken, there is also a chance that a photograph of you will be included in presentations and articles prepared by the researcher. Your name will

not be connected with the picture and your picture will not be connected to any data. This means that no one reading an article or listening to a presentation will be able to connect something you said or wrote during this study to your picture.

- Your name will NOT appear in any article or presentation. Instead, the researcher will be using something called a 'pseudonym' which is a 'fake name' that the researcher will pick to replace your real name. Immediately after collecting any data the researcher will replace your name with your pseudonym.
- All data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a safe location (in the researcher's locked office or home). All data will be destroyed—data on a computer will be deleted and other data will be shredded—after two years.
- The only time that someone will know what you said will be if you participate in a group interview. During group interviews, the other students in the interview will hear what you have to say. The researcher will make it very clear to all students that they are not to discuss what was said in the interview with other people outside of the group. Also, the researcher will not ask questions that are private and if you do share something private the researcher will wait until the other students are gone to ask you questions about it. You will not have to share anything you feel uncomfortable sharing in front of the group.

Research Results will be Used in the Following Ways:

- After working in your classroom, the researcher will take everything that she has learned and write a large paper called a dissertation. She will also be making presentations and publishing papers about what she learned so other teachers and researchers can learn from the study as well. Your teacher and the researcher will also give a presentation to the other teachers at your school so they can hear about the study and learn from the findings.

Questions or Concerns:

- You can always talk to the researcher or teacher at anytime about this research;
- Your parent may contact the Human Research Ethics Office, University of Victoria

Consent:

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above directions of participation in this study and that all your questions have been answered by the researcher.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	*Signature*	*Date*

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Visually Recorded Images/Data: Participant to provide initials:

- Photos may be taken of me for: Analysis _____ Dissemination* _____

*Even if no names are used, you may be recognizable if visual images are shown as part of the results.

Appendix D

[Your department letterhead]

Parental Consent Form

Considering primary-aged English language learners' peripherality and legitimacy in small group discussions about graphic novels

Your child is invited to participate in a study entitled *Considering primary-aged English language learners' peripherality and legitimacy in small group discussions about graphic novels* that is being conducted by Alexandra Bomphray.

Alexandra Bomphray is a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions by e-mail (XXX) or by phone XXX.

As a graduate student, Alexandra Bomphray is required to conduct research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree in Educational Studies. It is being conducted under the supervision of Alison Preece and Ruthanne Tobin. You may contact Dr. Preece at XXX or by phone at XXX. Dr. Tobin may be contacted at XXX or by phone at XXX.

Purpose and Objectives
The purpose of this research project is to better understand the role literacy practices play in determining the degree of English Language Learners' (ELLs) community acceptance and participation, as well as provide a detailed description of ELLs' perceptions of their own classroom membership and participation. These areas will be studied by examining the impact of one literacy practice, the inclusion of graphic novels in small-group literacy discussion, on the perceptions ELLs have about their membership.

Importance of this Research
Research of this type is important because one of the factors contributing to ELLs' low academic success rates in North American classrooms is the fact that ELLs struggle with gaining acceptance and full membership into their classroom community. This struggle limits both their participation opportunities in the classroom and their ability to engage in the meaningful social interactions that are required for learning. Gaining a better understanding of how to make classroom communities more conducive and supportive for these learners is essential and the detailed descriptions gained from this study will shed some insight into this area. Additionally, while many teachers, researchers, and librarians have noted the potential benefits of using graphic novels with ELLs there has been little to no research in this area. This research will therefore assist in forming a foundation for understanding how ELLs respond to graphic novels and how the inclusion of graphic novels might influence their participation and acceptance in classroom communities.

Participants Selection
Your child is being asked to participate in this study because her/his classroom has a high percentage of Spanish speaking English language learners. All of the students in your child's classroom —along with their teacher—are being asked to participate in this study.

