

ACCESSING ACADEMIC LITERACY FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS:
A CASE STUDY OF AN ELEMENTARY SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM

by

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ABSTRACT

This study explored one classroom teacher's attempt to bridge young learners' access to the academic content of Social Studies in an elementary, multilingual, multicultural, mainstream classroom. To this end, it examined both the planning and enacting of a Grade Five/Six Social Studies unit: Immigration In Canada. The unit was designed to draw on the teacher's and learners' social and cultural identities as a resource and afford students multiple ways to access and demonstrate understandings.

In the complex, and dynamic environment of the mainstream classroom, the subject of Social Studies presents a linguistically demanding academic discipline for native English speakers and often an even more formidable challenge for students who are in the process of acquiring English as a second or an additional language. Simultaneously, the subject matter of Social Studies can provide a useful venue to share experiences related to language, culture and personal histories. This study provided a rich and holistic account of the everyday classroom life of students' and their teacher's experiences over a three month time span during Social Studies lessons.

Through qualitative research methods, data were drawn from reflective notes of planning sessions, field notes of classroom observations, audio-recorded interviews of the students, and an audio-recorded interview of the teacher, a survey and student work samples. Two, one hour after school planning sessions and seventeen (usually forty-five minute) classroom lessons were observed over a three-month period. The data was analyzed and systematized around my research questions in order to explore how the Social Studies unit was enacted in a mainstream setting.

The qualitative analysis of the data suggested that there were positive connection between the curriculum as planned and the curriculum as experienced in the classroom. The study demonstrated that a Social Studies unit that encompassed a multiliterate pedagogy where particular attention was paid to drawing on students' social and cultural identities had very positive outcomes. The study also highlighted that the teacher's own professional identity played a key factor in affirming student identity and promoting student engagement. There was a strong link between investment of the learner and the relationship between the teacher and the students. The students were more deeply invested in the lessons than they might otherwise have been because the learning environment that the teacher constructed, valued students as members of a learning community, each with a personal history that was respected. The findings also suggest that the narrative genre of storytelling was a preferred activity for students and bridged a connection between both home and school environments. Within the Social Studies lessons the teacher continually emphasized and fore-grounded the role of relationship between student and teacher and student to student as means to an effective learning environment.

The study also highlighted the need for further research in diverse, elementary mainstream, classroom settings and the need to further examine literacy practices that encompass a more linguistically and culturally responsive pedagogy.

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To Archie and Stella

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This is an exploratory case study of a teacher's multiliterate pedagogy, in the complex, multilayered, social context of a classroom of diverse learners. The learners and teacher studied were situated in a multilingual, multicultural, elementary school setting in a local, urbanized community.¹ Despite the growing cultural and linguistic diversity in Canada's urban communities, there is a lack of research in elementary, mainstream classrooms that focuses on teachers' efforts to draw on the "cultural, social, and intellectual capital" (Early & Marshall-Smith, 2008, p. 1) students bring to the classroom setting. Research in this area is vital, particularly as Cummins, Brown, and Sayer (2007), suggest that "It is reasonable to hypothesize that pedagogical approaches that affirm the identities of culturally and linguistically diverse students may promote greater academic engagement and achievement" (p. 222). Further, Cope and Kalantzis (2005); Kress (2003); The New London Group (1996); and Stein (2003) have argued that educators in the twenty-first century need to broaden their literacy practices to integrate a variety of representational modes to enable students to access information and demonstrate knowledge. This study provides a rich and holistic account of the everyday classroom life of students and their teacher's experiences during a three month social studies unit: *Immigration In Canada*.

The dilemma of the "life-world" of the teacher, according to Aoki (1993), is living in the zone between the "curriculum-as-plan" and the "curriculum-as-lived experiences" (p.

¹ The names of the students and teacher have been given pseudonyms to protect participants' confidentiality.

261). Aoki (1991) also asserts that sometimes there is a “tensionality” that emerges “in part”, from the teacher dwelling in the space between the “two curriculum worlds” (p. 159).

This study documented a Grade Five/Six Social Studies unit designed to connect cultural experiences and afford learners’ access to multiple modes of representation to make-meaning and the reality of the varying ‘lived’ experiences of the diverse learners and their teacher. The aim of the study is to contribute to the knowledge of how participants negotiate the linguistic and academic demands of mainstream elementary social studies lessons and draw upon various aspects of the learners’ and teacher’s awareness of their own “personal histories and multiple identities” (Morita & Kobayashi, 2008, p. 2809).

In sum, this is a three-month long case study in which an experienced Gr. 5/6 teacher and I, a District specialist in ESL and Multiculturalism, collaborated in the design and implementation of a social studies unit on the theme of immigration in Canada. The unit was designed in terms of a multiliteracies approach, and with the needs of second language learners in mind. The study explored how the teacher accessed students prior knowledge and simultaneously drew upon the social and cultural identities of the students. The findings demonstrate that a pedagogical approach designed to: affirm the linguistic and cultural identities of the students; allow multiple access routes to demonstrate understanding; create conditions in which students are valued members of a community of learners, has the potential to maximize student engagement, participation and academic success.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Unprecedented transnational migration and an overlapping trend of rapid technological change, has resulted in Canada’s urban communities becoming increasingly diverse. With this multiplicity, our elementary, secondary and post-secondary student

populations come from an ever-changing range of educational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. As a result, educators are faced with the significant challenge of addressing the language and literacy needs of varied and often vulnerable student populations in environments where they encounter information in progressively complex and multiple forms (Early & Marshall-Smith, 2008; Mohan, Leung & Davison, 2001). The reality for these students is that proficiency in English acts as a gatekeeper in accessing higher education, and ultimately, students' future participation in the work place and community. According to Early (2008):

Future directions in second and foreign language education in Canada must consider ways that the full range of linguistic and cultural competencies that students bring to school can have greater instructional relevance, not only for individual student's well being, but also for the collective Canadian good. (p. 207)

In our educational contexts, many students are not only struggling with the challenges of learning English and acquiring academic content knowledge, but simultaneously, negotiating identities and membership as they attempt to become competent and legitimate students in their varying academic and community contexts (Davison, 2005; Duff, 2001; 2002; Morita, 2004). Consequently, students may appear passive, reticent or even silent in their classroom contexts and the teacher may appear overwhelmed. An interview excerpt cited in Pon, Goldstein and Schecter (2003), provides a compelling example of the perspective of a Hong Kong-born Chinese student in an urban, mainstream Canadian classroom:

Silence is a signal for lack of trust. It also means insecurity, that I don't feel good about my English. I want to hide it, I don't want to hear it, I don't want to be picked on. It requires a lot of courage for me to say something in a language in which I know I have an accent, in which I know that I may not be able to use the right word. I use it wrong and people may laugh at me. I am not going to show you something that I am not good at (p. 124).

By not addressing the needs of our linguistically and culturally diverse populations we are sentencing many students to “a lifelong under-use of human potential” (Ngo, 2007, p. 17).

Duff (2002) suggests that the reasons for the perceived lack of student participation are much more complex than “the observed patterns and silence among English language learners are not well understood by both teachers and local students” (p. 10). Teachers are not always aware that it often takes many years for second language learners to reach an advanced level of English language proficiency and there is no guarantee that academic success is certain (Cummins, 1992; Duff, 2001). Recent ethnographic studies by Duff (2001, 2002) have focused on student participation during Social Studies lessons in an urban, Canadian secondary setting. In addition, Morita’s (2004) qualitative, multiple case study investigated student participation in academic discourse experiences in a Canadian university setting. Given the urgency and desire for greater academic engagement at all educational levels, additional research is needed to compliment previous research by drawing on information accessed in a local, mainstream elementary setting. Further, Duff (2001) suggests “more research must be conducted on mainstreamed ESL students and their teachers experiences, frustrations and strategies for dealing successfully with the challenges of language and content integration” (p. 115). In addition, Duff and Uchida, 1997; and Morita and Kobayashi (2008) argue for the need to examine instructors and teachers views as to how they conceptualize their students’ academic socialization as well as their own changing identities over time.

This study focused on the content area of Social Studies because it represents a linguistically challenging academic discipline for both Native Speakers (NSs) and Non-Native speakers (NNs) students, and it also provides a useful venue to share experiences

related to language, culture and personal histories (Weisman & Hansen, 2007). The de-contextualized concepts and abstract language found in Social Studies texts are often problematic for ESL students, because their lack of second language proficiency may make it difficult to read highly academic text and demonstrate understanding through written assignments (Brown, 2007; Case & Obenchain, 2006; Cummins, Brown & Sayers, 2007; Duff, 2001; Short, 1994; Weisman & Hansen, 2007). It is well understood that activating and building prior knowledge provides a foundation for learning new information. Cummins et al. (2007) emphasize that incorporating family and cultural experiences of the student, will extend and enrich the meaning-making connections to the language and content of Social Studies' text.

In our mainstream settings, both English language learners and native English speakers are “learning language for academic purposes and using language to learn” (Mohan et al., 2001, p. 218). This present study focused on the powerful potential of the mainstream classroom teacher, as an active and collaborative participant in fostering maximum participation, by bridging the everyday language and experiences of students with the academic demands of the school Social Studies' curriculum. This study is a qualitative, interpretive account of how this type of instructional approach is planned, carried out in practice and reflected upon by the classroom teacher.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose in undertaking this study as an educator and a researcher, was to investigate a local elementary, classroom and deepen my understanding of how well-designed curriculum unfolds in the complex, challenging and dynamic environment of a classroom of learners, many for whom English is a second or an additional language. Duff

(2001) suggests, “the challenging content, texts, language and activities associated with Social Studies combined with sociocultural, educational, and linguistic differences among mainstreamed students, make it a fertile subject area for future research” (p. 107). The study responds to the call in the literature, for research in diverse, mainstream classrooms and contributes to the construction of knowledge building in this area for practitioners, researchers and policy makers. The study also explores the tensions and difficulties that emerge as the teacher dwells in the zone “between two curriculum worlds” as planned curriculum comes to life in the context of daily life in the classroom (Aoki, 1991, p.159). Embedded in my investigation, is the belief that literacy learning is a social practice and that each student and teacher has a complex social identity, and this awareness is at the heart of the quest for providing rich learning opportunities and ultimately the potential of academic engagement and success.

It is generally acknowledged that in our local, multilingual contexts almost every mainstream classroom is an ESL classroom and that all teachers are language teachers. This understanding should encompass any teacher’s pedagogy. Duff and Uchida (1997) cite Giroux’s (1992) insight of teachers as “cultural workers” (p. 475) who help students to make “new intercultural, cognitive, social and affective connections” (p. 476). In addition, teacher identities are a result of past experience and these identities are also subject to “constant negotiation due to changing contextual elements” (Duff & Uchida, 1997, p. 460). Drawing on the work of Rowsell and Pahl (2007), student and teacher texts can be viewed as “historical and material artifacts with complex social histories” (p. 392). Furthermore, the teacher may not realize the extent that her/his choices (e.g. teaching artifacts, class arrangements, reading materials) have cultural, social and educational impact (Duff &

Uchida, 1997). This qualitative study highlighted, through the teacher's use of collaborative inquiry, how aspects of the participants' cultural backgrounds and histories were drawn upon and used as a pedagogical tool.

Further, by viewing cultural and linguistic diversity as an asset, this study is strongly influenced by the work of the New London Group's (1996) multiliteracies approach. Within the study, the Social Studies unit was planned, to include and document teaching practices that enabled students multiple ways of accessing and representing knowledge. Ultimately, an approach, in the twenty-first century, that enables students, to become "designers of their own social futures" (Gutierrez, 2005, p. 27).

The following research questions were refined and reformulated throughout the planning, data collection, data analysis and writing of this study:

How does the elementary teacher, in a multilingual classroom setting, bridge young learners' access to the academic content of the Grade 5/6 Social Studies curriculum?

The guiding questions posed for the study were:

1. How does the teacher facilitate learners' access to prior knowledge and simultaneously draw upon participants' social and cultural identities in the unit of work as designed and enacted?
2. How does a grade 5/6 Social Studies unit, with instructional approaches designed to afford second language learners' access to multiple modes of representation, manifest itself in a multilingual classroom.
3. How does the teacher create conditions in the learning environment to facilitate learners' engagement in making intertextual connections to the academic content of a Grade 5/6 Social Studies unit?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Considering the steadily increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in our local educational contexts, and our responsibility to provide opportunities for success, it is critical that educators understand the realities and complexities of not only the linguistic but also the multilayered social and cultural dimensions of the learning environment. This study contributes to the already rich and insightful literature on the integration of language and content, multimodal approaches, and the interrelationship between identity and classroom practice. This qualitative investigation, examined how an educator, in a local mainstream multilingual classroom, approached the challenge of designing culturally responsive curriculum that connects students to academic content. It also addressed gaps in the literature examining the daily conflicts and opportunities mainstream teachers face when designing and implementing curriculum.

This study specifically addressed the challenges educators face in multilingual, multicultural, elementary mainstream environment and shows the effectiveness of integrating multimodal language and content approaches to maximize student participation and the potential for academic success. The findings will provide both practical and theoretical knowledge for classroom content teachers, ESL specialist teachers, teachers of Social Studies and fellow researchers. The study took place over a three-month period, so it also presents an opportunity for fellow researchers to investigate Social Studies pedagogy that follows a group of multilingual learners in a mainstream setting throughout a greater part of the academic year.

Finally, this study had implications for both the researcher and the participant teacher. The study provided the opportunity to explore and reflect upon our identities and personal

histories and better understand how past experiences shape our beliefs that influence our pedagogical decisions when designing and implementing curriculum. The study also demonstrated the power of respectful, collaborative work within a classroom where two teachers, each with their own areas of expertise, can learn from each other.

1.5 Definition of Terms

The term ESL student is defined in the B.C. Ministry of Education Policy Framework 1999 as:

English as a Second Language students are those whose primary language(s), or language(s) of the home, is/are other than English, and who may therefore require additional services in order to develop their individual potential within British Columbia's school system. Some students speak variations of English that differ significantly from the English used in the broader Canadian society and in school; they may require ESL support. (p. 9)

For the purpose of this study an ESL student meets the above-mentioned criteria of a student who speaks another or an additional language in the home. Students who are receiving additional services are referred to as Ministry designated ESL students.

There are a number of terms that recur throughout the study. I have drawn many of the definitions from the work of Pahl and Rowsell (2005) for a straightforward but accurate explanation of the terms

1. Communities of Practice- “Groups of people with common beliefs, values, ways of speaking and being” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2005, p. 156).
2. Cultural capital- As cited by Norton Pierce (1995) this is Bourdieu’s term, “to reference the knowledge and modes of thought that characterize different classes and groups in relation to specific sets of social forms. Some forms of cultural capital have a higher exchange value than others in a given social context” (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 17).

3. Funds of Knowledge- “The cultural resources that families bring to other settings” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2005, p. 154).
4. Identity- “how people understand their relationship to the world, how the relationship is constructed over time and space and how people understand possibilities for the future” (Norton, 1997, p.410).
5. Intertextual- The gaining of meaning from different kinds and types of text (see definition of text that follows).
6. Multiliteracies- The use of using a variety of literacy forms simultaneously.
7. Multimodal literacy- “Literacy teaching and learning that takes into account of all modes within texts” (Pahl & Rowsell, 2005, p. 156).
8. Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLO’s)- British Columbia’s content standards. Knowledge students are expected to acquire by the end of the course. (Ministry of Education, 2006)
9. Text- visual, oral, written and electronic language forms. These varied forms are often used in combination with one another.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis is as follows. The second chapter includes an overview of the literature useful in considering the research questions. The literature review consists of theory and research in the areas of language and content, of multimodal literacy and the interrelationship of identity and classroom practice. Further, it looks specifically at the literature on the challenges of teaching Social Studies curriculum in our multilingual settings. The third chapter provides an outline of the methodology used in the study. It describes the research site, the participants, the process of data collection and the analysis drawing on the

triangulation and interpretation of multiple sources of data. The fourth chapter reports the findings of the study in relation to the research questions. It synthesizes findings from classroom observations, audio-recorded interviews, work samples and classroom artifacts. The fifth chapter serves as a conclusion by discussing new pedagogical understandings and insights into best practice. The chapter also addresses the limitations of the study and educational implications for practice and future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In what follows, I review theories and research relevant to the questions raised in this study. The review of the literature took place over time throughout the study (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). At the early stages of the research process I identified gaps in the literature, sought a clearer direction and refined my research questions. As the research evolved I interpreted information more deeply during my fieldwork and analysis. The chapter encompasses a review of the literature that I believe to be complementary and related areas for the purpose of this study: the integration of language and content learning, multimodal literacy approaches and the interrelationship between identity and classroom practice. All areas presented are relevant for discussing the teaching of both native speakers of English and students acquiring English as a second or an additional language. First, I overview literature on the integration of language and content and more specifically, because of the nature of the study, I also discuss challenges and approaches to the teaching of the academic concepts of Social Studies in the mainstream classroom. Second, I review concepts of multiliteracies pedagogy framework and multimodal approaches that have been inspired by the transformation toward a twenty-first century need to broaden our literacy approaches due partly to shifting world global economies, that affords students access to and demonstrating understanding through a variety of representations. Finally, I encompass in the literature the complex and changing role of identity and its' importance as an integral aspect of implementation of curriculum within a mainstream, classroom setting.

2.1 Integration of Language and Content

Regardless of the age or the diversity of the backgrounds of our learners (e.g. long time residents, newcomer immigrant, international students) all students in varied learning environments are faced with the need to learn the content of school curriculum. Both proficient English language speakers and students learning English as a second or additional language are as argued by Mohan et al, 2001, “learning language for academic purposes and using language to learn” (p. 218). Although a refreshing perspective, language and content instruction presents a formidable challenge for educators when attempting to create responsive pedagogical approaches that enable students to become academically successful in our changing, multilingual mainstream contexts. To learn language and content simultaneously requires thoughtful and intentional planning at the both curriculum design level and daily lesson level (Mohan, 1986).

For the past three decades, as a result of shifting demographics, considerable attention has been paid to addressing the needs of diverse classroom populations by varying approaches to the integration of language and content in English speaking countries such as Canada, Australia, England and the United States (Chamot & O’Malley, 1992; Davison, 2001; Early & Hooper, 2001; Early & Marshall-Smith, 2008; Mohan, 1986; Mohan et al., 2001; O’Malley & Chamot , 1990; Short, 1994; Stoller, 2008).

Content instruction for newcomer students or students who were born in Canada but not proficient in English cannot wait until the student has mastered English language proficiency (Early & Marshall-Smith, 2008). Mohan (1986) criticized both the “laissez-faire” (p. 7) and previous, formalized approaches to second language acquisition. Mohan (1986) argued that instructional approaches needed to, “go beyond second language acquisition

research” (p. 11) toward an “integrative approach which relates language learning and content learning, considers language as a medium of learning and acknowledges the role of context in communication” (p. 1). Mohan (1986) advocated for more explicit instruction through the use of the “Knowledge Framework” to simultaneously support English language learning and academic content.

Mohan (2001) stresses that any multicultural setting needs to systematically address culture and language learning. He suggests that underlying the integrative approach is a language socialization perspective that language and culture are learned simultaneously. The individual is socialized into the culture by participation in ‘sociocultural activities’ and student’s participation in the discourse of these activities is a way of “acquiring language but also of acquiring sociocultural knowledge” (Mohan, 2001, p. 112).

Building on the work of Mohan (1986), Early and Hooper (2001) led two ambitious large-scale projects by researchers and educators to implement an instructional approach that focused on the integration of language and content. The study involved school teams including classroom teachers, ESL specialist teachers and administrators encompassing many elementary and secondary schools in the Vancouver School District (Early & Hooper, 2001). The study highlighted the potential role of the teacher as a committed and creative “change agents” (p.50) and simultaneously the importance of drawing on and connecting with the “perspectives and wisdom of the community...as a network of people who are resources” (p. 50).

Mohan’s integrative approach continues to be valuable for learning a second or an additional language and also for language education in general, including when second language learners and native speakers are working together in the mainstream classroom.

Cummins (1992) distinction of two levels of language proficiency: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) have had significant relevance in the area of language and content instruction. It serves as a useful conceptual tool for strengthening educators and parents understanding that it takes a long- term commitment to support academic proficiency. Cummins (1992) made the distinction as a means of explaining the difference in the time it takes for most immigrant students to acquire conversational fluency (one to two years) and academic proficiency (five to seven years). BICS refers to the survival English used in more context embedded, interpersonal, everyday situations and CALP refers to the more cognitively demanding, context reduced academic tasks. Conversational fluency uses many simple grammatical structures and high frequency vocabulary. BICS or survival English is important especially for peer related aspects of the social life of the child more typically found in contexts outside of the classroom. In classroom situations students are required to demonstrate understanding in a more complex manner such as written or oral modalities academic functions that require a higher level through language (Cummins, 1992). Similarly, Gibbons (2003) makes the distinction between “school language” and “playground language”.

The work of O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Chamot and O'Malley's (1992) has contributed to learning strategy research, grounded in cognitive psychology orientation, to second language acquisition theory. They developed the comprehensive Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA) model to enable students, usually at the intermediate level of language proficiency, through the integration of language and content, to prepare them to enter mainstream classes. The CALLA model (Chamot & O'Malley 1992) uses process oriented “learning- strategy instruction” (p. 50) through direct and *explicit* instruction

and practice. Strategies include: “metacognitive”, “cognitive” and “social-affective” (Chamot & O’Malley p. 51). Of particular importance, is their reference to the social-affective strategies with the understanding that students working cooperatively with peer activities involved in activities such as modeling, and giving feedback during a task, enables students to use the language skills associated with an academic assignment. Although the CALLA model is targeted for ESL students in a content-ESL classroom O’Malley and Chamot (1990) suggest that learning strategy instruction can support non-ESL students as well, by teaching students to apply their understandings to content and language learning.

