Children Writers:

Enactments of Identity, Agency, and Power

in a Third-Grade Writing Workshop

by

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study uses the theoretical concepts of identity, agency, and power to explore the ways in which students in their moment-to-moment interactions enact identities, agency, and power as they engage in the activity of writing and participate in a writing workshop. This research highlights what happens to writers as they engage in writing processes with one another and moves away from interpreting what happens between students as only cognitive or behavioral phenomenon. Additionally, through the lenses of identity, agency, and power, the complexity of what it means to be a writer in a writing workshop is made visible.

Data for the study were collected over a five-month period and include observations of children participating in a third-grade writing workshop, written field notes, and detailed recording of the actions and interactions among the students as well as the teacher and students to capture the time, space, and participants' activity during the writing workshop. Whole class and small-group interactions were video and/or audio recorded daily for later transcription, observation and reflection. Semi-structured informal interviews and informal talks with the students and the teachers were conducted and recorded on a regular basis, and the students' written work and other related artifacts were collected to examine the students' work as writers.

The research reveals three major themes: 1) students enact multiple identities to serve a variety of purposes; 2) students enact agency in the ordinary and everyday practices of the writing workshop to change their present

interactions, circumstances, and conditions; and 3) in their microlevel

interactions, students enact macrolevel notions of power that shift classroom as

well as peer relations. Additionally this study reveals the ways in which students

use their written texts as evidence to substantiate the claims they are making

about themselves and about others as learners and as people.

DEDICATION

To all of the students who have allowed me the privilege of learning beside them.

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I want to convey my deep appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for the many people who have supported me in completing this dissertation. Foremost, I thank Dr. Karen Smith, my mentor and Committee Chair, for her thoughtful guidance throughout my time as a graduate student and during the dissertation process; I appreciate the many opportunities that allowed me to grow and learn in my professional work. I have been moved by her deep respect for children, teachers, preservice teachers, teacher educators, and families. I thank Dr. Sarah Hudelson and Dr. Carole Edelsky for the abundant amounts of wisdom, kindness, support, and encouragement they provided throughout my graduate studies and the ways in which they have contributed to making this experience a rich and meaningful journey. I appreciate Dr. Josephine Marsh for her generous sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience as a member of my dissertation committee.

My dissertation emphasizes the importance of relational work in children's learning and lives, and this dissertation would not have been possible without the relationships in my life. I want to acknowledge and thank my husband, Michael Meister, for his constant love and support as he patiently listened and encouraged me. Also, I thank my family for their unconditional love, support, and belief in me throughout this journey. Finally, I thank the many friends throughout my graduate studies that became my community, offering support, a kind word, a friendly smile, and, when necessary, a gentle nudge.

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INTRODUCTION

On this day, Mr. Jones, the teacher, has talked with the third graders about writing first drafts of their fairy tales during the class mini-lesson. The students have all brainstormed and webbed their ideas, and today during independent writing time, they are to begin writing their stories. As the children write, there is a steady noise level consisting of children's voices, laughter, and even a few shouts from across the room as children summon Mr. Jones to answer questions, spell words, and check their work. Mr. Jones circulates, answering questions, reminding the children of what they should be doing, and sharing aloud examples of students' work. Off in a corner of the room, Manuel and Juan are in deep negotiation about ideas for their version of *The Three Little Pigs*:

Juan: What do you think it's gonna be? What's the second one?

Manuel: Fire!

Juan: So the wolf can blow, ohhhh, ahhhh. Right! He can blow us the candy off, he can blow the chocolate off.

Manuel: Nooooo! Because what if he hates it?

Juan: Ok. He hates it. So, and you said fire, right? Second house is . . . .

Manuel: Do fire too! Do fire too! Mine's gonna be of . . . .

Juan: Water!

Manuel: Mine's gonna to be of shields, the third one, yeahhhhh,

mine's gonna be of shields because it gives you a chance to

get in, it'll block you (makes a loud blocking sound).

Juan: I'll put mirrors.

In the middle of the room, Ana and Roberto sit at a large table with a few of their classmates. Ana, with an infectious grin on her face, stridently reads aloud her writing and lets out loud giggles. As lead pencils and erasers are busily passed between students, children's voices fill this space with song lyrics from the popular Chris Brown song *With You:*

Student: "Single hearts all over the world tonight, single hearts all

over the world tonight," (singing lyrics from the Chris

Brown song).

Ana: I like that song a lot.

Student: Chris Brown.

Ana: "Hey, little Sugar" (singing). Is that by Chris Brown? Nuh

uh.

Student: With you? Are you with me? (singing).

Ana: No la "Single hearts all over the world tonight" (singing).

Student: Si.

Ana: No encanta el.

Student: Oh si.

Student: "Single hearts all over the world tonight. Single hearts all

over the world tonight," (singing).

Martin:	Are you guys singing?
Student:	Si el Chris Brown encanta *With You*.
Ana:	Tell Cesar! Tell Cesar!
Martin:	Are you guys talking about the radio?
Ana:	No, we're talking about something.

Ana dutifully returns to her writing and completes the first draft of her story. However, as she writes she occasionally pauses to include herself in the nearby social life, either by involving herself in the other students' social negotiations about their writing or by responding to questions or comments posed aloud by other students as they write. Across from Ana at the corner of the table sits Roberto. Roberto sits perched on his chair, hovering over his paper and steadfastly writing as well as laughing out loud at certain parts of his story. Roberto is undistracted by the activity around him and seems to pay no attention to the other children as he writes.

The third graders in this classroom colorfully illustrate what it means to be in a writing workshop where students are in the process of becoming and identifying as writers and as certain kinds of people. In a writing workshop, at all moments, students engage in multilayered relational work which often involves negotiating and collaborating with peers as resources for generating, drafting, editing ideas, and giving and receiving feedback. However, working with peers is not always a neat, tidy, or neutral process, because although a writing workshop takes place in a school culture, it also takes place in a childhood culture (Dyson,

2003), which is informed by important yet often uncontainable childhood features such as spontaneity and play.

The above vignette can be interpreted in many ways, some which might be based on traditional ideas about what a student's writing process, relational work, and participation should look like in the classroom. For example, the ways in which Manuel, Juan, Ana, and Roberto participate in the writing workshop could be interpreted through traditional expectations for student behavior, suggesting that Manuel, Juan, and Ana need more self-control as students and lack motivation as writers, while Roberto, who works quietly without distraction, demonstrates an appropriate amount of self-control as a student, and motivation as a writer. From a cognitive viewpoint, Roberto could be perceived as a capable and skilled writer whose knowledge and capability is demonstrated by his ability to remain undistracted by his peers, whereas the more noticeable disruptions by Manuel, Juan, and Ana could lead them to be construed as students who lack the ability to concentrate and the appropriate thinking skills needed to complete their writing work. Or, the entire classroom and its writing workshop context could be explained through a classroom management perspective, suggesting that a writing workshop provides students with too much freedom and not enough structure.

When students are defined only by their external behaviors, assumed cognitive dispositions, or specific expectations for a productive and engaging writing context, much information about who Manuel, Juan, Ana and Roberto are as writers and people is left out as well as misunderstood. However, when one applies alternate lenses to a writing workshop and to the students' work as writers,

it is possible to illuminate the complexity of what takes place with and between children as they engage with one another as writers and as people, as well as how students' relational work impacts what they are learning. For example, when examined through the lens of agency, the interaction between Manuel and Juan perhaps demonstrates how friends with shared histories and connected lives outside of the classroom are able to challenge each other as writers to create new and complex ideas for their stories; they jointly remake themselves as creative writers who push new boundaries in their writing. Or, through the lens of power, perhaps Roberto's autonomous participation in the writing workshop could be viewed as limiting his possibilities for growth as a writer, reproducing macrolevel and microlevel practices of traditional power structures that influence what a student's writing participation and process should look like in the classroom. A closer examination of Ana and her actions may reveal a more complex portrayal of a young girl who is both knowledgeable and socially adept. For instance, in some moments Ana seems easily distracted as she sings, giggles, and even bosses other children around while writing, yet other moments expose Ana as an assiduous writer who completes her work despite distractions and interruptions. From an identity perspective, Ana has learned to thoughtfully navigate shifts in identity and take on new forms of participation as she takes part in a writing workshop.

This vignette, and its possibility for multiple interpretations and understandings about children as writers, demonstrates the tension that exists when students are defined solely by narrow, traditional views of behavior and

cognition without consideration for the ways in which identity, agency, and power contribute to who students are becoming both as writers and as people. Inspired by my work with preservice teachers, this vignette and its multiple readings reveal the apparent gaps in what we know theoretically at the university and research level but unfortunately often leave out of preservice teacher education programs, thereby perpetuating more narrow and limited interpretations of children as they engage in writing.

Rationale

As a language arts methods instructor for preservice teachers at a major university in the Southwest, I taught students theoretical underpinnings and pedagogical knowledge surrounding writing and writing instruction. This course was taught as part of the Multilingual Multicultural (MLMC) program, which emphasized preparing teachers to work with bilingual and English language learning students. These preservice teacher education classes were taught in a block structure, with the language arts, reading methods, assessment, and practicum classes taught in an integrated format that addressed specific theoretical and practical considerations for working with students whose first language was not English, and who were in the process of refining their bilingual and biliterate skills. Additionally, the classes were held at a local elementary school as a means to providing the preservice teachers with authentic learning experiences that involved opportunities to observe and practice the theoretical ideas and teaching methods they were learning while working directly with children in dual language classrooms.

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Content for the language arts course included studying about writing processes, learning about writing workshop as a framework for supporting students' writing processes, and learning about how children construct their understanding of literacy. While I found these concepts important to new teachers' preparation, I also began to notice that this knowledge alone did not explain the multiple dimensions of classroom life and students' writing experiences. For example, one experience we offered our preservice teachers was the opportunity to work for approximately one hour each week with students in a third grade writing workshop. After our weekly work with our writing "buddies," the preservice teachers always came back with lots of questions about their experiences with these young writers. Most often they noticed that the children were biliterate in English and Spanish, that they seemed to enjoy writing, and that they were confident trying new writing strategies. However, at other times, the preservice teachers questioned why the students chose to write in one language rather than the other, why they may not have wanted to write during their time together, or why they seemed to not get much actual writing accomplished. They also got frustrated when the students seem "sidetracked" by their peers. In response to these concerns, the preservice teachers often drew upon their own schooling experiences, or upon their beginning understandings of the writing process and writing workshop, to make sense of them. For example, they may have suggested changing the workshop structure, or giving students less time to write so that fewer perceived distractions occur. They often wanted to intervene

on the students' behalf in order to prevent a student from being misunderstood or embarrassed as she made a case for her writing decisions.

Answers to these occurrences with writers in a writing workshop are not as simple or as straightforward as the preservice teachers would like to make them. Providing quick-fix responses oversimplifies the multilayered relational work these young writers are engaged in at all moments of the writing workshop and looks more at outward behavior, the products and artifacts associated with writing, rather than at the cognitive, moral, emotional, and participatory process of becoming a writer. The preservice teachers' questions and proposed solutions remind me of the complexities of classroom life when students are actively engaged in writing. As a former classroom teacher, I understand that in moments like these, which feel awkward, confusing, or even harmful to some students, it seems easier to turn to practices or solutions that are more procedural and tidy. However, my own teaching experience, coupled with years of reading educational research, have taught me that questions like these have no easy solutions, because simply addressing learning as neutral and as skill-based behaviors misses the important relational work that happens with and between children as they engage with one another as writers.

This dissertation turns to the concepts of identity, agency, and power to examine the complexity of what it means to be a writer in a writing workshop and to identify how students' relational work impacts them as writers and as people. Additionally, this dissertation aims to make visible how the concepts of identity, agency, and power contribute to our understandings of children's literacy

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learning. Also, it provides new considerations for writing instruction in preservice teacher education by impacting policies which are deficit-oriented and which simply view learning as neutral, skill-based behaviors.

Theoretical Framework

      The writing workshop and talk. In classrooms that implement a writing workshop (Calkins, 1986, 1994; Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001; Graves, 1978, 1980, 1983), writing is understood as recursive, and students work on pieces that are meaningful to them. To support students' engagement in the writing process, teachers often set up a predictable workshop structure consisting of a mini-lesson, a review of the class' status, time for independent writing, and time for sharing each other's writing. Within this context the students are allowed plenty of choice while being actively involved in creating their own texts. Additionally, through its structure, the writing workshop purposefully provides students a space for social interaction, so that they may talk with the teacher and with their peers while writing their own texts.

      According to Barnes (1992) understanding classroom talk is essential because it serves as a window on students' learning and social development. For Barnes the study of classroom discourse is a study of a communication system. Barnes explains speech as both communication and reflection, in that language must enter into the curriculum as the communication system of the classroom and as a means of learning. Therefore, Barnes believes that any social institution can be considered a communication system, and that curriculum is a form of communication because it is where students and teacher come together in

meaningful communication such as talk, writing, reading books, and even

disagreeing with one another while exchanging and constructing meanings.

Barnes (1992) suggests that in every utterance speech unites the cognitive

and the social. Thus, speech makes it possible to reflect on the processes by

which students relate new knowledge to old, and through which meanings are

enacted and realized. According to Barnes, it is through communication that

students find out whether they need to take part in the formulating of knowledge,

or whether they act mainly as receivers. When language is considered as a means

of learning, the learner is regarded as an active participant in the making of

meaning. On the other hand, when communication is considered solely as a

communication system, the learner is relegated to a passive role as the recipient of

socialization. Barnes emphasizes that students are not passive recipients rather

they are constantly learning ways of making new meanings. From this perspective

classroom communication can either encourage the memorization of details,

encourage students to reason about evidence, or head them towards the

imaginative reconstruction of a way of life (Barnes, 1992).

While many educators have gotten very good at implementing the writing

process and the writing workshop into their practice, and have begun to

emphasize the development of their students as writers through peer interaction,

we have been slower at moving the discussion into deeper notions of what

actually happens to writers as they engage with one another in these processes.

Lensmire (2000) addresses some of the tensions that exist within student

interactions in a writing workshop. He describes writing workshops as socially

rich sites of possibility that offer opportunities for learning not found in traditional classrooms; however, he also recognizes that writing workshops are not conflict-free spaces, since social interactions with peers and teachers can also be openings for conflict and risk. According to Lensmire, working with peers and expressing oneself as a writer is not a neutral activity, because peers are not "an undifferentiated and uniformly supportive whole" (2000, p. 70), meaning that when students engage in writing workshops and express themselves as writers, they face peer audiences that range in levels of support, as well as in levels of social and academic risk. And it is here, within these interactions, issues of power, enactments of agency, and ideological beliefs surface, and students' identities are shaped.

  Identity, agency, and power. To consider the possibilities open to our understanding about children as writers within the social environment of the writing workshop, this dissertation turns to the concepts of identity, agency, and power. These concepts make possible richer interpretations and understandings of the various actions, interactions, identities, and possibilities available to students as they participate in a writing workshop. Applying the notions of identity, agency, and power to children's relational work as they engage as writers in a writing workshop is stimulated by the work of Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007), who argue for new directions in sociocultural research. For Lewis et al., a sociocultural perspective alone provides a limited understanding because it doesn't specifically address the nature of identity and agency in literacy practices and the production of knowledge; nor does it address the larger systems of power

that shape and are shaped by individuals in particular institutional, historical, and cultural contexts. Rather, Lewis et al. suggest that while sociocultural theory does recognize the classroom as a learning environment where people learn through social interaction and does illuminate learning as an active, meaning-making process in which cultural and historical tools and artifacts—such as language—are used to help us mediate, communicate, and interact, it does not go far enough. By applying the lenses of identity, agency, and power, it is possible to more closely attend to how individuals, relationships, and meanings are constituted in sociocultural learning contexts.

Identity. Postmodern, constructivist, and critical perspectives have moved away from a fixed notion of identity, which described a unified, cohesive essence belonging to an individual who develops in stages (Erikson, 1968; Hall, 1996), to instead conceptualize identity as a constructed and dynamic process in which sociological factors such as race, gender, and social class, as well as context, play a crucial role in the situational and historical moment (McCarthey, 2002; McKinney & Giorgis, 2009). Lewis et al. (2007) emphasize the function of identity in the production of knowledge by applying the concepts of situated learning (Lave, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991), Discourse (Gee, 1999; 2001), and the psychohistorical and improvisational notions of identity put forth by Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte, & Cain (1998). From this perspective, learning is an act of subject formation where one experiences shifts in identity by taking on new identities along with new forms of participation and knowledge.

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Situated learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991), wherein learning is socially situated and constituted by relations among members of the community, gives emphasis to the importance of context in identity construction. According to Lave and Wenger, learning includes the construction of identities because it involves becoming a different person with respect to the possibilities enabled by broader systems of relations in which the activities, tasks, functions, and understandings have meaning. In other words, "learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities–it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person" (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 53).

To explain how a person is recognized as a certain type of person, and allowed or denied access to full participation in a community, including its resources, tools, and material goods, many researchers turn to the notion of "Discourses" (Gee, 2002, p. 13). Through the use of "Discourses" one enacts different identities that are recognized as valuable in particular communities. Gee describes "Discourses" as the ways in which humans integrate language with non-verbal ways of being, thinking, acting, believing, valuing, and feeling, in conjunction with the appropriate usage of symbols, tools, and objects. From this viewpoint language plays a key role in the process of identity construction because different identities and activities are enacted in and through language (Cazden, 2001; Gee, 2001).

Holland et al. (1998) describe identities as psychohistorical formations that develop over a person's lifetime and as a vital means through which people

care about and care for what is going on around them. For this reason, their

perspective argues that identities are not static, preformed, or finished; instead,

identities are always forming, unfinished, and taking place in social practice

specific to practices and activities situated in historically contingent, socially

enacted, and culturally constructed recognized fields of social life (Holland et al.,

1998). Therefore, persons, and to a lesser extent, groups, are caught in tension

between the past histories settled in them and the present discourses that somehow

attract or impose upon them. Thus, in the flow of activity, within specific social

contexts, and from the cultural resources at hand, identities are improvised

(Holland et al., 1998).

Holland et al. move the discussion surrounding identity forward by

bringing identity and agency together; thus signifying that identities are important

bases from which people remake conditions, create new activities, and establish

new ways of being. From this perspective, our identities—our always forming

and constantly changing understanding of ourselves—serve as our starting point

for new possibilities, and are a means to telling us and others who we are. Our

identities, which we share in the physical world, make it possible in a particular

moment to mediate a different reaction or response to what is normally presumed

due to our socially, culturally, and historically influenced status or position. In

other words, identities make self-direction possible because they are the means by

which we enact, mediate, and perform agency.

Agency. Holland et al. describe agency as a theory of self-formation

where people through their identities and actions create new possibilities and

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redefine their worlds. A theory of self-formation describes a person's constant

making and remaking of oneself as he or she takes up different identities that are

informed by their histories, yet also evoked by a particular context and its

available tools, resources, and languages. Holland et al. refer to agency as

improvisation and explain improvisation as impromptu actions that occur daily

and mundanely as people participate in socially, culturally, historically, and

materially shaped lives. Therefore, agency is a person's unplanned and

spontaneous response in a moment and in a particular context that cannot be

explained by who they are culturally or by the social context in which they are

participating. Moreover, this agentic action is only made possible by a person's

constantly forming and reforming identities in which they perceive themselves in

new and unimagined ways. In other words, agentic action is possible because it

conceives a person as not tethered by cultural or positional constraints.

Influenced by a deep understanding and practice in cultural studies, yet

sensing a limitation in the ways people and their experiences are defined, Holland

et al. (1998) bring their culturalist work to the social constructivist ideas of

Vygotsky and Bakhtin. Together these ideas recognize culture, systems of power,

social positioning, and the remaking of identities as they take place in social

worlds. Also, when taken together, it is possible to see humans and their

interactions as driven by more than cultural logics or subject position.

Holland et al. (1998) explain that from a culturalist perspective the person

is seen as the bearer of cultural events and conditions that have been collectively

passed on to them from group cultural norms. The ways in which a person

conducts oneself is culturally motivated, and goes along learned and expected

cultural and context-sensitive principles that are acted upon regardless of the

people or situation surrounding the interaction. From this perspective a person's

behavior is a consequence of their cultural principles that transcend the people

and situations within which one interacts (Holland et al., 1998).

On the other hand, a constructivist perspective suggests that how one sees

and experiences the world is shaped by a subject position. A person's subject

position is informed by his or her histories and experiences in the world, which in

turn determines what discursive practices, resources, knowledge, and even power

is available to that person in an interaction. A constructivist perspective also

addresses the prevalence of power in people's interactions; therefore a person's

behavior such as the acting out or refusal of subject positions can be explained by

their position.

Vygotsky contributes to our understanding of a person's subject position

by suggesting that it was almost impossible to understand a person's behavior

without knowing the history of its formation. Also, he emphasized that in

interaction with others people free themselves from the oppression of

environmental stimuli. Similarly, Bakhtin was concerned with the development

of identities as an outcome of living in, through, and around the cultural forms

practiced in social life (Holland et al., 1998). He emphasized that humans by

their dialogic nature can hold more than one perspective at a time, even if these

perspectives are logically incompatible. The work of Vygotsky and Bakhtin

added to the ideas of cultural studies as defined by Holland et al., make it possible

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to pay attention to both culture and subject position as it happens in the moment; in other words, the improvisations. Additionally, from this perspective improvisations can be perceived as generative in that they serve as a starting point for transformed identities where openings for change can begin.

Building from the work of Holland et al. (1998), Lewis et al. (2007) apply the concept of agency to learning suggesting that the production of knowledge involves opportunity for agentic action, where a person on the basis of new ideas, practices, or discourses, learned through participation has the opportunity to make and remake him or herself, his or her identities, their discursive toolkits, and relationships. Moreover, learning both promotes and constrains agency by providing or constraining access to discourses. Lewis et al. (2007) define agency as the "strategic making and remaking of selves, identities, activities, relationships, cultural tools and resources, and histories as embedded within relations of power" (p. 18). They work from the premise that learning shapes subject formation, which shapes identity enactments, and allows for different types of agency. However, the power of that agency depends on recognitions that draw from physical and social features of the person as well as the discourse community the person is trying to enter (Lewis et al., 2007).

Lewis et al. (2007) acknowledge learning as an act of subject formation within and across discourse communities, so that as people acquire, appropriate, resist, or reconceptualize skills and knowledge, they are formed as acting subjects. Additionally, as people move across different discourse communities, people strategically enact identities that they know will identify them with particular

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communities and that will be recognized as valuable in particular spaces and

relationships. These identity enactments also shape how people see themselves.

Like Holland et al. (1998), Lewis et al. suggest that as people navigate across

discourse communities, there is also the potential to change the discourse

community. For this reason, learning is not only represented by participation in

the discourse community but also by the processes through which people become

members of discourse communities, resist membership in such communities, are

marginalized or marginalize others from discourse communities, reshape

discourse communities, or even create new discourse communities (Lewis et al.,

2007).

      Power. The concepts of power asserted by Foucault (1980, 1984)

examine the unpredictable productions of power as well as the systemic workings

of power. From Foucault's perspective, power is conceived as a result of

interactions and relationships with others, rather than as a discrete entity that is

possessed by some and desired by others. Furthermore, as people compete for

control of and access to resources, tools, and identities, power is produced as well

as enacted in and through discourses, relationships, activities, spaces and times

(Lewis et al., 2007). Foucault recognizes that systems of power exist but also

suggests that it is through microlevel practices of power that systems and regimes

are produced and reproduced.

      Foucault's perspective on power implies that macrolevel and microlevel

practices of power are mutually constitutive, meaning that power is produced and

reproduced through individuals as they participate in and reproduce those larger

systems of power. For example, as the children researched in this study write, they often judge and critique one another's written work by the number of written pages, with the number of pages subject to whether or not the writer has skipped lines or the writer used big or small handwriting for the story. When acting in this way at the microlevel, the students in their interactions are enacting a macrolevel institutional system of power that determines the quality of children's writing and a writer's abilities by the product.

When examining power, it is important to distinguish microlevel and macrolevel performances of power, because even when attempting to challenge or subvert oppressive power relations, it is possible through participation to create a variety of differently valued subject positions (Lewis et al., 2007). Lewis et al. emphasize learning as a power-imbued process, since learning is always situated in participation and within discourse communities, where there are concerns over resources and access to tools or identities needed for full participation in the community. Returning to the above example, when one student judges another student's written work because it is different in length or in style, the judging student is maintaining a subject position informed by macrolevel institutional beliefs about writing that may be harming another student's learning by denying them full access to and participation within the discourse of writing. Therefore, examining power in conjunction with the perspectives of identity and agency makes it possible to see learning as both the resistance to and the reconceptualization of skills and knowledge (Lewis et al., 2007), wherein lies the potential to disrupt and transform existing/fixed discourses.

Research Questions

Using the lenses of identity, agency, and power, this dissertation aims to examine the complexity of what it means to be a writer in a third-grade writing workshop and to identify how students' relational work impacts them as writers and as people.

In particular, this dissertation will address the following questions:

1. What identities do young writers enact in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?

2. In what ways do young writers enact agency in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?

3. How do issues of power impact young writers in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will begin by reviewing the literature addressing the topics of sociocultural theory, literacy learning, and the writing workshop to establish the theoretical learning perspectives that inform the activity of children's writing and the complex context in which writing takes place. This review will then describe studies that have examined how students construct identities and enact agency, and the ways in which power plays out in students' learning, with specific attention given to the subject positions students assign and assume while working with one another. Finally, this literature review will consider how the concepts of identity, agency, and power have begun to be examined in classroom writing contexts. The chapter's conclusion will connect topics relating to sociocultural theory and the relational work taking place in writing workshop contexts to demonstrate the importance of using the concepts of identity, agency, and power to get a closer examination and interpretation of what happens with and between children as they write.

Sociocultural Theory and Literacy Learning

For over 25 years, sociocultural theory has been applied to research studies encompassing a broad range of topics. A sociocultural theory of learning derives from Vygotsky, a Russian educator turned psychologist who sought to develop a Marxist theory of human intellectual functioning in reaction to the postrevolutionary psychology work of the time (Cole & Scribner, 1978). The work of Vygotsky has been appropriated by scholars in many fields to explain the

processes of thinking, problem solving, interaction, and construction of meaning that contribute to the development of human society (Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000). A sociocultural perspective on development also moved the field of psychology forward by recognizing that learning is an actively mediated process through interaction with others (Moll, 1990). Although Vygotsky died of illness at a very young age, the core tenets of sociocultural theory have provided the basis for modern analysis in many fields, and his ideas have evolved, as well as been modified, through the studies that draw on them (Lee & Smagorinski, 2000).

