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Appropriating Appropriateness, Ability, and Authority: Indexicality and Embodiment in Second Graders' Academic Language Use in Peer Interactions

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

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For the girl who "couldn't"

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ABSTRACT

Appropriating Appropriateness, Ability, and Authority: Indexicality and Embodiment in Second Graders' Academic Language Use in Peer Interactions

by

Meghan N. Corella Morales

Academic language has long been viewed as playing a crucial role in students' academic success, conceptual understanding, and cognitive development. More recently, academic language has come to occupy a prominent place in the discourse surrounding the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which are said to place an unprecedented emphasis on speaking and writing academically. However, clear and effective ways of theorizing and teaching this register remain elusive, both within the CCSS and within education research more broadly. Because research in this field is still in its nascent stages, there is a scarcity of observational studies on students' actual use of academic language in classrooms, particularly at the elementary level. Hence, to derive more empirically grounded theories and pedagogies related to academic language, there is an urgent need to understand how and whether young students use academic language in their interactions, a need which I addressed in this study.

Drawing on a range of sociocultural theories including Bakhtin's dialogicality, sociocultural linguistic theories of enregisterment and indexicality, theories of multimodality, and (neo-)Vygotskyan theories of learning, in this dissertation I take an action-based perspective that defines (academic) language not solely in terms of where it is used or who

uses it, but rather with an eye to how it works—along with other semiotic and embodied resources—to accomplish action in the social world. I propose a novel, ethnographically informed framework that defines academic language as context-specific uses of semiotic resources that allow language users to index ideologies and identities related to appropriateness, ability, and authority. Conducted during Beachside Elementary School's first full year of implementation of the CCSS, the ethnographic study described in this dissertation investigates peer interactions during language arts and math activities in one second-grade classroom. To understand how students used academic language in peer interactions, what ideologies were apparent in their understandings of academic language, and how their uses and understandings of academic language shaped their constructions of identity, I engaged in participant observation for nine months, writing fieldnotes, capturing hundreds of hours of audio and video recordings, and collecting classroom texts. This dissertation presents an interactional analysis of recordings of students' peer interactions, with fieldnotes and classroom texts serving as secondary sources of data.

Through these analyses, I found that students frequently appropriated academic communication norms in multiple and complex ways. Even in the absence of adults, students used a range of semiotic resources locally understood as "academic" to accomplish a variety of actions and construct a multitude of identities. I also found that not only can "everyday" or "social" language do academic work, but "academic" language can do social work, and indeed, both registers can simultaneously accomplish both kinds of action. Importantly, then, the meaning of any given academic semiotic resource was not predictable solely on the basis of its enregisterment as (non-)academic or on the basis of its referential meaning. Another finding was that the teaching and learning of academic communication norms was bound up with hegemonic ideologies of intelligence, gender, and class, suggesting that far from being a

neutral resource tied only to the learning and expression of objective facts or academic concepts, academic language expresses an array of sociopolitical meanings.

On the basis of these findings, I discuss implications for theory and practice. Overall, I argue for an action-based, sociocultural linguistic approach to researching and teaching academic language, emphasizing that such a perspective allows researchers and educators to see a wider range of students' semiotic strengths than are made visible by the structuralist accounts of language that have been predominant in this field.

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It is the second day of second grade in Room G[1] at Beachside Elementary School, and Ms. Mayzie is explaining that her students should use their "finishing markers" to transform their "important things about me" rough drafts into final products. Recognizing that one of the potential challenges of this activity is remembering the various locations of the classroom's many materials, Ms. Mayzie asks the class where they can find their finishing markers. She calls on Nicole, who tentatively offers an answer: "In your toolbox?" Ms. Mayzie immediately takes up Nicole's language, evaluating it positively as she says, "In your toolbox! I love the idea of calling pencil boxes toolboxes! We're gonna use her word" (FN 140828).

As a researcher interested in children's language use in classrooms, I too loved Nicole's word. For one, compared to *pencil box,* it more accurately described its referent—namely, a plastic box used by each student to store not just pencils, but a wide range of tools necessary for and indexical of academic success in Room G, such as highlighters, markers, erasers, glue, and raffle tickets awarded to students for using academic language or demonstrating responsible behavior. Besides being struck by Nicole's idea itself, I was drawn to this moment of teacher–student interaction because of the various questions that it raised and continues to raise in my mind. Since that day, I have asked myself whether this exchange, insofar as it helped Ms. Mayzie and her students to accomplish academic goals, might be considered an instance of academic language. In turn, I have wondered whether classifying it (or not) as "academic language" even matters. I have wondered how, why, and on what other occasions Ms. Mayzie builds on or ratifies her students' words, pondering also the question

[1] The names of all locations and participants hereafter are pseudonyms.

of how such ratification might impact students' language use as well as their academic success, learning, and social identity. I have been drawn to the metaphor offered by Nicole's use of *toolbox* instead of *pencil box*, reflecting on how educators can teach language in ways that rely not only on traditional linguistic resources but encompass a wide variety of semiotic tools. And I have wondered how schools and society might look if all students were routinely encouraged to use their own words to name not only classroom materials, but also intellectual ideas.

To be sure, I am far from being the only researcher with such questions about the relationships between language, schooling, knowledge, identity, and equity. One area of inquiry in which questions of this kind have been particularly central is research on academic language. For some time now, researchers in this area have examined how language relates to learning and to school success; especially in the context of discussions about the achievement gap, students' mastery (or lack thereof) of academic language is frequently invoked as an explanation for differential rates of success of different groups of students, usually as measured by scores on standardized tests (see Gee, 2005; Snow & Uccelli, 2009). More recently, the concept of academic language has come to occupy a prominent place in the discourse surrounding the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The CCSS have been characterized as having an "unprecedented emphasis" on academic language (Zwiers, O'Hara & Pritchard, 2014, p. 1); many scholars point out that they embody a more rigorous set of linguistic and academic demands than many states' previous standards (Valdés, Kibler, & Walqui, 2014) and require teachers in all content areas to focus intensively on the development of academic language (Cummins, 2014). As Gottlieb and Ernst-Slavit (2014) argue, the CCSS have established "a new paradigm around the role of language in teaching

across subject area disciplines," making the saying "every teacher is a language teacher" a reality (p. xxvi).

Yet just how teachers and students will be affected by this "new paradigm" related to academic language remains to be seen. Even beyond the CCSS or any set of educational standards, more fundamental questions about academic language—such as those raised by Nicole's and Ms. Mayzie's exchange—remain a matter of debate, and some are only just beginning to be explored within a field that in many senses can be regarded as still being in its "infancy" (see Anstrom et al., 2010). The study described here contributes to scholarly understandings of some of these key questions, including how students use academic language in peer interactions, what ideologies are apparent in their understandings of academic language, and how their uses and understandings of academic language shape their constructions of identity.

To explain the historical context for and scholarly significance of these questions, I begin with a literature review that first outlines some predominant scholarly conceptualizations of academic language and then provides an overview of empirical classroom studies related to academic language; this discussion highlights key debates in the field as well as some of the gaps in the literature addressed by the current study (Chapter 2). Next, I describe the theoretical framework that guides my approach to addressing these questions (Chapter 3). This discussion is followed by an overview of my methods of data collection and analysis (Chapter 4). I then present interactional analyses of each of the three dimensions of my framework for academic language (Chapters 5, 6, and 7). I close with a summary of findings and a discussion of implications for theory and practice (Chapter 8). Throughout the dissertation, I make a case for an action-based, sociocultural linguistic approach to investigating the teaching and learning of academic language in classrooms,

arguing that such a perspective allows researchers and educators to see a wider range of students' semiotic strengths than is achieved by relying solely on structuralist accounts of language.

II. Literature Review: Academic Language in Education Research

As various scholars (e.g., Anstrom et al., 2010; Snow & Uccelli, 2009) point out, despite the increasingly frequent references to academic language within education research, the literature evinces neither a simple nor an agreed-upon definition of academic language. The diversity of scholarly perspectives on academic language is evident even at the level of terminology: though commonly referred to as *academic language*, this linguistic register has also been called *the language of education* (Halliday, 1994; cited in Snow & Uccelli, 2009), *the language of schooling* (Schleppegrell, 2004), *academic English* (e.g., Scarcella, 2003), and *academic communication* (Haneda, 2014a), among other proposed terms. To give a sense of the wide array of conceptual distinctions within and across different terms, I begin with an overview of approaches associated with several well-known scholars in this field. I have organized the following overview according to some of the main theoretical approaches (e.g., systemic functional linguistic approaches, sociocultural approaches) in the literature on academic language. Other scholars' reviews of the literature, especially Snow and Uccelli's (2009) and Haneda's (2014a), have been particularly useful in this process. The organizational scheme of the review that follows should not be taken to imply that each approach fits neatly into a single paradigm or draws solely on one tradition. Rather, most of the scholars described below draw on various theories, as will be discussed. The overview is also organized somewhat chronologically in order to highlight the interrelatedness of these approaches and illustrate how they have built on one another over historical time. After describing each of the approaches in turn, I discuss one overarching debate—that of how and whether academic language can be distinguished from other registers— in order to highlight some key differences and similarities among these approaches while also illustrating some of the main questions with which the field is still grappling.

A. Conceptualizations of Academic Language

1. Cognitivist Approaches

Many researchers (e.g., Anstrom et al., 2010; Snow & Uccelli, 2009) point to Cummins' work in the late 1970s and early 1980s as the beginning of scholarly dialogue and debate about academic language. Cummins' (1981) proposal of a distinction between what he termed *basic interpersonal communicative skills* (BICS) and *cognitive academic language proficiency* (CALP) is still well known (and controversial, as will be discussed). By contrast with then-predominant views of language proficiency as one-dimensional, such as Ollers' (1979; cited by Cummins, 1981) notion of *global language proficiency*, Cummins' (1981) BICS/CALP distinction highlighted the idea that language proficiency is not a unitary construct. Theorizing BICS and CALP along two intersecting continua of contextual support and cognitive demand, Cummins proposed that BICS was more context-embedded and less cognitively demanding than CALP; hence, as he argued, the latter took longer to acquire and was typically acquired later in life than the former. As Snow and Uccelli (2009) explain, this distinction was particularly useful in highlighting a problematic gap in assessments of second language learners: proficiency assessments were often based on skills related to BICS, yet they were used to place students in classrooms in which CALP was required for success. However, many scholars have criticized Cummins' BICS/ CALP distinction on various grounds, most notably for its failure to specify which language skills were encompassed by CALP (Snow & Uccelli, 2009), for its neglect of the multiple variables affecting the development of academic language (Scarcella, 2003), and for devaluing the cognitive demands of interactional social language (Bailey, 2007, cited in Anstrom et al., 2010; see also Schleppegrell, 2004). In later work, Cummins has responded to these criticisms and has clarified the original intent of the BICS/CALP distinction, which as he emphasizes was meant

to “draw educators’ attention to the timelines and challenges that second language learners encounter as they attempt to catch up to their peers in academic aspects of the school language” (Cummins, 2008, p. 10). In his most recent work (e.g., Cummins, 2014), he has moved away from an emphasis on cognitive aspects of academic language and toward a more sociocultural perspective, as will be discussed below.

2. Perspectives Informed by Systemic Functional Linguistics

Motivated in part by the aforementioned critiques of Cummins’ early work, some scholars have endeavored to more fully specify the linguistic features of academic language, often by drawing on systemic functional linguistics (SFL), an approach developed by Halliday. SFL emphasizes language use in its social contexts, viewing language as both reflecting different contexts and contributing to their realization. In studying academic language in social context, Halliday (1993; cited in Snow & Uccelli, 2009) cautioned against a view of academic language as unitary, emphasizing instead that it is multidimensional and dynamic; that is, academic language comprises many varieties that evolve as thought and practice in different disciplines and subdisciplines evolve. In fact, in his view, academic languages such as scientific language make scientific thought (or thought in other disciplines) possible.

Also well known for bringing SFL insights to the study of academic language is Schleppegrell (2004), who draws on Halliday’s work to propose a framework of linguistic features of what she calls *the language of schooling*. Schleppegrell (2004) argues for a more explicit focus on language in teaching all subjects, which in her view would support the development of critical literacy. An SFL perspective, she argues, can support teachers and students in this process by providing a means of specifying the grammatical and lexical

resources—or register features—through which knowledge is construed and which may present challenges for students. To describe the register features of the language of schooling, she presents a model that identifies three situational expectations of schooling contexts: displaying knowledge, being authoritative, and structuring texts in expected ways. These three situational expectations each relate to the following three register features, respectively: the *ideational metafunction*, which refers to what is being talked about, and which in academic contexts often involves complex nominal syntax that draws on technical and abstract lexis as well as other features; the *interpersonal metafunction*, which involves social relationships, and which in academic contexts involves the construction of the authoritative role of the student through use of the declarative mood as well as modality and attitudinal resources; and the *textual metafunction*, which relates to how a text is structured, and which in schooling contexts depends greatly on strategies such as condensation, embedding, nominalization, and grammatical metaphor. She explains that the three metafunctions are always in interaction as writers/speakers create different types of academic texts through the linguistic choices they make.

Gee's (2005) conceptualization of academic language is likewise informed by SFL theories, which he combines with understandings drawn from cognitive psychology and New Literacy Studies to propose a framework that describes academic language as a related family of "social languages." His definition of *social language*—a "way of using language so as to enact a particular socially situated identity and carry out a particular socially situated activity" (p. 20)—reveals the central place of identity and activity in his notion of academic language. After specifying some common features of academic language (many of which, such as nominalizations and embedding, echo Schleppegrell's [2004] inventory of register features), he goes on to argue that acquisition of academic language is tied to identity issues because it

involves certain potential losses (e.g., empathy for objects of scientific study; views of transformation and change as dynamic ongoing processes) that the learner must be willing to accept, as well as certain gains (e.g., understandings of abstract entities and relations among them; categorization and quantification of traits) that the learner must see as gains if she/he is to be successful. He notes that this may be especially difficult for those whose lifeworlds do not align with the sort of "middle-class lifeworlds" (p. 23) that tend to value academic discourse. In addition to the willingness to accept these losses and gains, Gee argues that learning academic language requires having experiences of embodied practices and activities that help the learner situate the meanings of words and phrases. In his view, then, describing academic language is not simply a matter of specifying which forms count as academic, but of understanding how experiences, activities, and identities shape both the process of learning academic language and its very nature.

3. Practice-Based Approaches

For Snow and Uccelli (2009), while SFL-based frameworks are certainly relevant to the study of academic language, they are intended more as theories of language than as frameworks for educational research. Thus, these scholars argue for a practice-embedded framework that is more educationally relevant in the sense of expanding on inventories of linguistic features to incorporate a focus on the skills students need to acquire in order to master academic language. The problem with inventory-based approaches of linguistic features, they argue, is that they do not address the question of "the communicative challenges to which the features of academic language are meant to respond" (p. 122). The authors' pragmatics-based framework represents an attempt to address this question by focusing on communicative goals rather than linguistic features. Their model is divided into

four levels that represent the "nested challenges" of all communicative events: representing the self and audience; representing the message; organizing discourse; and constructing clauses. Although all communicative events present challenges in these four areas, the authors explain that within communicative events involving academic language, the challenges within each of these four levels differ; for instance, at the level of representing the self and the audience, a speaker in an academic language context must contend with the audience's indeterminate nature, its "high levels of language" (p. 124), and its potential lack of knowledge about the topic. They contend that their model makes clear that "the skills required for successful academic language performance go beyond the traditionally cited lexicogrammatical skills to include a level of metacommunication" (p. 125). At the same time, their model can be said to encompass these lexicogrammatical skills in that they propose that an inventory of features based on previous research (such as Schleppegrell's [2004] volume) can be integrated into their model.

Also representing a practice-based approach are Bailey and Heritage (2008), who discuss the linguistic demands of academic language at three levels: the word level, the sentence level, and the text or discourse level. They subdivide academic language into two categories: what they call *School Navigational Language* (SNL), or the language needed to communicate in a broad sense with peers and teachers in school settings, and *Curriculum Content Language* (CCL), or the language used to teach and learn specific content material. They contrast SNL and CCL with each other and with everyday social language on the basis of several dimensions of difference and similarity: the purposes to which each is put; the degree of formality; the contexts of use; the contexts of acquisition; the modalities each predominantly uses; teacher expectations for language abilities in each of the three varieties; and grade-level expectations for each.

4. Sociocultural Approaches

For Haneda (2014a), while both the SFL-based approaches and the practice-based approaches discussed above form part of a valuable toolkit for enhancing scholarly study of academic language, they have a problematic tendency to treat academic language as an end in and of itself and to privilege academic language over other semiotic resources for meaning making. Drawing on Vygotsky's sociocultural theories of learning, Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy , and the multimodal semiotic approaches of scholars such as Kress (2003), Haneda argues that academic language should be thought of as one component (albeit an important component) of what she calls *academic communication*, a broader repertoire needed for achieving personal, intellectual, and social goals. In arguing for a sociocultural approach to teaching academic communication, she emphasizes the importance of honoring students' lived experiences and encouraging them to strategically use multiple tools (including vernacular and academic registers as well as other modes of meaning making) in joint activities with meaningful goals, thereby ultimately preparing them to make sense of and act on the world. Such principles, she points out, are not in and of themselves new, although they represent a different direction for the teaching of academic communication. She asserts that this approach is especially significant for English learners given that their experiences and languages are not always valued within mainstream schooling. Cummins (2014) builds on Haneda's (2014a) argument in his *Literacy Engagement framework*, arguing that instruction in AL needs to be integrated into broader conceptions of academic communication and must be in embedded in pedagogical orientations that allow students to participate in academic practices in empowering ways and for powerful purposes. [2]

[2] Both Cummins and Haneda discuss the importance of student empowerment, a concept which, drawing on recent scholarship, I will problematize in Chapter 4.

5. Multi-Dimensional Frameworks

Though arguably oriented principally toward a functional view of language given its emphasis on defining the features and functions of academic English, Scarcella's (2003) framework is multi-dimensional in that it draws on linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural perspectives. Rejecting what she views as the dichotomous conceptualization of academic language that is implied by the BICS/CALP distinction, she proposes a tripartite framework that is intended to make visible the complexities of academic English. To do so, she draws on many of the approaches described above, including work by Halliday, Schleppegrell, Gee, Snow, and Vygotsky. In her tripartite model, the first dimension of academic English is the *linguistic dimension*, which she breaks down into five components: phonological, lexical, grammatical, sociolinguistic, and discourse. The second dimension, which she calls the *cognitive dimension*, likewise comprises several components: knowledge, higher-order thinking, strategic, and metalinguistic awareness. Finally, she describes the *sociocultural/psychological dimension* as constituted by social and cultural norms, values, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, interests, behaviors, practices, and habits. The three dimensions, she notes, are not separate, but rather represent the "multiple, dynamic, and interrelated competencies" (p. 10) that affect the development of academic English in K–12 education.

B. The Academic–Everyday Dichotomy: Differences and Similarities across Perspectives

The foregoing descriptions make visible various commonalities and differences across several predominant approaches to conceptualizing academic language. To make some key differences and similarities more explicit, I turn now to a consideration of one question that has figured prominently in scholarly dialogue and debate about academic language: the

question of how or whether academic language can be defined in relation to so-called "everyday" or "conversational" language without invoking the deficit-oriented views that have historically been associated with the use of the latter.

Since the appearance of Cummins' BICS/CALP distinction, many definitions of academic language have suggested (whether implicitly or explicitly) that it differs markedly from language used for everyday purposes or in out-of-school contexts. As Bunch (2006) notes, "conversations about the language of schooling often focus on…how language used for academic purposes varies from its putative non-academic counterpart, termed variably *everyday*, *ordinary*, *informal*, *conversational*, *interpersonal*, *basic*, *playground*, and even *street* language" (p. 285). Many of the views described above employ this distinction: for example, Schleppegrell (2004) contrasts school-based language with "conversational" language; Gee (2005) contrasts academic and "lifeworld" language; Snow and Uccelli (2009) state that academic language "has no clear opposite" (p. 115), yet their inventory contrasts it with "colloquial" language; Bailey and Heritage (2008) distinguish academic language from "everyday social" language; and Scarcella (2003) speaks of academic and "everyday" language as overlapping but distinct. Cummins, of course, also employs the same type of distinction—after all, the BICS/CALP distinction was largely intended to draw educators' attention precisely to an important contrast that had not yet been named or theorized in education research.

At the same time, many scholars, including Cummins himself, have long seen the limitations of this binary mode of thinking and have endeavored to describe the complexity of academic language in ways that go beyond binary distinctions. Indeed, many of the critiques of Cummins' model are directed at this dichotomizing quality of the theory. Scarcella (2003), for instance, describes the BICS/CALP distinction as representing a "dichotomous

conceptualization of language…[that is] not useful for understanding the complexities of academic English" (p. 5), and Anstrom et al. (2010) likewise note that Cummins' model has been interpreted as a dichotomous view of language acquisition. Cummins (2008) responds to this critique by asserting that "both BICS and CALP are more complex than a binary distinction implies" (p. 79).

One way that academic language theorists and researchers have attempted to go beyond binary distinctions is by placing the two varieties on one or more continua. As described above, Cummins' early work placed BICS and CALP on two intersecting continua relating to the amount of contextual support and cognitive demand associated with each. Similarly, Scarcella (2003) uses a continuum to represent the overlapping yet distinct nature of the linguistic features of academic versus everyday English. While such continua allow for overlap between poles in ways that strictly dichotomous depictions do not, they nonetheless represent a rather flattened, one-dimensional view of language in that they imply the existence of a line with endpoints—endpoints which in turn have historically become associated with descriptors such as "complex" or "cognitively demanding" versus "cognitively undemanding." As Schleppegrell (2004) argues, one of the problems of characterizing academic language in terms of complexity and cognitive demand (as well as in terms of its putative explicitness and decontextualization as compared to everyday language) is that such descriptions may invoke a deficit perspective by "[implying] that students' difficulties with this language are related to their cognitive abilities" (p. 16). Despite these dangers, characterizations of academic language as more cognitively demanding than everyday language have continued to inform the work of even those scholars who critique Cummins' (1981) supposedly dichotomous view of language; for instance, Scarcella (2003) critiques

many aspects of his model, but she follows Cummins in describing academic English as more cognitively demanding than ordinary English.

Related to yet worth distinguishing from the idea that academic language makes greater cognitive demands on speakers than "everyday" registers is the widespread notion that it somehow results in "a child's ability to think adequately" (see Rolstad, 2005, p. 1996). Such notions are suggested not only by the BICS/CALP distinction, but also by labels often used as synonyms for *academic language*, such as *cognitive language* (Mandel, 2013), *the language of thinking* (Costa & Marzano, 1987), and *complex language* (Zwiers et al., 2014). Rolstad (2005) argues that this pervasive assumption that "cognitive development can be fully realized only through the development of the school dialect" (p. 1993) is clearly a deficit view and is at best questionable in light of decades of linguistic research showing that "any language can be a suitable vehicle for thought and learning" (p. 1994). Such deficit views, which are a reflection of the larger "Great Divide" between literates and non-literates (see Wiley & Rolstad, 2014), have negative consequences for the literacy education of all learners, but particularly affected are learners who have been marginalized, such as students of color and bilingual students, who are often defined in opposition to the linguistically and racially dominant group. An example of the pervasiveness of deficit perspectives (and of binary thinking more generally) within the academic language literature is Zwiers et al.'s (2014) distinction between "academic language learners (AELs)" and "non-AELs," or "mainstream" students. Such a distinction not only implies deficit views of the "AEL" group but is also illogical considering that academic language, like all varieties of language, is always changing (see Chapter 3) and never fully acquired (Lucero, 2012). Overall, what is needed, as Rolstad (2005) asserts, is a more linguistically informed approach to theorization of and research on academic language so as to avoid the types of "bad observation, bad theory, and bad

practice" that Labov (1966; cited in Rolstad, 2005, p. 1998) cautioned against decades ago. Yet a linguistically informed approach may not be enough; a sociopolitically informed approach is needed so as to avoid the perpetuation of deficit views that have long characterized accounts of non-standard varieties.

Because of the problems associated with any binary distinction or continuum that defines academic language in opposition to other registers and reifies it as a unified monolith, some scholars have tried to avoid engaging the dichotomy altogether. Rolstad (2005) is one such researcher; she questions the very existence of academic language and concludes that "if there is such a thing as academic language, it must be considered a linguistic register on a par with any other register, no more complex, no more inherently difficult to learn, than any other register" (p. 1996). In a similar vein, Bunch (2006) begins his analysis "not by attempting to contrast 'academic' with other sorts of language, but by asking the broader question 'how did students use language to engage in academic tasks?'" (p. 286). He sets out to challenge the conversational/academic dichotomy by highlighting a distinction between what he calls the *language of display* and the *language of ideas*, both of which he argues are academic uses of language (his analysis will be described in more detail below). Of course, in the process, Bunch is obliged to refer to the very conversational/academic dichotomy he critiques (even though he does so by placing each term in scare quotes), and his distinction between the *language of display* and the *language of ideas*, while useful, arguably creates a dichotomy of its own.

Clearly, then, the literature on academic language often relies on binary oppositions to describe and construct its object of study. While acknowledging the problems inherent in dichotomous thinking (problems which the works of many postmodern and postcolonial theorists have underscored; see, e.g., Said, 1978), I argue that the main problem is not so

much the use of binarity itself, but rather the reasons and ways it is employed. For all of the scholars described in the previous section, distinguishing academic language from more social or everyday language seems to be a necessary part of understanding and describing what academic language is. Yet the motivations for understanding and describing the nature of academic language in relation to other types of language differ from one scholar to another. For some (e.g., Gee, 2005; Scarcella, 2003; Schleppegrell, 2004), understanding how the features of academic language contrast with those of everyday language is necessary for helping students become proficient academic language users, which in turn is necessary for them to access content and learn discipline-relevant modes of thought. Gee (2005), for instance, argues that the academic register of science is needed for the kinds of thinking associated with science (e.g., analyzing underlying differences and understanding semantic relations), and Scarcella (2003) likewise argues that one must "'do' discipline-specific work with academic and discipline-specific language" (p. 9). By contrast, for Haneda (2014a), academic language use is linked to discipline-relevant modes of thought, though not necessarily in a linear or causal fashion; overall, she emphasizes that it is not only academic language but instead a range of linguistic registers that are necessary for accessing the knowledge of a discipline. This idea regarding the use of a range of linguistic registers has also been highlighted by Bunch (2006), who argues it is possible to do discipline-specific academic work and thinking with language that has been considered typical of "everyday" language.

As this discussion has demonstrated, the nature of the relationship between academic modes of communicating and academic modes of thinking [3] is one key question underlying

[3] This invokes the broader question of the language–thought relationship that has long been a subject of debate among linguists, literary theorists, and others, especially in relation to the well-known Sapir-Whorf

the field's continued reification of binaries between academic and social language. The overview of empirical studies in the following section will highlight some ways in which these questions shape the ways research on academic language is carried out.

C. Empirical Studies of Academic Language

Various scholars (Anstrom et al., 2010; DiCerbo, Anstrom, Baker & Rivera, 2014; Scarcella, 2003) have noted that research focusing on academic language is relatively scarce and still in its nascent stages. However, several lines of inquiry have emerged, and although they do not always demonstrate a systematic approach to describing the concept of academic language (see critique in Anstrom et al., 2010), these lines of inquiry can nonetheless be viewed as lending insight into how academic language is conceptualized in education research. In multiple, interacting, and sometimes conflicting ways, the range of theories of academic language outlined above, as well as the fundamental issues underlying them, have shaped both the research questions addressed by empirical studies of classrooms and the findings emanating from these studies. In this section, I discuss how the scholarly perspectives described above have informed various lines of inquiry in research on academic language use in classrooms. This discussion is not intended to be exhaustive; rather, I have chosen to focus on two generally contrastive lines of inquiry: experimental or intervention-based research and observational, descriptive research. My reasons for selecting these areas are their prominence in the literature as well as their relevance to my study. I focus only briefly on the first area of inquiry since my study is not experimental, though certainly many of the findings from this body of work raise relevant questions for my research. In composing this review, I have also chosen to focus mainly on studies that, like my own study, investigate

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hypothesis (see, e.g., Kramsch, 2008)

elementary-level classrooms with learners representing a diversity of linguistic, cultural, and racial backgrounds.

1. Experimental and Intervention-Based Studies

As Haneda (2014a) points out, a view of language as a discrete system underpins many experimental studies, which often focus largely or exclusively on academic vocabulary. Haneda (2014a) cites the work of Snow (e.g., Snow & Uccelli, 2009) as prominent in this area, explaining that the academic vocabulary studies conducted by Snow and other researchers tend to be concerned with questions about how vocabulary may be most effectively taught; hence, they typically involve an intervention with a pre-test and post-test design. To identify academic vocabulary, these studies often draw on corpus linguistics. Coxhead's (2000) academic word list is frequently cited for these purposes. His methods in constructing his word list relied on the academic–nonacademic binary discussed above in the sense that he endeavored to distinguish academic word families (such as *analyze, concept,* and *data*) from "general" vocabulary.

Examples of experimental research drawing on corpus linguistics include Kieffer and Lesaux (2012) and Arya, Hiebert, and Pearson (2011). Citing Coxhead's (2000) list as well as work by SFL scholars like Schleppegrell (2004), Kieffer and Lesaux (2012) investigated the effectiveness of explicitly focusing on morphological awareness as an instructional method for supporting the development of sixth-grade students' academic vocabulary and literacy skills. They found that both linguistically minoritized students and English-only students demonstrated similar gains for relational aspects of morphological awareness, but linguistic minority students demonstrated greater gains for syntactic aspects. They offer a number of interpretations of this difference in performance, one of which is significant for the goal of moving away from deficit-oriented views of bilingual students: they suggest that the

difference between the gains of language minority students and English-only students may "reflect a metalinguistic capacity that is more developed among [language minority] studies as compared to native English speakers" (p. 538). Likewise comparing the performance of native English speakers with that of English learners is Arya et al.'s (2011) study. Like Kieffer and Lesaux (2012), Arya et al. aimed to find ways of making academic language more accessible to all students, yet Arya et al.'s focus and methods are different: their study involved an experiment that investigated the effects of lexical and syntactic complexity on third-grade students' comprehension of science texts in four topic areas. Arya et al. (2011) found that lexical complexity significantly impacted comprehension in only two of the topic areas, whereas syntactic complexity did not significantly affect students' comprehension in any of the topics. They found no additional effects for English learners in either of these areas. The potential implications of such findings are noteworthy for countering deficit views of bilingual students and for theorizing what counts as complexity in academic texts.

2. Observational Studies

As is the case with many experimentally oriented studies, classroom observation research has often been motivated by questions about challenges that students face in learning academic language and ways of better supporting students' learning, but in quite different ways from experimental research. Most of these studies rely on some form of discourse analysis, though their approaches to it vary, as do their approaches to observation, with some taking ethnographic perspectives and others not. And although many of these studies draw on sociocultural theories of language and learning, their research questions also differ, with one strand of inquiry focusing mainly or exclusively on teachers' discursive and instructional practices, and another strand focusing on students' discourse in teacher–student interactions

and/or in student–student interactions. Here I discuss both areas of inquiry as both are relevant to my study.

Teachers' instructional practices. Drawing from a diversity of theoretical approaches ranging from sociocultural perspectives to SFL work to sociological theories, studies in this area examine teachers' talk and instructional practices as they relate to academic language. Richardson Bruna, Vann, and Escudero's (2007) study draws on work by sociocultural theorist Lemke as well as on SFL work to explore the social actions performed by what they call "the discourse economy" that resulted from an instructional approach focused on academic vocabulary in a lesson on rock formation in a ninth-grade English-learner classroom. Through a multimodal discourse analysis of teacher–student interactions, the researchers show how the teacher's use of strategies such as metacommenting, corrections of pronunciation, repetition, and word stress served to emphasize a simplistic language-as-vocabulary view. They argue that if teachers "[water] down the linguistic technology, they may also be watering down the content of science" (p. 51) and may thus be depriving students of opportunities to develop scientific "habits of mind" (p. 52)—an argument which underscores the language–thought question discussed above.

Other studies also emphasize the potentially negative linguistic and cognitive consequences of teachers' approaches to academic language instruction. Lucero's (2012) SFL-based study of first-grade dual-immersion teachers finds that teachers missed critical opportunities to facilitate academic language development for their students. Similarly, Ernst-Slavit and Mason's (2011) study, which draws on Bourdieu's (1991) theories of linguistic capital, finds that the "overwhelming amount of non-academic language used by teachers" (p. 434) may have confused students and created many lost opportunities for the teaching and learning of academic language.

Teacher–student and student–student interactions. Other researchers have focused on classroom discourse in a more interactional way, examining not only teachers' discursive practices but also the discourse of students in their interactions with one another and/or the teacher. One such study is Durán and Szymanski (1997), which is reviewed by Durán (2008) in his discussion of examples of how the assessment of English learners' academic English competencies might be reconceptualized. Drawing on cultural historical activity theory, Durán and Szymanski's study examined English learners' ability to benefit from instruction in recognizing and answering questions, which Durán (2008) characterizes as an important class of academic English skills. Through a discourse analysis of student–student and student–teacher interactions, Durán and Szymanski (1997) show how students were able to acquire the teacher's cultural model for ways of answering questions. The teacher used various assisted performance strategies, such as explanation and modeling, to guide students through this process. In their interactions with one another, students often drew on the teacher's explanations of steps for recognizing and answering questions. Similarly, Aragón (2014) analyzes how high-school students in a linguistics outreach program (see Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee, forthcoming for a description of this program) drew on instructors' and mentors' discourse and narratives as they learned about the academic concept of *community of practice*. Her analysis of student–student and student–teacher interactions shows how over time the term took on locally situated and more collaborative meanings in ways that allowed the group to co-construct a third space (see, e.g., Gutiérrez, 2008) that advanced sociolinguistic justice (Bucholtz et al., 2014).

Also informed by sociocultural theories of language and learning is Bunch's (2006) study, which differs from the previously mentioned studies in focusing mainly on peer interactions. As discussed above, Bunch (2006) questions the academic–everyday language

dichotomy and instead employs a broad conceptualization of academic language as the language that students used to achieve academic tasks in their peer interactions. The author focuses on small-group discussions in a middle-school classroom in which students are collaboratively preparing presentations based on authentic primary and secondary historical texts. Bunch's discourse analysis of peer interaction during these discussions shows that "students did not leave their 'conversational' or 'everyday' language at the classroom door" (p. 293), but rather used a variety of linguistic resources to engage in the academic task before them. Indeed, the author observes that in the moments when students seemed to be most engaged with the core academic content, their talk was replete with features that have been described as typical of "conversational" language; he thus calls this style the *language of ideas* to emphasize its importance for understanding academic concepts. What he terms the *language of display* also had an important academic purpose, although he notes that "an obsessive focus on constructing a quick answer for display to an outside audience also sometimes hijacked the purposes of discussion questions" (p. 298). He concludes by arguing for broader conceptualizations of academic language that could begin to move away from dichotomous conceptualizations and could thus provide more meaningful opportunities for all students to participate in taking up a wide range of uses of English for academic purposes.

Like Bunch (2006), Kern, Lingnau and Paul (2015) argue for broader conceptualizations of academic language, though in a distinct way. Taking a constructivist approach based on a conversation analytic framework, they seek to extend the view of academic language beyond formal linguistic features to include communicative practices that provide a teaching and learning environment for such features. Their study of a first-grade classroom in Germany finds that the teacher tended to emphasize grammatical correctness, complete sentences, and other linguistic features commonly described as aspects of academic

language; these practices, which are intimately connected to language ideologies and social norms (such as politeness rules), often left little opportunity for students to make self-defined contributions to classroom talk. The authors note that their analysis raises the question of how and whether conceptualizations of academic language should be broadened to include social norms.

3. Some Overall Conclusions Based on the Literature Reviewed

Within and across the two areas (i.e., experimental and observational) of academic language research discussed above, several overall patterns emerge. First, as many observational studies have shown (Kern et al., 2015; Richardson Bruna et al., 2007; see also Ajayi, 2005; Anstrom et al., 2010; Moje, 1995), teacher-fronted approaches as well as structuralist accounts of academic language and overly simplistic views of language-as-vocabulary have tended to shape instructional practices in many classrooms. This finding raises several important questions, including how or whether such approaches may be constraining linguistic and/or conceptual input for students (see, e.g., Richardson Bruna et al., 2007) and how dialogue between research and practitioner communities can be strengthened (see also Valdés, 2004). Second, the experimental studies (Arya et al., 2011; Kieffer & Lesaux, 2012) as well as the observational studies (e.g., Richardson Bruna et al., 2007; Kern et al., 2015) highlight the idea that to best facilitate academic language development, complex interrelationships—for example, the relationships between vocabulary and syntax, between structural features of language and students' prior knowledge, between linguistic forms and social practices—need to be taken into account. That is, attending to one feature in isolation (e.g., vocabulary) is insufficient for academic language research and learning alike. Third, many of the studies underscore some of the difficulties of and problems with distinguishing "academic" and "everyday" or other uses of language since both are used

to engage in conceptual work in academic settings (see, e.g., Bunch, 2006; Richardson Bruna et al., 2007) and both may contribute to textual complexity in ways that are sometimes difficult to disentangle (see Arya et al., 2011). Finally, as discussed in previous sections and as exemplified by the studies reviewed in this section, no one single approach to academic language can be identified across the body of literature on academic language or even within any given study; indeed, some studies (e.g., Durán and Szymanski, 1997; Richardson Bruna et al., 2007 study; see also Gebhard et al., 2007) combined SFL-based insights with practice-based approaches and/or sociocultural approaches. This conceptual diversity across and within academic language studies suggests that the lines between different conceptualizations of academic language are not clear or rigid, and it also points to potential affordances for dialogue among different scholarly perspectives.