What is involved

If you agree for your child to voluntarily participate in this research, his/her participation will include being observed during language arts instruction on a daily basis for six months. During observations, the researcher will be taking written notes and filling out observational protocols. The researcher will also be teaching whole class and small group graphic novel lessons to your child throughout the study. These lessons will be audiotaped. Several of your child's whole class and small group literacy discussions will be also audiotaped. Additionally, your child may be engaged in formal and/or informal interviews which will be audiotaped. With your child's permission, samples of your child's language arts work, including journals, reader's notebooks, and drawings, will be collected.

There is a possibility that photos will be taken of your child with your permission. These photos will be used in my interviews with students as a way of helping them to remember a particular lesson or activity. There is an additional possibility that your child's photo will be used during the sharing of results, though their name will not be attached to their photo.

Inconvenience
Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to your child. Your child may be asked to participate in short interviews (ten to fifteen minutes) that will require them to leave the classroom during the school day. The researcher and the teacher will work together to ensure that students do not miss essential instruction and that students are provided with the opportunity to catch up on anything that was missed. Additionally, the researcher will be in your child's classroom during language arts instruction on a daily basis for the duration of this study. Her presence may cause a few brief disruptions until all students in the classroom are used to her.

Risks
There are no known or anticipated risks to your child by participating in this research.

Benefits
The potential benefits of your child's participation in this research include an improvement within his/her classroom with regards to the participation and acceptance of all students, especially English language learners. Your child will also be provided with the opportunity to engage with graphic novels, a new form of literature that has been demonstrated to have very positive effects on young children's reading skills and enjoyment. Additionally, your child's teacher will be actively involved in the research process and as a result will gain an enhanced understanding of how to create conducive learning environments for all students. Her/his professional development throughout the research process will have the potential to directly benefit your child's instruction.

Outside of your child's classroom and instruction, this research may help teachers and researchers to better understand the perceptions and understandings that ELLs hold about their classroom membership and acceptance. Additionally, the detailed description of the study will have the potential to assist teachers in better understanding how to make their own classroom community more conducive to all learners and could encourage and inspire teachers to make changes in their classroom. If the use of graphic novels is found to positively impact ELL participation and acceptance, this study could encourage teachers and researchers to use graphic novels with other ELLs to see if it is an effective literacy strategy for their ELLs as well.

Voluntary Participation
Your child's participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you consent to your child's participation, you may withdraw this consent at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw your child from the study, his/her individual data will be destroyed. In the case that any of your child's data is linked to group data (e.g. if your child was engaged in a literacy discussion with other students or took part in a group interview), it will be used in summarized form with no identifying

information. ANY PHOTGRAPHS TAKEN OF YOUR CHILD WILL IMMEDIATELY BE DELETED AND/OR DESTROYED IF YOU DECIDE TO WITHDRAW YOUR CONSENT.

On-going Consent
To obtain your on-going consent for your child to participate in this research study, the researcher will send home a brief update of the research project twice during the duration of the study. The researcher's updates will include a reminder of you and your child's rights regarding participation in this project. Additionally, the researcher will be available to talk to you at any time during the study if you have questions or concerns.

Anonymity
In terms of protecting your child's anonymity, your child's identity will be known to the researcher during the data gathering phase of this study. As the only investigator involved in this study, the researcher will be completing all data collection, including interviews, by herself and will therefore be aware of which responses and data are related to your child. However, to protect your child's anonymity from anyone beside the researcher a pseudonym will be used in place of your name on all data that is collected. Any data that is collected that already has your child's name on it (i.e. student work) his/her name will immediately be removed or covered up and replaced with a pseudonym.

Your child's anonymity will be protected in the dissemination of results. A pseudonym will be used in place of his/her name in my dissertation, all articles published, and any academic presentations that result from this study. Additionally, the school which your student attends will not be identified in these reports and any identifying information regarding the school will be changed.

There are a few areas where your child's anonymity will not be protected. Your child's anonymity will not be fully protected during the presentation that will be given at your child's school to other staff members about the study. Staff members at this meeting will be aware which classroom took part in this study. While pseudonyms will be used during this meeting and any distinguishing features or characteristics of your child will changed, there is a very small chance that a staff member may be able to guess the identity of your child due to the limited number of students in the classroom. However, the identity of your child will never be confirmed with these staff members. Additionally, there is a chance that—with your permission—a photo of your child will be included in presentations and articles based on this research. Your child's name will not be connected with the picture and the picture will not be connected to any data. This means that no one reading an article or listening to a presentation will be able to connect something your child said or wrote during this study to their picture.