The role of others in learning, the context in which learning is taking place, the use of mediational tools, and the *zone of proximal development* are important concepts that stem from the work of Vygotsky (1978) and that inform most sociocultural research. Researchers using sociocultural theory shift away from the study of the individual and toward the study of the social group in seeking to understand the social, cultural, and historical contexts in which humans grow and develop (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Lee & Smagorinsky, 2000; Perez, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978). For this reason, sociocultural theory begins with the premise that learning is socially mediated (Lee & Smagorinksi, 2000; Moll, 1990). Individuals learn through and with other people and with cultural tools or artifacts. This process is referred to as learning mediated on the intermental plane (Lee & Smagorinksi, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; Wink, 2002). As an individual internalizes new information through interactions with others, this learning is described as having been appropriated by individuals on the intramental plane (Lee & Smagorinksi, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; Wink, 2002). Through this

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perspective, learning is not merely transmitted; rather, it is a collaboratively active process in which appropriation is reciprocal and meaning is mutually constructed (Lee & Smagorinksi, 2000; Moll, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978; Wink, 2002).

Another perspective associated with sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) is the notion that individuals use tools or artifacts to help them mediate their understandings, surroundings, and interactions with each other. These tools or artifacts have different forms (such as language, sign or symbol systems), are social in origin, and are constructed culturally and historically. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that because tools have been created over the course of human history, and because they change with society and its level of cultural development at the time, tools carry social, cultural, and historical meanings. Thus, for Vygotsky "individual developmental change is rooted in society and culture" (1978, p. 7). For this reason, a sociocultural view claims that even learning carried out in isolation is inherently social, cultural and historical because it is carried out with the use of tools (Lee & Smagorinski, 2000; Moll, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978). Lastly, sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) proposes that learning takes place in a zone of proximal development (Lee & Smagorinski 2000; Moll, 1990; Wink 2002). A zone of proximal development is a way of viewing what a person is coming to know and suggests that the capacity to learn is not finite and bounded (Lee & Smagorinski, 2000). According to Vygotsky (1978), "It is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with

more capable peers" (p. 86). Vygotsky emphasized that what children can perform collaboratively or with assistance today they can perform independently and competently tomorrow (Moll, 1990). This notion that learning leads development also depends on the social organization of instruction and the social interaction taking place (Moll, 1990).

Recognizing the sociocultural conditions necessary for learning, other sociocultural theorists (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985, 1991) have expanded the ideas of Vygotsky and the ways in which literacy learning from a sociocultural perspective is studied and understood. A social practice perspective emphasizes that learning is situated in activity, further conceptualizing a link between the literacy activities and the context in which it takes place (Barton & Hamilton, 1998). Lave and Wenger (1991) proposed that learning is a process of participation in communities of practice, participation that is at first legitimately peripheral but that increases gradually in engagement and complexity. From this perspective, learning is socially situated and constituted by relations among members of the community. Moreover, possibilities for learning, i.e., for legitimate peripheral participation, are defined within the social structure of the community of practice, its power relations, and its conditions for legitimacy (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Lave and Wenger (1991) explain that learning within a community of practice is not simply a process of transfer or of assimilation but is instead a learning process that involves the whole person becoming a full participant and a member by appropriating the community's practices and ways of being. From

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Lave and Wenger's perspective, a distinction from other sociocultural

perspectives is that learning implies becoming a different person with respect to

the possibilities opened by the community's systems of relations. Like

Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, this analytical perspective moved away

from examining the acquisition or production of knowledge as solely a cognitive

process of the individual to acknowledging the relationship between learning and

the social situations in which it occurs (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Recently, however, Lewis, Moje, and Enciso (2007) argued that a

sociocultural perspective alone provides a limited understanding, because it does

not attend to how individuals, relationships, and meanings are constituted in

learning contexts. For this reason, Lewis et al. apply a critical sociocultural

perspective instead, suggesting that the concepts of identity, agency, and power

are aspects of learning in a sociocultural environment that need closer

examination.

The Writing Workshop

A focus on the social and cognitive processes involved in writing

increased in the 1970's due to research that challenged the notion that writing is

subordinate to oral language (Graves, 1978; 1980; Samway, 2006). At this time,

writing research began to explore the role of context, taking into consideration the

ways in which purpose, audience, and other influences inform or affect the

product, as well as the ways in which homes, communities, and classrooms create

social contexts for the development of writing and writers (Samway, 2006). From

this sociocultural perspective, scholars argue that writing occurs in social contexts with a range of socially constructed influences that affect how writers compose.

The writing workshop is used as a framework to support children engaged in writing in classroom contexts that apply writing process approaches. The basic daily writing workshop structure consists of a minilesson, a class status update, time for independent writing, and time for sharing written work. The minilessons are short, focused 5-10 minute lessons. In minilessons, procedural information, writing process, and content are taught based on the needs of the class. The status update lasts approximately 5 minutes and serves as a quick way to check in with students about what they are working on during the independent writing time. Following the mini-lesson and the status update, the next 35-45 minutes of the writing workshop is devoted to independent writing time. During this time, students are actively engaged in writing, working on self-directed writing projects: planning, drafting, revising, editing, conferring, and rereading. The last 10-20 minutes of the writing workshop is used as a sharing time. During these sharing sessions, the whole class comes together, and students share some aspect of their writing or writing experience; they also give and receive responses to each other's writing. The writing workshop framework supports the writing process through its predictable structure and routines that create an environment where students are responsible for their learning; they are also able to acquire the skills and desire to see themselves as writers. Additionally, the writing workshop creates an environment where students with varying abilities, experiences,

cultures, and language can coexist as well as learn from one another (Calkins, 1994; Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001).

While the writing workshop provides a cohesive and supportive structure that supports writing process approaches and views students as authors, that does not mean the students' interactions within this workshop are neutral or without consequence regarding students' knowledge production, identity construction, and language acquisition. Delpit (1995) and Lensmire (1993, 2000) suggest that for non-mainstream students there are limitations to a process approach to writing and the writing workshop that need to be recognized and addressed. According to Delpit (1995), writing workshops and a process approach to writing fail to provide children of color with needed skills and access to the "culture of power" (p. 24). Lensmire (1993, 2000) critiques workshop advocates for ignoring conflict and for not engaging students in much needed deliberation of texts after discovering that third-grade students used texts to harm each other and to isolate students along socioeconomic lines.

Enactments of Identity, Agency, and Power in Learning Contexts

Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) suggest that we examine how issues of identity, agency, and power are often enacted in classroom literacy learning, needs to be employed when investigating sociocultural learning environments, because learning is situated in participation, wherein access to specific tools, resources, and discourses is always being negotiated, thereby shaping students' "histories of participation" (Rogoff, 2002).

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Cazden (2001), whose historical work examined classroom

communication from a social perspective, offered a similar perspective regarding

the influence of peer interactions on learning. Cazden pointed out that the

differences between learning in teacher-led lessons and learning in peer groups

are becoming less distinguishable; in more and more instances, the teacher is not

maintaining a stance of authority, and even when the teacher leads discussions,

they include more student-to-student exchanges. According to Cazden, "If the

potentialities of classroom discourse, in which students talk more and in more

varied ways, are significant for all students, then we have to pay careful attention

to who speaks and who receives thoughtful responses" (2001, p. 5). While

Cazden's statement stemmed from the research surrounding teacher–student

interaction, it demonstrated a shift in focus, with closer attention given to the

learning potential in peer-to-peer interactions.

Similarly, Barnes (1992) explained that a classroom communication

system is not only a matter of how the teacher set up classroom relationships and

discourse, but also how students interpreted what the teacher did. Barnes

suggested that the communication pattern of any classroom is the outcome of a

history of mutual interpretation by teacher and students based upon previous

experiences they brought to the lessons. For this reason, Barnes distinguished

between exploratory talk and presentational talk asserting that presentational talk

was most common in classrooms and limited opportunities for students to make

new thinking their own. Furthermore, presentational talk encouraged students to

be more concerned about earning praise by giving the right answer to a question than about sorting out their ideas (Pierce and Gilles, 1993).

On the other hand, exploratory talk encouraged students to make connections, reconceptualize, reorganize, and internalize the new experiences, ideas, and ways of knowing offered in the curriculum. Barnes emphasized that during exploratory talk students were working towards meaning, and while it may not always be a neat process, students tended to demonstrate competence both in the content of what they say, and in their social relationships. Therefore, applying the concepts of identity, agency, and power to the production of knowledge provides a basis for understanding the complexity of learning in terms of who participates and how, as well as who doesn't participate and why or why not.

Positioning and identity. The concept of positioning is often applied to issues of identity construction because how a student positions him or herself to the curriculum and organizational patterns of the classroom, including social interaction, influences the construction of identity. Hall (1990) presented the idea of cultural identity, which emphasized not seeing identity as an essence but rather as a positioning. From this perspective, identity is unstable, constructed in particular local interactions, and embedded within relationships of power (Toohey, 2000). This perspective on identity construction is important in understanding culturally and linguistically diverse students' classroom learning experiences because these students, in particular, are forced to negotiate identity, power, and position, especially when placed in mainstream English language

classrooms and/or in classrooms that may not recognize or value their cultural differences as learners.

Toohey (2000), in a 3-year ethnographic study, demonstrated that minority language children's identities, language, and knowledge are socially constructed by different influences, such as peers, teachers, parents, and schools. She asserted that children's school identities were constructed and reconstructed in classroom interactions wherein participants positioned themselves and are positioned by others. According to Toohey (2000), "[t]he particular kinds of positioning possibilities that classroom discourse practices set up are also centrally related to the possibilities they present for students to develop classroom voices" (p. 100).

By examining the interactions and positioning that occur in a kindergarten classroom, Toohey (2000) explored how children come to construct and be assigned identities as school children. She determined that children's identities were constructed with regard to aspects of their academic, physical, behavioral, social, and linguistic competence, wherein particular school practices make visible or obscure certain aspects of their presentation of themselves. As the children's school identities were constructed and reconstructed in hierarchical activities (practices), participants positioned themselves and were positioned by others. Moreover, based on one's perceived position in the classroom, participants had the right to refuse participation or deny access to participation to others, which in turn could be either helpful or detrimental to students' learning and second language development (Toohey, 2000). Toohey's (2000) research implied that children positioned themselves as well as their peers, not only in

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conversations where teachers are involved, but also in conversations among themselves. Additionally, her research suggested that there is a clear link between identities and practices in which some identities entail developing mastery of community practices that were not simple or obvious.

Fairbanks and Ariail (2006) also demonstrated how positioning influences identity construction in their examination of three adolescent girls' literacy-related school experiences. Over a 3-year period, Fairbanks and Ariail explored the girls' processes of negotiating and acquiring positional identities, as well as the consequences of these identities for literacy learning and school participation. They point out that even though the researched students shared similarities with respect to gender, class, ethnicity, and orientation to school, the positional identities they occupied in school varied dramatically and were influenced by their interactions with other students and teachers (Fairbanks & Ariail, 2006). Furthermore, the ways the girls are perceived and positioned as "good" or "bad," "promising" or "troubled," "capable" or deficient" students contributed to the girls' constructed school-based identities and evolving sense of themselves as students (Fairbanks & Ariail, 2006).

For example, although all three girls consistently said that they were or wanted to become "good students," they defined this term in their own ways, informed by the dispositions, values, beliefs, and skills they brought from home, the social networks that supported them, and the experiences they encountered each day at school (Fairbanks & Ariail, 2006). One of the three girls, Isabel, was positioned by her teachers as a good student because they considered her to be

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smart, quiet, and hard-working. She engaged in the literacy practices of her school with the belief that they would be good for her, even though she did not understand when or why they would be beneficial.

On the other hand, Jessica, another of the three girls, was positioned by her teachers as a "bad girl" and as a "troublesome student" regarding the behavioral norms of the school and was placed in a remedial reading class, even though she earned A's and B's in her Language Arts classes. Jessica acquired a positional identity that framed her as capable but unmanageable, because she did not find intrinsic satisfaction in doing the assigned class work, and because when the activity was not meaningful or relevant to her life, she became bored and disinterested.

The third student, Melanie, a star athlete at the school, was extrinsically motivated to receive passing grades, even though she had mixed feelings about academics. She positioned herself as a "serious" student to adults, even as she expressed boredom with school, struggled with her behavior, engaged reluctantly in the development of her literacy skills, and participated in instructional practices that positioned her as deficient (Fairbanks & Ariail, 2006).

The positional identities of these three girls sheds light on schools' perspectives of individual students, perspectives which arise less from academic talent than from an array of dispositions brought to and cultivated through interactions in classrooms (Fairbanks & Ariail, 2006). Moreover, Fairbanks and Ariail asserted that the outcomes of instructional and institutional interactions,

based on differences in perception and the cultural norms of school, shape how students see and position themselves.

Enactments of power in learning contexts. Christian and Bloome (2004) identified the role of symbolic capital in students' learning opportunities, identity construction, and development as students, readers, and writers. According to Christian and Bloome, students are active agents in the social construction and distribution of symbolic capital. They used the term *symbolic capital* (Bourdieu, 1994) to explain the privileged social status and social position that a student may have in a particular situation, and they asserted that this capital plays a mediating role within classroom literacy activities. Christian and Bloome also argued that researchers need to pay closer attention to students' classroom interactions, rather than to perceived cultural and linguistic mismatches, to see how this capital affected learning, since opportunities are afforded to some, and not to others, based on their capital and on their identity.

To emphasize this point, Christian and Bloome (2004) described the social dynamics that took place when a small group of regular and English language learner (ELL) first-grade students worked together on a reading and writing assignment. The researchers found that symbolic capital is not inherent in an individual but is rather a result of the social interaction, the social organization of events, and of how the events play out (Christian and Bloome, 2004). The symbolic capital in the interaction determined where students sat or stood in relation to one another, the distribution and use of resources, as well as how

students reacted to one another regarding whose voice got heard and applied to the learning activity.

Christian and Bloome (2004) also pointed out that students are active agents in the social construction and distribution of symbolic capital. They suggested that students' monitoring of each others' activities is a type of positioning wherein the students with more capital maintain teacher-like positions, influenced by the teacher-led classroom instruction, and enacted as well as affirmed complex constructions of social positions in the peer group (Christian & Bloome, 2004). Christian and Bloome also argued that some students, such as ELL students who have low social positions in the classroom, often did not have the capital needed for opportunities to participate in different ways, which in turn limited and affected their chances to become proficient readers and writers. Therefore, they conclude that a child's perceived identity when entering into a social learning event is extremely important, since some identities carry more capital than others (Christian & Bloome, 2004).

Denos (2003), a first-grade classroom teacher, identified the power that existed in a multilingual, primary learning community by exploring the bullying behavior of a girl named Jennifer in her classroom: "Whatever is 'going on' is sometimes noisy and sometimes silent, sometimes public and sometimes hidden. But whatever it is, it is powerful, and I don't understand it, and I don't know what to do about it." (p. 417). In this statement, Denos captured the complexity and pervasiveness of power inherent in students' interactions and learning. Through her notes and videotaped observations of Jennifer in a variety of small group and

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independent activities, Denos noted how Jennifer's behavior was skillfully different in each context. For example, in some exchanges Jennifer dominated the other students working at the same table by taking away pencils or other class supplies and creating incidents in which students had to choose sides to prevent being socially excluded. In other exchanges, Jennifer appeared more playful, helpful, and generous with supplies as a way to connect with others and build relationships. From these interactions, Jennifer appeared to be a very powerful girl who actively and constantly demonstrated that through control of resources, exclusion, and affiliation she was able to secure desirable positions for herself with her classmates.

Due to the ever-changing social relations in a classroom, wherein issues of control, access to resources, positioning of self and others, and the construction of school identities is occurring, Denos' (2003) study also revealed how, even though it may appear to be one student who is bullying or causing questionable disturbances, most students are usually involved in these classroom displays of power. Denos explained that her videotaping of students' interactions provided her with the opportunity to see things that she had never noticed before in the classroom. For instance, Denos not only observed the bullying that took place but also saw that Jennifer appeared to have little interest in her own work. Moreover, Denos claimed that upon closer examination, *all* of the students were using language and power in complex ways to position themselves favorably in the classroom.

Enactments of agency in learning. Hull and Katz (2006) used data from

a multiyear digital storytelling project to illustrate how two participants in a

community-based multimedia literacy program assumed agentive stances toward

their then-present identities, circumstances, and futures. In their framework on

agency, Hull and Katz contended that people can develop agentive selves using

the tools, resources, relationships, and cultural artifacts that are available at

particular historical moments in specific social and cultural contexts. These two

researchers emphasized that individuals and groups, in relation to others, can

learn to construct identities as capable actors in the world who are able to

influence their lives paths, even though at times, one's sense of self-determination

may be constrained by social, cultural, and historical contexts. Finally, Hull and

Katz emphasized how important the enactment of an agentive self is for learning,

and in turn, for how the opportunity to be successful as a learner can foster a view

of self as agent.

Hull and Katz (2006) used the case studies of Randy and Dara to

demonstrate what it means to reposition oneself as an agent and author in one's

own life. For example, through digital storytelling, Randy learned to create

digital stories that combined his words and music with visual images and was able

in powerful ways to author an identity that enacted an agentive self necessary for

second chances and new opportunities. In a two-minute video digital story,

Randy narrated and performed an original poem/rap to the beat of a Miles Davis

melody while showing photographs he had taken of Oakland neighborhoods, with

residents in the background. For Randy, an African-American adult in his 20s

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who was from a poorer area in Oakland, the opportunity to be involved with digital storytelling was viewed as a path for change and as a chance to take charge of the direction of his life. In other words, through his digital storytelling, Randy enacted an agentive self by constructing an identity for himself as an artist, an author, and a social critic who expressed a desire for social, political, and economic justice, especially for African-Americans in low-income areas.

Dara, a teenage girl of North American and Guatemalan heritage, also enacted an agentive self when she created an outgoing and helpful identity at the afterschool site where the research took place. Hull and Katz (2006) described Dara as agentively negotiating an identity because her identity in the afterschool multimedia literacy program was in stark contrast to the identity she maintained at her school. In their case study of Dara, Hull and Katz explained how the supportive social relationships and resources available in a particular social context made agentive selves possible. For example, at her school Dara was viewed by her teachers as unhappy and modest, and she expressed her feelings towards her schoolwork as being forced to do work she didn't want to do.

Conversely, in the afterschool setting, Dara was a confident and active author who viewed herself as someone with experience; she was outgoing as well as willing to edit and make changes to her work, assist others when necessary, and confidently share her work and opinion with others. By negotiating an identity as an author, a storyteller, and as a skilled peer willing to share her technical expertise with others, Hull and Katz viewed Dara as forming and giving voice to an agentive self. Additionally, in this context, and within this community, Dara

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positioned and represented herself as an experienced digital storyteller; she was building a positive sense of self and was able to see herself as valued and knowledgeable, which was quite different from the identities she seemed to wrestle with at school (Hull & Katz, 2006).

Monzo and Rueda (2009) described native Spanish-speaking children Latino immigrant children "passing" (p. 20) as English fluent and suggested that children's passing strategies reflected identity development and agency. The term *passing* referred to the children's use of strategies to appear more competent in English than was actually the case (Monzo & Rueda, 2009). This study suggests that children will present themselves as English fluent based on their sophisticated awareness of the power and status of English in this country, and on the role English plays in social and economic mobility. Furthermore, while all of the children in the study articulated the value of bilingualism, the students' comments also revealed a deeper awareness of the interconnection between language, class, and identity (Monzo & Rueda, 2009).

In the Monzo and Rueda (2009) study, the students considered their passing as English fluent to be a conscious decision made to protect themselves from feelings of shame. The strategies used by the students included pretending to understand, affirming an answer rather than asking for clarification to a question, writing anything on independent work assignments rather than asking a teacher or peer for assistance, avoiding eye contact, and mumbling or messing up on purpose when reading aloud in English to keep read-aloud assignments to a minimum. In other words, passing as English fluent sometimes meant becoming

adept at avoiding doing the work. The authors of this study suggested that passing can then be understood as an agentic strategy for mediating the ways in which students view themselves and are viewed by others (Monzo & Rueda, 2009). From this perspective of agency, the students were not passively accepting the social positions they were cast into as English learners; instead, they were proactively and strategically devising strategies that would allow them to claim a more valued social position (Monzo & Rueda, 2009).

Finally, Dutro (2009) argued that children have agency to challenge practices through their own situated knowledge and were not simply subjugated to the literacy practices and ideologies imposed by mandated curricula. In her 2009 study, she described how children in a low-income school responded to a mandated writing prompt by providing their own individual and familial experiences of poverty rather than using examples from the classroom text on the Great Depression. Dutro described the children's application of their own situated knowledge to the writing prompt as agency because it challenged the social class-based assumptions prevalent in the mandated curriculum. Moreover, it demonstrated that agency isn't just about resisting but is also about the possibility for transformation.

Identity, Agency, and Power In The Writing Workshop

  Shifting roles and participation in the writing workshop. The notion of classrooms as contexts for the negotiation of students' identity, agency, and power, and the impact of these themes on children's learning, are particularly important to examine in a writing workshop context because of its sociocultural

learning environment, in which students are always working together and sharing their writing. Larson and Maier (2000) examined the peer interactions that took place during a first-grade writing workshop to analyze changes in participation and responsibility while jointly constructing a text. The researchers observed how the teacher and students shifted between and shared the roles of teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer while jointly constructing a text. Using Goffman's (1981) *participation framework*, Larson and Maier made visible how contextually situated language practices positioned teachers and students in various and shifting roles that mediated the co-construction of written texts.

Larson and Maier (2000) found that in a writing workshop environment, the roles of teacher, author, co-author, and overhearer were active, flexible, and filled simultaneously, because the teacher created an interactive context in which student interaction with text and with one another was demonstrated. The authorship processes purposefully demonstrated by the teacher were taken up by the students through shifts in participation roles; these shifts formed the foundation for the teacher-student and peer conferences that took place later, during student writing time (Larson & Maier, 2000). Larson and Maier suggested that the social construction of literacy knowledge was negotiated between teachers and students, and among students on multiple levels, as they gained competence and shifted roles in the participation framework. According to Larson and Maier (2000), "[l]earning to be an author was thus linked to learning to become a community member through which students learned a relationship to text, to each other, and to the world through writing and authorship" (p. 493).

While Larson and Maier's research implied that learning was dynamic and co-constructed in interaction, they contended that a shift in discussions about the role of language, culture, and society in literacy learning is also needed to better understand students' shifts in participation and roles.

McCarthey (2002) highlighted the differences in how students view the purposes of writing and view themselves as writers. According to McCarthey (2002), the writing conferences were a microlevelcosm of larger institutional forces at work and served as an example of Fairclough's suggestion that classrooms are cultural sites where local and institutional forces play out. By examining teacher-student writing conferences, McCarthey identified how three students appropriated, resisted, and transformed the expectations of the classroom and the influence these expectations had on their identities as writers. Although the students expressed agency within their writing, their responses were shaped by their home values and discourses, by the teacher's models of writing, and by the larger institution of schooling that gave explicit power to teachers, exposing the tremendous influence that the teacher-student relationship may have on students' writing and beliefs about themselves as writers (McCarthey, 2002).

As one of the case study subjects, Miguel appropriated the norms of the writing workshop, and his identity as a writer was defined in terms of the classroom expectations (McCarthey, 2002). Miguel perceived the production of good writing as part of being a good student, which aligned well with the classroom environment and allowed him to be successful in the eyes of the teacher. On the other hand, Anita was not seen as a successful writer in this

classroom because she resisted the teacher's classroom expectations and instead

wrote about what she wanted to write in the way that she wanted to write,

knowing that her work was not valued by the teacher because it did not match the

teacher's image of a good text (McCarthey, 2002). For Anita, the classroom

norms and teacher-student interactions seemed oppressive, so she found ways to

resist them; instead, she wrote for her own purposes and used language in a

variety of formats to think about and act on the world. In other words, writing

appeared to be a personal and private way for Anita to communicate with her

inner self (McCarthey, 2002).

The third case study student, Ella, exemplified how a student might

comply with classroom norms yet transform them to meet her own criteria

(McCarthey, 2002). Rather than just submitting to the teacher's authority, Ella

used the teacher's ideas in a unique way, developing her own style that showed

she understood the classroom norms and the teacher-valued forms. Ella—aware

of the teacher's values relating to a particular kind of writing—was able to

develop a "third space" and utilize Bakhtin's internally persuasive discourse to

combine her work as a fiction writer with the teacher's narrative voice through

letter writing (McCarthey, 2002).

Along with exploring learning as a process that happens in the classroom

between the teacher and student, it is also important to examine what happens

between students while engaged in learning activities. Bomer and Laman (2004)

emphasized studying interactions between children, because they contribute to the

identities and dispositions formed by the children. By looking closely at peer

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interactions in classrooms, Bomer and Laman suggested that we can begin to see not only what skills are being developed but also what kind of people are being developed. Through an analysis of a conversation between two young students engaged in spontaneous talk, Bomer and Laman identified how student writers assumed positions, assigned each other positions, and assigned functions to the texts they were composing while writing. Bomer and Laman used *positioning theory* (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999) to explain the ways in which people in joint production put on different selves and assign roles to different people.

Through an analysis of the relational work between Romy and Jessamyn, two primary age writers, Bomer and Laman (2004) identified how the students' relational work was relevant to their writing work, suggesting that how students position one another impacts not only their subjectivities but also their writings. For instance, in this particular interaction, Romy, a physically smaller and less academically confident first grader, who usually remained on the periphery of classroom activity and is considered to be a "struggling" student, finished her writing work early and began to monitor as well as to question Jessamyn. Jessamyn, a second grader, was a more socially confident student, and despite her own academic challenges, often took on a more teacher-like air with children who perceived themselves to be less competent. Romy, by finishing early and questioning Jessamyn about her work, and even pointing out what Jessamyn may have done incorrectly, positioned Jessamyn as slower and disorganized, and affirmed herself as speedy and accomplished.

