

City University of New York (CUNY)

CUNY Academic Works

Publications and Research

Queens College

2016

Students' Critical Meta-awareness in a Figured World of Achievement: Toward a Culturally Sustaining Stance in Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Research

Limarys Caraballo
CUNY Queens College

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

More information about this work at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/qc_pubs/355

Discover additional works at: <https://academicworks.cuny.edu>

This work is made publicly available by the City University of New York (CUNY).
Contact: AcademicWorks@cuny.edu

**Students' Critical Meta-awareness in a Figured World of Achievement:
Toward a Culturally Sustaining Stance in Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Research**

Limarys Caraballo
Queens College of the City University of New York

ABSTRACT

Students' academic experiences are often shaped by normalized conceptions of literacy that do not honor the interrelatedness of multiple identities, languages, and literacies. This qualitative case study in an urban middle school highlights students' critical meta-awareness of their identities-in-practice in the figured world of their classroom via a narrative analysis of students' writing, interviews, and focus group discussions. The author focuses on students' internalization and/or resistance within/beyond the curriculum as the basis for developing culturally sustaining stances toward curriculum, pedagogy, and research that actively disrupt cultural, ethnic, racial and epistemological hierarchies of power in academic contexts and beyond.

My goal for this year is to perfect my grammar and punctuation. This is my top goal because in every piece that is written it is important to have this perfected so that readers know exactly what you're trying to say. Furthermore, to talk properly is key in writing. . . I hope that this year I can correct my grammar and perfect my punctuation, because your way of writing is the first impression the reader gets from you. (Laura)

Implicit in Laura's 8th grade goals statement reflects a conceptualization of English language arts (ELA) that is mostly about refining skills in "grammar and punctuation" and talking "properly." Goal statements such as Laura's were assigned informally as journal prompts throughout the academic year or as short responses at the beginning of the fall semester. Her goals make sense, given that her graded assignments from the previous academic year received comments from the teacher that chastised her for being too "conversational" in her writing: "NEVER begin an essay this way—too conversational." Laura incorporates the feedback she has

received from her teachers on her previous assignments into her goals at the beginning of 8th grade ELA, taking up positionalities such as striving to “talk properly,” and mastering the skills necessary to make a good first impression as a writer. Her statement resonates with mainstream narratives about literacy in relation to academic achievement, standardized test scores, and college readiness, yet Laura’s statement also conveys a critical meta-awareness of how “talk[ing] properly” positions her as a certain kind of writer and student.

Souto-Manning observes that although students’ literacy and identity narratives are constructed and negotiated within the context of social and institutional interactions, “by and large, they are analyzed apart from issues of power and/or institutional discourses” (2013, p. 5). As reflected in Laura’s writing goals, students’ academic experiences are often regulated by an understanding of literacy as *autonomous*, consisting of particular reading, writing, and speaking skills that are presumably neutral and can be taught and assessed objectively (Street, 1984). In contrast, an *ideological* framing recognizes literacy as contextual and socially constructed, recognizing the interrelatedness of students’ multiple identities, languages, and literacies, and the critical styleshifting that students engage in as they negotiate mainstream and nondominant contexts (Paris & Alim, 2014).

In this article, I draw upon data from a larger qualitative study to examine how students’ construction and negotiation of multiple identities and literacies in a figured world of achievement challenge us to reconceptualize curriculum and reimagine pedagogies that disrupt marginalizing discourses about literacy. Framed by Holland and colleagues’ (1998) identities-in-practice theory, students’ identifications and positionings in relation to race, ethnicity, gender, class, among many others, are constructed in light of the sociohistorical, contextual, situated nature of identities through their conceptualization of their cultural contexts, or figured worlds.

One such figured world is the classroom in the current high-stakes context of *No Child Left Behind* and *Race to the Top*, where discourses of achievement become more overt, particularly in urban schools under greater scrutiny and regulation than their suburban counterparts (Lipman, 2004). Therefore, I focus on the intersections between students' multiple identities, experiences of literacy and language, and discourses of achievement as they become manifest in the enacted English curriculum at an urban middle school in a large metropolitan city. This article draws from a broader qualitative study of socioeconomically and culturally diverse purposive sample of middle school students' written assignments, school and curriculum documents, student focus group, and semi-structured student and teacher interviews. Through narrative analysis, I explore the liminal spaces between students' home/cultural and academic contexts and document the dynamic ways in which students resist the discursive regulation of their academic identities. Second, I reframe the discipline of ELA as an assemblage of literacy discourses and practices that serve a wide range of interests and propose a stance toward curriculum, pedagogy, and research in education that honors students' multiple identities and literacies. In the broader implications of the study, I discuss incorporating participatory research with youth (YPAR) as a way to put such a stance into practice, broadening what counts as knowledge and curriculum to disrupt power relations between educators and learners as well as individuals, communities, and institutions. More broadly, I argue for a reconceptualization of curriculum that supports students' construction and leveraging of multiple identities as well as a critical meta-awareness of the discourses that regulate their academic contexts.

Theoretical and Scholarly Orientations:

Identities, Literacies, and Achievement in the Classroom and Beyond

Recognizing that classrooms, and schools in general, are inherently evaluative contexts (Jackson, 1994), particularly amidst increasing standardization and accountability, a classroom may be examined as a figured world in which discourses of achievement (i.e., normalized expectations about how to “be” a high-achieving student) become more overt. Students are characterized as achievers when they pass standardized tests, learn “mainstream academic knowledge” (Banks, 1993) and master the dominant “culture of power” (Delpit, 2006) implicit in the enacted curriculum—the curriculum jointly created by students and teachers during instruction (Snyder, Bolin & Zumwalt, 1992). Beyond the explicit curriculum, the “official” course of study (Britzman, 1989; Eisner, 1985), the enacted curriculum is what students and teachers experience in the classroom as a figured world of achievement, in which discourses produce and regulate certain behaviors as acceptable and unacceptable. Discourses also “create ‘social positions’ (perspectives) from which students are ‘invited’ (summoned) to speak, listen, act, read and write, think, feel, believe, and value in certain characteristic, historically recognizable ways, combined with their own individual styles and creativity” (Gee, 1996, p. 128). In other words, these discourses, or ways of conceptualizing achievement in education, shape literacies and inform how students position themselves and interact with, resist, and respond to the enacted ELA curriculum.

The figured world is also the dynamic and discursive context in which students construct multiple identities among and across multiple axes of differentiation (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, class, ability, etc., as in Braidotti, 1994). Among these multiple identities, students’ academic identities as readers and writers factor significantly into students’ construction and negotiation of multiple identities in classroom contexts. In an essay that addresses the connection between identity and literacy, McCarthy and Moje conclude that “identity changes and challenges are, in

fact, what literacy learning are all about” (2002, p. 237). In their dialogic approach to this topic, they consider both the possibility that identities shape people’s textual and literate practices, as well as its converse—“that literate practices play a role in identifications and positionings” (p. 229). As an example, they note that mainstream readers discount graffiti as a textual form, even though it involves letters and related symbol systems, because of its association with deviant behaviors. Similarly, educators make instructional decisions about what texts (and even how much reading to assign) based on their beliefs about their students (Anyon, 1980; Apple, 1990) and their identities as readers (Sarris, cited in McCarthy & Moje, 2002) and writers (Ball, 2002). These instructional decisions, in turn, have a significant impact on the figured worlds in which students construct their identities as readers and writers.