Stoller (2008), presents a comprehensive overview of the history of major and notable contributors to Content-based approaches. Stoller (2008) refers to her (2004) work suggesting:

Despite differences in emphasis, what most content-based approaches share is the assumption that content and language create a symbiotic relationship; that is, the learning of content contributes to the learning of language and a mastery of language gives learners easier access to content.

According to Stoller (2008), Content-based instruction (CBI) has been influenced by cognitive psychology and second language acquisition research. Stoller (2008) makes reference to many linguists, who in the 1980’s, for example, Mohan (1986), Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) and Chamot and O’Malley (1987) who in the 1980’s made significant contributions in various ways (p. 61). Since the 1980’s the work of Short has made a noteworthy contribution to the supporting “ the language of different disciplines” (p. 63). Research investigating the success of CBI programs suggests that besides students being able to orchestrate writing reading and speaking tasks, they need “knowledge of pop culture”, “critical perspectives” and “confidence” (p. 64). One of the challenges, according to Stoller (2008) associated with CBI is the lack of expertise on the part of the content teacher and the

language specialist teacher. A familiar problem exists where the language specialist teacher is not knowledgeable about the content and the content teacher is not aware of the specialist. Stoller (2008) makes reference to Kaufmann and Crandall's (2005) suggestion there is a lack of research on language learners attempts "to master content knowledge and improve language skills" within the discipline areas (p. 64). Stoller (2008) also suggests that collaboration "across disciplines" and amongst practitioners and researchers would have positive outcomes (p. 68).

2.1.1 Challenges of Social Studies Education

Learning the language and content of Social Studies, as a discipline poses many challenges for our linguistically and culturally diverse student populations (Brown, 2007; Short, 1994; Weisman & Hansen, 2007). The language of the discipline of Social Studies as argued by Weisman and Hansen (2007) is often abstract, de-contextualized and cognitively demanding. Concepts according to Short (1994), are complex and not easily taught through the use of physical or visual cues and often require a high level of reading and writing to access and demonstrate understanding. Furthermore, if students have been attending school in another country, they will not necessarily be familiar with the background knowledge associated with foundations of the curriculum that have been previously taught. Other scholars (e.g. Brown, 2007; Cummins et al., 2007; Short, 1994; Weisman & Hansen, 2007) suggest that understanding Social Studies concepts are difficult for native speakers of English and an even more formidable challenge for students who are English language learners.

Short's (1994) research study, in an American Grade 6-9 setting, focused on instructional strategies specifically related to elementary English language learners acquiring content area knowledge in social studies. The project incorporated conducting interviews,

observations, participant teachers documenting implementation processes and student work samples. Some of the key findings in Short's research included "activating background knowledge", explicit teaching of text structure, "using cooperative learning" and "exposing students to authentic materials" (p. 587). Students' comprehension of concepts was increased by drawing examples from students' experiences and making connections through interactive hands-on engagement such as role-play. Short also claimed that the texts studied in the research did not address diversity. In addition, according to Short, it was observed quite consistently that teachers "made efforts to repeat, rephrase and extend student responses and comments and responses" (p. 596). In the mainstream classes observed in the project, teachers paired non-native and native English speaking peers as partners and mentors. Short (1994) reported that the teaching strategies used in the study supported the students in understanding and using academic content language of Social Studies and in increasing the student's understanding of American history. Furthermore, she suggests that drawing on students' historical and cultural resources has much potential. The study highlighted that students were able to draw on some critical aspects by having the students engage in discussion of different viewpoints and perspectives. Although ESL students often lack the background knowledge of navigating social studies texts, many educators found that the underlying narrative aspect of the structure of the textbooks appealing. For example, the narrative genre of storytelling is a universal method students have usually had exposure to in both home and school environments. Similarly in Duff's (2001), study students dwelt on their experiences as Chinese immigrant students in Canada and these experiences were inter-textually connected with aboriginal content of a film shown during a Social Studies class. Short (1994) and Weisman and Hansen (2007) also affirmed that connecting cultural

experience to the content can have promising results when instruction includes explicit and overt attention to practice and applying the content language. Further, Case and Obenchain (2006) and Short (1994), both emphasized the importance of collaboration between the ESL language specialist and the classroom content teacher when planning for instruction.

Gibbons (2003) qualitative, interpretive study, although her research was not in the discipline of Social Studies lessons, focused on the construct of mediation in spoken interactions between the student and the content teacher in Science lessons in an elementary ESL classroom. She asserted that developing spoken language ultimately supports competence in the more formal academic demands of the curriculum. In her study, Gibbons emphasized focusing on acquiring macro-analysis of data by building on evidence accumulated over time by observing a sequence of lessons. Her findings demonstrated that through teacher mediation students' contributions to classroom discussion "progressively transformed" over time as the specialized language of Science developed (p. 257).

The work of Schleppergrell (2001) and Schleppergrell, Achugar and Orteiza (2004) drawing from a functional linguistics perspective, has made a significant contribution to supporting non native English speakers' linguistic needs. Schleppergrell (2001) suggests there are tremendous linguistic demands for native speakers and even more so for non-native English speakers in our academic settings and these demands are not being fully addressed. Much of Schleppergrell's (2001) work has focused on the grammatical features of academic texts of particular disciplines. Schleppergrell et al. (2004) longitudinal research took place in the context of a high school History class in California. Their research suggests, "work with the textbook is critically important in learning history" (p. 89). However, when selecting texts teachers need to be very specific in their choices of text. They claim that it is not

enough to read the textbook students need to participate in activities where they are using “both everyday language and academic language” (p. 89). Importantly, this study comments that a focus on language is essential:

Because language is inseparable from social contexts and always makes meanings relevant to particular situations and cultures, we are not integrating language and content. Language and content are already integrated. What is needed is a means of helping students see how linguistic choices construe content meanings. (p. 90)

2.2 Multimodal Literacy Practices

Locally and globally students are growing up in contexts of increasingly salient cultural and linguistic diversity. Simultaneously, while students are immersed in diverse social practices it is a time of rapid economic, social and cultural change. The world-wide web has changed the way we view new information. Kress (2003) argues that we are going through a “revolution in the landscape of communication” (p. 1).

Multimodal approaches that have been inspired by the transformation toward a twenty-first century need to broaden our literacy approaches due partly to shifting world global economies, that affords students access to and demonstrating understanding through a variety of representations. The New London Group (1996) presented a theoretical overview of an approach referred to as “multiliteracies”. Responsive teaching that addresses cultural and linguistic diversity, in the complex and changing reality of schools, as students encounter information in progressively complex and multiple forms in the twenty-first century. They emphasized that although there are strengths in some existing literacy practices, there is need to extend instructional approaches beyond reading and writing to include multiple modes of representation (e.g. linguistic, visual, audio, gestural). These modes differ depending on the context and the variety of text forms available in any given educational context. Students need to gather information from multiple sources and analyze, synthesize, and critically

demonstrate and transform their understanding to new contexts. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) describe case studies from four different contexts and argue that all four aspects of Multiliteracies pedagogy (i.e. situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice) are necessary for good teaching. Cummins et al. (2007), suggests that the multiliteracies framework ‘intersect’ transmission, social constructivist and transformative pedagogical orientations. Siegel (2006) emphasizes that we cannot ignore the variety of modes of representation needed to negotiate our cultural, social and economic aspects of our lives.

Duff (2001) cites Short’s (1997) reference to a multimodal approach using “different modes of presentation and expression, in addition to academic expository texts, including: art, literature and hands on activities...and activities that promote discussion and debate” (p. 114) as instructional practices that would support more strategically a diverse range of student needs. Giving students choice in the mode of representation provides students with a sense of control over their learning environment (Pon, Goldstein & Schecter, 2003).

Gibbons (2003) also asserted that for second language learners, multi-modal texts provided the duplication of information that is often needed to acquire and demonstrate understanding.

Harklau’s (2003) research suggested that in some school settings, “teachers tend to hold the floor” and have a deficit view of English language learners. This outlook can constrain opportunities for active student participation and the opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic strengths (p. 91). She refers to the work of the New London Group (1996) that suggests that as a result of increasing advancements in technology language learners, instead of focusing on the acquisition of one language, need to learn how to navigate a multiplicity

of literacy forms (e.g. visual, textual) they encounter (p. 96). The significant point that Harklau makes is that the “multilingualism” they bring to these complex and robust environments “is clearly a resource” not a problem (p. 96). In Harklau’s study, she discussed the enthusiasm a group of teachers had for students writing their immigration stories and that student were often able to communicate more deeply their cultural histories because of the hybrid nature of their personal accounts. A multimodal approach provided second language learners with a larger repertoire of ways to understand concepts and also demonstrate their understanding.

Kress (2003) and Siegel (2006) argue that texts are multimodal. According to Siegel (2006), in her review of the literature on “multimodal transformations”, suggests children have always engaged in multimodal practices and bring a repertoire of knowledge to learning contexts (p. 65). For example, children use talking, dramatizing, gesturing and drawing as an integral part of the writing process. Research shows “when curriculum changes include multimodality” students who have experienced learning difficulties may achieve greater success (Siegel, 2006, p.73).

Kress (2003) argues two “distinct” and “related” factors: first, that the image has substituted the dominance of written text and that second, the screen has replaced the book as the medium of communication (p. 1). Kress (2003) contends that this change is a “revolution” and has significantly effected the way we view what it means to be literate and therefore to question the larger social, political and cultural impacts of that change.

2.3 Identity in the Classroom

In recent years more interest and recognition has focused on the social practice of literacy development and the socially situated nature of the learner (Rowse & Pahl, 2007).

Researchers using a variety of methodologies and theoretical perspectives have informed educators' understanding of the interrelationship between social identity and classroom practice. In this study I use Norton's (1997) term of identity to refer to "how people understand their relationship to the world, how the relationship is constructed over time and space and how people understand possibilities for the future" (p. 410).

Norton Peirce (1995) proposes that the concept of motivation does not adequately address the complexity of the social relationships of "power, identity and language learning" (p. 17). She points out that the term investment rather than motivation conceptualizes the multiplicity of factors that influence learners' engagement. Consequently, the language learner, according to Norton Peirce (1995) and Norton (1997) is engaged in "identity construction" (p. 18) as they are "constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world" p. 410. For example, in her longitudinal study of immigrant women's experiences, Norton Peirce (1995) found that although all participants were highly motivated to learn English (e.g. enrolling in English courses, a desire to have connections with English speaking Canadians), however, constraining social factors (e.g. hierarchical workplace conditions, lack of confidence in speaking English) inhibited participants' engagement in speaking. Further, Martina illustrates the case of a language learner who had many multiple identities- "a mother", "a worker", and "a wife" and that her investment in her social identity as primary caregiver gave her reason to struggle for the words to fight for the rights of her family.

Duff's (2001) ethnographic study of one local mainstream, Grade 10 Social Studies class, addresses how to create opportunities for students to negotiate their identities and subject matter knowledge in culturally respectful ways. The teacher in the study, attempted to

accommodate and integrate English as a Second Language (ESL) learners by drawing on student background knowledge and personal cultural experiences to connect to Canadian historical concepts. The qualitative, interpretive research consisted of audio and video interviews of classroom participation, and discourse samples from interviews with students.

Cummins et al. (2007) propose that for an “optimal learning environment, virtual or “real,” requires that both cognitive engagement and identity investment be maximized” (p. 214). Further, they suggest that, “it is reasonable to hypothesize that pedagogical approaches that affirm the identities of culturally and linguistically diverse students may promote greater academic engagement and achievement. ” The interpersonal space that is created in these student-teacher interactions are not only the result of teacher’s techniques and strategies to support academic growth but the messages that the teacher communicates regarding her/his view of the student’s identity including the student’s capabilities for the future. In an optimal learning environment the process of ”reciprocal negotiation of identity and collaborative generation of knowledge take place within this knowledge construction zone” (Cummins et al., 2007, p. 216). However, Cummins et al. (2007) also suggest that this zone can also be constricting if student identities are not being affirmed. Students are reluctant to invest cognitively and academically if their perspective is that the learning environment does not value and encourage aspects of their linguistic and cultural heritage. This text builds on previous books by Cummins (1996; 2000) where he argues for the importance of notions of ‘identity’ in theory, research and practice in the education of bi/multilingual students.

Morita’s (2004) research also acknowledges the situated nature of learner participation and that the “ local classroom context- the social, cultural, historical, curricular, pedagogical, interactional, and interpersonal context- is inseparable from learners

participation” (p. 596). Morita also implies there is a connection or a “reciprocal relationship” between participation and competence. For example, Rie’s case (a Korean-born, international, graduate student from Japan) had “contrasting positionalities” in two different university courses. In one course, despite her language limitations she was a “valued member” and stated “I could feel my own presence” (p. 592). In another course, although she had an interest in the subject matter, Rie had difficulty with the topics and discourses and felt “ignored” (p. 595). Finally, although students may appear passive and withdrawn, in reality they are often “actively negotiating their multiple roles and identities” (Morita 2004, p. 587). For instance, in Morita’s study Nanako (a female, international, Japanese graduate student) had different identities in each of her three university classes. In Course E she felt “less experienced” and “less knowledgeable” and used her silence as a “face saving strategy”. However, once her instructor acknowledged that her silence was not a problem, her membership (through silence) was legitimized, and this recognition resulted in more positive participation and socialization. The same instructor also prudently acknowledged that her “outsider” status could be viewed as a resource rather than a deficit. It is apparent that students, although sometimes appearing reticent or passive, are often actively negotiating their own identities and agency. So in the ‘real’ work of the classroom, amid unprecedented social, economic and technological change this is a complex, but crucial challenge for educators to address.

Pon et al. (2003), made reference to a teacher in a Grade 12 class acknowledging a student’s legitimacy within the class and giving a student the option of time to revisit their response later: “It’s okay to say if you don’t know right now. You can think about it and we’ll come back and look at your response later” (p. 125).

There has been an emerging body of research exploring the connection between home, school and community literacy practices (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Alvarez, & Chui, 1999; Heath, 1983; Moji, Ciechanowski, Kramer, Ellis, Carrillo & Collazo, 2004; Street, 2003). Moreover, these sites are areas of changing and sometimes contradictory identity formation (Norton Peirce, 1995). This study, investigates how curriculum designed to capitalize on the home and community knowledge learners potentially bring to the classroom can connect to and bridge young learners' understandings of academic content. In other words, how "academic" and "non-academic" activities can be interdependent in the classroom (Wortham, 2006, p. 1).

Rowell and Pahl (2007), drawing on the work on everyday literacy practices of Heath (1983) and Barton and Hamilton (1998), argue that children's texts are historical in nature and shaped by multilayered identities. They emphasize the link between everyday literacy practices and the "identity constructions" within the shaping of children's text (p. 391). Further, they make reference to a metaphor of "identities sedimenting into texts" (p. 388) and suggest that multimodal text can be seen as an artifact and that "this artifact-like quality is linked to the identity of the meaning-maker" (p. 392). In addition, the teacher in their data sampling, when making pedagogical decisions, drew on her "childhood ideologies". Rowell and Pahl refer to Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* which "describes ways of being, doing and acting in the world across generations, time and space." In their ethnographic studies in homes they observed that children "draw upon intergenerational ways of doing and being to construct new meanings" (p. 394). Rowell's ethnographic study involving a Canadian teacher demonstrated how the teacher's personal history was represented in many facets of her teaching, such as her unit plans and the layout of her

classroom design. Rowsell calls for further research studies and teaching practices that investigate the social and historical nature within text. The present study seeks to contribute to this area of knowledge by examining social studies lessons that were planned to draw upon the students' and teacher's personal histories in a Grade Five/Six elementary classroom.

In addition, the contributions of Bransford, Brown and Cocking (cited in Cummins et al., 2007) closely relate to the findings of this present study. Their major synthesis of the evidence on "optimal conditions" for how learning occurs includes: "engaging prior understandings, integrating factual knowledge with conceptual frameworks and taking active control over the learning process" (p. 42). As Cummins et al. point out the findings of Bransford and colleagues imply that "students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds" learn best when the learning environment fosters these three conditions (p. 42). Cummins et al. also refer to Bransford et al.'s emphasis on "the support within a community of learners" and Lave and Wenger's notion of "legitimate peripheral participation" as students are socialized into and supported by "dialogue, apprenticeship and mentoring" (p. 44). The present study investigates all three of the above mentioned factors for optimum learning in the context of a classroom where the teacher's professional practice is foregrounded by the belief in a community of learners.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methodology used in the research, the research design, the site, the participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

3.1 Research Method

The goal of this exploratory case study is to provide a holistic description of how a well-designed Social Studies unit is enacted in the complex, naturally occurring and dynamic environment of a classroom of learners, many for whom English is a second or an additional language (Jacob, 1987; Stake, 1997). Central to the research is the question: How does the elementary teacher, in a multilingual classroom setting, bridge young learners' access to the academic content of the Grade 5/6 Social Studies curriculum?

The guiding questions posed for the study were:

1. How does the teacher facilitate learners' access to prior knowledge and simultaneously draw upon participants' social and cultural identities in the unit of work as designed and enacted?
2. How does a grade 5/6 Social Studies unit, with instructional approaches designed to afford second language learners' access to multiple modes of representation, manifest itself in a multilingual classroom.
3. How does the teacher create conditions in the learning environment to facilitate learners' engagement in making intertextual connections to the academic content of a Grade 5/6 Social Studies unit?

Guided by the research questions identified, it also documents some of the curriculum decisions made by the researcher and the participant teacher during the designing of the Social Studies unit. The research is a case study of one Social Studies unit: *Immigration In Canada*, taught in one Grade Five/Six classroom, detailing the intricate complexities associated in the lived experiences of the participants (Stake, 1997). In addition, the study contains some characteristics of ethnographic research. As discussed in Chapter 1, justification for the choice of drawing from some ethnographic methods-was my intent to gain a measure of deeper understanding, by immersing myself in a classroom context, in order to generate, while acknowledging the limitations of the time frame, a “thick description” of the socio-cultural aspects of the learners in their natural setting (Davis, 1995, p. 434). Within the research, I have accessed both the etic (outsider’s) perspectives of the researcher and also encompassed the emic (insider’s) perspectives of both the teacher and the students in their classroom setting (Davis, 1995). According to Davis (1995), an emic perspective “demands description that includes actors’ interpretations and other social and/or cultural information” (p. 434). Ethnographic accounts, according to Davis (1995) and Gay et al. (2006) usually takes a full cycle of a calendar year, however, because of the time limitations of both the researcher and the classroom teacher this research took place over a three-month time frame. Palys (2003) cites Weick’s suggestion that as researchers, we look at a phenomenon in both “intentional and unintentional ways” (p. 203) and the importance of observing multiple behaviours in context. As an educational researcher, I looked for emerging and shared patterns, and webs of relationships that developed and expanded over the three-month period, in the context of Social Studies’ lessons. This study is a qualitative analysis of what transpired when well-designed curriculum came alive in the everyday,

dynamic and cultural context of a multilingual classroom. The study took into account both the documented perceptions and the beliefs of the teacher during the unit design process and then later the ‘lived’ teacher and student experiences in the classroom setting.

3.2 Site

The research was conducted in an elementary school in an urban multilingual and multicultural school district in British Columbia. Entry into the research site was negotiated early in the 2007-2008 academic school year. Many factors played a role in obtaining permission, access and credibility to undertake the study. As an educator in the School District I have served in many different roles and capacities including: an elementary classroom teacher, a Learning Assistance teacher, an ESL Specialist Teacher, a District Resource Teacher and presently District Curriculum Coordinator: ESL and Multiculturalism. I had developed a professional and highly respectful relationship with the participant teacher, in a previous school setting where we co-taught a Primary class. I am professionally acquainted with the school’s Administrator, the ESL specialist teacher and some of the teaching and support staff. In addition, I was familiar with some of the recent Professional Development initiatives that had been a focus for the school. Furthermore, as a long time teacher in the district, I was very familiar with the location of the school site, and comfortable working collaboratively in a school setting.

Davis (1995) referred to the importance of Erickson’s ethical principles of informing the participants of the activities and purposes as well as any risks or burdens that the study might entail. As a teacher-researcher, I presented myself as a knowledgeable learner, who would be vigilant in ensuring that these principles were built into the design of the study. I clarified with District Administrative staff, the school Principal and the classroom teacher the

intent of my research and my desire to maintain participants' confidentiality and anonymity. The name of the school was kept confidential. Furthermore, I did not discuss the place or nature of the study with colleagues in my workplace.

3.3 Participants

Regularly meeting the teacher and the learners in the classroom gave me the opportunity to develop a sense of complex relationships within the class. Of the 29 students in the class, 5 females were enrolled in Grade Six and 8 females and 16 males were enrolled in Grade Five. Informed student assent and parent consent forms were given to all students. Translated copies of the informed consent forms were made available to families. Of the 29 students, 19 gave consent to participate in the study. For ethical considerations, pseudonyms were used for all research participants to protect their identity. Students who did not consent to participate continued with normally occurring class activities. Throughout the study, every effort was made to avoid disrupting the routine of the class.

The class composition was a diverse group of students in terms of first language, educational experience and literacy proficiency. Six of the students were Ministry designated ESL students who received additional ESL support from a specialist ESL teacher. Three of the ESL students were Level 3 (Intermediate), Two were Level 4 (Advanced Intermediate) and one student was Level 5 (Proficient). The students in the study comprised a small number of “newcomers” who had immigrated to Canada less than four years ago, foreign born students who had immigrated from various parts of the world more than four years previously, Canadian born students whose parents had immigrated from Hong Kong, and Canadian born first language English speakers. No one in the class was a beginner English speaker. A majority of the class spoke another language than English in the home and that

other language was usually Cantonese or Mandarin. Among the 19 participating students, two were native English speakers (NSs) and seventeen were non-native speakers (NNSs). The non-native English (NNSs) speakers were of varying levels of English proficiency. Nine of the participating students were female and ten of the students were male.