However, Romy also began this interaction by pointing out that she had "messed up" a part of her writing, asking Jessamyn questions about letter formation and spelling and then asking Jessamyn to read her (Romy's) writing. Through these requests, Romy positioned Jessamyn as someone more knowledgeable, suggesting that Romy, who was most often positioned by others as less capable, younger, and socially inept, may not have been comfortable with a position that suggested advantage. Nonetheless, throughout this interaction, Jessamyn did not accept either position, of being more knowledgeable or less capable, and just continued working, enacting a completely different storyline altogether, which positioned her as the serious and diligent adult, and Romy as the pestering child. Through this brief interaction between two students as they wrote, Bomer and Laman demonstrated how subject positions were in flux, as multiple selves were continually forming, reforming, or changing entirely. Additionally, this example of the two girls' interaction demonstrated how acts of positioning can be contested and be considered agentive (Bomer & Laman, 1999).

Rowe, Fitch, and Bass (2001), in their study of a first grade writing workshop, also suggested that children's understanding of literacy practices and definitions of themselves as literacy learners were directly tied to the social roles they were able to play in classroom literacy events. Rowe et al. argued that these social roles were tied to larger issues of power and ideological assumptions about literacy that positioned children in particular ways in the classroom community and in the writing workshop. In their examination of a first-grade writing workshop, Rowe et al. paid close attention to children's "peer culture" (p. 428) to

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understand the significantly different perspective it offered children of themselves and of classroom literacy events. The authors contended that understanding the concerns, ways of talking, and social relationships in peer groups was critical to understanding the ways in which children played their roles in official literacy events.

Rowe et al. (2001) noticed that children easily shifted out of official academic and peer world roles and that the social positioning that occurred in the writing workshop closely aligned with the official classroom culture. Hence, the students that most closely approximated the classroom's valued literacy practices moved into the powerful roles, had more power in official classroom events, and displayed more control when writing collaboratively with peers (Rowe et al., 2001). Their research revealed a cycle that maintained the status of the more powerfully positioned students. For example, the students who produced more writing had more access to sharing their work in the author's chair. This sharing led to controlling peers' attention and talk, which ultimately influenced classroom definitions of appropriate text types and topics. Similar to McCarthey (2002), Rowe et al. claimed that students adopted three different stances toward the official classroom culture and power structure: students either bought into the vision of teaching and learning, challenged aspects of the classroom culture while attempting to introduce their own views as alternatives, or rejected the official classroom culture by engaging with others only minimally.

Lassonde's (2006) research study examined a fifth grade student's resistance to and engagement with writing in various contexts. Lassonde

demonstrated how Mark's constructed student identity as the "new kid," guided his writing choices. In this classroom, Mark, a 12-year-old European American male, maintained a troubled image by bragging about girlfriends, getting in trouble, hating school, and writing as minimally as possible. Lassonde asserted that Mark, by expressing his resistance and dislike for writing, positioned himself as an outspoken student who challenged the power of others. Additionally, this position made Mark feel powerful with his peers and in control of how much and when he would write.

However, unlike in Mark's previous learning environments, in this study's classroom, students held positions that were flexible and determined by the context of the situation (Lassonde, 2006). For example, Mark's resistant position toward writing began to gradually shift into a more social position as classmates expressed favorable responses to and genuine interest in his writing. In turn, as his writing enhanced Mark's social position, his academic positions and achievement were also influenced. According to Lassonde (2006)

> it appeared that when writing practices brought what he [Mark] perceived as favorable attention to his social positions in the classroom, he showed signs of engagement and expressed interest and enthusiasm about writing. He was using writing practices to position himself. (p. 407)

Lassonde (2006) recognized that social and academic identities can conflict and that a student's shifting identity was sometimes accepted and sometimes resisted. While Mark used writing to shape his identities within the relationships of the class, at times he valued the social identities more than the

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academic identities. Lassonde recommended that educators help students become

aware of the positions they are constructing and how these positions influence

their learning potential. By looking at Mark's writing through a positioning lens,

Lassonde was able to see how the social and academic roles Mark sought to

portray may have influenced not only his writing but also all of his literacy

learning. Lassonde points out that

> listening for students' voices through positional writing practices opens
>
> the door for teachers to hear and understand how students sometimes
>
> struggle with who they are as learners. We must be cautious, however, not
>
> to listen just to one voice or to assume our interpretations are accurate.
>
> (2006, p. 412)

Improvisation and agentic stances in the writing workshop.

Identifying and examining enactments of agency in learning is extremely

significant because it recognizes how people are able to influence their own lives

by considering their present capabilities and their imagined futures (Hull & Katz,

2006). Hull and Katz (2006) identify that the social science research of the last

two decades is reconceiving possibilities for agency and change; however,

moments of agency are sparsely illustrated in the literature. When claiming

enactments of agency, it is somewhat impossible to tease apart all influences and

their consequences. Therefore, while many articles identify and discuss

enactments of agency in research (Hull & Katz, 2006; Laman & Van Sluys, 2008;

Monzo & Rueda, 2009; Rowe, Fitch, & Bass, 2001; Wohlwend, 2009), it is

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important to point out that enactments of agency are often determined by the researcher's point of view, since what is considered improvisational is unique to each particular context, interaction, and participants, as well as to the particular experiences and history of that researcher (Lewis et al., 2007).

Wohlwend (2009) examined recursive processes of improvisation and revision in kindergarten children's play and writing, describing how these children's opportunities to play with Disney Princess dolls during the writing workshop provided them with the opportunity to improvise and revise characters' actions. In this study, Wohlwend demonstrated how students improvised new identities as they created new stories for and imbued new meanings into traditional story lines using a combination of the dolls and student-produced writings. Wohlwend applied the notion of improvisation from Holland et al. (1998) to define improvisation as "an agentic response with the facility to creatively resolve dilemmas caused by competing discourses and to reconcile conflicting identity expectations" (p. 61).

Zoe, a young girl who often carried the Disney Princess dolls in her backpack and took up the animated personas of these dolls in her classroom play, demonstrated improvisation as she revised her book during the class's writing workshop, created the storyboard to plan the performance of her story, and performed her play in a videotaped version of *Sleeping Beauty*. Zoe began this process by closely following the Disney version of *Sleeping Beauty* with both her story content and with the outside design of the book, which attempted to copy commercial fonts. Her first improvisation took place as she began to reproduce

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the Disney Princess story in writing, deciding to incorporate a baby sister into her narrative at the suggestion of a classmate.

Along with the writing of their stories, Zoe and her classmates often drew storyboards that recalled and facilitated their animated play with the Disney Princess dolls. This process also provided Zoe with the opportunity for improvised transformations of the original fairytale and of her planned text. For instance, during this process, Zoe wavered between faithful replication of a movie that she loved and creative innovation that offered more active and satisfying triumphs for her own character, such as carrying a cardboard sword and chasing down a dragon (Wohlwend, 2009). Wohlwend asserted that these solutions performed by Zoe were agentic improvisations that not only preserved the meaning of her original text but also maintained a more powerful and empowered alternative role for her princess character.

Laman and Van Sluys (2008) described how children in a multilingual, multiage classroom participated in and transformed a writing workshop. Their study recognized literacy as a social practice and classrooms as learning communities, wherein students could make decisions about using and acquiring languages, which then allowed their collective activity to extend and transform literacy practices for themselves and for others. Laman and Van Sluys' study also identified agentive actions in children's instances of deliberate decision-making about languages, writing purposes, and audiences; these multilingual writers took existing tools and extended their usage, enacted different identities, and

introduced and encouraged the investigation of language, writing, and possible selves.

All of the children in Laman and Van Sluys' (2008) study chose to write in their first languages; their decisions to write in their first language were influenced by their experiences as writers, and their purposes for writing. Maria, for instance, most often wrote in her first language, Spanish, and her writing was reflective of her family, her life in Mexico, and her friendship struggles. The researchers noticed that as Maria became more experienced with English, she used her Spanish as a resource, and continually chose Spanish for her writing until she chose to write a note to another, more popular classmate, who only wrote in English. Laman and Van Sluys described Maria's choice to write in English for this particular purpose as agentic since it entailed deliberate decision-making about writing, language, audience, and purpose.

Laman and Van Sluys (2008) also explained how mentor texts in writing were important tools for extending what writers could do and who they could be. For example, Nina, a fourth grade Israeli girl and Hebrew speaker who was new to the United States, used the short story "Eleven" by Sandra Cisneros as a mentor text to confidently write about her own experiences of being 10-years old. Laman and VanSluys described Nina's use of the text as agentive because it allowed her to enact an identity of productive writer, to gain experience with English vocabulary and syntax, and to write about herself and her life in new ways. The researchers emphasized that while this practice supported the investigation of language, it also encourages possible selves (Laman & VanSluys, 2009).

The authors cited in this review identify how literacy learning, and in particular the activity of writing, is a complex and multilayered process that is not neutral. It is clear that when students engage together in the production of knowledge, much more is going on that cannot be simply reduced to a child's behavior, disposition, or capability. Children, in their relational work, are often in the process of constructing identities, enacting agency, and negotiating macrolevel and microlevel level influences of power. Writing that takes place in social contexts, such as a writing workshop, which emphasizes interactions with others often impacts what students are learning, as well as who they are becoming as writers and as people.

This literature review demonstrates a clear need for research that examines robust sociocultural learning contexts, such as writing workshops, to provide an in-depth analysis of the complexity of what happens between children as they write (Bomer and Laman, 2004; Larson and Maier, 2000; Lassonde, 2006; McCarthey, 2002; Rowe et al., 2001; Wohlwend, 2009). In particular, it supports the work of Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007) who argue that because of current policy contexts in which increased amounts of narrowly defined "scientific" research is officially authorized and where reading and writing are viewed as neutral skill-based behaviors, we more than ever need sociocultural research that reveals the ways in which identity, agency, and power play out in children's literacy learning to make visible that learning to read and write are not neutral skill-based behaviors. This dissertation study represents an effort to address this needed area of research, and its contribution to the literature is two-fold. First,

this study provides a close analysis of the actions and interactions of students as they engage with one another as writers through the theoretical lenses of identity, agency, and power. By using all three lenses, the complicated relational work that makes up classroom life as children become readers and writers is made visible demonstrating that learning to read and write are not neutral skill-based behaviors that can or should be minimized to children's cognitive or behavioral abilities. Second, as a teacher educator, this study raises my own consciousness as I work with preservice teachers whose beliefs and understandings about children writers are often informed by the limiting and narrowly defined policy context. Because of these concerns with what happens between writers as they engage with one another in the activity of writing, I investigated the research questions below.

Research Questions

1. What identities do young writers enact in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?

2. In what ways do young writers enact agency in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?

3. How do issues of power impact young writers in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Method

This interpretive study is based in qualitative methods because its aim is to produce a grounded understanding of meaning and action within a context that identifies meaning from the actors' point of view (Erickson, 1986; Merriam, 2002). The following methodological theories guided my research and characterize an interpretive approach to qualitative research. First, in interpretive research there are multiple realities, which are often shared and constructed out of people's lived social experiences and interactions in a specific context. This social reality is a process that plays out in complex and unpredictable ways. Such a process is particularly important to an interpretive study because it addresses how we as human beings, in a need to make sense of things, take our interpretations to be real and perceive our interpretations to be the actual qualities of the objects themselves. Therefore, interpretive research recognizes that there are all kinds of knowledge and truth, rather than just one, yet to be discovered, truth (Erickson, 1986; Merriam, 2002).

Second, in interpretive research, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. This perspective permits more consideration to the context, in that techniques for collecting and analyzing data can be adapted to the specific circumstances of a particular natural setting. Interpretive research also acknowledges that data are mediated through the researcher. Thus, my knowledge of literacy theories and pedagogies, my experience as a classroom

teacher of English language learners, and the observed students' familiarity with me (as the teacher of their university "buddies") informed my role as the researcher throughout the data collection and analysis process. For example, since the students seemed to understand my presence in their classroom as a teacher, they often brought me into their particular writing experiences by showing me their writing, asking me how to spell words, or even asking me content-specific questions for their stories. These interactions with students may have informed and enriched my data collection and analysis, or they may have caused me to miss something else. Most important, however, is that these interactions with the children fit the specific circumstances of this natural setting, since in this classroom students frequently and actively involve others in all aspects of their writing. At the same time, my beliefs and knowledge about literacy, writing, children's development as writers, and language acquisition informed and mediated my data analysis.

Third, the research process used in this interpretive study is inductive. Through careful observations and detailed data analysis, theoretical assertions are built and written up with rich descriptions conveying what was learned about this phenomenon, as opposed to deductive research approaches, which instead test existing theories. This inductive process revealed the identities children enacted as writers, the children's enactments of agency while writing, and how issues of power impacted children as writers while participating in a writing workshop.

Finally, Erickson's theory of social life informs this study, since it explains that in social relationships, the actors mutually construct meanings

through their participation, understandings, and perceptions of their actions (Erickson, 1986). Erickson's theory of social life is also useful to this study because it extends to the social organization of the classroom context, in which formal and informal social systems operate simultaneously (Erickson, 1986).

Context

   The school. This interpretive, qualitative study took place over the course of one school semester, beginning in January 2008 and ending in May 2008. The school is in a midsize, economically and culturally diverse, urban school district located in a large city in the Southwest, and was selected because of the collaborative relationship I had established with the classroom teachers and the principal while teaching undergraduate teacher education literacy courses on the campus. The school spans kindergarten through eighth grade, with approximately 800 students, and offers both dual language (Spanish/English) and English Immersion classes. The majority of the students are Latino, and for many of them, English is not their first language. The zoned area of the school serves families with an array of socioeconomic levels, and more than 90% of the school population is eligible for federally subsidized free or reduced lunches. This school has a long history in the community for its literature-based instruction and dual language program. However, at the time of the study, the school was labeled "Underperforming" by the state, which means it was not meeting state performance and progress goals. Due to this label, the school was placed in Year One of a school improvement process, allowing outside consulting agencies to come in and significantly restructure the school's literacy practices.

The dual language program. The school maintains a dual language program in the first through eighth grades. In 2000, the southwestern state in which this study took place overwhelmingly supported an English Only proposition with the belief that the bilingual programs used in schools failed to educate immigrant children. Since the passage of the proposition, English language learners have no longer been automatically offered bilingual education programs and are instead placed in English Immersion classrooms until they can demonstrate proficiency on the state-mandated English language exam (the AzELLA). Students unable to demonstrate such proficiency are only allowed to participate in a dual language program (wherein content area instruction is provided in both English and Spanish) with a written and signed parental waiver, or once the child is 10 years old. The goal of a dual language program is for each student to build on his or her first language while learning a second language, developing a student who is bilingual and biliterate in all content areas. At this particular school, the structure of the dual language program is designed around students receiving instruction for each content area in both English and Spanish. For this reason, throughout the school day, students move between two classrooms, receiving content area instruction such as reading, math, language arts, science, and social studies in either English or Spanish. Additionally, at the particular grade level used for this study, the language of instruction for each content area changes every two weeks.

The classrooms. This research study was situated in 2 third-grade classrooms. Due to the dual language structure of instruction, the students move

throughout the day between a designated English-instruction classroom and a Spanish-instruction classroom. Because I was following a specific group of students, data were collected in two classrooms with the same group of students. Although each classroom is organized a little bit differently, and the language used by each teacher is different, the instruction and content in both rooms is the same.

The teachers. Due to the structure of the dual language program, the students receive content area instruction from two different teachers: Mr. Jones is responsible for delivering the content in English, and Ms. Rodriguez does the same in Spanish. Each teacher has a homeroom group of students and, throughout the day, the students move between the two classrooms for content area instruction in reading, math, language arts, science, and social studies. Mr. Jones and Ms. Rodriguez apply a team-teaching approach that includes planning together and jointly making decisions for the third-grade, dual language students. Each teacher has a very good understanding of the students in each homeroom.

Mr. Jones, who teaches the English component of a dual language program, is originally from the Midwest and attended the local state university, where he received a B.A. in Elementary Education, as well as an M.Ed in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in English as a Second Language. He has some knowledge of Spanish, is in his eighth year of teaching, and is a strong advocate for the literature-based program historically valued at the school. Mr. Jones' knowledge about working with writers and writing workshops was stimulated by his participation in a teacher study group that worked with a local

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university professor to study how to implement and establish an effective writing workshop.

Ms. Rodriguez, who teaches the Spanish component of the dual language program, is bilingual and biliterate, with Spanish being her first language. She was born in the United States but went to school in Mexico through the fifth grade, experiencing an ESL pull-out program when she moved back to the United States for school. Ms. Rodriguez is a graduate of the same local state university and was a former student in the Multilingual Multicultural (MLMC) Elementary Education program, which is the same program in which the researcher was an instructor. Ms. Rodriguez is in her fourth year of teaching and also completed her student teaching at the school in which she is currently a teacher. Her knowledge about working with writers and the writing workshop was informed by her work as a student in the MLMC elementary education program. This was Mr. Jones' and Ms. Rodriguez's second year teaching together in the dual language program.

The students. For this study, I selected one homeroom group of third grade students to observe and describe the identities enacted, the instances of enacted agency, and the power dynamics occurring in their writing workshop. In this group of students were 23 children, 12 boys and 11 girls. All of the students in this study were a part of the dual language program at the school and had participated in the dual language program for varying amounts of time, ranging from one to three years. The students were 8-to-10 years old. Except for one student, all of the students were Latino, and their first language was Spanish, with Spanish being the language spoken at home by and with their parents. From this

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homeroom group, six students were selected as focal students for the study. A description of the selected focal students is provided in the Data Collection section.

The researcher. I am a Caucasian, native English speaker with limited proficiency in Spanish. I worked for eight years as a public school teacher and collaborative peer teacher with English language learners in low income, urban, and culturally diverse school settings. Prior to beginning my research, I worked with the teachers and the principal of the school in this study for four years as a literacy methods instructor for the local state university. As a language arts methods instructor for preservice teachers, I taught university students the theoretical underpinnings and pedagogical knowledge surrounding writing instruction, with an emphasis on preparing teachers to work with English language learners. This position provided me with the opportunity, prior to my study, to build relationships with the teachers whose classrooms I later researched, and to feel comfortable asking them questions while moving freely in and out of their classrooms. My presence over time also led the children to become familiar with me prior to the research study and to view me as the teacher of their university "buddies" (as mentioned in Chapter 1, this was the name used to describe the identity of the preservice teachers working with the children during the semester).

When I first started the research for this study, I did not realize how much my familiarity to the children would impact my data collection. While I tried to be inconspicuous, the students noticed my every move and brought me into every

one of theirs. They were always asking me questions about their writing and wanting to help me with the audio-and video recording. They considered me a part of their classroom and viewed me as a teacher. I was often asked for help, was included in their practice of having the teachers and classmates vote on what story to write, and was watched to see if I noticed students' misbehavior. While I intended to be a silent, unnoticed researcher, I soon realized, as only a person who has ever worked with children can, that no such thing exists in a classroom setting. At that moment, I acknowledged my role as a qualitative researcher and as the primary *human* instrument for the research. Rather than trying to remain detached and unresponsive to the context I was studying, I began to value and draw upon my experience as a former classroom teacher, which in turn informed my interests, point of view, observations, interpretations, and interactions with the students and with the teachers.

Ethics

The ethical issues inherent in this study include the protection of participants, issues of power or authority, and the influence of the researcher's subjectivity on the interpretation of research. Written permission from parents and students to participate in the study was obtained prior to the study, with each student and parent receiving a letter in English (Appendix A) or Spanish (Appendix B) explaining the research and how it will be used. Confidentiality of all subjects was maintained by using pseudonyms for all students as well as for the school and the school district in which the research was conducted. Permission from the students and their parents to use data from the study (e.g.,

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transcripts of audiotapes and interviews, excerpts of videotapes) was also

obtained. Focal students were selected in cooperation with the classroom

teachers.

Data Collection

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary instrument for data

collection, so that the data is mediated through the researcher's perspectives,

choices, and relationships. Erickson (1986) stressed that methods don't stand

alone, and recognized that all methods are fallible, because each method only

gives a partial picture of the participants studied. For this reason, qualitative

researchers need to use multiple methods, and the choice about which methods to

use should be deliberate and purposeful as well as "appropriate for study of that

content" (Erickson, 1986, p. 2).

Based on this understanding about qualitative research, the following data

collection methods were used to support this study:

1) I wrote descriptive field notes of my daily observations to capture the

time, space, and participants' activity, as well as to record interactions

during the writing workshop, including the teachers' mini lessons, the

students' independent writing time, teacher and peer conferences, and

students' sharing time. These observations of the writing workshop and

written field notes included careful recording of the actions and

interactions between the students and between the teacher and students

(Appendix C).

2) These whole-class and small-group interactions were also video and/or audio-recorded daily and transcribed for later observation and reflection (Appendix D).

3) Semi-structured informal interviews and informal talks with the students (Appendix E) and the teachers (Appendix F) were conducted and recorded on a regular basis to get their meaning perspectives of the actions observed and of their experiences in the writing workshop.

4) Students' written work, including the students' Ideas Books, Writer's Notebooks, final written pieces, and other related artifacts, was collected to examine the students' work as writers.

5) Research memos were regularly written throughout the data collection process and were kept in a Researcher Journal as a way to sift out the emerging issues and themes, to focus my research, to challenge my assumptions and interpretations, and to guide my next steps in the data collection process (Appendix G).

The data collection occurred in two phases, as shown in the following tables.

Table 1

Data Collection Phase 1

When:	January 2008 – March 2008	
Who:	50 students 2 teachers	
Where:	Mr. Jones's and Ms. Rodriguez's classrooms	
Data Collected:	Type of Data	Function of Data
	1) Field notes from daily observation during the writing workshop	1) Establishing the nature of writing and learning in this classroom
	2) Interviews with teacher(s) and/or students	2) Establishing the nature of the student/student and student/teacher interactions
	3) Memos	3) Examination of what tools, networks, and artifacts are used to mediate writing
		4) Exploration of the discourse of writing in this classroom

During Phase One (see Table 1), the data collection process focused on ways students participated in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop, determining the nature of writing and learning and the nature of the student/student and student/teacher interactions in each classroom. Due to the structure of the dual language program, it was necessary for my data collection purposes to select one homeroom group of students to follow. I

selected the homeroom group for this study through these early phase observations and through discussions with the classroom teachers.

The criteria used to determine which homeroom group I would follow included (a) the quality and quantity of children's written output during the writing workshop, (b) how often and how consistently the children seemed to be interacting with one another while writing, (c) which homeroom group of students would be less concerned with or distracted by my presence and by my audio and video recording devices, and (d) which group would be most willing to talk with me if I asked questions. Ms. Rodriguez's homeroom was selected based on these criteria, and because both Mr. Jones and Ms. Rodriguez felt that this homeroom had a very special way of being with one another and of working together, a synergy that they summarized as "sweetness." Additionally, Mr. Jones and Ms. Rodriguez seemed to have the most lingering wonderings and curiosities about this homeroom group of students as writers.

Table 2

Data Collection Phase Two

When:	April 2008 – May 2008
Who:	23 Students 2 Teachers 6 Focal students
Where:	Mr. Jones's and Ms. Rodriguez's classrooms

Type of Data	Function of Data
1) Field notes from daily observation of writing during the writing workshop	1) Examination of what writing looks like in these 3rd grade dual language classrooms
2) Videotape and/or audiotape of students' during writing workshop	2) Establishing how the student/student and student/teacher interactions impact the writing and the writer 3) Examination of the identities constructed in the writing workshop
3) Interviews with teacher(s) and/or students	4) Observation of instances of agency in the writing workshop 5) Exploration of the instances of power that are enacted in this writing workshop
4) Memos 5) Students' written work	6) Examine the students' written work as writers, to enhance understanding of children's interactions, and to see how text functioned in students' construction of identities, enactments of power, and enactments of agency

In Phase Two (Table 2), six focal students were selected from the chosen

homeroom group. After the first two weeks of data collection, focal students

were selected as a means of "angling my vision" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) in the

classroom; this focus provided a consistent way to get at the particulars of

students' interactions in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop. The focal students were selected using the same criteria described to select a homeroom group, again in collaboration with Mr. Jones and Ms. Rodriguez: (a) the quality and quantity of the students' written output during the writing workshop, (b) how often and how consistently the children seemed to be interacting with one another while writing, (c) which students would be less concerned with or distracted by my presence and by my recording devices, and (d) which students would be most willing to talk with me if I asked questions. Additional criteria used to select focal students stemmed from my observational field notes and reviews of classroom video recordings that identified the focal students' vastly differing personalities, ways of interacting, and ways of working as writers in the classroom. The focal students in the study were never informed of their selection as focal students. While the whole class was video recorded, the focal students' interactions with classmates were closely observed and audio taped. As I aimed to capture conversations that were unprompted, natural, and as authentic as possible, the audio recorders were strategically placed close to where the focal students were working. The focal students were also formally and informally interviewed throughout the data collection process.

I will now provide a brief description of each focal student. The first focal student, Manuel, was selected because of the way he participated in class. He exerted a lot of confidence and was always actively involved in other students' writing work and conversations in ways that seemed authoritative, yet protective. Ana, the second focal student, was selected due to her intriguing and effervescent

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personality. Ana demonstrated a range of identities and always seemed to command the attention of those around her, including the teachers. The third focal student, Roberto, was selected because of his diligence in his writing work. Roberto most often chose to work by himself, seemed undistracted by as well as uninterested in the activity around him, and worked on pieces of writing the entire workshop time. Raul, the fourth focal student, was selected because he appeared to be the student that most of the boys looked up to in the classroom, and that the girls seemed to have a crush on. According to Ms. Rodriguez he was "very popular" because the students viewed him as a good athlete and a good student. During the writing workshop, Raul always appeared to be steadfastly working, although he was always sitting near a more easily distracted group of boys. The fifth focal student, Sandra, was selected because she appeared to be well-liked by the other girls in the classroom. She seemed to be a leader that the other girls were drawn to, as classmates always wanted to sit near her. Sandra worked quietly, completed all her work, and participated in all aspects of the writing workshop. Jasmin, the sixth focal student, was selected because of her autonomy. At times, Jasmin was very concerned with what the other girls in her class were doing, to the extent that she would not get her own work done. However, at other times, Jasmin would choose to work independently and complete her work. Jasmin was also a very good artist, and her attention to artistic detail, sometimes at the cost of her written work, was noted.

Data Analysis

My initial analysis began by looking across the data chronologically to get

a rich description and understanding of what was going on in the observed writing

workshop context. Next, I narrowed down and reorganized my data in two ways.

First, I eliminated the data that was gathered in Ms. Rodriguez's classroom; it was

evident that, due to the presence of a student teacher, the structure and content of

the writing workshop context was noticeably changed, which resulted in a

reduced amount of student interactions and written work. Second, I categorized

the data collected about the students while they were in Mr. Jones' classroom.