4. Issues for Future Research

In light of the diversity of perspectives, methods, and findings represented by these and other studies, a wide range of avenues for future research can be identified. To be sure, no one single study will be able to address all the remaining questions. I close this section with a description of some of the many gaps in the literature that my study has the potential to address. Following Bunch (2006), I adopted one broad question to guide my observations and analysis throughout this study: How do students use language and other semiotic resources for social and academic purposes in peer interactions during language arts and math activities? This broad question was further divided into the three sub-questions mentioned in the Introduction:

> Research Question 1: (How) do students use academic language in peer interactions?
> Research Question 2: What ideologies are apparent in their understandings and uses of academic language?;
> Research Question 3: How do students' uses and understandings of academic language shape their constructions of identity?

To make clear why these questions are significant, below I outline some of the specific contributions of my study with regard to theories of academic language, research focus/questions, methods, and historical and sociopolitical contexts of research.

Theories of academic language. Many of the studies reviewed focus mainly on linguistic aspects of academic language teaching and learning (e.g., Kieffer & Lesaux, 2012; Richardson Bruna et al., 2007). Others represent broader theoretical views of academic language but do not attend to embodied action or other semiotic resources (e.g., Bunch, 2006; Kern et al., 2015). Thus, scholars like Haneda (2014a) have called for approaches that capture the multimodal nature of learning and the actional nature of language. As I will discuss in Chapter 3, the theoretical perspective I will be adopting in my study represents just such an expanded view, a perspective which is also captured by the broadness of my overarching research question.

Research questions. As Snow and Uccelli (2009) point out, the vast majority of research on academic language has focused primarily or exclusively on English learners, and yet as Anstrom et al. (2010) note, it is still not known whether the teaching and learning of academic language differs for English learners versus native speakers. Thus, at minimum, this near-exclusive focus on English learners implies a need for more research on students of all language backgrounds so as to better understand differences and similarities—not to mention so as to avoid the potential deficit implications of focusing only on English learners (see also Haneda, 2014b). By including students institutionally designated as English learners as well as students identified as native English speakers and monolingual English speakers, the present study helps contribute to redressing this imbalance. The fact that my study focuses on second-grade students also represents a valuable contribution to the research since, as

literature reviews conducted by Lucero (2012), Valdés, Bunch, Snow, Lee & Matos (2005), and Anstrom et al. (2010) show, academic language has been studied mainly at higher levels of education. Given that the age of seven is often considered to be a linguistically significant transition for children's development (see, e.g., Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014), and given also that according to the CCSS, second grade is the year when students should begin learning to make metalinguistic informal–formal and home–school language distinctions so that they can decide when it is "appropriate" to use each type of language (see "Second grade," 2011, p. 2.6), studying second grade is of theoretical and practical importance. My study also addresses other related needs within the literature on academic language, including the need for studies that describe which linguistic forms are actually used in classrooms (Kern et al., 2015), the need for more research exploring classroom interactions (DiCerbo et al., 2014), and the relative lack of attention to questions of ideology and identity in studies of academic language (Kern et al., 2015; Heller & Morek, 2015, cited in Preece, 2015).

Methods. Many studies of academic language have been experimental or intervention-based, and as Anstrom et al. (2010) note, there are relatively few descriptive classroom studies on which to base recommendations for practice and policy. Relatedly, there is a need for more longitudinal work (Scarcella, 2003) and for discourse-analytic studies (Anstrom et al., 2010). Because it is based on ethnographic methods of participant observation over an entire school year and uses discourse analytic methods (see Chapter 4 for an expanded discussion of methods), my nine-month study helps address these particular methodological gaps.

Historical and sociopolitical contexts of research. Since the CCSS are only just beginning to be implemented in classrooms, the majority of language and literacy research to date has been conducted in different historical and sociopolitical contexts (but see Choi, 2014

for a study of argumentative writing practices in the CCSS era). Since it was conducted during the first year of Beachside Elementary School's full implementation of the CCSS, this study has implications for understanding what effective Standards-based instruction might look like (see Bunch, Kibler, & Pimentel, 2013).

D. Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed some predominant approaches to conceptualizing academic language within educational research, relating these to longstanding debates and remaining questions within this field. I have also provided an overview of the ways in which these theories have shaped experimental and observational classroom research. On the basis of this review of research, I have highlighted the need for a broadened approach to the study of academic language, one that takes account of multimodality, that does not view students' and teachers' language use from deficit perspectives, and that avoids reifying the academic register as a unified monolith that is necessarily separate from "everyday" language. In the next chapter I describe the specific ways in which my theoretical framework can address these needs.

III. Theoretical Framework

The research questions that guide this study are informed not only by the theoretical and methodological issues salient in the literature discussed in the foregoing chapter, but also by distinct though interrelated sociocultural theoretical perspectives on language, interaction, learning, identity, and schooling. This chapter will describe the broadly sociocultural linguistic approach that I take throughout this dissertation. I begin by discussing a language-as-action perspective, highlighting the concepts of enregisterment and indexicality as valuable conceptual tools for understanding how both agency and structure shape people's use of language and other semiotic resources. I then provide an outline of my three-dimensional framework for understanding academic language. This is followed by a discussion of the key theories of learning that inform the analyses throughout this dissertation, particularly sociocultural theories of appropriation and peer interaction. Throughout this chapter, I argue that to contribute to meaningful educational change, theories of language and learning must attend to the dynamism, diversity, complexity, and politics of all human interaction.

A. What is (Academic) Language?

1. Language as Action

As various scholars have argued, the conceptualizations of academic language that have underpinned much academic language research tend to be circular and tautological. For instance, Irujo (2009) emphasizes that it is circular to define academic language as the language of school simply because it is used in school, and similarly, Rolstad (2005) highlights the tendency to evaluate register differences tautologically, as in "'high quality language' is defined as the language used by people who use 'high quality language'" (p. 1995) and "'everyday words' are those that we use in 'conversational language;' conversational language' consists of words we use every day" (pp. 1996-1997). Agreeing

that such definitions are unhelpful at best and deficit-oriented at worst, in this dissertation I take an action-based view that defines (academic) language not solely in terms of where it is used or who uses it, but rather with an eye to how it works—along with other semiotic and embodied resources—to accomplish action in the social world. From this perspective, language is an expression of agency and "an inseparable part of all human action, intimately connected to all other forms of action, physical, social and symbolic" (van Lier & Walqui, 2012, p. 4). Within sociocultural linguistics, action- and practice-oriented views of language are well-established (see, e.g., Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Eckert, 2008a), but as van Lier and Walqui (2012) and Haneda (2014a) explain, such ideas are only just beginning to gain ground in educational scholarship on academic language.

At this juncture it is useful to distinguish between action-based perspectives on language from other perspectives. First, an action-based view of language contrasts with formal theories of language, which define language as forms to be learned and thus focus on users' ability to accurately use these forms. Formal approaches typically direct language learners' attention to discrete lexical and grammatical forms, sequenced in a manner that is theorized as moving from more basic or easier to more complex (see Valdés et al., 2014). Developed largely in opposition to this emphasis on discrete forms, functionalist theories professed to shift the emphasis away from structures toward functions and speech acts. Functional perspectives are concerned with how people use language to perform functions, make meaning, and achieve communicative goals. However, scholars have critiqued some functional approaches for their tendency to present language units in isolation and abstraction in much the same way that formal theories tend to do (see van Lier & Walqui, 2012). The behaviorist undertones of some of the language central to functional approaches, such as *function* and *task*, are also worth noting. The significance of the action-based perspective,

then, is that it offers a much more agentive, integrative approach to understanding what language is and what is done with language. In this view, "form and function are subservient to action" (van Lier & Walqui, 2012, p. 5).

One of the implications of viewing language as action is that linguistic analyses should attend to the interactional contexts and situated activities in which language is used. Within educational research on academic language, Bunch's (2006) work provides one useful example of how this might be approached. Rather than starting with forms (e.g., *compare*) or functions (e.g., comparing) that are conventionally associated with academic language, Bunch (2006) looks more broadly at action, asking how students use language as they engage in particular activities. Following his logic of inquiry, I begin with the broad question of how students use not just academic language, but language and other semiotic resources more broadly, within particular activities (i.e., math activities and English language arts activities, particularly the activity known locally as "Workshop time," which will be described in more detail in Chapter 4). Another implication of the language-as-action perspective is that linguistic analyses are not neutral analyses of only linguistic forms, but rather are inherently social analyses. As such, they are also analyses of ideology and identity (among other interactionally emergent phenomena); as Bucholtz (forthcoming) puts it, "every social move is also a stylistic move" (p. 32), and ideology "undergirds all stylistic action" (p. 51). Again, these understandings are relatively well-established within sociocultural linguistics, but within research on academic language, they represent a less common perspective. As discussed in Chapter 2, academic language researchers have not often attended to ideology and identity (see, e.g., Kern et al., 2015; Heller & Morek, 2015, cited in Preece, 2015), but in taking up a language-as-action perspective, I am necessarily attending to these aspects of interactions.

2. Enregisterment

van Lier and Walqui's (2012) action-oriented framework for understanding language acknowledges that agency may be "facilitated or debilitated by a range of individual and social factors, including sociocultural, historical, economic and political ones" (p. 4). Thus, as they and many other scholars (e.g., Ahearn, 2001; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; Gee, 2011) have noted, attending only to agency at the micro level of interaction without also attending to macro-level structures makes for incomplete analyses at best. To understand social structure, many (e.g., Ernst-Slavit & Mason, 2011; Preece, 2015) have looked to Bourdieu's theories of capital, habitus, and the linguistic market. However, as Agha (2003) argues, Bourdieu's 'top-down' approach to the formation of a standard language relies mainly on decontextualized reasoning and tends to overlook agency. For this reason, in this study I have taken up Agha's theory of processes of enregisterment, finding it to be more helpful to my work because it illuminates how agentive moments of (academic) language use are related to larger social and linguistic structures, like institutions (e.g., schools) and registers (e.g., academic language). Agha's account of *enregisterment*—that is, "processes through which a linguistic repertoire becomes differentiable within a language as a socially recognized register of forms" (p. 231)—highlights the importance of contextualized analyses of data by emphasizing that enregisterment processes have an "irreducibly agentive character, even though the individuals involved differ in their degree of effective freedom" (p. 270). Agha's (2003) theory holds that enregisterment processes unfold one speech event at a time, forming higher-order structures, or speech chains, that link social personae, cultural values, and cultural/linguistic forms. He argues that the dissemination of a register depends on the circulation of messages typifying speech; these messages can be more or less implicit and are spread through various genres that are themselves linked together as part of a speech chain stretching across sometimes vast expanses in space and time. With regard to the roles of

institutions (like schools) in the dissemination of such messages, Agha (2003) notes that schools play a crucial role in processes of enregisterment because they are "sites of overt metadiscursive activity" (p. 261); at the same time, however, schools and other institutions can be and are reconfigured periodically through external discourses.

3. Indexicality

Speech chains are formed largely through indexical processes. Indexicality is the linking of context-specific social meanings and semiotic forms (Bucholtz, forthcoming). Although sociocultural linguists have theorized indexicality in a number of ways, for my purposes in this chapter and the rest of the study, Ochs' (1992) distinction between direct and indirect levels of indexicality is especially useful. At the first level, linguistic and other semiotic forms (e.g., lexical forms, phonological resources, registers) directly index speech acts (e.g., ordering a meal), sociocultural activities (e.g., oratory practices), and stances (that is, evaluative, affective, and epistemic orientations to talk; see also Chapter 7). At the second, indirect level of indexicality, these semiotic forms can build stances, styles, and identities through their ideological associations with personae believed to frequently engage in such acts and activities or to take such stances. For example, the phrase *oh my god*, especially when uttered with exaggerated stress, high pitch, and nasality, directly indexes an expressive stance, which is in turn is associated with a prep girl or Valley girl persona (see, e.g., Chun, 2007). Also relevant is Eckert's (2008a) concept of the *indexical field*, or a fluid "constellation of ideologically related meanings" (p. 454). Her discussion of the indexical field draws attention to the fact that any given semiotic resource does not have a fixed or pre-determined meaning but rather a field of potential meanings. For example, Eckert (2008a) discusses the various potential meanings of /t/ release in American English: this phonological feature may index a variety of stances (e.g., polite, emphatic, angry), personal qualities (e.g.,

educated, elegant, prissy), and personae (e.g., British person, gay diva, school teacher, nerd). This indexing of social personae through language use underscores the interactionally emergent nature of identity, a perspective which provides a valuable alternative to the static notions of identity that have been predominant in the social sciences (see Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

Focusing on indexicality allows for a sociopolitical understanding of language, one that sheds light on both identity and ideology, individual agency and structural constraints, social change and social reproduction. Such a view contrasts with a referential theory of language, which depicts language merely as a tool for referring to the world and which has its roots in the Cartesian-inspired cognitivism that has long dominated Western thought (see, e.g., Atkinson, 2011). As Dick (2006) puts it, a referential view of language "reduces the production of meaning to language's ability to establish correspondences between the content of expressions and a putatively objectified, material world" (p. 90), when in fact it is through a combination of referential and indexical meaning that language produces meaning. In Irvine's (2012) words, "language does not just label the world; it is not simply a tool of reference, separated from the social forms and cultural concepts of which one speaks...it is also dynamically engaged in constituting them and enacting them" (p. 49). Hence, by contrast with the mind/body/language divides typical of Cartesian thinking, an indexical perspective views language as interconnected with and co-constitutive of the social, material, and embodied world.

Overall, a focus on indexicality and on processes of enregisterment is significant in light of static notions of register and context that, as Kern et al. (2014) point out, have undergirded much academic language literature. One example of such static notions can be found in guides for curricular planning, such as Gottlieb and Ernst-Slavit's (2014) volume,

which states that "the concept of register is typically concerned with variations in language *conditioned by uses rather than users*" (p.2; emphasis added). Based on such definitions, it is unsurprising to find other deterministic explanations of the context–language relationship, such as "discourse is the overarching dimension or umbrella that helps shape the types of applicable sentence structures that, in turn, *dictate the most appropriate words* [to be used]" (Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit, 2014, p. 6; emphasis added). The ideas that contexts condition uses of language and that structures dictate word choice do not hold up to empirical accounts of the context-creating power of language (e.g., Agha, 2003; Eckert, 2008a). Indeed, Agha emphasizes that even in spite of the fact that enregisterment involves sedimentation of speech habits and perception across time and space, the next turn is "always up for grabs, always potentially a branch point in the social life of the register" (p. 270). Furthermore, the ideology of linguistic appropriateness that is implicit in statements like Gottlieb & Ernst-Slavit's (2014) and in documents associated with the CCSS (see Chapter 2) is problematic, as recent sociocultural linguistic work has argued (see, e.g., Flores & Rosa, 2015; Love-Nichols, 2014). If language is related to thought (see Chapter 2), then ideological statements about what kind of language is "appropriate" in a given context—which arise when the language–context relationship is theorized as unitary or static—are also implicitly statements about what kind of thinking (i.e., the putatively "higher-order thinking" critiqued by Rolstad, 2005) is "appropriate." Such notions should evoke wariness not only because they are typical of the prescriptivism of institutional settings in colonial and postcolonial contexts, but also because they are antithetical to the goals of innovation and diversification central to intellectual inquiry in any academic setting or field (see Chapter 5 for an expanded discussion of appropriateness). Fortunately, from the standpoint of Agha's (2003) theory of

enregisterment, cultural values, such as the valorization of "appropriateness," have a social life; they are changing and changeable.

4. Academic Language: Appropriateness, Ability, and Authority

Any viable theory of academic language must thus account for both language's capacity for change and its tendency to sediment. By drawing on Agha's (2003) theory of enregisterment, and by viewing language as inseparable from human action, I aim to capture both of these aspects of the nature of language. Specifically, based on the theories reviewed above, several interrelated principles emerge: (1) Insofar as language is a form of action, academic language can be defined in terms of the academic actions that it accomplishes, and to accomplish these actions, it works with other symbolic resources across multiple communicative modes, which also need to be analyzed (see Bucholtz, forthcoming; Goodwin & Alim, 2010; Haneda, 2014a; Kress, 2011); (2) Since what gets recognized as an "academic" action may change or vary according to disciplinary, interactional, and ethnographic contexts, academic language cannot, as recent work (e.g., Kern et al., 2015) has begun to argue, be neatly extracted from its contexts of use; (3) Given variations of local contexts, ethnographic or emic definitions of academic language need to be given attention; (4) Because processes of enregisterment involve the sedimentation of habits and perceptions of speech through indexical speech chains, emic understandings of the academic language register will likely draw on more broadly circulating definitions, genres, and ideologies; (5) Because processes of enregisterment are also somewhat flexible and dynamic, what counts as academic language can and does change within and across particular settings; and (6) Considering that (academic) language, as a form of action, is an expression of agency, and considering also that enregisterment processes involve the linking of linguistic forms to social personae through indexicality, analyses of academic language are fundamentally social

analyses of people, and as such, analysts must foreground language users instead of only discussing language uses.

These understandings form the foundation of the three-part framework that guides my analysis throughout this study. I argue that academic language produces "academic" meanings not simply because it referentially points to advanced conceptual knowledge and other objects constituted as "academic," but because it allows users to index acts, activities, stances, and qualities that in turn indirectly index academic identities through sedimented—though by no means permanently settled—ideological links to social personae. That is, what makes a given use of language or other semiotic resources "academic" is not only that it refers to academic knowledge or that it bears the structural hallmarks of academic language, such as embedding, nominalization, or the use of the declarative mood (see Chapter 2), but also that it allows users to take particular stances, embody particular styles, and thus build particular identities—identities that can and do shift from one interactional moment to another. This definition makes it clear that academic language, far from being an "objective" or "neutral" way of understanding the world (as dominant discourses hold), is fundamentally social and is bound up with subjective as well as political processes.

Specifically, the framework I propose here defines academic language as context-specific uses of semiotic resources that help users index ideologies and identities related to appropriateness, ability, and authority. Accordingly, in this study I examine how semiotic resources enregistered as "academic" can help language users accomplish any one or more of three interrelated actions: (dis)aligning themselves with an ideology of appropriateness; positioning themselves as having a high level of academic ability or intelligence; and taking stances of authority relative to others. It is important to note that these three dimensions of the indexical meanings of academic language use are overlapping and often work together in

processes of social reproduction, though at times they work relatively independently and can be distinguished from one another. For this reason, each of my findings chapters (Chapters 5, 6, and 7) foregrounds one particular dimension while also acknowledging ways in which each dimension overlaps with others. Also important to emphasize is that this framework is not only deductive but also inductive. That is, the three dimensions of my framework are reflective not only of theories articulated in literature on academic language, but also of my ethnographic observations that these particular ideologies and identities were especially salient in Room G at Beachside Elementary School. Given its partly inductive nature, the framework outlined here may apply in different ways when used in different ethnographic settings, or it may not apply well at all, which points to the need for an ethnographic approach to understanding processes of enregisterment (see Chapter 8 for further discussion of these issues).

At the same time, the salience of appropriateness, ability, and authority is not unique to Room G. Rather, all three have long been acknowledged as central components of what is valued within mainstream (and hegemonic) schooling practices (see, e.g., Collins, 2003; Heath, 1983; Varenne & McDermott, 1998). Yet seldom have they been brought together in an explicit way within a single analytic framework, and to my knowledge they have not yet brought together as a lens for examining academic language. This dissertation's framework thus sheds new light on how the language practices and linguistic forms that are typically valorized as academic are intimately connected with the reproduction of broader practices and ideologies within schools and society. It also puts the spotlight on learners' identity construction processes (rather than only looking at macrosociological identity categories), thereby portraying them as people always in the process of becoming (Freire, 2000), both socially and academically.

B. How is (Academic) Language Learned?

1. Sociocultural Theories of Learning

Like the view of language described in the preceding section, the theory of learning to which I now turn is fundamentally social. This view draws in large part from Vygotskyan sociocultural theory and neo-Vygotskyan theories (e.g., Rogoff, 2003; Wertsch, 1998); broadly speaking, it can be considered a social constructivist or sociocultural perspective. From this broadly sociocultural perspective, learning is a complex dialectic in which an individual and her/his social context mutually construct and transform one another. The relationship is dialectical because learning cannot be separated from the social contexts in which it occurs; it is a socially mediated activity that begins in interpersonal interaction and then moves into the intrapersonal realm. Learning is also mediated by language, which is viewed as a central symbolic artifact or tool for mental and social activity (though, as discussed above, here I view language not only as a tool for performing action but as a form of action itself). As Mitchell and Myles (2004) explain, this perspective contrasts with input and interactionist views that have pervaded much language learning and second language acquisition research and which characterize language as a source of input for autonomous and internal learning mechanisms. Sociocultural theory does not ignore these individual learning processes; rather, sociocultural theorists view learning as first social, then individual.

2. Peer Interactions

Thus, people learn by using language—and also learn *to* use language—in socioculturally situated activities in which they jointly construct knowledge, problem solve, and enter into dialogue. Much of sociocultural theory emphasizes the importance of supportive, scaffolded interactions with more capable others, usually adults. However, as many have emphasized (e.g., Blum-Kulka & Snow, 2004; Goodwin & Kyratzis, 2007), peer

talk is also crucial in children's socialization and development of discourse. From one perspective, peer interaction offers a "stepping stone for adult-like uses of language and for gaining membership in adult cultures" (Hamo, Blum-Kulka, & Hacohen, 2004, p. 73f) since the interactional structures found in peer interaction challenge children to organize discourse by themselves in the absence of adults (see also Stude, 2014). From another perspective—the one which guides my analysis throughout this study— children's groups are unique systems that do not merely mimic the norms and values of the adult world but rather adapt them to their own purposes (Corsaro, 1997). That is, peer interactions are not just adult interactions in "miniature," and so children must be viewed as competent social actors in their own right (Thorne, 2001). As such, in this dissertation I focus largely on peer interactions as an important site for understanding some of the ways in which children use language according to the norms of their own social worlds. I focus especially on interactions that are not directly mediated by adults, but I also analyze interactions in which adults are present since these events likewise allow peers to position themselves and one another.

3. Appropriation

Whether in interactions with peers or adults, learners can begin to internalize, or *appropriate*, new knowledge, skills, and perspectives into their own individual consciousness. Wertsch (1998) draws on Bakhtin's work to explore the how language is appropriated. Bakhtin's dialogicality posits that speakers appropriate their words from interactions with others: "The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word" (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 293-294). This process of appropriation is not easy, nor are all words appropriated by each speaker—not because of cognitive deficiencies on part of the speaker, but because "many words stubbornly resist, others remain alien…it is as if they out

themselves in quotation marks against the will of the speaker" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 294). Bakhtin's theories also emphasize that language is not a neutral medium but instead is social and political.

With regard to the learning of academic registers, several important implications of sociocultural theories of learning and of Bakhtin's dialogicality should be noted. First, if learning (like language itself) cannot be separated from the social contexts in which it occurs, then research on academic language must attend in some way to those contexts. Hence, from a sociocultural perspective, the fact that there is a scarcity of research addressing the questions of which linguistic forms of academic language are actually employed in real classroom contexts or of how linguistic forms become learning objects (see Kern et al., 2015) represents a significant theoretical gap in the literature. Second, and closely related to the first point, if it is not from a dictionary but from others' mouths that speakers take their words, then a researcher's reliance on pre-determined inventories of academic language features to determine what linguistic forms should be used or learned (see Ernst-Slavit & Mason, 2011 for one example of such an approach) is incomplete at best. Rather, analysts should examine what counts as academic language and as competent language use in specific interactional and ethnographic contexts. Third, adult–child as well as child–child interactions are important sites for understanding how learners take up academic language (hence my focus on peer interactions). Fourth, since learning is fundamentally social, and since language is not neutral, the social and academic aspects of learning cannot be easily disentangled; as Lee and Anderson (2009) put it, identity is "intricately tied" to language learning and interaction (p. 182; see also Wortham, 2006).

A final implication that is related to the others yet worth emphasizing on its own is as follows: because sociocultural theories of learning and Bakhtin's dialogicality encourage

researchers and educators to look at (academic) language practices in situated contexts, they help challenge deficit approaches that locate (dis)ability solely within individual students (see Collins, 2003; Varenne & McDermott, 1998). Moving away deficit perspectives is important for the education of all learners, but it is especially crucial for bilingual students, students of color, and students whose linguistic varieties and cognitive abilities have historically been denigrated. Thus, my conviction of the theoretical soundness of sociocultural theories of learning and action-oriented, dynamic theories of academic language go hand in hand with my sociopolitical commitment to helping advance sociolinguistic justice (see Bucholtz et al., 2014). Ultimately, it is my hope that this study will contribute in some way to the longstanding endeavor of scholars across a diversity of fields and research areas (e.g., Bucholtz et al., 2014; Freire, 2000; Gutiérrez, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lee & Suarez, 2009; Paris, 2012) to give students access to academic discourses and knowledge while building on and sustaining their *funds of knowledge* (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005).

IV. Methods

In this chapter, I describe the ethnographic methods of data collection and analysis used in this dissertation. I begin with a discussion of ethnography and its goals. I then describe the ethnographic setting and discuss the participants in this study. The rest of the chapter outlines the methods by which data were produced and analyzed.

A. Classroom Ethnography of Room G at Beachside Elementary School

While I am mindful of intense scholarly debates about what counts as ethnography as well as the seeming trendiness of ethnography among education researchers (particularly a tendency to describe their work as 'critical ethnography'; see Heath, 2012), I characterize my study as a classroom ethnography of Room G at Beachside Elementary School in that my main goal was to understand how local practices and cultural values shaped the way academic language was understood, taught, learned, and used in this particular setting. Ethnography is particularly well suited to providing a way of understanding how cultural practices (such as linguistic practices related to academic language instruction) are organized by insiders' cultural meanings, values, and ideologies. To begin to understand a culture from an emic perspective (e.g., to begin to understand how the students and teacher in the micro-culture of Room G define *academic language*), the researcher "must become a student" (Spradley, 1979, p. 2) who seeks to learn about and from participants. Because of the ethnographic emphasis on the importance of learning from others, many ethnographers describe ethnography as "a philosophy of research" (Anderson-Levitt, 2006) or "as epistemology" (Green, Skukauskaite & Baker, 2012). One of the main epistemological assumptions of the ethnographic research tradition is that participation in everyday life and everyday settings of a particular cultural group constitute both what is to be known and how knowing is to happen. In this sense, then, ethnography is not unlike what people do as they

go about their daily lives (see, e.g., Frake, 1988): participating as learners and doers in particular sociocultural practices.

While ethnographers seek to understand a particular culture or community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) from an insider's point of view, an entirely "insider" point of view is not possible for several reasons. For one, even when the goal of ethnography is to contribute to social justice (as is the case for this study), ethnography— like all forms of academic research— involves complex power dynamics in that the researcher usually represents the authority of "science" or the academy, and ethnographers and ethnography itself have historically played—and continue to play—a role in colonialism (see, e.g., Jacobs-Huey, 2002). Second, there is no one single "insider" perspective since no community is homogenous, and indeed no person enacts the same perspectives or identities across all interactional moments; rather, each community and each insider is multi-faceted, complex, and contradictory. Third, a purely "insider" perspective is not the aim of ethnography; instead, the overall goal of the ethnography is to translate insiders' perspectives in terms that will make sense to outsiders. As Anderson-Levitt (2006) explains, this "dualistic approach" to ethnography is necessary because oftentimes "insiders cannot articulate the tacit levels of culture," and so "the ethnographer must also observe from an outsider's perspective to make visible the invisible" (p. 285). The overall account that results, if undertaken thoughtfully, is not one that "echo[es] the subjective realities of each individual participant," but rather one that represents "a combination of many perspectives" (Bhatti, 2012, p. 81).

However, saying that ethnography combines many different perspectives is not the same as saying that ethnographies are somehow objective—although as Heath (2012) explains, an objective stance was the norm for early ethnographic work, such as her seminal work carried out in the 1980s. By contrast, recent ethnographic work in anthropology,

sociocultural linguistics, and education has increasingly been informed by an understanding that, in Irvine and Gal's (2000) words, "there is no 'view from nowhere,' no gaze that is not positioned" (p. 36) and has accordingly sought to acknowledge the inherent subjectivity and partiality of all representations of culture and of all scientific research. Unfortunately, acknowledgments of researcher subjectivity have led to misconceptions that ethnographic and other social science research is too subjective and hence not "scientific" enough. Such positivist criticisms overlook the value of subjectivity, misinterpret the nature of ethnography as an intersubjective process (see Jacobs-Huey, 2002), and neglect to take into account the systematic methods that ethnographers use to gain multiple perspectives on their data. I will discuss some of these methods and the overall question of the subjectivity of the researcher in further detail below. First, I turn to a brief description of the community of practice that I entered as a participant observer.

1. Setting

In October of 2013 I set out to volunteer in a classroom, both in order to see how the education theories I was learning about in graduate school related to current schooling practices and also in order to begin to establish relationships that might lead to an ethnography like this one. Since my teaching assistantship responsibilities had allowed me to form relationships with volunteer coordinators at a local division of the county's office of education, I signed up through their website for volunteer opportunities in lower-level elementary classrooms since that age group was of particular interest to me. My contact at the county's education office placed me with Ms. Mayzie in Room G of Beachside Elementary School. Since 2013 and continuing through the present moment (May of 2016), I have been volunteering in her classroom for between 1.5 and 10 hours per week, mainly during language arts activities, but also during math and art lessons.

Beachside Elementary School is located in Golden Hills, a central California coastal city with a population of approximately 30,000. Next door to Golden Hills is a larger city of about 90,000 that has historically been a popular destination for tourists due to its coastal location, mild weather, natural and built beauty, and culture of affluence. While the county is home to various celebrities and wealthy families, many residents are poor, with an estimated 16 percent living below the poverty line. Furthermore, housing in the county in which both cities are located is very expensive and difficult to find, resulting in homelessness for many residents of a variety of ages and educational backgrounds.

At Beachside Elementary, these disparities in wealth are certainly present, though they are not as readily apparent as they are at many other schools in the county. For example, in some of the county's schools, 100 percent of students qualify for free or reduced lunch, whereas at Beachside, approximately 50 percent qualify. According to official demographic information, 52 percent of students are Hispanic, 30 percent are White, 11 percent are Asian, 4 percent are dual race, and 2 percent are of "other" races[4]; approximately 30 percent of students have been classified as English learners (ELs), which again contrasts with other schools in the county, where the percent of ELs is often over twice that at Beachside. Over 80 percent of Beachside parents reported having completed high school or higher levels of education. Overall, the school is ranked by the state as one of the better schools in the district.

Room G reflects many of these characteristics of the school itself. First, it is fairly representative of the racial demographics of the school. For the school year during which I collected data for this study (2014-15), there were 21 students in Ms. Mayzie's classroom, of

[4] These are the labels used in official online documents about the school.

whom 11 were Latina/o, five were white, two were Arab, two were mixed-race students (1 identified as Mexican and Italian, and 1 was Latina and white), and one was black. With regard to language status, from my perspective all students spoke English very well or natively, though two had been classified through state testing as beginning-level ELs, six as intermediate ELs, and one as a reclassified/advanced-level EL. Students' class status was more implicit, though I did have knowledge that at least three students lived in a nearby low-income neighborhood, and several other students appeared on the basis of their worn clothing and other material possessions to be from working-class families. The educational status of students' parents was also difficult to determine since parents were not participants in my study.

To better understand the ethnographic context, I endeavored to attend to the ways in which the socioeconomic, linguistic, and racial backgrounds of the students, the teacher, and the school itself shaped student interactions. First, from descriptions of other local classrooms that I read in hundreds of undergraduate student fieldnotes through my role as a teaching assistant during my time in graduate school, and based on local ethnographic work done by colleagues (e.g., Choi, 2014), I believe that relative to many other classrooms, the students and teacher of Room G had access to considerable material, technological, and social resources. For example, the room was colorfully decorated with an almost overwhelming number of commercially produced didactic materials (e.g., posters) covering the walls (see Figure 4.1 below). All students had access to basic school materials collected from parents at the beginning of the year (pencils, pens, and the toolbox described in the introduction) as well as regular access to iPads and computers owned by the school. Furthermore, on most days when I engaged in participant observation, at least one other adult volunteer (often a parent or an undergraduate student from the nearby university) was also present. During my time in

Room G, I also noticed that most friendship circles were racially and linguistically similar; particularly noticeable to me was the fact that the basic-level ELs, who attended pull-out ESL instruction for at least thirty minutes per day, were friends with one another. Students not designated as EL students were also friends with one another. I also observed that more expensive clothing and classroom materials (such as hair accessories and mechanical pencils) become important tools for constructing social identities, with some of the most popular students (e.g., Nicole, who will be described below) often being some of the most well-off.

Figure 4.1

Image of the right side of Room G and students during language arts

2. Activities

Most of my days in Room G were focused on language arts activities, although I often observed at least one math lesson per week. Students had language arts for one and half hours per day during what was locally known as "Workshop time." Workshop time was usually structured around two to five "must-dos" (tasks that students were required to complete) and several "may-dos" (activities that students could engage in if they finished all their must-dos). Must-dos varied in nature, but usually they focused mainly on written work,

including an academic vocabulary component (to be described in more detail in Chapter 5), worksheets related to narrative or informational texts the class had read together, worksheets focused on some discrete feature of language (e.g., adverbs, contractions), or journals on a topic that was typically provided by Ms. Mayzie. Sometimes these must-dos were to be completed independently by each student; on these occasions, students could request help from Ms. Mayzie or adult volunteers by "putting up their question marks" (i.e., standing up their name tags, which were made of laminated paper stapled into a triangular shape with one face of the triangle featuring a question mark that was intended to signal that a student had a question and thus eliminate the need for students to raise their hands for long periods of time). On other days (usually when there were two or more volunteers in the classroom), Workshop was organized differently: Ms. Mayzie implemented what she variously called "centers" or "rotations," during which students worked on their must-dos not independently but instead in groups of three to six that were formed mainly according to differentiated levels of academic performance (see Chapter 6 for a description of this grouping practice). When Workshop was organized around centers, students spent approximately fifteen minutes working with Ms. Mayzie or a volunteer to complete a must-do, and then rotated to the next adult-led center, where they focused on another must-do.

The structure of math time was rather different. Volunteers were not always available during this time of day, so the "centers" structure was not usually used. Math typically started with generative large-group discussions of the concept being learned (e.g., the customary versus the standard system of measurement) and then had a hands-on activity (e.g., measuring distances within Room G), which was often conducted in pairs or small groups. In addition to this time of day, students also participated as a class in a daily routine called "Calendar Time," which allowed them to practice basic math skills through various exercises,

such as counting by 10s forward or backward from the number of school days left in the year. "Number Talks" were another math activity. These were generally structured as whole-group, teacher-facilitated discussions of how students had solved specific math problems. Each student was given a miniature whiteboard to solve the problem and then was expected to be ready to explain to the group the strategy they had used to solve the problem (see Chapter 7 for an example of a number talk). Number talks were sometimes integrated into math time, although at other times they were included in language arts as a Workshop must-do (especially when conferences or other special events required changes to the usual weekly schedule), and at other times, they were conducted with a few students while other students completed other tasks.

3. Participants: Portraits, Positionalities, and Relationships

Students. In the analysis that I undertake in the chapters to come, I focus mainly on nine students Ms. Mayzie's classroom. Of the 21 students in Room G, I obtained signed parental consent forms and verbal assent for 20 students (see Appendix A for IRB-approved versions of consent forms and assent script). The parents of 17 students gave their consent for their child to participate in all aspects of the study (i.e., video and audio recordings, interviews), while the parents of 3 students consented to partial participation (e.g., only interviews or only audio recordings), and one student's parents never returned the several forms I sent home even though the student was enthusiastic about participating; as such, this student was not a participant in the study. The nine students described below were, in a sense, self-selected; they were chosen for this analysis largely on the basis of their marked interest in participating in the study. I consider this selection process to be an aspect of the kind of meaningful consent described by Metro (2014), who on the basis of Levinasian thought argues that the ethics emerge in face-to-face moments rather than being assured by a

signed, pre-formulated consent form. Face-to-face encounters with Room G students were crucial for getting a sense of which students were most eager to participate in my study. And although almost all of the students in Room G were willing or even eager to participate, the nine students discussed in Table 4.1 below were especially enthusiastic and regularly requested that I let them use one of the audio microphones. I have listed these nine students roughly in order of the extent to which I focus on them in this dissertation, although I have also organized the table according to friendships in order to highlight connections among students. The table provides some basic demographic information about each student as well as descriptions of each student and of my relationships with them under the heading of "participant profile."