Furthermore, the prominent role of languages and literacies in students’ negotiations of academic, racial, and ethnic identities (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000; Kinloch, 2010; Lee, 2007; Paris, 2009) invites an analysis of how students position themselves within the discourses of schooling and/or their home communities and to what effects. It is well documented that there is a connection between students’ use of home literacies, including languages, slang, and/or dialects, and perceptions of success or failure by school personnel and society at large (Ball, 2009; Fordham, 1999; Kinloch, 2005; Knight, 2003; Pollock, 2004; Sealey-Ruiz, 2005). These marginalizing discourses can be obscured by rhetorics of equity and access in achievement-driven figured worlds. For example, culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) is sometimes misappropriated; educators may use CRP to increase awareness of diverse cultures and increase students’ access to mainstream norms and literacies, yet fail to help students develop critical perspectives about the power relations, policies, and practices that impact their communities relations at play (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Building upon CRP to address the complexity of social

inequalities, particularly in relation to the role of home languages and literacies in a more expansive knowledge of culture, culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) challenges educators and researchers to address the marginalization of nondominant languages and literacies in order to better meet the needs of students and work to sustain the rich and multiple identities and literacies that they already possess (Paris, 2012).

Context and Research in A Figured World of Achievement

Informed by an identities-in-practice practice lens, my analysis builds on the assumption that students' identities, literacies, and experiences of the enacted curriculum are interrelated and situated in the figured world of the ELA classroom. The guiding questions for this article focus on 1) how students' multiple identities and literacies mediate their experiences of the enacted curriculum in the figured world of the classroom; 2) how educators respond to students' experiences and participation; and 3) what educators and scholars can learn from students negotiations in order to better support students' multiple identities and literacies in academic contexts.

The larger mixed-methods multi-case study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) from which the data for this analysis was drawn at Northeastern Urban Academy, a selective public middle school in a large city, consisted of student and teacher interviews, field notes from 33 classroom observations in the same 8th grade class over the course of a semester, and 8th graders' self-published student profiles, identity questionnaires, and writing portfolios. Prior to collecting data for the study, I had worked with some of the middle school teachers as part of the school's professional development activities, and had begun to get to know many of the students during some of their curricular and enrichment programs. I was interested in the school's stated mission to offer a rigorous academic program, on par with the most selective (and less diverse) schools in

the city, to what NUA defined as “high achieving” students from very diverse urban neighborhoods.

In 2007-2010, the student population of 100 students per grade had a fairly even gender balance and consisted of approximately 50% Hispanic or Latino/a, 25% White/Caucasian, 12% African American or Black, and 10% Asian, South Asian, or Middle Eastern students from three school districts encompassing a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Students were eligible to apply to the school if they had scores of 3 or 4 (Proficient or Excellent) in both their Math and ELA standardized state assessments and a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher. Nonetheless, meeting the school’s academic goals proved challenging for some students. In spring 2008, the school’s assessment data indicated a wide distribution of student performance in ELA. At the end of their second semester, 24 out of 94 (26%) 6th grade students had semester grades below passing in ELA (less than 70% semester grade average); of these 24 students, 21 (87.5%) were Black or Latin@. To qualitatively examine these experiences and negotiations among students in this grade, I invited a gender-balanced group of eight students of color that reflected the achievement range in the class and expressed a willingness to engage in self-reflexive conversations about their experiences in class and their construction of identities. In addition to class observations, I conducted two interviews with each participant and one focus group discussion with all of the focal students.

A key assumption in my data analysis is that students’ narratives of their curricular experiences and their versions of themselves in the ELA classroom context, as elicited in interviews and present in their written work, are connected to the construction of their multiple identities and experience of literacy practices. As Souto-Manning proposes, Critical Narrative Analysis (CAN) demonstrates that “when individuals make sense of their experiences through

narratives, they bring together the micro (personal) and the macro (social or institutional) situations in place” (2012, p. 5). This constructive process of “world making” is the main function of the human mind, according to Bruner, and “recounting” one’s life, or experiences, is an “interpretive feat” that takes place within broader discourses and contexts (2004/1987, p. 691-693). I build upon Bruner’s concept of world making to understand the narrative process through which students construct and negotiate identities, as students construct themselves by building upon the “narratives” that are available to them in the figured world of the classroom.

Similarly, while it is important to create a context and background in which to present the study’s participants, I resist the tendency to provide neat profiles or descriptions. In keeping with the notion of world making, as well as to disrupt notions of representation in creating profiles about participants, I briefly introduce the student and teacher participants highlighted in this article based on their self-identifications in various data sources--interviews, web profiles, and the work they did in the class. These brief “pen portraits” (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000) are meant to be rhizomatic (non-ordered, non-directional) rather than linear, composed out of the data in order to draw some points of connection between and among multiplicities of selves, rather than as attempts to “make sense” or “reconcile” demographic or personal backgrounds with their academic identities and experiences (Ochs & Capp, 1996).

Jason was born the city where he lives and attends school, and had close ties to his family in Nicaragua (where his parents were born and he visits his relatives about once a year). He often wrote about family in his journal whenever there is an opportunity to “freewrite.” He shared that he is very proud of being Nicaraguan and was adamant in his interview about not pretending to be “someone [he is] not.” He spoke only Spanish at home as a young child and then learned to speak English once he started going to school.

Laura was also born in the city and her parents, who were born and raised in the Dominican Republic (DR), speak English and are occasionally able to help her with her homework. Laura was good friends with many other students at the school who shared a similar cultural background, but she seemed to have less ties to the DR than other participants whose families were from there. In an interview, Laura shared her disappointment about never having made it to the Principal's Scholars list that was published each semester to recognize students whose grade point average was a "A" or above 90%.

Lina was born in the United States to Dominican and Panamanian parents, and currently lives with her grandmother. She reported that she worked hard to complete assignments and commented favorably about classes in which she felt she learned "new" things. Depending on context and association, and in order to fit in with peers, Lina interchangeably positioned herself as "smart girl" or an "average girl." In elementary school, she had been bullied for being a good student, but at NUA she became increasingly comfortable with an academic identity as a "high-achiever."

Manuel was the only focal participant born in the Dominican Republic. Like the other Dominican participants, Manuel conveyed much pride in his heritage and often referred to being Dominican as a way to describe himself and his likes/dislikes, including preferences regarding music and fashion. He shared that his parents do not speak English and that this makes it more difficult for him to get help with his homework, and felt that he was at a disadvantage in comparison to his middle-class White classmates.