The participant teacher in the study was an Anglo-Canadian male in his fifties. He was born and educated in Vancouver. Mr. McKay has been a teacher for twenty-nine years and for the past twenty years has been an intermediate teacher with a particular interest in physical education. I have a positive, professional relationship with the teacher, previously established, when we had worked together twenty years ago. In the past, I found him to be professional, dedicated and creative in his approach to teaching. In the 1987-1988 academic year the participant teacher and I co-taught in my Grade Two classroom. At that time, he had the role and responsibility of Resource Teacher supporting the integration of two students with identified special needs in my mainstream Grade Two setting. Among the students in the school, Mr. McKay was well respected as a classroom teacher and also well known for supporting extra curricular activities with the students.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The data was collected over one complete Grade 5/6 unit titled: *Immigration In Canada* consisting of a sequence of seventeen, forty-five minute lessons conducted from the end of November to early March. The lessons were aligned to British Columbia's Ministry of Education Grade 5 and Grade 6 English Language Arts and Social Studies curriculum. Data were mainly collected from fieldwork experiences using multiple, qualitative methods including: descriptive field notes, reflective observational field notes, audio-recordings of semi-structured interviews with students (see Figure 3.1), an audio-recorded interview with

some students (see Appendix D for the questions that were posed), an audio-recorded exit interview with teacher (see Appendix E for the questions that were posed), a teacher response journal, work samples, class maps of seating arrangements, and classroom artifacts (e.g., photographs of classroom charts and posters). Audio-recordings could be reviewed repeatedly and both teacher and student interviews contained an opportunity for open-ended responses. The audio recordings were transcribed for analysis. Please refer to Appendix H for transcription protocols. The study examined the participants in whole class teacher directed lessons, group work and independent work.

3.4.1 Curriculum Planning Sessions

In the fall of 2007, I met with the classroom teacher twice after school, to collaboratively plan the Social Studies unit. The first planning session took place in the teacher's classroom and the second planning session took place in the school library. Each planning session was approximately one hour long. During this unit design phase the teacher and I viewed the Social Studies and the English Language Arts (Grade Five and Grade Six) curriculum guides in the planning. The teacher also indicated that the class had come up with an overall question for the year "*Why are we here?*" and that question would be referred to throughout the year. Recently, the teacher had attended professional development on the topic of Multiliteracies and handouts distributed at the workshop, were used as reference tools. Following the co-planning meetings, the classroom teacher had the opportunity to read, comment on and expand ideas written in the planning notes. Subsequent to our meetings, the teacher and I stayed in contact by telephone and email refining, developing and sourcing resources for the planned unit of work.

3.4.2 Classroom Observations

The week before the study began in the month of November 2007, the teacher introduced me to the class as a participant observer. The teacher, Mr. McKay explained that, as part of my research, I would be visiting the class regularly during Social Studies lessons. Further, Mr. McKay informed the students that he would usually be teaching the lessons but that sometimes I would co-teach the lessons and participate in discussions. Mr. McKay gave me the opportunity to explain the purpose of my study and the students had the chance to ask questions. I assured the students that their participation was voluntary and handed out the informed student and parent consent forms (see Appendix A and B).

Throughout the study, I took on varying roles as a participant observer. For example, sometimes I was actively absorbed in the role of co-teacher as “active participant observer”, and other times “privileged active observer” where, at the direction of the teacher, I had the opportunity to focus, mainly on data collection, as I observed the lesson (Gay et al., 2006, p. 447).

My classroom observations began in the last week of November 2007 and ended in the second week of March 2008. At the beginning of the study, I observed during Social Studies lessons at least twice a week. As time progressed, I observed lessons at least once a week, during the school’s 11:30-12:15 period. Social Studies lessons usually were scheduled twice a week and some of the lessons carried on when I was not attending. The lessons that I was not able to observe usually took place in the computer lab. During the research process, I had the opportunity to visit with the class during other time blocks but the 11:30 time block was the most consistently scheduled time, as it was the most desirable for the teacher’s timetabling commitments and I could do the observations during my lunch break.

Further, because not all parents granted permission for audio-recordings, and as a consequence classroom work could not be digitally recorded, classroom observations were critically important and provided along with samples and images of texts and artifacts produced by the teacher and students a key means for ongoing descriptive data. My intent was to comprehensively and accurately observe and document classroom events seen and heard, as they occurred. In total, I observed 17 Social Studies' lessons. Since 16 class observations lasted 45 minutes and 1 class observation lasted one hour, a total of 13 hours of class time were observed. The teacher and students welcomed me and I felt very comfortable visiting the class. The teacher was given the opportunity to review the field notes, check for accuracy and give any feedback for example, where key information pertaining to a classroom event may have been missing details. Where possible I copied down direct quotes from the teacher where instructions and explanations were repeated for the students.

Interpretive, qualitative research design, according to Davis (1995), "is constantly evolving" (p. 445). During my observations, copious field notes were taken regularly, to record, the multifaceted, non-linear, changing nature of the Social Studies lesson as it emerged. The main focus for the field notes was the role of the teacher as I observed the interactions between the teacher and learners in directed whole class lessons, group work and independent work within the natural classroom setting. After each observation session, I would revisit my field-notes and compose descriptive and reflective insights.

3.4.3 Audio-recordings

I decided interview data from digital audio-recorder would provide worthwhile information for the study. The audio-recordings provided a verbatim account of the interview and prevented bias from subjective interpretation (Gay et al., 2006). The audio-recordings

also had the benefit of being able to be reviewed repeatedly, giving insights into non-written teacher and student perspectives. Further, because of a desire on the part of the classroom teacher and myself, not to interrupt the routine of the class, and because of scheduling constraints, I kept the duration of the interviews short. I did not get parental consent from some parents to proceed with some student interviews so my audio- recorded sampling was six students. Two of the students interviewed were native English speakers and four of the students were second language learners. Originally I planned on the interviews being of a semi- structured nature but in reality the interviews were more structured. The students had the opportunity for an open-ended response but they were not very forthcoming. The interview consisted of a set of fourteen questions with an opportunity at the end for open-ended discussion. During the audio-recorded interviews I also took notes throughout the interview. In total, six audio-recorded interviews were conducted at the outset of the unit on November 29, 2007, in a private setting next to the computer lab, where the rest of the class was working on assignments. There were no names on the recordings so confidentiality was assured. The recordings were transcribed verbatim at a later date. Each transcription was then reviewed to check for accuracy.

Finally, with the use of a digital audio-recorder, I conducted an interview with the classroom teacher near the end of the unit on February 27, 2008. I interviewed the teacher during the lunch hour in a room that was part of the library. During the interview process I also took notes as the participant teacher responded to my questions. The interview gave me the opportunity to ask questions about his perceptions and viewpoints of the Social Studies unit. The interview consisted of a number of questions with the opportunity for open-ended discussion. The audio-recording was transcribed at a later date.

3.4.4 Classroom Artifacts

Classroom artifacts also provided valuable and authentic data for the study-“written and visual sources of data that contribute to our understanding of what is happening in classrooms and schools” (Gay et al., p.423). Throughout the study relevant artifacts were collected these included: the unit outline, modes of representation planning sheet, worksheets, photo of a map, class posters and We Know/ We Wonder/ We Learned charts. The artifacts chosen all contributed insights to the understanding of the study.

3.4.5 Survey

On my last visit to the class a survey was distributed (see Appendix G). This survey was intended to provide some additional data, as some of the parents of participating students had requested that their child not be audio-recorded. The survey gave the students the opportunity to reflect on the unit of study and their perception of what they had learned from the unit. Further, the students were asked to indicate what the teacher did that was most helpful for their learning. On the back of the survey the students were asked to draw a picture of the lessons that they enjoyed the most in the unit. Only participant student surveys were used for the data. The classroom teacher also used the results of the survey to reflect on the students’ perceptions of the Social Studies unit and his role as their teacher.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis, as is common in qualitative research, began at the start of the study and continued concurrently and following the data collection. The data from the field notes of the two planning sessions were reviewed and re-written following collaborative meetings. Planning notes, unit plans, and student handouts also constituted part of the data and were reviewed and updated throughout the unit. The teacher had the opportunity to add any

comments or suggestions throughout the three-month period of the study. As previously stated, following each classroom visit, field notes from the observations were analyzed and reflected upon. In addition, student work samples were collected, sorted and collated and interview data was analyzed iteratively to establish emerging themes.

3.5.1 Use of Computer Software: Atlas ti

The data analysis and management of the data for the curriculum as lived component of this study was supported by the use of qualitative data analysis software called Atlas ti. Making sense of the data through the use of computer software hastened the process of coding and retrieving the narrative text (classroom observations and interview data) of the study. For example, the computer software, instead of cutting and pasting by hand, allowed me to store text, codes, quotes and memos that I could then access as I went through the analysis. First my observational notes, audio-recorded interview transcripts and survey entries were entered into the software program. Then, I recursively went over the data to identify patterns and organize themes. After the initial coding process, each of the narrative texts was re-read and the coding was updated. I then refined and expanded my codes, through the query tool, to combine codes and also put codes into code families. To aid in the analysis of the coding system, I defined each of the codes as used in this study (see Appendix F). The use of the computer program facilitated the data analysis process by providing a more comprehensive and systematic way to explore the data. In the data analysis process I found that my classroom observations were the richest source of inquiry.

3.6 Trustworthiness of the Study

Gay et al. (2006) suggest “qualitative researchers can establish the trustworthiness of their research by addressing credibility, transferability, and dependability” (p. 403),

First, in this present study several techniques were used to address the criteria of credibility. Palys (2003) suggests “validity requires intimacy” (p. 11) and valid data will come from the relationship built up over time with close and extended contact in the classroom setting with the participant teacher and students. Regular and repeated visits, using some ethnographic techniques, over a three-month period helped to ensure accuracy of recording participants’ perspectives at the research site. In addition, throughout the study maintaining meticulously clear and precise accounts of the context being observed supported credibility and trustworthiness in my relationship with participants. Throughout the research I debriefed with the participant teacher, my husband, and my faculty advisor to assist in my reflection of the research process.

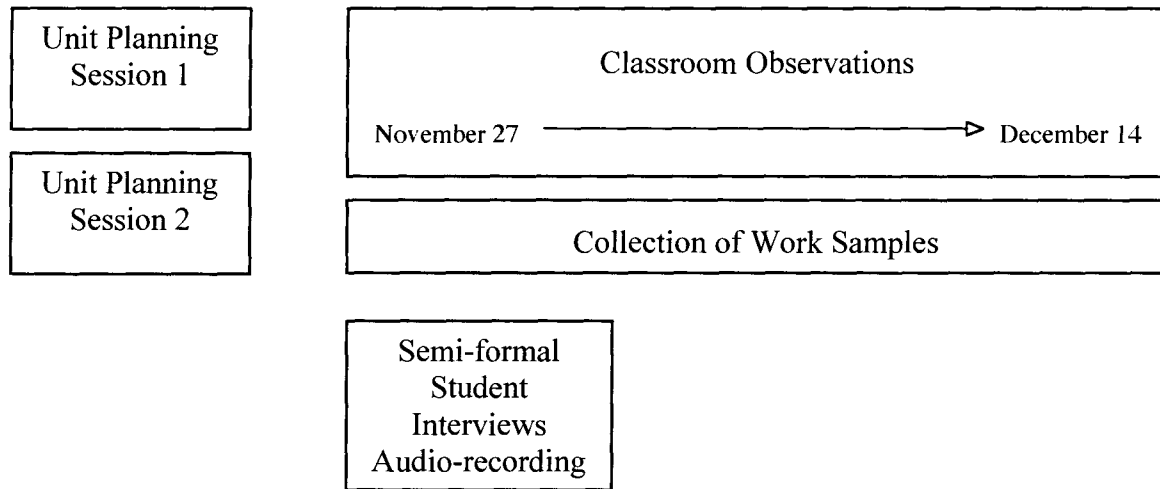
Another technique to ensure credibility and reliability was a case study, multiple methods approach using “triangulation” (Gay et al., 2006, p. 405). Many kinds of data were collected, for example, field notes, interviews, student work samples and surveys to contribute to more holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied.

Second, Gay et al. (2006) refer to Guba’s definition of transferability as the “researcher’s belief that everything is context bound” (p. 405). In this study, rich and detailed images of the context of the classroom setting were described. Attention was paid to the design of the class, the seating arrangements of the students and events as they took place.

Third, dependability was assured as I kept an organized and accessible “audit trail” throughout the study (Gay et al., 2006, p. 405). As mentioned previously, the participant teacher was able to review and comment on the data collected during and after the study. Additionally, I reviewed the data with another researcher and debriefed with my advisor throughout the study.

TERM 1

November (2007) —————> December (2007)



Winter Break (December 21, 2007 – January 7, 2008)

TERM 2

January (2008) —————> March (2008)

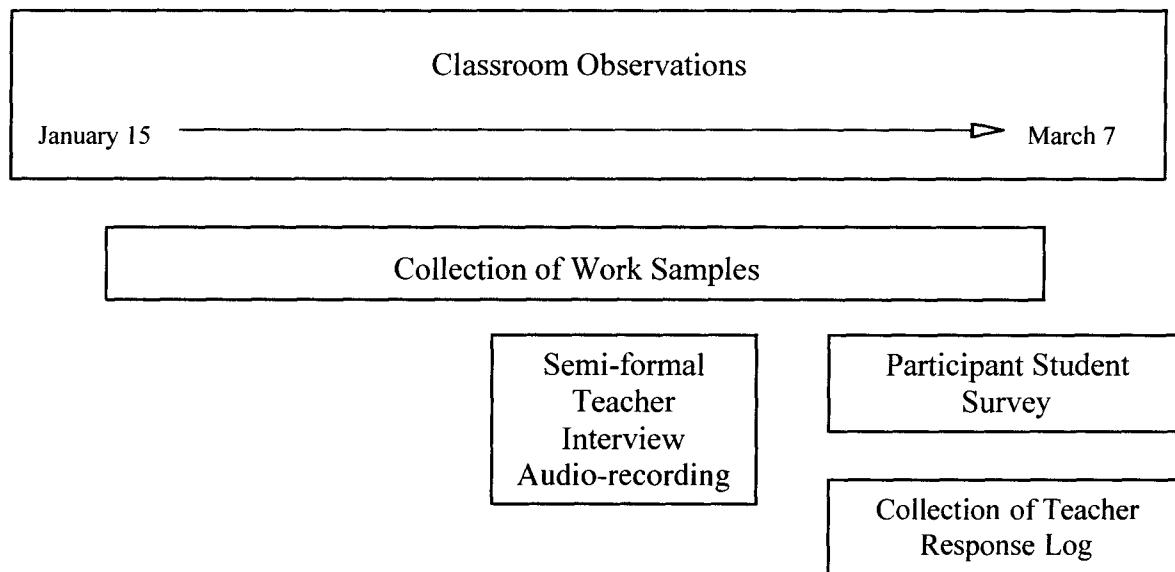


Figure 3.1: Timeline for Data Collection

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the key themes that emerged from this study. The findings are based on the qualitative analysis of data collected through: field notes, audio-recorded interviews of students, an audio-recorded interview with the classroom teacher, student work samples, a student survey, a teacher response log, and classroom artifacts. The research question central to the study is- How does an elementary teacher, in a multilingual, mainstream classroom setting, bridge young learners' access to the academic content of the Grade 5/6 Social Studies curriculum? I systematized the data around my guiding questions in order to explore how the Social Studies unit was enacted in a mainstream setting. The guiding questions posed for the study to support my inquiry were:

1. How does the teacher facilitate learners' access to prior knowledge and simultaneously draw upon participants' social and cultural identities in the unit of work as designed and enacted?
2. How does a grade 5/6 Social Studies unit, with instructional approaches designed to afford second language learners' access to multiple modes of representation, manifest itself in a multilingual classroom.
3. How does the teacher create conditions in the learning environment to facilitate learners engagement in making intertextual connections to the academic content of a Grade5/6 Social Studies unit?

I collected the data during two, one hour, after school planning sessions with the classroom teacher plus ongoing correspondence by telephone and emails over a period of three months. In addition, as a participant observer in an elementary Grade 5/6 classroom

setting, during 17 Social Studies lessons taught over a three-month period. The lessons observed were a Grade Five/Six unit: *Immigration In Canada* and were designed by the participant teacher in consultation with the researcher. Following Aoki's (1993) notion of curriculum as planned and curriculum as lived, I begin with an account, drawn from the data of the unit planning process and then provide an examination of the lessons as they were enacted in the classroom in order to explore how the learners accessed the content of the Social Studies unit.

4.1 Curriculum as Planned

In this section, I describe the findings of two, one hour, after school planning sessions that focused on designing the Social Studies unit. The findings also acknowledge teacher made planning materials that were refined subsequent to our meetings, as we stayed in contact by telephone and by email. The findings are based on field notes, as well as materials (e.g. unit planners) that were created as an outcome of the planning process. In Chapter 3, I briefly described the planning of the unit, however, I felt the planning of the unit needed an expanded accounting because one of the guiding research questions includes the designing phase of the Social Studies unit, this section reports on the outcomes of the curriculum planning process. My research did not encompass the assessment of the students, so this is not discussed in the findings. The unit was planned to draw on the everyday, personal experiences and cultural resources of the students and provide multiple ways for a diverse group of students to access and demonstrate understanding of the unit. What follows is a brief synthesis of the outcome of two planning sessions, plus subsequent conversations by email and telephone that continued over the period of the study.

We co-planned together, and I was respectful of the fact that the teacher had ownership of the class. He was the key contributor, and our planning sessions were cordial and productive. The teacher had an understanding of the content of the Social Studies' unit and we were committed to creating a unit plan that would enable diverse learners, including those for whom English is a second language, to engage in the curriculum. The teacher had recently attended a Professional Development Day on the topic of Multiple Literacies, and he was eager to use many of the ideas in the design of the unit. Our hopes for what we wanted students to accomplish in the unit were not contradictory. The teacher and I decided first and foremost, that activities that built on prior knowledge and connected new information with the students' own personal histories would make the Social Studies lessons more comprehensible and meaningful. The teacher and I had a co-operative, collegial and supportive relationship and we acknowledged and appreciated each of our areas of expertise.

4.1.1 Connecting to the Prescribed Curriculum

This section describes the process of meeting the Ministry's requirement of meeting PLO's for the Social Studies unit of study. In both sessions, British Columbia's, Ministry of Education's English Language Arts and Social Studies (K-7) Integrated Resource Packages (IRP's) were used as reference tools for the planning of the unit.

First, the Prescribed Learning Outcomes (PLO's) of the Ministry's Social Studies curriculum were reviewed. The content of the Grade 5/6 unit was the history of immigration in Canada, with a focus on immigration to British Columbia. The following two outcomes were identified to address the goals of the Grade 5 Social Studies unit: "Assess why immigrants came to Canada, the individual challenges they faced and their contributions to Canada" (p. 30) and "Describe the contributions of significant individuals to the

development of Canada's identity " (B.C. Ministry of Education. Social Studies Integrated Resource Package, 2006, p. 30).

Since many of the students in the class were immigrants or were children of immigrants, the first above- mentioned PLO's, had the potential to naturally draw on the real immigrant experiences of students and their families. The second PLO, also addressed the content of the unit and afforded students a variety of choices for expression and presentation.

Once the PLO's were decided, available resources that would support the learning outcomes were discussed. The teacher indicated that there were enough copies of the course textbook, *Connections Canada* (2000) for each of the students. We thought that a few pages in the textbook would be useful as an instructional tool, because of their direct relation to the topic, a good readability level, bold faced text features, as well as photographs that acted as visual supports. The teacher indicated that opportunities for paying attention to, and talking about text and text features were important to address when using the textbook. In addition, the teacher expressed a desire to supplement the textbook with newspaper articles on current events, relevant passages from books, other printed materials, posters, and videos. One of the books that we viewed as having potential for discussion was *Tales From Gold Mountain* (Yee, 1989). These materials were all useful multimodal instructional materials that could be used as pedagogical resources to draw on the social and cultural identities of the students. These materials were already available, engaging for students and well matched to the curricular expectations of the unit.

In addition to examining the Social Studies PLO's, attention was paid to the English Language Arts curriculum guide to find PLO's that would support not only the Social Studies unit, but also more directly contribute to the learning of language. In other words the learning

of content and language would create “a symbiotic relationship; that is, the learning of content contributes to the learning of language and a mastery of language gives learners easier access to content” Stoller (2008) p. 59. We discussed that in Language Arts IRP the definition of text included all forms of language: oral, written, visual and electronic and that students should also be aware of the definition. During the process, the participant teacher surprisingly, could quote many of the Language Arts PLO’s. He stated he could do this because he had “been writing report cards and commenting on student learning outcomes”. After some discussion, the following Language Arts’ PLO’s were decided upon:

1. “Use speaking and listening to interact with others”(p. 309).
2. “Select and use strategies before reading and viewing to develop understanding of text” (p. 320).
3. “Create meaningful, visual representations that communicate personal response, information and ideas relevant to the topic” (p. 329).
4. “Use writing and responding to express personal responses and relevant opinions about experiences and texts” (p. 333).
5. “Write a variety of clear, focused informational writing for a range of purposes and audiences” (p. 327).

At this phase of the planning the teacher knew the PLO’s needed to address the unit objectives and the resources available. The findings indicate that during the planning process, the mandated Ministry guides could be used as reference tools in clarifying outcomes at the beginning of the design process.