Table 4.1

Information about Focal Students

Student (Pseudonym)	Available Ethnoracial and Linguistic Information	Participant Profile
Nicole	Mexican and Italian (though she emphasized her Italian heritage and seldom mentioned her Mexican heritage); monolingual in English	As suggested by the opening vignette and my focus on her throughout this dissertation (see especially Chapter 6), Nicole was a major focal student throughout my study. She was a bright, sociable student who seemed to be part of the popular crowd in Room G; various other students mentioned her in conversations and in written work, and on assignments that asked them to list their friends, her name often appeared. Besides being popular among her peers, Nicole also positioned herself as a good student through her markedly polite and appropriate behavior and her enthusiastic take-up of academic language. Her best friend was Nikki, whose lead she often followed (indeed, Nicole originally chose a different pseudonym for this study, but she changed her choice to 'Nicole' when, during a group interview with me, Nikki chose her name). Another close friend of hers was Brooklyn, although by the end of the year, she and Brooklyn had fallen out due to a conflict that ultimately resulted in parental conferences with Ms. Mayzie and the principal. Nicole loved dancing, particularly flamenco dancing, and on the basis of her body image and clothing, which was often reminiscent of teen styles, she seemed drawn toward

		tween culture. She was also eager to please the adults around her. She and I had what I would characterize as a good relationship, and she seemed to like and trust me; she often "put up her question mark" (a local signifier that a student needed help, as described above) when she saw me pass by her desk, although oftentimes when I approached to ask her what she needed, she did not seem to actually have a question (since she often paused at length to formulate one) and instead wanted to talk about her family or her interests. On the last day of school, she came up to me in tears, hugged me, and gave me a paper on which she had written "I will miss you. Love, Nicole."
Nikki	Arab; Bilingual in Arabic and English; Not classified as an EL	Nikki arrived to Beachside Elementary a few months into the school year, having moved from another region within the state. From the moment that Ms. Mayzie seated her next to Nicole (who gladly participated in socializing Nikki into Room G's norms), the two became good friends. Nikki was usually verbally participative in class and was one of the higher-performing students according to report cards. Several students, including Nicole, seemed to perceive her as intelligent and often followed her lead during group work. Nikki was also on friendly (even flirty) terms with Miles. As was the case with Nicole, Nikki and I had a good relationship.
Brooklyn	White; Monolingual in English	Brooklyn caught my attention—and that of everyone else, I think— from the first day I was in Room G during the 2014-15 for displaying what was locally understood as inappropriate behavior (see Chapter 5). In interviews with me, she described herself as "sassy," though at the same time emphasized she could be "serious." I often observed that she seemed distracted during class. Brooklyn regularly doodled on the back of worksheets (e.g., she drew pictures of what she entitled "Dreamland"), and when, some months into the study, I obtained consent from her mother for her to participate in my study, I noticed that Brooklyn often whispered into the lapel microphone when she wore it. She whispered even during Ms. Mayzie's explanations of instructions. I found later that she was not necessarily distracted, but instead was often repeating Ms. Mayzie's words verbatim as well as providing commentaries to me on her friends and enemies in Room G. This enemy dimension became salient late in the year when, as described above, she had a falling out with Nicole, Nikki, and another member of the girls' friendship circle. The reasons for this conflict remain unclear to me, but her former friends told me she had said "mean" things to them. Despite this reputation for mean and disruptive behavior, I noticed that Brooklyn very much wanted to make friends and was often sensitive to others' feelings. Brooklyn was one of the lowest performing students in Room G and was one of a few students (mainly basic-level ELs and a student with a diagnosis of a learning disability) who were regularly pulled out of Room G to receive special remedial services. My relationship with her was good; she seemed to trust

		me enough to come to me (sometimes in tears) and request my help mediating peer conflicts, which I tried my best to provide.
Domenica	Latina (Mexican); Bilingual in Spanish and English; Initially classified as an advanced EL and then reclassified	Domenica was one of four students (along with Cameron, Miles, and Susana) who was in the "extensions" group because she was meeting or exceeding academic expectations (see Chapter 6 for a description of this grouping practice). Perhaps because of her placement in this group, Domenica tended to be quite perfectionistic and was hard on herself when she made mistakes. In fact, her mom (whom I came to know quite well because she regularly volunteered in Room G and because I also regularly saw her at my university since Domenica attended a reading clinic there) requested my help with teaching Domenica to view mistakes as a natural part of learning. Domenica seemed to be well-liked by peers, though not part of the popular crowd. She was good friends with Susana; both regularly collaborated on their classwork, though they also competed with each other. Domenica often referred to me as "Meghan Trainer" (the name of a singer who was popular during the time of the study), apparently mainly because of my first name, and I often observed her singing lyrics to songs geared toward tweens and teens. Toward the end of the year, I got to know Domenica better when I was invited to her first communion. I also worked closely with Domenica toward the end of the year on translations of mother's and father's day projects from English into Spanish; she was the only student who decided she wanted to write in both languages for both assignments, and she seemed proud of her bilingualism.
Susana	Latina (Mexican); Bilingual in Spanish and English; not classified as an EL	Susana, like Domenica, was in the extensions group, and like her friend, was quite participative in class and was regarded by Ms. Mayzie as a "good helper" (according to notes Ms. Mayzie left for substitute teachers); she was quite invested in classroom norms and in a "good student" identity. At the same time, I observed in interactions and in recordings that she was regularly playful and subversive in her language use in peer interactions; she frequently stylized Valley girl, country, and British accents (see Chapter 7). She was an especially eager participant in the study and often asked to wear the lapel microphone. She also liked doing interviews with me, so much so that she requested multiple interviews.
Miles	White; monolingual in English	Miles was both a "smart student" (i.e., an extensions student) and a popular student in Room G. Several other students often followed his lead and tried to imitate his style (see Chapter 7). On many occasions observed him giving other students commands during group activities and discussions, although most peers did not seem to mind, and indeed some even seemed eager to please him. Occasionally Miles was involved in conflicts, especially with Brooklyn. In peer interactions, he enjoyed talking about topics his male peers in particular found interesting, such as girls, nudity, and video games, though he was quite adept at simultaneously maintaining the appearance of

		efficiently doing his work. In fact, he was so efficient that sometimes his handwriting was difficult to read, a fact which I often pointed out to him, which he in turn seemed to resent or shrug off. He was friends with Cameron and with another boy not mentioned in this analysis. He also seemed to be on friendly, even flirty, terms with Nicole and Nikki.
Cameron	White; monolingual in English	Cameron, also an extensions student, was locally regarded by many of his peers as "smart" and as "talking smart" (see Chapter 6). He seemed to view himself in these terms; for instance, for one class assignment that asked students to envision ways of improving the world, he discussed how he would make college free for everyone and how this would make him "the smartest person in the world." Ms. Mayzie regarded him as the most accelerated student in the class and on a couple of occasions when she did not have answer keys for quizzes that I was helping to score, she provided me with Cameron's completed quiz, and indeed I noted that he had answered all questions correctly. With fellow extensions students, he tended to be competitive, but with other students, I often observed him being very patient and helpful to his classmates when they were struggling to complete assignments. Cameron was friends with Miles and with another boy not mentioned in this analysis.
Alan	Latino; not classified as an EL	Alan was generally on the quieter side during class discussions, though he was not shy. In fact, in peer interactions with friends (including Lorenzo), he was quite talkative and enjoyed talking about sports, fishing, and video games. He received special services for a diagnosis of a speech impediment (a lisp), and sometimes adults (including me) had a hard time understanding him, although his peers generally seemed to understand him well. His academic performance was on the lower end, and he was often behind on his classwork. He seemed well liked by most peers, and while not himself especially popular, he apparently aspired to be part of the popular crowd; he often imitated Miles (see Chapter 7).
Lorenzo	Latino; bilingual in Spanish and English; classified as an intermediate EL	Lorenzo was on the quieter side during language arts discussions, though he was locally known as advanced in math. His mathematical reasoning often impressed even the adults around him, and on a couple of occasions, I remember being struck by the creative ways he solved problems. His math skills seemed to be important to him; when I made an end-of-the year video to thank Ms. Mayzie and asked Lorenzo to talk about what he liked about her, he thanked her for helping students become "mathematicians." Socially, Lorenzo seemed to be well liked, though not part of the popular group. He was friends with Alan, with whom he often discussed video games and sports. Lorenzo also enjoyed talking and writing about blood, weapons, and other such topics that sometimes got him in trouble for others' interpretations of them as violent (see Chapter 5).

Ms. Mayzie. From the first day I volunteered in her classroom in 2013, Ms. Mayzie has struck me as warm, flexible with people and plans, devoted to her students, passionate about teaching, and exceptionally skilled at her job. She is a white woman from northern California and is of what I assume to be a middle-class income level. She is a native English speaker, though she speaks some Spanish and has spent short periods of time in Spanish-speaking countries. She completed her teacher education training and credentialing at a university located in the same city as Beachside Elementary School. She has lived in the Beachside area for over ten years, during which time she has been a teacher at two elementary schools including Beachside. At the time of the study, she had over a decade of teaching experience. She is married and has two small children, one of whom was in his first year at Beachside at the time of the study. Teaching and parenting young children meant that her time was quite limited, although she always seemed remarkably energetic; as she explained, she does everything "to the nth degree." She always struck me as very focused in her interactions with me and with students. She explained that she loved her job because it requires one to be "present" in a way she had not experienced in other lines of work. She also went out of her way to make time for all her students, their parents, and even classroom volunteers, frequently staying up until the late hours of the night finalizing lesson plans for next day, as I have often observed from the fact that her emails to me are almost always sent very late at night.

The tone Ms. Mayzie set in Room G is one that I would describe as serious and efficient, though with many moments for fun and "silliness," which were often explicitly separated out from more serious or academic moments. For example, she frequently set aside moments for students to make noises they found funny and to do role plays. She also emphasized classroom rules (what she calls "Room G Agreements," which were generated

through a classroom discussion at the beginning of the school year), appropriate and responsible behavior, and respect for others (see Chapter 5). For instance, when Brooklyn rolled her eyes following one of Ms. Mayzie's explanations at the beginning of the year, Ms. Mayzie immediately and sternly responded, "I don't know how you talk to your parents, but in this classroom, you respect me and others" (FN 140828). However, such sternness of tone and words tended to be the exception rather than the rule. In general, Ms. Mayzie talked to students in encouraging, empathetic, and respectfully serious ways, frequently praising their work and ideas and positioning them as able (as exemplified by the example exchange presented in the Introduction). I think it was partly this combination of fun, seriousness, and respect that led almost all students to spend the final hours of their last day of school saying repeatedly that they were going to miss Ms. Mayzie and their classmates and then, in many cases, sobbing as they watched a "Room G Adventures" video that Ms. Mayzie spent many days laboring over as a farewell to the group. The group of students from the year before the study (i.e., the 2013-14 school year) had much the same reaction on the last day of school, and throughout the 2014-15 school year, many of them (who had by then gone on to third grade) stopped by Room G to hug Ms. Mayzie, to tell her they miss her, or simply to say hello.

Over the nearly three years I have spent in her classroom, my relationship with Ms. Mayzie has become increasingly close. Especially during the 2015-16 year, we have begun to discuss more personal details of our lives with each other. I value her support and insights immensely and feel that we have a good deal in common. I think our commonalities stem in part from the fact that we are both straight white, middle-class, college-educated women who were socialized into a similar set of values (e.g., being "nice," believing that one should "do it nice or do it twice," and frequently taking affiliative stances toward others' actions). Of

course, this is not to say that our experiences or beliefs are identical; indeed, there have been moments when I have not understood why Ms. Mayzie was taking a particular pedagogical approach (such as sometimes insisting on silence during Workshop), although over time I have come to better understand with the reasons and advantages of decisions that initially puzzled me or that I might not have made myself. Overall, I have come to love working with her and have learned much from her about seeing the brilliance in students' ideas, valorizing their contributions to discussions, and throwing myself into the work I do.

For her part, Ms. Mayzie seems to value my help and enjoy working with me. She frequently asks for my input, thanks me for coming in, and comments on how grateful she is for the additional support. She was also very receptive to and even enthusiastic about the idea of my doing my dissertation work in her classroom, saying that she believes such research, as well as researcher–teacher relationships in general, are extremely important. In fact, her belief in the importance of such relationships is so strong that in the fall of 2015, she helped introduce a colleague of mine to another teacher at Beachside Elementary for research purposes. Throughout the informed consent process for my study, Ms. Mayzie was very helpful to me in ensuring I was able to reach all parents. Especially crucial was the fact that she invited me to Back-to-School Night to briefly present my project to parents; when she introduced me to the group, she described me as an "expert" that they were "very lucky to have." Likewise, in front of the students of Room G, she often referred to me as the resident "academic vocabulary expert" or "guru," and she frequently asked me clarifying or confirmatory questions about spelling and grammar during Workshop lessons.

Me. Though I often felt far from being able to claim "expert" or "guru" status in matters such as mediating peer conflict or helping keep students focused on their work, Ms. Mayzie's positioning of me as knowledgeable about language was very much in line with the

way I have seen myself and been seen by others throughout my life. My relationship to the topic of this dissertation and, in many senses, to Ms. Mayzie and her students, has been shaped by my identity as something of a "grammar nerd." While growing up, I spent a good deal of my time devouring books, especially fiction books that helped me imagine I was Hercule Poirot or that I lived at Hogwarts with Hermione, Harry, and Ron. Even as a young child, I liked showing off my SAT words and correcting other people's mistakes. "It's *than*, not *then*!" "That's a dangling modifier!" Obviously this irritated nearly everyone around me, although my teachers praised me for it. I now think that I was so invested in my identity as a grammar nerd because I felt a sense of panic—panic that if I didn't police other people's language and keep my own language sounding "intelligent" and "correct," then I wouldn't have any source of authority or wouldn't actually be smart and therefore couldn't possibly qualify as a true nerd. And for much of my life, I felt that if I wasn't a nerd, then I wouldn't have an identity at all. Language was one of the main tools I used to talk myself into binary choices about myself and my life. I convinced myself that as a nerd, I couldn't possibly be interested in popular culture or even anything outside of school. I was sure that if I was to truly speak "academically," I needed to fight to keep the pollutants of "everyday" language from choking my speech and making me sound less educated. And I thought that if I was a good listener, then I couldn't really be a talker, especially not the kind of talker who shares "too many" of her real thoughts and experiences with others.

It was not until college that I started to question these ideas. I had grown up in a very white, middle-class suburban area of Colorado. When I started college in Los Angeles, I was suddenly surrounded by people who were culturally, racially, and linguistically different from me. My very first college friend was Mexican American and had an "accent"; only a couple of years later, while taking my first linguistics class, did I learn I had an accent, too. The familiar

yet oppressive either/or box of identity which I had inhabited throughout my life continued to cave in during my time studying and living in South America. It turned out that despite my "expertise" in language, including Spanish, Chileans in particular did not always understand me because I spoke a different variety of Spanish, and some of my college-age Chilean friends told me I spoke "too formally." I realized that some saw me not so much as smart or even nerdy, but as pretentious and privileged—and they weren't entirely wrong. For the first time, I didn't want to be only a nerd, but I felt I didn't know how to be anything else in Spanish or even in English. So I started intentionally using some of the "everyday" language and "slang" words and grammar that I had once looked down on. At first this felt contrived, but over time it became a real part of me. Yet to this day I continue to struggle to understand the complex social meanings of the vast range of linguistic and other semiotic styles around me. That is, because I invested so early and so thoroughly in creating an academic identity and thus came to exclude everything I felt was not "academic," I still do not have the range of indexical competence that I see in many others, including Nicole, who was the student who inspired the indexical competence framework described in Chapter 6. I tend to miss jokes about social personae and allusions to popular culture, which often amuses my friends and family. In reflecting on my relationship to language and to the larger social world it indexes and creates, I have come to see the stakes of different kinds of language competence as being very high.

Throughout my time in Room G as well as the time I have spent writing this dissertation, I have continued to see these stakes as high. At times, I have felt acutely aware of how my own experiences directly shaped my relationships with students and my analyses of their semiotic practices. For example, I sometimes feared that like my sister, low-performing students like Nicole might not graduate from high school if their abilities

continued to be turned into deficits because of the narrowness of predominant conceptualizations of what counts as competent language use and as intelligence more generally. And I often saw reflections of myself in some of the shy, nerdy students in Room G. By contrast, other students, like Miles, Alan, and Lorenzo (and indeed, most of the boys in Room G) did not remind me of any particular experiences or people from other areas of my life, at least not at a conscious level. On the whole, however, I recognize that my own experiences have shaped this study—just as my perspectives have in turn been greatly shaped by all I have learned with and from the members of Room G. I have also learned much from the many mentors and colleagues in graduate school who have helped open my eyes to the transformative beauty of ethnography as an intersubjective process.

4. Methods of Data Production

I turn now to an overview of how data for this study were produced. Despite the objectivist stance implied by the conventionalized phrase *data collection*, "data are not simply discovered by the researcher but are jointly produced in the encounter between researcher and researched" (Bucholtz, 2011, p. 37); as discussed above, my presence in the classroom, my relationships with participants, and my subjectivity shape what kinds of data I "collected" and how I analyzed it.

Classroom observations, fieldnotes, and recordings. I began volunteering and stepping into the "participant as observer" (Merriam, 2009) role from the second day of classes during the 2014-15 school year at Beachside. During the first week of the academic year, I was in the classroom almost every day and spent several entire days in Room G since my schedule allowed for this, since I wanted to get to know the kids well, and since I wanted to observe the initial implementation of socialization routines across a variety of activities and content areas. As the school year went on, my schedule changed, and I typically spent two to

three days in the classroom each week (for a total of approximately 5 to 15 hours per week) during language arts and math activities. These two content areas became the focus of my observations for theoretical reasons (most notably, for the reason that language arts is the activity during which students hear the greatest number of metalinguistic messages about academic language), for scheduling reasons, and for reasons of reciprocity (that is, math and language arts were the activities for which Ms. Mayzie had indicated a need for volunteers). During my visits, I participated in most classroom activities, usually by working individually and in small groups with students. Some of the students seemed to view me as a "teacher" (which was how Ms. Mayzie referred to classroom volunteers), and in fact, several of them often confused me with Ms. Mayzie, especially toward the beginning of the year. Other students seemed to view me as a big kid (e.g., some were surprised when they found out my age, having assumed I was a teenager or college student) and tended to interact with me in casual ways (see Chapter 7 for further discussion). For my part, I tried to position myself as an ally and even an older friend by using more casual language with students, asking them to call me by my first name, joking and smiling during conversations, and discussing some aspects of my life with them, particularly my cat. At the same time, I also tried to make sure I was helping students understand classroom norms and that I was supporting Ms. Mayzie's instructional goals, which meant I often had to remind students about behavioral rules and encourage them to do their work more efficiently. This role negotiation was challenging, as is the case with all participant observer roles.

One source of data for this study is ethnographic fieldnotes, which are crucial in many ways. First, as Anderson-Levitt (2006) explains, the process of writing fieldnotes is one important technique for distancing oneself from an insider's perspective. Second, in the words of Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995), "observing and writing about certain kinds of

events foreshadow what will be noticed and described next" (p. 29). Hence, writing fieldnotes is an important part of the observational and analytic processes. Finally, fieldnotes themselves are valuable data and metadata for an ethnographer; they provide information about and analysis of the object of inquiry (in this case, teaching and learning interactions related to academic language), where to look within video and audio data, and the ethnographer's experiences and insights related to specific temporal and interactional contexts. For these reasons, nearly every day that I was in Room G, I carried and used a small notebook to make detailed jottings and then write fieldnotes about language use, embodied action, and activities. These jottings allowed me to capture observations, but they also provided an important means of discussing my research with students since many of them commented on or asked me about my notebook, whereupon I typically explained that I was writing down "all the smart things" they said that sometimes adults might not hear. Even as I was observing them, they were observing me; as Jacobs-Huey (2002) puts it, the "so-called Native/Other(s) have been duly observed gazing and talking back" (p. 792), and this process of mutual observation was made especially visible by my fieldnote-taking practices. Yet I could not always write fieldnotes or even jottings. Indeed, my prioritization of the participant role often meant that I did not or could not capture the kinds of semiotic details that I wanted to.

Many of the semiotic details that I was not able to capture through fieldnotes are captured through audio and video recordings, which serve as the primary source of data and the focus of analysis throughout the following chapters. Once I received consent forms from participants' parents and assent from students, I began video- and audio-recording students as they indicated willingness or eagerness to be recorded, as discussed above. On most days, I brought two lapel microphones, which I usually gave to any two students who wanted to be

recorded, though at other times I approached students I wanted to focus on and asked if I could record them; they usually assented, but when they did not, there was almost always another student eager to be recorded. In fact, more often than not, more than two students wanted to be audio recorded, so the students and I developed a system wherein I would put them on a list in my notebook so that I would remember they were "next in line" for the microphone. I also used a camcorder every day, positioning it on a tripod in a relatively unobtrusive location and focusing it on the student(s) wearing the lapel microphone.

Although Ms. Mayzie had encouraged students to pretend the equipment was "invisible," I often noticed students orienting to the cameras and microphones. While many have argued that participants' orientations to recording equipment are a problem in relation to the "observer's paradox," others, such as Heath, Hindmarsh, and Luff (2010), argue that this issue of reactivity is often exaggerated. Furthermore, my participants' reactivity also had many advantages; like my jottings, the recording equipment led to conversations about the research situation, and sometimes I exploited this to teach students new concepts. For instance, during the week that students were learning the academic vocabulary word *observe* in small centers groups, I used the recording equipment as an example of the observation tools I use as a researcher, which in some cases led to conversations about social science and graduate school. In relation to the "observer's paradox," it is also important to note that this concept is rooted in the positivist belief that there is one underlying reality to be captured, a reality that is necessarily obscured by an outsider or observer. Yet as Trechter (2013) aptly puts it, "within any community, the reflection on and observation of language and interaction with outsiders is somewhat normal...a research approach that assumes the observer is causing unnatural interference is less likely to allow research participants to assume different roles and degrees of agency" (p. 34).

Interviews. Interviewing is a key part of the ethnographer's toolkit because it provides important ways of building relationships with participants, contextualizing one's observations, and understanding participants' worlds in their words. At the same time, an ethnographer must keep in mind that an interview is not a straightforward window into insiders' worlds. Talmy (2011) characterizes such a view as a (neo)positivist "interview-as-research-instrument" perspective, wherein the interview is seen as a means of "giving voice" to participants or revealing truths, according to which logic "data contamination" must be avoided. By contrast, from what Talmy calls an "interview-as-social practice" perspective—which is the perspective that has guided my approach in this study—interviews are "not sites for the excavation of information held by respondents, but [entail] participation in social practices" (p. 28), and thus are co-constructed by the researcher and participants.

Ethnographic interviewing is challenging for a number of reasons, including its tendency to highlight the researcher–researched power differential. As Brenner (2006) discusses, interviewers are often presumed to control the questions and focus, and this power differential is especially heightened in interviews with children because of the multiple lines of actual or presumed difference between children and adults (i.e., adult–child, researcher–researched, and "expert"– "novice" differences). At the same time, an ethnographer can use certain strategies to address these and other challenges. One important principle is to find ways of feeling comfortable with participants, which, in Brenner's (2006) view, is "the key to a good interview study" (p. 368). For this reason, I began conducting interviews only several months into the study, by which point my regular presence in the classroom and my interactions with students had allowed me to establish relationships with them. Other important strategies I employed were conducting interviews on the participants' "own turf" (Murphy, 1980, p. 83), using some of each participant's own words in the course of each

interview, and being flexible with my questions and my overall interview agenda. When interviewing the students, I also used strategies such as interviewing them in pairs or groups rather than individually, creating a natural context by embedding the interview in larger activities they were already engaged in or familiar with (such as doing role plays showing how to ask for help in Room G), and providing opportunities for students to ask me questions (Eder & Fingerson, 2002).

Beyond these strategies, however, I found larger principles to be most helpful in approaching interviews, especially with my second-grade participants. First, it was important to recognize young people as linguistic and cultural experts in their own right (see, e.g., Bucholtz et al., 2014) so that I could learn about and from them. Similarly, as Thorne (2001) emphasizes, it was crucial to break with common adult perceptions—for example, the idea that children's actions are trivial, cute, or irritating, and that children themselves are passive recipients of adult teaching—by entering the field with an "assumption that kids are competent social actors who take an active role in shaping their daily experiences" and with an "attitude of respectful discovery" (p. 225). A second guiding principle was to approach the interviews and my ethnographic study as a whole as an opportunity to accompany my participants through part of their educational journeys, rather than paternalistically seeking to "empower" them (see Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee, forthcoming).

Since "the skill of the ethnographic interviewer is seen in the ability to 'build' the interview as it proceeds" (Brenner, 2006, p. 359) rather than in the interviewer's adherence to any one set of questions, I used the "interview guide" approach described by Patton (2002). These interview guides can be found in Appendix B and were developed in consultation with Diana Arya, one of my committee members. Because of its emphasis on keeping the topic in focus while encouraging spontaneous wording and ordering of questions,

this interview approach is compatible with the ethnographic understanding that the role of the researcher is to learn about and from the participant. As Brenner (2006) points out, the interview guide approach also "allows an interviewer to capitalize on the ethnographic questioning cycle described by Spradley (1979), in which the informant's cultural and personal vocabulary and framework are incorporated into questions" (p. 362).

5. Methods of Data Analysis

In various senses, the foregoing discussion has already begun to describe some of my methods of data analysis. Fieldnotes, for instance, can be regarded as both data and as a phase of data analysis. In fact, even by being present in the field, I was engaging in analytic work. However, these aspects of analysis can be distinguished from analytic work undertaken for the purposes of written presentation to an outside audience. It is to these aspects of analysis that I now turn my attention, discussing some of the methods I used for transcription, coding, and selection of examples for extended discourse analysis.

Transcription. Throughout the 2014-15 and 2015-16 academic years, several undergraduate research assistants (see Acknowledgments) have helped me with the process of indexing (i.e., a step prior to transcribing that entails writing brief summaries of language use and of shifts in activities over the course of a recording) and coding my video and audio recordings. Since transcription and indexing are necessarily selective processes reflecting theoretical definitions (Ochs, 1979), different analysts' transcriptions of the same recording are different, and thus I too undertook much of the indexing and coding of the data. All transcripts presented in this dissertation were produced by me using conventions adapted from Du Bois (2006) (see Appendix C).

Coding. During the indexing stage, my research assistants and I used an open coding process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) that combined inductive and deductive codes. Inductive

coding enables the emergence of new themes that the analyst might not see if only deductive codes were used: "Inductive analysis…begins not with theories or hypotheses but with the data themselves, from which theoretical categories and relational propositions may be arrived at by inductive reasoning processes" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 333). Emic language is often used in this phase of coding. Examples of deductive codes, which were drawn largely from my literature review and/or were derived from my research questions, include: "academic vocabulary," which had inductive sub-codes for different vocabulary items taught in Room G; "academic communication"; "conflict"; "collaboration"; and "ideologies: ability." Examples of inductive codes include: "Valley girl," which emerged to describe Susana's and other students' frequent stylizations of this persona; "ideologies: gender," which emerged as an important theme in students' explanations of appropriateness (see Chapter 5); and "give me five," which is a phrase Ms. M frequently used to remind students they needed to listen "like scholars" (see Chapter 5 for an extended discussion of this practice), and which was included as a sub-code of "academic communication" once I realized it was enregistered as an academic way of communicating. This process was iterative and moved fluidly between types of codes, also allowing me to move between my data and literature on academic language.

Selection and analysis of interactional episodes. The indexing and coding process described above helped me to narrow the field and determine where in my hundreds of hours of data to look for *telling cases* (Miles, 1984, cited by Green et al., 2012) and *key events* (Wolcott, 1994). It was also useful for identifying potential focal students, although as discussed above, it was mainly my sense that students had meaningfully consented which drove my decision me to focus on them in this dissertation. The indexing and coding process was also crucial in helping me to develop the theoretical framework described in Chapter 3. Once I developed this framework, I returned to my coded indexes and to the recordings

themselves to analyze telling cases and key events, focusing especially on episodes in which the codes and sub-codes "appropriateness," "ability," and "conflict" (the latter of which led me to develop the authority dimension of my framework) appeared in focal students' interactions. Overall, a sociocultural linguistic approach to interactional analysis (e.g., Agha, 2003; Bucholtz, forthcoming; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, 2008; Eckert, 2008a; Irvine & Gal, 2000; Ochs, 1992) guided me throughout the analytic process. When combined with ethnography, this approach to discourse analysis helps ensure that researchers "view talk not as a chunk of text removed from any broader context but as a dynamic interactional process embedded in and inseparable from the social and cultural world from which it emerges" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2008, p. 153). Thus, while transcribing and analyzing the interactional episodes in the chapters to follow, I endeavored to move between interactional and ethnographic contexts in order to better understand both levels of context as well as my participants themselves. The understandings that emerged are the focus of the analysis chapters that follow, which present an ethnographic discourse analysis of how students' use of (academic) language was shaped by locally salient ideologies and identities related to appropriateness, ability, and authority.

V. Appropriating Appropriateness through Academic Language

> *Meghan: What have you guys found to be the challenges with teaching academic language?*
> *Ms. Mayzie: They don't use it. We teach it and then it goes away.*
> *Ms. Fairfax: There's certain words that are definitely much more accessible [than others].*
> *Mr. Travis: In what context would a student on their own say those words?*

As these excerpts from an interview with Ms. Mayzie and her two colleagues suggest, teachers who are invested in their students' success may worry that linguistic resources packaged as "academic" are not taken up frequently enough or that they quickly fade from

their students' minds, perhaps because they are inaccessible in and of themselves or because students have no context in which using these resources would seem natural. These concerns arise in large part from a language-as-vocabulary perspective. That is, Ms. Mayzie, Mr. Travis, and other educators may understandably be focused on making sure students practice and internalize particular words, especially when dominant discourses hold that academic language is, by and large, a set of inherently superior and cognitively demanding vocabulary items that are indispensable for accessing discipline-specific knowledge (see Chapter 2). Indeed, from this perspective, why would children regularly use such complex words—especially, as Mr. Travis points out, when interacting on their own?

In this chapter, I address the implicit theoretical and ideological questions about academic language that are at their heart of these and other challenges that language educators often experience as especially salient. Through analyses of peer interactions and interview data, I show that adults do not necessarily need to be present to or directly provide students with reasons or contexts in which to use academic language; rather, even on their own, kids often exploit the context-creating power of academic language to make their own meanings. One of the most salient meanings emerging from interactions in Room G was related to an ideology of appropriateness that was presented to them through academic language and literacy practices. The chapter begins with a brief review of key theoretical concepts about language that were articulated in Chapter 3. I then turn to an overview of relevant literature on the ideology of appropriateness as it relates to language and education. Next, I draw on observational data, interview data, and fieldnotes to examine how this ideology shaped interactions and activities in Room G as students appropriated various semiotic resources locally enregistered as academic. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of findings for language and literacy education.

A. Academic Language as Action

Form- and function-oriented approaches to understanding academic language (see Chapter 3) have tended to convey the idea that the meaning of language inheres in a more or less predetermined way in a set of grammatical structures and lexical items. Formalist views hold that speakers and writers need only concern themselves with accurately using a set of forms, whose broader sociopolitical meanings are often not closely examined. Functional perspectives go a step farther by acknowledging the social context, but they too often neglect fluid and dynamic nature of meaning making as well as the power dynamics that shape interactions, emphasizing instead how certain forms relate to performing specific tasks and functions in socially accepted ways, as though language users were merely function-performing machines. As discussed in previous chapters, both views of language are limiting in that they paint a picture of language users as less than agentive and of the language–context relationship as static and one-way. And this picture narrows the field of vision to social reproduction, making it easy to forget that social change is always on the horizon.

By contrast, the action-based view I take in this chapter and throughout the study foregrounds the agency of language users, the context-creating power of language, and the multiple and often contested nature of meaning. This is not to say that language users are completely unrestrained or that language use is unpatterned. To be sure, any use of language draws on speech chains in which typified messages link cultural values, social personae, and linguistic forms in processes of enregisterment (Agha, 2003); however, these chains do not inexorably bind social settings, activities, and semiotic forms together. Rather, language is built and rebuilt from the bottom up in social interactions (whether written, technology-mediated, or face-to-face). Speakers take their language not from the dictionary but from others' mouths, imbuing it with meanings suited to their intentions (Bakhtin, 1981). These

meanings often draw on, reproduce, and/or reconfigure more broadly circulating ideologies. Hence, identity, ideology, and language are closely intertwined and are, in many senses, (co)emergent through indexical meaning-making processes.

B. Appropriating Appropriateness

Some of the intimate connections between identity, ideology, and (academic) language are visible within the following analysis of ways in which ideas about appropriateness entered into and emerged from children's interactions in Room G. Through their use of semiotic resources locally marked as "academic," and also through their use of resources regarded as not particularly academic or even decidedly *not* academic, students made moral assessments about their own and others' ways of behaving and being. Specifically, they constructed important aspects of their own and others' identities by assessing ideas, embodied actions, and language use as (in)appropriate. Through these actions, students in Room G variously reinforced, reframed, and challenged the ideology of appropriateness that was salient in this classroom.

1. Constructing and Deconstructing Appropriateness in Schools and Society

The salience of appropriateness is by no means unique to the way day-to-day life was organized in Room G. Appropriateness reigns supreme within and outside many classrooms. In schools, appropriateness is often framed as a primary aim of language and literacy education. As discussed in Chapter 2, the Common Core State Standards incorporate an explicit focus on appropriateness by making putatively straightforward distinctions among linguistic registers. In second grade, students are expected to make informal–formal and home–school language distinctions so that they can decide when it is "appropriate" to use each type of language (see "Second grade," 2011, p. 2.6), and CCSS documents for later grades continue to emphasize this ideology through "college and career readiness" anchor

standards, such as the speaking and listening standard that students need to learn to "adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate" (see "English language arts"). As Flores and Rosa (2015) argue, even alternative approaches to schooling, such as additive perspectives related to the language education for linguistic minority students, have tended to paint "appropriate" (i.e., academic or standardized) speech and behavior as a desired and achievable end goal because "standardized linguistic practices [are viewed as] as an objective set of linguistic forms that are appropriate for an academic setting" (p. 149). Much of the scholarship on academic language that was discussed in Chapter 2 has advanced a similar view; for example, explicit references to appropriateness cut across several of the dimensions of Scarcella's (2003) framework. Indeed, one longstanding assumption within first and second language research more generally has been that learning language means learning to use linguistic resources in normative, socially appropriate ways. The well-known construct of communicative competence, for example, has been taken up in various subdisciplines with a notable emphasis on appropriateness (see Chapter 6 for an extended discussion of communicative competence).

To be sure, leaners do need to understand what counts as "appropriate," not only for their own social survival, but also—and, as I argue here, more importantly—as a matter of challenging these discourses. Recent scholarship has critiqued discourses of appropriateness on several fronts, noting that they are often recruited to support other hegemonic ideologies, such as colorblind racism and ideologies of intelligence as fixed and innate. Flores and Rosa (2015), for example, argue that the notion that academic language is more appropriate for school settings is based on racialized ideological perceptions that "place the onus on language-minoritized students to mimic the white speaking subject while ignoring the

raciolinguistic ideologies that the white listening subject uses to position them as racial Others" (p. 155). In a similar vein, Love-Nichols (2014) argues that ideologies of appropriateness reify standard language and form a kind of colorblind discourse that legitimizes modern-day deficit-based views of students, particularly minoritized students. As Love-Nichols' analysis shows, the ideology of appropriateness is bound up with the production of "intelligent" speaking subjects through what she terms the *ideology of worth*, in which non-standard varieties (particularly racialized varieties) are seen as being of inherently less worth because they do not convey a speaker's message in ways that (white) listeners will perceive as intelligent. And even outside of scholarship on language education, the idea that some ways of speaking are inherently more appropriate than others within certain contexts has been recognized as having implications for human freedom. For example, Radheshwar (2014) argues that one requirement of "freedom" as conceived of in the modern era, particularly in the climate of the war on terror, is "conformity to the parameters and behaviors of national identity" since this conformity enables "the appropriate signaling of presence through standardized language to [one's] fellow citizen such that they [can] be trusted as an extension of the self (necessitating thus the domestication and/or the obliteration of the Other within the self for individuals and for societies)" (p. 39).

In addition to its powerful role in perpetuating hegemonic ideologies of race, intelligence, and freedom, the ideology of appropriateness advances an adult-centered approach to education that may ultimately constrain creativity and meaningful learning for children and young people. Since what counts as appropriate is defined by adults, an unquestioning attempt to teach appropriate behaviors may have the unintended effect of disempowering children and overlooking their complex social worlds. Appropriateness is not necessarily a criterion for kids' interactions in the ways that it has (hegemonically) come to

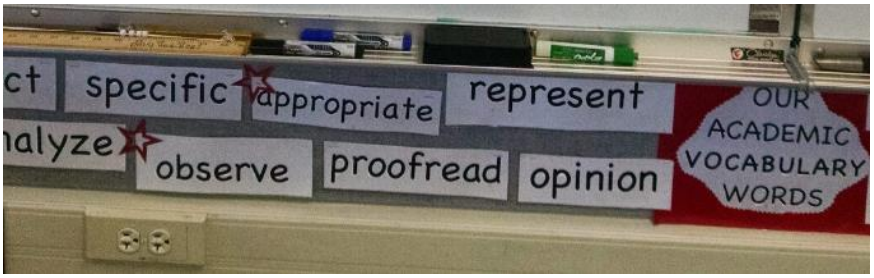
matter in adult interactions in our capitalist patriarchal white supremacist regime. Hence, imposing this frame on students' behavior—despite the many good intentions often underlying the desire to teach them what is perceived as (in)appropriate—may limit their freedom of expression. Importantly, the normalization and homogenization implicit in ideologies of appropriateness are in direct tension with the ostensible goal of modern-day education: to learn to think critically and innovatively.

2. Teaching Appropriateness in Room G

At times, students in Room G seemed to experience the emphasis on appropriateness as constraining their own intellectual and social freedom, while at other times they took it up as an effective resource for one-upmanship and for attempting to limit their peers'—and even adults'—freedom. The conduct of daily life in Room G made appropriateness an especially prominent ideological and linguistic resource for such identity projects. One of the ways in which the appropriateness was constituted as a central value and came to organize activities as well as relationships within this classroom was through literacy practices related to academic language. As suggested by the excerpted interview discussed in the opening of this chapter, academic language instructional practices in Ms. Mayzie's classroom focused largely on academic vocabulary. Indeed, when I opened the interview with a broad question about how all three second-grade teachers approached teaching academic language to their students, Ms. Mayzie's immediate response was to discuss vocabulary: she explained that "everybody has a word wall," a portion of one of the classroom walls on which the teachers place white signs with each of the academic vocabulary words the teach throughout the year (see Figure 5.1 below).