Unlike the other student participants, Jenna grew up in an affluent neighborhood that is a short bus ride away from the school. She identified as bi-racial – half-Korean and half-White. She shared that although her parents "both graduated from Ivy League schools," they had fairly

different attitudes about learning and grades. Her father and his family were more relaxed about grades, while her mother insisted that she be done with her homework before she took part in any co-curricular activities. Jenna described herself as “artsy” and liked to write.

The students’ ELA teacher, Ms. Brian, a White woman in her mid 20s, had recently graduated from a teacher preparation program. Initially a film major, Ms. Brian felt that her work in media and communications had lacked purpose, but was enthusiastic about teaching and “connecting” with students. Ms. Brian’s ELA classes followed the school’s scope and sequence faithfully, although she expressed anxiety about being able to “cover” the number of texts required. She usually made decisions about when a unit would begin or end depending on how long it took to “get through” a particular text or assignment. She shared that she felt overwhelmed, at times, by the overall demands of her job and wished she could manage some aspects of it better, such as communicating with parents about their students’ grades.

Working from these self-identifications, in addressing students’ construction of multiple identities in the context of this figured world, even a macro-discursive and constructivist approach may invite an understanding of narratives as ordered, albeit subjective and flawed versions or representations of experiences (Ochs & Capps, 1996, p. 19). To emphasize the recursive nature of narrative world making in documenting and examining students’ ELA experiences, I invoke Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) notion of *assemblage*, a composite machinistic structure made up of a plethora of related or unrelated parts. Understanding students’ narratives as assemblages allows them to be read as “not fixed or static” representations, but rather composites that encompass their multiple identities, experiences, depicts a “constantly shifting set of relations” (Walkerline, 2007, p. 33) among these multiple identities, positionings, and discourses. In a similar manner, students’ (and teachers’) understanding of what it takes to

1
2
3 achieve in the class is assembled from the versions of ELA that are made available in the figured
4
5 world of achievement. In the following sections, I examine how discourses of achievement
6
7 produce versions of ELA and literacy that are rhizomatically, rather than linearly or
8
9 progressively, interrelated and overlapping, and invoke particular selves-in-practice in classroom
10
11 contexts.
12
13

14 **Assembling ELA among Conceptions of Literacy and Discourses of Achievement**

15
16 An identities-in-practice lens renders visible a multiplicity of positionalities that are
17
18 simultaneously available in the classroom as teachers and students enact the curriculum
19
20 (Caraballo, 2013). Therefore, in the same way that students' identities are assemblage of these
21
22 positionalities and selves-in-practice, the ELA curriculum can be understood as an assemblage of
23
24 the multiple literacies, discourses, and purposes that make up the discipline of ELA. In
25
26 conceptualizing ELA as assemblage, I first address how the student participants'
27
28 conceptualizations of ELA impact their experiences and contribute to the enacted ELA
29
30 curriculum at NUA. I document the narratives of tension, resistance, and hope that students
31
32 construct as they carve spaces for their own in-practice narratives of identity and experience
33
34 within and beyond existing literacy practices. These constructions and negotiations,
35
36 demonstrative of students' critical meta-awareness, challenge us to reconceptualize curriculum.
37
38 Approaching curriculum as assemblage, particularly ELA as assemblage, supports the richness
39
40 of the various identities and literacies that students construct in and beyond schools and
41
42 classrooms and contributes to culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris, 2012) in the interest of
43
44 equity and social justice.
45
46

47
48 As discussed above in relation to Laura's narrative about writing "properly" in her ELA
49
50 journal, the student participants' conceptualizations of ELA exemplify some among multiple
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

possible purposes of the subject and discipline. An assemblage incites us to imagine how versions of ELA exist simultaneously in the classroom context and mediate students' experiences of the curriculum. It also marks, by omission, the literacies and identities that are excluded from the curriculum--what Eisner (1985) describes as the null curriculum, or "all that is not selected as well as all that occurs but remains unnamed and unacknowledged" (Britzman, 1989, p. 149). Building upon and beyond research that examines students' academic experiences in classroom contexts (DeBlase, 2003; Nasir et al., 2009; Tan & Barton, 2008, Vetter et al., 2011), the intersections between/among students' and teachers' critical awareness of discourses of achievement in curriculum demonstrate how such discourses frame literacy as autonomous rather than embedded in classed, raced, and gendered power relations. Building upon students' critical meta-awareness of these discourses is not only a sociocritical and political literacy exercise essential to a critical English education (Morrell, 2005), it also invites students to work toward shaping the discourses that regulate their educational experiences.

The Centrality of Discourse: Literacy and Beyond

A curriculum is an important socializing device that mediates "students' thinking and identities in particular" (Burrows & Smagorinsky, 2009, p. 173). Conceptions of success and failure are embedded in the enacted curriculum, and "teachers' and students' spoken and written texts shape and construct policies and rules, knowledge, and, indeed, 'versions' of successful and failing students" (Luke, 1995, p. 11) in the ELA middle school classroom at NUA. Students' conceptualizations of ELA and of achieving in ELA illustrate some of the ways in which the discourses that regulate the world of achievement and literacy at NUA function to further stratify students from diverse backgrounds (Au & Raphael, 2000).

As a diverse selective school committed to “giving minorities, especially . . . an equal opportunity at education” (Ms. Brian), the privileged status of academic literacy at NUA was reified as the school strove to produce “graduates exceptionally well qualified and distinctive for purposes of college admissions” (Principal, Welcome Letter). The letter invokes the assumption that being highly “educated” provides equal access to high status positions in our meritocratic society (Hurn, 1993): “The [NUA] academic experience [will] distinguish our graduates from others” and has “advantages for selective college admissions and for marketplace.” The association between subjects such as ELA, achievement, and socioeconomic progress/individual advancement is reflected in Jenna’s goal statement:

I want to get the best grades, but more importantly, to learn a lot because both of these subjects [ELA and math] will be important in my future, whether I pursue a career directly involving one of these subjects or not.

For Jenna, who wanted to “get the best grades” as well as “learn a lot,” “grades and learning are connected, and if [she] can get top grades and have learned a lot, [she] will know I have achieved my goal.”

In pursuit of these objectives, the course description privileges an autonomous literacy model (Street, 1984, 1995) that aligns with the way in which students’ skills will be assessed in state tests and exams. The four skill sets referenced, “reading, writing, listening, and speaking,” correspond with the state’s ELA standards and the state’s core curriculum (Hillocks, 2002).

In contrast, when filtered through an ideological literacy model (Street, 1984, 1995), “the issues, choices, and factors” that influence who students are and become would be viewed through the lens of the multiple social practices that students bring with them to the classroom. At NUA, as in secondary (middle and high school) English curriculum in general, “attention to

literacies has largely been confined to knowledge and practices involved in the reading of literature” (Burroughs & Smagorinsky, 2009, p. 171) and the assumption that “the essayist form of literacy--dominant in western academic circles--is the only desirable form” (Au & Raphael, 2000, p. 170). While the ELA curriculum at NUA encouraged students’ creativity and explored various means of self-expression in the lower grades by incorporating projects such as an interview project and a “rap” writing assignment as part of their 6th grade year-long thematic study of identity, the focus in the upper grades became increasingly circumscribed by the pressures of accountability and the need for the school to stand out as a college- and career-preparatory school for a diverse group of students, with “test preparation integrated into the curriculum” that would teach students to master the “skills assessed [by State] English Language arts tests and national ELA-focused exams” (ELA Course Description).