The writing workshop in his classroom focused on particular writing units of

study. Each unit was approximately a week to two and a half weeks in length and

titled Test Prep, Fairy Tales, and Memories. Data for each unit were organized

into a binder that included the daily observational field notes, memos, video and

audio recordings, transcriptions of the focal students' audio recordings, and, if

available, the focal students' and nearby peers' written work. Organizing the data

in this way provided a means of examining students' interactions while immersed

in the activity of writing and of observing how their interactions may have

impacted their writing pieces from beginning to end.

After the data were reorganized into the units of study, I reread all of the

field notes and examined each day's videorecording to see if there were any

instances that addressed my research questions and seemed of particular interest.

I noticed that this approach was too broad for the particulars I was trying to

capture within the student interactions, so I began working with the audio

recordings for each focal student. This process included first listening to each

audio recording as a way to familiarize myself with the students' voices, and then

listening again, paying attention to any big ideas or surprises present in each day.

I created an outline of the key events and wrote research memos that included

careful notes about students' interactions and moments of interest. During the

second time listening to each audiorecording, I carefully transcribed them each

day, identifying the speaker, utterance, and time in the recording. On the third

round of listening to each audiorecording, I used my field notes and the video data

to confirm which students were involved in each interaction, capturing anything

that may have been missed in the original transcription, and making any needed

corrections on the transcribed data. In addition, I highlighted in the transcriptions

when a focal student showed up in another focal student's audiorecording. As the

focal students were frequently working close to one another, often one audio

recorder was able to capture more clearly what another had missed. This process

of repeated listening to the audiorecordings allowed for a detailed description of

the transcripts and provided me with a very deep familiarity with and

understanding of the students' interactions. Additionally, through the intricacy of

this process, it became clear that focusing on the students' interactions and

relational work during just one writing unit of study provided a richer and more

in-depth portrayal of the students' work as writers in a writing workshop. For this

reason, I chose to focus on the Fairy Tales unit, because during the data collection

it was the most consistent in terms of the children having uninterrupted time to

write and following regular practices and routines in the writing workshop.

Microanalysis using positioning theory. After reading each transcribed

set of data, I selected moments that would help me answer my research questions.

These moments could not be easily explained and seemed to get at the complexity

of what happens with and between children as they write. These moments were

then used for microanalysis, based on the work of Bomer and Laman (2004).

Bomer and Laman developed a form of microanalysis based on positioning theory

(van Langenhove and Harré, 1999) to explore the subject positions first-grade and

second-grade student writers assume and assign one another. Bomer and Laman

developed this analytic protocol for microanalysis of everyday conversations

using the theoretical notion of positioning to examine the intertwined social and

emotional dimensions of peer interactions and the ways they may interconnect

with children's cognitive development as they engage in becoming students,

writers, and people. Bomer and Laman also introduced using the students'

composed texts as a way to examine the related functions student writers assign to

their own or others' composed texts.

Positioning theory, as explained by Harré and van Langenhove (1999), is a

dynamic alternative to the more static concept of role, emphasizing that

everything is socially constructed with always shifting patterns that are relative to

the local context. According to Harré and van Langenhove, the concept of

position is general enough to capture diversity but precise enough to articulate the

ephemeral conditions that matter so much in social life. Extending the work of

Goffman (1968), which focused mostly on the interactions between individuals

and the social environment in which they operated, positioning theory aims to

understand the dynamics of social episodes, including how social phenomena are constructed (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). Therefore, working from the perspective that social phenomena are generated in and through talk, positioning theory creates a conceptual and methodological framework that gets at the dynamics of social episodes and offers a dynamic analysis of conversations and discourses.

Positioning theory also addresses issues of power and agency in learning. By acknowledging the cultural, interpersonal, and institutional levels relevant to social life, a close examination of the microlevel and macrolevel influences that recognize learning as a power-imbued process becomes available (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). Positioning theory also suggests that one's personal being "is that between what an individual believes about themselves the self-concept; and what they are able in the circumstances to display as personas" (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999, p.9). This perspective aligns nicely with the notion of agency as improvisation (Holland et al., 1998) because it reveals the possibilities available when one responds to circumstances in ways that have no preconceived social and cultural expectations.

The microanalysis process included taking selected sets of data broken into utterances and analyzing them along assigned categories with specific analytic dimensions. The assigned categories I adapted and used from Bomer and Laman (2004) for my microanalysis were *agent, utterance, body language, self positioning, other positioning, text function, storyline,* and *cultural resource* (see Table 3).

Table 3

Microanalysis of Writing Workshop Episode

Agent	Utterance	Body Language	Self Positioning	Other Positioning	Text Function	Storyline	Cultural Resource	Other
Ana	Once upon a time there was a princess who lived in a castle that wanted to …	Working on her writing	Serious student Busy student	Less capable slower	Work focus	More and less knowledge-able	Popular Culture School	
Clara	Ok, one day a princess	Working on her writing	Serious student Busy student	Equally capable student Parallel worker	Work focus	Parallel workers	Popular Culture School	
Ana	Once upon a time (PAUSE)	Working on her writing	Knowledge-able student	Less capable Less knowledge-able	Evidence of competence	More and less knowledge-able		
Ana	Let's see, Mr. Jones, do we have to write 'Once upon a time?'	Posture as equal to the teacher authority	Competent student Praiseworthy student Monitor of speed and progress	Less capable	Evidence of competence	More and less knowledge-able Setting up audience	School	

Microanalysis of Writing Workshop Episode, continued

Agent	Utterance	Body Language	Self Positioning	Other Positioning	Text Function	Storyline	Cultural Resource	Other
Ana	Once upon a time (Reading aloud her writing)	Posture as equal to the teacher authority	Competent Student Knowledge-able Student	Less capable Less Knowledge-able	Evidence of Competence	More and less knowledge-able Setting up audience	School	
Clara	One day a princess. What did the princess do?	Working on her writing	Serious student Busy Student Equally capable student Parallel worker	Parallel worker	Evidence of Competence	Parallel workers	Popular Culture School	
Ana	(Does not reply or look up for her work)	Dismissive	Busy student Academically un-needy	Needing others responses	Evidence of work focus	More and less knowledge-able	School	
Ana	When a princess meets a prince. When the princess, yeah, that makes sense.	Working on her writing	Speedier student	Slower of progress	Evidence of capability and pace	More and less knowledge-able	School	

The term *agent* identifies the speaker of the utterance. An *utterance* is defined by each speaker's turn in the episode, and each utterance, including moments of silence, is considered a unit of analysis. *Body language*, when available, captures what the students are doing physically in the moment of the interaction. *Self positioning* and *other positioning* describe what Harré & van Langenhove (1999) refer to as reflexive positioning and interactive positioning. Reflexive positioning is where a person positions herself. Interactive positioning is where she positions the other person by treating her as a certain type of person in relation to her position in the interaction. In an interaction, reflexive and interactive positioning occurs simultaneously, since assuming a position always means assigning a position (Bomer & Laman, 2004; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). Bomer and Laman (2004) suggest that *texts* mediate relations among those present in the writing situation as much as they mediate author/audience or subject/meaning relations. In these situations, the category of positioning identifies how an agent uses the students' written texts in the act of positioning and how texts may have been positioned in a particular storyline. *Storylines* are the typified situations in which positions and acts of positioning fit. Storylines are what help to create and provide coherence in the relations among self, other, and text (Bomer & Laman, 2004; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999). The category of *cultural resource* identifies what resources are available to students in the world and what resources they draw upon when mediating their learning. Finally, I added the category *other* to my analysis because I wanted to create a space to explore the theoretical concept of agency and make visible the unexplainable and

impromptu occurrences that could not be exclusively defined by a student's subject position or her culture.

The analytic protocol for positional microanalysis developed by Bomer and Laman (2004) and the theoretical work of Harré and van Langenhove (1999) offered me a systematic way to look at students' interactions in terms of positioning because it was through the children's positioning of themselves and others that issues of identity construction, agency enactment, and enactments of power took place. The lens of microanalysis provided a visible way to see the moves that children were making in their interactions and language while also capturing the complexity of what happened between the children when they worked together as writers. By looking at how the children positioned themselves and others in their interactions, I was able to see what identities were enacted. Positioning follows a storyline (i.e. teacher and student; doctor and patient; parent and child) that are situated in conversations, therefore, when speaking a person casts herself and the person to whom she is speaking *as those two characters from that story we both know* [emphasis added in original] (Bomer and Laman, 2004). Bomer and Laman apply the theoretical ideas of van Langenhove and Harré (1999) to further explain that, "as soon as one calls to mind certain positions in a storyline one also imagines complex sets of predictable, stereotypic, attitudes and interactions" (2004, p. 427). In other words, as students interact, through their conversations they enact particular storylines, wherein a student assumes a position, which in turn assigns a position to another student.

For this reason, the position and the storyline are socially real and must be dealt with—even if one chooses to resist or reject the positioning. For example, often as students work together as writers, one student assumes a position as a "teacher" which assigns another student the position as "student." In this positioning the student who assumes the position as a "teacher" enacts identities that suggest that she is more capable and knowledgeable, and possibly less in need of assistance than the other student who is assigned a position of "student." However, it is important to emphasize that these positions are fluid, and only used for the situation at hand.

Just as the microanalysis process addressed the assigning and assuming of positions within an interaction, it also highlighted how issues of power impact students while in the activity of writing, as children reproduce macrolevel and microlevel practices of power and ideology. The microanalysis chart had a category for cultural resources that made transparent the macrolevel structures of power that were informing the children's microlevel practice interactions. Finally, since I had added the category of *other*, a clear set of data emerged which I could explore through the theoretical concept of agency.

Following the microanalysis of the data, the analyzed data were then examined against the research questions to identify patterns and to choose an organizational structure. For research questions 1 and 3, it became clear that a richer description of the depth and complexity of child authors' identity and power in a writing workshop was revealed when looking deeply at one or two students' experiences throughout the entire Fairy Tales writing unit of study.

On the other hand, for research question 2, to capture the breadth of children's enactments of agency that occurred within a writing workshop, a richer description emerged by describing a variety of student examples throughout the unit of study. I wrote up episodes that captured the dynamic essence of the students' interactions by including a variety of details so that the material I developed speaks to, argues for, and illuminates the final main points, themes, and issues addressed by the research questions. Finally, an analytic narrative of the findings that weaves together the students' interactions with theoretical interpretations is used to show what identities young writers enact, the ways young writers enact agency, and how issues of power impact young writers in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop.

To address trustworthiness, this research study was conducted in an ethical manner. As the researcher, I proceeded in as ethical a manner as possible. Prior to data collection, permission was received at the local level from all of the participants, including the students, teachers, parents, principal, and school board. At the institutional level, permission was received through the university's Institutional Review Board. Also, throughout the data collection process, I honored and respected the researcher-participant relationship by revealing the actual purpose of the study, protecting the participants' privacy, and assuring that no harm was afforded to the participants.

A degree of trustworthiness was also achieved through triangulation of the data, an audit trail, and member checks with the participants. A qualitative study recognizes multiple realities that are always changing and acknowledges that the

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understanding of this reality is the researcher's interpretation of the participants' interpretations or understandings of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). In this study, triangulation included using multiple sources of data, such as descriptive field notes of the daily observations, the video and audio recordings of the whole class and small-group actions and interactions of the students and teacher, the recorded semi-structured informal interviews and informal talks with the students and the teacher, and the students' written work. These data sources were continually checked and rechecked against one another to ensure a degree of validity and reliability. Member checks included regularly checking in with the teachers and students to share my beginning interpretations of the data, asking them whether the patterns I was seeing seemed true. The members would then let me know whether my interpretations seemed to "ring true" (Merriam, 2002, p. 26) or whether they needed some clarifying. The initial interpretations with the teachers reflected patterns about where and with whom the students seem to work, the students' writing dispositions, and understandings of this particular writing workshop context. With the students, the initial interpretations included the patterns of where and with whom they were choosing to do their writing work, as well as of which writing topics and aspects of the writing process they preferred.

Additionally, internal validity was supported by the length of time that I was engaged in data collection. Near the end of the data collection process, the data and the emerging findings began to suggest a level of saturation, in that I was seeing and hearing the same types of things in the students' actions and interactions throughout the three writing units of study.

Finally, to further establish validity, an *audit trail* (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) that documented my data collection and data analysis processes, as well as how decisions were made throughout the research study and analysis, was kept as a means of further establishing reliability.

A degree of external validity was established through generalizability. Merriam (2002), applying the work of Erickson (1986), suggested that qualitative research has concrete universals wherein the general lies in the particular. From this point of view, generalizabilty in qualitative research can be described in the following way: "What we learn in a particular situation we can transfer to similar situations subsequently encountered" (Merriam, 2002, p. 28). Therefore, in qualitative research the most common way generalizabilty is established is through reader or user generalizability, wherein readers determine whether findings from a study can be applied to their particular context (Merriam, 2002). For this reason, an analytic narrative of the findings that included *thick, rich description* (Erickson, 1986) to contextualize the study enough for readers was used to ensure external validity in a qualitative sense (Merriam, 2002).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In this chapter I describe the findings of this research study. I begin by
providing a rich description of what writing and the writing workshop looks like
in this particular third grade, dual language context. Following a description of
the context, my findings are organized by the research questions that guided this
study. The findings for each research question are addressed by providing several
episodes of classroom interactions with an analytic interpretive narrative of each
episode. In the findings, I limited my examples to particular episodes. These
episodes are prototypical and were selected because I felt each one provided the
greatest illumination of the assertion. Additionally, these particular episodes were
selected because I felt they could be written into the most vivid and dynamic
episodes for the audience, standing as representations of the evidence from which
they were built, while also providing relevance beyond the particulars of the
episode to capture the essence of the phenomenon.

Context

To examine how young writers in the activity of writing construct
identities, enact agency, and enact power while participating in a writing
workshop, it is necessary to describe the context in which their writing took place.
The third grade students in this study were part of a dual language program where
they received content area instruction in both Spanish and English throughout the
school year. Since the analyzed data is taken from the students' time in Mr.

Jones' English classroom during a Fairy Tales unit, that is the classroom context to be described.

Mr. Jones' classroom was minimally furnished, with three large tables where the students worked, a teacher's desk in the corner, a computer area, and bookshelves filled with children's literature organized into bins by content, author, and reading level. The room also was filled with a variety of reference and writing tools such as dictionaries, pens, pencils, markers, and crayons, which the students freely accessed as needed. The walls of the classroom were covered with children's work along with pop culture memorabilia, including famous musical groups, sports teams or icons, and superheroes. Along the lower portion of the walls, Mr. Jones' had a designated space for each student which served as a classroom version of the social networking website *MySpace* (www.myspace.com), where each student could share personal work such as photos, artwork, cards, notes, and papers. Mr. Jones also encouraged the students to post their published pieces of writing on these spaces. The influence of macrolevel power structures was obvious in this classroom, as Mr. Jones was required each day to post a schedule and content objectives that reflected the state standards and that were written in technical language on the chalkboard at the front of the room.

In this classroom context, the students were familiar with the structure of a writing workshop and with the writing process from both content and procedural perspectives. The writing workshop occurred daily for a minimum of 45 minutes to one hour and followed a predictable structure that included a mini-lesson, a

class status update, independent writing time, and a class sharing session. To create their stories, the students followed a writing process that began with brainstorming and creating a map of their ideas. Next, they wrote a first draft that included getting all of their ideas on paper. They then revised and edited their papers, either alone or with a peer, and then they wrote their final copy for publishing.

Except during the mini-lesson, class status update, and sharing time, times when the teacher asked the students to sit together on the floor at the front of the classroom, the children had a lot of autonomy during the writing workshop period. During the independent writing time, the students were able to sit wherever they wanted. The students preferred a variety of different working environments that varied from day-to-day. For example, some students liked to work alone and got to work on their writing quickly. Other students meandered around the room for a bit, stopping to talk with other students to see what their friends were doing before eventually getting started on their writing work. The length and amount of time each student worked on writing also varied. Some students would work on their pieces of writing the whole class time without talking to nearby classmates, while other students talked throughout the entire writing time. In this classroom, both English and Spanish were valued. When the students talked with one another, they used both English and Spanish, regardless of the language they were writing in or the target language classroom they were in at the time. However, the students always spoke to Mr. Jones in English, and the

students used both languages with Ms. Rodriguez, although she always adhered to the dual language policy, speaking and responding to the children only in Spanish.

In this classroom, the students appeared to like writing, as they were always happy when given more time to write. Writing was understood to be a collaborative process, and students frequently used their peers as resources for spelling words, getting ideas for their pieces, choosing topics, revising or editing their papers. The students also liked to share their work with one another during sharing time, as hands always quickly shot up into the air when the teacher asked for volunteers. Pop culture was also an important aspect in this writing workshop, as many times the students' conversations would reference current children's books, television, movies, or music, and these elements would frequently show up in the children's ideas and pieces of writing.

At the time of this study, the school was on the cusp of being labeled a Failing school and was working at all costs to prevent being taken over by the state. This effort meant that many of the practices on which this school had been historically recognized, such as being literature-based, committed to authentic reading and writing experiences, valuing the experiences of children as part of the learning and curriculum, and having a collaborative staff that was seen as knowledgeable experts, were no longer emphasized. Instead, reading instruction emphasized the knowledge of isolated skills, children were put into homogenous groups based on language and test scores, and time for other content area instruction such as writing, social studies, and science was severely decreased. For this reason, Mr. Jones' and Ms. Rodriguez's commitment to a daily writing

workshop was extremely unique and demonstrative of their belief about the importance of writing in children's lives. The students' enthusiasm for writing was regularly evidenced as shouts of "Yes!" and "Yeah!" when the announcement that they would be having a writing workshop was made.

At the time the data were collected, the students were working on a unit about fairy tales, following a week of standardized state testing. During this unit the teachers emphasized skills they believed were important for the students' preparation for 4th grade. This emphasis included providing writing paper with smaller lines and only having an illustration on the cover of their stories rather than throughout the whole piece of writing. The teachers also emphasized the importance of finishing pieces of writing, and the students were expected to complete this piece of writing within the week and a half that the fairy tale unit was taking place.

Findings for Identity

This section addresses the following research question:

What identities do young writers enact in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?

The following assertions answer what identities young writers enact in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop:

1) Young writers enact multiple identities that serve different purposes.

2) Children's written text serves as a way for students to make visible and to substantiate their enacted identities.

This dissertation takes the perspective that identities are enacted in particular moment-to-moment interactions where context plays a crucial role. Therefore, to answer this research question, and emphasize this perspective on identities, two students—Ana and Clara—and the identities they enact in the writing workshop as they interact with each other and their classmates in the activity of writing is closely examined. Each assertion is addressed by providing episodes that capture the students' interactions accompanied by a theoretical interpretation. Assertion One and Assertion Two will be illustrated and discussed after each episode.

Episode One

Ana and Clara sit next to each other at a large table in the middle of the classroom. As they write their fairy tales, Ana springs into action and loudly says, "Once upon a time there was a princess who lived in a castle that wanted to . . . ."

A moment later, Clara also shares her writing aloud and says, "Ok, one day a princess."

Ana continues writing her story and carefully reads aloud each word as she writes, "Once upon a time," then briefly pauses: "Let's see. Mr. Jones, do we have to write 'Once upon a time?'" Ana does not wait for Mr. Jones to respond and returns to reading aloud her writing, "Once upon a time."

At the same time, Clara continues with her variation of a fairy tale beginning and states aloud, "One day a princess." As the children continue writing, Clara poses a question aloud to no one in particular: "One day the princess. What did the princess do?"

Ana does not reply to Clara, or look up from her work, instead reading her

story aloud and commenting as she writes, "When a princess meets a prince.

When the princess, yeah, that makes sense."

Suddenly, Clara begins to criticize Ana's work, "No, no, *pero, tu tienes* 1-

2-3-4-5-6 ideas. And those six ideas, 1-2-3-4-5-6, that's a little bit Ana."

Ana snappily responds to Clara's claim, "So! But I'm gonna fill the page!"

Clara curtly responds, "I'm gonna fill up both of them!"

Ana snidely replies, "Yeah sure!"

As the tension at the table between Ana and Clara becomes palpable,

Carlos attempts to lighten the mood at the table and states, "I can even fill up 10

[pages] by writing a long, long, long story."

**Assertion One: Young writers enact multiple identities that serve different
purposes.**

In this episode, Ana and Clara demonstrate the multiple identities that

young writers enact for particular purposes as they engage in the activity of

writing and participate in a writing workshop. Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte, &

Cain (1998) describe identity as "a concept that figuratively combines the

intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social

relations" (p. 5). In other words, a person knowingly enacts identities as they

relate to the social dynamics taking place in culturally and historically informed

communities. For example, in the beginning of Episode One, Ana enacts an

identity that suggests she is confident, assertive, and competent in the Discourse

community of writing fairy tales. When Ana states, "Once upon a time there was

a princess who lived in a castle that wanted to . . ." she is making her knowledge

of fairy tales known to the other students at the table by broadcasting aloud how

they begin, the types of characters they involve, and the settings in which they

often take place. In this moment, Ana enacts an identity as a knowledgeable

writer who knows how to write fairy tales.

In this community, being recognized as a writer is valuable. Writers in

this community actively engage in their writing time, take pleasure in being able

to share their stories with one another, and like the attention and

acknowledgement that producing writing warrants from their peers. Lewis et al.

(2007) posit that learning is an act of subject formation that involves identification

with particular communities. They explain that these identifications are

"demonstrated through the enactment of particular identities one knows will be

recognized as valuable in particular spaces and relationships" (Lewis et al. 2007,

p. 19). Thus, by demonstrating her knowledge of fairy tales and her ability to

produce writing, Ana attempts to enact an identity that she knows is of value in

this community.

As Ana enacts her identity as a knowledgeable writer, Clara seems to

recognize the value that Ana's enacted identity carries. Therefore, Clara attempts

to enact these identities as well when she states, "Ok, one day a princess" a

moment after Ana shared her beginning aloud. In this statement, Clara enacts an

identity that suggests, in this Discourse community, that she, too, is a competent

writer who is knowledgeable about fairy tales. Clara also makes it known that like

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Ana she too can promptly get her ideas on paper. Moreover, in this statement Clara enacts an identity that positions her as equal to Ana.

Ana quickly seems to recognize the identity being enacted by Clara and knows its value. When Ana notices that Clara put herself in an equal position as an expert fairy tale writer, Ana quickly enacts an identity as a competitive peer, acting in ways that are less friendly and mature. In this interaction, Ana and Clara demonstrate the tension that Lensmire (2000) suggests sometimes exists between students as they engage with one another as writers in a writing workshop. According to Lensmire, working with peers and expressing oneself as a writer is not a neutral activity, because peers are not "an undifferentiated and uniformly supportive whole" (2000, p. 70), meaning that when students engage in writing workshops and express themselves as writers, they face peer audiences that range in levels of support, as well as in levels of social and academic risk. Therefore, to maintain her position as well as her identity as competent in the Discourse of fairy tales, Ana does not respond to Clara and instead continues to carefully and loudly read each word as she writes, "Once upon a time." In this moment, and through these actions, Ana enacts an identity as an unsupportive and competitive peer.

For this reason, Lensmire points out that while writing workshops are socially rich sites of possibility that offer opportunities for learning not found in traditional classrooms, they also are not conflict-free spaces. In their interactions Ana and Clara demonstrate the multiple identities that are enacted for various purposes, and how interactions with peers can also be openings for conflict and

risk. Ana and Clara have enacted identities that demonstrate their knowledge of fairy tales, and of writing. Also, they have enacted identities that make their capabilities and competence as writers known by suggesting how far each of them is moving in their story plotlines. However, when both Ana and Clara feel that there identities are being questioned, or that they are at risk of being positioned as a less competent writer of fairy tales, they enact identities that range from immature and petulant to teacher like.

Holland et al. (1998) explain identities as people's significant self-understandings in which people tell themselves and others who they are, while also trying to act as though they are who they say they are. In this writing community, where students are encouraged to see themselves as writers, it seems the seeing of oneself as a writer is directly connected to how well one is able to also make her self known to others as a writer. As the students continue writing, Ana loudly asks, "Let's see. Mr. Jones, do we have to write once upon a time?" Through this question, Ana does two things through her words and actions to tell herself and others who she is as a competent and capable writer. First, Ana broadcasts her knowledge of how fairy tales begin to the other students. Second, Ana does not wait for Mr. Jones to respond to her question and instead continues writing as though he had answered in the affirmative. This action suggests that by posing a question aloud, Ana was simply attempting to showcase her identity as a competent and capable fairy tale writer, assuming a position that presents her as independent of the teacher's guidance, since she is already well aware of how fairy tales begin.

These enactments by Ana demonstrate how young writers enact multiple identities that serve different purposes. While Ana enacts her identity as a knowledgeable writer, she also enacts her identity as a competitive peer, trying to position herself as more knowledgeable and competent than Clara by drawing attention to the fact that Clara's fairy tale did not begin with the standard opening, "Once upon a time." While these enacted identities serve a variety of purposes for Ana, they are also specific to what matters to Ana from moment-to-moment as she participates in her writing community. In this community, where kids generally like to talk and share with one another while writing, Ana's talk was a way to establish her expertise rather than to share her knowledge for her peer's benefit. For example, when Clara poses a question about her story aloud to no one in particular ("What did the princess do?"), Ana does not reply to Clara or look up from her work. By ignoring Clara, Ana enacts an identity as a competitive peer too busy to be bothered with someone else's questions, and who also does not want her friend to get ahead of her while they write their stories. Ana continues to enact an identity as a competitive peer, rather than as a friend or colleague, as she continues talking aloud about her own story ("When a princess meets a prince… when the princess, yeah, that makes sense"). Furthermore, through this verbal monologue, Ana makes it known that she is progressing in her story while enacting her identity as a capable and competent member in this Discourse community, by emphasizing that her fairy tale plot, unlike Clara's, not only has a princess as the main character, but a prince as well.

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Assertion Two: Children's written text serves as a way for students to make visible and to substantiate their enacted identities.