Confidentiality
Your child's confidentiality and the confidentiality of the child's data will be protected by storing all electronic data on a password protected computer that will be stored in a locked house or office. All other data will be organized and kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked house or office. As the only investigator, the researcher will be the only one who will have direct access to this data.

As mentioned above, a pseudonym will be used on all data collected and stored. This pseudonym will also be used on all coding sheets created throughout the analysis stage of this study and throughout the dissemination process.

The only time your child's confidentiality will not be fully protected will be during group interviews—if they are selected to participate in these. During group interviews, the other students present will know what your child said. The researcher will make it very clear that students are not to discuss what was said by anyone to anyone outside of this group. Additionally, questions asked during this interview will not be personal or force your child to share something they are not comfortable. If the researcher feels that your

child has shared something important—yet perhaps also personal—the researcher will ask follow up questions on this topic on an individual basis and not in front of the group. Your child will also be made aware that they are not obligated to share anything that makes them feel uncomfortable in front of their peers.

Dissemination of Results
It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: dissertation, published article, presentations at scholarly meetings, and directly to participants at a staff meeting.

Disposal of Data
Data from this study will be disposed of two years after the completion of the study. All electronic data will be erased and all paper copies will be shredded.

Contacts
Individuals that may be contacted regarding this study include the researcher and her supervisors. Contact information for these individuals has been provided at the beginning of this consent form.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria.

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researchers.

Visually Recorded Images/Data Parent/guardian to provide initials:

- Photos may be taken of my child for: Analysis _____ Dissemination* _____

*Even if no names are used, your child may be recognizable if visual images are shown in the results.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	*Signature*	*Date*

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Appendix E

Name:_____

The Daily Comic

1) Write a couple of sentences telling what happens in the comic. Escribe un par de frases diciendo lo que sucede en el cómic.

2) What is the weather like in the comic? ¿Cuál es el clima en el cómic?

3) Which of the following words best describes Odie? ¿Cuál de las siguientes palabras describe mejor Odie?
   a) Excited/ Emocionado
   b) Angry/ Enojado
   c) Lazy/ Perezoso

   Explain your answer. Explique su respuesta.

Name:_____

The Daily Comic

1) Write a couple of sentences telling what happens in the comic. Escribe un par de frases diciendo lo que sucede en el cómic.

Sentence #1:

Sentence #2:

Sentence #3:

2) Why is it funny that Odie (the dog) pretended that Garfield said something about 'kissing the feet of dogs'? ¿Por qué es divertido que Odie (el perro) pretende que Garfield dijo algo acerca de 'besar los pies de los perros?

3) What is Odie doing at the END of the comic? ¿Cuál es Odie haciendo en el FINAL de la historieta?
   a) Laughing at his joke/ riéndose de su broma
   b) Pretending that he does not hear Garfield/ Fingir que no oye Garfield
   c) Saying something to Garfield/ Decir algo a Garfield

Appendix F: Sample Teacher Guide for Teacher-Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Babymouse: Queen of the World Teacher Guide

Brief Description of the Book: Babymouse thinks her life is boring. She wants a life full of glamour and excitement! When the glamorous Felicia Furrypaws decides to throw a slumber party, Babymouse will do anything to get invited—even if it means hurting her friend Wilson's feelings. Will Babymouse finally get to live that life of excitement or will she be doomed to a life of taking out the trash and dealing with her bratty, younger brother?