Standardization and normalization thus “entered” the NUA ELA classroom in both explicit and implicit ways. Although Ms. Brian’s goal as a teacher, as stated in interviews, was initially to “make kids into lifelong readers” and “phenomenal writers,” rather than preparing them for an exam, teachers were encouraged by the administration to meet and discuss how to incorporate test-taking strategies into the content that they planned to address in order to maximize students’ performance on the exam. As Ms. Brian shared, despite her own perspective on what is “so lost in” assessing students’ work via “standardized editing” (a reference to the school’s standardized essay rubric), she was torn between what she wanted her class to be “about,” and the school’s reputation as “a really rigorous academic program”:

We’re supposed to be a really rigorous academic program, but I don’t know. . . . I understand that certain standards have to be met, and have to be assessed somehow, but I think there’s just something that’s so lost in, in assessing kids, based on giving them, you

know, standardized editing, and I don't know. Cause I really don't want that to be what my class is about.

Standardizing assessment of students' writing is a way to maintain "rigorous" and "objective" standards. This academic paradigm discredits what is outside the norm as inferior, substandard (Ladson-Billings, 2000), or not "rigorous" enough. Although Ms. Brian did not want to "teach to the test," for NUA to be the "strictly academic type of school that it's trying to be," she found herself to be in the position of "producing academics."

In the same vein, the desire to be challenged and a rhetoric of edification/enlightenment via education are associated with particular behaviors and attitudes that are essential to being framed as "intelligent" or "intellectual." ELA presumably offers an opportunity to "all students" to "challenge" themselves as students and convey the expectation that high achievers are self-motivated, successful, and ethical--in order words, model citizens in a democratic society (Banks, 2008; Popkewitz, 1998). Yet some students of color found themselves associated with non-academic behaviors and attitudes (Caraballo, 2012b). During a focus group discussion with the other student participants, Jason proposed that faculty and students believed that "Hispanics are loud, and we are always failing." Jason's impression of how he was positioned as a "Hispanic" student draws explicit connections the students made between attributions about being loud and academic expectations. Students like Laura, who wished to be recognized academically as a principal's scholar, were aware that there are particular enactments of literacy and achievement that they should perform in order to make the grade and achieve academic success. The gap between the explicit/visible and implicit/(in)visible expectations is particularly difficult for lower-income students of color to bridge because they are less likely to come from backgrounds whose parents or close family members are immersed in academic contexts and are

privity to some of their unwritten rules.

Narratives of Tension, Resistance, and Hope in ELA and Beyond

The teacher and student participants' narratives and documents thus used to assemble the versions of ELA that are enacted in the curriculum at NUA demonstrate how literacy is framed and assessed in ways that overlook the wealth of students' cultural literacies (Street, 1995) and linguistic repertoires (Rymes, 2011). However, despite the hegemonic function of academic literacies, however, student participants carve out spaces in which to construct and reconstruct versions of themselves amidst the literacy events in which they engage, contributing to the multiplicity of ELA as assemblage. In examining students' consumption and creation of texts as they negotiate the space between their home/cultural communities and the figured world of achievement in ELA, liminal spaces between worlds become evident. Students continuously, and intuitively, construct identities around intersections between their experiences in and out of the classroom. From an ideological perspective, the sociocultural nature of literacies emphasizes that the literacy skills "measured" by standardized tests at best overlook and at worst oppress the multiple literacies that students cultivate and bring to their academic contexts, so that "students of diverse backgrounds often appear highly literate and accomplished when literacies other than those of the school are considered" (Au & Raphael, 2000, p. 173).

The assumption that literacy is a collection of measurable skills "leaves unexamined" the idea that literacy "is instead a cultural practice" (Au & Raphael, 2000, p. 173) and ignores the many different ways in which children and adolescents are socialized into various literacies and literacy practices in their peer groups, homes, and communities (see Heath, 1983; Lee, 2007; Kinloch, 2011, among others). The literacy practices in students' home lives, such as translating for parents who do not speak English, writing rap poetry, or Bible study at their church, offer

1
2
3 them opportunities to participate in their family's and community's social literacies (Bloome &
4
5 Enciso, 2006; Orellana et al., 2003; Saracho, 2007; Winn & Ubiles, 2011).
6
7

8
9 At NUA, students constructed identities-in-practice within and beyond the classroom that
10 reflected the multiple literacies and contexts that they negotiated on a regular basis. Manuel, for
11 example, had consistently low or borderline grades in ELA¹ and several teachers had wondered
12 whether he had a learning disability. Nonetheless, Manuel self-identified as a writer. He drew
13 upon his own conception of literacy to reject the framing of reading and writing in the context of
14 the current ELA class, arguing instead in an interview that ELA is supposed to be “about writing
15 and being yourself and like expressing yourself.” Although it is possible that Manuel critiqued
16 the ELA curriculum due to his marginal “success” in the classroom, the dichotomy that he
17 describes between “being yourself” and “expressing yourself” is connected to the tensions
18 students negotiated in connection to “being loud” and being “polite,” “smart,” or “academic.”
19 Ms. Brian's assessment of Manuel's writing, which she described in an interview as often “not
20 making sense” is also in direct contrast to his self-identification as a writer.
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35

36 **Sites of Resistance in ELA and Beyond**

37
38 Like Manuel, other student participants resisted various aspects of their ELA coursework
39 or the academic expectations of their teachers and administrators in different ways and for
40 different reasons, and they authored identities-in-practice in connection with these experiences in
41 the context of the enacted curriculum. Jason, who negotiated multiple identities as a Latino male
42 and a “borderline” good student, wrote a journal entry critiquing his teachers' requirement that
43 students use assigned vocabulary words in freewriting assignments as “hypocritical”:
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52

53 I am not sure what to write with my journal since we can write anything we want to

54 because [Ms. Brian] always said she just wants us to write, and it doesn't matter about
55
56
57

58 ¹ At NUA, grades and grade point averages below 70% were considered “below passing.”
59
60

1
2
3 anything. So yeah, that is pretty hypocritical how it says FREEWRITE but then it says
4
5
6 “Use as many vocabulary words as possible.” So why doesn’t she just say use as many
7
8 words as possible instead of saying FREEWRITE.