Episode One also demonstrates how children's written texts can be a way for students to make visible and to substantiate their enacted identities. Bomer and Laman (2004) suggest that at times students bring each other's written texts into their interactions as evidence to verify the claims one student is making about another. In this interaction, Clara does not let Ana, or any evidence in the written text deter her identity as a competent member of this Discourse community. Instead, Clara confidently, without any apparent doubt or hesitation, continues writing her fairy tale stating aloud "One day a princess." Throughout this episode, as Ana reads aloud her fairy tale that begins, "Once upon a time" and shares her developed plot line ("when a princess meets a prince"), she uses her written text as evidence for what is incorrect in Clara's text, thus, positioning Clara as less competent in this Discourse community, and enacting her identity as a writer who is knowledgeable about fairy tales, and competent in story writing. Ana uses her own written text to demonstrate her knowledge of fairy tale beginnings, characters, and plot. At the same time, Ana's text points out what is incorrect in Clara's text such as a beginning that is a variation on the classical fairy tale beginning, and an author that has less certainty about what her main character the princess will do. Through their composing processes, Ana and Clara are well aware of what the other is doing and where each of them is at in their stories. Through this action, Ana points out the ways in which Clara's text is different, vetting their paces against one another, and once again enacting her

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competitive identity as she makes her more capable student identity known to other students.

When the students return to their writing, Clara begins to criticize Ana's written text, stating, "No, no, *pero*, *tu tienes* [but, you have] 1-2-3-4-5-6 ideas. And those six ideas, 1-2-3-4-5-6, that's a little bit, Ana." This action by Clara suggests that while she continues to enact an identity as knowledgeable in this Discourse community, she is simultaneously well aware of how Ana continues to assign her a less knowledgeable position. Clara enacts an identity as a teacher, pointing out errors in Ana's work. At the same time this suggests she is more knowledgeable than Ana in writing, and about what makes writing good, both qualitatively and quantitatively. It is possible to conceive that in this moment Ana and Clara are both aware of how they are attempting to position one another. Bomer and Laman (2004) explain that in a situation people are likely to feel strongly about the way they are positioned, especially if that position contrasts with the ways they want to position themselves. For this reason, Bomer and Laman emphasize that positions are basic to being, belonging, and becoming. Enacting an identity is directly tied to how one sees oneself and to the positions one holds. Therefore, by pointing out what is wrong in Ana's text, and using the text as evidence, Clara enacts a teacher identity and assumes a position as more knowledgeable than Ana. In turn, Clara becomes the more knowledgeable writer who belongs in this Discourse community.

Ana appears to finally get fed up with the jockeying that has been taking place and becomes more assertive, and even mean, in her snappy response to

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Clara: "So! But I'm gonna fill the page!" With this snarky reply, Ana uses her knowledge about the length of written text to affirm her capabilities as a writer and makes it known to Clara that she is well aware of what she is expected to write. While Ana enacts her position and her identity as a capable writer because she knows what to do, and what is expected, she now enacts an identity that is more immature in temperament. Clara, unrelenting, curtly responds, "I'm gonna fill up both of them!" Ana snidely replies, "Yeah sure!" continuing to enact her identity as a more temperamental, competitive peer. Through these statements it becomes clear, that at this point in the independent writing time, Ana and Clara are no longer friendly colleagues sharing a writing table but rather are fierce competitors vying to be the more knowledgeable, capable, and competent member in this Discourse community. Ana and Clara demonstrate how students enact multiple identities for a variety of purposes. Throughout this episode they have each shifted from mature and confident writers who actively engage in writing and develop fairy tale plot lines, to writers who critique a peer's writing, and who are not open to a peer's feedback.

Episode Two

Ana and Clara continue to work on their fairy tales. Clara states aloud, "One day a princess was . . ." suggesting that in her fairy tale she has begun to move past the opening into the plot of her story.

Ana also states aloud the progress she has made in her fairy tale and exuberantly declares, "One day there was a beeaauutiful, beeaauutiful princess!"

Clara abruptly turns to another subject in an attempt to get Ana's attention: "Ana, *mira*! *Mira*, Ana! Ana, I have the top! I have the top, Ana. Ana! Ana, I have the top. I'm gonna take it off. I'm gonna put it in the cupboard."

Ana does not respond to Clara and instead directs a question about writing to the other students at the table: "What's a snapshot?" A nearby student responds, "A snapshot is when you zooooom in." Ana, with a huge grin and a loud giggle replies, "Oh, like she is beeaaautiful and she loooved jewelry."

Sensing that she is unable to distract Ana from making progress on her story, Clara returns to her writing and says aloud, "One day a beautiful . . . ."

Ana also continues writing and states aloud, "Once upon a time there was a beeaauutiful . . . ."

Clara turns to Ana and asks, "Beautiful? How do you spell beautiful?" Ana enthusiastically responds by offering to get a dictionary, and Clara exclaims, "Hurry, Ana! Go get a dictionary! I want to find it! I know how to use them!"

When Ana returns, she declares, "I know how to use them. I'm gonna do my own!" Ana begins to make a production out of looking for the word by being loud and singing, "Let's see. Let's see. Yeah, yeah, yeah… A-B-C."

Clara notices that Ana seems to be getting ahead of herself and says, "You have to go in the *B*."

Ana notices what she has done and begins shouting, "A! B!"

Clara identifies that she has found the word first, loudly stating, "*Yo encontré*! *Yo encontré*!"

Ana appears irritated and snidely replies, "Why did I even got a dictionary for?"

Clara quickly responds, "For looking for beautiful."

As Ana and Clara return to writing their stories both girls are humming to the tune of "Mary Had A Little Lamb." Ana sounds out the word *queen* as she attempts to spell it, returning to the dictionary as a resource and declaring, "Qu-een. Qu-een. Qu-een. I found queen!" Together Ana and Clara read the definition from the dictionary, and Clara notices that the definition includes the word *beautiful*.

Clara realizes that she and Ana have misspelled the word beautiful and states, "We spelled beautiful wrong." Ana does not acknowledge Clara's comment and instead continues reading the multiple definitions for queen from the dictionary.

When Ana finishes reading from the dictionary she returns to writing her story and says aloud, "Looovely eyes. Lovely eyes and a long . . . ."

Clara appears annoyed at not being acknowledged by Ana and becomes more assertive, identifying that she has corrected an error that Ana has not addressed: Clara states, "We spelled beautiful, you spelled beautiful wrong!"

Ana does not respond to Clara's assertion and instead continues to write her story aloud while also returning to singing. Ana loudly sings, "La la la la la la la la la la" while also writing and speaking aloud, "Long, long, long blaaack hair with lovely, with very lovely eyes."

Assertion One: Young writers enact multiple identities that serve different purposes.

In this episode Ana and Clara continue to enact identities as knowledgeable, capable, and competent members of this Discourse community. Along with these enacted identities, Ana and Clara also enact identities as friends and as competitive peers. Episode Two also demonstrates how at times, Ana enacts an identity that is more playful, exuberant, and jovial as she laughs and sings while working. Additionally, in each moment, the multiple identities enacted serve different purposes.

As Ana and Clara work on their fairy tales, Clara states, "One day a princess was . . . ." In this statement Clara points out that in her fairy tale she has begun to move past the opening into the plot of her story, implying that Clara is a faster writer than Ana, and enacting an identity that is equal to Ana's. Ana, prompted by Clara's sharing, also states aloud the progress she has made in her fairy tale and exuberantly declares, "One day there was a beeaauutiful, beeaauutiful princess!" thereby enacting a more jovial identity focused on including very descriptive details in her story. By matching her progress to Clara's, Ana positions herself as equal to her.

Aware that she was unable to position herself as ahead of Ana, Clara abruptly turns to another subject in an attempt to get Ana's attention and distract Ana's writing flow: "Ana, *mira*[look]!! *Mira*, Ana! Ana, I have the top! I have the top, Ana. Ana! Ana, I have the top. I'm gonna take it off. I'm gonna put it in the cupboard," announces Clara. In this instance, Clara enacts an identity as a

competitive peer who desperately wants to distract her friend as a way to better position herself. Holland et al. (1998) explain that we are always engaging in forming identities, in producing objectifications of self-understandings that may guide subsequent behavior. From this perspective a student's behavior can not simply be understood as good or bad; rather, a student's behavior is a much more intentional, complex, and active process that takes place as students choose who they are going to be as writers and as people in particular moments.

Rather than responding to Clara, Ana instead directs a question about writing to the other students at the table: "What's a snapshot?" By suggesting that she is continuing with her story, Ana shows that she is not easily distracted or disrupted by others' antics and assumes the identity of a focused and mature writer. When a nearby student responds, "A snapshot is when you zooooom in," Ana further enacts her identity as a knowledgeable writer who understands revision techniques when she exuberantly replies, "Oh, like she is beeaaautiful and she looooved jewelry." Additionally, in this exaggerative response Ana enacts her more playful, and exuberant side. By being both playful and focused on her writing at the same time, Ana demonstrates how students can enact multiple identities that serve a variety of purposes.

Holland et al. (1998) state, "Identities are lived in and through activity and so must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice" (p. 5). As Clara returns to her writing, she and Ana enact multiple identities for a variety of purposes as they relate to the activity and social practice of writing in this particular classroom. Clara says aloud, "One day a beautiful . . . ." This statement

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is important for two reasons. First, it suggests that Clara is done trying to distract Ana, and is again moving forward in her story. Second, Clara's story has now changed from "One day a princess" to "One day a beautiful" which suggests that Ana's writing may have influenced the direction and details in Clara's fairy tale, further affirming Ana's enacted identity as a knowledgeable member in this Discourse community.

Ana puts forward her identity as a productive, creative, and influential writer when she states aloud, "Once upon a time there was a beeaauutiful . . . ." With the emphasis on the word *beautiful*, it seems that Ana is making it known to Clara and to the other students at the table that she originally created the sentence with the word beautiful. This statement also demonstrates that Ana has been focused and committed to writing her story during the writing time, which enacts her identity as a responsible student. In this moment Ana's more playful identity emerges. While Ana tries to keep up with Clara, she now is being more playful than competitive. Ana enacts her child-like and girlish identity that likes "beeaauutiful" princesses to be in her fairy tales. Clara enacts an identity as a friend and a collaborator when she asks Ana, "Beautiful? How do you spell beautiful?" When Ana generously offers to get a dictionary in response to Clara's question, she too enacts an identity as a friend and collaborator.

Yet, when Clara enacts an identity as a boss that is more capable than Ana and states, "Hurry, Ana! Go get a dictionary! I want to find it! I know how to use them!" Ana seems to quickly sense that by offering to go get the dictionary, she reduced her more powerful status in her enacted identity as the one who is always

in control of the people and situations around her. As a result, when Ana returns

from getting the dictionary, her enacted identity as a friend and collaborator

quickly shifts to that of a competitive peer. Ana replies to Clara with a cutting

tone: "I know how to use them. I'm gonna do my own!" As a reaction to Clara's

assumed expertise, Ana enacts an identity that is childish.

As Ana and Clara look for the word *beautiful* in the dictionary, Ana begins

to make a production out of looking for the word by being loud and singing:

"Let's see. Let's see. Yeah, yeah, yeah. A-B-C." In response, Clara points out to

Ana that she has passed the *B*. "You have to go in the *B*," states Clara implying

that she is more skilled and diligent than Ana, since Ana has carelessly passed

over the needed letter.

Rather than respond to Clara, Ana instead makes her competence known

by shouting, "A! B!" implying that she too is equally as skilled as Clara.

However, Clara finds the word first and loudly states, "*Yo encontré* [I found]! *Yo*

encontré!" indicating to Ana, and the other nearby students, that she has found the

word. This interaction suggests that there has been an unspoken competition

between the girls to see who could find the word first, which in turn would

confirm one girl being smarter or more skilled than the other. Realizing that her

identity as knowledgeable and capable, along with its accompanying position may

have been tempered, Ana snidely says,"Why did I even got a dictionary for?" At

this point Clara seems to realize that she may have finally rattled Ana and

quickly, contritely, responds, "for looking for beautiful." In this moment Clara

enacts an identity that suggests she is a more mature, and more in control of the situation than Ana.

Assertion Two: Children's written text serves a way for students to make visible and substantiate their enacted identities.

The last part of this episode demonstrates how children's written text serves as a way for students to make visible and substantiate their enacted identities. Bomer and Laman (2004) identify that children's texts are often used as evidence about the subjectivities assumed by students. As Ana and Clara return to writing their stories, a returned sense of friendship and equanimity fills the table as both girls hum to the tune of "Mary Had A Little Lamb." At this moment, Ana and Clara are friends, and each is engaged in their own writing. Ana returns to the dictionary to look for the word *queen* and when she finds it, Ana and Clara read the definition from the dictionary together. As they are reading, Clara notices that the definition in the dictionary includes the word *beautiful*, and she realizes that she and Ana have misspelled it earlier, telling Ana, "We spelled beautiful wrong." This interaction is of particular interest, because this time, Clara is not trying to enact an identity that is positioned as better or more knowledgeable than Ana. Rather, by using the pronoun *we*, Clara includes herself in the spelling error, suggesting a sense of collaboration, where before there was competition. However, Ana does not acknowledge Clara's comment, and instead continues reading the multiple definitions for *queen* from the dictionary. Ana then returns to writing and reading aloud her story: "Looovely

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eyes. Lovely eyes and a long . . ." which suggests Ana is done working with

Clara.

Clara appears annoyed at not being acknowledged by Ana and becomes

more assertive, restating the error and changing the subject pronoun from *we* to

you the third time: "We spelled beautiful, you spelled beautiful wrong!" Ana does

not respond and instead continues to write her story aloud: "Long, long, long

blaaack hair with lovely with very lovely eyes," while also singing, "la la la la la

la la la la la." Lewis et al. (2007) explain that as people acquire, appropriate,

resist, or reconceptualize skills and knowledge within and across discourse

communities they continue to be formed as acting subjects. In this interaction,

Clara uses Ana's written text, which includes a misspelling of the word *beautiful*

to point out an error they both had made in their writing. However, as the error in

their written texts is made public, Ana ignores Clara's assertion as a way to resist

how it may form and shape her enacted identity as a competent writer. At the

same time it enacts Ana's identity as an immature peer and defiant writer who

does not need or respond to other's critiques.

Episode Three

Ana continues writing her story, and this time, rather than refer to the

dictionary, she decides to ask the teacher how to spell a word. Ana shouts from

across the room, "Mr. Jones, how do you spell *hawk*?" Mr. Jones lets Ana know

he will be there to help her momentarily. Ana impatiently starts to whine, "Mr.

Jones, you need to come help me. Come help me, Mr. Jones! Come and help me!

Mr. Jones, how do you spell hawk?" As Ana whines and begs for the teacher's

help, she also involves herself in nearby students' business addressing who has taken another student's money and an eraser.

While helping Ana spell a few words, Mr. Jones asks Ana if she wants him to read her story. Ana jovially replies, "If I get it wrong it's your fault!" Mr. Jones reads Ana's fairy tale and tells her that she has misspelled the word *hair*, then helps her spell it correctly.

He asks, "And now do you know what the problem and solution is going to be?"

"Yeah!" says Ana. "That the how do you call it? That the king . . . ."

Mr. Jones questioningly interjects, "the prince?"

Ana corrects him, "The king."

Mr. Jones asks again, "The king?"

Ana senses her mistake and replies, "No, that the prince came and then the king. The king locked, uhmmm, the prince inside a dungeon, and then the princess, and the queen looked for him all over the world and they never found him. And than the solution is that a servant went into the dungeon too, and then she found the key and the prince."

"The servant?" asks Mr. Jones.

"Yeah!" answers Ana.

Mr. Jones continues, "And lets him out?"

"Yeah!" affirms Ana.

Mr. Jones compliments Ana's story: "That's a good one. And you thought about that all yourself, Ana?

Ana replies with a laugh, "Yeah, and I didn't even wrote that."

The teacher then confirms Ana's implied revision: "You changed it. That's ok."

Ana replies with a laugh, "I changed it to that the sister kicked them out."

After Mr. Jones leaves Ana returns to her writing and says aloud, "Hawk! Like, look! Once upon a time there was a beeeaaauuutiful princess with very lovely eyes and long, long, black hair like a hawk. Yeah, you get it? You don't?"

Clara answers, "No! How can she have a looooong hair like a hawk?"

Ana answers, "Long, long, blaacckk [hair]. The color black as the hawk!"

Clara jokingly retaliates, "I know, but like a hawk? A hawk? So it has to be straight and like that."

Ana giddily replies, "You're crazy!"

Clara laughs, "I know I am!"

Clara returns to writing her fairytale and says aloud, "I can't think! Beautiful long hair. Like a black marker. *Mira*, one day a beautiful queen with very long hair like a black marker."

Ana makes a suggestion to Clara, "Like a zebra."

Clara responds, "Like a cheetah. Like a bracelet."

"A black bracelet. Like the color black," replies Ana.

Assertion One: Young writers enact multiple identities that serve different purposes.

As Ana engages in the activity of writing her fairytale while participating in a writing workshop, it is possible to see how from moment-to-moment she

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enacts multiple identities that serve various purposes. Ana also seems to know how to cleverly interact with both students and adults. For example, in the beginning of this episode, Ana wants the teacher's attention and from across the room whines, "Mr. Jones, you need to come help me. Come help me, Mr. Jones! Come and help me! Mr. Jones, how do you spell hawk?" As Ana grows impatient she enacts the identity of a whiny child. At the same time, while Ana waits for Mr. Jones, she enacts the identity of a funny, motherly, and even a bit bossy student as she attempts to maintain attention from the other students at the table by involving herself in their spelling queries, allocating, managing, and monitoring who is using the school supplies, as well as acting silly by singing, or making funny sounds and comments.

When interacting with Mr. Jones, Ana shifts between identities that serve various purposes. Once Mr. Jones arrives, Ana discards her helpless, needy, and whiny identity and assumes a position of equality with her teacher. With this new identity Ana demonstrates to Mr. Jones that she is a competent member of this Discourse community by sharing her knowledge of story structure, holding the teacher accountable for mistakes, and not backing down from her adlibbed composing ideas. By enacting this identity Ana demonstrates who she is as a writer to Mr. Jones. At other times, Ana enacts an identity that is more playful and jovial. In these moments, Ana demonstrates to Mr. Jones who she is as a person. Ana's shift between identities explains why Bomer and Laman (2004) emphasize that social, emotional, moral, relational, and personal dimensions are always a part of the same interactions that produce academic growth. Therefore,

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the authors encourage educators to pay close attention to not just what academic skills are being developed, but, also what kinds of people are being developed.

Ana's simultaneous interactions with Mr. Jones and with her classmates demonstrates the idea that learning is an act of subject formation, where one experiences shifts in identity by taking on new identities along with new forms of participation and knowledge (Gee, 2001; Lave, 1996; Lewis et al, 2007). Ana is aware of how to interact with a teacher in the identity of a student, but she pushes it a bit further and interacts in a way that suggests that she and Mr. Jones are equals. When interacting with Mr. Jones, Ana makes jokes and teases. For example, while helping Ana spell a few words, Mr. Jones asks Ana if she wants him to read her story. Ana jovially replies, "If I get it wrong, it's your fault!" With this joking introduction, Ana went on to accept Mr. Jones' spelling corrections with good humor. Although she is joking, Ana is willing to place blame on Mr. Jones if he "gets it wrong." Though, when another student may point out an error Ana has made in her written work, she becomes childish and defiant by ignoring the person and singing. For this reason, the way in which Ana interacts with Mr. Jones could be considered a new form of participation and a new form of knowledge that demonstrates her capability and cleverness in social interactions, which was unlike the other students forms of participation with the teacher in this classroom. Furthermore, this episode also makes visible how learning includes the construction of identities as it involves becoming a different person with respect to the possibilities enabled by the broader systems of relations including social communities in which the activities, tasks, functions, and

understandings of broader systems of relations have meaning (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Through her attitude and actions, Ana seems to understand the meaning in the broader system of relations regarding teacher and student interactions, as well as peer-to-peer interactions.

Following her interaction with Mr. Jones, Ana returns to her writing and jovially says aloud, "Hawk! Like, look! Once upon a time there was a beeeaaauuutiful princess with very lovely eyes and long, long, black hair like a hawk. Yeah, you get it? You don't?" As Ana interacts with Clara this time, she enacts an identity as an engaging, goofy, good-humored, and cheerful third grader that willingly helps her friends. Clara pick up on Ana's playfulness and questions her, "No! How can she have a looooong hair like a hawk?" Ana replies to Clara, but this time she is not a competitive peer. Instead Ana enacts an identity as a confident writer and explains her simile for the hair. Ana answers, "Long, long, blaacckk [hair]. The color black as the hawk!" Clara continues to poke at Ana and says, "I know, but like a hawk? A hawk? So it has to be straight and like that." Unlike the previous interactions, this time Ana does not respond in a competitive or defiant way when questioned about her work. Instead, she continues to joke with her friend and giddily replies, "You're crazy!" Furthermore, in this interaction, Ana enacts an identity as a friend and collaborator who shares her ideas. When Clara returns to writing her fairy tale and thinking aloud, Ana jumps in to brainstorm ideas with her friend. As Ana and Clara joyfully work together to generate idas, Ana confirms her enacted identity

as a friend and collaborator by affirming Clara's ideas and adding them to her own.

Throughout these interactions, Ana and Clara colorfully demonstrate in their moment-to-moment interactions what it means to be a writer in a writing workshop. At times, Ana and Clara enact identities that are knowledgeable, capable, and competent in this Discourse community; at other times they enact identities that are competitive, mean, and bossy. Ana also displays identities that are goofy, generous, motherly, or childlike. Thus, Ana is engaging, vibrant, uninhibited, and somewhat uncontainable as she navigates her way as a writer participating in a writing workshop. Furthermore, the multiple identities Ana and Clara enact are also made visible and substantiated through their written texts. By examining what identities students enact in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop it becomes clear who young children are as both writers and people. Together these episodes demonstrate the multiple identities that students are enacting at all moments while participating in the activity of writing in a writing workshop.

Assertion Two: Children's written text serves as a way for students to make visible and to substantiate their enacted identities.

Episode Three also demonstrates how children's written text makes visible and substantiates students' enacted identities. When Mr. Jones reads Ana's fairy tale, he asks her a question regarding the required problem and solution storyline. Ana immediately replies, "Yeah!" and begins to enact an identity as competent as

she tells Mr. Jones her story's plot, confidently asserting her place in the conversation.

Ana begins, "That the how do you call it? That the king . . . ." Already familiar with the characters in her story which includes a princess, Mr. Jones interjects, "the prince?" Ana confidently maintains her currently enacted identity and corrects him, "The king." Mr. Jones verifies, "The king?" and Ana seems to sense her mistake. However, she quickly recovers, corrects the teacher, and goes into a lengthy explanation of her story's problem and solution. Ana explains, "No, that the prince came and than the king. The king locked, uhmmm, the prince inside a dungeon, and then the princess, and the queen looked for him all over the world and they never found him. And than the solution is that a servant went into the dungeon too, and then she found the key and the prince." After Mr. Jones asks Ana a few more questions about her story, he affirms her identity when he states, "That's a good one. And you thought about that all yourself, Ana? In this moment, Ana uses her identity as a writer to maintain her equal status position with Mr. Jones by improvising her story.

All of a sudden, Ana becomes giggly, and she replies to Mr. Jones' acknowledgement with a laugh. "Yeah, and I didn't even wrote that," giggles Ana. Ana giggles because she knows that she just made up that part of her story. Ana cleverly and confidently enacts multiple identities for various purposes. Along with her identity as a competent member in this Discourse community, Ana simultaneously demonstrates her more playful and silly side. Together, these identities provide her access to the Discourse communities of adults and children,

which in turn permit her to interact with Mr. Jones in this light-hearted way. Yet, Mr. Jones seems to interpret Ana's admission of spontaneity as intentional revision when he states, "You changed it. That's ok." In this statement Mr. Jones responds to Ana's enacted identity as a competent writer, rather than a silly child.

Findings for Agency

This section addresses the following research question: *In what ways do young writers enact agency in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?*

The following assertions answer in what ways young writers enact agency in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop:

1) Young writers enact agency in moments that are relevant and meaningful to them.

2) Young writers enact agency by taking agentive stances in the decisions they make as writers.

3) Young writers enact agency when they take up opportunities that allow them to change their present interactions, circumstances, and conditions.

Assertion One is discussed following Episode One. Assertion Two is discussed following Episode Two. Assertion Three is discussed following Episode Three.

Episode One

It is the middle of the fairy tales unit, and the students are in the midst of writing their stories. Mr. Jones, in the mini-lesson, reviewed all of the elements that need to be in their fairy tales: a thoughtshot, a snapshot, dialogue, and a

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problem with a solution. As the young writers begin working on their stories, off to the side of the room, a group of boys sits together and works on their fairy tales.

Today, as Raul and his friends work on their writing, they also engage in debates regarding Britney Spears and the tooth fairy:

"Britney Spears is not bald!" says Omar as he erases his paper.

"Yes, she is!" replies Victor.

"No, she's not," chirps Cesar.

"Jaime Lyn Spears?" asks Oscar.

"The sister? Oh no, not her. Not her," says Victor.

"Britney Spears? Yeah, she's bald," confirms Gabriel.

Throughout this discussion, Raul remains focused on his writing, at times pausing and rereading his paper. The boys continue with their discussions.

Victor asks Gabriel, "Dude, why do you still believe in tooth fairy? You know your mom is the one who gives you the money."

This time Raul participates, "I know, huh?" suggesting that he, like Victor, is mature enough to know that the tooth fairy is not real.

Yet Gabriel is not convinced and says, "No."

Cesar butts in, "Yes!"

Omar interjects to share his experience, "That's why sometimes your mom doesn't give you money. That happened once. I put it under my bed, and then I went to the bathroom and I was pretending I was going to the bathroom, and my mom was in the room and put a dollar under the bed."

During this time, Raul diligently completes his writing work, seeming to pay close attention to many composing and artistic details. Although Raul appears very serious while writing and is very quiet in his interactions, he does at times rouse his friends. Unbeknownst to the teacher, Raul quietly goads other students to do things that may get them in trouble. When Victor becomes intrigued with the audio recorder on the table and says, "Can I push a button? Dare me? Dare me to push a button?"

"Yes," Raul quietly answers. A few moments later, Raul says to Oscar, loud enough for Victor to hear, "He won't do it."

As Victor continues to talk to the recorder, "Hello recorder, what's your name?" Oscar and Raul continue to provoke Victor: "I would do it if it was my recorder," says Oscar. Oscar continues, "You won't press a button. I dare you. I triple dog dare you to press this. No chicken-outs. No nothing!"

Raul laughs and joins in, "I triple dog dare you!" As Oscar tries one more time to get Victor to push a button on the recorder, Raul says, "Ah, you gotta do it, Victor."