Unit Planner

Key Understandings

Class- Big Question- September – June ongoing – Why Are We Here?

Immigration has influenced our communities past, present and future.

Cultural Diversity is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian identity.

----- is an ever-changing, multicultural, multilingual community.

Social Studies-Identity, Society and Culture

Assess why immigrants come to Canada, the individual challenges they face, and their contributions to Canada

Describe the contributions of significant individuals to the development of Canada's identity.

Language Arts

Use speaking and listening to interact with and inform others

Select and use strategies before reading and viewing to develop understanding of text

Create meaningful visual representation that communicate personal response, information and ideas relevant to the topic

Uses writing and responding to express personal responses and relevant opinions about experiences and text

Write a variety of clear, focused informational writing for a range of purposes and audiences

Key Questions

What is multiculturalism?

How does language affect our relationships?

How can we welcome newcomers to our community?

What artifacts have significant meaning in the lives of students in the class?

What are some immigrant experiences of students in the class?

What do we know about our personal histories?

Cumulative Projects

Choose one significant individual who has contributed to Canada's identity. Use variety of sources such as informational texts, photographs, oral histories, artifacts, web searches and historical documents to find out information. Demonstrate your understanding through a written report or a poster. Information will be shared during an oral presentation.

Make a collage that represents the diversity in ----- . The collage should include both visual and written text. Each student will contribute to the final product. First language can be used to represent meanings as needed.

Figure 4.1: Unit Planner

4.1.2 Extending the Design

The concept of immigration is very general and the teacher, as stated in the response log, wanted to explore ways to make the concept “more personalized and concrete in their (students) minds”. Simultaneously because of the diversity within the class, the teacher needed to create lessons that were linguistically appropriate yet cognitively challenging. This section describes how the teacher designed the unit plan to capitalize on the familiar cultural experiences of the students in order to link the academic demands of the Social Studies unit.

The teacher used a unit planner template from the Multiple Literacies handout as a reference tool. It was decided that the templates of the Unit Planner, the Multiple Ways of Demonstrating Understanding and the Rubric would be adapted to meet the needs of the Social Studies unit (see Figure 4.1, Table 4.1 and Table 4.2). The unit planner included the above-mentioned PLO’s but also “key understandings” core content statements, which, by the end of the unit, students would be expected to understand (see Figure 4.1). The understandings connected students not only to a general understanding of immigration, but also to the reality of the context of the community in which the students lived. The teacher planned on students gaining an understanding of the experiences and influences of immigrants, by connecting to and drawing on the background knowledge of students and their families within the local context of the class and the community. We also identified key terms that were essential to the students understanding of the unit. The key vocabulary terms of “immigration”, “multiculturalism”, “multilingualism”, “artifact”, “diversity” would be explicitly taught and also displayed visually in the classroom.

The teacher included that the class’ big question (inquiry question) “Why are we here in the unit plan. The big question, according to the teacher, had acted as a reference point for

class discussion since September. The inquiry question- Why are we here?- had been introduced in September. As students gained new knowledge the class would revisit the question. He indicated the immigration unit, “Could potentially act as a catalyst to support the students’ inquiry into the big question”. Later, in an interview, he discussed the idea of the “bigger question”:

the power of uh the multiple literacies. Being able to ah combine subject areas in to a bigger picture. You know that’s really neat. uh Some of the Social Studies concepts are meaningful to the boys and girls, and uh being able to relate uh relate a subject area- to a bigger concept always makes something more meaningful. It certainly has in this case, the uh immigration unit and thoughts related to our bigger question- *Why are we here?* (February 27, 2008)

The unit was designed with instructional approaches to afford learners access to multiple modes of representation. Once again, we used the template from the *Multiple Literacies* handout that was provided at the professional development session to plan activities that took into account multiple ways of accessing and demonstrating understanding (see Figure 4.2). Some of the planned learning activities included exploring the students’, the teacher’s and the participant researcher’s: country of origin, language(s) spoken in the home, and history of their names. The teacher indicated that collaborative learning opportunities, “especially for our ESL learners” were important instructional components. When planning activities, partner and TRIAD groupings were incorporated into much of the multimodal design. For example, students, through a process of active inquiry, would act as historians, to share and question their personal artifacts, and explain through a variety of modes, how the artifact had significance in theirs and others lives. In summary, the intent was that the planned activities of the unit would touch a chord, a personal connection, to the curriculum, within each student.

Multiple Ways of Demonstrating Understanding

OPPORTUNITIES TO SPEAK & LISTEN

1. Classroom group discussion while at desks- first language, name, artifacts, key vocabulary
 2. Partner talk- Think Pair Share- discussion of names, challenges for newcomers
 3. TRIAD groupings – discussion about name, text, artifacts, challenges for immigrants
 4. Expert presentations- museum and teachers re- artifacts
 5. Talking heads- sharing in TRIAD group- building the railway, challenges for newcomers
-

OPPORTUNITIES TO READ & VIEW

1. Listening/visual to co-read aloud by teachers from Paul Yee's Tales from Gold Mountain
 2. Textbook discussion/ photo *Connections* - Immigration-The Pacific Rim (pp. 41,42)
 3. Reading/ photo from Paul Yee's Struggle and Hope -Building The Railway (pp.16 and 17)
 4. Websites/books/Newspapers/Magazines- name, cultural background, famous Canadian
 5. Visuals – We know / We wonder / We learned chart, Country of origin map, first language bar graph
-

OPPORTUNITIES TO WRITE & RESPOND

1. Write/computer -a personal response about their name- To Say The Name Is To Begin The Story
2. Bring and write a paragraph about an everyday artifact- Compare and contrast artifacts
3. Investigate text features and respond to information with key ideas and questions (e.g. Early immigration, reasons for immigration)
4. Group collage- representing cultural diversity in Richmond/ own cultural background/first language
5. Informational report- significant Canadian of choice-written and oral report, poster, using visual and written information

Table 4.1: Multiple Ways of Demonstrating Understanding

Recognizing that students come to the learning environment with varying levels of understanding, we co-constructed a rubric to give the teacher a reference tool when planning for differentiating instruction. For example, a student who had reached a higher level of proficiency, would be able to analyze reasons for immigration and the impact on the cultural diversity of the community while another, less proficient student would be able to explain that immigration has had an impact in his or her community (see Table 4.2). Our hope was that students would have the opportunity to question, interpret and analyze the everyday realities immigrants face, and that all students would transcend their basic understanding of the concepts to reflect on, extend or broaden their thinking. For example, to compare and contrast social justice issues related to immigration in the community past, present and future. With this in mind, the rubric was designed as a reference tool, for the teacher to conceptualize the varying levels of diversity within the class (see Table 4.2).

Subjects	Not Yet Meeting Expectations	Meeting Expectations	Fully Meeting Expectations	Exceeding Expectations
Social Studies	Understands that ----- is part of Canada	Explains that immigration has had an impact on the cultural diversity of -----	Analyses reasons for immigration and the impact on the cultural diversity of -----	Compares and contrasts the reasons for immigration, challenges faced past, present and future
	Understands that many immigrants come to Canada	Recognizes that immigration has influenced the Canadian identity	Assesses reasons why immigration has influenced the Canadian identity	Argues reasons for immigration, challenges and how this has influenced Canadian identity
Language Arts	Communicates ideas and takes turns in partner, group activity with teacher prompting	Communicates ideas on topic and takes turns in partner, group activity	Communicates using supporting evidence and reflects on opinions of others in group	Communicates using strategies to inform, persuade, clarify, and collaborate in group activity
	Writing is loosely connected, brief and hard to follow	Writing consists of connected ideas with limited detail	Writing is easy to follow, with relevant, descriptive information and specific examples	Writing is clear, varied and precise with specific examples to support point of view

Table 4.2: Rubric

The findings show that the teacher was able to plan a unit that he felt addressed the mandated objectives of the curriculum, expanded the outcomes to a more personal and responsive pedagogy, and provided many pathways to gaining and demonstrating understandings of the concepts of the Social Studies unit.

4.2 Curriculum as Experienced

This section discusses the culture of the classroom. The first part will give an outline of the culture of the classroom to give the reader a context into which they can situate the findings. The findings are organized around the following themes that emerged from the analysis of the curriculum as lived experiences: affirming student social and cultural identities, multiple literacy practices and constructing conditions in the learning environment. The findings of this section are based on data gained during class activities and field notes. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the research was situated in a Grade Five/Six multilingual, elementary classroom having 29 students. Throughout my observations, I noted that there was a very positive and welcoming environment during the course of my classroom visits. Often when I arrived in the classroom, it was the latter part of a Math lesson, and students would be working collaboratively on assigned tasks in small groupings at their desks or on the floor. Generally there appeared to be lively, focused engagement of students and teacher. The teacher and the students always greeted me in a warm, cordial and respectful manner.

Early in the study I asked the students to indicate their country of origin on a map (see Figure 4.11) and indicate on a bar graph, their first language. The students came from a range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The students were all in Grade Five or Six and their ages ranged from 10-12. Of the 19 students who participated in the study all 4 students in Grade Six were female and the Grade Five participants were 6 females and 9 males. All

the students in the study lived in the catchment boundaries of the school. Of the participating students, eleven of them were born in Canada, and of these, six were born in the school district. Six students had immigrated from East Asian countries, one came from Eastern Europe and another came from the United States. When asked the first language spoken in the home, a majority of the students indicated a language other than English. Chinese was the most predominant, as seven students indicated that they spoke Cantonese as their first language, and four students indicated that they spoke Mandarin as a first language. The additional languages other than English were: Albanian (1), Tagalog (1), and Vietnamese (1). The remaining five students indicated that English was the first language spoken at home (see Table 4.3). Of the eleven students who indicated that they were born in Canada, only one indicated that English was their first language. One child was not present during the home language activity. An important consideration, is that most of the students in this study, speak another, or an additional language to English, at home and are learning through English instruction at school.

• •

Name	Where were you born?	Language(s) spoken at home	Language(s) I can read	Language(s) I can write
1	B.C. Canada	Cantonese	English / Chinese	Chinese /English
2	B.C. Canada	Cantonese, English, German, Mandarin	English, Chinese, a little German	English, Chinese, a little German
3	B.C. Canada	Cantonese, a little English	a little Cantonese, English	English, a little Cantonese
4	Canada	English, Mandarin	Mandarin, English	Mandarin, English
5	Albania	Albanian, English	English	English
6	Taipei, Taiwan	Mandarin, English, Taiwanese	English, Mandarin	English, Mandarin
7	B.C. Canada	Tagalog, English	English, some Tagalog	English
8	Hong Kong	English, Cantonese, a little Japanese	English	English, Chinese
9	Singapore	English, a little Mandarin, French, Japanese	English, a little Mandarin, French, Japanese	English, a little Mandarin, French, Japanese
10	Hong Kong	English, Cantonese, French, Mandarin	English, French, Chinese	English, French, Chinese
11	Canada	Mandarin, English	English, a little Chinese	English, a little Chinese
12	Washington, USA	Mandarin, English	Mandarin, English	Mandarin, English
13	Guang, Zhau, China	Mandarin, Cantonese	English, Chinese, Japanese, French, Spanish	English
14	B.C. Canada	Japanese, English, Tagalog	English	Japanese, English
15	Hong Kong	English	Chinese, English	Chinese, English
16	Canada	English	English	English
17	B.C. Canada	Vietnamese, English	English, Vietnamese	English, Vietnamese
18	B.C. Canada	Cantonese, English	Cantonese, English	Cantonese, English

Table 4.3: Participant Student Home Languages

The teacher, Mr. McKay described his class by stating “ This is not a very ESL class”. What he meant, by this, was that the class had very few Ministry designated, English as a Second Language students. In fact, of the nineteen participating students three were Ministry designated students receiving additional support. As is indicated by the above-mentioned data, the majority of students were English language learners. When the students were surveyed, as to their perception of their level of English language proficiency, ten students indicated that they were at an intermediate level. On another occasion when I asked the students, what languages they could read and write, students indicated a number of languages. This data demonstrated that the class was very heterogeneous and that most of the students viewed themselves as bilingual or multilingual both inside and outside of school.

The classroom was a portable classroom that was not attached to the rest of the school. The design of Mr. McKay’s classroom was welcoming, functional and orderly. The physical layout of the classroom was very conducive to supporting a positive learning environment (see Figure 4.2).

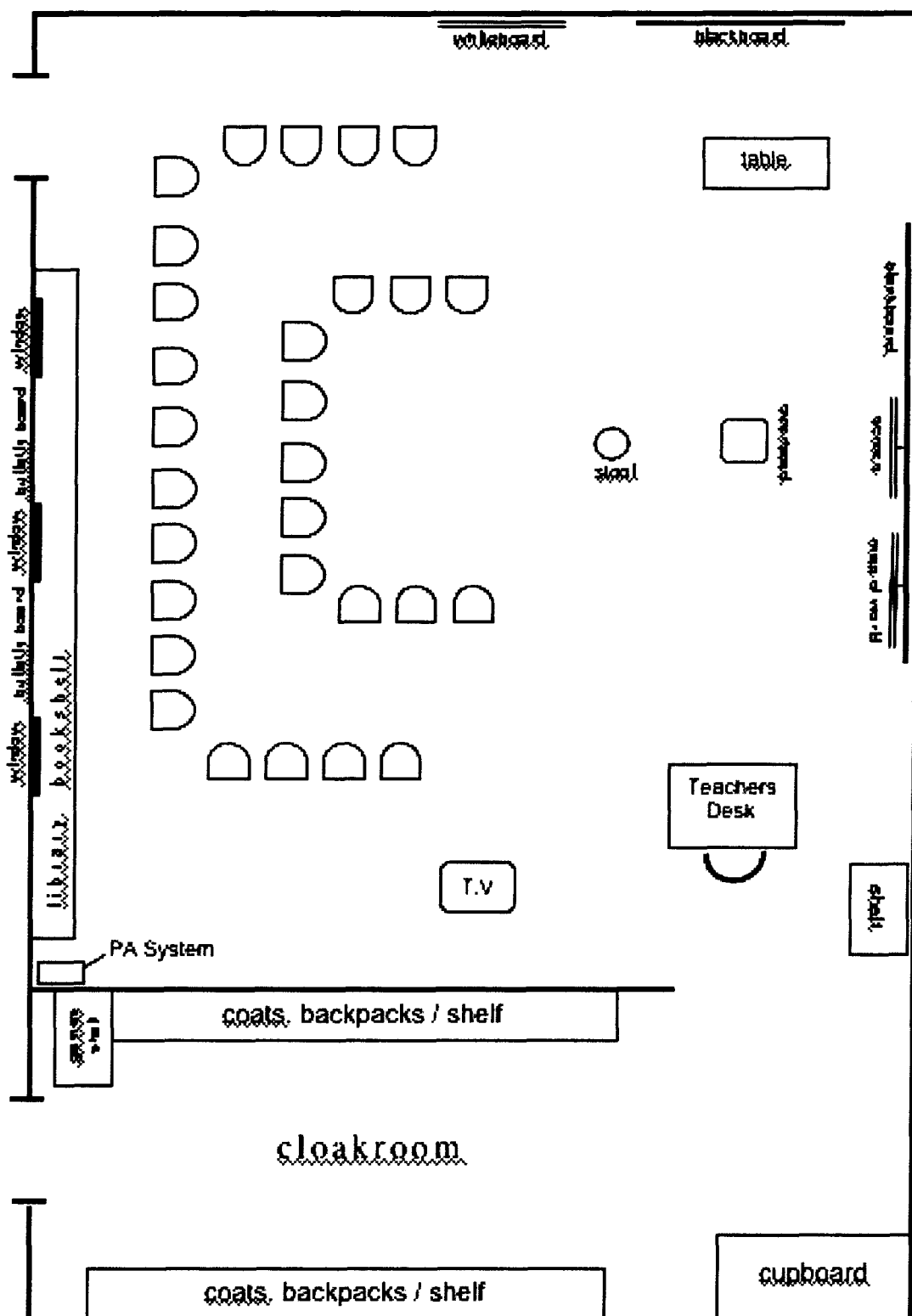


Figure 4.2: Heterogeneous Seating Arrangement – Grade 5/6

Throughout my observations, Mr. McKay changed the group seating arrangement a number of times. The cloakroom had a place for coats and lunches and there was also a shelf that the students could access with many different kinds of games. The classroom had a television, a DVD recorder, an overhead, a screen, a whiteboard, a blackboard and a large map of the world. The teacher's desk was situated unobtrusively near a wall as you entered the classroom. A stool was at the centre of the room and the teacher often sat there during class discussions. On the walls were posters that stated Attitude is everything, have the courage to be yourself, fill your brains with reading power. There were also designated bins where students could hand in work. Bulletin boards were covered with student work. There was also a Celebration chart that the teacher used when the whole class was working well and supporting each other in the understanding of a particular lesson.

The students' timetables indicated a full schedule academically and socially. There were many required subject classes throughout the day (e.g. Math, Science) and voluntary activities available at lunch and/or after school. Each day the students, under the supervision of their teacher, filled out their agendas and made note of, for themselves and their parents, homework expectations, and upcoming events such as parent teacher conferences.

Most of the instruction took place in the classroom setting. The students also had scheduled periods in the computer lab and in the gym. According to the teacher, additional language support was provided either in the ESL specialist's classroom or in the classroom context. The classroom teacher and the ESL specialist teacher would regularly meet, to decide the best approach for support, given time and scheduling constraints.

As mentioned previously, the teacher has had many years of teaching experience and is at the latter part of his teaching career. He resided in a local community near the school

district. The teacher was born in Vancouver and spoke English and some French. Based on my observations, he seemed to really know his students and was aware of their varying strengths and needs. When I asked the teacher how he made the classroom a welcoming place for students and what he felt was important in designing and delivering curriculum, he stated, “The overriding factor is learning community-learning together”. What we can see from this short, but powerful excerpt, is that the teacher forefronts the role of relationship in the learning environment. Throughout my observations, the teacher continually invested in the understanding of community and in the value of the cooperative group process within the classroom.

The teacher often mentioned that he was very busy with many responsibilities, such as refereeing for sports activities, supervising lunch hour activities, writing report cards, preparing for conferences, and meetings with colleagues. In most instances, my classroom observations were the period before lunch, and at the end of the period Mr. McKay often had to rush off. A typical comment as noted in my field notes was, “Gotta go and ref a basketball game”. In the classroom context, however, the teacher was very calm and unrushed with his students. In fact, in my data on a number of occasions, I indicated that the teacher did not rush the lesson and was very calm with the students.

In this section, I have briefly described some of the aspects of this classroom’s context that contributed to the culture of the classroom as described in field notes, survey questions, and classroom activities. Both the students and the teacher have multiple and changing demands throughout their school day. From my observations, the classroom context was very conducive to supporting student learning and engagement during the Social Studies lessons in this complex and dynamic classroom environment.

4.3 Affirming Social and Cultural Identity

In general, there was a successful connection between the curriculum planned and the curriculum lived. As previously mentioned, the unit was planned to connect and draw upon students' social and cultural identities in a number of ways. This approach undeniably supported links to the content of the immigration unit. Lessons were planned for the students to inquire and share information about their country of origin and first language, the history of their name, a significant everyday cultural artifact in their home and family immigration experiences. From the data, I will describe two of the activities that aided to the understanding of the content of the Social Studies unit: the Artifact lessons and the Why are we here- in Canada lessons. From the data I have included both students and teacher's quotes to demonstrate how they invested in the lessons. The data demonstrated that by drawing on social and cultural identity as a pedagogical tool, the students had a reason or an investment to participate and engage in the learning. Analysis of this data also shows how the relationship, the emotional content of the interactions between students and students and teacher, in this classroom, forefronts the successful delivery of curriculum.

4.3.1 Artifact Lessons

The unit was planned with activities that enabled the learners to connect to their own histories and also to better understand and acknowledge each member of the classroom's histories collectively. In this section, I examine data collected during lessons that focused on the concept of an artifact. These lessons enabled students to simultaneously learn the content of the curriculum, focus on language and affirm their social identity. I present short descriptions of life in the classroom, focused on the cultural value of an artifact. From my

observations, many things happened simultaneously, that contributed to the success of these lessons.

To begin the process of inquiry into the question, what are some artifacts that have significance in the lives of students in the class, the teacher had invited the curator of the local museum to be a guest speaker. The curator, as requested, brought in some of the museum's everyday, cultural artifacts to show the class. The following excerpt from field notes demonstrates some of the characteristics that made the lesson successful.

(C= curator from museum, S= student, T=teacher)

- C: Do you know what an artifact is?
S: Something someone used long ago.
C: Do you think your desk is an *artifact*?
S: Yes ... We can learn about the past.
C: Right, history, culture, past- helps us to understand the present....
C: Everybody's object can give us a wealth of information.....Has your chair ever been repaired? (Students got out of their seat to have a look)
C: We found out a lot about our school *culture*, materials.... Artifacts help us to see similarities and differences in cultures.
T: Remember all those things for *active* listening.
T: later prompt "Thanks for putting hand up" (more students then put hand up)
C: I would like you guys to become *curators*.
T: (quietly) Boys and girls-get into your groups of three.
The students went ahead and got into their groups without incident. The museum curator handed out artifacts and an artifact analysis sheet to each group of 3. On a chart the teacher printed words 'artifact', 'culture', 'curator').

(November 28, 2007)

This excerpt shows that first, the visiting curator clearly and explicitly emphasized key vocabulary and simultaneously important concepts in the lesson. For example, the vocabulary consists of fairly sophisticated words (for example, "artifact", "culture" and "curators"), but in this case, the words were contextualized for the students. In addition, the teacher also visually displayed the words on a chart for student reference. Second, the

students were able to actively engage in the role of being a curator. The curator brought gloves for the students so that they could touch and handle the artifacts. Third, throughout the lesson, the classroom teacher strategically monitored the students' participation and prompted students, as he deemed necessary. For example, the teacher's "active listening" prompt, reminded students that they were not passive listeners and that instead they needed to regulate their own learning and be ready to contribute. Also, the teacher, when directing the students to assemble into their groups of three, used clear and direct speech that would be easily understood.