Meeting #1:

1) Read students the brief description of the book and have students make predictions about the question 'Will Babymouse finally get to live that life of excitement or will she be doomed to a life of taking out the trash and dealing with her bratty, younger brother?'
2) Visual Element: Tell students that they will learn that Babymouse has a wild imagination and spends a lot of her time daydreaming. The author does something to show you when Babymouse is imagining something that is not really happening. Have students look at pages 15 and 16 and see if they can determine what the author does? (the background is in pink). Ask students why they think the author chose pink instead of another color? Tell them that when they are reading regular books and a character is THINKING or DAYDREAMING about something it might help them if they visualize this in the color pink to help them to remember that this part of the story is not real.
1) Reading Comprehension Strategy: Tell students that it is extremely important for them to monitor their understanding of stories and to clarify things that they do not understand. Tell students that at the end of EVERY page they are to ask themselves two questions: What just happened in the story? and Was there anything confusing? Model doing this with students. Have them read pages 18 and 19. Discuss with students that while they answer these questions they will naturally be reading both the words and pictures on the page. Mention that this is also a time to check their vocabulary pages for any confusing pages and write down any words not listed. Finally, talk to students about the fact that each frame in a graphic novel is similar to a paragraph in a regular novel. Tell students that when reading regular books they should stop either after each paragraph (if the paragraph is long or the story is hard) or at the end of each page and ask themselves these same questions.

Meeting #2:

1) Ask students if they have any questions about what they have been reading or any words they need clarified.
2) Visual Element: Have students look at pages 50-51. Ask students what the **illustrator does** to SHOW the following things: how Babymouse is feeling in specific frames and what Babymouse actually does to impress Felicia.
3) Reading Comprehension Strategy: Briefly review the importance of monitoring comprehension and clarifying understanding. As a group re-read pgs 46-47, and have students ask their two questions reviewed during the previous meeting. These are two

confusing pages so make sure students understand that: Babymouse is imagining that she is the captain of a spaceship (which fits with her character because she wants excitement and adventure), that they know what the words grave, affirmative, and dared mean, that the picture on the top of pg. 47 is Babymouse's eyes, and that they are searching for an invitation to Felicia's in space. Next, introduce the concept of 'theme'. Tell them that all good stories have a theme: an underlying idea or topic that is found throughout the entire story. For example, in Through Grandpa's Eyes one of the themes is empathy: putting yourself in someone else's shoes, learning to better understand how it must feel to live like someone else and face someone else's struggles. Tell students that themes often teach us lessons about life and help us to better understand ourselves. Two themes found in Babymouse are: friendship and popularity. Briefly have students look through the book for examples of being a good friend and being a bad friend. Then introduce what 'popularity' means and how many people change who they are and make bad decisions to be popular. Discuss how Babymouse might be doing some of these things.

Meeting #3:

1) Ask students if they have any questions about what they have been reading or any words they need clarified.
2) Visual Element: Have students look at pages 76-77 and discuss what the illustrator does to make the reader feel scared.
3) Reading Comprehension Strategy: Briefly review the importance of monitoring comprehension and clarifying understanding. As a group re-read pgs 82-83, and have students ask their two questions reviewed during the first meeting. Review what 'theme' means. Spend time discussing what Babymouse learned about friendship and popularity.

Appendix G: Sample Questions for Student-Led Graphic Novel Discussions

Discussion Card: Stone Rabbit Section 1

1) Each of you should pick your favourite picture and explain to the group why you like the picture. Be sure to talk about things like lettering, color, facial expressions, and interesting drawings.
2) What is Stone Rabbit's problem? How do you think he can solve the problem?
3) If you have time, share one of your completed activities.

Discussion Card: Stone Rabbit Section 2

1) Should Stone Rabbit just go home and make the other bunnies stop Willie on their own? Or should he stay and try to protect his new friends? Explain your answer.
2) What are some things that the illustrator does to make you feel scared? (Be sure to talk about color, lettering, and facial expressions)
3) If you have time share one of your completed activities.

Discussion Card: Stone Rabbit Section 3

1) Is Stone Rabbit a hero? Or did he just do what anyone would have done?
2) Why do you think kids who are bullied often become mean to others?
3) If you have time, share one of your completed activities.