Victor will not be persuaded and emphatically states, "No! No! No! No! No! The computer lady said no!"

Near the end of the independent writing time, Raul and Oscar pause for a moment from their writing and share aloud with one another what they are doing in their writing: "I already did solution, snapshot, dialogue and thoughtshot," says Raul, a popular boy who is also recognized by the other students in the classroom as a good writer.

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"I already made a thoughtshot and dialogue," says Oscar.

Diego, who is also sitting at the table, listens to his friends and interjects, "What's a thoughtshot again?"

Javier responds, "[It's] what the character's thinking about."

Mr. Jones, who is nearby, also replies to Diego's question and suggests some familiar phrases that the students use when writing a thoughtshot: "Yeah, it's what the character's thinking about—'he wondered,' 'he thought'." Mr. Jones then asks the boys, "Are you done?"

Raul responds, "No, I need the problem."

Mr. Jones replies, "You did your solution before the problem?"

Raul begins to explain, "The solution is like . . . ."

"Doesn't the problem usually come first and then the solution?" asks Mr. Jones.

Oscar quickly jumps in to back up his best friend and sternly asserts to Mr. Jones, "It's in order!"

Raul continues, "It's because I'm doing . . . ."

Oscar jumps in again in support of his friend and contends, "It's in order! It's in order from the problem and solution!"

Raul begins to explain his story again to Mr. Jones: "It's because I put they're fighting for the truth."

Mr. Jones replies, "So, you have the problem already, too?"

Raul replies in exasperation, "No, but I didn't put it. I'm gonna put it at the end. He fought for a quarter."

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Mr. Jones responds, "I'll read it and see how it sounds. I've never heard of someone putting the problem after the solution, but we'll see if it makes sense."

Oscar, still convinced about the order of his friend's story replies, "No! But it's in order. Right there! Look! It's in order!"

Diego also gets involved in the conversation and states, "Come up with the solution first, and then that's the problem."

Assertion One: Young writers enact agency in moments that are relevant and meaningful to them.

As Raul and his friends discuss Brittany Spears and the Tooth Fairy, Raul enacts an identity as a boy who still likes to play around with his friends when the opportunity arises. In these moments Raul participates just enough to make his presence and knowledge known and to still be a part of the group but not so much that a teacher suspects he is not getting his writing work done.

Later, as Raul and Oscar work on their fairy tales, they pause for a moment from their writing to share aloud with one another what they are doing in their writing: "I already did solution, snapshot, dialogue and thoughtshot," says Raul. "I already made a thoughtshot and dialogue," says Oscar. In this interaction, Raul puts forward his identity as an adept writer by making it known to himself and to his friend that he has completed the teacher's expectations for his piece of writing. Moreover, this statement reveals his capability by making publicly known the pace at which he is able to compete his work without any apparent difficulty. Together, these interactions demonstrate how agency is a theory of self-formation, where a person, through their identities and actions, is

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able to create new possibilities and redefine their worlds. In these moments, of friendly conversations about pop culture and writing techniques Raul is constantly in the process of forming and reforming his identities as a peer, friend, and writer, thus making agency possible as he perceives himself in new and unimagined ways in his interactions with his teacher, Mr. Jones.

When Mr. Jones overhears the students talking about their revising strategies, he joins the conversation and asks the boys if they are done with their stories. Confident in his work and in his ability as a writer, Raul responds, "No, I need the problem." Mr. Jones replies, "You did your solution before the problem?" Through this question, Mr. Jones presents his view of writing, which is socially, culturally, and historically informed by various perspectives on teaching and learning. Mr. Jones implies that certain writing elements are formulaic, in that they should be written in a prescribed order: when composing a story, students should not be able to write a solution to a problem that has not yet been written. Raul does not appear rattled by the teacher's questioning and quickly provides an explanation for why he has written a solution before writing a problem. Raul begins, "The solution is like . . . ." This moment, which is relevant and meaningful to Raul as a writer, marks the beginning of Raul's improvisation. In this socially, culturally, and historically shaped context around teaching and learning, Raul, by explaining his reasoning for why his story has a solution before the problem, engages in an unplanned response that is informed by his history and identity as a good student and writer.

Mr. Jones does not seem to be convinced by Raul's response and continues with his viewpoint on writing, this time rephrasing his question: "Doesn't the problem usually come first and then the solution?" At this point, Oscar jumps in to back up his best friend. He sternly asserts to Mr. Jones, "It's in order!" Oscar's strong support for his friend recognizes and advances Raul's identity as a skillful writer in this classroom. Additionally, it seems that Oscar's outward support of Raul's story, which acknowledges his friend's identity as a smart and discerning writer, contributes to this moment as meaningful and relevant to Raul, while helping Raul move forward with his formative response to Mr. Jones: "It's because I'm doing . . . ."

Again propelled by his identity as a writer, Raul does not back down and continues with his impromptu actions and response. Raul does not allow the teacher's persistent questioning to change his certainty about his story, nor does Raul hesitate and begin to think that he did something incorrectly. Raul is certain that the way he chose to write his story is correct, even when the teacher doesn't seem certain that it can work. It is possible to conceive that in this moment, Raul perceives himself in new and unimagined ways, as he breaks out of a traditional student-to-teacher relationship and challenges his teacher's opinion. However, this moment is interrupted by Oscar, who once again jumps in to support his friend, fervently contending, "It's in order! It's in order from the problem and solution!"

Raul tries yet again to explain his story to Mr. Jones: "It's because I put they're fighting for the truth." In this statement, Raul conveys that he knows that

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his story has a problem and a solution. Raul's story clearly makes sense to him, and he knows that his story has, or will have, an adequate problem and solution, even though he has not composed his story in a formulaic way. Raul seems to be making a clearer case for his story as Mr. Jones replies, "So, you have the problem already, too?" This time Raul replies to Mr. Jones in exasperation, "No, but I didn't put it. I'm gonna put it at the end. He fought for a quarter."

These moments appear especially relevant and meaningful to Raul because they represent where his identity as a writer and the deliberate decisions he has made as a writer are being challenged. Raul enacts agency as he repeatedly expresses to Mr. Jones why his story and the way he is composing his story makes sense to him as a writer. Raul's impromptu actions, in the form of his unplanned responses to Mr. Jones, cannot be explained by the social context in which he is participating or by who he is culturally. Although this writing workshop context does provide the students with lots of choice, time to write, and opportunities for collaboration with peers, the teacher's pedagogy around writing instruction is formulaic. As a result, the way in which Raul participates does not appear culturally motivated, in that it does not reflect or go along with the collective cultural norms and conditions of this context.

Mr. Jones finally concedes Raul's point and responds, "I'll read it and see how it sounds. I've never heard of someone putting the problem after the solution, but we'll see if it makes sense." However, Oscar and Diego are still convinced about the order of Raul's story and continue to ardently express, "No! But it's in order. Right there! Look! It's in order! Come up with the solution

first, and than that's the problem." In this interaction, Raul responds to his

teacher in an unplanned and spontaneous way, which can be explained as agentic

action. In his agency, Raul seems to perceive himself in new ways, allowing

himself the freedom as a writer to step outside of preconceived ways of writing.

Additionally, Raul interacts with the teacher in new ways that position him as the

expert of his own writing, rather than giving the teacher an automatic

authoritative status. Furthermore, Raul's agentic action is made possible by his

identity as a writer, which is constantly in the process of forming and reforming,

as he participates in the writing workshop. Hull and Katz (2006) point out that

identifying and examining enactments of agency in learning is extremely

significant because it recognizes how people, by considering their present

capabilities and their imagined futures, are able to influence their own lives. In

the episode above, it is possible to consider that Raul, propelled by his identity as

a conscientious student who is supported by his capabilities as a writer and artist,

has through his agentic action just contributed to influencing his own life and his

future.

Episode Two

It's another day in the writing workshop, and the end of the writing time is

approaching. Mr. Jones begins slowly counting down, "Five, four, three, two,

one," as a signal to the students to gather in a circle on the carpet for the writing

workshop sharing time. Manuel sits perched on his knees and eagerly raises his

hand to ask if he can share his story, "The Titanic," which he just completed. In

this writing workshop, students often work on more than one piece of writing at a

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time. Manuel returned to writing this story after finishing his fairy tale. Mr.

Jones agrees, and Manuel reads his story:

> One day Victor bord and very hungry he went to go fishing. He got a big
>
> fish but when the wave came the fish went out of the boat. Raul was
>
> driving the Titanic and he was going to crash Jesus. But Jesus was yelling
>
> "Help". Raul crashed the Titanic with a light house they rebuild. The
>
> Titanic. Raul felt really bad. Hies eyes got all watery. Raul didn't drove
>
> the Titanic agin. The End.

When Manuel finishes reading, he pauses for a moment and looks carefully at his

piece of writing in what appears to be a silent rereading of the story. The other

students pause with him. When Manuel looks up from his story with a big grin on

his face, he says, "It's not finished. I'm going to change something. I forgot

some details."

The next day in the writing workshop, the students are all seated in a circle

on the carpet in the front of the room for their sharing time. Manuel, who has

been working steadfastly on the revisions and rewriting of his story, quickly raises

his hand and asks to share his new version of "The Titanic" story. After proudly

displaying his accompanying artwork for the story, Manuel begins to read:

> One day Victor was bord and very hungry he went fishing. He got a big
>
> fish but when a wave came the fish went out of the boat. Raul was driving
>
> the Titanic he was going to crash Jesus. But Jesus was "yelling Help".
>
> Raul saw him and pulled him up. and when Raul was pulling Jesus up
>
> Raul crash with a light house. And hies boss Manuel got mad and tuck the

Titanic away. Manuel redilb the Titanic and the light house. Raul felt

really bad. Hies eyes were watery. Raul did not drove the Titanic agin.

The End.

When he finishes reading his story, Manuel looks up from his paper and smiles

proudly. For Manuel, his story is now complete.

Assertion Two: Young writers enact agency by taking agentive stances in the

decisions they make as writers.

Manuel's decision to rewrite his story after it has already been shared and

"published" (Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001) is an improvisation. Holland et al.

(1998) refer to agency as improvisation and explain improvisation as impromptu

actions that occur daily and mundanely as people participate in socially,

culturally, historically, and materially shaped lives. Thus, agency is a person's

unplanned and spontaneous response in a moment and in a particular context that

cannot be explained by who they are culturally or by the social context in which

they are participating. For this reason, Manuel's decision to revise his story after

it has been shared can be perceived as agentic. In this moment, and in this

particular context, Manuel's unplanned and spontaneous response was a unique

occurrence; since no other students ever went back to revise a piece of writing

after it had been published and shared.

In addition, when Manuel reads his story, pauses, rereads for a moment,

and then states, "It's not finished. I'm going to change something. I forgot some

details" he again enacts agency by taking an agentive stance in the decision he is

making as a writer. Dutro (2009) argues that through children's own situated

knowledge, they have the agency to challenge practices and are not just

subjugated to the literacy practices and ideologies imposed by the mandated

curriculum. In this instance, Manuel enacts agency as he uses his situated

knowledge about writing to take control of his writing and to recognize that

something needs to be different in his story. Manuel's response to his piece of

writing–"It's not finished. I'm going to change something. I forgot some

details"–is unexpected and cannot be explained by the social or cultural patterns

of this writing workshop context. Moreover, Manuel's reaction and subsequent

action provide a glimpse of Manuel as a writer who has an unwavering vision for

his story.

In this writing workshop context, when students engage in a writing

process, they brainstorm ideas, draft the ideas into a story, revise and edit the draft

by themselves or with a peer, and then publish the writing by rewriting a final

copy and creating a cover or pictures to accompany the story. During this

process, the students are not actively looking for ways to continue to make their

stories better, and when the students rewrite their final copies, there often are still

a few spelling, mechanical, and possibly composing errors. Additionally, in this

writing workshop context, the sharing of one's story with the other students seems

to signify that this particular piece of writing is complete. While this classroom's

writing practices allow lots of freedom for the children's ideas, and the teachers

consistently give the children time to write and engage with one another as

writers, it is possible to see hints of a more formulaic curriculum surrounding

writing when the students traditionally follow one writing process that does not emphasize the practice of rereading.

Fletcher and Portalupi (2001), however, point out that even though rereading is crucial, many students do not pay attention to rereading, and it is here where the big composing questions that drive the revision process come forward. In Episode Two, Manuel seems to be rereading his paper, which in this context can be considered an improvisation. Moreover, when Manuel rereads, he takes dominion over assuring that his story is an accurate portrayal of his vision, even though it has already been "published" (Fletcher & Portalupi, 2001).

The next day, Manuel assiduously works on revising his story. When the independent writing time is over and the students return to the carpet at the front of the room for sharing time, Manuel quickly raises his hand. He slowly shows the other students his accompanying artwork for "The Titanic" and then begins to read his revised story. This time, when he is done reading his story, he looks up to the teacher and to the other students with a big smile on his face. As a writer, Manuel seems very content with and proud of his revised story.

Manuel's actions in this instance exemplify his identity as a writer, and it is this identity that makes agentic action a possibility for him. Holland et al. (1998) explain that through their identities and actions, people create new possibilities and redefine their worlds. Similarly, Bomer and Laman (2004) point out, "When children learn to do things with words…they learn not just skills or knowledge, but also the subject positions that have been made available in the transactions that produce the skills or knowledge" (p. 429). In his story-sharing

transaction, Manuel is able to assume an available subject position as a confident and skilled writer; in this subject position, he is able to see a piece of writing as unfinished, he is not afraid to take risks, and he makes his work public. Thus, Manuel in this subject position is also able to produce the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize, as well as to demonstrate to others, that a "published" piece of writing is not always a "finished" piece of writing, while also expanding what it means to share one's work publicly with others. In other words, by rereading and asking the bigger composing questions that are necessary for writers, Manuel has redefined his, and possibly the other students', as well as the teacher's, worlds of writing.

Episode Three

After the morning mini-lesson, as the other students slowly make their way to their seats, Roberto is seated at the table ready to write. As Roberto writes, he is comfortably balanced on his knees in his chair. He hunches over his writing and steadfastly writes, at times looking up to reread and talk to himself about his writing; other times this pattern includes a small laugh as he seems to appreciate the work he does as a writer. While Roberto does interact with classmates by answering questions, helping to spell words, and offering to help other students when the teacher requests volunteers, it seems that he prefers to complete his writing alone.

As Roberto finishes his fairy tale, which is a version of *Little Red Riding Hood*, he asks Dora if she is using a wolf instead of coyote in her version of *Little*

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Red Riding Hood. Dora tells Roberto that she is, and Carlos then asks, "Roberto, you still have a wolf?"

Roberto replies, "Yeah."

Dora states, "You said you didn't have it."

"I did, I do" responds Roberto.

The students resume their writing, and a few minutes later, Dora refers to nearby Gabriel as "Grandpa."

"Why do you call me grandpa? Because my glasses?" asks Gabriel.

Roberto overhears their conversation and interjects, "They decided to call me grandpa for no reason."

After a brief pause, Roberto asks Dora, "Why do you call me grandpa?"

Dora replies, "Who?"

Roberto responds, "You! You call me grandpa."

Gabriel laughs, "I thought grandpas are too old to play tag."

Roberto laughs, too, and states, "This grandpa is a genius, and made a robot so that he could become younger."

Roberto puts his fairy tale away and begins to work on his other story about robots. At the same time, Mr. Jones announces to the class that he needs someone to edit Omar's paper. Roberto volunteers and begins to work with Omar. As Roberto reads Omar's paper for edits he asks Omar lots of questions about his story. From the beginning, Omar seems to grow impatient with Roberto's close reading of his paper and says, "Just read it!"

Roberto continues, "Did you copy this from the game?"

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"Which one?" asks Omar.

"The game of Baby Mario and Luigi" says Roberto.

Roberto returns to reading Omar's paper: "One day princess, which princess? One day Princess Peeeach was getting . . . ." He stops reading Omar's paper and begins to make a correction on it. "Sorry if I spell it wrong," states Roberto. As Roberto reads and edits the story, he often laughs out loud at parts and continues to ask Omar questions about the story: "What does that say? Your baby, he's got two babies? Why is it a good thing?"

Omar answers, "I don't know."

Roberto tries again, "What does that have to do?"

"I just wrote it," says Omar.

Roberto starts to give a lot of ideas to Omar: "In your picture you could put a baby Mario, and the baby don't have any diapers, and Princess Peach, on, you know, those babies. Can you imagine?" Roberto begins to laugh at the ideas he's presenting and says, "Ok, I gave you that idears."

Assertion Three: Young writers enact agency when they take up opportunities that allow them to change their present interactions, circumstances, and conditions.

In their framework on agency, Hull and Katz (2006) contend that people can develop agentive selves using the tools, resources, relationships, and cultural artifacts that are available at particular historical moments in specific social and cultural contexts. From this perspective, students assume agentive stances toward their present identities, circumstances, and futures. In this episode, as Roberto

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participates in the writing workshop, he takes up opportunities that present themselves to assume agentive stances towards his present identities, circumstances, and future, using the available tools, resources, relationships, and cultural artifacts that are available.

Episode Three begins with Roberto diligently working on his writing. In this particular historical moment, as Roberto participates in the writing workshop, he engages in conversations with his classmates and assumes agentive stances toward his present identities and circumstances. For example, when Roberto finishes his fairy tale, which is a version of *Little Red Riding Hood*, he learns that he and Dora both use wolves in their stories, rather than coyotes. In this classroom context, both Roberto and Dora enact identities and assume positions as very serious and original writers. For this reason, Dora confronts Roberto and states, "You said you didn't have it," to which Roberto wittily responds, "I did, I do."

In this circumstance, Roberto takes up the opportunity that has presented itself to enact his identity and assume his position. Roberto assumes an agentive stance when he states, "I did, I do." In this statement, Roberto enacts an identity and assumes a position as a self-assured student and original writer who takes ownership of his story. Also, he is unapologetic about the composing decisions he has made for his story. Holland et al. (1998) and Bomer and Laman (2004) call attention to the assignment and taking up of positions as agentive and improvisational. Thus, when Roberto states, "I did, I do," he enacts agency, as he

does not allow another student to position him by suggesting that he may have copied her ideas.

In the next interaction, Roberto takes up another opportunity that has presented itself as he assumes an agentive stance towards his assigned identity as a "grandpa." These familial designations were part of a game that the students often played during recess that involved assigning and playing family roles such as mother, father, daughter, or son to classmates. As the students resume their writing, Dora refers to nearby Gabriel as "Grandpa." Roberto overhears their conversation and interjects, "They decided to call me grandpa for no reason." Roberto also asks Dora, "Why do you call me grandpa?" to which Dora replies, "Who?" Roberto responds, "You! You call me grandpa." In this interaction, Roberto takes an agentive stance toward his identity as a grandpa by asserting that he is called grandpa for no reason and also by confronting Dora.

When Gabriel laughs and states, "I thought grandpas are too old to play tag," Roberto laughs, too, and states, "This grandpa is a genius, and made a robot so that he could become younger." In this moment, Roberto takes up an opportunity that has presented itself and takes an agentive stance, remaking his assigned position as a "grandpa." Furthermore, Roberto uses his identity as a clever and creative writer of robot stories and his knowledge of discursive resources to do so. Bomer and Laman (2004) explain how this remaking is agentic: "The fact that participants are drawing upon discursive resources does not mean that they are trapped into ready-made cultural patterns, as they can do new things with the old material" (p. 427). Thus, in this interaction, Roberto

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demonstrates how students can do new things with the old material to remake themselves and invent new openings.

In the following interaction, Roberto puts his fairy tale away and begins to work on his other story about robots. At the same time, Mr. Jones announces to the class that he needs someone to edit Omar's paper; Roberto volunteers and begins to work with Omar. As Roberto reads Omar's paper, he asks lots of questions about Omar's story. In these interactions, Roberto enacts his identity as a writer, seeming very interested in Omar's story as he engages with Omar, writer to writer. Roberto asks Omar questions about the story, such as, "Did you copy this from the game?" and pays close attention to the story details: "One day princess, which princess?" However, from the beginning, Omar grows impatient with Roberto's close reading of his paper and says, "Just read it!" In response, Roberto enacts an identity as an editor and begins to just make corrections to the paper's surface structure and spelling, paying less attention to the content. He also acknowledges that he may be spelling words incorrectly, stating, "Sorry if I spell it wrong."

However, Roberto quickly returns to his enacted identity as a writer while reading and editing Omar's story, recognizing that editing is about achieving clarity in writing, not just correcting punctuation and spelling errors. During this time, he often laughs out loud at parts and continues to ask Omar questions about the story: "What does that say? Your baby, he's got two babies? Why is it a good thing?" Omar answers, "I don't know." Roberto tries again: "What does that have to do?" Omar responds, "I just wrote it." Roberto enacts agency when

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he once again takes up an opportunity that has presented itself to enact his identity as a writer and as an editor. In this interaction, rather than getting distracted or deterred by Omar's lack of engagement or response, Roberto maintains his identity as an editor who understands the rich possibilities of an edited piece of writing, and he starts to give a lot of ideas to Omar: "In your picture you could put a baby Mario, and the baby don't have any diapers, and Princess Peach, on, you know, those babies. Can you imagine?" Roberto begins to laugh at the ideas he's presenting and says, "Ok, I gave you that idears."

In this classroom, when students come together to edit or revise one another's writing, the process often focuses on correcting errors in convention and spelling, rather than on clarifying ideas. Roberto, however, informed by his history as a writer, seems to understand that editing involves a deeper focus and enacts his identity as a writer to collaborate with Omar on his paper. Still, Omar is not comfortable with this way of working, so for a short time Roberto enacts a proofreading identity and begins to make corrections to Omar's paper without Omar's input. Unable to resist his urges, however, Roberto once again assumes an agentic stance as a writer and a reader as he engages with Omar's text and ideas laughing and asking questions about its content. In this interaction, Roberto assumed an agentic stance as he changed the circumstances to represent his beliefs and practices about writing and editing.

Throughout this writing workshop, Roberto enacts agency as he takes up the many opportunities that present themselves. He has now remade his identity from a lone and solitary writer to one who engages with his peers while writing.

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Roberto has also transformed his position as a third grade grandpa to a committed, engaging, and expert writer who is unmoved by other's questions or responses to what matters to him in writing.

Findings for Power

This section addresses the following research question: *How do issues of power impact young writers in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop?*

The following assertions answer how issues of power impact young writers in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop:

1) Children use ideas as a form of power to enact their identities as writers and people.

2) Children in their interactions (microlevel practices) appropriate macro structures of power in ways that confirm and disconfirm one another as writers.

3) Power is fleeting and shifts as it is enacted in children's moment-to-moment interactions.

4) Children use their written texts as a form of power to enact their identities as writers and people.

Each assertion is addressed in this chapter by providing episodes that capture the students' interactions, accompanied with a theoretical interpretation. Assertion One and Assertion Two will be illustrated and discussed following Episode One. Assertion Three will be illustrated and discussed after Episode Two has been

presented. Assertion Four will be illustrated and discussed following Episode

Three.

Episode One

It is the first day of the Fairy Tales unit and on this day Manuel and Juan,

two best buddies, are working together in a corner of the room, brainstorming

ideas for their stories. They have borrowed the text structure of *The Three Little*

Pigs for their stories. Together, Manuel and Juan create a variety of possibilities

for types of building materials, with varying levels of difficulty for a wolf to

penetrate, starting with a house made of spaghetti and then branching out into

houses made of chocolate, mirrors, lightening, paper, knives, pillows, televisions,

shields, and gold. As Juan writes "house of spaghetti" on his paper, Manuel, in an

exasperated tone, says to Juan, "You copy me!"

Juan appears unmoved by this and responds, "I'm going to think of

something else. It's going to be funny!"

They return to their writing, and a moment later Manuel says, "It's

chocolate."

Juan gleefully responds, "Thank you!"

As Manuel and Juan move on to possibilities for the second and third

houses, their ideas and the nuances associated with each house become more

carefully negotiated and deeply played out. When Manuel shouts "Fire!" as the

option for the second house, Juan enthusiastically jumps into this idea to further

build and substantiate Manuel's idea: "So the wolf can blow, ohhhh,

ahhhh…right! He can blow us the candy off, he can blow the chocolate off."

However, Manuel quickly knocks down Juan's support and enthusiasm for the idea with, "Nooooo! Because what if he hates it?"

Juan accepts that his idea to add the candy is unacceptable to Manuel and returns to Manuel's original idea of fire. "Ok, he hates it. So, and you said fire, and you said fire, right? Second house is..."

Manuel and Juan continue brainstorming ideas. Manuel comes up with an idea that he is certain of and states, "Mine's gonna to be of shields, the third one, yeahhhhh, mine's gonna be of shields because it gives you a chance to get in, it'll block you" (Manuel makes a loud sound to substantiate the blocking capabilities of the shields).

Juan also arrives at his moment of certainty and excitedly announces, "Mine's with—mine's with gold, mine's with gold, he can't blow it up!"

In an exasperated tone, Manuel replies, "Yeah he can! What if he robs it?" Juan quickly responds, "No, because it's made of cement."

Manuel applies his knowledge of the fairy tale structure and replies, "No, but he can blow it."

Juan still does not acquiesce to Manuel and replies, "No he can't!" while also garnering further support for his story idea by asking a nearby classroom visitor whether or not gold can be blown down.

Manuel, still unwilling to relent, responds, "But what if he gets like, uh, TNT, and then he blows it up like *boom*!" Juan finally concedes his idea and returns to brainstorming more ideas for the second house.

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Assertion One: Children use ideas as a form of power to enact their identities as writers and people.

A sociocultural perspective on learning addresses the idea that learning is always situated within discourse communities. As people participate in discourse communities, they compete for access to and control of resources, tools, and identities. For this reason, learning, and in particular the activity of writing, is not neutral, because as people participate in discourse communities, power is performed through their discourses, relationships, activities, spaces, and times. This episode made visible the ways in which ideas serve as a form of power between children as they came together as writers. In a writing workshop, ideas are an important resource, since they serve as the beginning of a story; however, in this writing workshop, the generating of ideas, and others' approval of those ideas, seemed to mean everything to the students. For instance, in this community of student writers, generating good ideas for stories was crucial to full participation in the community; students would often walk around the classroom, asking peers for an opinion and taking a survey as to which story they should write based only on an idea presented as a title, with little or no attention yet given to the actual development of that idea as a story. For this reason, students were always trying to outdo one another with the most creative, scary, outlandish, or funny stories, because they loved the responses they would receive from classmates when sharing together as writers.