Later in the lesson, one student was able to express his identity through the use of his first language. The curator held up a small jar with Chinese writing. The student stated proudly "I can read Chinese!" (see Figure 4.3). The curator and the student then together explained the significance of the jar, the student interpreted the Chinese text written on the jar and the curator described its use. The student appeared to engage, invest and contribute in the lesson because his first language was respected and valued. His cultural and linguistic background was recognized and affirmed.



Figure 4.3: Chinese Jar

During this lesson the teacher, Mr. McKay demonstrated a close relationship with the students in a number of ways. In the latter part of this lesson, for example, the students got into their groups, the teacher chose to sit on the carpet and work with a group of students. He quietly, handled and discussed the artifacts and worked with the group to collectively answer the questions on the worksheet. During this task, one of the students stood up and dropped the artifact he was holding. At that moment in time, it seemed as if the whole class gasped and turned to stare at the student. Without missing a beat, the teacher quietly said “It’s O.K.” and the tension in the air immediately subsided as the groups carried on with their tasks.

In a follow-up lesson, students were invited to bring in their own everyday artifact for an artifact party. Basically, the teacher asked all students to bring an object from their home that was symbolic of the child’s heritage and that was not valuable in a monetary way. Some of the artifacts the children brought included: a crab ornament, a paper doll, a coal oil lamp, a photo, a book, a sweater, and a jade bracelet. Many of the artifacts were passed on from grandparents and great grandparents and originated from all parts of the world (e.g. China, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Philippines, Canada). Mr. McKay acknowledged each artifact, holding it up and stating something descriptive such as “that’s special, it has cultural and personal significance.” As the teacher walked from desk to desk, and discussed each of the students’ artifacts he also provided opportunities for students to share opinions and ask questions. One student showed a lantern that she said her Dad had made in the Philippines (see figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4: Philippine Lantern Artifact

One student confidently told the story how her mother had lost a cross and many years later her mother had gratefully found it. Inside this pouch is her mother's cross (see Figure 4.5).



Figure 4.5: Pouch with Cross Artifact

The following is a reflective note that I wrote following my visit to the classroom.

Mr. McKay took time with each student and was not at all rushed in his approach. The students all seemed to appreciate their classmates' contributions and the discussion was respectful and enlightening. Many of the artifacts had intergenerational significance and had been important in the lives of the students' ancestors and then had been passed on to their parents.

The teacher planned this lesson so that they would gain knowledge from each other.

The lesson did not focus on the individual but on the shared knowledge of the group.

Through this process the teacher sent the message, that who they were, their social and cultural identity, was important. Further, the teacher, through the lesson gained a greater understanding of his students', individual and collective personal lives.

One problem that arose during this artifact lesson was that two students, who were English language learners, did not bring artifacts. Once this was recognized, the teacher sat with the two students, and discussed examples of artifacts in the home. In the end, the students agreed that one would bring a photo and the other would bring a favourite sweater

that was made by the child's grandmother. In his response log the teacher made the following comment, "There were a couple of ESL students who had not brought an artifact yet. I suggested that even a picture of something would have meaning". On my next visit to the class both students had brought in their artifact to show the class.

The artifacts all had historical significance in the student's lives. For example, one newcomer ESL student brought as his artifact, a picture of his previous home, taken in his family's war torn homeland. This provided a concrete and compelling description of why the student's family would have chosen to immigrate to Canada. Mr. McKay made a point of stating that the photo had "*incredible* significance". The students clapped after this student's presentation. In the response log the teacher shared his emotional connection to the child's presentation:

When one of my ESL students got up and briefly shared a picture of where he used to live in Albania, before they had to flee the war. His talk was short but when he finished the class gave him spontaneous applause that brought tears to my eyes. Don't try to tell me this isn't a powerful theme unit!

Later the same student wrote a short narrative uncovering his past experience. This student was a victim of war and had immigrated to his new country, Canada. Many of his artifacts were lost in his move to his new country. Bringing his photograph uncovered his past experience and gave him a way to share his identity and explain his choice of an artifact, in a way that otherwise he may have been hesitant to express.

I brought the picture because my cousin took a picture of are houses a couple of months before the war started with Ygoslavia. We left after a couple months during the war. I was a baby when the war started and I stayed in the war about 5 months with my family.

Alan, Age 10.

Interestingly, a number of the students' writing indicated that there was an intergenerational value to artifacts. Here is one example:

This is my craft from China. My Grandmother brought it 30 years ago and brang it here because it had maple leafs on it. So it's like Canada with maple leafs. Also it was very cheap in those days if the middle was sewn by hand. Now my grandmother gave it to my mom so my grandmother passed it on. I wish my mom would pass it on to me.

Rowena, Grade 6

One student when showing his tiger tooth in class stated "It's from my great grandparents in the 1800's" Later in a written reflection the student expressed his identity through language as he explained his artifact (see Figure 4.6):

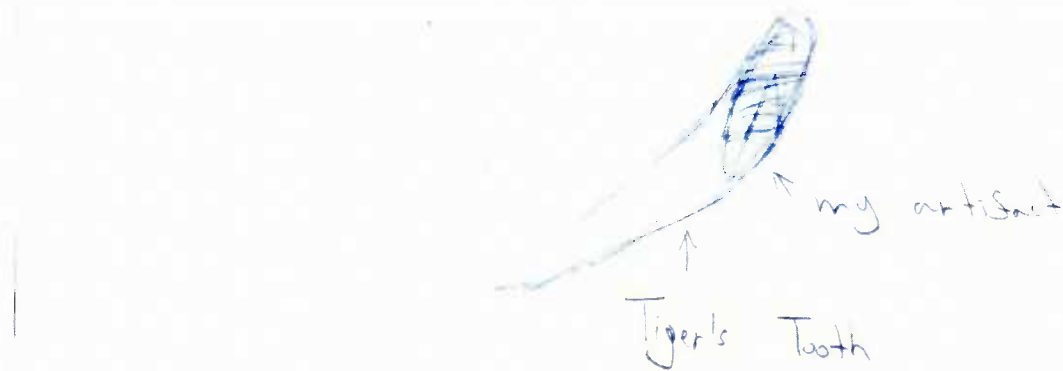


Figure 4.6: Tiger Tooth Artifact

I'm going to tell you all I know about tiger tooth. The tiger tooth is from Tai Wan. It was from 100 years ago. Now 2 days you can't find it because it can't hunt for tigers! They can only be found in Tai Wan. This artifact is passed on from my grandfather. It doesn't cost that much but it means a lot to me. Well that's all I know about my artifact.

Robert Age 10

At the culmination of the unit, the same student reported that the artifact presentation was his most meaningful part of the unit. Below is the student's writing entry approximately two

months later. The student expresses simply, his enjoyment of the lesson but also his enjoyment of the collective group process of learning about “each others artifact”.

I think my favourite part for the whole social study unit would be the part where we studies each other’s artifact. It was fun learning about my artifact. The social studies unit surely encouraged me on working even harder.

The student is writing text about his artifact, but also important, is that the text itself, the student’s writing, can also be considered an artifact. As Rowsell and Pahl (2007) suggest “individuals embed fundamental aspects of their identities in texts” p. 396.

Through the texts written about the artifacts students were able to express their history through the artifact and both students and the teacher were able to find out information about the student’s family not previously known, In refernce to Figure 4.7 and Figure 4.8 both artifacts have significant meaning in the student’s lives. As Dana, a student from the Philippines explains:

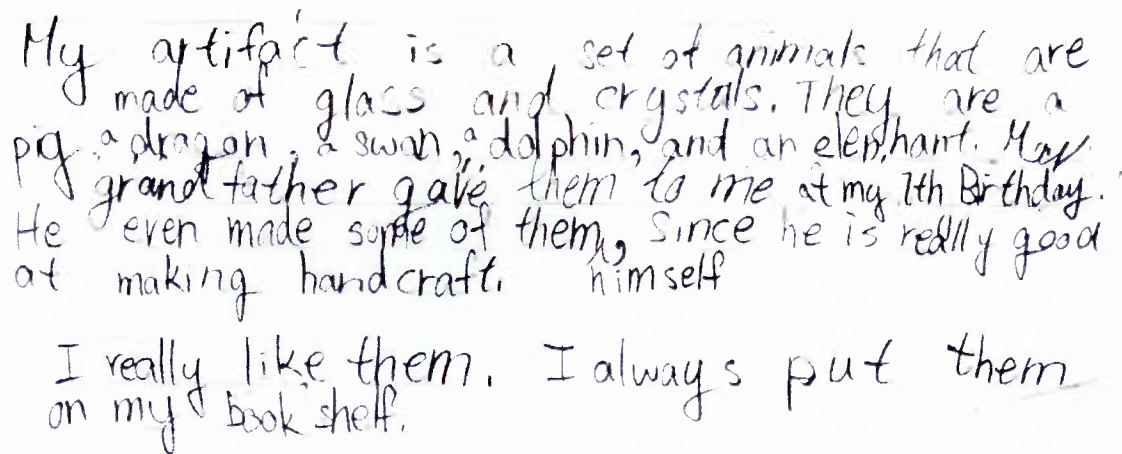


Figure 4.7: Statue of a Carving Artifact

The Jesus statue is from the Philippines. It was carved in prison in jail. What they do is the prisoners carve stuff like Jesus statues, decorations ect. Then people sell the stuff that the prisoners make in the street. So what happened was my dad saw it and brought it for my 2 big sisters when they were still like about my age. But they left the statue in the Philippines when they came here to Canada. Then when my Dad went back to the Philippines for a special occasion, he decided to take the statue back with him to Canada. So he asked my aunt Janice, who kept the statue for us if he could take it back to Canada with him and she said yes. So the statue immigrated! The perfect thing to bring for the artifact day because of our unit on Social Studies.

Dana Grade 5

In the following text a student, Victoria a student whose first language is Cantonese explains the importance of a set of Crystal objects:



My artifact is a set of animals that are made of glass and crystals. They are a pig, a dragon, a swan, a dolphin, and an elephant. My grand father gave them to me at my 1th Birthday. He even made some of them, since he is really good at making handcraft himself.

I really like them. I always put them on my book shelf.

Figure 4.8: Sample of Writing About Artifacts

Artifacts are powerful and filled with identity. At the end of the Social Studies unit, the students were asked to draw a picture of their most meaningful activity during the unit. Many student participants expressed, through drawings, that either the museum curator bringing in the artifacts to observe and touch or the artifact lesson where students brought in their own artifacts, was a preferred activity of the unit (see Figure 4.9). As shown by the data, the artifact unit connected the students to their personal histories, raised cross-cultural

awareness within the group and sparked conversations about immigration experiences of students' families in the class.

4.3.2 Why are We Here in Canada? Lessons

The teacher when delivering the lessons, often used the connection of his own family's history, by the way he spoke to the student's through teacher talk, to engage the students. The concept of immigration as the teacher stated is very general and the teacher wanted to make it more "personalized" and "concrete". (In this study, I use teacher talk to refer to the manner in which the teacher verbally discussed ideas with the class.)

"Why are we here in Canada?" The teacher referred (pointed) to the We Know chart "What do we know about immigration?" The teacher wrote on the chart the comments made by the students. The teacher engaged in a conversation about his own history- his grandparents coming from Ireland. He explained that because of the potato famine his grandparents were starving in Ireland. Mr. McKay also discussed his wife's grandparents who had emigrated from the Ukraine to our city. Throughout the discussion a large map was on display.

November 27, 2007

In this excerpt, the teacher is using his parents history and his wife's family history to show the students on a personal level, how immigration has affected both his and his wife's family.

Once he fore-grounded the students with a personal connection, he then addressed the question, 'What is immigration?' This concept was challenging for the students in many ways. The following excerpt from my field notes demonstrates how the teacher rephrased and prompted to support the student understanding of what immigration is and the reasons people immigrate while using a We Know chart as a reference. (T= teacher S= student)

T: What do we know about immigration?

S: Moving to somewhere far away

T: For example moving to White Rock or Vancouver?

S: Moving to another country

(The teacher put on chart)

S: Parents move

T: Sometimes parents, sometimes grandparents
S: Sometimes part of a family moves
T: Sometimes part of the family has moved. Sometimes part of the family stays back.
(Teacher recorded on chart)
T: Who, what, where, when....
S: Something *forces* them to move
(Teacher recorded on chart)
S: Sometimes people immigrate to be with the rest of the family

The teacher in his response log stated, “ It took more prompting to get ideas when we had a class-wide discussion about what we know about immigration- a general rather than a personal topic”.

One week later, the teacher once again gave a personal disclosure by going beyond the context of the classroom and demonstrated his wish to know more of the history of his family. All the while, the students were involved in multimodal practices as they read the chart, listened to the teacher, and referred to the map

Mr. McKay explained that artifacts and family names keep coming back to the class question -*Why are we here?*” Mr. McKay stated, “Most of us are Canadian. What is it that makes us Canadian? Then Mr. McKay said that he had been listening to the CBC news about the Ukrainian immigrants. Mr. McKay suggested that there are over 1 million Canadians who have Ukrainian heritage. He then gave it a personal note “I am interested in finding out more because my wife’s background is Ukrainian”. Mr. McKay then pointed to the map.

This passage showed another example of the use of teacher talk in supporting understanding in connecting to social and cultural identity. I found that when grouping my codes using Atlas ti in the social and cultural identity code family. Of 17 classroom observations I made note that the teacher spoke directly to the class to support student understanding as a component of the lesson 12 times.

The data has demonstrated that within the design of this Grade 5/6 unit a commitment to drawing on student’s social and cultural identities had positive outcomes.

Through my observations the relationship of the teacher played a key role in affirming student identity and promoting student engagement. The highest coincidence between codes in my data occurred between “relationship” and “investment”. The students were more deeply invested in the lessons, because as they were constantly negotiating a sense of who they are, the teacher’s and the class’ message was that they were valued members of the group, each with a personal history that was respected. Within these lessons described the teacher continually emphasized and fore-grounded the role of relationship between student and teacher and student to student as means to an effective learning environment.

Furthermore, in coding my classroom observations, I found a high incidence of the teacher specifically nurturing the students’ self image, through the manner in which he spoke to them, and drew on their personal histories and backgrounds. He invested in the value of their cooperative group process and understanding of community. In my research I found that I created a specific code family that addressed social and cultural identity. These included, besides “relationship” and “investment”: “teacher talk”, “personal history”, “artifacts”, and “organization”. These were the key components of affirming social and cultural identity in the classroom. In the above-mentioned lessons the additional components of explicit attention to vocabulary, active involvement of the learner, and scaffolding prior understanding all contributed, simultaneously to the success of these lessons. I also found that these fundamental aspects of the classroom relationships were supported and enhanced not only the design and delivery of the lessons but also the layout of the classroom . Overall this led to a successful connection between planned and lived curriculum.

I felt the drawbacks to a full realization of the planned unit were that the class period of forty-five minutes was constraining. It often seemed that too soon, it was time to move on to another activity (e.g. computer, gym, lunch) before all that was planned was accomplished. The teacher also commented on the same dilemma “ It always seemed we ran out of time and couldn’t get accomplished what we wanted to in the 45 minute block of time”. One of my observations was a one-hour time span and during that lesson I, as a participant observer, felt more satisfied with what was accomplished.

So far in this chapter I have illustrated some examples where the students were invested in the learning environment because social and cultural identities were affirmed. The following discussion shows how the teacher’s multimodal approach contributed to student engagement and participation.

4.4 Multiple Literacies

In the planning of the unit, the teacher designed multiple ways for the students to access and gain understanding. This approach contributed to the success of many of the lessons. I present examples from the lessons that demonstrate the teacher’s use of multiple literacies in the delivery of the Social Studies lessons. I will draw on two lessons where the use of multiple modes including a photo and the use of a narrative story supported meaning making and connections to the content of the Social Studies curriculum in the classroom.

4.4.1 Chinese Immigrant Photograph Lesson

In this section I discuss the teacher’s use of a photo in the textbook, along with other representational modes to support connections to the content of the unit. The photo in the textbook was originally from British Columbia’s archives and showed a group of Chinese railway workers who were involved in the dangerous work, of building the Trans Canada

railway. The following field notes show a number of factors happening simultaneously that contributed to the quality of the lesson.

Mr. McKay said “ I would like you to take out your Social Studies books and look at the picture (Chinese immigrant workers) on page 43”.... He wrote on the blackboard and also stated out loud what he was writing. (He had his questions prepared on a sheet of paper for his reference.) “Who are they”? As the teacher wrote, he said “they are people with a story to tell”. He carried on asking questions:

“Where did they come from?”

“Why are they all together?”

“How did they get there?”

“What are they doing?”

“What do they want to do?”

(Students were quiet at their desks and individually looking at the picture.)

He directed the students to “in your heads for a moment think about this”....

“This is like reading and inferring... this is reading the picture. What are their hopes and dreams?” (December 6, 2007)

In this scenario, the students were provided with a number of representational and communication modes interwoven in the delivery of the lesson. For example the photo, the written text, the text on the blackboard, Mr. McKay’s gestures as he walks around the room and Mr. McKay’s teacher talk. The following excerpt shows how the lesson progressed from a lesson focused on independent learning to a collaborative grouping learning arrangement. In this situation, the students expressed their opinions with other group members and simultaneously the group also had the support of the group to help them. This activity stimulated critical thinking skills as reflected in the field note:

Mr. McKay told the students to take their textbooks and get into their TRIAD groups and study the picture. Mr. McKay looked at the clock and said, “ You don’t have long. When the big hand gets to 10. The groups had lively and robust conversation. While the students were engaged in conversation Mr. McKay said that he believed in the “power of group work” and that group work “supercedes whether English is a first, second, or third language”. The teacher then prompted the students “Mickey’s hand is on the 10. Back to your seats!” (In one minute all students were in their desks, focused on the teacher! (December 6, 2007)

This observation revealed that the photograph was successfully used as an example of a real life event that had taken place in the past. My notes recorded the teacher's clear organization, for example: his questions were prepared in advance for reference, Social Studies books were available for everyone and the pace of the lesson was monitored. In addition, the teacher scaffolded the students concept of time " You don't have long", "When the big hand gets to 10" and " Mickey's hand is on the 10" and that he spoke the words as he was writing on the blackboard. In this activity, the students were using learning content and learning language as they listened to the teacher, worked in their cooperative TRIAD groups to express personal viewpoints regarding why the Chinese workers had immigrated to Canada and the challenges these immigrants may have faced, all while using the photograph as a meaning making tool. The teacher reported in his response log, his pleasure at the students' participation during this lesson, "Since most of my students are Asian, the textbook photo of the Chinese railroad workers seemed most powerful and meaningful". Students' survey responses indicated an important understanding from this lesson:

I learned that Chinese weren't treated fairly when they moved to Canada. Chinese had earned less money than the English. I learned about how hard Immigration was.

I learned that the Chinese had such a hard time when they first started immigrating.

I have learned that it was really hard for the Chinese to come to Canada and even when they came, they all had low paying jobs.

I've learned that when Chinese people immigrated to Canada white people were racist to them even though the Chinese people worked hard building the railway.

As mentioned in the previous section, one of the recurring constraints of many of the lessons was the lack of time to complete what was planned. My field notes document 8 of the 17 lessons there was not enough time to cover all the material and that sometimes the dynamics of the lesson was interrupted because of timetable constraints. In the above-

mentioned lesson, after class discussion the teacher handed out sticky notes and students were instructed to individually write down two ideas and one question they had about the picture. However, there was not enough time for the students to fill out the stickies. The teacher instructed them to carefully put their books away in their desks for the next lesson. However according to my data, the lesson, although well intentioned, was never completed.

4.4.2 Tales From Gold Mountain Lessons

A recurring theme in the data was the popularity of the use of the narrative read aloud story as a multimodal tool to strengthen student understanding. The teacher and I had discussed the use of story in our planning phase but did not realize it would be so popular with the students. On most of the visits, Mr. McKay and I would finish the lesson by co-reading a chapter from Paul Yee's book *Tales From Gold Mountain*. Showing students the powerful picture at the beginning of the chapter, gave the students the opportunity to predict the story structure.