Figure 5.1

Partial image of the "word wall"

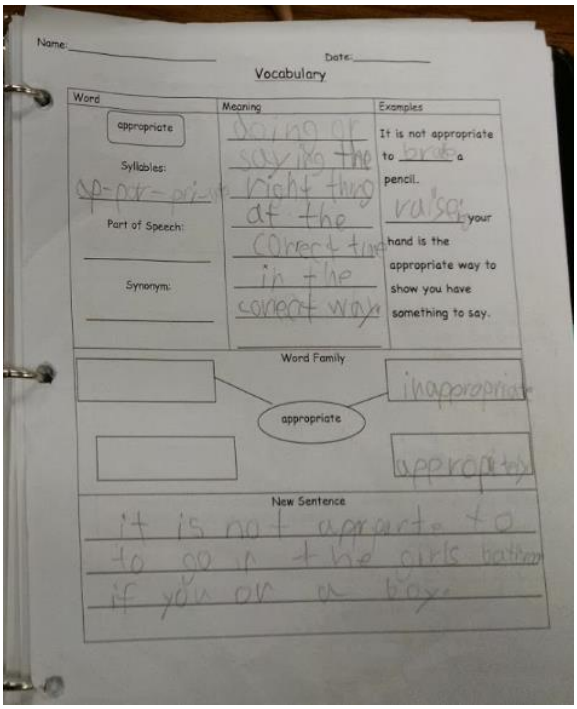


In the above image, the word *appropriate* is centrally located on the word wall and is marked with a star, a local signifier used to indicate that the word had already been covered and presumably had been learned by the students. In fact, this word was the fourth word to be introduced in Ms. Mayzie's classroom and was taught within the first three weeks of school. Although I had initially assumed that Ms. Mayzie's list of academic vocabulary words came from some official curricular document provided by the district, perhaps itself intertextually linked through a written speech chain to well-known tier-based typologies of lexical items (e.g., the typology set forth by Beck, McKeown & Kucan, 2002), she explained to me that she and her colleagues had undertaken the considerable labor to compile the list themselves by identifying words frequently found in many of the written texts that they used with students throughout the year. In the case of *appropriate*, however, social interaction served as the primary motivation for its inclusion in the academic vocabulary list; Ms. Mayzie reported that she and her colleagues selected this word and purposely covered it early in the school year largely in order to teach classroom rules and to prevent or address conflicts and interactional patterns regarded as behavioral problems. During my first year volunteering in Ms. Mayzie's class (2013-14), I quickly became aware of the ways in which *appropriate* served as a powerful linguistic resource for enforcing behavioral norms. For example, in the case of one student who was often found to be lying and stealing and spent much of her time seated separately from her peers due to frequent conflicts, Ms. Mayzie encouraged me to use *appropriate* and *inappropriate* when I experienced interactional problems with her.

During the year in which I collected the data for this study (2014-15), this lexical item continued to be taken up by Ms. Mayzie, the students, and by other adults (including me) to reinforce local behavioral norms as well as more broadly circulating ideologies related to language, interaction, and even gender and personhood. Like all vocabulary words locally enregistered as "academic," *appropriate* was presented to the students through a biweekly Room G literacy practice: a group-based discussion to elicit students' prior knowledge about the target word, followed by individual or small-group completion of a worksheet locally known as the "academic vocabulary" or "AV" worksheet (see Figure 5.2 below). During these discussions, Ms. Mayzie or I (as the resident "academic vocabulary expert") helped the group generate a definition including as many of the students' own words as possible. In the case of *appropriate*, the definition the group arrived at with Ms. Mayzie was "Doing or saying the right thing at the correct time in the correct way," although on the students' first academic vocabulary test, Ms. Mayzie shortened this to "the correct way to do something." Both definitions underline an important dimension of the ideology of appropriateness: namely, that there is but one correct way of acting in any given situation. The examples generated in the class discussion were also suggestive of this ideology of "the one" in that many of them indexed school-wide or classroom-specific rules that implied that there is one correct, preferred, or superior way of engaging in certain practices or acting within particular spaces. These examples included rules about acceptable times to use the bathroom, walking rather than running in the hallways, and raising hands to share comments during teacher-mediated class discussions. To be sure, many of these rules were designed to promote safety, community, and respect, although the ways in which they were taken up by students in interactions sometimes promoted unequal power relations, as will be discussed below.

Figure 5.2

The front side of Lorenzo's academic vocabulary worksheet for *appropriate*



In the "new sentence" portion of their *appropriate* AV worksheets, many Room G students drew on the school rule examples they had discussed with Ms. Mayzie. This "new sentence" portion of the worksheet was designed to provide students with an opportunity to come up a sentence of their own that would help them remember the meaning of the word. For this particular AV word, several students wrote "new sentences" such as "it is inappropriate to run in the hallway." Other examples of new sentences revealed more broadly circulating ideologies. Lorenzo, the student whose worksheet is reproduced in Figure 5.2, wrote "It is not appropriate to go to the girls' bathroom if you are a boy," highlighting the normative treatment of gender as binary and the strict separation between the two genders. In other cases, students' new sentences included metalinguistic formulations of some of the academic communication norms into which they were being socialized, such as "Saying bad words is inappropriate" and "It is inappropriate to shout out." Tellingly, within the "antonyms" section (located on the reverse side of the worksheet and typically completed by

each student independently), two of the seven students whose worksheets I collected for this particular AV word wrote *ugly* as an antonym for *appropriate*, suggesting that at least some students understood the consequences of acting "inappropriately" to be very severe indeed. Insofar as *ugly* is used to describe people rather than behaviors, it seems that for these students, inappropriate actions indexed a particular social type (namely, an ugly or inferior person) and/or could result in a significantly negative assessment of a person's entire character or social worth.

3. (In)appropriate Ideas

The ways in which students took up the ideology of appropriateness to morally assess one another's actions were visible during language arts activities and other literacy-related peer interactions throughout the school year. Even in spite of the fact that Ms. Mayzie often emphasized that individual students were responsible for their own actions and should "worry about [themselves]" rather than policing one another, students came to enact the ideology of appropriateness as a means of positioning themselves as morally and socially superior by monitoring their peers' very ideas for conformity to classroom rules and broader social norms. Sometimes they undertook these actions by drawing on the lexical item *appropriate*, as is the case in the first example below. This example is excerpted from a Workshop interaction that took place approximately two months after this vocabulary word was first presented, suggesting that its ideological force was strong enough so that neither the word nor the set of norms it indexed completely went away, as Ms. Mayzie had worried in the interview discussed above. The participants in this interaction are Alan, Lorenzo, Susana, and Domenica, four students who were seated at the same table throughout much of the school year and who thus came to know each other well. Susana and Domenica were good friends and often helped each other with classroom work, especially because their worksheets were

more challenging than most others' due to the two girls' designation as "extensions" students (this was Ms. Mayzie's term for students whose assessments indicated they were academically advanced; see Chapter 6 for a discussion of this grouping system). Alan and Lorenzo were likewise good friends. Neither was an extensions student. Lorenzo was an intermediate EL student regarded by Ms. Mayzie and his peers as having advanced skills in math. By contrast, Alan had an academic standing in this classroom that was near the opposite end of the spectrum in that he generally received lower grades and had been identified as having a speech impediment, for which he received special services that required him to leave the classroom several times each week.

The following interaction takes place while all students are expected to be working on various Workshop "must-dos," including individually completing a project designed to help them distinguish between facts and opinions by creating their own "fact/opinion spiders." Using a template provided by Ms. Mayzie, they were to glue together a spider body and legs, having first written four facts about spiders on four of the legs and four of their own opinions about spiders on the other four legs. At this point in the interaction, Susana has finished her spider and is working on a separate task but is still participating in the conversation that Alan, Lorenzo, and Domenica are having about certain artistic touches they want to put on their spiders. For Lorenzo and Alan, one of these touches is drawing "blood" on their spiders using red markers, an idea to which Domenica objects on the grounds of its supposed inappropriateness:

Example 5.1: "That's appropriate!" (141107, 1:19:09-1:20:00)

1	LORENZO;	Oh yeah,
2		You can really make blood on this thing.
3		**Make it red.**
4		(1.0)
5		Here, red. ((passing red marker to Alan; Alan takes it))
6		**And make- and make red,**
7		**in the- in the other mouth,**
8		# # #black #.
9		(1.0)
10		**It can be bleeding.**
11	ALAN;	No,
12		Only like #two #dots #of blood on it.
13	DOMENICA;	((inaudible utterance))
14	ALAN;	**Yeah it is. <frowning at Domenica>**
15		**#It's # appropriate to draw it ## because #it #has blood on it.**
16	LORENZO;	**That's appropriate! <increased volume>**
17		**That's appropriate!**
18	SUSANA;	**What's appropriate?**
19	DOMENICA;	**[That's not appropriate.]**
20	LORENZO;	**[To draw blood] on a spider.**
21	DOMENICA;	**That's inappropriate.**
22		((All 4 kids look at another group for 3 seconds))
23	LORENZO;	**It's not!**
24		**But you could put water and blood.**

In a discussion that both reinforces and questions the ideology of appropriateness through the repeated use of language that is enregistered as academic, Alan's spider comes to be an object of evaluation by his peers—even in spite of the fact that the spiders were intended to be each student's own creation. Perhaps because Alan was perceived as being in need of extra help due his marked status as a student receiving special services, he (like other students perceived as being of lower ability) was often the recipient of suggestions from his peers. Such is the case here, as underlined by Lorenzo's use of the imperative mood (lines 3, 6, and 7) as he combines an authoritative stance with a friendly tone to encourage Alan to use the red marker to add blood to his spider. As he often did, Alan takes up Lorenzo' suggestion by accepting the marker (line 5), though he has his own ideas about how to add blood to his creation in that it appears he wants to draw a minimal amount of blood (see lines 11-12) rather than making the spider appear to be bleeding (line 10).

This conversation about blood soon sparks a response from Domenica. While her utterance in line 13 is not audible due to her distance from the microphone and camera, based on Alan's utterances in lines 14-15 as well as her own protestations of inappropriateness in lines 19 and 21, and based also on Domenica's tendency to intensively monitor others' behavior and evaluate her peers' work (see Chapter 7 for an extended discussion of the ways in which she positioned herself as authoritative vis-à-vis her peers), it seems she has raised the question of the "appropriateness" of drawing blood on a spider. The ensuing debate in lines 16-24, wherein Domenica argues that it is inappropriate to draw blood and Lorenzo argues that it is not, suggests that the lines demarcated by the ideology of appropriateness are in fact less clear than portrayed by both local and more broadly circulating definitions (namely, definitions of *appropriate* as "the correct way" of doing something). The students use this gray area to take stances on Alan's spider and, by extension, on what counts as morally or socially acceptable behavior.

It is important to note that these assessments could well have been achieved without the use of academic vocabulary—for instance, Domenica could have said "you shouldn't draw blood" or "that's gross." Yet in this interaction, their appropriation of language locally enregistered as academic becomes an important resource for their construction of identities and exploration of ideologies. To the extent that she assesses Alan's decision as an inappropriate one, Domenica aligns with the ideology of appropriateness. For their part, Lorenzo and Alan disalign from Domenica's stance by holding that drawing blood is not inappropriate—indeed, Alan argues that it is appropriate (lines 16-17), perhaps using the word in the sense of "fitting" (a meaning that had not been directly discussed in Room G) since spiders are carnivorous and are often depicted in popular culture as blood-sucking. However, Alan and Lorenzo do not entirely disalign with the ideology itself insofar as they

do not reject the premise of the debate, as they might have achieved by saying something along the lines of "who cares about being appropriate."

In general, references to blood, weapons, and violence often provided platforms for explicit or implicit invocations of appropriateness in Room G. One indirect moral precedent for many such discussions was the set of classroom rules established on the fourth day of school and entextualized through a large poster entitled "Room G Agreements" (see Figure 5.3 below), which was placed prominently near the classroom door. In particular, rule three ("be responsible") and rule eight ("be safe") were often recruited as resources by adults and students alike. Indeed, I often found myself citing and reinforcing these rules in the course of helping students with assignments or mediating peer conflicts. For example, one day while helping Lorenzo with an assignment in which the students were to imagine what kinds of stores and objects they would put in a community of their own creation, I was concerned by what seemed to me to be inappropriate references to bazookas and bombs. As I looked over his work with him, I pointed to the "Agreements" poster as I asked him whether these images were "safe" and then encouraged him to change some of them (150512 A). Like me, many students in Room G were quick to read images and language of this kind as inappropriate. In another interaction also involving Lorenzo, a similar though more extended assignment asked students to imagine how they would "make the world a better place." Lorenzo's idea was to create a world modeled around Minecraft (a video game popular with many of the students) in which "there would be armor for everyone and swords for everyone" (PIC 150416). In a somewhat inconsistent application of classroom norms, I praised his idea as creative. By contrast, Nicole (the focal child of the next chapter) reacted negatively to it, frowning and stating that she "wouldn't like to live there" (FN 150326).

Figure 5.3

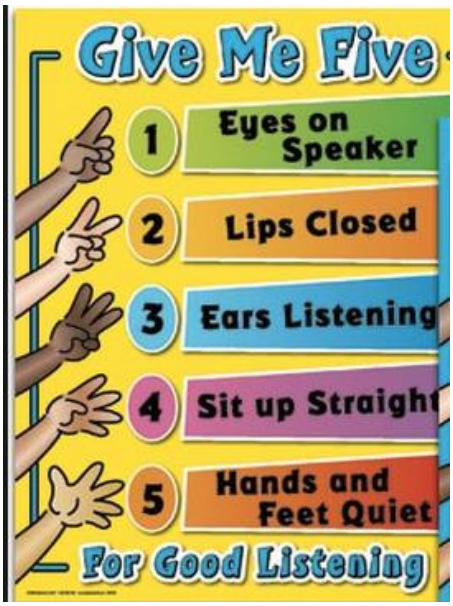
Photo of the “Room G Agreements” poster listing classroom rules

4. (In)appropriate Embodied Actions

Like the academic ideas they developed through classroom language and literacy practices, students’ embodied actions were subject to evaluations of appropriateness. One way in which embodied action was constituted as an object of monitoring was through a set of gestural and linguistic practices locally known as “give me five.” In an ironic twist on the usual solidarity-building meaning of the idiom “give me five,” in Room G this practice indexed a recognition of authority in that it had an implicit intertextual tie to the second rule (i.e., “be a good listener”) of the “Room G Agreements.” The set of semiotic practices surrounding “give me five” was entextualized through a prominently displayed mass-produced poster that specified five facets of “good listening” (see Figure 5.4 below).

Figure 5.4

“Give Me Five” Poster



Ms. Mayzie emphasized these good listening skills as early as the second day of school, as described in this excerpt from my fieldnotes:

> [Ms. Mayzie provided an] explanation of one of the classroom posters "Give Me Five," which details 5 skills good listeners need ("lips closed," "hands and feet quiet," etc.). In particular, she said a couple times that kids listen "not only with their ears but with their eyes" and emphasized the importance of looking at the speaker and turning their body toward the speaker. (FN 140828)

Toward the beginning of the year, to index this poster, she would point directly to it. However, as the weeks went on, she began to hold her hand in front of her chest with the palm facing toward the interlocutor (much like the gesture conventionally used to signal "stop" when helping a driver park a car), a gestural phrase that soon became ideologically regimented (Hoenes del Pinal, 2011) in this classroom. Throughout the school year, this gestural phrase was typically accompanied by questions from Ms. Mayzie such as "are you giving me five?" and "are you listening with your eyes?" or by observations such as "we seem to be having trouble with number one" and "some people are having trouble with number three," sometimes combined with Ms. Mayzie glancing at, pointing at, and/or nodding to the poster.

In many ways, these practices were framed as a matter of appropriateness and enregistered as an aspect of academic communication. Ms. Mayzie characterized these good listening skills as part of the kind of communication appropriate for a school setting, describing them as what "good students" or even "scholars" do. As with other classroom rules, I participated in the reinforcement of these embodied communication norms, often by using some of the same wording Ms. Mayzie used. For example, one day during the third week of school, a student named Alexandra was playing footsie with Nicole under the table during a partner-based discussion of proper nouns. Nicole asked Alexandra to stop by holding up her hand in a variation of the "give me five" gesture (this variation will be discussed below). As I walked by, I backed up Nicole's request by reminding Alexandra that "in here, we don't play footsie—that's for recess. We sit up straight, and we give people space, like scholars" (FN 140908). Although I did not explicitly use the word *appropriate*—indeed, the word would not be formally introduced to the students until the following week—my use of "in here" and "for recess" was suggestive of this ideology in that it characterized certain behaviors as (un)suitable for certain contexts. My invocation of Ms. Mayzie's "like scholars" language further connected the ideology of appropriateness to academic communication, framing certain embodied actions as inappropriate because they supposedly do not count as scholarly ways of communicating.

The "give me five" gestural phrase was made available to and even expected of students since Ms. Mayzie often encouraged students to use this gesture to help remind one another to be good listeners. However, when used by the students, the gesture took on an additional meaning: on various occasions toward the beginning of the year, Ms. Mayzie explained to them that if a peer was bothering them or doing something inappropriate (such as talking when the teacher was talking), as in the above example involving Nicole and

Alexandra, then they should use the "give me five" gesture to remind the peer to be a good listener and/or to signal their peer to stop whatever they were doing. Though there was some overlap between the two meanings of the gesture (i.e., "be a good listener" and "stop bothering me"), this additional meaning of "stop bothering me" seemed to be the more common meaning of the gestural phrase when used among the students. Of course, given that students are viewed as having less authority than teachers, it would have been strange indeed to see a student in Room G (and likely in most classrooms) take up this gestural phrase to command their partner or friend to listen to them with lips closed, quiet hands and feet, and so on. This difference in gestural meaning when the phrase was used by adults versus students was also manifest in some of the "utterance qualities" (Hoenes del Pinal, 2011) of the gesture: among themselves, students tended to use this gestural phrase more aggressively and quickly than when Ms. Mayzie used it to them. Here too I was a participant in the process of socializing the students into taking up the gesture in this way. For example, one day when a student named Brooklyn had gotten in trouble for talking with Alexandra while another teacher was giving instructions for a physical education activity, I reminded Brooklyn of what she should do in similar situations in the future:

> I explained [to Brooklyn] that anytime Ms M or someone else is talking or explaining something, if Alexandra or anyone else is talking to Brooklyn, Brooklyn should put her "give me 5" hand up and just look at Ms M and not the person. I said that's always a rule. (FN 140904)

Many students enthusiastically drew on this "rule" to monitor each other for appropriate behaviors, including embodied behaviors. In fact, the "give me five/stop" gestural phrase was often taken up even in the absence of a specific rule defining a given behavior as inappropriate, and its value as a semiotic resource indexing appropriateness as well as authority endured late into the school year. For example, one day in March during an

academic vocabulary activity (a practice known as a "Tea Party," which will be described in more detail in the next chapter), Nicole took up the gesture to monitor a brief interaction between two of her peers (see Figure 5.5 below). Cameron, an extensions student, had approached Laura (who, for reasons of consent, will not be described at length and whose face is not shown in the below images) to read one of his academic vocabulary sentences to her. As he read this sentence, his volume increased toward the end of his utterance and, in what appeared to be a playfully emphatic gesture, he stretched out his neck and moved his face to within a few inches of hers, as shown in Figure 5.5a below. Laura smiled slightly and backed away. Nicole, momentarily without a partner with whom to share her sentence, had been observing the two of them. As Laura smilingly stepped away from Cameron without saying anything, Nicole joined in the interaction by giving Cameron the "give me five/stop" sign with her right hand and saying "too close, too close" while gently and smilingly shaking her head back and forth several times (see Figure 5.5). Although there were no specific classroom rules about how much physical distance between peers was acceptable, Nicole seemed to view Cameron's interaction as somehow inappropriate, perhaps because the activity itself (i.e., an academic vocabulary activity) highlighted academic communication norms, because she had noticed Laura backing away, and/or because she was drawing on broader social norms about proxemics, especially norms related to appropriate amounts of physical distance between members of the opposite sex. In relation to the final point, on other occasions Nicole showed herself to be particularly attuned to ideologies of gender and sexuality; for instance, in one interview with me, she discussed her desire to avoid getting "too big" (in reference to gaining weight by eating "unhealthy" food) and to one day have a "six pack" (FN 150210). Though her motivations for mediating Cameron and Laura's interaction cannot be known for certain, Nicole's actions in this exchange underline the

prominence of the "give me five" gesture as an academic means of evaluating embodied actions as inappropriate.

Figure 5.5

Cameron, Laura, and Nicole interacting during a tea party (150325 B)

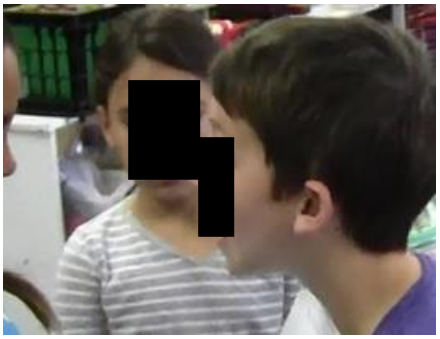


Figure 5.5a. Screen shot of Cameron (right) approaching Laura (left) while Nicole (center) looks on

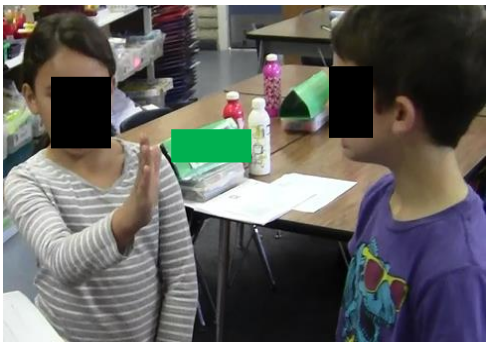


Figure 5.5b. Screen shot of Nicole (left) directing "give me five" gesture toward Cameron (right)

Other kinds of embodied action that brought students into close physical contact with one another also tended to be objects of monitoring for appropriateness, whether through the "give me five" gestural phrase or other means. Interestingly, even "giving someone five" in the conventionalized, solidarity-building sense appeared to raise questions of appropriateness in Room G, as the next example demonstrates. This interaction occurs on the same November day as Example 5.1 above and includes three of the same students: Susana, Alan, and Lorenzo. The three students are working on independently on a language arts activity: a letter to Cameron, who had done a "Star of the Week" presentation about himself earlier that week. While working, the three students occasionally talk with each other about how many sentences each of them is required to write (since "extensions" students like Susana were required to write more), where to put the assignment when it is finished, and what the instructions for the other assignments were. Several times throughout the day's activities,

Ms. Mayzie reminds students not to talk unless they're talking with her or another "teacher" (i.e., classroom volunteer). In fact, she had provided one such reminder just a few minutes before the beginning of the following example. Here, Lorenzo, Alan, and Susana nonetheless talk with one another at the same time as signaling to one another that the very fact that they are interacting, as well as the particular ways in which they are interacting, may be regarded as inappropriate:

Example 5.2: "High fiving is not violence" (141107, 19:00-19:40)

1	LORENZO;	I'm #gonna #solve #the #equation with you. ((looking at Alan))
2	ALAN;	((looks up from paper toward Lorenzo, raises eyebrows, nods slightly, smiles;
3		**then stands up, arm raised in high five gesture**))
4		(0.8)
5	LORENZO;	**((stands up and high-fives Alan, then quickly glances toward front of**
6		**room, where a volunteer is working with a student))**
7	ALAN;	**((after high five, quickly glances toward back of room, where Ms. Mayzie**
8		**is working with another group))**
9	SUSANA;	**I saw that. ((smiling and wagging index finger))**
10	ALAN,	((looking at Susana, smiling))
11	LORENZO;	**#But Ms. Mayzie #doesn't know that.**
12	SUSANA;	#You #can't ###.
13		#We #can #do #that.
14	LORENZO;	**High five is <u>not</u> violence.**
15		**# it is.**
16	SUSANA;	#I #saw #in #Sponge #Bob #Square #Pants ###,
17	LORENZO;	#that high fiving was violence. ((doing a high five gesture with right arm))
18		

Through the verbal and embodied aspects of their interaction in this example, Lorenzo, Alan, and Susana raise but do not quite resolve the question of the appropriateness of exchanging a high five. Already by speaking relatively softly throughout most of this exchange, the three students co-construct the very fact that they are interacting as potentially being in violation of Ms. Mayzie's instructions to limit their conversations to consultations with teachers. Lorenzo's proposal that he and Alan work together on one of their upcoming tasks (line 1) may also drive the students' efforts to keep their conversation under the radar since the tasks for this particular Workshop were to be completed independently. Thus, when

they high-five (lines 3-5), it is unsurprising that both students immediately glance toward areas of the room where "teachers" are located (lines 5-8). Due to the positioning of the camera, it is unclear whether they are "caught" by the teachers—although they have been seen by Susana, as she points out in a friendly but emphatic way in line 9. Simply by remarking on their high five, she frames their exchange as marked. The markedness of their action is further underlined by her playful wagging of the finger, as though to say "tsk, tsk," which signals that their action can be read as residing outside the bounds of what is permissible within this classroom, or at least within this particular activity. Immediately thereafter, she invokes Ms. Mayzie's name. Although her utterance in lines 10-11 is not entirely audible, the fact that she has cited the authority of the teacher lends weight to her implicit reproach of their action and suggests that she believes Ms. Mayzie would have something to say about its appropriateness. Lorenzo's emphatic response, "high five is <u>not</u> violence" (line 14), serves as a defense of the acceptability of their action on the grounds that it is not violent, and in a sophisticated argumentation move, he goes on in lines 16-17 to elaborate on his point by citing an apparently media-based counterexample, with the implication being that he recognizes that sometimes this action can be construed as violent. That he frames his defense of his and Alan's high five in terms of violence (or lack thereof) suggests that he views this criterion as particularly important for judging the appropriateness or permissibility of an action, perhaps in relation to the "be safe" classroom rule, as discussed above. After line 18, all three students return to their work. Though brief, their exchange in Example 5.2 highlights the ways in which the students of Room G monitored their own and others' embodied actions for appropriateness at the same time as questioning and pushing back against the would-be clear-cut lines of this ideology.

5. (In)appropriate Language Use

As with embodied action, students' language use was subject to evaluations of appropriateness through invocations of classroom norms, the use of academic language, and/or metalinguistic comments about some aspect of their language use. Even the very act of talking tended to invite such evaluations, particularly during language arts activities. As discussed in Chapter 4, Workshop "must-do" tasks were sometimes to be completed in small rotating groups called "centers," but on other days, they were to be completed independently, as in Examples 5.1 and 5.2 above. In the latter case, generally it was expected that students talk only to Ms. Mayzie or other adults when they had a question about their work. If they talked to one another, they were to speak what was locally known as their "private voice," defined as a "clear, low, slow" voice (PIC 141114). Ms. Mayzie emphasized that these "productive partner" conversations should be related to their classwork and should be quiet enough so that the volume level would not get "too high for learning" (141020). Students often forgot about these guidelines and on many days were reminded of them various times throughout Workshop by Ms. Mayzie or even by one another. For instance, during one independent Workshop time in January, Alan and Domenica briefly discussed whether they were to complete a worksheet together and check their answers with each other. Their volume rose slightly as they disagreed over whether they should work together or separately (Alan wanted to work together, whereas Domenica did not), at which point Susana asserted, "No talking during Workshop time! Excuse me, no talking!" (150126 14:22). While she could simply have said "no talking," her specific reference to Workshop time shows that context-sensitive classroom norms were an effective tool for peer policing and peer socialization into linguistic behaviors regarded as appropriate at some times and not others.

Other types of language use were framed as inappropriate not just for Workshop time, but for school in general. Particular structures and lexical items regarded as informal or

characterized as "slang" tended to be especially salient in this regard. At times Ms. Mayzie explicitly used the word *appropriate* or its variants to make these differences clear. For instance, one day in April, an extensions student named Miles asked Ms. Mayzie "when are we ever gonna do this?" in reference to a worksheet that had been distributed to the group but not yet completed. Ms. Mayzie responded by asking him, "Is that an appropriate way to ask a question?" to which Miles responded with a shake of his head as Ms. Mayzie requested that he show her "the appropriate way." Miles rephrased, asking instead, "When are we gonna do this?" and this time received an answer (150407 A). In this instance, it appeared that his initial use of *ever,* which in this context indexed an impatient stance toward the activity, was the main feature that rendered his language use inappropriate.

On other occasions, Ms. Mayzie used metalinguistic resources besides the word *appropriate* to make the lines of appropriateness clear to students. Several weeks later, for example, when a student named Michael murmured *whatevs* in an aside to Cameron in the midst of a math lesson, Ms. Mayzie responded by drawing a distinction between academic and "playground" language. The whole class was present as she told Michael, "Michael, let's use academic vocabulary- academic language in the classroom. *Whatevs* is more of a slang thing, and that's better for out on the playground, okay?" (150428 E). In cases like this, the notion that context determines language use (see discussion in Chapter 3) seemed to motivate Ms. Mayzie's mapping of "slang" and "academic language" onto different spaces—in this case, the playground and the classroom, respectively.

This distinction between "playground/slang" and "classroom/academic" language sometimes entered into peer socialization as it was taken up by some students to position another peer as behaving inappropriately. One striking example of the ways this distinction was reified in peer interactions occurs approximately three weeks after the above

conversation between Ms. Mayzie and Michael, and in fact appears to refer directly to it or to other such interactions between Ms. Mayzie and Michael. In the following example, students are working in "centers" groups on various tasks, including a Mother's Day project in which students used straws to blow bubbles of pain and produce colorful "bubble art." This messy activity has generated a good deal of excitement among the students. In one centers group, Alan, Nicole, Michael, Damian, and Jackie are mimicking the sounds produced by blowing paint bubbles through their straws and are comparing their art with one another. At one point Michael exclaims in surprise by using an idiom indexical of profanity, which Nicole immediately frames as inappropriately non-academic:

Example 5.3: "Please just use our academic vocabulary" (150519, 22:20-23:15)

1	MICHAEL;	I don't even know how to blow a bubble.
2	ALAN;	One time I,
3		one time I,
4		one time I [###]
5	UNKNOWN;	[###]
6	NICOLE;	[@@@]#a #bubble.
7		I know how to blow a (.) spit bubble.
8		(3.0)
9	ALAN;	See, like this.
10		(2.0)
11		Michael, just #blow a spit bubble.
12		(2.0)
13	MICHAEL;	**What the heck <u>is</u> that? <loudly>**
14	NICOLE;	**You <u>shouldn't</u> do- say that,**
15		**'Cause Ms. Mayzie says (.)**
16		**Remember when she said,**
17		**'Michael please just use our academic vocabulary.' <slowly>**
18		(3.0)
19	UNKNOWN;	**No, Michael said 'what the heck is that.'<softly>**
20		(4.0)
21		**@@@@**
22	ALAN;	**Whoa,**
23		**spit bubble.**
24	MICHAEL;	**Oh my god. <loudly>**
25	UNKNOWN;	Hi there,
26		and welcome to the inside of (.) ##brain.
27	MICHAEL;	#### the hottest #game show in town.
28		(2.0)
29		**What the heck <u>is</u> that thing? <loudly>**

Although the referent of Michael's question in lines 13 and 28 (i.e., "what the heck is that thing?") remains unclear since the students are off camera and no one directly answers his question, this interaction clearly demonstrates the ways in which register-reifying metalinguistic comments helped students police the boundaries of social conduct regarded as appropriate. Michael's exclamation in line 13 quickly sparks a reaction from Nicole, who objects not in personal terms (e.g., as she might have achieved by saying "I don't like it when you say that"), but in moral and objectivist terms by framing his action as something that should not be done: "you shouldn't do- say that" (line 14). In lines 15-17, she goes on to cite Ms. Mayzie's authority by invoking her name and appropriating some of the same words that the teacher had used on prior occasions to describe Michael's language use as un-academic. I could not find instances in the data of Ms. Mayzie describing the idiom *what the heck* as inappropriate or un-academic, but it seems Nicole recognizes the indexical link between this phrase and the phrase *what the hell*, which is widely regarded as representing the kind of "bad words" which some students had characterized as inappropriate in their AV worksheets. Of course, it is not only Michael's words but also his affective stance of surprise that is implicitly framed as objectionable by Nicole's comments, as suggested by her self-correction from *do* to *say* in line 14; insofar as "academic" personae (e.g., scientists) are often depicted as distant and unemotional, in a sense, Michael is not simply saying but also doing something "un-academic" by loudly expressing surprise. Two other students are interested in what Michael said to elicit such a response from Nicole, and Michael's words are reiterated by either Damian or Jackie in line 19, making clear that others at the table have heard his words and have found the exchange worth remarking upon. While none of the students at the table

directly agree or disagree with Nicole's assessment of Michael's utterance as non-academic, Alan and Michael indirectly resist the ideology of appropriateness invoked by Nicole's metalinguistic comments by resuming their conversation about spit bubbles (line 22). Their conversation is marked by language that can be read as belonging to the same "inappropriate" register as *what the heck*; Alan's use of *whoa* (line 22) and Michael's use of *oh my god* (line 24) are not locally enregistered as academic vocabulary and are similarly indexical of affective stances of awe and surprise. This implicit disalignment becomes more direct when Michael loudly and emphatically repeats the same phrase (line 29) that prompted Nicole's assessment, thereby rejecting her recommendation that he use appropriately academic language.

Though Nicole's attempt to remind Michael about classroom norms surrounding appropriate language use has the effect of constructing her own conduct (and by extension, her own character) as superior to his, her remark may have been driven by a desire to help her peer learn important classroom norms. Of course, her motivations in this instance cannot be known for certain, and in any case, they are likely complex; however, my interviews with Nicole and her best friend, Nikki, suggested that they viewed the interactional and social consequences of inappropriate conduct as negative. For example, in a series of interviews I conducted with them, they decided to role play parent–teacher and student–teacher conferences. In one interview (150409 INT), they decided to restart the "conference," with Nicole requesting that Nikki be "more proper next time." To index this "proper" behavior, they stylized British accents throughout the interview, invited each other to have cups of tea, used markedly formal forms such as *shall*, and congratulated each other on doing well with "complicated words" they encountered in imaginary written texts. Toward the end of the interview, I asked them why it was important to be proper, to which Nikki answered, "It's important to be proper because if you're like all messy, you might get in trouble, and it's not

nice to be messy or anything, like in school or in public or anything." Nikki's explanation underlines the negative consequences of being "messy"—framed here as the opposite of "proper" or appropriate behavior—as well as the notion that certain contexts such as school and public spaces require certain behaviors in order to avoid getting "in trouble" or being morally assessed as "not nice."

In an interview with Susana and Domenica, I again saw this theme of the negative consequences of inappropriate behavior, in this case in ways that directly connected the ideology of appropriateness with ideologies surrounding language, gender roles, and social class. In this interview, Susana, Domenica, and I decided to engage in a teacher–student role play. In the portion of the interview represented below, Susana is enacting the role of a teacher as I play the part of a student requesting help on classwork. Susana, Domenica, and I have been discussing why (and whether) it is important to use the "academic language for asking for assistance" sentence frames that Ms. Mayzie encouraged students to use whenever they had a question for her or another teacher (these sentence frames will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter). To remind students to use these sentence frames, at the beginning of each of the three school years I have volunteered in her classroom, Ms. Mayzie has stapled a laminated list of them to each student's name tag (which is always located on the student's desk), as exemplified by the photos in Figure 5.6 below.