9
10 Although Jason spoke in several instances about the importance of doing well in school in order
11
12 to accomplish his long term goals of having a career and supporting a family, he struggled to see
13
14 the “point” of some of what he had to do in school. He often wrote in his journal about not
15
16 having anything to write about, and eventually began to question the motives behind the
17
18 “opportunities” to “freewrite” provided in English class.
19

20
21
22 Jason’s “reading” of the assigned writing prompt starkly contrasts Ms. Brian’s intended
23
24 use of “open” journal prompts as opportunities for students to draw upon their own experiences
25
26 in the midst of increasingly standardized curricula.
27

28
29 I don’t want to ruin writing. You know, I want them to still feel that they want to write
30
31 creatively. . . . Sometimes I feel, especially when I first came to this school, I felt a little
32
33 bit like, creativity was a little bit sort of—creativity in the sense of like, the arts—was a
34
35 little bit like, crushed. A little bit. Because the academic standards are really high,
36
37 sometimes I feel a little bit like there’s not a lot of wiggle room for—[sighs] for just
38
39 messing around creatively. (Ms. Brian)
40
41
42

43
44 While Ms. Brian planned “Friday Freewrites” as an opportunity for students to write more
45
46 creatively and from their own perspectives, “there’s not a lot of wiggle room” in the curriculum
47
48 for literacy practices that are not as explicitly related to the goals and objectives of the class. As a
49
50 result, the Friday Freewrites were co-opted by vocabulary practice.
51

52
53 According to Bourdieu’s (1970, 1977) theory of cultural and social reproduction, cultural
54
55 worlds are reproduced as individuals develop strategies based on the implicit or explicit
56
57
58
59
60

1
2
3 expectations of the social worlds that they inhabit. Building upon Bourdieu’s theory of cultural
4
5 and social reproduction, Holland et al. (1998) frame individuals as both agents and subjects—in
6
7 the process of socialization, “practice is always informed by a sense of agency” but the limits
8
9 and possibilities of agency only make sense in relation to cultural contexts (Webb, Schirato, &
10
11 Danaher, 2002, p. 36).² Seeing through this veiled “opportunity” to express himself in the
12
13 context of his ELA class via journal freewrites, Jason saw the assignment for what it had
14
15 become—a way to get students to practice their vocabulary words.
16
17

18
19
20 If we see “writing as a socially-constructed meaning-making activity” (Sperling, 2003),
21
22 his response to this journal prompt, in particular, demonstrates how Jason worked through some
23
24 of his thoughts about what regulates classroom spaces while writing in his ELA journal. He
25
26 directly critiques Ms. Brian’s lack of explicitness about her objectives by choosing to “freewrite”
27
28 about the fact that there is no real opportunity for him to write freely. These sites of resistance
29
30 complicate the reliance on best practices and other pedagogical approaches that attempt to
31
32 address the needs of “all students” in the current context of increased standardization and high-
33
34 stakes testing. Minoritized students like Laura, Lina, and Jason, in particular, negotiate power
35
36 relations in the classroom that are obscured by generalized discourses of achievement and
37
38 normalized expectations about what it means to be a “high-achieving” student. Lina’s experience
39
40 with participation, for example, demonstrates some of these tensions as well, and illustrates a
41
42 different kind of resistance. According to Lina’s 8th grade goal statement, she earned a “D” in
43
44 English (<70% grade average) during the previous academic year due to a “lack of participation
45
46 and focus:”
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56

57
58 ² The term “agency” refers to the capacity for human action and improvisation amidst “powerful and hegemonic”
59
60 cultural and social regimes (Holland et al., 1998, p. 277).

Trying to focus and participate is very important especially in English class. Therefore, my goal for eighth grade is to focus and participate in English. This is important because last year I got a “D” in English because of my lack of participation and focus due to a lot of distractions. It’s crucial that I am attentive in class and forget about all the distractions surrounding me. This will not only help me ace English, but help me with other subjects I am not focusing in and or participating in.

In this statement, written at the beginning of the academic year, Lina stated that her goals were to participate because her lack of focus had led to her low grade. Well into that academic year, during the interview for the study, her thoughts about participation conveyed a complexity that was obscured by discourses of effort/ability and a simple commitment to greater focus. Lina was uncomfortable participating during open class discussions in which students were invited to share their opinions because she felt insecure about other students being more “right” than her in the evaluative context of the classroom. Her anxiety affected her willingness to contribute to class discussions in ELA, even though her journals indicate that she had many insights about the reading and made connections between her own experiences and her school assignments. In her interview, when I asked her to comment on her class participation in ELA, she responded:

Lina: So...when you participate you’re giving your opinion. That’s what basically it is, or your thought of something. But then in ELA, I don’t participate at all...it’s just, I’m not, um, comfortable sharing my opinion...because, you don’t wanna risk that when people are saying, when you say, “Oh, I think this is you know this and this and this,” and then somebody’s over there arguing, “No, you’re wrong.” And then, when you think about it, it’s like they have a better reason than you... so it’s better not to share because the other person is probably always gonna be

right. So, I don't like sharing, and then Ms. Brian calls on me randomly; it bothers me a lot...because I understand the question and I can have a thought of it but I just don't wanna share it.

Limarys: Why do you think that the other person's reason is going to be more correct?

Lina: Because probably they're gonna say something that makes more sense to the question than you are. So, it's like, they're providing more of a thought than you are to what the question is. . . . Which I think is really important but . . . I don't like sharing my opinions in class.

Because she struggles with how to explicitly convey the implicit expectation of being "right" or making the most "sense to the question" in class, Lina ultimately personalizes her lack of participation as caused by her own discomfort alone rather than part of a greater classroom context. This exchange also brings into focus how Ms. Brian's "randomly" calling on students, perhaps an attempt to invite more students' perspectives into the discussion, exacerbates the dynamic. In the midst of this complex intersection of pedagogical interests and students' positionalities, discourses in the figured world of achievement at NUA "enter" the classroom space and impact Lina's experiences of the enacted curriculum.

In conjunction with the earlier discussion about "being loud," identities and curricular experiences are seen as interrelated with the discourses at work in the enacted ELA curriculum. Lina contributes in a way that is inconsistent with her "loud" self-characterization. Although she frequently volunteers to assist with class duties and is attentive during class, Lina excludes herself from most class discussions by positioning herself as unlikely to be "right." In the 33 class observations I conducted, Lina participated in a large group setting only four times--when she was called on specifically during discuss or to present her work. Lina's identity-in-practice

positions her as a “loud girl” who is fairly silent in the classroom, suggesting a connection between a “loud” identity-in-practice and a student who is less likely to offer the most thoughtful answer when other students are “gonna say something that makes more sense to the question” than she would. Her reluctance to participate in class and make herself vulnerable academically also contributes to Lina’s being positioned by her teachers as someone who needs to be more vocal in the learning process and not “afraid to ask for help when necessary” (Ms. Brian).

Although perhaps Lina internalized some of these expectations about participation in characterizing herself unwilling to share her opinion, she carved out different ways to participate in the classroom, such as passing back papers and taking notes, in which she was less likely to be judged. Rather than being completely alienated by her “silence” during class discussion, Lina constructed other ways in which to participate (Boler, 2005), even though these were not as valued as the conventions of academic exchange and debate in the figured world of achievement at NUA. The range of students’ experiences of curriculum offers a sense of the agentic ways in which students respond to and resist marginalizing discourses of achievement, underscoring the need to consider the alternative literacies and practices that students bring to the enacted curriculum, as well as making explicit their disruption of alienating discourses.