At the end of the book, *Tales From Gold Mountain*, the author Paul Yee describes the history behind his writing and this passage was read to the students when I first introduced the book. The passage states:

I invented the stories in this book. But they are all firmly rooted in real places and events, in things such as the work world of the Chinese, the folk traditions they brought from China, and the frontier society of this continent. Some of these things I recalled from growing up in Chinatown, listening to the stories and overhearing adult conversations (Yee, 1989, p. 63)

When reading the above passage, I felt, intuitively, that I struck a chord with the students. In my data, I noted that when arriving in the classroom, students would often ask if I was going to read a story. Often there was only time to read half the story and it would be finished during the next classroom visit. My notes from this observation state:

I as co-participant, read to class the first half of the chapter Rider Chan and the Night Rider from *Tales from Gold Mountain*. I showed the class the visual from the book and asked the students to predict who some of the characters might be and what they thought the story might be about. The students then listened while I read and, in the end, left a “cliffhanger” to be continued. The students were genuinely interested in the story and were disappointed that we had to stop for lunch. I told them we would finish the story on my next visit. (January 18, 2008)

The next visit some of the students asked if I would finish the story. I also found that they asked for the picture to support meaning. This is the entry in my observational notes on my next visit:

The participant teacher asked if I would read the rest of the story Rider Chan and the Night Rider from *Tales From Gold Mountain*. Before I read one of the students asked if I would show the picture at the beginning of the chapter and some other students in the class nodded in agreement. (January 23, 2008)

The data from the survey showed that 10 out of 19, of the participating students saw this activity as their most meaningful part of the unit. The students also appreciated that the teacher and I co-read the book together (see Figure 4.9)

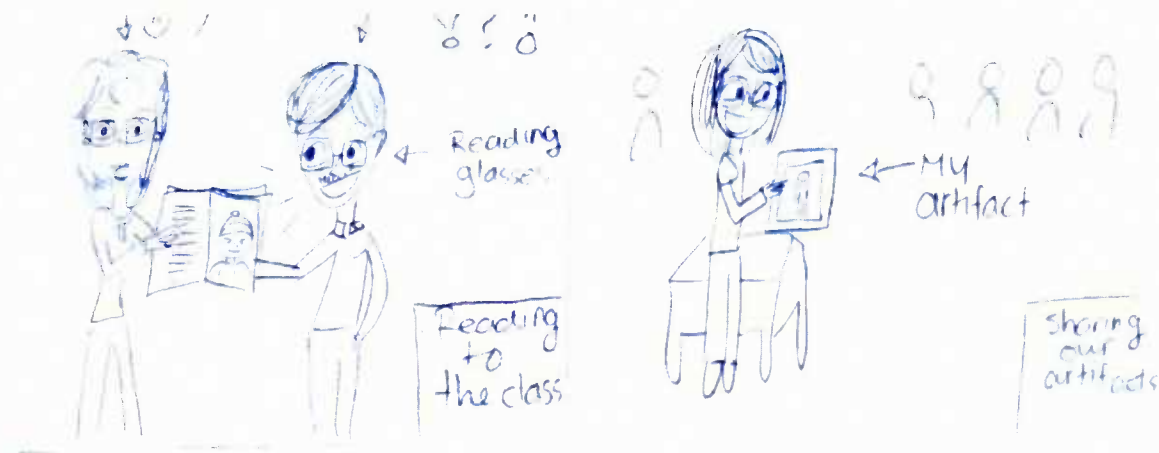


Figure 4.9: Illustration of Teachers Co-reading

Besides using the read aloud as an instructional tool, throughout the lesson the data reveals that the teacher often used the concept *story* to explain.

The students were in their desks and looking and listening to the teacher.

The teacher stated, “ Bringing back the idea of *story*. What do you remember about the story of my family?”... Right, all four of my grandparents moved from Ireland. That was about 1910 almost 100 years ago. My wonder is how did they get here? What do you wonder? Don’t answer think in your minds. Immigration- who, where, why? I want you to use your thinking. (November 28, 2007)

The teacher had an everyday conversation with his students, recognizing and asking questions about his grandparents. The teacher was expressing his identity through his conversations with the class; through the social practice of talking the students are learning about their teacher.

Repeated classroom visits revealed that the Mr. McKay used a variety of visuals (e.g. overhead examples, vocabulary chart, posters, charts) in his instruction and also as reference tools for students when completing assignments. When coding my data my visual refers to “images that can be used and viewed to support understanding”. Throughout any and every lesson the teacher used some form of visual representation to support meaning. Some of the visuals were constant throughout the unit. For example, all students could easily view a large map of the world where the students had using stickpins, indicated each students country of origin (see Figure 4.10).



Figure 4.10: Country of Origin Map

Another larger map of the world was often pulled down for viewing when discussing patterns of immigration. Vocabulary was also in view of the students throughout the lessons. In addition, charts that had been co-constructed were also on display for student reference such as I Know, and I Wonder charts. The data strongly demonstrated in the survey that they felt pictures helped them learn. Seventeen of the nineteen students indicated that pictures help them to learn.

Yes, because if I don't understand what the text might be talking about I can look for pictures to explain.

Yes, looking at pictures can help you to understand a story

Pictures are always an extra 'text feature' to help me understand more. They give me a good visual of what I am learning about.

In my research using the Atlas ti program I found that I created a specific code family that addressed multiple ways of accessing and demonstrating understanding. The codes included: "visuals", "computer", "story" and "text". These were key components of many of

the lessons. At the end of the unit when the teacher and I revisited all the ways we had planned on students demonstrating understanding we had accomplished all but the group collage (see Table 4.1).

4.5 Creating Conditions

In this section, I look more closely at the guiding question as to how the teacher facilitated or created an environment that enabled students to make intertextual connections to the content of the unit. As mentioned previously the analysis of the data, using the Atlas ti, showed that “teacher talk”, “relationship” and “investment” all played a vital role in engagement, success and social cohesion of the students. In order to understand the relationship of these factors I went back to my data. When reviewing the data the original code family: “relationship”, “investment” and “teacher talk” was often followed “organization”. The teacher’s organization of the learning environment including collaborative groupings, contributed to student engagement.

Much of the previous data has shown the strong organizational foundations within the classrooms learning environment and this organization and was a positive factor in the delivery of the lessons. The field notes below once again demonstrate the clear and explicit attention to organizing for learning:

The teacher told the class to refer to page 54 in text. He quietly signaled to one student to focus. He prepared and organized them for the group activity ahead. First, he reminded the students “ We are making sure that *other* people in the group are getting meaning. We are thinking outside that self-thinking”. Second, he reminded students of what they needed to take to their TRIAD groups “pencil, sheet of paper and their book”. (January 15)

And in a lesson two weeks later:

When the teacher gave the signal to begin the activity the students stood up and knew to push chairs in, knew their group members and where to sit. The teacher did not have to intervene- all students went to their places with the group. The students were

to put in a personal response (4, 3, 2 or 1) in terms of certain criteria and then have a peer write down a mark according to the criteria.
(January 31).

In my observations the teacher often began the lesson talking to the students. However, from my data the talk was not teacher-directed but teacher facilitated talk. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) suggest, “Overt instruction when linked to Situated Practice becomes more like teacher scaffolding than teacher-centred transmission pedagogy” (p. 240).

Interestingly, when students were surveyed as to what was the most helpful thing your teacher does to help you learn a recurring theme is the word *explains*:

The most helpful thing that Mr. McKay did was helping us find information to a lot of things. He *explains* everything that me or someone else doesn’t understand.

The most helpful is when he *explains* how to do whatever task he gives you.

The most helpful thing he does is show examples.

He *explains* well and specifically.

That he *explains* all of the assignments clear. He answers all our questions Patiently.

He *explains* facts in front of the whole class.

The most helpful thing is that if we do not understand, He *explains* it every time.

As we can see in the above excerpts, many students have used the word *explain* to describe the action on the part of the teacher that is most helpful. Examples from the data, suggest that the teacher-talk is not teacher to student transmission of facts, but instead, the teacher scaffolding understanding for the student.

The teacher’s response log indicated that “corporate” (collaborative) learning activities “especially for ESL learners” were “worthwhile and beneficial”. Of my seventeen classroom visits twelve of the lessons involved the students working in TRIAD

(collaborative) groupings. At the culmination of the unit, participant students when asked in a survey their preferred way to learn, thirteen of the nineteen participants indicated that they learned best in TRIAD groupings. Previously, near the beginning of the unit, interviews of the six participating students when asked their preferred way to learn, four had indicated partner activities, one preferred group activities, and one preferred working alone.

4.5.1 Significant Canadian Poster Presentation

This Significant Canadian project where students were requested to present their information through an oral presentation was unquestionably linguistically difficult for many of the students. Many of the ESL students had difficulty particularly with the vocabulary, when presenting to the class. The teacher had prompted the class “Everyone has something worthwhile to share. The audience has as much responsibility as the presenter... remember everyone’s supportive”. Most projects were visually appealing and used a variety of modes to communicate ideas but when presenting the ideas in the poster to the class orally some students were not prepared, and in a few cases part of what they had written was too difficult to read aloud. The teacher also indicated that he thought this project was challenging. He states in his response log:

It was interesting when students started sharing their Significant Canadian projects. While most did a great job, this kind of research project was very difficult especially for the ESL students. They (ESL students) did complete some research but some was plagiarized and didn’t totally follow the specific criteria that we had set out for them.

However many of the students were able to present their poster confidently and were at ease in front of the group. This is an example of a the timeline piece of one student’s poster (see Figure 4.11):

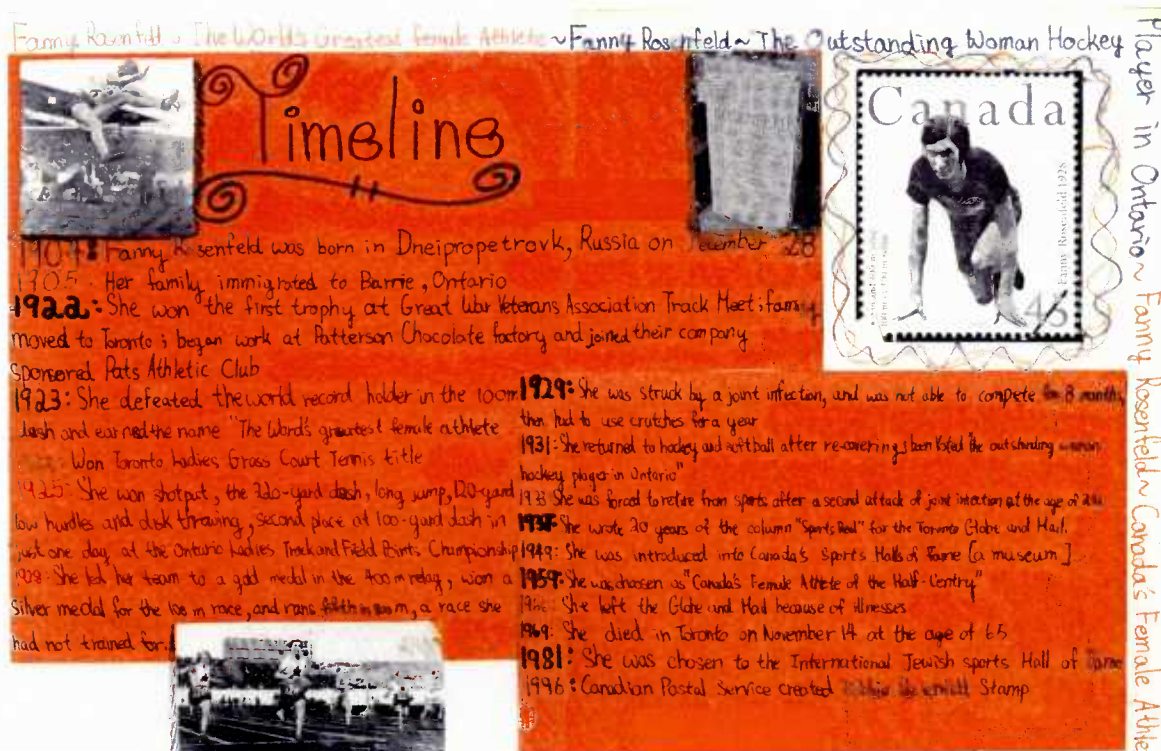
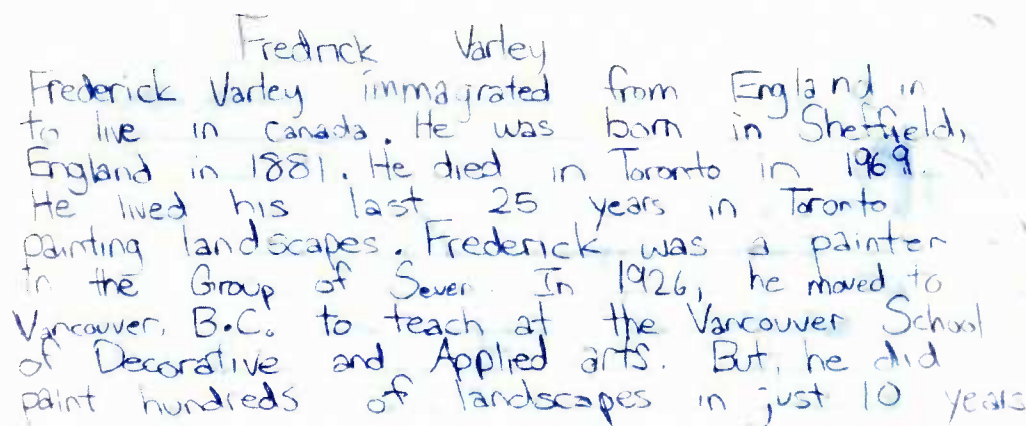


Figure 4.11: Significant Canadian Immigrant

The teacher had provided opportunities for the students to practice their Significant Immigrant Canadian oral presentations in their TRIAD groups practicing. During one of my observations the teacher had prefaced the activity by saying, “ We encourage each other, we learn from each other”. As I circulated the students were supporting each other by, restating vocabulary when necessary and offering positive and supportive comments. For example, one of the students said about his project, “ Mine’s too long”. Another student in the group said, “You need to change your pages from five to three. You also need to explain some of the big words like quantum and methane”.

A week later, during an observation, on a day when the students were going to orally present their Significant Canadian project, a student came up to Mr. McKay and said she wasn’t feeling well. Her voice was raspy and she didn’t look well. She asked the teacher if *he* (the teacher) would read her assignment for her. The teacher acknowledged that she wasn’t

feeling well and suggested that she ask a partner to read half or if necessary, all of it for her “side by side”. When it was the student’s turn, the teacher prompted, “Try to do a little of the report” and the two girls stood together and the student’s friend read the first half and the student read the other half. The class clapped and the teacher’s response was “ That was great! Good for you”. Although the Significant Canadian was a challenging task for many students all the students completed the written part of the project and all presented to the class.



A photograph of a student's handwritten work on lined paper. The text is written in blue ink and describes the life of Frederick Varley. The student has written: "Fredrick Varley immigrated from England in to live in Canada. He was born in Sheffield, England in 1881. He died in Toronto in 1969. He lived his last 25 years in Toronto painting landscapes. Frederick was a painter in the Group of Seven. In 1926, he moved to Vancouver, B.C. to teach at the Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied arts. But, he did paint hundreds of landscapes in just 10 years". There are some corrections and additions in the text, such as "Fredrick" being corrected to "Frederick" and "Fredrick" being added to the second sentence.

Figure 4.12: Sample of Writing About a Significant Canadian Immigrant

According to the teacher the Significant Posters were part of each student’s portfolio during parent teacher conferences. In my interview with the teacher he stated that during parent teacher conferences some of the ESL students had shown samples of their work explaining to parents in their first language:

When the children are uh communicating their learning and what they have done in the classroom during parent teacher interview times they are uh welcome and encouraged to talk to their parents in their first language if that will help to be able to communicate their learning at school to their parents.

This chapter through the findings has attempted to show the complexity of enacting a planned Social Studies unit in a multilingual, mainstream setting. Drawing on social and

cultural identities as a resource and enabling students multiple ways to show and demonstrate understandings were key components to bridging students access to academic content. The results also demonstrate that the teacher continually emphasized and fore-grounded the role of relationship and the importance of connecting personal histories between student and teacher and student to student as means to an effective learning environment.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Cummins et al. (2007) cite Bransford, Brown and Cocking's claim that the "optimum conditions" for learning to occur include: "engaging prior understandings, integrating factual knowledge with conceptual frameworks and taking active control over the learning process" (p. 42). The findings indicated that this study is clearly a description of one teacher exemplifying an understanding about how students learn best. The major themes that emerged were: his attention to drawing on students prior knowledge and simultaneously affirming social and cultural identity, his use of a multiliterate pedagogy that gave students access to multiple routes of representation and his ability to create a culturally responsive learning environment that values a community of learners. In sum, an elementary class of diverse learners, many for whom English is a second language, were engaged and invested in the social studies lessons taught.

The following chapter will present a discussion of the findings and implications for theory and practice.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This case study explored a teacher's multiliterate pedagogy in the complex, social context of a classroom of diverse learners during Social Studies lessons. Central to the study was the research question: How does an elementary teacher, in a multilingual, mainstream classroom setting, bridge young learners access to the academic content of the Grade 5/6 Social Studies curriculum? To answer the question I planned collaboratively with the participant teacher during the designing of the unit and observed many of the unit's lessons as they were enacted in the classroom context. During the process I was guided by the following questions to support my inquiry:

1. How does the teacher facilitate learners' access to prior knowledge and simultaneously draw upon participants' social and cultural identities in the unit of work as designed and enacted?
2. How does a grade 5/6 Social Studies unit, with instructional approaches designed to afford second language learners' access to multiple modes of representation, manifest itself in a multilingual classroom.
3. How does the teacher create conditions in the learning environment to facilitate learners engagement in making intertextual connections to the academic content of a Grade5/6 Social Studies unit?

This chapter synthesizes the findings of the study and attempts to provide answers to the research questions. Pedagogical implications and areas for future research will also be discussed and areas for future research.

The teaching of the language and content presents a formidable challenge to any

teacher of Social Studies and the teacher in this study was no exception. The study revealed an example of how one teacher, through thoughtful and intentional planning created a responsive pedagogy that enabled both proficient English speakers and students acquiring English as a second or an additional language to successfully participate in a Social Studies unit. The students in the study were “learning language for academic purposes and using language to learn” (Mohan et al. 2001, p. 218). As discussed in Chapter 2, much of the literature suggests that pedagogical approaches that view cultural and linguistic diversity as a resource have the potential to result in greater engagement and positive achievement of students (Cummins, Sayers & Brown, 2007; Short, 1994; Weisman & Hansen, 2007). The literature also calls for a need in the twenty-first century, to broaden literacy practices to incorporate and integrate a variety of representational modes to enable students to access information and demonstrate knowledge in progressively complex and multiple forms. This study is in response to the vital need for research in our multilingual, multicultural mainstream classrooms to address these areas. The analysis of the data strongly suggests that in this study, the teacher’s multiliterate pedagogy and in particular his view that the diversity in his class was an asset, were key components to bridging connections to the academic content of the Social Studies unit. Multiple data sources also strongly indicate that the teacher continually emphasized and fore-grounded the role of relationship between student and teacher and student to student as means to an effective learning environment. This analysis was also supported by the teacher’s interview statement where he acknowledged: “The overriding factor is learning community”. My observations of both the skillful planning of the unit, and the enacting of the Social Studies unit as it was delivered in the classroom setting, demonstrated that these factors all contributed to a positive connection between the

unit that was planned and the unit as it was lived in the classroom context. It would be oversimplifying the study not to look more deeply at the complexity these factors and how they contributed to successful engagement and participation of students and their teacher during Social Studies lessons.

The first guiding research question asked how the teacher facilitates learners' access to prior knowledge and simultaneously draws upon participants' social and cultural identities. The participant teacher in this study understood the complex linguistic and cultural resources his students brought to the classroom collectively and individually and used this understanding as a pedagogical tool in the shaping and delivering of the Social Studies unit. Data provided from observations of class activities and information afforded in student interviews demonstrated that this classroom was indeed a very diverse, multilingual, dynamic community of learners. As discussed in Chapter 4, the students in the study had a variety of countries of origin, educational experiences, languages spoken in the home and they generally viewed themselves as multilingual. Although many of the students' first languages were Cantonese or Mandarin and many were born in Canada, each student had his or her unique background experiences, multiple identities and personal histories. From the beginning of the study, the teacher seemed aware of the range, complexity and the diversity of the class and as the lessons evolved his knowledge of the students' backgrounds expanded. This expansive knowledge contributed to an ongoing building of the student-teacher relationship resulting in the successful participation of the students. There was a reciprocal effect because over time, the students through the teacher's discussions of his personal histories, grew to know their teacher more.

Similarly, the two teachers in Duff's (2002) ethnographic study in a Social Studies 10

class, attempted to draw on the students' background knowledge and cultural experiences to connect to Canadian historical concepts. However, in contrast Duff's (2002) study demonstrated how despite the teacher's objective to "create a respectful, inclusive classroom culture" discussions in Social Studies 10 often resulted in silent, peripheral participation by ESL students (p. 295). The ESL students in Duff's study were often reluctant to share their aspects of their heritage with the class. An important consideration in Duff's study is that the ESL students' perception was that their peers and teachers did not view the student as having legitimate membership and the students viewed themselves as 'outsider' participants in the classroom community. In the case under study the students were a younger and more socially cohesive group and generally embraced the idea of sharing personal histories. Duff (2002) also contends that although teachers are often expected to draw on students' cultural and background knowledge, this practice should to be examined very thoughtfully because students may be reluctant to identify, at least publicly, with their background and cultural practices during classroom discussions (p.305). Indeed Duff's remarks are worthy of consideration however, the students participation in Mr. McKay's Social Studies activities demonstrated that in this particular classroom context, students were generally very proud and willing to share their cultural practices and histories. Although any mainstream classroom has its unique challenges and composition, a deep investigation by the teacher, of the diverse linguistic, educational and cultural backgrounds of its' students has the potential to be used as a means to contribute to academic success.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Moje et al. (2004) argue, " Teachers and curriculum developers must develop deep understandings of the particular funds of knowledge and discourse that students have available outside of school" (p. 65). Norton Peirce (1995) also

suggests “language learners will develop their oral and literacy skills by collapsing the boundaries between their classrooms and their communities” (p. 26). The teacher affirmed the students’ cultural and social identities by drawing on the everyday and/or out of school knowledge from the students’ families and home experiences. The data showed that the instruction began by activating students prior knowledge by connecting to the personal lives of the students through, for example, the country of origin map activity, name activity and cultural artifact activities. Here is an example of how one student used her name to imagine a fairy tale.

A Story About My Name

This is the fairytale of my name, here it goes.

Once there was a rumor that there was a lady that lives on the rainbow. They say her name is Rainbow Woman. She was known as a very ancient god. every time someone does something nice the rainbow appears and when someone does something wrong the rainbow disappears and it starts raining. The people who are greedy keep saying they feel something swept past them at night and when they wake up and find out that there money was missing.