Figure 5.6

The importance of academic language sentence frames

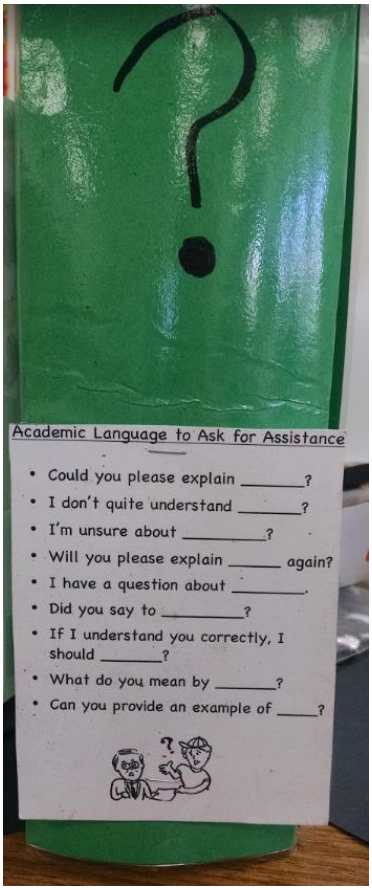


Figure 5.6a. Photo of name tag with list of sentence frames

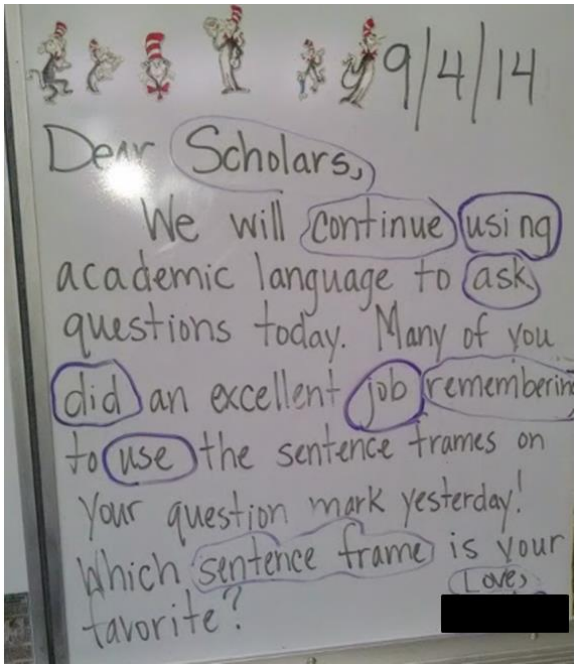


Figure 5.6b. Photo of morning message encouraging students to use sentence frames

As Susana and I enact our teacher and student roles in this role play segment of the interview, with Domenica occasionally joining in, my aim is to get both girls to explain to me (the "student") why it is important that I use the academic language sentence frames. To achieve this, I pretend to be reluctant to use the frames, avoiding them by phrasing my request for help in alternative ways and then by taking up a mocking tone characterized by exaggeratedly elongated vowels, a higher pitch, and a slower, more measured rate of speech. This stylization leads Susana and Domenica to explain some of the possible long-term effects of speaking in inappropriate or "sloppy" ways:

Example 5.4: "You don't want to use a sloppy voice" (150507 INT, 4:30-5:32)

1	MEGHAN;	Could you please explai:n(.)? <slow, elongated, higher pitch>
2	SUSANA;	No! @@
3	MEGHAN;	No?
4		Why?
5		I said it.
6		[1 What's wrong with that? 1]
7	SUSANA;	[1 You have to do it, 1]
8		'Could you please explain how to do this math problem?'
9	MEGHAN;	**Could you please explai:n (.) <slow, elongated, mocking>**
10		how to do this math problem?
11	SUSANA;	No,
12	MEGHAN;	[2 No? 2]
13	SUSANA;	**[2 You have 2] to do this,**
14		**in a regular voice.**
15		'Could you please explain,
16		How to do this math problem?'
17	MEGHAN;	**Why do I have to use a regular voice?**
18		**[3 You- you understood me. 3]**
19	SUSANA;	[3 Because (.) 3]
20		Well,
21		**because that's a sloppy voice,**
22		**and you don't want to use a sloppy voice** [4 # # #you 4]
23		[4 Why not? 4]
24	SUSANA;	So [5 #you 5]
25	DOMENICA;	**[5 #you@ #won't@ #have #a 5] husband.**
26	MEGHAN;	**Because I have a <u>husband</u>?**
27	DOMENICA?;	**No, because you <u>won't</u>!**
28	MEGHAN;	**Oh I won't have [6 a husband if I'm sloppy? 6]**
29	SUSANA;	**[6 You'll be lonesome. 6]**
30	MEGHAN;	**I'll be lonesome if I'm sloppy.**
31	SUSANA;	Well (.) because=
32	MEGHAN;	Okay,
33		why?
34	SUSANA;	**And also some people might not understand you what you say.**
35	MEGHAN;	O:h.=
36	SUSANA;	And you might [7 just # 7]
37	MEGHAN;	[7 Okay, 7]
38		I won't have a husband,
39		I'll be lonesome,
40		[8 And people 8] [9 won't understand me. 9]
41	DOMENICA;	**[8 And very poor, 8]**
42		**[9 very poor. 9]**
43	MEGHAN;	Okay,
44		I'll try.

The account that Susana, Domenica, and I co-construct of the importance of using academic sentence frames and "regular" speech highlights various ideological links among appropriate language use, gender, and class. In much the same way that Nikki had recruited

"messy" as the opposite of "proper" in her interview, in lines 13-22, Susana constructs "sloppy" as contrasting with my "regular" voice—that is, my unmarked speech style, which implicitly indexes appropriate conduct in that it takes the academic language sentence frame seriously rather than poking fun at it through stylization. Even when I point out to her that my stylization was still comprehensible (line 18), she answers that it is "sloppy" and encapsulates a style I "don't want to use" (line 22). Susana seems to view the undesirability of this sloppy voice more in terms of others' supposed inability to understand such speech (line 34), whereas for Domenica the stylization that Susana has characterized as "sloppy" is undesirable because sloppiness is connected to an inability to attract a husband—which, as dominant discourses of gender hold, is a sad state of affairs indeed since a woman without a husband must necessarily be "lonesome," as Susana puts it (line 29). Domenica further links sloppy ways of speaking and being with negative material consequences: as I summarize what they have said about what will happen "if I'm sloppy" (line 30), she asserts that I will be "very poor" (lines 41-42). For Domenica, socioeconomic status may have been especially salient because both of her parents were working-class immigrants, and Domenica's clothing sometimes looked more worn than many of her classmates' (e.g., she often wore the same pair of leggings with holes in the knees). As bilingual students and as extensions students, Susana and Domenica may also have been especially attuned to linguistic norms as well as particularly invested in attaining the social capital represented by "better language," as Susana had described academic language earlier in this same interview.

Gendered and classed images also made a noteworthy appearance when I spoke with another student, Brooklyn, about academic language. Brooklyn had distinguished herself on the second day of school by being the first student to have to write a "letter of apology" (one of the most severe consequences for being disrespectful toward others in Room G).

Throughout the year, she continued to struggle with behaving in accordance with classroom norms. At the same time, in many senses she was aware of these norms and of the importance of "appropriate" conduct, as demonstrated by her metalinguistic comments as well as her language use in the following example. On this day, I was circulating during Workshop to answer students' questions about their tasks, and Brooklyn called me over for help with a question that she found difficult—so difficult, in fact, that in the moments leading up to this excerpt, she can be heard mumbling "I'm so confused" and "stupid" (apparently using this adjective as a self-descriptor). As she prepares to ask me for help on the question she is struggling with, she appears to be monitoring her own language use and makes a metalinguistic comment about the need to rephrase her question in a "proper" way, which I seize upon as an ideal moment to ask her about what connections she sees between academic language and appropriateness:

Example 5.5: "A princess needs to be proper" (150127, 50:20-51:51)

1	BROOKLYN;	**I don't know how to do number five.**
2		**It doesn't make #any #sense at all.**
3		(2.0)
4	MEGHAN;	Okay.
5		(1.0)
6		Oh okay.
7	BROOKLYN;	**#If you want me to do it proper.**
8		**'Could you please explain (.)' <increased volume, slower pace>**
9		**how to do this <creaky, slow>?**
10		(.8)
11	MEGHAN;	What- I- I'm curious,
12		What did you say before?=
13		I didn't hear you.
14		You said you want me to do it-?
15		(2.0)
16		Say it again,=
17		it was a good idea I think.
18		You said 'you want me to do it proper'?
19		Is that what you said?
20		Or did I hear you [$_1$ wrong $_1$]?
21	BROOKLYN;	[$_1$ I said $_1$] 'if you want me to do it proper.'
22	MEGHAN;	Proper, okay.

23		Proper.
24		Tell me about that word proper.
25		I'm curious.
26		I think that's an interesting idea.
27	BROOKLYN;	=Proper is- means like,
28		(.8)
29		Um,
30		I @@ #forgot.
31		(1.0)
32		**Proper's like,**
33		**when,**
34		**I could say,**
35		**I'm a princess.**
36		**And in the movie,**
37		**they would say 'a princess needs to ## be proper.'**
38		**So like,**
39		**walk proper,=**
40	MEGHAN;	**Mm hm.**
41	BROOKLYN;	**talk proper,**
42		**eat proper,**
43		**all these th-,**
44		**and dress [$_2$ proper. $_2$]**
45	MEGHAN;	[$_2$ Okay. $_2$]
46	BROOKLYN;	Like that.
47	MEGHAN;	**And so for you this is kinda like the princess?=**
48		Like it's proper,
49		like the princess [$_3$ dresses properly? $_3$]
50	BROOKLYN;	[$_3$ #You #could #say $_3$] like,
51		like,
52		like,
53		**If this would call- be called,**
54		**'saying it,'**
55		like,
56		like,
57		I mean like,
58		**you have to talk nice,**
59		and #I #like #you to be nice,
60		so I just (.) made it properly.
61		#Like #that.
62	MEGHAN;	Thanks for explaining that to me.
63		Those are really interesting ideas.

The conversation that unfolds following Brooklyn's rephrasing of her initial question points to her awareness of the fact that in Room G, academic ways of communicating were valorized as "proper" or appropriate behavior. For her, this behavior seems to be indexical of a particular gendered and classed figure of personhood—namely, a princess. Her request for help in lines 1-2 is quite clear, though is perhaps more of a complaint than a request (in that

she says “it doesn’t make any sense at all”), and in this sense is neither especially appropriate nor academic, at least as locally defined. Yet I do not take particular note of the complaint-like nature of her request since by this point in the school year, I am more concerned with helping students with their work than with encouraging them to use the sentence frames. I thus look at her worksheet as I prepare to help her with her question in lines 4-6. Although this exchange is off camera, my fieldnotes for this day highlight my surprise that Brooklyn stopped me at this point to rephrase her request. In lines 7-8, she implicitly frames her initial request as less than proper by suddenly deciding to rephrase it and “do it proper” as she quotes a frame from the sentence frame card (i.e., “could you please explain”) with a speech style that is slower and louder than her surrounding utterances, thereby distancing herself from the sentence frames practice even at the same time as she takes it up due to her recognition that it is regarded as a more appropriate way of communicating.

Just as she surprised me, it appears that my impromptu interview questions have surprised her. At first my request that she tell me about the word *proper* seems to take her aback, as suggested by her pauses, self-interruptions, and laughter in lines 27-31. Soon enough, however, she comes up with the telling image of a princess. Precisely which movie (line 36) she has in mind remains unclear, though *The Princess Diaries* is one possible source, and at any rate, the cultural model is quite recognizable. The explanation she constructs in lines 35-44 is reminiscent of the culturally well-known narrative of a girl (often a middle- or working-class girl white girl, like Brooklyn herself) who finds out she is to be made a princess and is then socialized into the kinds of speech, dress, and other semiotic practices that are hegemonically viewed as inherently superior or proper, or at least as fitting for a person of this station. In line 47, I ask her to connect this princess persona back to “this” (“this” refers to the sentence frames stapled to her name tag and the larger body of

academic language practices they indexed). Brooklyn appears to begin to suggest an alternate title for the sentence frames list when she says "If this would be called, 'saying it'" (lines 53-54). She does not explicitly finish this alternate title, but the idea is clear enough: she connects the academic language sentence frames with being proper and talking "nice"—something that is not merely optional, but that which "you have to" (line 58) do in order to be recognized by a person in a position of power (in this case, a classroom volunteer like me). For her, it appears that the princess persona captures the power of "proper" language use to shape the way one is regarded by others.

C. Chapter Conclusion

In Room G, language use, along with the use of certain embodied actions and the expression of certain kinds of ideas, did indeed shape the ways students were constructed by one another. As I have argued throughout this chapter, students used a variety of academic semiotic resources in order to morally assess one another's ideas, embodied actions, and language use as (in)appropriate. Yet their orientations to the ideology of appropriateness were not predictable or unitary. Sometimes students aligned with this ideology by evaluating the appropriateness of others' ideas (as was the case with Domenica's evaluation of Alan's spider in Example 5.1), of others' embodied actions (as was the case with Susana's assessment of her peers' high five in Example 5.2), and/or of others' language use (as in Nicole's request that Michael use academic language in Example 5.3). At other times, students pushed back on assessments of their actions, language, or behavior as inappropriate (as with Alan's and Lorenzo's defense of drawing blood on a spider in Example 5.1 and their characterization of their high five in Example 5.2). In still other cases, students subverted the ideology by continuing with or repeating actions assessed as inappropriate (as was the case with Michael's use of casual and affect-laden language in Example 5.3). In these examples, it

was girls who invoked or aligned with the ideology of appropriateness while boys disaligned with it or subverted it, although on many occasions I observed that boys also participated in evaluating others' actions as inappropriate, most notably by using the "give me five" gesture. By a similar token, girls frequently took stances of authority in ways that subverted communication norms regarded as appropriate or academic, as will be discussed in Chapter 7. Gender also emerged as a central theme in students' explanations of the importance of appropriateness, as did social class, as exemplified by Domenica's and Susana's discussions of marriage, loneliness, and poverty in Example 5.4 as well as Brooklyn's invocation of the image of a princess in Example 5.5.

These findings highlight important contrasts between what teachers may expect or intend students to do (or not do) with academic language versus what students actually do. First, despite Ms. Mayzie's and her colleagues' worries that students seldom use academic language, students did in fact frequently take it up. To be sure, students' use of particular lexical or grammatical forms enregistered as academic was not ubiquitous in peer interactions, but when viewed as broader set of communication norms, such as embodied actions and other stances and practices associated with academic language, their use of academic language was much more frequent than expected. In fact, a random sample of video and audio recordings showed that even late into the school year, academic communication practices were taken up by students an average of 25 times per class.[5]

[5] This figure was derived from an analytic process wherein several days' worth of video and audio recordings of math and language arts activities were randomly selected and were then analyzed with regard to students' use of several academic communication practices: the use of academic vocabulary; the marked use of complete sentences; the use of sentence frames, including the frames for asking for assistance (see Figure 5.6); metalinguistic comments about the importance of using academic language; the use of the "give me five/stop" gesture; and marked displays of "give me five" listening skills. Any instance of any of these practices was coded and a tallied list was created. Afterward, an average per class session was calculated. I thank Aimee Giles, Ellen Ouyang, and Francesca Sen for their help with this intricate process.

In addition, and of greater consequence than the mere fact that students used academic language, the ways in which students appropriated these academic semiotic resources were not necessarily predictable on the basis of how Ms. Mayzie had presented the resources. First, rather than taking up *appropriate* and the behaviors it indexed to self-assess their own actions (as intended by Ms. Mayzie), students took up this ideology as a means of policing one another. Furthermore, the ways in which they understood the ideology of appropriateness was often intertwined with other hegemonic ideologies (gender and class being the most relevant within this analysis) that had not been explicitly conveyed to them in Ms. Mayzie's explanations of appropriateness. These connections to other ideologies reveal students' keen understandings of the larger sociopolitical world indexed by particular semiotic resources. Far from being cultural dupes, students were aware of these connections and strategically appropriated the language of appropriateness for their own purposes. Likewise, far from being a neutral resource tied only to the learning and expression of academic concepts, academic language was used by students to express a range of social and power-laden meanings. Thus, the production of literate selves in Room G was intimately bound up with the production of morally acceptable or "appropriate" selves—a state of affairs which students variously reproduced and rejected. This overall finding raises the question of how educators can prepare students for the current structure of society, including the dominance of discourses of appropriateness that shapes how they are perceived by others, while also building on their already sophisticated ability to interact in ways that question these discourses and that have the potential to radically restructure society. The conclusion to this dissertation (Chapter 8) will further explore these issues.

VI. Appropriating Ability: Academic Language and Indexical Competence

It is the third day of second grade at Beachside Elementary, and already I feel have made a friend. I am standing beside seven-year-old Nicole, helping her with her classroom job for the week: washing the colorful water bottles Ms. Mayzie has provided for each of the students. Nicole tells me she is good at this job because she often helps with dishes at home, and we chat for a while about her family. At one point she looks at my own LifeFactory water bottle and asks if I got it at Whole Foods. She likes shopping at Whole Foods with her mom, she tells me, adding that it's important to eat organic food. After a while I realize we have become so absorbed in our conversation that we haven't progressed much with washing the water bottles, which means she is missing the first academic routine of the morning. I tell her I'll finish up. She turns to me and says, "I can tell you're going to be a good helper." And I think to myself, "I can tell you're going to be a good student." How could a young girl of relative socioeconomic privilege, bright and sociable, eager to please the adults around her, *not* do well in school?

When I returned from a trip a few weeks later, I found a number of changes in Room G. One of these concerned Nicole: to my surprise, not only had she not been placed in Room G's "extensions" group (a group of students that Ms. Mayzie has assessed as meeting or exceeding expectations, as will be described below), but according to assessments, she was among the lowest-performing students in the class. On the one hand, I was puzzled by this assessment of her because on many occasions, I had observed Nicole attending carefully to classroom norms (including those surrounding appropriate behavior, as discussed in the preceding chapter), participating eagerly in class discussions, and using language in creative

and competent ways. On the other hand, as I considered the way competence has traditionally been measured in schools and by scholars, Nicole's classification as a "low" student seemed less surprising. As is the case at many other schools, in Room G, students' academic abilities, including their language and literacy skills, were evaluated in large part through written assessments and homework performance, for which Nicole tended to receive low grades due to inaccuracies and incompleteness.

These discrepancies between Nicole's performance on written work versus in interaction became a major focus of my observations and analysis throughout the rest of the year as I attempted to find a way of understanding and characterizing the brilliance I saw in her. It was not enough to say that she was stronger in oral competencies than in written ones since she, like all students, often struggled and often succeeded in both areas at different times. Over time I realized that many of the abilities I saw in her were related to a domain in which I myself often felt incompetent (see Chapter 4): an understanding of the diversity of styles and identities that make up our complex social world and that are both indexed and created through semiotic practices. These realizations led me to develop the concept of *indexical competence* that guides my analysis in this chapter. I begin the chapter by situating indexical competence in relation to other types of competence that have been prominent in scholarship on academic language, language socialization, and second language acquisition. I then discuss the ways competence and ability were constructed in Room G, paying particular attention to the ideological links between local academic language practices and students' conceptualizations of intelligence. Next, I offer examples of indexical competence by focusing on excerpts from Nicole's interactions with her peers. I close with a brief discussion of theoretical implications of this framework, arguing not only that Nicole and children like her are competent in ways that are often overlooked by conventional approaches to teaching

and assessing language, but also that these kinds of competence could provide valuable entry points for both appreciating and expanding kids' semiotic repertories, including their development of academic language.

A. Indexical Competence

During the 1960s and 1970s, cross-cultural work on children's communicative practices began to take shape, guided largely by Hymes' (1972) concept of *communicative competence*, which "encompasses the realm of sociocultural knowledge necessary for members of a speech community to use language in socially appropriate ways" (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2008, p. 4). The notion of communicative competence has been influential in language socialization research. It has also been imported into second language assessment research, notably through Canale and Swain's (1980) development of a three-pronged communicative competence framework encompassing *grammatical, sociolinguistic,* and *strategic competence*, and subsequently through Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model, which is comprised of *language knowledge* and *strategic competence*. The former model remains very influential, although the latter is often viewed as a "much more comprehensive model of communicative competence" (Bagarić & Djigunović, 2007). Both models, along with the overarching concept of communicative competence, have also shaped the theories of academic language (see, e.g., Scarcella, 2003). Yet these models' focus on functions (a focus that is apparent even in the naming of categories such as "functional knowledge") tend to present language units in isolation and abstraction; hence, scholars like van Lier and Walqui (2012) have instead advocated for an action-based rather than functional view of language (see also Chapter 3). Furthermore, these models of communicative competence tend to emphasize the contextual (in)appropriateness of utterances or strategies. As discussed in the

preceding chapter, this concern with appropriateness is adult-centered and often reproduces hegemonic ideologies of race and gender, among other oppressive discourses.

A consideration of these limitations of communicative competence frameworks highlights the need for a perspective that focuses on describing speakers' own understandings and uses of different interactional stances and styles. By more directly connecting language to the larger sociopolitical world, indexical competence represents this kind of perspective. The framework of indexical competence that I propose here encompasses at least three abilities: first, an understanding of indexical fields (Eckert, 2008a) or of direct and indirect indexicalities (Ochs, 1992); second, the ability to fluidly or rapidly switch among a range of different indexical resources, including knowing when to (momentarily) drop an index; and third, an ability to use indexical meanings in creative, innovative, or unexpected (though not necessarily "appropriate") ways (see Silverstein, 2003, for a discussion of presupposing and creative indexicality). Although my conceptualization of indexical competence shares with previous models a concern for interpreting language use in its social context, it attempts to move away from the ways in which these models themselves index an ideology of appropriateness and a history of locating competence within the individual.

While it could perhaps be conceived of as an aspect of communicative competence, indexical competence is better viewed as an aspect of more sociocultural models of competence, such as Young's (2011) formulation of *interactional competence*, which focuses "not what a person *knows*, but what a person *does* together with others" (p. 430; emphasis in original text). Indexical competence is also compatible with a language socialization approach, which emphasizes the indexical relations between linguistic structures and sociocultural information (see, e.g., Ochs & Schieffelin, 2008). Language socialization research has examined the processes whereby novices "become increasingly adept at

constituting and interpreting sociocultural contexts from linguistic cues" (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2008, pp. 8-9) as they are socialized into the practices of their speech community(ies). However, given the overriding focus on standardized language within mainstream approaches to schooling, it is worth investigating whether all children do in fact become increasingly adept, or more indexically competent, as they become more highly schooled and more invested (Norton Peirce, 1995) in school discourse practices. Indeed, in my own case, my indexical competence narrowed as my education continued and as I became increasingly removed from many aspects of popular culture, as described in Chapter 4. Though these questions about the long-term expansion versus narrowing of indexical competence are beyond the scope of the present year-long study, for the purposes of this analysis it is important to note that indexical competence is not typically valorized or even recognized as a form of competence within mainstream approaches to schooling. Rather, as is evident from decades of classroom research across contexts (e.g., Heath, 1983; Michaels, 1981; Philips, 1974), many aspects of children's social worlds and their funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005), including their language practices, are marginalized when language and literacy instruction focus exclusively on the standard variety, which is often held to be innately superior, more cognitively demanding, and an indicator of superior intellect (see also Chapters 2 and 3).

B. "Smart words": Academic Language and Intellectual Ability

As is the case in many formal and informal educational spaces in our society (see, e.g., Collins, 2003; Harklau, 1994; Varenne & McDermott, 1998), ideas about cognitive ability and intelligence were of central importance to day-to-day life in Room G. Competing definitions of intelligence were visible in interactions throughout the year. On the one hand, Ms. Mayzie and other adults in the room often explicitly articulated a developmental view of

intelligence (see Oakes, Wells, Jones, & Datnow,1997), emphasizing that all students can and do become "smarter" over time as they learn new skills, appropriate new practices, and begin to think in new ways. For example, from the beginning of the year, Ms. Mayzie had students write about specific learning goals in order to emphasize the ways in which they would get "smarter" throughout the year (FN 140904). And on the one hundredth day of school, a day that Ms. Mayzie and many other Beachside teachers celebrate through a variety of fun activities (e.g., having students create cup towers by stacking 100 plastic cups; having students estimate how far onto the playground they will get if they take 100 steps outside the classroom), Ms. Mayzie hung a colorful sign labeled "100 Days Smarter" over the classroom door so that all students would pass underneath it as they entered throughout the day (FN 150210). Similarly, when Ms. Mayzie's mother, Ms. Wyatt (a former elementary teacher herself), took her leave of the students after volunteering in the classroom for about a week toward the beginning of the year, she stated that she would be back in five months and asked the class, "who's gonna get smarter [in that time]?", whereupon most students raised their hands and both Ms. Mayzie and Ms. Wyatt emphasized that everyone would get smarter (FN 140904). That students realized that this developmental view of intelligence was preferable in explicit discourses about intellectual ability was evinced in various ways throughout the year. For instance, in response to Ms. Wyatt's question about getting smarter, one student, Alvaro (who to me seemed very native-like in his oral English skills but who had been classified as an English learner at the "basic" level), did not initially raise his hand. In a gesture indicative of peer socialization into a developmental conceptualization of intelligence, Cameron touched Alvaro's arm and signaled that he should raise his hand along with the other students (FN 140904).

On the other hand, during interactions and interviews, many students often displayed a strong alignment with an ideology of intelligence as fixed (see Oakes et al., 1997) and participated in implicit—and sometimes explicit—comparisons of individuals' putatively innate and/or quantifiable levels of intelligence. Even though Ms. Mayzie never explicitly articulated such a view to students and in fact had a zero-tolerance policy surrounding the use of words like "the s-word" (i.e., *stupid;* FN 140902), students seemed to interpret various practices, particularly the "extensions group" practice, as evidence that some students were smarter than others. Ms. Mayzie had devised the extensions group practice the preceding year when she noticed that six of her students were consistently finishing their work early and performing at a significantly higher level than other students. To differentiate instruction for them, she began to devise assignments that were "extended" in terms of length and/or in the sense of having more complex content than the usual assignments (e.g., blank lines in place of sentence frames on many language arts worksheets; longer reading passages with more academic vocabulary). The next year (the year in which I collected data for this study), she continued the extensions grouping practice. By October, she had identified four students—Domenica, Susana, Cameron, and Miles—as extensions students. Although Ms. Mayzie had selected these students not on the basis of formal assessments of their cognitive abilities, but instead on the basis of her own observations that they were able to work independently as well as collaboratively and were meeting or exceeding academic expectations, many students nonetheless interpreted placement in the extensions group as an indication of innate intelligence. For example, one day shortly after the extensions group had been formed, Aaron (not a focal child in this analysis) asked Cameron and Domenica, "how do you know that you're in extensions?" Domenica answered, "because Ms. Mayzie told us," which led to an exchange in which Aaron asked which students were in extensions, then

quietly commented that one of the students Domenica had named was "not the smartest" (141031 B). This comment made it clear that he linked general intelligence with extensions status. One day several months later, another student (who throughout the year had displayed a desire to be in the extensions group) noticed that he had received a much longer (i.e., extensions-like) version of a reading passage than the students around him, whereupon he loudly and repeatedly asked me if this meant he was "smarter" (FN 140428).

To be sure, these students were not the only ones to connect the extensions status to ideas about intelligence, though most students typically gestured toward this connection in more tacit ways. In a discursive practice akin to colorblindness and, in particular, colormuteness (Pollock, 2004), a notable *(dis)ability muteness* characterized much of students' as well as Ms. Mayzie's and other adults' (including my own) discourse around intelligence, obscuring these ideologies of intelligence even at the same time as they remained highly relevant to students' interactions. For example, throughout the year I regularly heard extensions students implicitly positioning themselves as more able than others by announcing to their peers that they had to do more work on a given assignment (e.g., that they had to write five sentences in their journal compared to the usual requirement of three). I also regularly, though somewhat less frequently, heard non-extensions students rubbing in the fact that they had less work to do than their extensions peers. When some students did more explicitly refer to intelligence (or, more markedly, a lack thereof) by using words such as *dumb* or *not smart*, others were generally quick to point out that such behavior was not appropriate. Nicole was notable in this regard, and several times I observed her labeling such comments as "rude" and "not nice" (AUD 150519). Likewise, my interviews with focal students often highlighted the ideology that discussions of intelligence should not be had or should be kept secret—even while the ideology of intelligence as fixed also emerged. For

example, Domenica and Susana (both extensions students) characterized three "basic" level English learners as "not smart" because they always had to ask for help, and they then went on to imply that they and the other two extensions students were smart. Notably, they immediately followed these comments with a request to me not to take the conversation "too seriously" (AUD INT 150507). Similarly, at one point, Domenica used wording that implied a classmate was progressing very slowly and then asked me not to repeat the words she had used (AUD INT 150414).

Discussions of language use also highlighted ideologies of intelligence in that most of the focal students I interviewed connected using academic language with being smart. Indeed, the ideological connection between being smart and using academic language was visible from the beginning of the year in Ms. Mayzie's explanations of the importance of learning academic language. In one memorable instance, she performed a role play to illustrate why she wanted students to regularly use the "academic language for asking for assistance" sentence frames that were stapled to each student's name tag (see Chapter 5). In this role play, she played the part of a student and had various students play the part of the teacher responding to her request for help. When the "teacher" approached her to answer a question, Ms. Mayzie acted out various non-specific ways of asking a question: grunting, pointing at a portion of a worksheet without saying anything, or saying "I don't get it." As students laughed in response to these role plays, she explained that when students use these vague ways of asking for help rather than using the academic language sentence frames, they "don't sound as intelligent as [they] really are" (FN 141010), thereby expressing a view that all students are intelligent at the same time as underlining the ideology that the academic register represents a more intelligent way of speaking. This role play was repeated various times throughout the year to socialize new classroom volunteers into the sentence frames practice

while also reminding the students why it was important to use them. Besides the sentence frames practice, other facets of academic language were also enregistered as "smart" ways of speaking. For example, when presenting the academic vocabulary word *represent*, Ms. Mayzie discussed synonyms with the students while also pointing out that *represent* was connected to greater linguistic capital than certain synonyms, as the following fieldnotes excerpt demonstrates:

> At one point [Ms. Mayzie] noted that "show" (which had been offered as a synonym) made sense in the example sentence she was using, but "s*how* doesn't sound like a 2nd grade student or scholar." She then explained that "scholar" meant someone smart and famous, and I think I heard a student make a small (dramatic) gasping sound. She used the word "scholar" once or twice more. She also explained that "in my class, if you use an AV word the right way in a sentence, you get a raffle ticket." (FN 140902)

Though Ms. Mayzie emphasized the idea that academic language could help any student sound "as intelligent as they really are," in interviews and peer interactions, many students took up the connection between intelligence and academic language rather differently. When I asked the students I interviewed whether and why they thought it was important to use academic language, some answered by reinvoking Ms. Mayzie's points about specificity and intelligibility (see Example 5.4, Chapter 5), but all focal students I interviewed also made some kind of connection between intelligence and academic language. As an example of the latter phenomenon, when I asked Nikki what "academic reading" meant (in the context of her having characterized a passage in a book as "academic"), she answered, "reading really smart and really hard words." I then asked "how do you know if words are smart?", to which she answered, "smart words are like, academic" (AUD INT 150410). This question-and-answer sequence, which continued for several more turns, highlights the circularity characteristic of mainstream conceptualizations of academic language, whereby it is argued that "smart words are academic, and academic words are smart" (see Chapter 3).

Students also connected academic language to intelligence when I asked them "who in Room G do you think uses a lot of academic language?" All students I interviewed unhesitatingly named Cameron, and some also named the other extensions students. Several students went on to label Cameron and/or his language as "smart"; Nicole, for instance, said "he always talks like, smart" (AUD INT 150409). Thus, students tended to connect intelligence with particular "smart-sounding" people (mainly the extensions students) and/or with academic language.

C. Nicole: A Communicatively and Indexically Competent Student

Just as Nicole attended carefully to academic language and to ideas about intelligence, I attended carefully to the ways she used language and the views she expressed about intelligence. My keen interest in her practices and perceptions came about largely because I was puzzled by her low performance on her classwork, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter. However, in reflecting on my positionality as a researcher and volunteer in Room G, I realized that my own academic and linguistic trajectories shaped the way I saw Nicole as well as the reasons I became interested in her in the first place. In some ways, she reminded me of myself at her age. Like me, she was invested in being "nice," was school-oriented, and displayed eagerness to please those around her, particularly adults and teachers. I also saw in Nicole's trajectory some parallels to my sister's educational path; for reasons that I still do not fully understand but that shaped my decision to pursue graduate study in education, my sister was labeled early in her life as one of the "low" kids and ultimately dropped out of high school, and at times I feared the same fate awaited Nicole. At the same time, however, I saw in Nicole qualities that did not remind me of myself or my family. Most notably, Nicole seemed to be part of the popular crowd in second grade and was also part of a group of four friends whom Ms. Mayzie described to me as the source of more "girl drama"

than she has ever seen (FN 150310). Other students also constructed Nicole in these terms; for instance, one day while taking roll, Ms. Mayzie asked who was absent, and a quiet student named Erica stood up, spread her legs and arms, and said "Nicole" in a voice I can only describe as "dramatic" (FN 150127).

1. Nicole's Communicative Competence

When I looked at Nicole, besides seeing this "drama," I also saw many kinds of competence, both as defined by the discourse norms of Room G and as defined by what pen-and-paper assessments simply do not capture. From the beginning of the year, Nicole demonstrated communicative competence by attending carefully to language and other semiotic practices that were in the process of becoming locally enregistered as academic ways of being. My early fieldnotes document Nicole's investment in the "good listening" and other academic language practices of Room G, including the "give me five" practices discussed in the preceding chapter. She also tended to speak and act in markedly appropriate and even hyper-polite ways. For example, on many occasions she approached me and other volunteers at the end of an activity to thank us along the lines of, "thank you so much for teaching us. That was so kind of you" (AUD 150519).

Nicole also demonstrated communicative competence by speaking in "complete sentences," which Ms. Mayzie continually reminded students to do (see Chapter 7 for an extended discussion of this practice). Indeed, such was her investment in this practice that she often produced complete sentences on her own, and in this sense she differed from many students in the class, who tended to do so only with prompting or rephrasing from Ms. Mayzie. The follow fieldnotes example illustrates one such instance:

> [During a discussion about a book they had read,] Ms. Mayzie also reminded them of the meaning of "antagonist." The exchange went something like:
>
> Nicole: "it's the guy crushing the wish,"

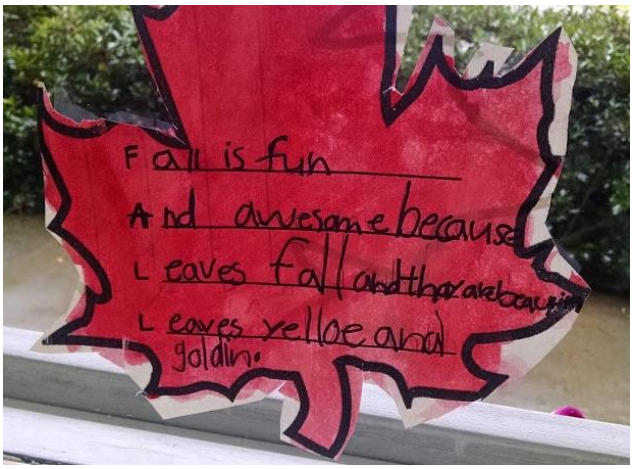
Ms M: “yes, working against the wish,”
Nicole: “like the bad guy.”
Ms M: “yes.”
Nicole: “=That’s what “antagonist” means.”

It was interesting to me to observe overlap between Nicole and Ms M’s turns (often Ms M discourages these kinds of “interruptions”) and to note that Nicole eventually made this utterance into a “complete sentence” of the kind encouraged by Ms M. (FN 140911)

So quick was she to pick up on this expectation of speaking and writing in complete sentences that she turned a seasonal acrostic poem assignment into a complete sentence across several of the letters of the target word, as shown in Figure 6.1 below.

Figure 6.1

Nicole’s fall leaf acrostic poem



This acrostic exercise was not intended to elicit complete sentences but rather a list of adjectives or nouns related to autumn, and indeed Nicole was the only student to interpret the assignment as an opportunity to practice the former skill by writing a sentence across several letters of the poem. In these and many other instances, then, I observed that Nicole demonstrated the kinds of grammatical and textual competence that were locally valorized.

I also repeatedly saw Nicole demonstrate lexical competence, another facet of communicative competence that I initially thought would give her considerable social and

linguistic capital relative to her peers. In particular, she recognized and eagerly tried out new words even before they were formally introduced through Room G's biweekly "academic vocabulary" worksheets. An excerpt from a fieldnote written during the third week of school captures an instance of this. In this case, Nicole whispered suggested utterances to her partner Alexandra to help her generate an oral answer for a large-group discussion:

> Alexandra repeated a bit of what Nicole had said to her to the whole class. I don't remember (nor did I write down) what it was, but it made Ms M say, "Okay, and Nicole, do you have anything to add? Would you like to clarify anything?" Nicole responded, "I would like to cla, cl, cl.. [scrunches up face]..what's clarify?" [all while sitting up very straight]. Ms M: "good question. We'll be talking about clarify. It means to make something more clear, to help us understand." Nicole: "I would like to clarify that…" and then she added something to her answer. (It was interesting to me that Nicole immediately took up and tried to use this new word, recognized that she didn't know it, asked for help, and then used it in a complete sentence, all while using academic body language.) (FN 140911)

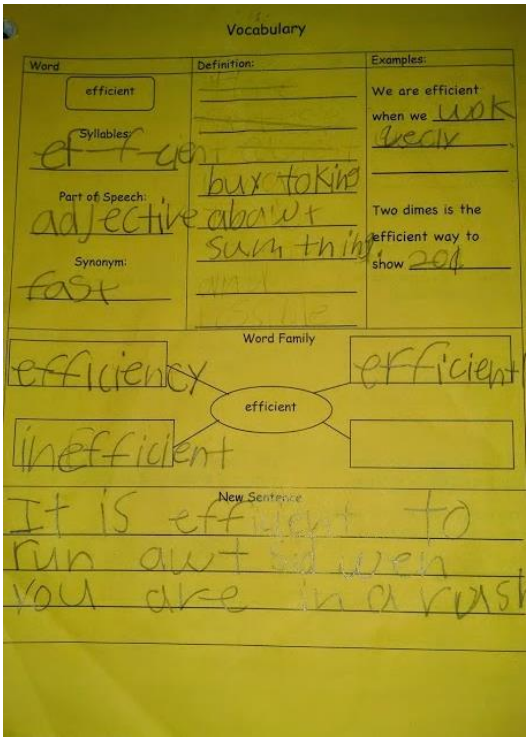
Notably, Nicole took up not only the new word as soon as it was presented to her, but in a communicatively competent move, she also immediately echoed the entire framing device (i.e., "I would like to clarify that").

On other occasions, however, Nicole's classroom language use suggested she struggled with linguistic aspects of communicative competence. As with many children her age, this was usually most evident in her written work, which tended to be less than neat, had misspellings, and was sometimes incomplete. For instance, her academic vocabulary worksheet for the lexical item *efficient* (reproduced in Figure 6.1 below) illustrates some of these tendencies: the text contains several misspellings, such as "sumthing" for *something* and "awt sid" for *outside* (yet these misspellings, as with many children's misspellings, represent logical extensions of other orthographic rules and speak to Nicole's phonetic awareness); it also contains a few inaccurate or incomplete ideas (e.g., her definition reads simply "buy

toking abawt sumthing," or 'by talking about something'); and most of the worksheet is written in what for an adult might look like sloppy handwriting.