Episode One began with two best friends, Manuel and Juan, brainstorming ideas for their stories. When Manuel asserts to Juan, "You copy me!" he enacts

and confirms a more powerful writing identity as the idea producer, which is a more powerful and higher status position in this discourse community, where ideas are a valuable resource. Also, through his statement, Manuel positions Juan into a lower status position as a "copier." Juan's identity is now as someone who consumes others' ideas rather than as someone who generates or produces his own ideas. Although Juan appears to not refute the position and accompanying status assigned to him by Manuel, he does not completely accept it, either. Instead, Juan positions himself as someone who is also capable of producing ideas, even funny ideas, when he responds, "I'm going to think of something else. It's going to be funny!"

Juan's response to Manuel demonstrates that power is not an entity that some have and others desire but rather that power is something that happens from moment to moment in interactions. For this reason, Lewis et al. (2007) emphasize that social action is performative and suggest that studying performative shifts in power leads to understandings about how performances reproduce, sustain, or transform participant statuses and texts. From this perspective, Manuel, in his position as an idea generator, reproduces a powerful status; however, Juan, by advocating that he too can come up with ideas, transforms his status from someone who is positioned as a copier to someone who is equally capable of generating ideas.

When Manuel and Juan return to their writing work, they are now again equally positioned as capable idea producers. Manuel immediately declares, "It's chocolate," to which Juan replies, "Thank you!" Manuel's declaration, followed

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by Juan's speedy and jubilant, "Thank you!" once again positions Manuel in a more powerful status, since he is able not only to quickly generate new ideas but also to approve or disallow another student's ideas. At the same time, Juan is once again positioned as the one who needs Manuel for ideas. In both instances, however, by not getting angry at Manuel's assertion that he is copying, and by his enthusiastic acceptance of chocolate as an idea for a house, Juan's response to Manuel suggests that Juan favors his identity and position as a loyal "best bud" that acquiesces by choice to Manuel's performances of power and higher status position as the idea creator. For Juan, it seems that the position, identity, and status as Manuel's best friend are as important to him as being the idea generator is to Manuel. For example, although each student comes up with an equal number of ideas, there is a distinguishable pattern in which Juan consistently expands and supports the ideas generated by Manuel with possibilities, intricate details, sounds, and genuine enthusiasm, while Manuel finds reasons for why Juan's ideas will not work.

As Manuel and Juan continue to negotiate ideas for their fairy tales, Juan finally has an idea that he will not concede to Manuel. Juan decides that his house will be built with gold because it cannot be blown up. Even as Manuel continually tries to convince his friend that the idea will not work, Juan does not give in and confirms his certainty by bringing in a more knowledgeable outsider to support his idea. In this moment, Juan does not concede his idea and in this interaction he does not let himself be assigned the position or identity of an idea consumer. Instead, in this performance shift of power, the power relations

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between Juan and Manuel are now destabilized, and Juan has transformed his participant status, affirmed his idea-producing capabilities and assumed an identity and a position as an idea producer.

Together, the interactions in this episode demonstrate how power is produced and enacted in and through relationships, discourses, activities, times, and spaces. In this writing workshop, where ideas are a form of power, the person who has the ideas is perceived as more powerful in the interaction. Therefore, power is not an entity that resides in either of them; rather, the balance of power is a result of their interactions. Through their interactions as friends and writers, Manuel and Juan engage in performances of power, demonstrating how power is constantly being produced and reproduced as children participate with one another as writers and people in a writing workshop.

Assertion Two: Children in their interactions (microlevel practices) appropriate macro structures of power in ways that confirm and disconfirm one another as writers.

Episode One also demonstrates how children in their interactions (microlevel practices) appropriate macro structures of power to confirm and disconfirm one another as writers. Lewis et al. (2007) distinguish microlevel and macro level performances of power by explaining how even when attempting to challenge or subvert oppressive power relations, it is possible through participation to create a variety of differently-valued subject positions. This notion of differently-valued subject positions is particularly important when interpreting the interactions of Manuel and Juan through the lens of macro level

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structures of power, because it emphasizes the ways in which children appropriate macrolevel structures of power that confirm and disconfirm one another as writers.

In this writing workshop, children sit at tables because the teacher places an emphasis on children collaborating and working together. Also, during the writing workshop, the children are allowed to sit wherever they want, so they often choose to sit near their friends. In this interaction Manuel and Juan have chosen to sit together in a corner of the room as they brainstorm ideas for their stories. As the boys talk aloud their varying ideas, Juan begins to write one of the ideas down on his piece of paper. As Juan is writing, Manuel asserts, "You copy me!" This assertion by Manuel reflects a macrolevel notion of schooling and power that emphasizes knowledge as something that an individual possesses, rather than as something that is produced in collaboration. Juan substantiates this macrolevel notion of schooling and power in his response, "I'm going to think of something else. It's going to be funny!" In this response, Juan affirms the notion that only one person produces an idea; thus, he, too, must produce his own idea. Neither student identifies that the ideas were produced, furthered, or even sustained in collaboration.

This interaction (microlevel practice), in which Manuel and Juan appropriate macro structures of power, also shows how they confirm and disconfirm one another as writers. Manuel is positioned as a writer who generates ideas that another student would try and copy, while Juan is positioned as a writer who not only needs other people's ideas but who also takes them. As this

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macrolevel structure of schooling gets played out in the children's microlevel

practices, Manuel is positioned in a more powerful status and is confirmed in his

identity as a writer. The value placed on coming up with ideas was also shared by

Mr. Jones, who often would emphasize to the students that having good ideas was

important to writing a good story, and through his demonstrations in the mini-

lessons, would share how he came up with ideas. As demonstrated by Manuel

and Juan in this interaction, it seems that working together might just mean

working in proximity to one another rather than actually collaborating on an idea

or story.

Another evident macrolevel structure of power is the notion that when

children come together to work, one child is going to be smarter than another

child. This power structure builds off the previous notion of schooling and is

postured when Manuel says to Juan, "It's chocolate," and Juan replies, "Thank

you!" Through this acceptance of Manuel's idea, Juan assumes the position of

one who needs another person for ideas. In turn, Manuel, who has given Juan the

idea, has positioned Juan as a copier and positioned himself as smarter than Juan.

As the boys continue to generate ideas for their stories, there is a pattern of Juan

enthusiastically building off the ideas put forth by Manuel, with Manuel giving

the final word on what will or will not work. This pattern is furthered by another

macrolevel structure of power that suggests that in an interaction, one person is

right and one person is wrong, especially when resources are at stake. For

instance, when Juan begins to generate ideas that build on Manuel's original idea,

Manuel says, "Nooooo! Because what if he hates it?" suggesting that the ideas

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generated by Juan are wrong. Also, when Juan has his definitive moment and generates his own original idea rather than just building on Manuel's idea, Manuel brings forth many reasons why he believes Juan's idea will not work, reasons that may not even be plausible. This pattern continues until Juan moves on to another idea, reproducing the macrolevel structure of power that when children come together, one will be smarter than the other, and that in interactions, one person is right and the other person is wrong.

These interactions, wherein macrolevel notions of power and schooling are produced and reproduced in children's microlevel practices, also informed the subject positions available to Juan in this classroom, which in turn confirmed and disconfirmed who Juan was as a writer. For example, Juan consistently seemed to be perceived by the teachers, and even possibly by himself, as less capable than Manuel, which may explain why he often conceded to Manuel. In a post-observation interview, Ms. Rodriguez explained that because Juan had been retained the year before, she liked to give him lots of opportunities to help her as a means to building his self-confidence and helping him blend into the classroom. In another instance, Mr. Jones stated to Juan, "Once you guys start writing this together, make sure that you're not just copying him [Manuel] but thinking of ideas together. It doesn't have to look exactly the same." Mr. Jones assumed that Manuel had been guiding the work with Juan and was unaware that on this day, and on many others, Juan had come up with more ideas than Manuel and was the one repeatedly keeping Manuel on track with getting his writing work done for the day, even though Juan often neglected completing his own work. Similarly,

Juan was not selected as one the focal students in this study, yet after close analysis of the data and transcriptions, it became clear that Juan was more in charge and more capable than was being assumed and perceived in the classroom observations.

Episode Two

It's another day in the writing workshop, and on this day, during the independent writing time, the students are writing their first drafts of the ideas that have been previously brainstormed. When the students are done writing the first drafts of their fairy tales, they are expected to use their remaining time to complete or start other pieces of writing. In this classroom, when students begin new pieces of writing, they often involve others by asking for ideas, sharing their ideas, and asking to use each other's names in their stories, thereby creating two practices that are unique to this classroom. First, students will write down a list of titles and take a poll asking classmates which story they should write. Second, because the kids generate their own ideas for stories and often write stories that use each other's names, an important classroom practice has emerged: if you are going to use another student's name in your story, you have to have that student's permission. However, an unofficial caveat to this class rule is that permission to use one's name is often contingent upon who the character with your name is in the story, and what the character will do.

Today, Victoria, a sweet and bubbly girl, is working near Manuel and Juan. After finishing her first draft of the fairy tale, she begins to work on a new story. Victoria follows the class rule and asks Manuel and Juan if she can use

their names in her story because she wants to write a story about a monster. She excitedly tells Manuel that in this story, he is going to run away from a monster that is in his house.

Manuel responds, "No, I don't wanna run away from a monster." Victoria, as a respectful rule follower and classmate, accepts Manuel's decision and begins generating new ideas for her story and characters.

As Victoria returns to work on her story, other ideas for the story begin to get negotiated, and she confirms the use of Juan's name in her story. Juan willingly allows the use of his name until he hears the story will be titled, "Manuel and Juan and the Magic Dragon." Juan laughs at the thought of a magic dragon and tells Victoria not to use his name.

Manuel makes fun of Juan and interjects, "Tell them Juan was crying."

Manuel's comment seems unacceptable to Victoria, who then shares "Juan and Manuel" as the new title of her story.

Victoria resumes her writing, talking aloud as she writes, "Juan and Manuel put the magic dragon."

Juan responds, "That's sweet!"

Manuel, who is neither the idea generator nor the first name in Victoria's story, vehemently interjects, "No versus the magic dragon."

Victoria responds to Manuel, "No against."

Manuel again asserts, "No versus."

Juan responds, "Oh yeah, that's good, that's good, that's so good, versus the magic dragon."

Victoria relents, "Alright then, versus."

Manuel has also completed the first draft of his fairy tale and begins to work on his next story. During this time, he generates many ideas that include superheroes. An emphasis on superheroes is unique to this classroom–they are well known and very important to the students, since a Superheroes unit was one of the first writing workshop genre studies completed by the students. The students take their roles in these stories very seriously, and when the idea "Manuel and Superman" is made, Manuel states, "I already faced Superman, like a long time ago." He pauses for a moment and then places the condition of "Ok, but I beat up Superman."

From the earlier interaction with Victoria, Juan has appropriated the notion that "versus" is a better title and interjects "Manuel 'versus' Superman." As ideas continue to get generated, different students' names from the classroom are suggested. When Manuel comes to the idea of "versus Juan" the other students around him enthusiastically respond to this idea. However, Manuel knows that in his stories, he is the winner, and he is not willing to beat up his friend Juan. Manuel responds, "Noooo!" Manuel eventually settles on the idea of "Manuel versus Godzilla" and affirms his prowess with noisy, shooting, freezing sounds as he shouts, "Yeah, I'm the Iceman!"

Manuel's position as the authoritative idea generator in this classroom is further substantiated as Cesar from across the room begs Manuel for an idea: "Manuel, can you give me an idea, please?"

Manuel replies, "I already gave you an idea where the wolf was gonna explode!"

The notion of giving and receiving ideas appears funny to Juan; he laughingly states, "He's like, 'Can you give me an idea please'!"

Cesar, still unsure about the idea given to him by Manuel, seeks further clarification and asks, "In the world what, Manuel? Manuel, in the world what was going to explode?"

Juan impatiently replies from across the room, "He said the wolf was going to explode!"

Assertion Three: Power is fleeting and shifts as it is enacted in children's moment-to-moment interactions.

Episode Two demonstrates that from moment to moment, as children enact their identities, classroom power relations are shifting and destabilizing (Lewis et al., 2007). In the exchanges between Manuel, Juan, and Victoria, a relation of power is repeatedly enacted, produced, and reproduced, so that power shifts between and among the participants. Lewis et al. explain that power is produced and circulates among people. In the previous episode (Episode One), Manuel was in a position of power that Juan, for the most part, willingly obliged. In this episode (Episode Two) with Victoria, who also assumes an identity as a confident writer, the power relations begin to shift.

In this instance, Victoria, by asserting her ideas for her story and asking for permission to use Manuel's name, enacts her identity as a confident and creative writer in charge of her story's plot, and positions herself with a powerful

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status. Also, because Victoria asks Manuel for permission to use his name, she enacts the identity as a respectful classmate who follows the classroom rules. By positioning herself in this way, Victoria destabilizes the classroom power relations so that Manuel is positioned as equal to another student. Victoria's strict adherence to the classroom rules seems to serve as a form of power because, as Rowe et al. (2001) explain, students that most closely approximate the classroom's valued literacy practices move into the powerful roles, have more power in official classroom events, and display more control when writing collaboratively with peers (Rowe et al., 2001).

Manuel, however, quickly shifts the power relations again and claims a more powerful position by telling Victoria she cannot use his name in her story because he does not like what the character with his name in the story will do. In this interaction, which is similar to other interactions Manuel has with other students in the classroom, Manuel's more powerful position–not only as an idea generator, but also as the authority of what gets written in one's stories–is once again affirmed. Manuel's response to Victoria shifts his status in the classroom, imposes his authority over her story, and evokes the unofficial classroom rule. Although Manuel had at first given permission to Victoria for his name to be used in her story, it appears to be contingent upon Victoria's creating a suitable plot line and acceptable opposing character.

Manuel's response to Victoria shifts Victoria from a powerful position as the creative visionary of her story to a lower status position as a loyal follower and compliant writer who awaits authorial permission from others. Thus, in this

interaction, the power relations have once again stabilized, as Victoria's identity has now shifted from a confident and creative writer to one who needs to ask for and receive permission from Manuel to write her stories. Additionally, this interaction between Manuel and Victoria demonstrates how macrolevel influences of power inform children's microlevel practices. First, Manuel's microlevel level decision to not let Victoria use his name is informed by a macrolevel, pop culture-influenced notion that in stories, the better character is the stronger, fearless, winning character. Second, the macrolevel structure of following rules governs the students' microlevel practice of asking permission to use one's name in a story, which Victoria diligently respects.

As the writing continues, Victoria once again destabilizes the classroom power relations when she surpasses Manuel's derogatory comments about Juan and gives Juan top billing in her story. Victoria states, "Juan and Manuel put the magic dragon." This move shifts Victoria to a more powerful status and once again positions her as the authority in her story. Also, in this interaction the power shifts to Victoria, as Manuel is assigned to a lower status position as a subordinate, compliant writer. An inadvertent outcome of this interaction which further destabilizes the classroom power relations is that Juan is now positioned as independent of Manuel rather than as Manuel's loyal follower and sidekick. In this classroom, where Manuel seems to have the assumed authority over the ideas generated, often maintaining a position of authority and expertise on all writing, a balance has been disrupted. In other words, the students' power relations have destabilized and shifted.

This interaction also explains how power is not an entity in a person; rather it resides in students' interactions. In the interactions of Episode Two, Victoria, as the author of her story, decides that the people she names in the title of her story will be the lead characters. Victoria usurps Manuel, who has been making final decisions for other students' stories, and destabilizes the classroom power relations. In these interactions, Victoria's authorial decisions maintain a more powerful position and shift the power in two ways. First, she has changed the title and accompanying storyline to use her friends' names; neither Juan nor Manuel is positioned as weak in a magic castle. However, Manuel attempts to shift the power again and seize a more powerful position by positioning Juan as weaker than himself in the story when he says, "Tell them Juan was crying." Second, Victoria, maintains the destabilized classroom power relations by holding her ground and using her knowledge and identity as a writer to give Juan top billing, suggesting that he may even be more important than Manuel in this story. Although Manuel attempts to position Juan as weaker than himself, an established position pattern in their relationship, Victoria is not participating. In this interaction, Victoria has destabilized the classroom power relations. Furthermore, through these shifts in power, Victoria transforms her status and Juan's participant status, as well as the status of her text, demonstrating that power is produced in and circulates among people.

As demonstrated in Episode One, at times, especially when there is a third person available who seems to recognize and advocate for the validity of his ideas, Juan will not as willingly assume the position of loyal follower assigned to

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him by Manuel. In these interactions, Juan momentarily claims an acknowledged, more powerful, and recognizable position with Victoria, yet ultimately he remains Manuel's loyal sidekick, consistently offering responses to Manuel's jokes, supporting Manuel's ideas, and assuming the lesser roles in stories. As Victoria resumes her writing with "Juan and Manuel put the magic dragon," Juan responds, "That's sweet!" This statement confirms Victoria's momentary position of power through authorship of her story and affirms Manuel as subordinate, since he did not get to delegate what she wrote; a balance has been disrupted. Manuel, aware that the power has shifted, vehemently interjects, "No versus the magic dragon" to once again assert his knowledge and regain a powerful position. Victoria responds "No against," maintaining her position as authority in her own writing as well as ownership and vision for her story. Manuel again asserts, "No versus!" In this moment, the power relations shift again, as Juan responds, "Oh yeah, that's good, that's good, that's so good versus the magic dragon." Juan thereby reassigns himself to the position of Manuel's loyal sidekick, even though his name is first in someone else's story. Victoria follows and says, "Alright, then 'versus.'" In this classroom, the relations of power have once again shifted; Manuel through his language demands for another student's story, has influenced Victoria, and Victoria's acceptance of his demands has returned Manuel to his position as an authority and idea generator. Victoria once again is a compliant follower, and Juan is a loyal supporter of Manuel.

In Episode Two, both Manuel and Victoria demonstrate performances of power as both resistance and dominance. Although students may not name how

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they interact with one another using these terms of power, they are well aware of what counts in writing, how this knowledge can position oneself amongst others, and what storylines they enact. When Cesar asks Manuel for an idea and Juan laughs, then grows impatient with Cesar, Juan demonstrates that in this classroom hierarchy, he seems to position himself above Cesar. In a sense, Juan's reaction to Cesar suggests that Juan chooses a less powerful position with Manuel because of his identity as a friend, not because of his identity as a writer, even though the teachers and possibly other classmates seem to perceive that Juan's actions stem from his ability and history. The intricacy of how these interactions play out emphasizes the complexity of students' relational work that cannot be reduced to behaviors or cognitive abilities. For this reason, how students negotiate the inherent power imbued in their microlevel context of the writing workshop ultimately informs and impacts who the children are as writers and people and what counts in writing process and product.

Episode Three

It is now the end of the week, and the students are expected to complete their fairy tales by the end of this day. The students are given a lengthy amount of time to write, and with the deadline for completing their writing approaching, there seems to be increased attention and monitoring of each other's written work and work habits. Juan and Manuel always work near one another and stay aware of what the other is doing. Manuel shouts, "Juan, you're not even writing nothing. I tell on you! Mr. Jones, Juan's just playing. He's not doing nothing!"

Juan responds to Manuel's claim, "Yes I do. I already have one."

Yet Manuel can top that and lets Juan know: "Look it! Look it! 1-2-and 3! Oooohhh!"

Juan replies, "Dude it's because you skip lines. That's all there for… anyways, if you don't skip lines, you'll get, like, only two pages done."

Ignoring Juan's claim that his story is longer because he has skipped lines, Manuel then shouts across the room, "Mr. Jones, I think my story's gonna be three or four pages long!"

As Juan returns to his writing, Manuel and Cesar begin to negotiate a deal from across the room in which Manuel, who is recognized by other students as a good artist, will create a title and cover sheet for Cesar's fairy tale story for one dollar. When Juan becomes aware of this, he encourages Manuel not to do it because Manuel may not get his own work done. Juan pleads, "Dude, let Cesar do that, let Cesar do that. You just can't do all of the work for today. Then you gotta do it all for that." Juan also confronts Cesar: "Cesar, why do you want Manuel to do it?"

Cesar doesn't have a very specific reason, responding, "'Cause, man."

Realizing that he is unable to change Manuel's mind, Juan suggests to Manuel, "You should have told him for ten bucks."

Cesar overhears Juan's suggestion and shouts, "Nooo!"

Manuel disregards his loyal friend Juan's concern and says, "Only for this? Ten bucks? You're crazy, man!"

Juan still seems to feel his friend's time and ability is worth more and says, "Two dollars!"

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Assertion Four: Children use texts as a form of power to enact their identities as writers and people.

Episode Three is included because of its unique and complex view into what happens between writers when they use text as a means for enacting power with one another. In this interaction, Juan stands his ground with Manuel and will not be positioned as a student who doesn't get his work done because he is "just playing," or skipping lines, or using big writing. Juan is also choosing in this moment to point out to Manuel some of his friend's inconsistent writing behaviors. Juan is no longer a loyal sidekick who stands in Manuel's shadow. This interaction suggests that while Manuel may reign over ideas in this classroom, he does not reign over students' behavior or over the quality of one's writing. In this interaction, Juan stands up to Manuel, and Manuel seems so off-balance that he is the one, this time, who brings in a third party to confirm whether or not he is right. This change in relationship between Manuel and Juan demonstrates that one's position is often informed by external types of power and is not permanent. Instead, the interaction demonstrates how power dynamically changes from moment-to-moment, providing students with opportunities for constructing new identities, enacting agency, and exploring who they want to be and become as writers and people. Additionally, in this episode, Manuel and Juan start monitoring one another's work, with different expectations emerging. Manuel and Juan use the texts as a way to position one another, and their ideas regarding the written texts as they play out in their microlevel interactions are informed by macrolevel ideas on schooling. For instance, Juan uses the length of

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Manuel's story and the size of Manual's printing to determine Manuel's story

quality and expertise as a writer. The underlying inference is made between the

boys that a longer story suggests better quality; however, Juan disproves this link

by determining that the length only exists because Manuel skipped lines and used

bigger handwriting. Additionally, the Manuel and Juan reproduce the macrolevel

notion of valuing the product associated with writing more than the process

involved in writing.

Another way in which the students use texts to enact power is that they are

well aware of the power that text holds in this community. Episode Three

demonstrates how the students interpret each other's texts as a form of power.

Cesar has brokered a deal with Manuel to design the artwork for his cover page.

As Lewis et al. (2007) point out learning is about participation in a discourse

community, wherein one has access to the tools and resources that are valued in

this community. In this writing workshop, sharing stories with one another holds

great value. The students enthusiastically come together at the end of each

writing day to share their work with one another by reading their writing aloud

and displaying the accompanying artwork. The final copies of their stories are

also displayed throughout the room, and one time each semester a Writing

Museum, which showcases their work for the entire school and parents, is held.

Cesar desperately wants access to this discourse community and realizes that

stories, ideas, and art have value that will let him be seen as a full participant.

While earlier in the week Manuel provided Cesar with an idea for his story, Cesar

is now in the final stages of his story and desires a well-drawn illustration to

support his story. For this reason he cleverly negotiates a deal with Manuel to design the cover page for his story, knowing that from a macrolevel perspective, money can get a person what he or she wants. Cesar, Manuel, and Juan are well aware that we live in a capitalistic society and bring this knowledge into this writing context through their interactions to wield power.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Discussion and Implications

The importance of a quality education for all children is being promoted everywhere today. As I write this final chapter, a documentary movie about public schools titled *Waiting for Superman* is being released, as well as receiving Oscar nomination attention and accolades from the President of the United States. At the same time, actor Tony Danza is a first year teacher in Philadelphia with his experiences being documented in a television show named *Teach*, and the television shows *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* and *School Pride* are renovating schools. All of these shows are receiving national attention for the ways in which they are documenting, dealing with, and helping to repair what is happening in America's public schools.

It seems as if now, possibly more than ever, people from a variety of public and private sectors are paying close attention to our public schools. What is consistent amongst the movie and television programming, as well as federal legislation like "No Child Left Behind," or "Race to the Top," is that they tend to focus on what isn't happening in schools and between children, rather than what is. When viewing schools, and the children within them from this perspective, what is wrong, and what is not happening is always present. Moreover, it is these views along with their own histories as students that seem to continually inform preservice teachers' (with whom I worked) perspectives on teaching and learning. For this reason, this dissertation attunes to the complex, clever, and innovative

ways that students work together as writers and people to draw attention to what is happening in classrooms between students as they engage in relational work.

To examine what happens between students as they engage in relational work in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop this dissertation turns to the concepts of identity, agency, and power. Lewis et al. (2007) explain that these concepts are important to sociocultural learning environments, such as a writing workshop, because it attends to how individuals, relationships, and meanings are constituted in these contexts, and it makes visible larger systems of power that shape and are shaped by individuals in particular institutional, historical, and cultural contexts (Lewis et al, 2007). From their perspective, "Identity, agency, and power are not peripheral to learning. They are central" (2007, p, 46).

From my exploration of how young writers enact identity, agency, and power as they engage in the activity of writing while participating in a writing workshop, my dissertation assists us in better understanding the following implications: 1) the importance of students' relational work in learning; and 2) the application of these ideas into preservice teacher education coursework. Following this discussion, I will address the potential limitations that may have impacted my dissertation study.

Students' Relational Work: What Counts in Learning?

Who students are as learners and as people. This dissertation study suggests paying closer attention to students' relational work. Often students' relational work is thought of as collaborative learning, however this dissertation

reveals that students' relational work is much more than that. Students' relational work gets at the intricacies of what happens between kids as they work together as learners and as people. Bomer and Laman (2004) describe the importance of students' relational work in the following way: "learning to write is about learning to be in a particular kind of interaction—with other writers and with readers—and not about a display of skill" (p. 458).

By examining the concept of identity in a writing workshop, a more multifaceted perspective of who children are as writers, and as people, is presented. In particular, a clearer picture of who Ana and Clara are as they engage in the activity of writing, and participate in a writing workshop is presented. From this view, Ana and Clara are two knowledgeable and capable writers and friends, who at times compete, help, or laugh with one another as they write. When using the lens of identity, we see how their behavior, which includes talking and moving around, is still at all times tied to their academic work. Furthermore, we see how while Ana and Clara engage in writing, they also engage in negotiating who they are as people. In other words, trying to understand their academic work as writers, without contextualizing it in their social work as people, provides a very limited, and possibly inaccurate, picture of both Ana and Clara. However, by applying the concept of identity, which suggests that students are continually in the process of constructing themselves based on the context in which they are participating, the multiple identities that Ana and Clara enact for various purposes are made visible.