Figure 5.1: Sample of Writing About an Imagined Name

The teacher also revealed through his ‘teacher talk’ his genuine interest in talking about his family’s backgrounds and experiences. During the early phase of the unit the

lessons did not include complex vocabulary and concepts taught through textbooks but rather hands on activities that afforded students opportunities to express their own family history and also acknowledge each student's history, all the while connecting to desired learning outcomes of the Social Studies curriculum. The practice of bringing an artifact from home was one of the preferred activities and also a means for active engagement in class discourse of the students. Interview data from the teacher also demonstrated that when parent teacher conferences were held the students were welcomed to use their first language to support home-school communication. This implies that when interpreting and shaping curriculum educators need to build on the home practices in order to connect to school practices (Pahl & Rowsell, 2005).

This study did not incorporate any parents participants, however, their input and perspectives would have provided useful data and this could be a consideration for future research. For example, the parents of the students could have written about the artifacts from their perspectives, and their narratives would have been interesting information for the class. In addition many of the learners' parents were immigrants and their reflections and stories about their immigration experience would have provided interesting material for discussion.

The findings also suggest that the intention of the Social Studies lesson planned does not always unfold as planned. For example, even though the idea of bringing an everyday family artifact to school was designed to connect home and school literacy practices, two students, who in this case study, were English language learners, did not bring an artifact and needed more explicit instruction to understand what was expected. This was resolved as indicated in field notes and the teacher's response log, by the teacher sitting with the students for a few minutes, reviewing and clarifying the expectation and giving concrete examples.

This simple act made the difference between two students withdrawing and detaching from the activity to instead, full participation with the rest of the class.

The study strongly suggests that the teacher's building of identity as an integral part of his planning and literacy practices resulted in the positive engagement and investment of the students. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Norton Peirce (1995) argues that the concept of investment views "the language learner as having a complex social identity" and that investment plays a key role in the students' willingness to participate (p.17). The results of the study show that there was a recurring pattern of the teacher affirming social identities, and the students being invested in the learning environment. The study also suggests that students' identities shifted as the unit progressed and they were as Norton Peirce (1995) claims, constantly restructuring a sense of who they are. These students writing show examples (see Figure 5.2) of the students shifts in their identity and a new realizations about their names:

Before I searched and found out about it, I really used to hate my name. I really hated it, because it was a girl's name. I told them to stop but they still call me that name. But since I searched my name and I know what it meant, I began to actually like my name. I thought my mom didn't know what my name meant, but when I told her what my name meant, she said, "See! That's why I gave you your name".

History of my name

My name is my feelings about my name is good.
When I was smaller I didn't like my name much because
No one ever heard it and they used to say where did you get
that name. But now I really like my name. Some thing that
I learned about my name is that my parents chose my name
in the Kuran. I didn't know that till now. In the computer
lab my name didn't have a meaning but it would have been
fun to know!.

Figure 5.2: Sample of Writing About Name Activity

Students in their academic settings are not only learning language and acquiring academic content knowledge, but simultaneously, negotiating identities and membership as they attempt to become competent and legitimate students (Duff, 2001, 2002; Morita, 2004).

The second guiding research question asks how does a grade 5/6 Social Studies unit, with instructional approaches designed to afford second language learners' access to multiple modes of representation, manifest itself in a multilingual classroom. The data shows that the teacher in the planning and delivery of the unit was sensitive to the local and situated context in which he taught or as Talmy (2004) describes as a "participatory pedagogy" (p. 20). The learning environment in the classroom studied, consisted of multiple ways for students to participate through whole class, partner and group discussion. In addition, the teacher throughout the study integrated many language skills interchangeably throughout, for example writing, reading, oral discussion, drawing, and web-based projects.

Interestingly, although the participant teacher was not familiar with the

Multiliteracies Framework of the New London group (2000), much of the data demonstrates that the four elements of the Multiliteracies pedagogy schema: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice, were a part of his literacy practices. First, the students in the classroom were immersed in situated practice in “meaningful practices within a community of learners” which considered sociocultural needs and identities (p. 33). An example of this was when the students, after watching the curator had the opportunity to model being a curator with the museum artifacts. Later the students had the opportunity to bring their own artifacts and take on the curator role when explaining each of their artifacts. The students then had the opportunity to write about their artifacts and talk to their parents about their artifacts. Second, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the teacher often scaffolded or intervened with overt instruction when clearer more “explicit information” and “conscious awareness” was needed for students (p. 33). In the study the teacher would often stop the class to clarify understanding. The students overwhelmingly talked about how the teacher *explains*. The teacher through his “teacher talk” often focused on vocabulary, paid particular attention to text features, asked guiding questions and used visuals to support understanding. Third, the teacher incorporated in the design of many of the lessons and discussions a critical framing or “viewing it critically in relation to its context” (p. 34). The students discussed the challenges for immigrants past and future. Some of the students had the opportunity to reflect on their own or their family’s experiences as immigrants. The class as a whole discussed the many immigrants coming to their community and ways they could support newcomers upon their arrival. The students through the use of a photo, discussed the challenges of the Chinese immigrant railroad workers. Social justice issues such as, inadequate living accommodations and the pay discrepancy between Chinese

workers Caucasian workers were talked about. One student's response was "when we were focusing on the Chinese people and the Canadian/British people. I was really surprised when I heard about the way people judge people on their race, the colour of their skin." Fourth, the teacher provided opportunities for the students to apply, revise, transfer and transform their understandings in new and unfamiliar contexts. The artifact activity gave the students an opportunity to view an everyday object from the home in the context of a classroom setting. The students also had the opportunity to act as a historian and research a Significant Canadian who was an immigrant describe the challenges faced, adversities that sometimes were overcome and the contributions the person made. The data demonstrates that the teacher in the study was able to weave in and out of aspects of the Multiliteracies pedagogy without having a term or a label for his approach.

The findings also pointed out that the practice of reading aloud was a preferred and effective classroom practice. In the study the teacher and researcher used the narrative story as an instructional tool to connect to the understanding of challenges faced by immigrant Chinese workers. Short (1994) also suggests the narrative genre of storytelling is a universal method students have usually had exposure to in both home and school environments. Data demonstrated from students written and pictorial responses the read aloud from the book *Tales from Gold Mountain* was one of the preferred activities of the unit (see Figure 5.3).



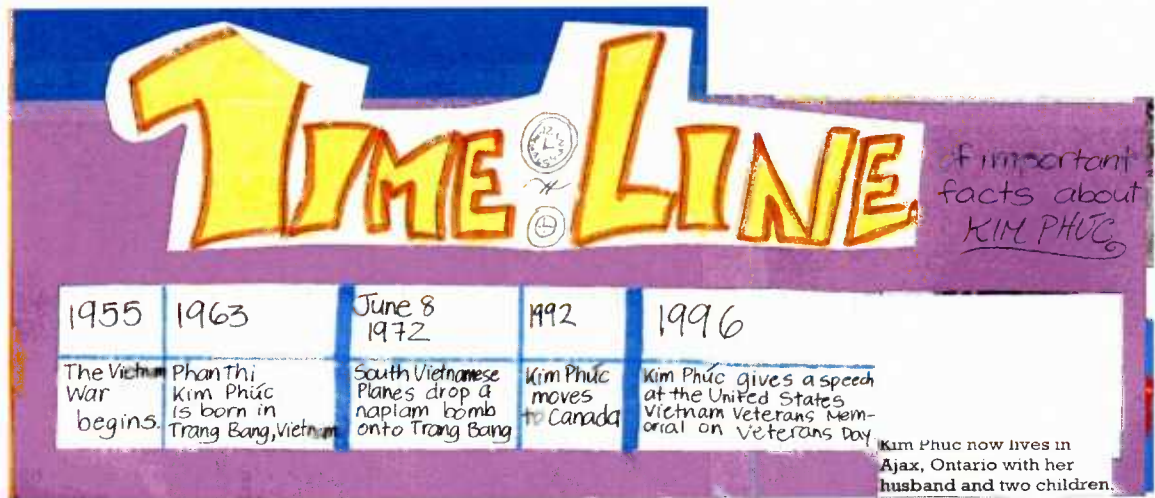
Figure 5.3: Illustration Based on *Tales From Gold Mountain*

This was a successful approach because it was also relevant subject matter, complemented by the use of a visually powerful picture. At the beginning of the lesson the students would have time to look at the visual, which graphically communicated a lot of information about the story. On some occasions each student had a copy of the visual as the story was being read and this was used as a reference point for discussion. When reading the story to the class, either the teacher or myself would read slowly and stop for rephrasing or clarification of vocabulary as we perceived was necessary. The use of the narrative story has its advantages because once selected it is ready as an instructional tool. There is no time consuming preparation of materials and when strategically and carefully chosen can have powerful results as was indicated in the study.

The study suggests that more time and attention should have been directed to

responding to the students written and visual work in order for students to be more fully prepared for the oral presentation. As I mentioned in Chapter 4, some of the students found the oral presentations about their Significant Canadian challenging. All the students successfully met the criteria for making their poster, however, when it came to their presentation many English language learners, had difficulty with the pronunciation of vocabulary and some of the students were difficulty making themselves heard. The students were encouraged to and had practiced their presentations with other group members, however, for some students more explicit attention needed to be paid during the project process to prepare for the presentation. In retrospect, in the planning of the unit more time spent on discussion and response to each student individually, about their Significant Immigrant Canadian project, and more opportunities to practice in their group arrangements would potentially have a more positive outcome.

The analysis of the samples of the posters strongly suggests that the students were able to produce a multimodal representation using visual and written forms to communicate their understanding of their Significant Immigrant Canadian (see Figures 5.4 and 5.5). The first example shows one aspect of a student's project on Phan Thi Kim Phuc who is known because of the well-known photo of a young girl running down the street after a napalm attack during the Vietnam War (see Figure 5.4).



Even though Phan Thi Kim Phuc wasn't a famous explorer, a famous prime minister, or an intelligent scientist-I chose her because to me, Kim Phuc is a hero. She survived a napalm three degree burn-and even though it still hurts-she has continued her life positively and peacefully.

Kim Phuc forgived the Americans and the person who was in charge of the napalm attack, while most people wouldn't have been able to do that.



Figure 5.4: Sample of a Significant Canadian Immigrant Poster

Adrienne Clarkson

Introduction

Adrienne was born in Hong Kong, China in 1939. She was 3 years old when she moved to Canada. She moved to Ottawa with her parents. Her Grandfather moved to Australia before she was born.

Contribution to Canada

She was the first ever-Chinese woman as a Governor General. She was the 26th Governor General and the 2ed Governor General in Canada. ~~that was a woman~~ She was fluent in ~~Bilingual~~ and French. She was sent France to work as one of Canada's Governor Generals.

Summary of Life

She was born in Hong Kong, China and moved to Canada in World War 2. She was raised in Ottawa and went to many public schools. She went to Toronto Trinity College and earned her Governor General medal. She then went to a College in Paris, France called the Sorbonne. That is my Famous Canadian Hero Adrienne Clarkson.



Sorbonne Paris, France



Toronto Trinity College

Timeline

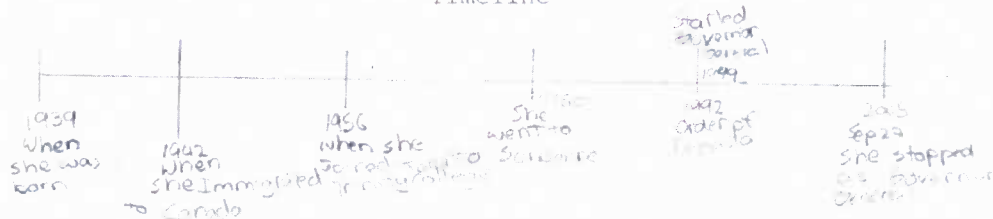


Figure 5.5: Sample of a Significant Canadian Immigrant Poster

The third research question asks how does the teacher create conditions in the

learning environment to facilitate learners' engagement in making intertextual connections to the academic content of a Grade5/6 Social Studies unit? The study suggests that the teacher's view of his class as a learning community served as a foundation for students' meaningful classroom engagement. Cummins et al. (2007) suggest that "cognitive engagement and deep understanding are more likely to be generated in contexts where instruction builds on student's prior knowledge and learning is supported by active collaboration within a community of learners" (p. 47). Simultaneously, within the structure of the learning community, the teacher's organization of activities was a key contributor to a cohesive social environment for academic learning to take place. The teacher organized his lessons for cooperative learning by using structured groups (TRIADS) to promote discussion of topics to share and communicate information and build on each member's knowledge (see Figure 5.6).

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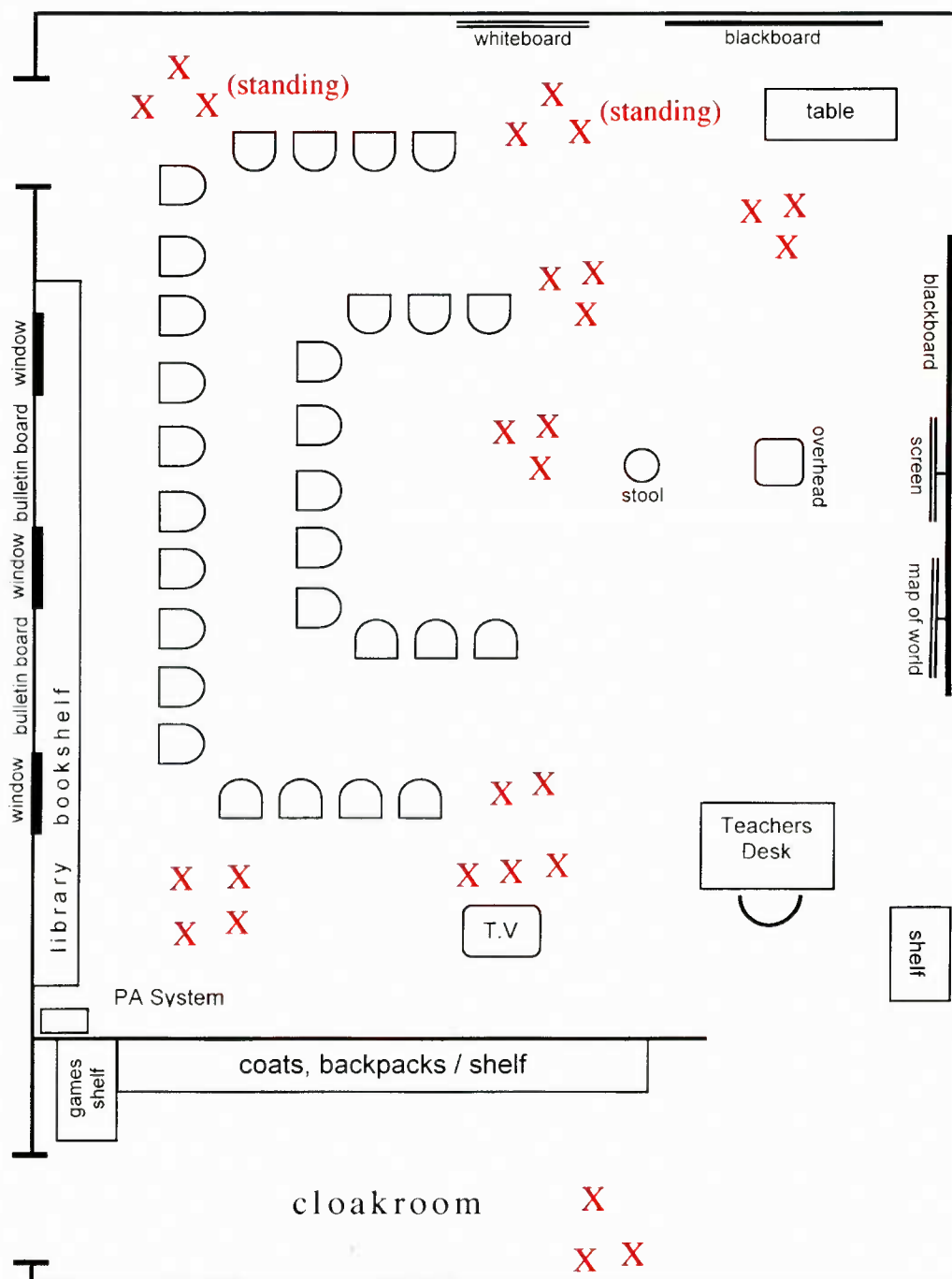


Figure 5.6: Co-operative Grouping Arrangement in a Portable Classroom

In one of the lessons I observed, the teacher used the text-book photo of Chinese immigrant workers as a reference tool, first for individual reflective inquiry and then in a group setting to discuss questions such as: Who are they? Why are they all together? What do they want to do? What are their hopes and dreams? The teacher stated, “This is like reading the picture”. In the lessons I observed when student were in their groups very little of the teacher’s time was spent on behaviour management but rather the teacher going from group to group to listen to and contribute to the group discussion. The students had an understanding of the respectful behaviour that was expected and their role as active participants.

As well, this study revealed that ‘teacher talk’ was an ongoing component of the way the teacher organized the lessons. Cope and Kalantzis (2000) suggest, “overt instruction when linked to Situated Practice becomes more like teacher scaffolding than teacher-centred transmission pedagogy” (p. 240). As discovered in Chapter 4 many of the students in the study expressed that the way the teacher *explains* was the most helpful. The teacher’s ongoing respectful, unhurried manner and ongoing message that each student is a valued member of the group all contributed to the learning environment.

5.1 Limitations of the Study

There are a number of limitations to this study. The data sample was small as there were 19 student participants and one participant teacher. It was the study of one class, one teacher and one subject. It was difficult to get recorded discourse samples because many of the parents did not give permission for audio recordings. Despite my desire to have many opportunities for observation and other data collection methods over the three months, constraints such as timetabling and curriculum demands in other areas sometimes made

access to the site difficult. The forty-five minute teaching block was also constraining. The insights and conclusions are specific to the participants and context in which this study was undertaken.

5.2 Implications for Pedagogy

This study has implications for pedagogy when addressing the teaching of Social Studies in our diverse elementary, multilingual, multicultural mainstream classrooms. According to Weisman and Hanson (2007) “Successful learning [in Social Studies] depends heavily on the knowledge of vocabulary, linguistic structures and background knowledge of the topic” (p. 181).

The mainstream Social Studies teacher would benefit from building a profile of all the learners in the class. Given the rapidly changing demographics of our local contexts, the mainstream classroom teacher should assume that they are teaching English language learners of varying levels of proficiency. In order to plan for instruction, the teacher must be aware of the students’ ESL levels and review the history of the ESL support that has been provided to the students. In addition, the teacher would gain useful information by finding out background information about all students in the class including, students who are native English speakers. Inquiring into students’ counties of origin, languages spoken in the home, years in Canada, traveling experiences would provide useful information that could be shared with the class as a whole. By doing so, teachers can tap into the students background knowledge and bridge connections between home and school environments. Weisman and Hanson (2007) suggest in order to access background knowledge, teachers should find out as much as possible about their students.

When planning for instruction, the Social Studies teacher should first acknowledge the learning outcomes that are mandated requirements of both the Social Studies and the Language Arts curriculums of the teacher's particular grade level. The teacher can then expand the learning outcomes to incorporate the local and situated nature of the learning context. Wherever possible, activities that focus on investigating and exploring issues relevant to the community in which they reside are more meaningful for students. In the present study the findings suggest that the teacher was able to address the required Ministry learning outcomes and then expand activities that involved looking at the history of immigration and issues within the community context.

Understanding vocabulary is essential to success and needs explicit instruction as it arises during Social Studies lessons (Weisman & Hanson, 2007). Students' benefit from vocabulary being systematically introduced, having visual supports and remaining accessible for students throughout a Social Studies unit. Learners can also be supported by strategies that promote the active involvement of the learners in working together in small groups to find meanings of words. During discussions, as vocabulary arises it can be addressed through clarification, rephrasing and repetition.

According to Rowsell and Pahl (2007), "Classrooms are spaces that can be infused with our students' identities" p. 402. Teachers of Social Studies can draw on the students' social and cultural histories as a resource to connect to curriculum and bring an awareness that student's histories are embedded in their text. In this present study, the findings suggest that the teacher viewed the students' social and cultural identities as a resource and he was able to tap into this resource.