Figure 6.2

Nicole's academic vocabulary worksheet for *efficient*



2. Nicole's Indexical Competence

Yet close observations of Nicole often revealed a different picture of her competence. Even with regard to this same academic language item *efficient*, she showed herself to have a deep understanding of the social complexities of many of the new semiotic resources being presented to her through language arts activities. On the same day she began filling out the worksheet in Figure 6.1, she appropriated *efficiently* in an interaction with her peer Alexandra to take a stance of institutional and epistemic authority (see Chapter 7 for an expanded discussion of authoritative stances). In the moments prior to this excerpt, Alexandra, a student who had an individualized education program (IEP) due to a diagnosed

learning disability, had been asking Nicole to borrow her highlighter. While Nicole was generally eager to position herself as a good helper, here she initially refuses to accede to Alexandra's request as she makes a series of discursive moves to position herself as authoritative:

Example 6.1: "Please do your work efficiently" (141030, 58:37-59:40)

1	NICOLE:	#I gotta do these.
2	CAMERON:	[What's this for?] ((to Nicole))
3	ALEXANDRA:	[Nicole,
4		can I have another ##]
5	NICOLE:	**Please stop asking.**
6		**Please do your work efficiently <[ifiʃəntli]>.**
7	ALEXANDRA:	Please.
8		Can you give me your highlighter?
9	NICOLE:	**I**
10	ALEXANDRA:	Can you give me your highlighter?
11	NICOLE:	**solve (.)**
12		**a (.)**
13		**Huh?**
14	ALEXANDRA:	Can I #use ##
15	NICOLE:	**You already have a highlighter.**
16	ALEXANDRA:	I know but I want # this
17		And that pink does not work.
18	NICOLE:	You have to give it back though.
19		Why don't you use this also? ((taking a purple marker out of A's toolbox))
20		That is missing#
21	ALEXANDRA:	I want to use
22		Do you want to do like a star? ((drawing something))
23	NICOLE:	When can I wear that? ((referring to microphone))
24	DEIDRE:	I don't know.
25	NICOLE:	**Here. ((giving the highlighter to Alexandra))**
26		

Nicole's understanding of the indexicalities of *efficient* comes through as she takes up this academic vocabulary item in line 6 to do complex social and academic work. Through her use of this lexical item, which was locally categorized in explicit metalinguistic ways as "academic," combined with her use of the imperative mood (lines 5-6), she constructs a stance of interactional and epistemic authority. The way she composes a sentence out loud for a worksheet in lines 9-12 contributes to this overall identity project in that it allows her to

do being "efficient": she is the "good student" efficiently working on her assigned task and is therefore too busy to be bothered with trivial matters such as the color of a highlighter, especially since it appears that Alexandra already has one (line 15). At the same time that she takes these stances of authority and positions herself as being in a teacherly role, Nicole is able to take up the potentially competing identity project of being a good partner by eventually giving the highlighter to Alexandra in line 26. In many ways, her actions throughout this exchange demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of *efficient* and the stances associated with the use of this word—as well as the dominant cultural values underlying this concept. She understands *efficiently* not only in a referential way (that is, not only as referring to a particular kind of behavior), but also in an indexical way, in that she uses it to take an authoritative stance toward Alexandra's request and to construct an "efficient student" identity through various semiotic modes, including speech and embodied action. She is, in Bakthin's (1981) words, able to populate others' words with her own intentions. Although the fact that she is giving her peer commands might not be considered particularly appropriate from an adult's perspective, appropriateness is not the central issue in this discursive move of Nicole's; rather, what matters is Nicole's ability to appropriate academic language and other semiotic resources as she fluidly shifts between stances and styles.

Nicole's understanding of how language indexes stances and thus personae also comes through during one of Room G's "tea parties," an activity Ms. Mayzie conducted relatively regularly to encourage students to orally practice new vocabulary in a fun way. In this activity, half of the students are given a paper with a vocabulary item (usually taken from a text the class has been reading) and a definition. The other half of the students are to spontaneously create "complete sentences" using the vocabulary word printed on the paper

their peer is holding. All students circulate and are expected to pair up with as many others as they can. After one round of this activity, Ms. Mayzie has the students switch roles so that those in the definition-providing role have the opportunity to practice creating sentences, and vice versa. In Example 6.2 below, Nicole takes a stance of authority as she pairs up with Lorenzo to create a sentence using one of the target vocabulary items, *declare.*

Example 6.2: "I declare this world is mine" (141030, 03:36-4:00)

1	NICOLE:	**I am doing a tea party with Lorenzo.**
2		**Meghan put it on me.**
3	LORENZO:	Declare.
4		To #say clearly and strongly.
5	NICOLE:	Oh,
6		**I declare this world is mine. <loud, low pitch>**
7		(2.0)
8	LORENZO:	@@@

Through her intonation, Nicole indexes a stance of authority which, given the content of her sentence ("I declare this world is mine," line 6), the volume of her utterance, and her low pitch may in turn index the characterological figure of conquerer or colonizer. However, this is not the only stance she indexes while composing sentences for the tea party activity. Rather, she is able to rapidly shift among stances and personae throughout the tea party, as the next example from approximately two minutes later makes evident:

Example 6.3: "I'm very slender" (141030, 05:15-05:30)

1	SUSANA:	Um,
2		Slender.
3		Thin or skinny.
4	NICOLE:	**I am doing a tea party with Susana.**
5		Okay.
6		**I'm very sl:ender. <creaky, low pitch>**

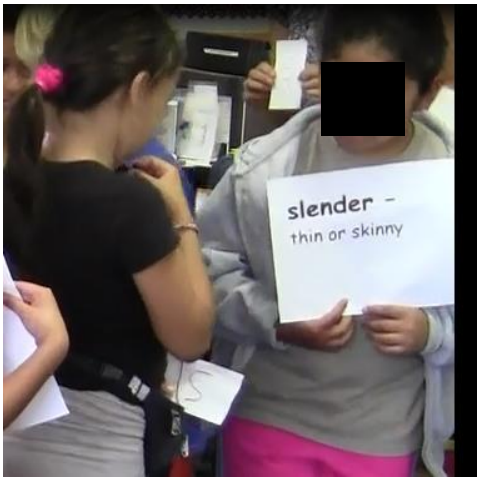
As in Example 6.2, in Example 6.3 Nicole not only produces the locally valued complete and accurate sentences, but she also coveys an understanding of this word's

indexical meanings. Taken together, her intonation (particularly its rise in the middle of the vowel of the first syllable of "slender"), elongation of the first consonant cluster of *slender*, use of creaky voice, and lowered pitch all indicate that she understands this word to be indexical of stances of sexiness and associated with attractive people. The sentence may even refer to Nicole herself; I often observed that she seemed very aware of her body and her appearance, and on one occasion she told me that she wanted to avoid getting "big" (i.e., overweight) and hoped to have a "six pack" one day (FN 150215). Thus, her own embodied experiences and identity in the world may have been shaping her understanding of the indexicalities of this word.

Also worth noting in both tea party examples is Nicole's awareness of the microphone and the research situation. In line 4 of Example 6.3, and also in lines 1-2 of Example 6.2, Nicole is holding the microphone close to her mouth (see Figure 6.4 below) and seems to be directly addressing the future audience of the recording (i.e., me and/or the research assistant "friends" who, as I explained to students, would be helping me do my project). Possibly realizing that this future audience will not be able to see her since in some moments she is off camera, each time she changes partners, she explains who her "tea party" partner is. Nicole's orientation to the recording equipment does not simply speak to participants' "reactivity" to the research situation (see Heath, Hindmarsh, & Luff, 2010), but more importantly, it underscores her ability to shift between various perspectives. This kind of perspective-shifting competence is theorized as being important for the development of academic language insofar as the audience of much academic writing is often indeterminate and may have a lack of knowledge about the situation or topic at hand (see Snow & Uccelli, 2009).

Figure 6.4

Nicole orienting to the microphone as she explains that she and Susana are doing a "tea party"



More than halfway through the school year, Nicole is still displaying her striking indexical competence, as exemplified by the next interaction. Here, Nicole and two peers, Damian and Amanda, collectively come up with a creative approach to a conceptually and interactionally complex task: navigating many physical obstacles (e.g., bookcases, computers) as they measure a distance in Room G (in this case, the distance between a bulletin board and a whiteboard). This interaction occurs during a math lesson focused on estimated versus actual distances. In this lesson, students worked in groups of two to three students to measure distances in Room G in order to determine how close their initial estimates were to the actual measurements (*measure* is an academic vocabulary word). In Example 6.4 below, I am filming and simultaneously indirectly guiding Nicole, Amanda, and Damian, who together have begun using military-style commands to coordinate this task.

Example 6.4: "Hut!" (25:11-26:50)

1	MEGHAN;	Wait Nicole,
2		aren't we starting over here?
3		Isn't it the jobs board?
4	NICOLE;	[$_1$Yes. $_1$]
5	AMANDA;	[$_1$Hut! $_1$] ((raising hand to forehead to salute))
6	DAMIAN;	###
7		Oh now I get it.
8	NICOLE;	**That's ha:rd.**
9	DAMIAN;	I get it,
10		I actually get it!
11		###
12		I actually get it.
13	NICOLE;	#Stand! ((hands clasped over yardstick; takes 2 steps forward))
14		(1.0)
15		((scratching chin))
16	MEGHAN;	Okay guys,
17		how are you gonna measure?
18	NICOLE;	((purses lips, looks to left))
19	MEGHAN;	What are you gonna start with?
20	NICOLE;	**Follow my lead. <low-pitched voice> ((holding right index finger up))**
21		(.5)
22		Hut!
23	DAMIAN;	((hopping in place))
24	MEGHAN;	**So we're doing some air measuring,**
25		**it looks like.**
26		**All right.**
27		**Air [$_2$measuring. $_2$]**
28	NICOLE;	[$_2$hut! $_2$]
29		Hut,
30		Hut!
31		#long.
32	AMANDA;	((putting hand at end of yardstick))
33	NICOLE;	Hut! <[hoʊp]>
34		Two.
35	DAMIAN;	((holds hand at end of stick to mark two yards))
36	AMANDA;	((runs to other side of stick while Damian keeps hand at beginning of stick))
37	MEGHAN;	Got it, Amanda?
38	NICOLE;	Hut!
39		Ow!
40		Three.
41		Hut.
42		Hut.
43		(2.0)
44		Four.
45	AMANDA;	((touching both ends of stick))
46	DAMIAN;	((moves hand up to mark end of stick))
47	NICOLE;	Hut!
48	MEGHAN;	What are you gonna do now?
49	AMANDA;	((moves Damian's hand away from yardstick))
50		##

51		**((smiling)) This is gonna be hard.**
52	NICOLE;	Hut!
53	DAMIAN;	Hut!
54	MS MAYZIE	How's the air measuring coming over here?
55	MEGHAN;	I think it was necessary in this case,
56		otherwise they [$_3$were gonna$_3$] have to go like,
57	NICOLE;	[$_3$six $_3$]
58	MS MAYZIE;	They're doing a pretty good job with their-<u>three</u> of them.
59	MEGHAN;	Just don't forget where your hand is.
60	NICOLE;	[$_4$Seven $_4$]
61	MS MAYZIE;	**[$_4$This is$_4$] <u>awe</u>some!**
62	JACKIE;	### all over #Miles's hand ((off camera))
63	NICOLE;	((momentarily shakes lower body as though dancing or skipping))
64	MEGHAN;	Is that where [$_5$your hand was, Damian$_5$]?
65	AMANDA;	[$_5$Eight! $_5$]
66		Eight! ((jumping up and down))
67	MEGHAN;	Is that [$_6$exactly- $_6$]
68	AMANDA;	[$_6$It's eight. $_6$]
69	DAMIAN;	[$_6$Between eight and nine. $_6$]
70	MEGHAN;	Okay,
71		now what are you gonna do?
72	DAMIAN;	Eight!
73	AMANDA;	So close!
74		It was <u>nine</u>!
75	NICOLE;	I was 8!
76		Ye:s!

Although Amanda and Nicole remark on the difficulty of the task (saying "that's ha:rd," line 8, and "this is gonna be hard," line 51) given all the obstacles in their path, the three students immediately address these challenges in a creative and effective way: they measure in the air rather than along the floor, as shown in the screen shot in Figure 6.5 below.

Figure 6.5

Screen shots of Damian, Nicole, and Amanda "air measuring" (lines 46-49)


Another group of students had been using this "air measuring" technique some minutes earlier. My reaction to the other group's use of this strategy had been to point out that what I called "air measuring" (a term I coined in the moment and repeated in marked ways) might be harder than just measuring on the floor and might also result in jabbing other classmates in the eye with the yardstick. Here too I am initially skeptical of this approach, as suggested by my comments about "air measuring" in lines 24-27, but I soon see that the way the students are using their hands to mark positions in the air works, especially because (as I realized upon closer analysis of the video) they are able to precisely coordinate their "air measuring" moves with football-like or military commands (i.e., "hut") to signal to one another that the yardstick needs to be moved. Nicole is the one issuing the majority of these commands, and indeed she was the one to direct the others to "follow [her] lead" (line 20) using a deep, low-pitched voice—apparently a stylization of the kind of male voice ideologically associated with military language of this kind. This playful language and its accompanying military gestures and actions become momentarily enregistered within this interaction, in the sense that for each of the three distances the students measure, they make use of this same set of military gestures and commands, and they even develop a short "honoring" ceremony after they finish measuring each distance. While military language and gestures may seem to have little to do with the task of measuring a room, the stances of precision they directly index coincide nicely with the instructional goals of the unit (i.e., to teach students to measure distances

accurately). The indexical competence visible in this use of language is important in its own right and also insofar as it facilitates the group's completion of the measuring activity. Led by Nicole, the group uses language indexical of non-academic activities in order to creatively and effectively organize the academic task at hand, an achievement which Ms. Mayzie recognizes by evaluating their approach as "awesome" (line 61). Crucially, then, even in moments when Nicole not using "smart words," her linguistic genius is visible, especially when her actions are viewed through the lens of indexical competence.

D. Chapter Conclusion

Just as Nicole and many of her peers often drew creatively on a wide range of semiotic resources to produce multi-layered meanings as they undertook complex social and academic work, so too must language and literacy educators and researchers expand their repertoires of pedagogical and theoretical tools. As I have argued throughout this chapter, the narrow focus on "smart words" that has tended to characterize conventional approaches to language instruction may unintentionally blind educators—as well as students themselves—to the many kinds of "smart" that shine through children's interactions. In a similar vein, a more general cultural obsession with the written documentation of performance, along with the social construction of intelligence as quantifiable, documentable, and comparable across different people, obscures the competencies and accomplishments situated in even the most mundane interactions. As demonstrated by Example 6.1, children's understandings of the referential as well as the indexical meanings of academic language often emerge in interaction in ways that may not be visible in their writing, especially during early childhood and especially when writing tasks are based only on structural views of language. Teacher-facilitated peer interactions such as the tea parties in Examples 6.2 and 6.3, as well as more spontaneous student-led interactions like the group measurement activity in Example

6.4, provide key sites for the appropriation of academic language and the learning of new ideas and skills, even when they appear on the surface to be involve "non-academic" language and practices.

Indexical competence represents a useful tool not only for understanding interactions, but also for expanding longstanding definitions of what counts as competent language use and for challenging entrenched ideologies about how best to assess children's language skills. Educators and researchers may learn much about students, about language, and about learning itself through the lens of indexical competence. In regard to academic language in particular, an important implication of the indexical competence framework and analysis undertaken here is that it provides a way of opening up a "Third Space" (Gutiérrez, 2008) and enacting the kinds of culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris, 2012) that can help schooling catch up to the multilingual, multicultural, and multiliterate realities of contemporary social life. Even students' indexical competence as it relates to so-called "everyday" language may provide a useful foundation for building other kinds of competence. By contrast with the widespread belief that academic language is necessary for undertaking academic work because it unlocks "higher-order thinking skills" (see Chapter 2 and 3), this "everyday" language can be just as suitable for engaging in academic thinking and undertaking academic tasks. The indexical competence often visible in these moments provides a valuable window into how children are connecting language to the sociocultural world that constitutes and is constituted by language. Thus, indexical competence is not only a useful foundation upon which to build other types of competence, but it is also a valuable type of competence in its own right because of the way it connects users' knowledge of language to their understanding of people—a kind of understanding that has the potential to re-humanize schools and society.

VII. Asserting and Subverting Authority through Academic Language

For me, this October day in Room G is proving to be both a trying and an amusing one. As the local "expert" on academic language, I am leading the academic vocabulary center for that day's Workshop time. From my comfortable seat in the padded "teacher's chair" at the back table, I facilitate an extensions group discussion of the vocabulary item *efficient* and check students' worksheets for coherence and correctness. I am in charge—or so I think. I am in the midst of correcting a mistake on Domenica's worksheet when Cameron interrupts me to correct my correction, telling me that she meant *efficiency* instead of *efficiently*. As it happens, he is wrong, and I dismiss his utterance. But some forty seconds later, Miles tosses his worksheet at me with a casual "here" as he stands up. "What does 'here' mean? You guys are all like 'here,'" I chide him with a smile on my face. He too smiles and snickers as he says, "check it, check it," to which I respond with a classic fill-in-the-blank teacher question: "Check it...please?" He pauses for a moment, apparently considering what to do as he glances sideways toward Cameron, and then concedes, smiling as he says "check it, please." I am amused by what I regard as their "cute" (and, in my mind, failed) attempts to position themselves as authoritative. I also feel slightly irritated and surprised. Where do these kids get off interrupting me, correcting me, and giving me commands? But soon I return to the work of helping the students understand this particularly difficult academic vocabulary item, and these questions fade from my mind.

Yet upon reflecting on this day and returning to the video record of it over a year later, I find that I still have some of these same questions. At the heart of my amusement, irritation, and surprise, as well as at the heart of the questions they stirred, is a deeper issue: *Does* a child in fact have authority? In this chapter, I engage with this question through an analysis of examples of peer interactions in which various students in Room G position

themselves as authoritative by taking up academic language in serious as well as subversive and playful ways. The chapter begins with a brief overview of theories and empirical work related to authority across several disciplines. Building on this work, I outline a framework for examining instances of authoritative stance-taking in peer interactions in Room G as well as other classrooms. I close with a brief summary of findings and their implications. Overall, I argue that when understood as emerging in interaction rather than inhering in a given social status, authority is a useful lens for understanding the meanings that academic language can take on as students interact with peers, adults, and society more broadly.

A. Authority and Language

1. Predominant Theories of Authority

The notion of authority has been of central importance to theoretical and empirical work in a variety of fields, including philosophy, political theory, law, sociology, linguistic anthropology, and education. Across these fields, authority is often viewed as a form of legitimized power and is thus distinguished from the more general notion of power, especially power in the sense of force, violence, or coercion. Specifically, authority has been viewed as "[residing] in consensual support for the regime, while power is the ultimate 'stick' of that regime. When the regime loses or lacks authority, it has to resort to power" (Blommaert, 2008, p. 2). In her seminal work, Arendt (1958) argues that although authority is always hierarchical and always demands obedience, it is distinct from power: "the authoritarian relation between the one who commands and the one who obeys rests neither on common reason *nor on the power of the one who commands*; what they have in common is the hierarchy itself, whose rightness and legitimacy both recognize and where both have their *predetermined stable place*" (p. 2; emphasis added).

Yet as Arendt's own analysis of the loss of authority in the modern world suggests, authority is neither particularly stable nor predetermined. Rather than being only an outcome of legitimization processes or inhering in a given social status, authority is in and of itself a contested and dynamic process. And like other dynamic processes of negotiation, such as ideology and identity (see Chapter 3), authority as legitimized power can be viewed as an interactional achievement, as suggested by Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) discussion of authority in terms of the concept of *authorization*. A similar view of authority as a process and an interactional phenomenon guides this chapter. This perspective has been relatively less common in empirical studies within social science; as Griswold (2007) points out, until recently, social scientists have tended to pay little attention to the actual practices through which authority is instantiated. Here I aim to contribute to the small but emerging body of research that has examined these practices, focusing particularly on academic language as a resource for asserting and subverting authority.

Unlike sociological studies that have examined possible reasons for the legitimization of authority (the most frequently invoked reasons being charisma, traditional norms, and legal rationality), and also departing somewhat from anthropological research that has examined some of the factors (e.g., gender, age, knowledge, institutional identity) that contribute to the creation of authoritative social statuses in different cultures (see Griswold 2007; Stevanovic & Peräkylä, 2012), my analysis in this chapter focuses less on reasons or factors external to the interaction and more on the moment-to-moment processes whereby individual actors are positioned as (un)authoritative. At the same time, however, my analysis here (as in the rest of the study) is not limited to each immediate interactional context but is situated in the larger ethnographic context in order to shed light on how larger identity trajectories, social statuses, and local practices in Room G may be relevant within a given interaction. Such an

ethnographically informed approach to interactional analysis is valuable for understanding how authority emerges in virtually any interactional context, but it is especially important for understanding children's interactions. Since children are not simply incomplete versions of adults, and their sociopolitical worlds are not necessarily "miniature" versions of adults' worlds (see discussion in Chapter 2; see also Griswold, 2007), abstract and adult-based theories about authoritarian regimes, legal rationality, or social status factors only go so far in explaining how particular children within particular activity systems construct and contest authoritative positions through their semiotic practices in specific interactional events.

2. (Un)doing Authority through Stance-Taking Acts

In an endeavor to recognize the similarities between adults' and children's interactions while avoiding imposing adult-derived analytic frames on children's interactional moves, in this chapter I combine elements of scholarly theories of authority with elements of the language and practices I observed in Room G. The simultaneously deductive and inductive framework I outline here focuses most centrally on the sociocultural linguistic concept of stance-taking. In Du Bois' (2007) words, stance-taking involves evaluation, positioning, and (dis)alignment: "I evaluate something [the stance object], and thereby position myself, and thereby align [or disalign] with you" (p. 163). Stances can be thought of as evaluative, affective, or epistemic orientations to talk. With regard to stances of authority, most prior literature has described authority mainly in terms of the epistemic dimension; indeed, the collocation *epistemic authority* is well-established. However, for many scholars, any stance-taking move can be viewed as having simultaneously evaluative, affective, and epistemic dimensions (see Bucholtz, forthcoming; Du Bois, 2007). This multidimensional perspective on stance enables a broader understanding of authoritative stances as indexing not only the speaker's (claimed) knowledge, but also their feelings and moral/ideological beliefs.

Thus, in this chapter I discuss authority not only in terms of epistemics, but in terms of various kinds of authoritative stance acts that emerged in the data I examined. The stances I discuss are: stances of *linguistic authority*, in which the stance object was language use or linguistic practices; stances of *institutional authority*, in which the stance object was the rules, norms, and/or roles of a particular activity; stances of *personal authority*, in which the implied source of authority was the speaker's own perspectives or experiences (see Johnstone, 2009); stances of *moral authority*, in which the stance object was participants' overall comportment (linguistic and otherwise), and wherein the speaker took a stance of adherence to a particular ideology or set of moral beliefs (see Johnstone, 2009); *"smart student" stances of authority*, in which speakers positioned themselves as able, intelligent, or particularly knowledgeable; and *"cool kid" stances of authority*, in which speakers positioned themselves as cool or popular. These stances may overlap with one another (e.g., a stance of moral authority may also imply attitudes about language use and hence may also be an instance of linguistic authority), but at the same time, they can be distinguished from one another since certain types of stance acts are more salient in certain interactions, as will be demonstrated in the analysis in the following sections. Similarly, some of these stance acts (most notably stances of moral authority and "smart student" stances) invoke the ideologies of appropriateness and ability discussed in preceding chapters, highlighting the fact that all three of these dimensions of academic language often work together in processes of social reproduction (see Chapter 3). Finally, across these different types of stance acts, I also examine a variety of actions that allowed students to position themselves as authoritative, including: telling others what to do; assessing the goodness, appropriateness, or morality of others' actions; speaking on behalf of others; correcting others; citing prior authority; attempting to define the interactional situation; and asserting the superiority or importance of

their own perspective. By addressing this range of stances of authority and authoritative actions, I hope to be able to paint a more specific picture of the ways authority was constructed and contested in students' interactions in Room G through their appropriation of academic language as well as through their use of other semiotic resources.

B. Seriously Academic Constructions of Authority

In many peer interactions, academic language proved to be a powerful tool for constructing authoritative selves, particularly during moments of conflict or disagreement. On these occasions, the affective dimension of students' authoritative stances was often serious (though more playful adoptions of academic language occurred often, as will be discussed in the next section). Even seemingly inconsequential conflicts or trivial disagreements often became important sites for appropriation of semiotic resources locally enregistered as academic, from academic vocabulary items to "give me five" listening skills to "complete sentences" to "public voices." Oftentimes several of these resources worked in conjunction with one another to help students position themselves as having the authority to tell others what to do, to correct others, to speak on behalf of others, to define the interactional situation, to assess others' actions, or to assert their own perspectives.

The last two authoritative moves—assessing others' actions and asserting one's perspective—are especially relevant in the following excerpt, which captures a short interaction between Nikki, Nicole, and Cameron. At this point in the day, it is nearly lunchtime, and the three students are talking as they finish cleaning up their desks following a Workshop during which their must-dos were to work independently on math problems and on a worksheet related to a Mother's Day story they had read. In addition to this independent work, students also briefly worked in groups when they were called to the back table by Ms. Mayzie to begin a Mother's Day art project for which they created "bubble art." As discussed

in Chapter 5, most students were excited by this "bubble art" activity; thus, the volume level was somewhat higher than on a typical Workshop day. Because of the noise produced by excited conversations, some parts of the exchange represented below are unintelligible, as are many of the utterances captured by the microphones in the moments leading up to it. Nonetheless, about one and half minutes before the beginning of Example 7.1, an unknown male student off camera is heard to exclaim what sounds very much like "dang it!", a type of language use which Cameron remarks upon within the following interaction. Importantly, Cameron was regarded by many of his peers as speaking in noticeably academic ways, as discussed in the preceding chapter. This interaction reflects this aspect of Cameron's identity in that he positions himself as authoritative by taking up linguistic resources and stances that are, according to local definitions, decidedly academic:

Example 7.1: "It's like slang" (150507 C, 4:30-5:10)

1	CAMERON;	**What is 'dang'?**
2		**(1.0)**
3		**What does 'dang' mean? <louder>**
4		**(2.0)**
5		**What does 'dang' mean? <louder>**
6	NIKKI;	Um, # 'dang' means,
7		(1.0)
8		That means=
9	NICOLE;	**That's just a style.=**
10	NIKKI;	**That's a style.**
11	NICOLE;	**It's like slang.**
12	UNKNOWN;	Nikki, ((another student appears to have approached them))
13		I have a ###.
14		And mine ###.
15	NIKKI;	Yeah, ((apparently talking to unknown student))
16		but lots of people ###.
17	NICOLE;	**You should thank her.**
18	NIKKI;	**#That's #not #slang.**
19		**That's what people say.**
20	CAMERON;	**She said 'dang.'**
21		**You said 'dang.'**
22	NICOLE;	**No,**
23		**'thanks:.'**
24	CAMERON;	**From my perspective,**

25		**she said ‘dang.’**
26	NICOLE;	**I said <u>thanks</u>!**
27	CAMERON;	**From <u>my</u> perspective.**
28	NIKKI;	**But that doesn’t make <u>sense!</u>**

In this example, Cameron positions himself as authoritative by drawing on an ensemble of academic language and academic practices to both implicitly and explicitly comment on others’ language use. Indeed, his close attention to others’ language is what initiates the interaction. Whether touched off by his male classmate’s apparent exclamation of “dang it” in the moments before Example 7.1, by something that Nicole purportedly said, or by some other use of *dang*, Cameron’s question in line 1 is evidently important to him and is certainly significant for the identity work he is undertaking here. Upon not receiving a response from his peers, he persists in asking his question, rephrasing and repeating it twice (lines 2-5) in a loud, clear, slow voice that fits the description of the “public voice” that Ms. Mayzie often emphasized as an important element of academic communication. In fact, his utterances throughout this exchange are louder than most of Nikki’s and Nicole’s, and despite the fact that all three students are off camera and are about twenty feet away from the camera microphone, he in particular can be heard and understood in the audio portion of the video record even though many other conversations were going on at the time.

In addition to his use of a “public voice” to perform an authoritative academic identity, Cameron’s question itself indexes this identity. Ironically, even though his question would appear on the surface to suggest a lack of authority in that it highlights his lack of linguistic knowledge, here it is in fact better understood as a stance of linguistic authority. By establishing his ignorance of the word *dang*, Cameron is able to implicitly distance himself from the colloquial register with which *dang* is associated. That Nicole and Nikki understand the word as forming part of colloquial usage is evidenced by their characterization of *dang* as

"just a style" and "a style" (lines 9-10), respectively, and by Nikki's characterization of it as "what people say" (line 19). Although Nikki's apparent utterance "that's not slang" (line 18) would suggest that for her, slang somehow differs from "what people say" (an interesting distinction that unfortunately she does not elaborate on), for Nicole, the word is "like slang" (line 11)—a telling description since in Room G, as in society more broadly, slang was understood as inappropriate for the classroom (see the discussion of slang in Chapter 5). While Cameron does not advance a directly negative evaluation of *dang* or of slang within this interaction, the stance of personal authority he takes when he repeatedly asserts "his perspective" and insists that Nicole did in fact say the word (lines 20-27) frames this kind of language use as worth remarking on and as police-able.

On other occasions, Cameron more explicitly disaligned with and even disapproved of slang as well as other kinds of colloquial and "non-academic" language use. For example, when the class was rehearsing a Dr. Seuss play on a day about two months prior to this interaction, Cameron joined Ms. Mayzie and several others in distancing himself from some of the informal language (and in this case, also racialized and classed language) which the students encountered in the script (150320 B). In this instance, Ms. Mayzie directed students' attention to one line in the script: "elephants ain't too swift as a rule." She asked the class what the sentence meant, and when Domenica explained the meaning of the phrase (i.e., that elephants aren't very smart), Cameron commented to a peer, "that does <u>not</u> make sense." Ms. Mayzie, possibly responding to Cameron's assessment, then asked the class, "and of course, is the word *ain't* a word?", whereupon Cameron was among the first and loudest to answer "no." Ms. Mayzie proceeded to explain that the characters were using such language because they were in their "teasing mode" and were in the jungle rather than at school. Thus, in many

ways Cameron had already begun to appropriate not only academic language but also the ideology of the standard associated with it.

Cameron's appropriation of academic language to construct an authoritative image is especially marked at the end of Example 7.1, when he uses an academic vocabulary word to insist that he heard Nicole say the word *dang*. It is unclear exactly which utterance of Nicole's he is referring to, but on the basis of Nicole's clarification that she said *thanks* (lines 23 and 26), he may have heard *dang* in place of *thanks* in her utterance "you should thank her" (line 17; this utterance is characteristic of Nicole in that she often thanked adult volunteers, as discussed in the preceding chapter). Alternatively, he may have thought he heard her say *dang* in another moment prior to this interaction. Despite Nicole's repeated attempts to clarify what she actually said (see lines 22-23 & 26)—which she is arguably in a more authoritative position to do since she is the speaker whose utterance is in question—Cameron continues to position himself as having the authority to emphasize his version of events. Academic language is central to these assertions in that Cameron markedly and repeatedly uses *perspective* (lines 24 and 27), which is one of the students' academic vocabulary words. He has appropriated not only the word but the whole framing device "from my perspective," which was emphasized through the examples Ms. Mayzie used when the vocabulary word was initially presented some months before. Insofar as he could have highlighted his perspective without using language enregistered as academic (e.g., he might have said "I thought you said *dang*," "no, you said *dang*," or "well, I heard *dang*"), his use of this academic phrase here is marked through its repetition and emphatic intonation. It is also marked by virtue of its juxtaposition with the topic of the conversation (i.e., the informal word *dang*) and with the girls' language use—which is authoritative but is not particularly academic, and thus demonstrates disalignment with Cameron's style—as they argue in an

equally emphatic way that Nicole said *thanks* and that Cameron's perspective "doesn't make sense" (line 28).

Even in the absence of direct conflict and in the presence of adults, students positioned themselves as more authoritative than their peers by drawing on academic language. Although an adult's presence might seem to settle question of who was in charge of the interaction, academic language provided students with useful tools for unsettling teacher/student and expert/novice boundaries, particularly when the adult mediating the interaction was a classroom volunteer. Indeed, the ambiguous and hybrid role of classroom volunteers (including me) seemed to raise questions of authority in that our volunteer roles combined teacher, peer, and novice/newcomer qualities. On the one hand, Ms. Mayzie referred to volunteers as "teachers" and frequently reminded students of the importance of giving any teacher their attention and respect. On the other hand, our status in the classroom was on a par with students' in that they usually referred to us by our first names (as most of us, including me, preferred) and tended to engage in more casual conversations with us about their hobbies, friends, and other aspects of their out-of-school lives. And in fact, in some ways we were subordinate to rather than on a par with students; most notably, we were often less familiar with important classroom routines and norms.

Given their positioning as more able than the other students (see Chapter 6), extensions students in particular were quick to exploit the ambiguity of the volunteers' role in order to attempt to establish themselves as having greater authority than peers and even volunteers, as suggested by this chapter's opening vignette and by Example 7.2 below. This example is excerpted from a volunteer-mediated peer interaction that occurred on a day in May when Ms. Bradshaw, a teacher candidate working with Ms. Mayzie that year, was leading the day's classes as part of her credentialing requirements. That Ms. Bradshaw was

directing activities may have further underlined the issue of authority in that students were aware she was only in charge temporarily (i.e., for a total of two weeks). In fact, only a few minutes into that day's Workshop, several students subtly challenged her authority, largely by taking stances of linguistic authority made salient to them through local literacy practices surrounding the academic vocabulary word *proofread*. These practices encouraged students to evaluate language use for correctness and coherence. When Ms. Mayzie introduced it four months before, *proofread* and the set of practices to which it referred were taught not only through the usual academic vocabulary worksheet, but also through a laminated proofreading checklist (see Figure 7.1 below) that each student kept in their toolbox since they were to use it regularly, which many of them did.

Figure 7.1

Photo of laminated proofreading checklist

Note. Bottom line reads "does it make sense?"

Although the literacy practices surrounding *proofread* were intended to teach students to self-assess their own writing, many students used them in order to point out their peers' and even teachers' mistakes or departures from standardized language use. In some ways, Ms. Mayzie encouraged this; most notably, when students found typos in her writing, she congratulated them, framing such occasions as exemplifying the idea that even teachers

make mistakes and are not the ultimate authority on all matters. Students' implicit take-up of this idea was prominent during Ms. Bradshaw's lesson (150519 A). As Ms. Bradshaw called on students to read different portions of the instructions for one of their worksheets, Laura pointed out that the worksheet was missing a "box" mentioned in the instructions, an oversight which Ms. Bradshaw addressed by suggesting an alternative. Only seconds later, another student called out (without being called on by Ms. Bradshaw), "wait, there's a typo on this." Possibly because she had not called on him, Ms. Bradshaw did not directly respond to his statement and proceeded to ask Cameron to read the next part of the instructions; instead of doing so, Cameron echoed Michael, saying "there's a typo." Seconds later, Susana called out, "Oh, there's another typo, I see it." Ms. Bradshaw quickly provided corrections to the typos, but the challenges to her authority persisted when she resumed her explanation by having students read a line of the instructions that read "what does the illustration tell you?", which one student exploited to formulate a subversively joking question: "What does the illustration tell you, Ms. Bradshaw?"