Sustaining “Critical” Literacies and Meta-awareness in ELA Curriculum and Pedagogy

According to McLaren, critical literacy has the potential to “create a citizenry critical enough to both analyze and challenge the oppressive characteristics of the larger society so that a more just, equitable, and democratic society can be created” (Carlson, 1993 p. 238). Rather than perpetuating theoretical and ideological binaries that can overlook relations within and among overlapping and shifting identities and positionalities in multiple figured worlds (Caraballo, 2011), scholars, researchers, and educators might support and sustain students’ multiple identity

and literacy construction by deliberately nurturing their negotiation of a broad range of discursive spaces and figured worlds as part of the enacted curriculum. As Guerra (2011) theorizes, framing minoritized students' lives in multiple worlds as negotiating life in the neither/nor, a rhizomatic conceptualization of the third space (Gutierrez, 2008) between students' institutional and local contexts, "awakens within each of us a nomadic consciousness that requires a dynamic set of nimble, self-reflexive, and tactical capabilities" (Guerra, 2011, p. 10).

Raising students' and educators' critical consciousness regarding the (in)visible impact of discursive practices in and around curriculum and achievement is crucial to social justice agendas in education, though such a consciousness alone will not entirely dismantle the hegemonic structures in schools and society nor protect students of color and their communities from operating in, between, and among oppressive and marginalizing contexts. The student participants' multiple literacies practices and versions of ELA in this study illustrate how they negotiate who they understand themselves to be against whom they think they are "supposed" to be in the figured world of achievement. Overall, conceptualizing curriculum as assemblage points to the interrelatedness of negotiations of identities and negotiations of literacy events and curriculum—that students negotiate identities-in-practice (such as being "loud" or a "Hispanic who is always failing and stuff") with all that is discursively associated with the high-achieving academic identities that they are expected to cultivate and perform in this figured world. As Guerra (2004) reflects regarding the narratives of a young woman born in rural Mexico with whom he worked for many years, contrary to his own expectations as a critical pedagogue, her consciousness did not "move inexorably from a false or naive perspective to a self-reflective and critical one; instead, it jumps unsteadily and unpredictably between and among a variety of possibilities" (p. 28). As students are positioned and position themselves as negotiators of

multiple worlds, it is imperative for educators develop tools to facilitate and support them in their negotiations by conceptualizing ELA less as an academic discipline defined by content knowledge and a certain set of interpretive, expressive, and communicative skills (e.g., an underlying assumption of the Common Core State Standards, 2011) and more as an assemblage of multiple discourses, interests, assumptions, and practices.

While the critical process of conscientização (Freire, 1992) begins an agentic trajectory within and beyond multiple identity intersections and power relations in schools and society, the assumption that persons remain “liberated” once a state of critical consciousness has been reached can lead to stagnation in any movement, and has the potential to reify binaries of power and dominance. Nonetheless, students, educators, and researchers can build upon the work of critical scholars in nurturing a nomadic consciousness (Guerra, 2004)--one that can travel between multiple worlds and negotiate dynamic power relations as they become manifest in society and in educational institutions, among other contexts. Framing identities, literacies, and discourses of achievement as interrelated exposes curriculum and pedagogy as raced, classed, and gendered, rather than neutral centers students’ and teachers’ inherently critical meta-awareness of their educational and social contexts as key to future agendas in education research and reform. In making various parts of this assemblage explicit, Lina’s self-assessment regarding speaking up in class and Ms. Brian’s evaluation of her contribution become visible, revealing a particular curriculum of participation in ELA. Similarly, Laura’s literacy experiences in relation to the feedback she received from her teacher and her ELA goals statement overlaps with Jason’s critique of the ELA journal assignments that mask explicit vocabulary instruction as “freewriting,” and both exemplify the multiplicity of interests and purposes that make up ELA curriculum and pedagogy.

Theorizing ELA as assemblage can thus render visible, to students as well as teachers, a multiplicity of ELAs that intersect with their identities and literacies as the curriculum is enacted in their figured world of achievement. This kind of engagement with curriculum also supports a praxis in which teachers demonstrate a greater meta-awareness of the interrelatedness between what they know and have learned about teaching and learning and students' knowledge and experiences. Rather than perpetuating the uncritical internalization of discourses of achievement that shape their figured worlds, students and educators can co-construct curriculum and pedagogies of hope that make explicit the critical and multiple ways in which students negotiate and reframe their academic experiences (Caraballo, 2012a). As both teachers and students assume a learner's stance, culturally sustaining curriculum and pedagogies build on and from minoritized students' emergent critical consciousness to support their leveraging of literacies and discourses in academic contexts and beyond.

Implications and Future Directions:

Toward a Culturally Sustaining Stance in Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Research

As suggested by their titles, policies such as *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) and *Race to the Top* (RTT) frame minoritized students as lacking and inadequate, trailing behind and racing to catch up. As they frequently overlook the resources that students bring to educational contexts, these policies also increasingly limit teachers' autonomy in the development and implementation of curriculum due to the pressure of high-stakes assessments, particularly in urban schools (Costigan, 2008; Tanner, 2013). The growing standardization of curriculum and assessment ironically contributes to discrepancies between the experiences of minoritized students in urban schools and their suburban White middle-class peers (Darling-Hammond, 2004), who are less likely to be subject to a test prep curriculum that ultimately restricts students' access and

preparedness for college (Knight & Marciano, 2013).

In the broadest sense, my research seeks to generate dialogic spaces at the intersection of curriculum, pedagogy, and research that incorporate students' critical meta-awareness of identity, literacy, and discourses of achievement in accountability-driven academic contexts that marginalize minoritized populations. Given these regulatory discourses of achievement, the possibilities in reconceptualizing the discipline of ELA as an assemblage of multiple discourses are often overshadowed by increasing standardization and a dominant narrative about students' college and career readiness. However, authentic preparation for college and life must also be culturally relevant (Knight & Marciano, 2013) in an increasingly global and multicultural society. In order for students' cultures and literacies to be honored and sustained amidst current research and policy trends in education, curriculum and pedagogy must become increasingly critical in nature and purpose.

One area of possibility to generate such dialogic spaces for critical literacy education and college preparation exists at the intersection of curriculum, pedagogy, and participatory research. As McIntyre (2000) argues, "engaging in a process that positions youth as agents of inquiry and as 'experts' about their own lives" (p. 126) broadens their critical meta-awareness of the realities surrounding them. Youth participatory action research (YPAR) encourages students to create plans of action that are inspired by hope in their potential to affect change in their world. In the years since McIntyre's participatory work with youth on how violence is constructed in their communities, YPAR projects have positioned youth as knowers, researchers, and agents of change in areas ranging from racial injustice (Torre, 2005) and school reform (Rubin & Jones, 2007) to students' critical literacy experiences (Morrell, 2008), as well as a myriad related educational, socioeconomic, political, and structural issues.