Appendix H: Creating Graphic Novels Guide

Creating a Graphic Novel Name:_____

Answer the following questions:

1) I want my main character to be
    a. Human
    b. Animal
    c. Monster

2) My main character will be a
    a. Girl
    b. Boy

3) My story will take place in the
    a. Past
    b. Present
    c. Future

Possible Settings:
At a school at a character's home in outer space in a restaurant
on a beach in the arctic in the mountains in a big city on a farm
at the zoo in the woods in the desert at the mall on the playground

_____ _____ _____

Possible story ideas:
*A super smart cat detective gets a new case about the missing homework in Ms. Lara's classroom.
*A princess loses her magical unicorn and needs help looking for it.
*Billy, his parents, and his annoying little sister go camping. A strange creature starts to follow the family in the woods.
*Two friends sneak out of the house to go see a Justin Bieber concert.
*An alien on a space ship feels bad because he is clumsy and is always breaking important things.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Main Character
Name: Descriptive adjectives:
Draw what your character will look like:

Second Character (can be a villain)
Name: Descriptive adjectives:
Draw what your character will look like:

Third Character (optional)
Name: Descriptive adjectives:
Draw what your character will look like:

Fourth Character (optional)
Name: Descriptive adjectives:
Draw what your character will look like:

Graphic Novel Story Map

Beginning (Problem)
First,_____
_____.
Then, _____
_____.
Next,_____
_____.

Middle
First,_____
_____.

Then, _____
_____.

Next, _____
_____.

Ending (Solution)
First, _____
_____.

Next, _____
_____.

Last, _____
_____

Appendix I: Structured Observation Protocol

General Observation Ten Minute Quick Check

0-10 Minutes

General Observation	Researcher Comments and Questions

10 Minute Point

# of ELLs actively engaged:_____ # of ELLs working with English speaking students:_____

# of ELLs successfully completing task according to assignment standards:_____

Select one focus ELL and provide a brief description of what they are doing:

Modes of communication students are using:

Written text	verbal	images/pictorial	texture
shape	colors	gestures/movement	patterns
size	positions in space		

Languages students are using:

English Spanish

Learning format students are involved in:

Whole-group/teacher-dominated Individual/Teacher support available
Whole-group/student directed Small group work
Individual Pairs
Mixed
Describe:_____

Pairs/Groups are:

Teacher assigned Student selected N/A

Appendix J: Unstructured Observation Protocol

Unstructured General Observation Form

Date:_____ Time:_____

Number of students present:_____

Names of ELLs present:

Brief description of lesson as described by teacher prior to lesson:

General Observations	Researcher Comments and Questions

Appendix K: Sample Comprehension Guide

My Stone Rabbit: BC Mambo Comprehension Guide

Name:_____

Section One: Pages 1-25

My Vocabulary Words
Ruptured (pg. 7): broken
Tidal Wave (pg. 7): a very large wave, usually in the ocean
Bottomless (pg. 11): without a bottom or an end
Doom (pg. 11): something terrible

Reading Comprehension Questions
(You need to answer at least 3 questions. Please write your answer below the question and use complete sentences)

1) Stone Rabbit is dreaming when the book starts, what is he dreaming about?

2) Name three things that Stone Rabbit does in the morning. (pgs. 6-7)

3) What happened to Stone Rabbit after he pulled up the bathmat? (pg. 11)

4) Make up a funny reason for why there was barbecue sauce in the bathroom.

5) Where does Stone Rabbit land after falling through the hole? What gets all over his face and body? (pg. 14)

6) What do you think is worse—being chased by dinosaurs or being chased by bugs? Why?

7) What happens to Stone Rabbit at the end of pg. 25?

Activities

(You must do 1 activity in group A and 1 activity in group B. Please complete your activities in your Graphic Novel Reader's Notebook.)

Group A

1) I wonder why Stone Rabbit did/said _____because_____.

2) If I were being chased by dinosaurs and bugs I would _____ because_____.

3) When _____ happened in the story, it reminded me of when _____.

4) My favourite part so far is _____ because _____.

Group B

1) If you fell down a bottomless pit, where would you land? Use your imagination and draw a picture showing the place where you would go! Be sure to use lots of details and label your picture.

2) There are no words on page 20-21. Write a short paragraph to go along with the picture.

3) Describe how the illustrator shows that the dinosaurs are mean. Write at least three sentences.