Similar discursive moves to undermine adults' authority continued throughout the day's activities, including through Susana's moves in the following exchange. In this example, Susana, Cameron, Lorenzo, Brooklyn, and Nikki are at a center dedicated to defining key words that the class had previously identified within an informational article about ants. These words (including terms such as *ant, colony, queen, worker,* and *anthill*) were to be written on sticky notes along with students' own definitions of them, and the sticky notes were to be used afterward to form a community glossary. A classroom volunteer named Leah, who had begun volunteering in Room G about a month prior to this interaction, was in charge of this center. By the time she was leading the group of students featured in Example 7.2 below, Leah had already gone through the activity with one other group. She began the

activities at this center by asking each student to choose a vocabulary item, which occasionally led to mild conflict as two or more students wanted to choose the same item. Besides arguments over particular vocabulary items, other contestations of authority emerged as students hierarchically positioned themselves and one another through discursive moves such as announcements of their decisions, corrections of others' language use, and formulations of teacher-like questions. These discursive resources for taking stances of authority are taken up most notably by Susana while she and the other students work on the vocabulary definition task:

Example 7.2: "Can you be more specific?" (150519, 44:00-45:55)

1	LEAH;	And make sure that it's written in your own words.
2		Ms. Bradshaw really stressed that.
3		That you need to write it in your own words,
4		**and not just copy it from the article.**
5		**So Cameron,**
6	SUSANA;	**So you can copy a little bit of it,**
7		**but put it in your own words too, right?**
8	LEAH;	Yeah,
9		not- not too much.
10		Okay,
11		**so Susana's doing 'antenna.' <[æntɛnə]> ((pointing at Susana))**
12	SUSANA;	**'Antennae.' <[æntɛnaj]>**
13	LEAH;	**'Antennae,' <[æntɛnaj]>**
14		right. ((points at Nikki))
15	NIKKI;	I'm doing anthills.
16	LEAH;	She's doing anthills. ((points at Brooklyn)
17	BROOKLYN;	I'm doing ants.
18	CAMERON;	**I wanna do colonies. ((quickly raising left hand high in the air))**
19	LEAH;	Okay. ((handing Cameron a sticky note))
20	LORENZO;	Ah:! ((reaching out for sticky note and then withdrawing hand))
21	LEAH;	Is there anything else #you #wanna #do?
22		There are plenty of others.
23	LORENZO;	Anthills?
24	LEAH;	Uh,
25		#We're already #doing #anthills.
26	LORENZO;	Argh!
27	SUSANA;	**Um, ((looking at worksheet))**
28		**There's worker and queen.**
29	LEAH;	Mm hmm.
30	LORENZO;	Queen!
31	LEAH;	You wanna do queen? ((handing him a sticky note))

32		Okay.
33	BROOKLYN;	Ant queen, <singing quality>
34		queen [$_1$ queen $_1$] ((pointing pencil at Lorenzo))
35	LORENZO;	[$_1$ Worker. $_1$]
36		Worker worker!
37	LEAH;	Well we'll see.
38	BROOKLYN;	Queen or-,
39		do 'queen ant,'
40		or we won't know if it's just a queen or-
41	LORENZO;	=Wait I'm doing worker right now @@.
42	LEAH;	Okay.
43		You #should start working.
44		You need to do the definition for worker.
45		So you need to make sure you do it,
46		write it in your own words.
47		So don't just like copy it from the=
48	BROOKLYN;	Wait,
49		Do we write why the ###?
50		Or what is it?
51	LEAH;	Th- what is it.
52	BROOKLYN;	Okay.
53	LEAH;	It's [$_2$ a definition. $_2$]
54	LORENZO;	[$_2$ Okay,
55		there $_2$] we go. ((showing Leah his sticky note))
56	LEAH;	Okay,
57		**what did you put for 'worker'?**
58	LORENZO;	**'A worker ant.'**
59		(2.0)
60		**((Leah, Cameron, and Susana are looking at Lorenzo))**
61	SUSANA;	**Uh,**
62		**can you be more specific?**
63	LORENZO;	**Okay! ((jumps slightly out of seat and leans toward Susana's face))**
64	CAMERON;	**Can I do three?**
65	LEAH;	**Why don't you try that again. ((handing Lorenzo a sticky note))**

Throughout this interaction, Susana in particular makes several bids for authority, most of which are directly or indirectly ratified by the other participants, including the volunteer Leah. Susana's first move in an overall trajectory of increasingly explicit authoritative stance-taking is to take a rather subtle stance of linguistic authority: she redirects Leah's attention from Cameron (whom Leah calls on in line 5) by asking whether students can "copy a little bit of [the wording from the article]" (line 6). The way she structures this question—that is, by using the tag question "right" (line 7), which prefers an

affirmative response—renders it legible not simply as a clarifying question, but as a suggestion or even an amendment to the volunteer's explanation of the way students were to use language in this task. Susana soon corrects Leah in a much more overt way in response to the latter's mention of *antenna* (line 11). It is unclear whether Leah was simply thinking the text referred to the singular form of *antenna* or whether she was using a non-standard pronunciation of the plural form *antennae*, and it is also unclear on which basis Susana offers her correction. Nonetheless, that Susana has corrected the adult could not be clearer, and the very direct way in which she formulates the correction allows her to take a stance of linguistic authority toward Leah's language use. Susana might have mitigated her correction (e.g., by saying "I think it's *antennae*" or "isn't it *antennae*?"), as would likely be ideologically viewed as appropriate for a child (especially a girl) or expected of a Spanish-speaking student like her. And yet her bilingual abilities may have contributed to the metalinguistic awareness that allowed her to so assertively offer this correction. Furthermore, local literacy practices surrounding the academic vocabulary word *proofread,* as discussed above, may have made others' linguistic mistakes more visible to her—and indeed to all students—as a resource for taking stances of linguistic authority. In this instance, Susana has essentially extended the practice of proofreading her own and others' writing to include identifying and correcting mistakes in speech.

Academic language makes another, more explicit appearance later in the interaction as Susana continues with her project of building a teacher-like identity by using academic vocabulary to correct and help Lorenzo. When Lorenzo writes a slightly expanded version of the term he was assigned (i.e., *worker ant* as an expanded version of *worker*, line 58) instead of writing a definition of it, Susana joins Cameron and Leah in directing her attention to Lorenzo (line 60). Even though it is ostensibly Leah's responsibility as the volunteer to help

Lorenzo develop a definition, following the rather lengthy pause in line 59, Susana is the first to speak. Through her use of the academic vocabulary item *specific* (which had been introduced many months before, at the beginning of the school year), she concisely points out the problem with Lorenzo's response at the same time as implicitly positioning herself as more able by using one of the words locally enregistered as an "academic" or "smart" word (see Chapter 6). Besides constructing herself as more competent through the use of a "smart" word, Susana also positions herself as authoritative via the form of her utterance. While she might have directly stated "that's not specific enough" or commanded Lorenzo to "be more specific," she instead uses the kind of question indexical of teacherly pedagogical strategies in general and of Ms. Mayzie's own usage in particular ("can you be more specific?" was a question Ms. Mayzie used frequently throughout the year). In this way, she takes a stance of institutional authority as she steps into a teacher-like role. She had already begun moving in this direction earlier in the interaction by providing Lorenzo with suggestions about which vocabulary item he could choose (lines 27-28). Evidence that Susana's trajectory in this interaction is understood as authoritative by other participants is particularly visible in lines 63-65. For his part, Lorenzo accepts rather than rejects Susana's suggestion by saying "ok<u>ay</u>," and even though his emphatic intonation and embodied action (line 63) constitute a form of contestation of her assertion of authority, the very fact that he contests it suggests that he has read her move as authoritative. Lorenzo's utterance is closely followed by Cameron's request, directed at Leah, to write definitions for three words (line 64) rather than the minimum of one. Much like Susana's use of *specific,* Cameron's request is indexical of his hierarchical status as an extensions student and allows him to take a "smart student" stance of authority toward the task, which in turn allows him to one-up Lorenzo (who has struggled with his first definition) and possibly also Susana (who at this point is still working

on her first definition). Finally, Leah ratifies Susana's bid for authority by letting her suggestion stand as-is. Though she might have explained to Lorenzo precisely how he could write a more specific definition, instead she simply tells him to "try again" (line 65), thereby implicitly evaluating Susana's utterance as having correctly and sufficiently identified the problem as well as the solution. Overall, in less than two minutes and through just a few markedly academic discursive moves, Susana shapes and assesses others' actions in ways that allow her to momentarily step into a teacher-like role while simultaneously engaging in the work expected of her as a student.

C. Subversively and Playfully Academic Constructions of Authority

In Examples 7.1 and 7.2 above, Cameron and Susana augmented their student identities and sometimes enacted hierarchies through relatively serious appropriations of academic language, but on other occasions, they and other students positioned themselves authoritatively by taking up academic communication practices in more subversive, parodic, and playful ways. These playful performances often cut across different semiotic modes. Similar to Goodwin and Alim's (2010) concept of *transmodal stylization*, which involves the "creative, agentive, and strategic performing of two different communicative styles simultaneously across verbal and nonvocal modalities" (p. 182), students augmented their authority by taking both academic and "non-academic" (such as silly, funny, or cool) stances across semiotic modes. For example, at times they orally indexed an academic style while gesturally indexing a "cool" style, thereby combining the epistemic authority of a smart student with the social authority of a cool kid.

The following math-time interaction exemplifies this multimodal layering of distinct kinds of authoritative selves. On this day in January, Ms. Mayzie is absent and has provided the substitute, Ms. Welsh, with detailed instructions about how to implement a routine called

"number talks." In line with the Common Core Standards' shift away from memorization and discrete procedures and toward the development of deeper conceptual understandings and reasoning skills, number talks focused on encouraging students to understand the variety of strategies by which virtually any math problem can be solved. This emphasis on understanding that one equation can be approached in a multiplicity of ways was reinforced during language arts activities through the inclusion of *strategy* as an academic vocabulary word and through the inclusion of math-related examples on the AV worksheet for this word. In addition to teaching *strategy* during language arts, Ms. Mayzie introduced a variety of math strategies and names (e.g., *adding up, prior knowledge*) that were entextualized through a "Math Strategies" poster that was prominently displayed near the front whiteboard (where number talks occurred). She encouraged students to use these strategy names as well as complete sentences during number talks, thus emphasizing the importance of academic language practices during math.

By the time Ms. Welsh substituted on this day in January, students were very familiar with these discursive expectations, which they variously reproduced and subverted, often by transmodally producing both meanings at the same time or in close temporal proximity to each other. Example 7.3, which features Miles (an extensions student), represents one such case. In this exchange, Ms. Welsh is leading the students through a discussion of different ways to solve the math problem thirty minus nineteen. Throughout the thirty minutes prior to this excerpt, many students have already undermined Ms. Welsh's authority and/or positioned themselves as more authoritative than her or their peers in various ways, such as: telling Ms. Welsh or one another what they are supposed to do (e.g., "we don't do it that way anymore," "raise your hand," "don't shout out"); using the "give me five/stop" gesture (see Chapter 5) to each other; correcting Ms. Welsh's and their peers' language use (e.g., "it's *number talks*

[not *math talks*]," "erase the *i*"); mockingly repeating other students' use of complete sentences and sentence frames; and loudly making jokes in response to some of Ms. Welsh's instructions (e.g., "I forgot my thinking cap at home" in response to her utterance "put your thinking caps on"). In the moments just before Example 7.3 begins, Miles has been participating in some of this authoritative stance-taking by using the "give me five/stop" gesture to Domenica and Susana, who are seated in front of him and are playing with each other's palms and arms. As he performs the gesture, he sits up slightly on his ankles and vigorously moves his arm between Susana and Domenica. Apparently mistakenly interpreting Miles's use of the "give me five" gesture as norm-disrupting behavior (rather than understanding its local norm-enforcing meaning), Ms. Welsh reprimands him by telling him to sit still (see line 3 below). However, Miles is quick to reestablish his "good student" status through his take-up of academic communicative practices, several of which he enacts at nearly the same time as producing embodied actions that read as cool or aloof:

Example 7.3: "I want some big ears on this one" (150113 D, 3:02-4:30)

1	MS. WELSH;	I was wondering if anybody had a different strategy.
2		**Miles,**
3		**sit still please.**
4		**Does anybody have a <u>different</u> strategy?**
5	MILES;	**((shifts weight and sits back on ankles, then puts sole of right foot on**
6		**ground and bends right knee in air; props right arm on right knee))**
7	MS. WELSH;	Miles,
8		what did you do?
9	MILES;	**((sits up straighter, crosses legs on ground; several students are looking at**
10		**him))**
11		Um, I: did (.) uh,
12		**((looks toward "math strategies" poster))**
13		**prior knowledge.=**
14		I remembered last time that it equals,
15		[$_1$ um, $_1$]
16	MS. WELSH;	**[$_1$ Ooh, $_1$]**
17		Every-
18		**Is everybody listening?**
19		**I want some <u>big</u> ears on this one.**
20	MILES;	**[#Pri-]**

MS. WELSH; **[Prior] knowledge.**
What does that mean?
MILES; **Um, prior knowledge means it's when you,**
when you do something,
and it um, (.)
when you do a math problem,
and um,
and then you know what the answer is.
And then you do another one that's like one or two more.
MS. WELSH; Exactly.
So we just did thirty minus nineteen,
didn't we?
So we have prior knowledge that the answer is eleven,
right?
MILES; **And then I [$_2$ knew $_2$]**
MS. WELSH; [$_2$ So $_2$] he's remembering,
He's using [$_3$ his prior knowledge. $_3$]
MILES; **[$_3$ #and I knew it $_3$] equaled eleven.**
MS. WELSH; Okay.
So you're remembering that thirty minus nineteen equaled eleven.
MILES; **And then [$_4$ I added $_4$]**
MS. WELSH; **[$_4$ that's your $_4$] prior knowledge,=**
MILES; **And then I just added,**
uh,
I added (.)
Four.
MS. WELSH; No.
What's nineteen (.)?
How many apart are nineteen and-,((gesturing to the numbers nineteen and fourteen on whiteboard with marker))
wha- what=
MILES; **Five.**
MS. WELSH; **[$_5$ What $_5$]**
MILES; **[$_5$ I $_5$] added five.**
MS. WELSH; So nineteen minus four is (.)?
Five.
Right?
Right?
Miles?
MILES; **Yep. ((nods slightly))**
MS. WELSH; And then you ad- you brought the eleven down,
and added these two together?
MILES; Yeah.
MS. WELSH; And got sixteen.
Pretty tricky?
MILES; **No.**
MS. WELSH; **<u>Prior knowledge.</u>**

Following his attempt to authoritatively police Domenica's and Susana's behavior and its resultant reprimand by Ms. Welsh, Miles is the first and only student to raise his hand in response to Ms. Welsh's question in line 4. In a sense, his hand raising represents an enactment of academic communication norms and is thus a submission to the teacher's authority; however, the way in which Miles raises his hand—by propping his arm on his knee (line 5-6)—represents an assertion of authority in that it directly indexes a casual stance, which in turn indirectly indexes a "cool kid" persona who rebels against authority. Once called on by Ms. Welsh (lines 7-8), Miles makes a further adjustment to his embodied actions, indexing a "good student" identity by performing the "sit up straight" element of the "give me five" listening skills. The shifts in his embodied action in this sequence are captured in the images reproduced in Figure 7.2 below:

Figure 7.2

Screen shots of shifts in Miles' embodied actions in lines 5-10

Figure 7.2a. Miles sitting back and casually raising hand (lines 5-6)

Figure 7.2b. Miles sitting up straight when called on (lines 9-10)

Like his embodied action, Miles's speech combines the authority of the "smart student" with that of the "cool kid." On the one hand, his discourse is markedly academic in that most of his utterances are formulated as complete sentences, as Ms. Mayzie expected during number talks and in many other math and language arts activities. He also uses communicative practices marked as academic by looking toward the "math strategies" poster

(line 13) and then stating that he is using the strategy known as "prior knowledge" (line 14). As discussed above, this language is already locally enregistered as academic, and Ms. Welsh further marks this enregisterment by positively evaluating his use of the term when she says "Ooh," as though impressed (line 16). She then proceeds to ask everybody to listen with "big ears" as she repeats the noteworthy term several times throughout the interaction (lines 18-21, 33, 37, 42, 67), often with increased volume, emphatic stress, and slower intonation, thereby marking the term as an object of attention—so much so that the focal point of the interaction becomes the language used to describe the mathematical reasoning while the reasoning itself sometimes fades into the background. Miles likewise appears to begin to repeat the term (line 20), though he changes course as the teacher repeats it at the same time. He fully repeats the term in his answer to Ms. Welsh's question, again formulating his response in complete sentences and taking a stance of epistemic authority as he explains the meaning of the term with minimal hesitation and pauses (lines 23-29).

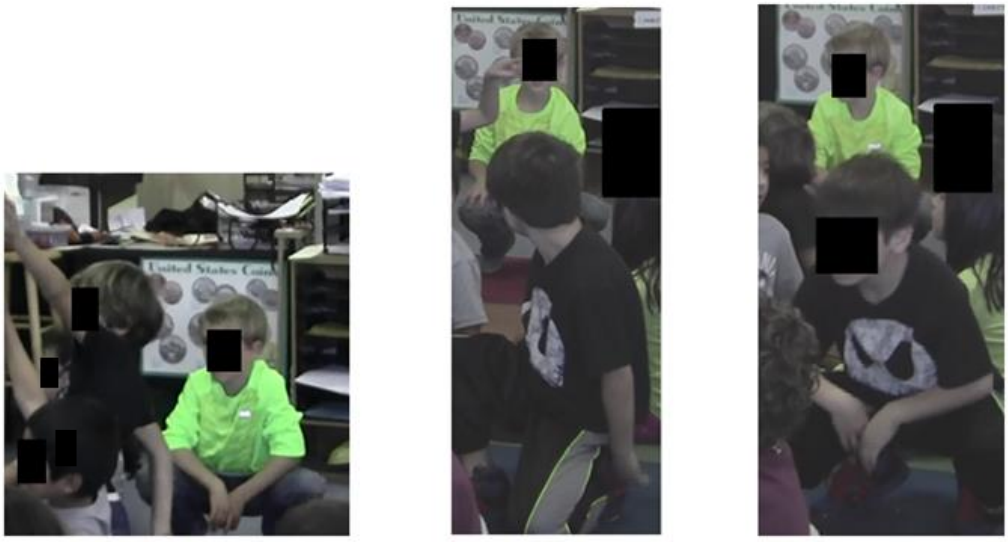
On the other hand, some of Miles's verbal actions throughout this sequence index a cool or informal stance rather than an academic stance. Most notably, toward the end of the interaction, he begins to use one-word answers, such as "five" (line 52), though he self-corrects this to a complete sentence (line 54). Similarly, in one of his final utterances, he casually answers "yep" (line 60) and "yeah" (line 63) in answer to Ms. Welsh's confirmatory questions. Also noteworthy is that even though he uses complete sentences throughout most of this example, many of his turns do not directly acknowledge Ms. Welsh's often overlapping explanations of his use of the prior knowledge strategy. In these explanations, she tends to use the third person singular to speak on behalf of Miles, a move that can be interpreted as implying that his utterances do not quite have the authority to stand on their own or that they need to be paraphrased in order to emphasize the academic term *prior*

knowledge. Like many children (and for that matter, many adults), Miles disliked it when others spoke for him; for example, in a peer interaction in March, Miles reprimanded Nicole for speaking on behalf of Nikki by asking her "Do you like people talking for you?" (AUD 150310). Perhaps for this reason, Miles persists in speaking for himself here, authoritatively proceeding with his own utterances rather than pausing to directly answer Ms. Welsh's questions or respond to her statements (see lines 34-37, 39-44). Miles's turn ends a few moments later in a telling manner: Ms. Welsh asks, "pretty tricky?" (line 65), to which he immediately responds "no" (line 66), thereby indexing the stance of effortlessness ideologically associated with both the smart student and the cool kid.

That Miles's laminated performance of both types of authority is recognized and legitimated by other participants becomes especially apparent several minutes later as Ms. Welsh is leading the class through another math problem in which prior knowledge is once more relevant. As Nicole is struggling to explain how she solved this new problem, Ms. Welsh ratifies Miles's epistemic authority by reinvoking his earlier explanation, asking Nicole, "kind of like what Miles did?" About a minute later, Ms. Welsh asks if someone can help Nicole. Several hands immediately shoot up in the air, but not Miles's; instead, he takes up a physically aloof and decidedly non-academic posture, crouching and then starting to look away from Ms. Welsh, the other students, and the whiteboard. This cool, authoritative stance is soon noticed by Alan, who looks toward Miles as he starts to imitate this crouching posture, as captured by the screen shots in Figure 7.3 below.

Figure 7.3

Screen shots of Miles (green shirt) crouching and then being imitated by Alan (black shirt)



As this sequence of embodied action suggests, Miles was a popular student in Room G. In addition to others' imitations of his embodied actions and interactional style, his presence was also felt in his peers' classwork in that several students tended to mention him frequently in their writing; for example, for one assignment which required students to write math story problems, of 12 students whose worksheets mentioned peers' names, four included Miles in their story problem (PIC 150507). Others also tended to follow his lead when doing group work by complying with his requests and commands and by pursuing topics of conversation initiated or favored by him. In one memorable instance (AUD 150310), Miles began talking about seeing a naked girl on the beach and, despite initial reminders from one of his peers that the group should do the assigned work, soon all four group members were involved in a conversation about nudity. They continued on this topic for some fifteen minutes while simultaneously appearing to complete their work by writing on their miniature whiteboards (although in Miles's case, he was using his whiteboard not to do his math problem, but to draw an illustration that apparently depicted Nikki naked, a project with which she aligned

through laughter and other means). In these cases and many others, Miles was able to combine the authority of the smart student with that of the cool kid by producing one set of communicative meanings in one mode (e.g., doing "working efficiently" via embodied action) and another set of meanings in another mode (e.g., doing heteronormative "guy talk" via his speech).

Other students also exploited various semiotic modalities to take up academic communicative practices in playful ways that allowed them to take authoritative stances and/or undermine others' authority. Cameron's interactions provide several telling examples. Although many times his stance toward academic communication norms was serious (as in Example 7.1), on other occasions it was playful or subversive, especially when his attempts to position himself as academically authoritative had been thwarted. For example, throughout the number talk activity discussed above as well as during the "calendar time" activity immediately preceding it, Cameron repeatedly makes moves to position himself as authoritative by drawing on academic language and classroom norms to tell others what to do or point out their procedural or linguistic mistakes. Importantly, Ms. Welsh has begun the calendar time activity by telling the group that the two "calendar assistants" (a role wherein one or two students directed the week's calendar time by asking questions using specific sentence frames and then recording their peers' answers in routinized ways) would be in charge and that everyone else should sit still and wait for the calendar assistants to call on them. Ms. Welsh therefore reminds Cameron several times to "let the girls run the show." After several reprimands of this kind, Cameron begins to do being bored, aloof, or critical through his actions, including visibly yawning, directing his gaze away from the board, moving his jaw as though chewing gum, squirming rather than sitting still, and smirking when Ms. Welsh reminds the students to sit "criss-cross apple sauce." His playful, bored, and

critical stances continue throughout the rest of the day and reemerge quite visibly during dismissal, when Ms. Welsh has the group sit in a circle on the rug and asks each of them to say a complete sentence about what they learned or which part of the day each liked best. To facilitate their use of complete sentences, she provides two sentence frames: "Today I learned__" and "Today I liked__." Following an imitative sequence in which Miles says "I liked running laps in P.E." and Aaron says, "I liked running laps, too," Cameron also echoes Miles's answer but neglects to use a complete sentence, saying instead "me too!" Ms. Welsh reminds him to use a complete sentence, whereupon Cameron slowly utters the sentence "I liked...running laps in P.E....too...I mean, three," as he rather mockingly marks both of the first two beats with emphatic nods of the head, then smiles as he glances toward Aaron, who evaluates his action as funny by giggling quietly. Cameron's embodied actions, combined with his subversively colloquial and joking addition of "I mean, three" (apparently in reference to the fact that he is the third student to mention running laps in P.E.), allows him to produce a transmodal critique of the "complete sentences" and "sentence frames" practices while still technically adhering to this norm.

Even in Ms. Mayzie's presence, Cameron (like all the other students in Room G) sometimes neglected to use complete sentences, though he usually did not take a parodic stance toward the practice in her presence. Whether due to forgetfulness or conscious subversion of this rather artificial norm, his and others' occasional neglect of it often indexed not only vernacular usage but also the authority of the teacher in that Ms. Mayzie herself often stepped outside of the complete sentences norm in her own speech. Though Cameron and other students often corrected Ms. Mayzie's typos and other language use, I never observed them reminding her to speak in complete sentences, perhaps in part because she had readily admitted at the beginning of the year that she sometimes forgot to do so: "Most of the

time in a classroom you want to speak in complete sentences. This is something I'm working on, too" (FN 140902). Hence, even though the "complete sentences" norm was metapragmatically enregistered as a key aspect of appropriate classroom discourse, its non-usage was also a frequent feature of students' speech and writing as well as an important part of Ms. Mayzie's own authoritative discourse.

The complete sentences practice, along with the related sentence frames practice, was implicitly critiqued in various other ways in peer interactions, as illustrated by a final example featuring an interaction in which Susana, Brooklyn, Alan, and Michael variously assert and undermine stances of authority by drawing on a range of linguistic resources. The activity that organizes this interaction is a language arts game played in groups of four to five people. This game was aimed at helping students understand the meanings of various suffixes they had recently learned, including *-ly, -ed, -er,* and *-est*. In the game, most group members had a card listing these suffixes, and they were to slap the appropriate suffix in order to signal their response to a prompt read by a group member known as the "caller." The caller was in a position of authority in that this person was to nominate respondents, keep the game moving efficiently, and assess others' responses as correct or incorrect. The caller began each round by reading a prompt from a card on which the definition of a target word was printed (e.g., one prompt read "most blue" as a definition for the word *bluest*). The other group members then slapped the most appropriate suffix on their own suffix cards (e.g., *-est* in response to hearing the prompt "most blue"). Next, the caller chose a person to respond. The selected participant was to explain their response by using a complete sentence in the form of a sentence frame provided to them by Ms. Mayzie: "I slapped the suffix [suffix letters] because [word + suffix] means [definition from prompt]." Finally, the caller decided whether the

respondent had answered correctly; if an incorrect answer had been given, the caller was to call on another participant.

Importantly, the relative institutional authority represented by the role of caller was not achieved simply through Ms. Mayzie's conferral of the role; rather, it was enacted, maintained, and contested through students' verbal and embodied actions. In some cases, callers took up academic language in order to index the authoritative stance ideologically associated with the role of caller. For example, Lorenzo, assigned by Ms. Mayzie to be the caller for his group, prefaced the introduction of some of the definition cards he was reading by assessing the difficulty of the question just as a teacher might do and by using the word *quite* in these assessments, such as "this one is going to be quite easy" (FN 150127). His use of *quite* was notable in that this word was enregistered as academic language due to its presence in the "academic language for asking for assistance" sentence frames (see Chapter 5) and due also to Ms. Mayzie's frequent use of this adverb in her speech and writing. Yet not all callers used markedly academic language to position themselves as authoritative. Alan, the caller for the group featured in the following example, takes up quite different linguistic resources in order to both assert and play with the authority associated with his role in the game. For their part, the other students in Alan's group make their own authoritative moves, most notably by assessing one another's actions, telling one another what to do, correcting one another, and poking fun at the "complete sentences" and "sentence frames" practices:

Example 7.4: "We're not kids" (150127, 35:20-36:50)

1	MICHAEL;	**Go!**
2	SUSANA;	**We're still on num[ber one!]**
3	UNKNOWN;	[###][##]
4	BROOKLYN;	**[# #acting #so crazy!]**
5	ALAN;	=Okay,
6		'most blue.'
7		'Most blee- blue.'

8		Michael.
9		[‘Most] blue.’
10	MICHAEL;	**[Wait,**
11		**can-]**
12		**wait can I be the (.)?**
13	ALAN;	**No:,**
14	MICHAEL;	**I wanna be the [caller.]**
15		**[du:de,]**
16	ALAN;	**I’m the caller:.**
17	MICHAEL;	**[Plea:se!]**
18	BROOKLYN;	**[We’re not,]**
19		**we’re not kids.**
20	ALAN;	**We <u>are</u> <u>ki:ds</u>.**
21	BROOKLYN;	**But we’re not <u>acting</u> like #kids.**
22	ALAN;	**You’re not acting like a kid,**
23	MICHAEL?;	@@
24	ALAN;	**You’re- you’re acting like a baby.**
25	SUSANA;	Guys,
26	ALAN;	**Wait no:,**
27		**#you’re acting like a teen- like adult.**
28	SUSANA;	**Stop!**
29	ALAN;	What!
30	SUSANA;	**Just pick another card.**
31	ALAN;	[I did!]
32	BROOKLYN;	**[You’re acting] [like a] baby. <softly>**
33	ALAN;	[‘Most blue.’]
34		**I <u>love</u> babies.**
35	BROOKLYN;	**A crazy,**
36		**(1.0)**
37		**dog.**
38	ALAN;	Ha ha.
39	MICHAEL;	**Can I go?**
40	ALAN;	I <u>love</u> being dogs.
41	MICHAEL;	**Can you just pick me?**
42	ALAN;	I pick,
43		I pick Michael.
44	MICHAEL;	Wait,
45		what is it?
46		‘Bluest?’
47	ALAN;	‘Most blue.’
48	MICHAEL:	Blue,
49		bluest.
50		(2.0)
51		Okay,
52		I slapped the suffix
53		(2.0)
54		‘-er’ because (1.0) ‘bluer’ (1.0) means (.)
55	BROOKLYN;	=Okay.
56	ALAN;	‘more blue:’ <[blu:]>
57		**Blu: <[blʊ:]>**

58		Okay.
59	MICHAEL;	**Blue: <[ˈblu: ə]>**
60	ALAN;	**‘Jump in the past.’**
61		**‘Jump in the [past.]’**
62		**[Susana.]**
63	SUSANA;	**Oh.**
64	ALAN?;	**@@@**
65	SUSANA;	**I slapped the suffix, <rising intonation, creaky, nasal, vowel fronting in**
66		**‘suffix’>**
67		**‘-ed,’ <rising intonation>**
68		**because, (.)**
69	BROOKLYN;	**Now don’t you go crazy.**
70	SUSANA;	‘jumped’ means (.) <usual speech style>
71	MICHAEL;	**Me:ans, <loud, high-pitched, shriek-like>**
72		**means.**

Despite Brooklyn’s and Alan’s repeated characterizations of each other’s (and the entire group’s) comportment as immature and crazy, in many senses this interaction is also characterized by serious affect and sophisticated interactional moves. Both the playful ways and the serious ways in which all four students orient to the activity and to one another contribute to various kinds of authoritative stance-taking, including stances of institutional authority, moral authority, and linguistic authority. In this exchange, the first type of stance, institutional authority, is achieved mainly through moves to reinforce the norms of the activity (which in turn also tend to constitute implicit citations of the authority of the teacher). Although theoretically the caller is in charge of ensuring the game proceeds efficiently and correctly, it is not only Alan (the caller) who attempts to enforce these norms, but all the other members of the group as well. Michael takes a serious stance as he commands Alan to continue (line 1), apparently in response to the fact that in the moments immediately preceding line 1, the latter had been making car-like noises. In a similar vein, Susana adopts an urgent tone as she reminds the group that “we’re still on number one” (line 2), a reference to the fact that this suffix game is only the first must-do of the day. In fact, some ten minutes prior to the beginning of this example, Ms. Mayzie had approached to help

the group move through the game more quickly, explaining to them, "the reason why it's taking you guys so long is because you're being silly about it." Thus, Susana's and Michael's turns align with Ms. Mayzie's earlier stance. Alan accedes to their requests by continuing with the discursive performance of his role in lines 5-9.

Yet Alan is also assertive, explicitly reinforcing his role of caller by taking a stance of institutional authority when Michael expresses a desire to be the caller (lines 10-14). Interestingly, Alan uses neither academic nor formal language to reject Michael's request (e.g., "it's not efficient to switch now"), nor does he explicitly cite Ms. Mayzie's authority (e.g., "Ms. Mayzie said I'm the caller"). Instead, he emphasizes only his own authority, augmenting himself by defining himself as the caller (line 16), an utterance he prefaces with the markedly colloquial address term "dude" (line 15). His use of this solidarity-indexing term allows him to perform a sophisticated balancing act: he maintains an affiliative stance toward Michael (which is important since Michael and Alan are friends) while still maintaining his claim to the authority represented by his temporary institutional role. Yet his friend makes several other moves to step into the caller role, including through his implicit self-nomination as the respondent to the next question (lines 39 and 41)—a request to which Alan accedes, but only by framing it as though it were his own decision, apparently arrived at through deliberation (i.e., "I pick, I pick Michael," lines 42-43). Like Michael, in several cases Susana aligns with the game's norms (at the same time as disaligning with Alan's and Michael's actions) as she reminds Alan to continue with his role by using the imperative mood, telling him to "just pick another card" (line 30).

In other moments, however, Susana and others disalign with the game's norms, in part by taking stances of linguistic authority. Here these stances are achieved through corrections of others' language as well as through acts of linguistic stylization. Bakhtin's

(1981) concept of *stylization*—"an artistic representation of another's linguistic style, an artistic image of another's language" (p. 362)—has been widely used in linguistic anthropology to describe how speakers use language and discursive practices "to appropriate, explore, reproduce or challenge influential images and stereotypes of groups that they don't themselves (straightforwardly) belong to" (Rampton, 1999, p. 421). Stylized acts are usually parodic or playful acts that index culturally recognizable personae by drawing on stereotypes about social groups (see, e.g., Coupland, 2001). In this interaction, the most readily recognizable stylized persona is the California Valley girl or prep girl, whom Susana briefly but clearly performs in her utterance "I slapped the suffix '-ed' because" (lines 65-68), which is marked by the rising intonation, vowel fronting, and nasality associated with this social type (see, e.g., Bucholtz, Bermudez, Fung, Vargas, & Edwards, 2008; Chun, 2007). Her playful channeling of the Valley girl, who is ideologically viewed as representing privilege and empty-headedness (Eckert, 2008b), is an effective resource for laying claim to authority in that it allows her to convey the idea that the suffix activity (or at least this particular question) is so easy that even a "dumb" Valley girl could do it. It also allows her to contest the sentence frames practice by poking fun at it rather than orienting to it in a completely serious manner. Thus, at the level of syntax she adheres to norms for academic communication by formulating her utterance according to the sentence frame, but at the phonological level, she manipulates this aspect of academic language and subtly critiques the idea that it is needed. That her action is understood as playful and non-normative is evidenced by Brooklyn's characterization of it as "crazy" in her utterance "Now don't <u>you</u> go crazy" (line 69), which frames Susana's behavior as resembling Alan's and Michael's. Michael adds to the "crazy" comportment by participating in language play himself, stylizing part of Susana's utterance (lines 71-72) in a high-pitched, shrieking tone. Yet by contrast with these

instances of breaking with linguistic norms, earlier in the interaction Michael enforces norms when he takes a stance of linguistic authority as he corrects Alan's playfully elongated and non-standard pronunciation of *blue* (line 57) by producing the standard pronunciation, which he emphatically utters as two syllables (line 59).

Brooklyn also attempts to undermine Alan's authority and construct herself as being in the adult-like position to tell others what to do, though she does so mainly through the rather different stance of moral authority. Possibly building on Ms. Mayzie's earlier reminder to the group not to be "silly," which was often invoked in Room G as the opposite of appropriate behavior, Brooklyn repeatedly enjoins the group not to act "like kids" (lines 19, 21) or "go crazy" (line 69), as though appealing to the group's moral sensibilities. This "like kids" theme had emerged a few minutes prior to the exchange represented in Example 7.4 when Brooklyn, responding to an exchange in which Alan and Michael had been discussing jiu jitsu, surfing, and butt cheeks, told the two boys, "You guys are acting like kids." Similar to his utterance in line 20, Alan had responded, "we <u>are</u> kids." Brooklyn had then asserted moral authority by saying, "I know! So stop acting like kids. You need to act like you're a teenager. You're acting like kids. We're not trying to be funny." Many of these earlier authoritative moves—telling the boys how to act, negatively assessing their actions, and defining the interactional terms of the situation (i.e., defining the situation as not being about humor or about "being kids")—are repeated in Example 7.4 as she again defines the moral dimension of the scene: "we're not acting like kids" (line 21), apparently in the sense of "we're not trying to act like kids here, we're trying to act more mature." The subsequent exchange between Brooklyn and Alan features a series of upgraded insults (and indeed, Alan characterizes them as such by saying "you're insulting me" several minutes after the end of this example) wherein Alan calls Brooklyn a baby (line 24), then an adult (line 27), perhaps

using the latter insult to imply that her norm-enforcing authoritative behavior indexes adult rigidity and party-pooping tendencies. She retorts that Alan is the one acting like a baby (line 32), an insult which Alan inverts by saying that he loves babies (line 34), as though to convey that her assessment of him has pleased rather than insulted him. Brooklyn then upgrades this negative assessment by lowering Alan's character, comparing him with an animal (a "crazy dog," lines 35-37). Thus, throughout this exchange, she claims the moral authority to assess his actions as immature. Importantly, even without using markedly academic language, Brooklyn is able to take the authoritative and norm-enforcing stances often associated with academic language—an ideologically adult-like achievement.

D. Chapter Conclusion

What, then, does it mean to be a kid? In many ways, the meaning of kidhood is as slippery, multiple, and complex as the meaning of adulthood. In this sense, childhood is not simply a developmental fact but an ideological construct, one that often prevents adults from seeing the full range of children's abilities. As demonstrated by the interactional examples analyzed throughout this chapter, being a kid does not entail an inability to effectively use linguistic resources marked as academic, nor does it imply a lack of authority, especially if authority is viewed as an interactionally emergent phenomenon rather than as residing in predetermined statuses (such as age or putative expert/novice and teacher/student roles) or in supposedly stable personality traits. Indeed, many of the seven- and eight-year-old kids in Room G were able to take a range stances of authority relative to their peers—and even relative to teachers—through serious as well as subversive or playful take-ups of academic communication norms. Academic language was one among many resources for instantiating authority, although because standardized language is an instrument through which authority is maintained (see Milroy & Milroy, 2011), it was an especially powerful one. In Example

7.1, Cameron took a stance of personal authority by distancing himself from "slang" through his metalinguistic questions and through his appropriation of academic vocabulary. Similarly, Susana's serious take-up of academic vocabulary (i.e., *specific*) and academic literacy practices (e.g., correcting others' language use) allowed her to take stances of linguistic authority relative to peers and adults in Example 7.2. Interestingly, Susana again took stances of linguistic authority in Example 7.4, but in this case her linguistically authoritative stances were achieved through a playful critique of the "sentence frames" practice via stylization. Meanwhile, in the same example, Alan, Michael, and Brooklyn took a variety of other kinds of stances of authority through serious as well as playful uses of a variety of semiotic resources. And in Example 7.3, Miles combined seriousness toward and subversion of academic communication as he enacted the potentially competing "cool kid" and "smart student" stances of authority across various semiotic modes.