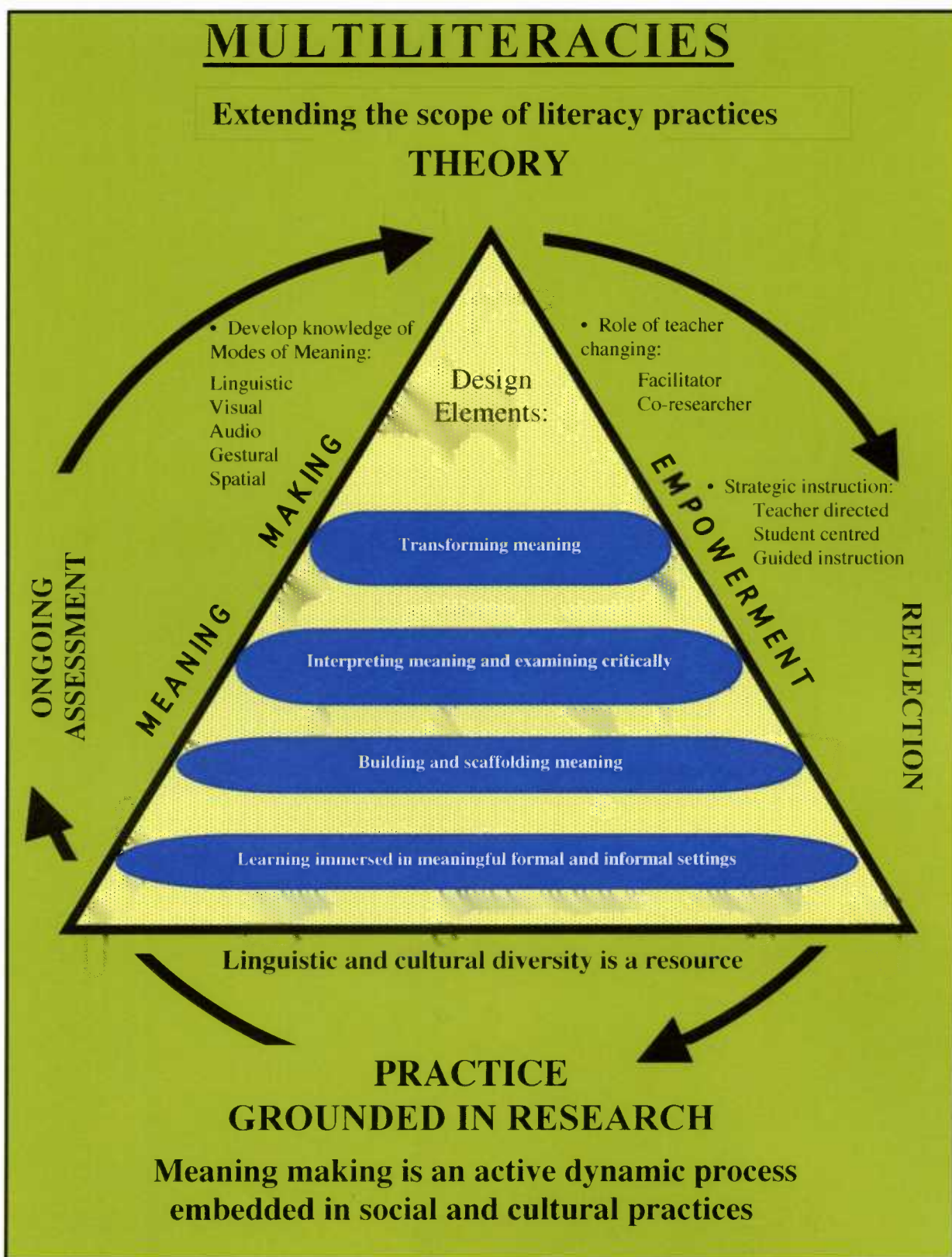


Figure 5.7: Literacy Model

A model (Figure 5.7) can be used as a reference tool for a discussion of what literacy practices should encompass when planning curricula. Based on the New London Groups' (2000) *Pedagogy of Multiliteracies*, the model views meaning making as an active and dynamic process embedded in cultural and social practices. The model considers cultural and linguistic diversity as a resource and access to multiple modes of representation as fundamental. Kalantzis and Cope (2000), when discussing The New London Groups' design elements of situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice make the point:

“These [elements] are not intended to be a rigid learning sequence. Nor are they intended to displace existing practices of literacy teaching, or to imply that what teachers have been doing is somehow wrong or ill conceived. Rather the aim is to provide ideas and angles with which to supplement what teachers do p. 239”

The model also demonstrates the varying role of the teacher and approaches to instruction are also included. In the present study this model was not used as a reference in designing the curriculum plan but it could be a useful theoretical and practical tool for future planning and/or research.

This study involved two teachers working respectfully together. We both came with our strengths and learned from each other. Our endeavor demonstrated the potential of the power of professional conversations.

5.3 Directions for Future Research

This present case study is exploratory so it has many possibilities for follow up. There is a need for further qualitative research that investigates the issues and challenges that face the teacher practitioner in a naturally occurring classroom setting. A similar study could take place in different grade levels, subject areas and/or different ethnic populations. Larger,

longitudinal scale research that takes place over a period of an academic year could follow a group of teachers and students. Future research that involves the collaboration of two teachers, each with their own area of expertise is needed. For example a content area specialist teacher and an ESL specialist teacher could work together collaboratively to support students to improve language skills and master understanding of discipline specific content knowledge. Future research could look more specifically at different groupings of learners: newcomer English language learners, students that were born in Canada but speak another or an additional language in the home, foreign born students and native English speaking students and their experiences in learning Social Studies content knowledge.

5.4 Conclusion

This study reports on one classroom teacher's attempt to address the challenges of teaching Social Studies in a diverse, elementary, multilingual, multicultural mainstream classroom. It has provided a rare glimpse of the real life, everyday experiences of a teacher and his students in the complex and dynamic context of a classroom environment. Short's (1994) research on effective strategies for teaching Social Studies included: "activating background knowledge", "using cooperative learning" and "exposing students to authentic materials" (p. 587). These were all aspects of the participant teachers' repertoire of strategies. At the heart of this teacher's belief was the value of "learning community-learning together". The teacher continually invested in the understanding of community and in the value of the cooperative group process within the classroom. This teacher had a view that the cultural and social identities that the students brought to the classroom should be affirmed and used as a resource. This view was complemented by a pedagogy that provided all students, including students acquiring English as a second language, opportunities for multiple ways to access

and demonstrate understanding. These factors all contributed to a successful and culturally responsive learning experience for his students. This study is an example of the collaborative work of a practitioner teacher and a teacher/researcher sharing their professional expertise to explore a Social Studies unit during the design and implementation phases.

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Appendix A

STUDENT ASSENT FORM

Accessing Academic Literacy for Diverse Learners: Bridging Everyday Language and the Language of Social Studies

Principal Investigator: Dr. Margaret Early
Department of Language and Literacy Education,
UBC

Co-Investigator: Daphne McMillan
Graduate Student in the Department of Language
and Literacy Education, UBC

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to explore classroom activities that support students' access to the understanding of Social Studies' concepts. The research will be part of a thesis and is being undertaken by Daphne McMillan, an M.A. Graduate student in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia.

Study Procedures:

The intention of the researcher is to take notes primarily on the activities of the teacher as she/he supports student learning during one Social Studies unit. If you agree to participate, you will be observed during your regular class with your teacher during ten (10) forty minute Social Studies lessons. Every effort will be made not to change the usual routine of the class. The researcher will take direction from the teacher to ensure that class activities are not disrupted. Your participation or lack of participation will not affect how classes are taught and will not affect your mark.

If you agree to participate, you will also have a chance to explain how you learn best during Social Studies lessons. Your audio-recorded interviews may be conducted individually or in groups depending on what you and your classmates prefer. You will only be interviewed with your permission. You or your parent(s)/guardian can review the audio-recordings at any time.

Some of your social studies' classroom work may also be collected and reviewed. This may include creative or writing, illustrations or materials that you created using the computer. Your teacher will also be asked to talk about his/her ideas about classroom strategies and activities.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept confidential. You and your school will not be named in any reports. All documents will be identified only by a code number and kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Duration:

Classroom observations will take place during one Social Studies unit of study. The researcher will come to your class only while the Social Studies lesson are being taught. Consenting students will be given two audio-recorded interviews that will last about ten (10) minutes. The interviews will be done individually or as a group, at the beginning of the unit and at the end of the unit. The interviews will take place out of regular instructional time (e.g. lunch hour) at a time that is convenient to the student. The audio-taped interview will not interfere with your studies.

Refusals:

You have the right not to participate at any time if you do not wish to be interviewed or observed.

Dissemination of Research:

The results from the research may be shared at national and international conferences and published in professional and research journals. Reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants.

Potential Benefits:

The information gained from the research will support a better understanding of best practices to support our diverse learners in their multilingual classroom settings. Teacher professional development will also be enhanced.

Contact for information about the study:

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact Dr. Margaret Early or Daphne McMillan.

Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects:

Consent:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy to your class standing.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Subject Signature

Date

(or Parent or Guardian Signature)

Printed Name of the Subject or Parent or Guardian signing above

Appendix B

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Accessing Academic Literacy for Diverse Learners: Bridging Everyday Language and the Language of Social Studies

Principal Investigator: Dr. Margaret Early
Department of Language and Literacy Education,
U.B.C.

Co-Investigator: Daphne McMillan
Graduate Student in the Department of Language
and Literacy Education, U.B.C.

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to explore classroom activities that support students' access to the understanding of Social Studies concepts in our diverse, multilingual, multicultural classrooms. The research will be part of a thesis and is being undertaken by Daphne McMillan, an M.A. Graduate student in the Department of Language and Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia.

Study Procedures:

If you agree to allow your child to participate in the research, he/she will be observed while the teacher delivers regular lessons. The intention of the researcher is to take notes, primarily on the teacher, during one unit of Social Studies. The lessons that will be observed are a regular part of your child's education. Your child's classroom activities will be documented only with your permission. Your child's participation will not affect how classes are taught. Every effort will be made not to disrupt the regular routine of the class. The researcher will take direction from the teacher to ensure that class activities are not disrupted.

If you agree to allow your child to participate, your child will be interviewed about his/her choices in representing and demonstrating understanding of concepts during Social Studies lessons. The interviews may be conducted individually or in a group and will be audio-recorded. An example of a question that may be asked is; "Do diagrams or illustrations help you to connect to or communicate a Social Studies concept? Can you think of an example when you used both writing and a diagram to show your understanding of a concept?" Your child will only be interviewed with your permission. You or your child can listen to the interview tape at any time. The teacher will also be asked for his/her ideas about activities that best support understanding of Social Studies concepts.

Samples of your child's social studies classroom work may also be collected. This may include creative or academic writing, artwork or models, or materials your child creates using a computer.

Confidentiality:

Your child's identity will be kept strictly confidential. Your child and your child's school will not be named in any reports of the completed study. Group interviews may limit confidentiality within the group. Your child's work sample may be used as part of the Graduate Thesis or shared at a conference. However, all documents will be identified only by a code number and will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Duration:

Classroom observations will take place during one unit of study of approximately ten (10) forty minute lessons. The researcher will observe in the class only while Social Studies lessons are being taught. The researcher will interview consenting students for about ten (10) minutes at the beginning of the unit and at the end of the unit. The interview will not interfere with your child's studies and will be conducted out of regular instructional time (e.g. lunch hour).

Refusals:

You have the right the right to refuse to allow your child to participate without jeopardy of consequence to her/his class standing.

Dissemination of Research:

The results from the research may be shared at national and international conferences and published in professional and research journals. Reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants.

Potential Benefits:

The information gained from the research will support a better understanding of best practices to support our diverse learners in their classroom setting. Teacher professional development will also be enhanced.

Contact for information about the study:

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact Dr. Margaret Early or Daphne McMillan.

Consent:

Please complete the following and return it to your child's teacher.

Your child's participation in this study is entirely voluntary and your child may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy or consequence to their class standing.

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above. You understand that your child's participation in this research is

voluntary, and that you willingly consented to allow your child to participate in this research project. Your signature also indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records. You may withdraw your consent at any time without consequences to your child.

Please check the appropriate box for each line:

You agree that your child:

☐ Can participate in this study

☐ Can be audio recorded in this study

☐ I do not give consent for my child to participate in this study

_____ Subject Signature (or Parent or Guardian Signature)	_____ Date
---	---------------

Printed Name of the Subject or Parent or Guardian signing above

Appendix C

TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Accessing Academic Literacy for Diverse Learners: Bridging Everyday Language and the Academic Discourse of Social Studies

Principal Investigator: Dr. Margaret Early
Department of Language and Literacy Education,
UBC

Co-Investigator: Daphne McMillan
Graduate Student in the Department of Language and
Literacy Education, UBC

Purpose:

The purpose of this study is to conduct an investigation of literacy practices that support students' access to the academic discourse of Social Studies in our multilingual, multicultural and multimodal classrooms. The hope is to identify practices that enable students to better represent their understandings in a variety of ways and use their own cultural and linguistic resources as a pedagogical tool. This study draws on previous studies (e.g. New London Group, 1996) that emphasize the need to broaden literacy practices in changing, economic, technological and socio-cultural conditions. The research will be part of a thesis and is being undertaken by Daphne McMillan, an M.A. Graduate student in the Department of Language and Literacy Education, at the University of British Columbia.

Study Procedures:

You will be involved in data collection that focuses on one Social Studies unit in the first term of the Fall of 2007. You will work with the Graduate Investigator to identify ways the elementary classroom teacher, at the unit design and student/teacher micro interaction levels, can enable learners, in a multilingual classroom setting, to make inter-textual connections to the academic content of the Grade 5 Social Studies curriculum. Generally, data collection will be in the form of field notes that will be taken during class observations during 10 forty-minute Social Studies lessons. Every effort will be made to avoid disrupting the regular routine of the class. The researcher will take direction from the teacher in how to position herself to undertake the research to ensure that class activities are not disrupted. The focus of the research will be primarily on the activities of the consenting teacher. Students who give informed consent will also provide data for the study. The teacher will be asked to share examples of work from children who have provided consent. Part of the research will be an audio-recorded interview pre and

post the unit, regarding your ideas pertaining to literacy practices that best support bridging and accessing diverse learners' acquisition of Social Studies concepts. In addition you will be asked to keep a log of your personal reflections during the unit of study.

Confidentiality:

The identity of you, your students and your school will be kept strictly confidential. Subjects will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study. The researcher will distribute and collect the student consent forms. Every effort will be made to ensure that the teacher will not know which of the students have given consent. Data will be made available only to the investigators.

Duration:

Classroom observations will take place during one unit of study. The researcher will observe the class only while Social Studies is being taught. The researcher will interview consenting students for about ten (10) minutes, individually or as a group, at the beginning of the unit and at the end of the unit out of regular instructional time (e.g. lunch hour) at a time that is convenient to the student. The interview will not interfere with your students' studies. Interviews with the classroom teacher will be conducted by the Graduate investigator and will last about 15 minutes at a time that is convenient.

Refusals:

Participation in this project is optional. You have the right to participate or to withdraw your consent to participate at any time.

Dissemination of Research:

The results from the research will be used as part of a graduate thesis and may be shared at national and international conferences and published in professional and research journals. Reports based on these presentations and articles will be available to all participants.

Potential Benefits:

The information gained from the research will support a better understanding of best practices to support diverse learners in their classroom setting. Teacher professional development will also be enhanced.

Contact for information about the study:

If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact Dr. Margaret Early or Daphne McMillan

Consent:

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above. You understand that your participation in this research is voluntary, and that you willingly consented to participate in this research project. Your signature also indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form

for your own records. You may withdraw your consent at any time without consequences to your employment or professional standing.

Please check the appropriate box for each line:

[] I consent to participate in this study

[] I consent to be audio recorded in this study

Subject Signature

Date

Printed Name of the Subject

Appendix D

STUDENT INTERVIEW

Accessing Academic Literacy for Diverse Learners: Bridging Everyday Knowledge and the Academic Discourse of Social Studies

Principal Investigator: Dr. Margaret Early
Department of Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Co-Investigator: Daphne McMillan
Graduate Student in the Department of Language and
Literacy Education, UBC

The questions I am going to ask you will provide us with information to better plan for classroom activities that support student access to the Social Studies curriculum?

You can choose not to answer any questions.

There are no right or wrong answers.

No one else, including your teacher, will know your answers.

Were you born in Canada? If not where were you born?

What languages do you speak in your home?

Do you know why you were named your name?

Do you have some special cultural objects in your home? (show an example of an old scrapbook)

Would you say you were at a beginner, intermediate or advanced level of English?

What is your favorite subject in school?

Do you enjoy Social Studies lessons?

Do you enjoy working with a partner on your Social Studies assignments?

What do you do to find words you need in the classroom?

Do pictures in your textbooks help you to understand Social Studies ideas? (show a picture)

What are some of the class activities that help you to gain understanding of Social Studies concepts?

What are some ways you like to show what you know about Social Studies concepts?

Is there anything else you want to tell me about how you best learn Social Studies concepts?

Thank you

Appendix E

CLASSROOM TEACHER INTERVIEW

Accessing Academic Literacy for Diverse Language Learners: Bridging Everyday Knowledge and the Academic Discourse of Social Studies

Principal Investigator: Dr. Margaret Early
Department of Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Co-Investigator: Daphne McMillan
Graduate Student in the Department of Language and
Literacy Education, UBC

The purpose of this study is to conduct an investigation of literacy practices that support ESL students' access to the academic discourse of the Social Studies in our multilingual, multicultural and multimodal classrooms. The intent is to investigate ways the elementary classroom teacher and the ESL specialist teacher use students' social and cultural identities to enable second language learners to make inter-textual connections to the academic content of the Grade 4 Social Studies curriculum? The research is for a graduate degree, and will be part of a thesis.

You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer.

How long have you been teaching?

Were you born in Canada? If not where were you born?

What scaffolds do you feel could be built at the unit design to facilitate students' understanding of their social and cultural identities?

Do you have a teaching strategy that you frequently use with you students to promote understanding of concepts?

How do you facilitate your students' access to multiple modes of representation (e.g. linguistic, visual, use of dual language) to demonstrate their understanding of connections between their of social studies concepts?

In what ways do your students of varying levels of English proficiency (beginner, developing, advanced) demonstrate inter-textual connections of Social Studies content knowledge? (e.g. labeling, access to key vocabulary, visual supports, models of genre)

As an elementary classroom teacher what are the challenges you face in facilitating Social Studies content knowledge in a multilingual setting?

Is there anything else you want to tell me about teaching Social Studies concepts to ESL learners?

Thank you

Appendix F

CODING TABLE

CODE NAME		DEFINITION	SAMPLE QUOTE
“Why are we here”	BQ	This is the question which guided the student’s inquiry throughout the year.	Big question for the whole class was “ <i>Why are we here?</i> ”
Artefacts	AR	Definition given in class— a “cultural object made by a human”, an everyday object symbolizing cultural heritage.	Artifacts help us to see similarities and differences in culture.
Classroom arrangement	CA	The physical configuration of desks and/or student groupings	Students were working TRIADS
Computer	CO	The use of digital technology within the context of the unit of study.	Students working hard at computers.
Expectation	EX	The expected conduct and explicit protocols for student activities.	There are no put downs here.
Humour	HU	The teacher’s use of language to joke or say something funny.	“Gino’s pizza”
Investment	IN	A reason given by the teacher to participate and engage in learning by valuing the student’s identity as an individual and as a member of the group.	idea that everyone is working toward the same goal.
Organization	OR	The way the teacher orchestrates the learning environment, including structuring of lessons and providing materials for learning.	The teacher handed out (using monitors) SS books and worksheet
Period	PD	Issues related to the duration of the teaching block.	The time was up.
Personal history	PE	Events in either students or teachers’ past that have shaped their lives and understanding of self.	It has cultural and personal significance
Relationship	RL	The emotional content of the interactions between students, and student and teacher.	He read in a relaxed and friendly manner
Representing	RE	Demonstrating understanding of concepts through any variety of modes—e.g. written, visual, digital, spoken or any combination.	What are some of the ways you like to show what you know?
Scaffolding	SC	Sequentially building on previous instruction or experience.	reminded the class that the goal for
Story	ST	The use of narrative to explain personal history or fictional events.	an opportunity to tell part of their <i>story</i> .
Teacher talk	TT	The manner in which the teacher verbally discusses ideas with the class (whole or group)	used everyday casual language “ Let’s take a look”
Text	TE	Any written or print material used in the classroom.	Yes bold print is a text feature.
Underlife	UN	Students non-conforming behaviours in the classroom –obvious and subtle.	I.... wondered around room
Visuals	VI	Images that can be used and viewed to support understanding. (e.g. posters, maps, pictures).	Chart was posted in the elass.
Vocabulary	VO	Language support for content specific, more complex terminology	Do you know what we mean by peer?

Appendix G

SURVEY

Name: _____

1. In addition to English what other languages do you speak?

2. What do you think is your level of proficiency in English?

_____ beginner _____ intermediate _____ advanced

3. Do you enjoy Social Studies?

_____ Yes _____ No

4. How do you think you learn best?

_____ alone _____ partner _____ TRIADS (groups)

5. Do pictures help you to learn? How?

6. Did you learn to enjoy Social Studies more after the immigration unit?

_____ yes _____ no

7. What did you learn from the immigration unit?

8. Of all the things your teacher does to help you learn what is the most helpful?

Appendix H

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

The following transcription conventions were used in decoding audio-recordings:

- word (underline) word stress
- word - (en-dash) abrupt sound stop
- (..) (periods in parenthesis) pauses: (.) a short pause, (..) a longer pause, (...) longer
- [word] (brackets) onset of overlapping talk
- (inaudible) inaudible utterance
- (word) (word in single parenthesis) best guess at a questionable transcription
- ((word)) ((word in double parentheses)) participants physical movement, laughter

Appendix I

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL: ETHICS BOARD

See following page.



CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - FULL BOARD

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Margaret M. Early	INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT: UBC/Education/Language and Literacy Education	UBC BREB NUMBER: H07-01797
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INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:

Institution	Site
I/A	N/A
Other locations where the research will be conducted: Richmond School District- 1 elementary school classroom	

CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):

I/A

SPONSORING AGENCIES:

I/A

PROJECT TITLE:

Accessing academic literacy for diverse learners: Bridging everyday language and the academic discourse of Social studies

EB MEETING DATE:

September 13, 2007

CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE:

September 13, 2008

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:

DATE APPROVED:

November 1, 2007

Document Name	Version	Date
Protocol:		
Revised research proposal	N/A	August 30, 2007
Consent Forms:		
Revised parent consent	N/A	October 21, 2007
Revised teacher consent	N/A	October 21, 2007
Revised student consent	N/A	October 22, 2007
Questionnaire, Questionnaire Cover Letter, Tests:		
Revised student interview2	N/A	August 31, 2007
Revised teacher interview2	N/A	August 31, 2007
Other Documents:		
Letter of Support from Richmond School District	N/A	October 22, 2007

The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

**Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board
and signed electronically by one of the following:**

Dr. M. Judith Lynam, Chair
Dr. Jim Rupert, Associate Chair
Dr. Laurie Ford, Associate Chair