YPAR consists of the collective investigation of a problem; relies on the knowledge of those most directly affected/involved; is driven by a desire to take action; and engages youth in addressing issues of social inequality (Morrell, 2006). Grounded in the belief that empowered and engaged as well as *literate* citizens are crucial to achieving equity and inclusiveness in society, students, community-members, and institutional participants come together through YPAR in a “conscious effort to disrupt or call into question this paradigm of knowledge production” (p. 7). In this sense, participatory approaches can bear an integral role in the reconceptualization of curriculum as an assemblage of the many literacies, discourses, and interests, whether individual, cultural, or institutional, that are continuously negotiated in any academic discipline such as English language arts. Similarly, recognizing and sustaining students and teachers’ cultural and experiential knowledges and perspectives on education and social change expand ongoing debates in curriculum, pedagogy, and research across multiple educational contexts. Positioning students and teachers as critical researchers in participatory engagements such a YPAR thus offers one frame, among other possibilities, that illuminates frequently-overlooked complexities at the intersection of classroom instruction, social justice, and schooling (Morrell & Collatos, 2002; Mirra, Garcia & Morrell, 2016). Building upon the work of the reconceptualists several decades ago, as well as Pinar’s (2004) definition of curriculum as not a noun, but a verb, curriculum is indeed a “complicated conversation.” A culturally sustaining stance toward curriculum, pedagogy, and research necessitates that educators and learners reimagine education together. As a generative curricular approach that creates discursive spaces for the development of culturally sustaining pedagogies, curriculum as assemblage becomes a heuristic that allows educators to understand curriculum to be a nonlinear and multidimensional composite of multiple ways of knowing as well as, to borrow Freire’s

words, reading and writing the world. Ultimately, given the dynamic nature of students' (and, arguably, teachers') multiple identities and literacies in urban contexts, theory, research, and practice that honors and sustains students' complex cultural and linguistic selves must cultivate critical meta-awareness and dismantle the power relations that obstruct educational justice.

REFERENCES

- Anyon, J. (1980). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. *Journal of Education*, 62(1), 67-92.
- Apple, M. W. (1990). *Ideology and curriculum*. Boston: Routledge.
- Au, K. H., & Raphael, T. E. (2000). Equity and literacy in the next millennium. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 35(1), 170-188.
- Ball, A. (2002). "Three Decades of Research on Classroom Life: Illuminating the Classroom Communicative Lives of America's at-Risk Students." *Review of Research in Education*, 26, 71-111.
- Ball, A. (2009). Toward a theory of generative change in culturally and linguistically complex classrooms. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46(1), 45-7.
- Banks, J. A. (1993). The canon debate, knowledge construction, and multicultural education. *Educational Researcher*, 22(5), 4-14.
- Banks, J. A. (2008). Diversity, group identity, and citizenship education in a global age. *Educational Researcher*, 37(3), 129-139. doi: DOI: 10.3102/0013189X08317501
- Bloome, D., & Enciso, P. (2006). Looking out across Columbus: What we mean by "multiple literacies." *Theory Into Practice*, 45(4), 296-303.
http://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4504_2
- Bogdan, R.C., & Biklen, S.K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and method*. Boston: Pearson.
- Boler, M. (Ed.). (2005). *Democratic dialogue in education: Troubling speech, disturbing silence*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Bourdieu, P. (1970). Cultural reproduction and social reproduction. In R. Brown (Ed.), *Knowledge, education, and cultural change: Papers in the sociology of education* (pp. 71-112). London: Tavistock.

- Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice* (R. Nice, Trans.). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (1994). *Nomadic subjects: Embodiment and sexual difference in contemporary feminist theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Britzman, D.P. (1989). Who has the floor? Curriculum, teaching, and the English student teacher's struggle for voice. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 19(2), 143-162.
- Bruner, J.S. (2004/1987). Life as Narrative. *Social Research*, 71(3), 691-710.
- Burroughs, R., & Smagorinsky, P. (2009). The secondary English curriculum and adolescent literacy. In L. Christenbury, R. Bomer & P. Smagorinsky (Eds.), *Handbook of Adolescent Literacy Research* (pp. 170-182). New York: Guilford Press.
- Caraballo, L. (2011). Theorizing identities in a “just(ly)” contested terrain: Practice theories of identity amid critical-poststructural debates on curriculum and achievement. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 8(2), 155-177. doi: 10.1080/15505170.2011.624939
- Caraballo, L. (2012a). Identities-in-practice in a figured world of achievement: Toward curriculum and pedagogies of hope. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, 28(2), 43-59.
- Caraballo, L. (2012b, April). “Being Loud”: Negotiating Intersecting Narratives of Race, Ethnicity, Class, Gender, and Achievement in Academic Contexts. Paper presented in session, “Habits of Spoken or Written Discourse for Academic Success,” Critical Examination of Race, Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Education Special Interest Group. American Educational Research Association Annual Conference, Vancouver, B.C.
- Caraballo, L. (2013, April). *Multiple identities and literacies in a figured world of achievement: Toward a culturally sustaining framework for curriculum and pedagogy*. Paper presented in symposium, “The Bank Says I’m Poor, but I’m Feeling Rich”: Toward Critical Meta-Awareness with Research Communities. Division G, Social Context of Education. American Educational Research Association Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Carlson, D. (1993). Literacy and urban school reform: Beyond vulgar pragmatism. In C. Lankshear & P. McLaren (Eds.), *Critical literacy: Politics, praxis, and the postmodern* (pp. 217-246). New York: State University of New York Press.
- Costigan, A.T. (2008). Canaries in the coal mine: Urban rookies learning to teach language arts in “high priority” schools. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 85-103.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2004). Standards, accountability, and school reform. *Teachers College Record*, 106(6), 1047-1085.
- DeBlase, G. L. (2003). Missing stories, missing lives: Urban girls (re)constructing race and gender in the literacy classroom. *Urban Education*, 38, 279-329.