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Agentic moments. Agency is an important aspect of this dissertation study because it captures inexplicable moments with children, which are limited when understood solely through behavioral, cognitive, cultural, or constructivist perspectives. Holland et al. (1998) explain that human agency happens daily and mundanely, and they assert that agency deserves our attention. Paying attention to agency in children's daily learning activities provides a way to capture what matters to children in their learning, while also acknowledging who they are as learners and as people.

Raul, Roberto, and Manuel demonstrate the ways in which agency occurs in the ordinary and everyday practices of the writing workshop during their work and experiences as writers. For example, in his daily work as a writer, in a moment that is relevant and meaningful to him, Raul takes an agentive stance and asserts to his teacher Mr. Jones that writing a solution before the problem is acceptable to his story. In this agentic action Raul reveals how important the enactment of an agentive self is for learning as he challenges practices and beliefs about writing that he may have outgrown or that no longer fit him as a writer. In this moment Raul cultivates a view of himself self as agent, and the consequences of this agentic stance may be far reaching to him as a learner, a writer, and a person.

Manuel also demonstrates how important the view of self as agent and the enactment of an agentive self is for learning as he takes an agentive stance in what he decides to do as a writer. When Manuel acknowledges his published story as "not finished" he takes dominion over his writing in a way that is new to this

context. Manuel is not just completing a writing assignment, he is a writer who has a vision for his story. In this moment Manuel serves as a demonstration to the other students, and to the teacher, that writing is never finished. Manuel's enactment of an agentive self matters not only because of the impact it has on him, but because of the potential impact it may also have on the other members in this classroom context.

Roberto demonstrates how young writers enact agency when they take up opportunities that allow them to change their present interactions, circumstances, and conditions. In this classroom context, Roberto has many opportunities to be successful as a learner, which informs his view of himself as agent and makes enactments of agency possible. For example, Roberto is a third-grade student who uses his writing as a resource to take an agentive stance and transform an imposed identity as a "grandpa" into a third-grade genius that creates a robot to become younger. Also, in these interactions Roberto enacts agency as he applies his writerly life practices to his work with other students. In these moments, Roberto views himself as agent, thus taking agentic action as he participates in a socially, culturally, and historically informed writing workshop. Furthermore, these agentic stances that inform his experiences as a learner could potentially change the course of his life and his future opportunities. Therefore, opportunities for agentic action are the moments that we want for young children as writers and as people.

Opportunities for dynamic shifts of power. This dissertation study reveals the ways in which power is enacted between two best friends as they

discuss ideas for their fairy tales. This reveals how children through their microlevel interactions enact macrolevel notions of power. Macrolevel practices of power are larger systems of power such as the federal government and legislature, or institutions such as the Department of Education or school districts that influence contexts and people at a local site level. At the macrolevel, performances of power instill state and federal mandates on local education institutions influencing curricular decisions, and eventually what happens at the local level. Microlevel practices of power are how these influences are reproduced between people in their interactions in local level contexts.

For example, the southwestern state in which this dissertation takes place is ranked near the bottom for per pupil spending, therefore many federal policies from "No Child Left Behind" that dictate curriculum decisions are implemented as a means to receiving federal money. Thus, a federal policy informs a state policy, which guides district decisions, which then directs a school's practices, and controls what happens in a local classroom. When Manuel and Juan work together as writers, their microlevel practices are informed by macrolevel notions of power. For example, when Manuel and Juan work together as writers, Manuel enacts a more powerful position in their interactions by appropriating macrolevel structures of power to confirm and disconfirm Juan as a writer. As they work together on their writing, Manuel uses the ideas he generates for stories as a way to position himself as smarter than Juan. For Manuel, knowledge is perceived as something that an individual possesses rather than something that is produced in collaboration.

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These macrolevel structures of power also inform their written texts in that in their stories there is always a winner and loser—which is most often determined by the character's gender or strength. Additionally the students use the length of one's story and the size of one's writing to determine another student's story quality and expertise as a writer. For instance, a longer story suggests that it must be better, however, another student can disprove this if they determine it is because the student skipped lines or used bigger handwriting. By examining students' microlevel interactions, it is clear that power is enacted moment-to-moment, and as the power relations shift, children's classroom relations are destabilized. This suggests that students always have opportunities through agentic action to transform their participant status, which in turn impacts their learning.

Returning to the beginning where discussions of public schools and public schooling is being promoted everywhere, this dissertation poses the following questions: Where as educators do we focus our lens? Do we focus it on the political macrolevel structures that suggest that learning is neutral, or should we focus it on the microlevel interactions which suggest that what happens between students as learners is anything but neutral? This dissertation focuses its lens on children's microlevel interactions. From this perspective, it is possible to see how at all moments when children are engaged with other students in learning, they are enacting identities, taking agentive stances, and negotiating the power inherent in classroom contexts, demonstrating that learning is anything but neutral. Additionally, by recognizing the complexity and possibility that takes place when

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children interact with one another in relational work, and that schools are the sites for this relational work, it is possible to see that questions and concerns for education and what's best for children cannot be easily resolved by a documentary, putting new teachers in classrooms, or by renovating a building.

Preservice Teacher Education: Where What Counts in Learning Can Be Applied

This dissertation stimulated by my work as a preservice teacher educator, leads me to consider what this means for preservice teacher education. Current classroom conditions are characterized as high accountability contexts where children are often receiving meaningless curriculum that is rigidly Standards driven. While there may be little that can be done to immediately change these conditions, what is still possible is for teachers to look at children as people. By examining children's enactments of identity, agency, and power in their moment-to-moment interactions, it is possible to see children who are bounded, but not defined.

As a teacher educator, I feel certain about the concern and commitment that preservice teachers bring to the profession. They, too, are trying to carefully navigate these controversial educational times; however, most of the rhetoric they receive is coming from perspectives that narrowly define teaching and learning, thus resulting in limited views of children as learners. According to Lewis et al. (2007), it is even more important now to reveal the roles that identity, agency, and power play in the production of knowledge and literacy as states view reading and writing as neutral skill-based behaviors. For this reason, this dissertation suggests

exposing preservice teachers to the concepts of identity, agency, and power by providing them with the time and space to closely examine what happens between children as they write.

Along with the pedagogical knowledge of teaching and learning writing, I would like to create a space for the preservice teachers to see children as writers and as people. This can be accomplished by having presevice teachers analyze and discuss authentic cases that illuminate the complex ways in which young writers interact. Through these cases, preservice teachers may be able to begin making sense of the complexity of teaching and learning, rather than deducing it to a child's behavior or ability. By carefully examining case studies that illuminate enactments of identity, agency, and power in children's learning, preservice teachers may begin to understand that they are working with students who are learners and people, who have many ways of experiencing, learning, participating, making sense, and being in the world with others. Furthermore, through this understanding, preservice teachers will be able to better understand and value learners' lived knowledge and experiences and consider them part of the learning process, rather than assuming that learning is isolated and sequential. While these ideas are beneficial for preservice teachers, they also can be applied to all teachers as a way to more closely look at their classrooms, their students, and their curriculum. For this reason, this dissertation also suggests that as educators, we need to know where our assumptions about children and learning are coming from.

Limitations to the Study

There were limitations in this dissertation study that are important to identify. First, I am not fluent in Spanish, therefore, when observing the students I may have missed some of their interactions that were not clearly captured on the audio or video recordings, or that took place in areas of the rooms where there were not recording devices. Second, since there was a student teacher in Ms. Rodriguez's classroom the organization of the writing workshop and the amounts of time children were given to write were impacted. Third, the data were collected in the Spring, thus it was interrupted a few times due to mandated state testing and field trips.

At the time of the study, due to the increased emphasis on raising test scores many teachers had abandoned writing instruction to increase the amounts of time given to specialized reading instruction. Therefore, due to the macro influences on education taking place the school was undergoing many curricular changes. These curricular changes also created a different perspective on how writing was taught with an emphasis on more procedural rather than process oriented approaches to instruction. Additionally, when planning for this study I was certain that I wanted to be unobtrusive and keep the setting as natural as possible. For that reason, I did not have the focal students wear microphones. This decision sometimes resulted in distortion of the quality of the recordings because of the children's movement around the classroom. Finally, in this dissertation study I examined the concepts of identity, agency, and power separately. This was a decision I made as a writer and researcher when choosing

what I wanted to illuminate for this study. While I intentionally chose to keep

these complex theoretical lenses separate and teased apart for the purpose of being

able to get a close examination of each one and the ways in which it informed

children's work as writers, I am not neglecting that the concepts of identity,

agency, and power are interrelated. Furthermore, when examining these concepts

of identity, agency, and power in children's actions and interactions, it is clear

that one concept is not more prominent than the other. Thus, as a researcher I

realize the richness of these concepts for what they offer together and separately,

and in my future research I intend to look at how the concepts of identity, agency,

and power work together in children's relational work as writers.

Closing

Literacy learning, and in particular the activity of writing, is a complex

and multilayered process that is not neutral. It is clear that when students engage

together in the production of knowledge and of language, much more is going on

that cannot be simply reduced to a child's behavior, disposition, or capability.

Children, in their relational work, are often in the process of constructing

identities, enacting agency, and negotiating macrolevel and microlevel influences

of power. Writing that takes place in social contexts, such as a writing workshop,

and that emphasizes interactions with others often impacts what students are

learning as well as who they are becoming as writers and as people. This

dissertation explore the concepts of identity, agency, and power to provide an in-

depth analysis of the complexity of what happens between children as they write

to identify how students' relational work impacts them as writers and as people.

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Thus making visible how the concepts of identity, agency, and power can contribute to our understandings of children's literacy learning.

The aim of this dissertation was to bring the conversation back again to what is happening between children as they work together as writers; to momentarily move the conversation away from test scores, academic performance, language competence, failing schools, and the quality of teachers, and instead look at what takes place between students as they engage with one another as writers and as people. Dewey (1938) asks this question:

What avail is it to win prescribed amounts of information about geography and history, to win ability to read and write, if in the process the individual loses his own soul: loses his appreciation of things worth while, of the values to which these things are relative; if he loses desire to apply what he has learned and, above all, loses his ability to extract meaning from his future experiences as they occur? (p. 49)

By examining how identity, agency, and power are enacted while students engage in the activity of writing and participate in a writing workshop this dissertation captures what a particular group of third-grade students deemed worthwhile and relative in their learning. Furthermore, these concepts call attention to the ways in which children maintain their "own souls" (p. 49) as they participate in a writing workshop. Bomer and Laman (2004) point out that along with their academic work, children engage in life work that includes negotiating power, privilege, and closeness with those around them. For this reason paying

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close attention to children's relational work in their learning through the lenses of identity, agency, and power serve as a means to closely examine who students are as learners and as people.

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APPENDIX A

PARENTAL LETTER OF CONSENT FOR MINORS (ENGLISH)

February 20, 2008

Dear Parent:

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Karen Smith in the College of Education at Arizona State University. I am conducting a research study to describe, examine, and understand bilingual students' interactions and talk during participation in a third-grade dual language writing workshop.

I am inviting your child's participation, which will involve observing and taking notes in the classroom daily during the writing workshop. The observations of the writing workshop will include careful recording of the actions and interactions among the students as well as the teacher and students. This project will span from February through May 2008 and may entail: some interviewing of your child about his/her participation in the writing workshop, audio and/or video taping your child (with other children) participating in the writing workshop, and collecting some written materials. The videotapes will be used for the research study only. If you do not wish for your child to be videotaped the camera will be aimed away from them when videotaping, or the camera will be turned off and the researcher will take written notes. Any written materials that are produced will have your child's name and any other identifying characteristics removed.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to have your child participate or to withdraw your child from the study at any time, there will be no penalty, it will not affect your child's grade, treatment or care, in the classroom. Likewise, if your child chooses not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The results of the research study may be published, but your child's name will not be used.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please feel free to call Dr. Karen Smith at (480) 727-7230 or Faryl Kander at --- --- ----. In addition, if you have any questions about you or your child's rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you or your child have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Research Compliance Office, at (480) 965-6788.

Sincerely,

Dr. Karen Smith, Ph.D. and Faryl Kander

If you are willing to have your child participate in this project, it will be necessary for you and your child to sign the enclosed permission form. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. We hope that you will fill it out and return it to _____or _____.

By signing below, you are giving consent for your child _____ to participate in the above study that will include the use of audio and videotaping, and the collection of written materials. These materials will be kept at Arizona State University by Dr. Karen Smith for five years. After this time the research data (the tapes and documents) will be shredded and erased.

- I give permission for my child to be part of the study.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Printed Name   Date

- I give permission for my child to be videotaped for research purposes only.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Printed Name   Date

- I give permission for my child to be audiotaped.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Printed Name   Date

- I give permission for my child to be interviewed.

_____   _____   _____
Signature   Printed Name   Date

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL LETTER OF CONSENT FOR MINORS (SPANISH)

20 de febrero, del 2008

Estimados Padres:

Yo soy una estudiante graduada bajo la dirección de la Dra. Karen Smith del Colegio de Educación en la Universidad Estatal de Arizona. Estoy conduciendo un estudio para describir , examinar, y entender las interacciones de los estudiantes bilingües durante la participación en el taller de escritura en el tercer grado.

Estoy invitando a su hijo(a) a participar en este estudio, el cual, involucra a los restudiantes a observar y tomar notas en el salón de clases durante el taller de escritura. Las observaciones del taller de escritura incluirán grabar acciones e interacciones entre los estudiantes y entre estudiantes y maestros. Este proyecto se efectuara de febrero a mayo del presente ano y puede incluir: entrevistas de los estudiantes sobre su participación en el taller de escritura, grabaciones en video y audio de su hijo(a) hablando con otros estudiantes y la recopilación de algunos ejemplos de escritura. Los videos serán utilzados exclusivamente para el estudio y no para publicidad. Si usted no desea que su hijo sea grabado, la cámera será apuntada a otra dirección o será apagada y yo tomare notas por escrito. Cualquier material escrito será revisado para borrar el nombre y otros datos de identificacion de su hijo(a).

La participación de su hijo(a) en este estudio es voluntario. Si usted decide que su hijo(a) no participe en este estudio o de retirarlo(a) del mismo en cualquier momento, no habrá afectación alguna tanto en las calificaciones como en el trato hacia el estudiante en ningún momento. De la misma forma, si su hijo(a) no desea participar o desea salir del estudio no habrá penalidad alguna. Los resultados del estudio podrán ser publicados, pero el nombre de su hijo(a) no será mostrado.

Si usted tiene preguntas sobre este estudio, favor de llamar a la Dra. Karen Smith al teléfono num. (480) 727-7230 o a Faryl Kander al --- --- ----. Además, si usted tiene preguntas sobre los derechos de su hijo(a) como participante en este estudio, o si siente que la seguridad de su hijo(a) podría estar en riesgo, usted puede contactar a Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, a través de ASU Research Compliance Office, al teléfono num. (480) 965-6788.

Muy atentamente,

Dr. Karen Smith, Ph.D. y Faryl Kander

Si usted autoriza a su hijo(a) participar en este proyecto, es necesario que usted y su hijo(a) firmen una forma. Si usted decide que su hijo(a) no participe o salir del proyecto en cualquier momento, no habrá penalidad alguna. Espero que usted llene esta forma y la regrese al Sr. Bilger o a la Sra. López.

Al firmar la forma que se encuentra a continuación, usted esta otorgando la autorización para que hijo(a) _____ participe en el estudio, el cual incluye videos y recopilación de materiales escritos. Estos materiales van a ser guardados en la Universidad Estatal de Arizona por la Dr. Karen Smith por cinco años. Después de este tiempo los datos del estudio (videos y documentos) serán hechos trizas.

▪ Yo autorizo que mi hijo(a) forme parte del estudio.

_____   _____   _____
Firma   Nombre   Fecha

▪ Yo autorizo que mi hijo(a) sea grabado exclusivamente para propósito del estudio.

_____   _____   _____
Firma   Nombre   Fecha

▪ Yo autorizo que mi hijo(a) sea audio grabado(a).

_____   _____   _____
Firma   Nombre   Fecha

▪ Yo autorizo que mi hijo(a) sea entrevistado(a).

_____   _____   _____
Firma   Nombre   Fecha

APPENDIX C

OBSERVATION NOTES

April 11, 2008

The students are done with their state testing today. They seem very excited to have the regular routines and structures of their classroom back.

The students just found out that their "extensions" are cancelled today. They seem very happy about this as they shouted "yeah" when they heard the news, and that now they will also have more time in the writing workshop.

Mr. Jones begins the lesson talking about fairy tales and demonstrates with a brainstorming web on the board.

Manuel suggests writing a story about The Three Little Pigs and so Mr. Jones uses that as an example on the brainstorming web.

Manuel suggests "a house made of spaghetti and the fox ate it."

Mr. Jones encourages Manuel to come up with more ideas. He suggests "chocolate and brownies."

Berta keeps playing with her led pencil—this has been going on throughout the entire mini-lesson.

Before moving into the independent writing time Mr. Jones provides the students with specific directions:

1. **They are not starting the first draft of the fairy tale, just doing the brainstorming of ideas today.
2. Mr. Jones also reminds them that when they do begin the first draft of their story they are not to just copy the sentences straight from their web, something he noticed that they did on their state test practice. The brainstorming "bubble map can just be words."

**Mr. Jones and Ms. Rodriguez have decided that they want the students to complete a piece of writing in a particular time frame such as 10 days. This is due to an increasing pattern they are seeing of students not finishing the pieces of writing that they are starting. For this reason they are being more specific with the expectations for each day. They also hope that this process of completing writing in a specified amount of time will better prepare the students for fourth grade.

Following the mini-lesson the students select places to sit around the room, which includes tables in the middle or off to the side of the room. Their choices seem to

be motivated by where their friends are sitting. Mr. Jones reminds the students to "make good choices where you sit, and use your time wisely." Once the students are seated a volunteer passes out their writing folders which includes the pieces of writing they are working on and their 'Idea Books." (Similar to a Writer's Notebook).

11:20
Cesar is sitting under the table. It appears to be distracting to the students, but they accept it and do not ask him to move. The plants on the table got knocked over and water has spilled. Everyone at the table is now moving their materials to avoid them getting wet. Ana runs to get paper towels to help clean up the water. Mr. Jones asks Cesar to pick a different spot, since this one apparently is not working.

Ana, Clara, Sandra, Carlos, Omar, and Martin are at the table at the back of the room.

Raul, Oscar, Victor sit at the table to the side of the room with the computers. Cesar joined this table after the plants spilled.

Dora, Roberto, Gabriel, Berta, Jasmin, Hilda, and Jessica are sitting at the table in the middle of the room.

Manuel and Juan are off to the other side of the room sitting in chairs that must have been brought in from Mr. Jones—they are not standard school chairs—they are tall and look more like bar chairs.

11:30

Manuel and Juan appear deeply engaged in their fairy tale brainstorming. They are debating the possibility of a "house made of spaghetti." (Video recorder is placed behind them looking out to the whole classroom. They are not in view of the camera.)

Sandra has now moved tables, after an exchange with Jessica.

Ana is working on her paper. She does not seem distracted by the conversation taking place with the girls next to her.

Jasmin is working on an idea called "The Princess and the Pea."

There is a steady level of noise throughout the classroom. It seems mixed with light conversation and the sharing of ideas for their fairy tales.

<u>11:45</u>
Mr. Jones: "be sure not to just tell ideas, but to write them.

Ana loudly states, "Blah, blah, blah." Not sure who this is to, or what it's about but the other students around her laugh.

<u>12:00</u>
Mr. Jones: "You should have some ideas written down by now."
Clara: "I have two!"
Ana: "I have three!"
Roberto has been writing the entire time today, even while there is lots of activity and conversation around him.

Dora who sits across from Roberto seems to work pretty steadily too.

APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIBED RECORDINGS

Context:

The students are writing fairy tales April 11th-18th following a week of testing. During this time the students are engaged in their familiar writing workshop routine with lots of time given for independent writing. Throughout this time the mini-lessons serve as a reminder for the students of the revision strategies they are expected to use in their papers (i.e. snapshots, thoughtshots, 5 senses, action, problem/solution).

Summary of the day:

This transcript is a conversation between Manuel and Juan and it takes place behind the video camera. Manuel and Juan are behind the camera, off to the side of the room, working near/with/in the tall chairs. The students are writing their first drafts of their fairy tales. There is a lot of activity taking place in the room as the kids get settled into their writing. The students use the literature in the classroom as a resource for their stories.

Transcription/Clip 1:

Speaker	Utterance
Juan:	Let's see, does the, the, the
Manuel:	How do you spell . . . (inaudible)(date?)
Juan:	Ta . . .?
Manuel:	T –A – T—R
Juan:	You're kidding me. Oh wait your doing the first, the first is house of spaghetti. I'm doing another one that has a house of spaghetti.
Manuel:	You copy me
Juan:	I'm going to think of something else
Manuel:	No, not of spaghetti
Juan:	I'm not gonna do spaghetti. . . . Its gonna be funny
Manuel:	Its chocolate?
Juan:	Thank you
Manuel:	I was going to do chocolate too
Juan:	Anyways you said like uh . . . (inaudible)
(Pause)	
Juan:	First is, first is . . . house of, (seems like he is writing while talking)
Manuel:	House of
Juan:	house of chocolate, house of chocolate
Juan:	No, let me do this
Juan:	I told you to draw chocolate (jokingly)
Manuel:	Second house
Juan:	(to F) How do you spell chocolate?

F:	How do you think you spell it?
Juan:	I don't know.
F:	Just guess. Choc. What would it start with?
Manuel:	Choc
Juan:	Ch
F:	Than what
Manuel:	o-c-e
F:	close a
Manuel:	n-e
Juan:	k
F:	choc-co-late, late
Juan:	l, e?
F:	a
Juan:	a, e-t
F:	t-e, you got it!
Juan:	What do you think its gonna be? What's the second one?
Manuel:	Fire!
Juan:	So the wolf can blow, ohhhh, ahhhh. Right! He can blow us the candy off, he can blow the chocolate off
Manuel:	Nooooo!!!! Because what if he hates it?
Juan:	Ok. He hates it. So, and you said fire, and you said fire, right? Second house, second is
Manuel:	Do fire too! Do fire too!
Juan:	Ah, lets see, what else, rhymes with fire?
Manuel:	Mine's gonna be of
Juan:	Fire meyer? (Juan laughs at what he said). Water! (Juan laughs again at his ideas)
Manuel:	Mine's gonna to be of shields, the third one, yeahhhhh, mine's gonna be of shields because it gives you a chance to get in, it'll block you (makes a loud sound)
Juan:	I'll put mirrors
Student:	. . . your story (maybe Pedro) (6:50/Sergio has walked over too)
Juan:	I'll put, I'll put, but you can't
Student:	One, do you . . .boyfriend?
Juan:	Yeah he's the one
Manuel:	Is that a real alligator?
Student:	No.
Juan:	Hey, I got an idea . . .story that . . .he cant blow - - - mirrors!
Student:	The black knight
Manuel:	No, huh?
Student:	The black knight
Student:	I already took that
Student:	Pelia con the white knight
Juan:	lightening, just kidding
Student:	You can do

Student:	Fish!
Juan:	Mine's with --- mine's with gold, mine's with gold he cant blow it up
Manuel:	Yeah he can, what if he robs it?
Juan:	No because its made of cement
Manuel:	No but he can blow it
Juan:	No he can't
Juan (to F):	If you made a stone, and the wolf blow it, would it, would it go down?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

Interview Questions for Students***:

1. Tell me about what you worked on today during writing workshop.

2. Did you work with anybody else? If so, who?

3. How did you choose who to work with?

4. What did you do together?

5. Did anybody choose you today to help then in writing workshop?

6. Did you help them revise or edit?

7. Tell me about what you helped them with when revising or editing.

8. Did you ask anyone to work with you today in writing workshop? If so, who?

9. What happened when you worked together today?

10. Tell me about this piece of writing you are working on.

11. Tell me about this piece of writing you have finished.

*** Please note all of these questions will not be asked at one time and it depends on the work that was being done for that day. Also, the terms writing workshop, revise, and edit are the terms used in the classrooms by the teachers.

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. Tell me about the organization if the writing workshop.

2. When do you intervene and decide if a child should work alone?

3. What do you think happens when the students work together?

4. When looking at the students work, what patterns do you notice about who edits and revises each other's work?

APPENDIX G

RESEARCH MEMO

Wed. Jan. 23rd (Mr. Jones classroom): Today in the classroom the class was discussing community spots as a form of publishing (a new way to publish). When they went to do their independent work I tried to capture as many of the particulars as possible and snippets of conversation, but its really hard. I am working on the role of the researcher: trying to be as un-evasive as possible, yet at the same time capture every single detail. The students seem to recognize me and are very welcoming. They invite me to sit by them. The share time was really interesting today. I am intrigued by Roberto for many reasons: 1) He seems to be a very confident writer; 2) He tends to work alone yet lots of other students utilize him as a resource; 3) He is very meta-cognitive when working; and 4) He seems to be the student that a lot of the kids go to for help. He never seems to mind, and takes an expert role. I am curious to how the other students perceive him, because he does not appear to ever shout out or engage of some of the more disruptive, attention getting behaviors that the other students do. The students during the status of the class all identify what they are going to do (first draft, publish, peer edit/peer revise). When Manuel said that he was going to publish C suggested he sit by himself because "you didn't get much work done yesterday." The kids can usually sit wherever they want (the seats are self-selected by students), although I guess at times C intervenes when he has noticed a concern [I should ask him how often this occurs].

Patterns: Victor is very aware of my presence or any older person's presence in the room. He usually greets me "Hi Teacher" and asked if the 8th grade student

was coming. He likes (wants?) attention. I know from last semester that he tends

to be more vocal (loud) to get attention, but I think he just doesn't realize (kind of

socially unaware). Most of the time he gets along with the other students, while

working he starts, then stops, talks, moves around, and rolls back in his chair to

pass the time.

APPENDIX H

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL LETTER

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

To:	Karen Smith ED
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair Soc Beh IRB
Date:	02/12/2008
Committee Action:	**Exemption Granted**
IRB Action Date:	02/12/2008
IRB Protocol #:	0802002590
Study Title:	An Examination of Writing Workshop: How Talk and Interaction Inform Students' Work as Writers

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1) .

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.   It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.