What would it mean for educators, researchers, and adults more generally to truly legitimize the creative ways in which kids are able to position themselves as authoritative as they juggle various actions, linguistic styles, and identities at once? What would schooling look like if, instead of dismissing their authoritative moves as cute, amusing, or irritating, adults more consistently recognized the natural authority of children's talents, knowledge, and perspectives? To be sure, many teachers already embrace this kind of pedagogy—teachers like Ms. Mayzie, who worked to ensure her classroom was a space in which the contributions of all students were heard and the authority of the teacher was not regarded as unassailable. Yet as highlighted by the often hierarchical ways that students in Room G enacted authority, the competitive structure of mainstream schooling and of society more generally makes it difficult for even the best teachers to help students understand the non-authoritarian side of authority. Such understandings of authority are crucial for liberating

education from the shackles of a long history of oppressive relations of power so that education can in turn liberate students and teachers alike. As Freire (2000) argues, “there is no freedom without authority, but there is also no authority without freedom” (p. 178); “in order to function, authority must be *on the side of* freedom, not *against* it” (p.80; emphasis in original). Given the intimate connections between language and authority, language education is a particularly powerful site for planting the seeds of a truly liberatory kind of authority. If framed as one set of semiotic resources among many rather than as an inherently superior register (see also Chapter 8), academic language can play an important role in this endeavor to end banking-style monologues and move toward problem-posing dialogues. Within such dialogues, a range of linguistic styles can be heard, the edges of sharp distinctions between academic and non-academic ways of communicating begin to soften, and oppressive distances between people begin to fall away, replaced by the natural authority of the voices of all.

VIII. Conclusion

In the preceding chapters, I have presented a range of analyses of how students used language, particularly academic language, for a variety of social and academic purposes as they interacted with one another during language arts and math activities. To integrate the findings from each one of the three dimensions of my framework, I first revisit the three overarching research questions that guided this study (see Chapter 2). I then discuss some limitations of this study and highlight potential avenues for future research. I close with a discussion of implications for theory and practice related to language and literacy education.

A. Summary of Findings

1. Research Question 1: (How) do students use academic language in peer interactions?

By contrast with dominant discourses that hold that young children do not yet have the developmental sophistication to use language that is tautologically argued to be of higher quality and more cognitively advanced than "everyday" language (see Chapter 3), and also by contrast with Ms. Mayzie's and her colleagues' impression that students generally do not use academic language, especially on their own (see Chapter 5), in this study I found that students do indeed take up academic language in their interactions with one another. While their use of academic lexical forms and syntactic structures was not ubiquitous, by analyzing academic communication (Haneda, 2014a) more broadly through the action-based appropriateness-ability-authority theoretical lens outlined in Chapter 3, I found that they frequently appropriated communication norms that were locally enregistered as academic. Perhaps more important than the mere fact that they used these norms is the complexity and multiplicity of the ways in which they did so. First, a range of students took up these resources, from bilingual students (Susana, Domenica, and Lorenzo) to students with diagnoses of language impairments (Alan) to low-performing students (Nicole, Brooklyn, and

Alan) to higher-performing students (Nikki) to extensions students (Susana, Domenica, Cameron, and Miles). Second, these students and other students in Room G took up academic semiotic resources across a variety of activities and content areas, including projects or tasks undertaken in small groups, whole-class discussions, conversations during independent work time, and conversations during transition times (e.g., clean-up time). Even in the absence of adults, they often used elements of academic communication in these activities. Third, they used academic communication at multiple semiotic levels, including the lexical, syntactic, and phonological levels of linguistic structure as well as embodied actions such as gesture, posture, and movements. Fourth, and related to the preceding point, they accomplished a variety of actions and made multiple kinds of meanings by working with an ensemble of academic resources and other semiotic resources, sometimes even simultaneously producing potentially competing meanings, as was the case with Miles's performance of "cool kid" and "smart student" authoritative stances (see Example 7.3, Chapter 7).

The complexity and multiplicity of students' uses of academic language and broader academic communication practices are significant in light of the binary conceptualizations of language that have tended to characterize scholarly and public discourses surrounding this register (see Chapter 2). First, despite the widespread notion that academic language is the only adequate tool for the "higher-order thinking" that putatively occurs in school (and only in school), like Bunch (2006), I found that students were regularly able to engage with advanced academic content and complete complex tasks by using language not enregistered as academic. For example, in Example 6.4 of Chapter 6, Nicole and her peers used military-like commands to navigate the interactionally, physically, and conceptually complex task of precisely measuring part of Room G. A second point closely related to the first

misconception that academic language is necessary for advanced conceptual work is the context-deterministic view that academic language is found only in "academic" contexts and that its sole purpose is to facilitate the undertaking of academic work. In this regard, the findings of this study provide a complement to studies like Bunch's (2006) findings by revealing the other side of the semiotic coin: not only can "social" language do academic work, but "academic" language can do social work, and indeed, both registers can simultaneously accomplish both kinds of work. These points will be further discussed in relation to research question 3 below.

2. Research Question 2: What ideologies are apparent in the ways students use and understand academic language?

Not surprisingly, ideologies of language were evident in the multiple and complex ways students used and understood academic language. One language ideology that emerged in interactions and interviews was related to the binary conceptualization of academic language discussed above. Some students aligned with this register-reifying binary opposition, often through the ideology of appropriateness. Cameron, for example, aligned with the view that slang and informal language such as *dang* and *ain't* are inappropriate for the school context (see Example 7.1, Chapter 7). A related though somewhat distinct ideology explains this contextual inappropriateness of non-standard varieties and the "everyday" register in terms of the putatively superior nature of academic language compared to other varieties, which are held to be less cognitively demanding and overall inferior (see Chapter 2). Susana, for example, described academic language as "better language" because it allows speakers to be more specific, whereas other uses of language may result in unintelligibility (see Example 5.4, Chapter 5). Yet in many ways, students pushed back against these ideologies—even some of the same students who in other moments indicated an

alignment with them. Susana, for example, seemed to poke fun at sentence frames by stylizing them in some moments (e.g., Example 7.4, Chapter 7) even though she defended their importance and used them in other moments. Like Susana, Nicole frequently engaged in indexically competent stylizations, as discussed in Chapter 6, and at times she used what might be viewed as decidedly non-academic language in the classroom (e.g., her use of military-like language in Example 6.4, Chapter 6). At other times, she reprimanded peers for inappropriate uses of language she framed as not academic, as in her reminder to Michael that he should use only "our academic vocabulary" in response to his use of *what the heck,* to which he responded by continuing to use this phrase, thereby rejecting the ideology of appropriateness she had implicitly invoked (see Example 5.4, Chapter 5).

Ideologies of intelligence were also apparent in students' linguistic practices and metalinguistic explanations of these practices. Particularly salient were hegemonic ideologies that portray intelligence as relatively fixed, readily quantifiable, and easily comparable across persons. Many students I interviewed expressed the idea that academic language entails the use of "smart words" as well as the related view that "smart" people use these words more often than students described as less intelligent. Such was the case in Nikki's and Nicole's descriptions of academic language as "like, smart words" and of Cameron as always "[talking] smart," respectively (see Chapter 6).

More surprisingly, ideologies of gender and class also came through in students' understandings of academic language, as indicated by interactions and interviews with focal students. One ideology of gender that emerged was the patriarchal notion that the ways a woman uses language is connected to her ability to attract a mate. Because of academic language's putative ties to appropriateness and cleanliness, failing to use academic language, or using it in a "sloppy" or mocking way as I did in the interview in Example 5.4, might result

in a failure to attract a husband and thus in loneliness, as Susana and Domenica argued. Domenica made a further connection between language use and social class, explaining that I would be "poor, very poor" if I continued to be sloppy in my language use. Like these students, Brooklyn also invoked gendered and classed images in her explanation of the nature and importance of academic language, though she did so in a rather different way; describing the academic language practice of sentence frames as "proper," she invoked the image of a princess to explain why it is important to speak in "nice" and "proper" ways (see Example 5.5, Chapter 5).

Overall, then, findings from the preceding three chapters highlight the social and political dimensions of students' uses and understandings of academic language. As Kern et al. (2015) argue in their study of academic language in a first-grade classroom, the teaching and learning of academic communication norms is bound up with other social norms and ideologies. Rather than being a neutral vehicle for expressing academic thinking and communicating objective facts, academic language, like all registers and varieties of language, indexes the subjective positionings, power-laden relationships, and often oppressive histories of the larger sociopolitical world that is created through interactions.

3. Research Question 3: How does students' (non-)use of academic language relate to their constructions of identity?

As discussed in relation to Research Question 1 above, academic language not only helped students think in academic terms or engage in their schoolwork, but it also allowed them to engage in intersubjective and subjective processes, including the interactional and social work of constructing stances, styles, and identities. By appropriating academic language, students often positioned themselves as aligning with an ideology of appropriateness (Chapter 5), as more intellectually able than others (Chapter 6), and/or as

more authoritative than others (Chapter 7). For example, Nicole simultaneously positioned herself as a "good student" who enacted classroom norms related to efficiency and as being in the teacher-like position to correct Alexandra's supposedly inefficient behavior by giving her commands (see Example 6.1, Chapter 6). Similarly, Susana asked teacher-like questions and took stances of linguistic authority through her use of academic vocabulary and language monitoring practices (see Example 7.2, Chapter 7). And in Example 5.1, Domenica aligned with the ideology of appropriateness and positioned herself as having the moral authority to assess others' ideas when she evaluated Alan's image of blood on a spider as inappropriate; Alan and Lorenzo disaligned with Domenica's evaluation, though they did not entirely reject the relevance of appropriateness as a relevant criterion for evaluating the project (see Chapter 5).

Even when students used academic communication practices subversively or playfully, or even in moments when they did not draw on resources enregistered as academic, they were likewise able to position themselves and others in relation to appropriateness, ability, and authority, though in rather different ways. Nicole positioned herself as her group's leader by issuing military commands and stylizing a male voice in Example 6.4 (Chapter 6). Susana's stylization of a Valley girl allowed her to position herself as having the linguistic authority to poke fun at the sentence frame she uttered in Example 7.4 (Chapter 7). And Miles's transmodal enactment of "cool kid" and "smart student" identities made use of serious as well as subversive orientations to academic communication practices. Overall, then, the array of communicative practices enregistered as academic in Room G—from academic vocabulary to complete sentences to the "give me five" practices to sentence frames—served as a flexible set of resources for performing multiple and sometimes competing styles, stances, and identities. Importantly, within a given interaction, these

resources worked not in isolation, but alongside other semiotic resources, such as language locally understood as "slang," to help students achieve relational positionings. Also worth highlighting is that no one feature or form (e.g., the academic vocabulary word *efficient*) had a stable or predetermined meaning; rather, its meaning emerged from context-specific uses that allowed students to index the broader sociopolitical world in often creative and sophisticated (though not necessarily "appropriate") ways, thereby embodying a diversity of identities across interactions and even within the same interaction.

B. Limitations and Directions for Future Research

In this dissertation, I have shown how students' use of academic language practices shaped and were shaped by ideologies and constructions of identity. However, the analyses I have presented undoubtedly raise methodological and theoretical issues that I have been unable to address in this study. With regard to methodological issues, one limitation of this study is that my data are drawn only from the classroom context and include only math and language arts activities. A data set including activities in other content areas (e.g., science) or encompassing non-school peer interactions (e.g., home interactions, playground interactions) would allow for a fuller understanding of ways in which students may draw on academic communication practices in peer interactions. For example, researchers could analyze how focal students use academic language to invoke similar (or different) ideologies and identities—including (dis)aligning with appropriateness, positioning themselves as intellectually able, and/or taking stances of authority—across different spaces. Another valuable line of research could trace students' use of academic communication practices (including not only language but other semiotic resources of the kind analyzed in this study) across developmental time. Particular questions of interest include whether students continue to use some of the same academic language as they become more or less invested in

schooling practices and/or as their identities as particular kinds of students (e.g., "smart students," "cool kids," "low-performing students," English learners) become more sedimented throughout their years in school. Such analyses are crucial for understanding how some students and groups come to be understood as lacking proficiency in academic language, though they are beyond the scope of this nine-month study, which was not designed to trace changes or continuities in students' discourse practices over time.

With regard to theoretical issues, several questions beyond the scope of this dissertation merit greater attention in future research. First, because the framework guiding this dissertation was developed partly inductively through my ethnographic observations of ideologies and identity categories that were especially prominent in Room G, it may not retain the same analytic power in other settings. For example, in classrooms without marked ability grouping practices, it is possible that academic language would not be defined as "smart words" or be perceived by students as being directly tied to particular peers who are viewed as smart. Similarly, in classrooms where appropriateness is not a central cultural value, the connection between academic language and this ideology may not be as salient as it was in this context or may be taken up in other ways. Future studies might fruitfully investigate questions such as these ones. Having answers to these kinds of questions would help researchers and educators better understand not what academic language universally "is," but what it comes to be in different cultural settings and what it could potentially be in a more equitable schooling system.

A second theoretical issue for future research is related specifically to the concept of indexical competence outlined in Chapter 6. Besides applications for the teaching and learning of academic language, various other subdisciplines could take up this concept to address a range of research questions. For example, researchers in second and foreign

language acquisition may find it a useful complement to pragmatics in that it could lend additional insights into what kinds of meaning making learners find challenging. It may be that even when language learners have mastered culturally specific norms regarding "appropriate" language use, they continue to struggle with understanding the historical and sociopolitical layers of indexical meaning into which members of the target culture have been socialized throughout their lives. Thus, studies in this area could address how learners develop indexical competence over time, how (or whether) they display indexical competence in specific interactions, and what kinds of curricula can support learners in understanding this fundamental component of language.

C. Implications for Theory and Pedagogical Practice

1. Theory

If researchers are to keep up with children in their creative, sophisticated, and multiple ways of making meaning with academic communication resources, they must develop theoretical and analytic tools that are similarly multi-dimensional. And they can draw these tools in large part from close examinations of children's actual practices. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, in order to see a wider range of children's semiotic strengths, including their indexical competence (Chapter 6), scholars must expand their conceptual frameworks of (academic) language. Such expansions would advance not only scholarship but could also ultimately impact policy documents like the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Although the CCSS can be said to represent significant paradigm shifts in many areas, the view of language and literacy articulated in these documents remains quite conventional. For one, as Durán (2014) argues, "the model of reading and text complexity put forth by the CCSS posits that text meaning is inherent in understanding the discrete linguistic statements making up a text and their grammatically signaled interrelationships" (p.

209); that is, a structuralist view of language tends to prevail. Another challenge is that despite the "unprecedented emphasis" on academic language within the CCSS (Zwiers, O'Hara & Pritchard, 2014, p. 1), most CCSS documents do not provide a clear definition of this concept. Given this absence of clarity, it is unsurprising that many teachers and teacher educators draw largely on traditional conceptualizations of language, including language-as-vocabulary perspectives, in their theorizing and teaching (see Chapter 2). Furthermore, when they do gesture toward a more specific definition of academic language, CCSS-related documents tend to reinforce the often problematic ideologies of appropriateness that are themselves tied to other hegemonic ideologies, including colorblind racism (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Love-Nichols, 2014) and normative gender roles, as found in this study (see Chapter 5). This emphasis on appropriateness also entails a failure to recognize the dynamic nature of enregisterment processes and of language itself, not to mention the inherent logic and validity of all varieties of language (see Chapters 2 and 3).

The structuralist and referential accounts of academic language that have tended to characterize research and policy documents need not be discarded altogether. Instead, they need to be broadened to account for the fundamentally social nature of language. Researchers can broaden many existing theories of academic language by incorporating attention to indexical processes of making meaning (Eckert, 2008a; Ochs, 1992; Silverstein, 2003), theories of enregisterment (Agha, 2003), accounts of identity and ideology as interactional phenomena (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005), analysis of the multiple semiotic modes through which social meaning is created (Bucholtz, forthcoming; Goodwin & Alim, 2010), and sociocultural perspectives on language and learning (Bakhtin, 1981; Haneda, 2014a; Rogoff, 2003; van Lier & Walqui, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1998). The framework presented in this

dissertation provides one way of broadening predominant conceptualizations of academic work and may thus offer a useful starting point for other contexts.

2. Practice

The schooling system is in need of a radical transformation, as has long been argued by researchers, teachers, administrators, parents, students, activists, and other stakeholders. One change that has long been needed and has been the focus of much public and scholarly debate (especially as made visible by CCSS-related changes) is related to assessment. As Durán (2014) puts it, the notion that students' performance on tests (particularly standardized tests) adequately captures their learning is "misguided and [distorts] what learning and mastery really are for students" (p. 211) since learning and competence "cannot be divorced from their authentic embodied environments" (p. 206). With regard to language and literacy instruction in particular, one implication of this understanding is that more attention needs to be given to students' development and displays of competence in specific, situated social interactions, including peer interactions. In many ways, Ms. Mayzie was adept at recognizing interactional achievements as such, as exemplified by her positive evaluations of students' creative and indexically competent use of a range of semiotic resources (see particularly Chapter 1 and Chapter 6). However, other teachers might overlook such displays of competence as merely cute, silly, or simply irrelevant "social" moments (rather than the putative opposite, "academic"). Indeed, even experienced and talented teachers like Ms. Mayzie need greater professional support to understand the importance of interactional and indexical competencies. Providing teachers with these kinds of support implies shifting away from an obsessive focus on standardized written assessments and moving toward recognition of interaction as a key locus for learning and an important site for assessment.

Alongside an increased valorization of students' interactional and indexical competencies is the need for increased amounts of instructional time to be devoted to interaction, particularly peer interaction. As the findings of this study make clear, students' interactions with one another—even when they were not directly related to the completion of an academic task or were apparently "off task"—were valuable sites for the appropriation of academic communication norms. Such interactions also served the crucial purpose of allowing students to metalinguistically discuss and even question these norms. In Room G, Ms. Mayzie sometimes organized language arts instruction around small-group or partner-based interactions, but oftentimes Workshop tasks were to be completed independently, and overall, opportunities for peer interaction were relatively limited due to the number of reading- and writing-oriented must-dos that students were expected to complete. Hence, more regular incorporation of interactional, dialogic activities and conversations grounded in collaborative group work would give learners much-needed time to appropriate academic language in the more meaningful and memorable context of meaning-making exchanges with peers. A range of participation structures, from apparently "off-task" casual peer conversations to student-directed group work to teacher-mediated interactions, would be valuable. One suggestion would be to make use of role plays to encourage students to take on the language and identities associated with particular academic communities of practice. Such role plays might be introduced by including opportunities for students to use their already strong observation and analysis skills as they watch/listen to audio or video recordings of real linguistic exchanges featuring older groups of students working on academic projects or even scientific or scholarly communities of practice engaging in work. Then the class could discuss the differences as well as the similarities they notice between the kinds of language used in the recording and the kinds of language they use, and students

could then be asked to take up some of these same semiotic resources in group- or partner-based role plays.

Strategies of this kind bring up a much-debated question in the literature on academic language: Do students need explicit instruction in academic language? Ms. Mayzie took such an approach, explicitly focusing on various forms of academic communication (e.g., academic vocabulary, sentence frames, embodied listening practices), often by distinguishing them from home or playground language. Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that this approach helped students not only attend carefully to new semiotic forms and practices, but also appropriate them in their own interactions and engage in metalinguistic discussions about them. Hence, the question is not so much *whether* teachers should explicitly draw students' attention to any form of new material—whether that new material is new language, new concepts, or new perspectives—but *how* and *why* they should do so. As discussed in preceding chapters, it is important to explicitly acknowledge the predominance of many of the hegemonic ideologies associated with academic language, such as the widespread notion that academic language is more appropriate for school, that it constitutes "smarter" or "better" language than "everyday" language, or that it can easily be distinguished from "everyday" language. At the same time, it is also crucial to guide students in questioning these ideas and in modeling alternative modes of thinking. For example, assessments of particular kinds of language use as (in)appropriate can often be more accurately and more equitably framed as matters of respect for others and/or relevance within a given context or activity. Similarly, rather than reinforcing the idea that academic language is inherently superior to other forms of language and/or indicates superior intelligence, teachers can liken the learning of specific academic language features and forms to the learning of a new language when traveling to a new place (thereby also emphasizing the value of

multilingualism). That is, instead of learning academic language simply to sound smarter, students learn specific academic communication forms and practices in order to communicate with specific communities of practice and to engage in specific activities. Such conversations must also include a deconstruction of the view that academic language is a monolithic set of forms completely distinct from "everyday" language and must shift the emphasis to the diversity and dynamism of any linguistic variety and of the social world itself. If our goal as educators and researchers is to help students expand the set of resources in their semiotic toolboxes, this deep understanding of diversity and dynamism must guide language arts education. By celebrating the poetry of becomingness that is inherent in language and people, teachers can prepare students to become the kinds of leaders who can think freely, creatively, and collaboratively enough to help build the equitable society that is at the heart of the purpose of education in a democratic society.

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APPENDICES

A. Appendix A: Parental Consent Forms and Child Assent Script

1. English version of parental consent form

PURPOSE
My name is Meghan Corella Morales. I am a graduate student in the Education Department at UC Santa Barbara. I am working with my professor, Dr. Jin Sook Lee, on a project called "Academic Language Use in Student Interactions in a Second-Grade Classroom." The purpose of the project is to better understand the ways that students learn academic language during their interactions with one another.

If you give permission, I would like to:

- Observe your child talking to classmates and the teacher as he/she would normally do in the classroom.
- Audio- or video-record your child and his/her classmates talking in class 2 to 3 times per week throughout the rest of the school year. I may ask your child to wear a small clip-on microphone during group activities (only if your child gives his/her permission).
- Interview your child using an audio recorder for between 10 and 30 minutes about school, their friends, and extracurricular activities.
- Collect copies of your child's regular classroom work.

BENEFITS
What I discover from this study about how students learn academic language in peer interactions will be shared with Ms. M and other educators, who may use the information to improve their teaching. What I find will also be shared with you, at your request.

RISKS AND SAFEGUARDS
There is a slight risk of loss of privacy or feelings of discomfort to your child because there will be a camera in the class. Your child will be told that he or she can ask the recording to be stopped at any time or ask that any part of the recording be erased. The audio and video recordings will be treated as confidential material. I will keep all recordings and papers secure in my office and home office. In communicating research findings, I will use an invented name for your child and will remove any identifying information.

As a part of our research, if we were to learn something that gave us serious concerns about your child's health and/or safety, we would report this information. For example, if we have reason to believe a child is being abused (or has been abused), we are required by state law and university policy to file a report with the appropriate agencies.

CONSENT
Participation in this research is voluntary and will not affect you or your child's standing in school or in any group or organization. If you and your child agree to participate in this study, you will be given a signed and dated copy of the form to keep.

QUESTIONS
If you have questions about the research, you can call me at 805-259-7363 or call Professor Jin Sook Lee at 805-893-2872. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the staff of the UCSB Human Subjects Committee at 805-893-3807.

USE OF DATA IN CONFERENCES, TEACHING AND FUTURE RESEARCH
My professor and I may want to present some of the data at education conferences and in classes at UC Santa Barbara and other universities. In addition, we would like to keep the recordings for possible use in future research on language use. We will always protect your child's privacy, and the data will only be used for academic purposes. We will not use any data that we consider sensitive in nature. If you like, we can further protect your child's identity in videos by making your child's image resemble a line drawing so that it will be less recognizable.

Please check one choice for each statement and complete the information below.

PARENT / GUARDIAN: I give permission for my child to be audio or videotaped during class. He or she can ask that the recording be stopped at any time and request that any part of the recording be destroyed.

Yes _____ No _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN: I give permission for parts of audio or video recordings of my child to be used in presentations at research conferences and in education courses at UC Santa Barbara or other universities. Any identifying information, like my child's name, will be removed from the recordings.

Yes _____ No _____

If you answered "yes" to the question above, please check one option. Your checkmark indicates the highest level of use that you permit:

a. original video ___
b. video changed to look like a line drawing ___
c. audio only ___
d. transcript only (no public play of audio or video) ___

PARENT / GUARDIAN: I give permission for my child's regular classroom work (e.g., worksheets, homework) to be copied. Any identifying information, like my child's name, will be removed from the copies.

Yes _____ No _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN: I give permission for my child to be interviewed about her/his participation in school, friends, and extracurricular activities. My child may skip any question he or she prefers not to answer.

Yes _____ No _____

Parent/Guardian name (print) _____

Parent/Guardian signature _____ Date _____

2. Spanish version of parental consent form

PROPÓSITO

Me llamo Meghan Corella Morales. Soy estudiante de posgrado en el departamento de educación de la Universidad de California, Santa Bárbara. Mi profesora Jin Sook Lee y yo estamos llevando a cabo un proyecto llamado "El uso del lenguaje académico a través de interacciones de grupo en una clase de segundo grado." El propósito de este proyecto es entender cómo los estudiantes aprenden el lenguaje académico durante las interacciones entre ellos.

Si Ud. me da su permiso, me gustaría:

- Observar a su hijo/a mientras habla con sus compañeros y la maestra, tal como lo hace normalmente en la sala de clase.
- Grabar en audio o video a su hijo/a y a sus compañeros mientras conversan en la clase aproximadamente 2 a 3 veces a la semana durante el resto del año escolar. Puede ser que le pida a su hijo/a que se ponga un micrófono pequeño en la camisa durante las actividades de grupo (solamente si su hijo/a da su permiso).
- Entrevistar a su hijo/a por 10 a 30 minutos sobre la escuela, sus amigos y sus actividades extracurriculares y grabar esta entrevista en audio.
- Sacar y coleccionar fotocopias de las tareas escolares de su hijo/a.

BENEFICIOS

Voy a compartir lo que descubro con la maestra Mayzie y con otros educadores, quienes pueden usar esta información para mejorar su enseñanza. Si Ud. desea, también compartiré mis descubrimientos con Ud.

RIESGOS Y MEDIDAS DE SEGURIDAD

Hay un pequeño riesgo de pérdida de la intimidad o de sentirse incómodo/a debido a la presencia de la cámara en la sala de clase. A su hijo/a se le explicará que puede pedir que la grabación se detenga en cualquier momento o pedir que cualquier parte de la grabación se borre. Las grabaciones en audio y vídeo serán tratadas como material confidencial y serán almacenadas de manera segura en mi oficina y en mi oficina de hogar. Al comunicar mis hallazgos, usaré un nombre inventado para su hijo/a y eliminaré cualquier información que lo identifique.

Como parte de nuestra investigación, si aprendiéramos algo acerca de la salud o la seguridad de su hijo/a que nos diera mucha preocupación, reportaríamos esta información. Por ejemplo,

si tenemos motivos para creer que un(a) niño/a está siendo abusado/a (o ha sido abusado/a), tenemos la obligación según la ley estatal y la política universitaria de reportar esta información a las agencias apropiadas.

CONSENTIMIENTO
La participación en esta investigación es voluntaria. Su decisión de participar o no participar no le
afectará a Ud. ni tampoco tendrá repercusiones en la situación académica de su hijo/a en la escuela o en cualquier grupo u organización. Si Ud. y su hijo/a deciden participar, le daré una copia de este formulario completado.

PREGUNTAS
Si tiene alguna pregunta sobre esta investigación, me puede llamar o mensajear al 805-455-8611 o puede llamar a la profesora Jin Sook Lee al 805-893-2872. Si tiene preguntas sobre los derechos de su hijo/a como participante de este estudio, por favor contacte al Human Subjects Committee (Comité de Sujetos Humanos) de UCSB al 805-893-3807.

USO DE DATOS EN LAS CONFERENCIAS ACADEMICAS, LA ENSEÑANZA Y LA INVESTIGACIÓN FUTURA
Es posible que mi profesor y yo queramos presentar algunos de los datos de este estudio en las conferencias académicas y en la enseñanza de los cursos sobre la educación en la UC Santa Bárbara y otras universidades. También nos gustaría guardar las grabaciones para posibles investigaciones futuras sobre el uso del lenguaje. Nos comprometemos a siempre proteger la privacidad de su hijo/a. Los datos serán usados solamente para fines académicos. No usaremos datos que consideremos ser confidenciales. Si Ud. desea, podemos proteger la identidad de su hijo/a aún más al hacer que la imagen de su hijo/a que sale las grabaciones de video se parezca a un dibujo lineal para que la imagen quede menos reconocible.

Por favor, marque una opción para cada oración y complete la información abajo.

PADRE/MADRE: Autorizo que graben en video o audio a mi hijo/a durante la clase. Ella/él puede pedir que le dejen de grabar en cualquier momento y también puede pedir que cualquier parte de la grabación sea borrada.

Sí _____ No _____

PADRE/MADRE: Autorizo que partes de las grabaciones en video o audio de mi hijo/a se presenten en las conferencias académicas, y en los cursos de educación en UC Santa Bárbara u otras universidades. Cualquier información que identifique a mi hijo/a, como su nombre, será borrada de las grabaciones.

Sí _____ No _____

Si marcó "sí" arriba, por favor marque una sola opción de los siguientes literales. Su marca señala el nivel más alto de uso que Ud. permite.

a. video original___
b. video editado para que la imagen parezca un dibujo lineal___

c. solamente audio___
d. solamente la transcripción (sin exposición pública del audio o video original)___

PADRE/MADRE: Autorizo que las tareas regulares de mi hijo/a (por ejemplo, las hojas de ejercicios) sean copiadas. Cualquier información que identifique a mi hijo/a, como su nombre, será borrada de las copias.

Sí _____ No _____

PADRE/MADRE: Autorizo que entrevisten a mi hijo/a sobre su participación en la escuela, sus amigos, y sus actividades extracurriculares. Ella/él puede elegir no contestar cualquier pregunta que prefiere no contestar.

Sí _____ No _____

Nombre y appellidos de niño/a (escritos a mano) _____

Nombre y apellido del padre o la madre (escritos a mano) _____

Firma del padre o la madre _____ Fecha _____

3. Child Assent Script

1) Observation, video-taping, and collecting copies of school work

Hi everybody! Just like you, I'm a student and I have school projects. For one of my school projects, I'd really like to observe and video tape you a couple times a week while you're working on academic vocabulary so that I can see how you learn. I'd also like to make copies of some of your academic vocabulary worksheets and other writing. Hopefully I can use this to help me and other teachers figure out how to be better teachers.

Being part of this project is your choice. If you don't want to be part of it, you can be in a different area of the classroom while I'm taping, and I won't make copies of your work. If you decide you want to be part of this project, all you would have to do is participate in class like normal. If you ever want me to stop video-taping, you can just tell me or Ms. Mayzie how you feel and I will stop video-taping you. Or if you ever want me to delete any part of the video tape, just let me or Ms. Mayzie know and I'll delete it. You can also tell me or Ms. Mayzie if there's a worksheet or paper you don't want me to make a copy of, and we won't make copies of it.

I'm also going to send a letter to your parents to ask them if it's all right with them for you to be part of this project. No one will be upset if you or your parents decide not to part of this project. And if you do decide to be part of my project, you can also change your mind and stop being part of it anytime you want.

Thanks for listening! I'll come around in a few minutes to ask each of you if you want to say yes or no to being part of my project. Does anyone have any questions?

2) Interviews

Remember my academic vocabulary project that I told you about a couple of weeks ago? Well, the other part of my project is doing short interviews that will help me understand how you learn. If it's okay with you, I'd like to interview you, which means I would ask you some questions about school and things you do outside of school.

Being part of an interview is your choice. If you don't want me to interview you, I won't. If you decide to be part of the interviews, we would sit at the table in the corner for 10 to 30 minutes and I would ask you some questions about school, your friends, and things you do outside of school.

I also sent a letter to your parents to ask them if it's all right with them for you to be part of the interviews for this project. No one will be upset if you or your parents decide not to part of the interviews. If you decide that you want to be part of them, you can also change your mind and stop anytime you want.

Thanks for listening! I'll come around in a few minutes to ask each of you if you want to say yes or no to being part of the interviews. Does anyone have any questions?

3) Interview description (for children for whom assent and consent for #2 has been obtained)

Thanks for letting me interview you! I just have some questions about school, your friends, and things you do outside of school. There's no right or wrong answer to any of these questions. I'd just like to know what you think. If there's any question you don't want to answer, that's no problem-- just tell me and we can skip that question. Or if you decide you want to stop the interview, that's also no problem-- just tell me and we'll stop. You can also ask me questions if you have any or if something I say doesn't make sense.

I'd like to record our conversation with this audio recorder. If you decide that you want me to stop recording, or if you want me to delete any part of the recording, just tell me and I'll do it. Is it all right if I record us talking?

Do you have any questions before we start?

B. Appendix B: Interview Guides

1. Guide for interview with teacher

- **Purpose**: Thank you so much for taking the time to sit down with me—this will really help me understand what your job is like from a new perspective. Let me start by

explaining more specifically what I'm interested in. I want to understand your experiences as a teacher, especially how things might be changing with the new standards. And of course, as you know, I'm also interested in academic language, so I've got some questions about that. As I'll be telling the students (and maybe you can give me suggestions for how to approach interviews with them), there are no right or wrong answers in any of this--I'm just interested in hearing about your experiences and perspectives. If there are any questions that feel too personal, you don't have to answer. And then if there are any questions that don't make sense, feel free to let me know. Also feel free to ask me questions. I know we both like to talk!

- **Recording explanations:** I'd like to tape record our interview so I can go over it later; would that be OK?

- **Potential Interview Questions:**
    - Experiences as a teacher:
        - What made you decide to go into teaching?
        - I know you were at another school in the district for a few years before coming here. What made you come to Beachside?
            - How is Beachside different from [insert name of other school]?
            - What are some important things to know about Beachside? For example, if there were a new colleague, what would be some things that would be important to know?
        - I've seen parts of your day, but usually not entire days. What does a typical day at work look like?
    - Teacher's interpretations of the CCSS
        - How do the CCSS play into the decisions you make as a teacher? The NGSS? The CA ELD guidelines?
        - How are staff meetings organized? Do you talk about the CCSS at meetings? Do you have trainings? What are some of the PDs?
        - How are the CCSS different from what you've had to deal with in previous years? What are your questions and frustrations related to the CCSS?
        - Bring in a big packet of CCSS and ask:
            - How do you even begin to sort through these?
            - Do you know which ones focus on academic language? I was looking at the ones focusing on AL, and here's what I came up with; what do you think?
            - How do you figure out how to translate these into practices/ make them happen? Is there a process that you use?
    - Teacher's definition of academic language
        - There are so many definitions of academic language out there that it's almost overwhelming! How would you define academic language?
        - Some researchers say that academic language allows for more complex thinking. Others say that academic language just allows for different kinds of thinking that are not necessarily more complex. What are your thoughts about this?

- Teacher's perspectives on ability/intelligence
    - You've told me a little bit before about your 1s, 2s, 3s, and 4s. I'm curious to know more about this system. Is it used by all teachers at Beachside?
        - Some researchers say that students are born with a certain range of intelligence. Others say that intelligence isn't innate but is developed through experiences. What are your thoughts about this?
    - What are the criteria for being in the "extensions" group?
    - How would you say linguistic abilities (e.g., use of academic language) relate to these criteria?
- Teacher's interpretations of data
    - I'm interested in your thoughts about this. What would you say to your colleague about [present teacher with some data or an artifact]?
        - Help me make sense of what these students are saying/ doing.
        - How does what students are saying/doing relate to your goals?
        - How does it relate to the CCSS?

2. Guide for interview with students

- **Purpose**: Thanks for letting me interview you! I just have some questions about school, your friends, and things you do outside of school. There's no right or wrong answer to any of these questions. I'd just like to know what you think. If there's any question you don't want to answer, that's no problem-- just tell me and we can skip that question. Or if you decide you want to stop the interview, that's also no problem-- just tell me and we'll stop. You can also ask me questions if you have any or if something I say doesn't make sense.

- **Recording explanations:** I'd like to record our conversation with this audio recorder. If you decide that you want me to stop recording, or if you want me to delete any part of the recording, just tell me and I'll do it. Is it all right if I record us talking? [pause] Do you have any questions before we start? [pause] Feel free to ask me questions during the interview!

- **Potential Interview Questions: Student Interviews**
    - Child's school experiences and friends
        - We're almost halfway through the year! How is second grade going?
            - Is it different from first grade?
            - What are some things that a new person or student (like when [insert name of student who arrived in October] came to Room G. What did she need to know?
            - What things do you like about school?
            - Are there things you don't like?
            - Who are your friends at school? What do you like to do/ play with them?

        - What do you do after school? What do you like to do? What kinds of things do you do with your family/ at home?
    - Child's understandings of academic language
        - Ms. M has talked a lot in Room G about academic language. How would you explain academic language to someone who doesn't know what it means, like an alien or a younger brother/ sister/ cousin?
        - Do you think academic language is important? What's it good for?
        - Who in Room G uses a lot of academic language? How you can tell when someone is using academic language?
        - Do you think the way you talk at home is different from the way you talk at school? Give me an example/draw me a picture.
    - Child's interpretations of ability/intelligence
        - How do you know you're a good student? What does a good student say/ do?
        - I've heard about of all these things [list some, like being a "productive partner"] that the teacher thinks are important; what do you think?

C. Appendix C: Transcription Conventions

;	Speaker attribution
.	Terminative intonation
,	Continuative intonation
?	Appeal/rising intonation
:	Prosodic lengthening
=	Latching; no pause between intonation units
-	Self-interruption
@	Laughter (each token marks one pulse)
(.)	Pause of 0.5 seconds or less
(1.1)	Measured pause of greater than 0.5 seconds
[ ]	Overlapping speech
[$_2$]	Overlapping speech in proximity to a previous overlap
<words>	Analyst comment on utterance quality
< [ ] >	Phonetic transcription
(( ))	Analyst description of embodied action
#	Inaudible syllable
#word	Uncertain word
words	Line to which analyst comment applies
<u>words</u>	Emphatic stress
WORDS	Speaker name (pseudonym)