- Deleuze, G., & Guattari, F. (1987). Introduction: Rhizome. In *Thousand plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia* (pp. 3-23). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Delpit, L. (2006). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: New Press.
- Eisner, E. (1985). *The educational imagination*. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan Publishing.
- Fordham, S. (1999). Dissin' "the standard": Ebonics as guerrilla warfare at Capital High. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 30(3), 272-293.
- Freire, P. (1992). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed* (R. R. Barr, Trans.). London: Continuum.
- Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Gee, J. P. (1996). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in discourses*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- Guerra, J. C. (2004). Putting literacy in its place: Nomadic consciousness and the practice of transcultural repositioning. In C. Gutiérrez-Jones (Ed.) *Rebellious readings: The dynamics of Chicana/o literacy* (pp. 19-37). Center for Chicana/o Studies: UC Santa Barbara.
- Guerra, J. (2011). Life in the Neither/Nor: Figural Representations of literacy, space and identity. Paper presented at the National Council of the Teaching of English Assembly for Research (NCTEAR). Madison, Wisconsin.
- Gutierrez, K. D. (2008). Developing a sociocritical literacy in the third space. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 43(2), 148-164.
- Heath, S.B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Holland, D., Lachicotte, W., Jr., Skinner, D., & Cain, C. (1998). *Identity and agency in cultural worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hollway, W., & Jefferson, T. (2000). *Doing qualitative research differently: Free association, narrative, and the interview method*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Hurn, C. J. (1993). *The limits and possibilities of schooling: An introduction to the sociology of education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Jackson, P. (1994). Life in classrooms. In B. Moon & A. S. Mayes (Eds.), *Teaching and learning in the secondary school* (pp. 155-160). New York: Routledge.

- Kinloch, V. F. (2005). Revisiting the promise of “Students’ Right to Their Own Language”: Pedagogical strategies. *College Composition and Communication*, 57(1), 83-113.
- Kinloch, V. F. (2010). “To not be a traitor of Black English”: Youth perceptions of language rights in an urban context. *Teachers College Record*, 112(1), 103-141.
- Kinloch, V.F. (Ed.). (2011). *Urban literacies: Critical perspectives on language, learning, and community*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Knight, M. G. (2003). Through urban youth’s eyes: Negotiating K-16 policies, practices, and their futures. *Educational Policy*, 17(5), 531-557. doi: 10.1177/0895904803256786
- Knight, M. G. & Marciano, J. E. (2013). *College ready: Preparing Black and Latina/o youth for higher education - a culturally relevant approach*. New York, New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2000). Racialized discourses and ethnic epistemologies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 257-278). London: Sage.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: A.k.a. the remix. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 74-84.
- Lee, C. D. (2007). *Culture, literacy, and learning: Taking bloom in the midst of the whirlwind*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Lipman, P. (2004). *High stakes education*. New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Luke, A. (1996). Text and discourse in education: An introduction to critical discourse analysis. *Review of Research in Education*, 21, 3-48.
- McCarthy, S., & Moje, E. (2002). Identity matters. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37(2), 228-238.
- McIntyre, A. (2000). Constructing meaning about violence, school, and community: Participatory action research with urban youth. *The Urban Review*, 32(2), 123-154.
- Mirra, N., Garcia, A. & Morrell, E. (2016). *Doing Youth Participatory Action Research: Transforming Inquiry with Researchers, Educators, and Students*. New York, New York: Routledge.
- Morrell, E. (2005). Critical English education. *English Education*, 37(4), 312-321.

- 1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
- Morrell, E. (2006). Critical participatory action research and the literacy achievement of ethnic minority groups. In J. V. Hoffman, D. L. Schallert, C. M. Fairbanks, J. Worthy & B. Maloda (Eds.), *55th Yearbook of the National Reading Conference Yearbook* (pp. 1-18). Oak Creek, WI: National Reading Conference.
- Morrell, E. (2008). Six summers of YPAR: Learning, action, and change in urban education. In J. Cammarota & M. Fine (Eds.), *Revolutionizing education: Youth participatory action research in motion* (pp. 155- 187). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Morrell, E. & Collatos, A. (2002). Toward a critical teacher education: High school student sociologists as teacher educators. *Social Justice*, 29(4), 60-70.
- Nasir, N. S., McLaughlin, M. W., & Jones, A. (2009). What does it mean to be African American? Constructions of race and academic identity in an urban public high school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46(1), 73-114.
- Ochs, E., & Capps, L. (1996). Narrating the self. *Annual Review in Anthropology*, 25, 1943.
- Orellana, M.F., Reynolds, J., Dorner, L., & Meza, M. (2003). In other words: Translating or "para-phrasing" as a family literacy practice in immigrant households. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38(1), 12-34.
- Paris, D. (2009). "They're in my culture, they speak the same way": African American language in multiethnic high schools. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 428-448.
- Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 41(3), 93-97. doi: 10.3102/0013189X12441244
- Paris, D., & Alim, H.S. (2014). What are we seeking to sustain through culturally sustaining pedagogy? A loving critique forward. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(1), 85-100.
- Pinar, W. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?* Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Pollock, M. (2004). *Colormute: Race talk dilemmas in an American school*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Popkewitz, T. S. (1998). *Struggling for the soul of the teacher: The politics of schooling and the construction of the teacher*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Richardson, E. B. (2003). *African American Literacies*. New York, New York: Routledge.
- Rubin, B. C., & Jones, M. (2007). Student action research: Reaping the benefits for students and school leaders. *NASSP Bulletin*, 91(4), 363-378. doi: 10.1177/0192636507310316.
- Rymes, B. (2011). Deference, denial, and beyond: A repertoire approach to mass media and schooling. *Review of Research in Education*, 35, 208-238. doi:

10.3102/0091732X10389428

- Saracho, O.N. (2007). Hispanic families as facilitators of their children's literacy development. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 6(2), 103-117. doi: 10.1177/1538192706299009
- Sealey-Ruiz, Y. (2005, Fall). Spoken soul: The language of Black imagination and reality. *Educational Forum*, 1-5.
- Snyder, J., Bolin, F., & Zumwalt, K. (1992). Curriculum implementation. In P. W. Jackson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on curriculum* (pp. 402-435). New York: Macmillan.
- Sperling, M. (2003). Tenth-grade literacy and the mediation of culture, race, and class. In S. Greene & D. Abt-Perkins (Eds.), *Making race visible: Literacy research for cultural understanding* (pp. 131-148). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Souto-Manning, M. (2012). Critical narrative analysis: The interplay of critical discourse and narrative analyses. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, p. 1-22. DOI:10.1080/09518398.2012.737046
- Souto-Manning, M. (2013). Critical for whom?: Theoretical and methodological dilemmas in critical approaches to language research. In D. Paris & M. Winn (Eds.), *Humanizing research: Decolonizing qualitative inquiry with youth and communities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Street, B. (1984). *Literacy in theory and practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press
- Street, B. (1995). *Social literacies: Critical approaches to literacy in development, ethnography and education*. Boston: Addison Wesley Publishing.
- Tan, E., & Barton, A. C. (2008). From peripheral to central, the story of Melanie's metamorphosis in an urban middle school science class. *Science Education*, 92(4), 567-590.
- Tanner, D. (2013). Race to the top and leave the children behind. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 45(1), 4-15.
- Torre, M.E. (2005). The alchemy of integrated spaces: Youth participation in research collectives of difference. In L. Weis & M. Fine (Eds.), *Beyond silenced voices* (pp. 251-266). New York, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Vetter, A. M., Fairbanks, C., & Ariail, M. (2011). "Crazyghettosmart": A case study in Latina identities. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 24(2), 185-207. doi: 10.1080/09518391003641890
- Walkerdine, V. (2007). *Children, gender, video games: Towards a relational approach to multimedia*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.