UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Weaving of Artistic and Political Voice in Art Making about Social Issues

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Education

by

Margaret Mary Dahn

2019

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2019

Professor Noel D. Enyedy, Co-Chair

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The goal of this dissertation is to understand how students developed their voices as they made art about social issues. As sixth grade students participated in an in-school visual arts class that I designed and taught, I attended to their talk about art and art making to study both what it meant to have a voice in a classroom discussion context as well as how they developed what I term their individual *artistic* and *political voices*. For the purpose of studying different kinds of student voice as it developed in interaction over the course of an instructional experience, I used design-based research to plan for structures of participation and discourse in pedagogy and curriculum. Designed structures included whole group, small group, and partner sharing focused on personal narratives about social issues, critique, and reflections on presenting art to an audience. I aimed to understand how curriculum and pedagogy supported how students talked

about art making, what it meant to have a voice in the classroom context, and students' individual development of artistic and political voice.

Through analysis of student art, talk, and interaction, I argue that students' levels of personal distance from their chosen social issues mediated how they talked about and expressed emotion through representational choices, that representational choices were linked to developing communicative practices around art making, and that students worked in ways that made sense to them consistent with their lived experiences. I argue that having a voice was interactionally developed during discussions and defined as collaborative, democratic, and heterogeneous. And finally, through individual focus students, I show how students' artistic and political voices symbiotically influenced one another as they interacted with particular mediating factors to transform their chosen topics into messages and art materials into mediums. This study will extend our understanding of how students develop their voices in classroom interaction and help conceive of ways to frame and organize arts learning experiences in schools. Results are relevant to how student voice is theorized and operationalized, how the value of arts education can be linked to learning and student experience, and methodological considerations for design-based research.

The dissertation of Margaret Mary Dahn is approved.

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2019

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> The key is curiosity, and it is curiosity, not answers, that we model. As we seek to know more about a child, we demonstrate the acts of observing, listening, questioning, and wondering. When we are curious about a child's words and our responses to those words, the child feels respected. The child is respected. *What are these ideas I have that are so interesting to the teacher? I must be somebody with good ideas.* (Paley, 1986, p. 127)

I was first introduced to the work of Vivian Paley in 2008 while writing my senior thesis at Northwestern University. To anyone familiar with Paley's work, it is clear that she has a tremendous amount of respect for children, and during my first year teaching, I reminded myself of Paley's central message—that what children have to say matters. And so after entering the teaching profession in the thick of No Child Left Behind, I did my best to incorporate student ideas, voice, and choice into lessons, most successfully in my years as a visual arts teacher in Huntington Park, a working class Latinx community in Los Angeles County.

The overall goal of the research I aim to do is to design imaginative experiences in schools serving low-income students of color to transform their educational opportunities. As a learning scientist, I aim to do this by engaging in research that reimagines interactions in classrooms through design. My research is primarily focused on creating experiences in situated learning environments that attend to and value diverse ways of knowing and being.

Building from Paley's message, this dissertation is motivated by a fundamental respect for children and my belief that young people have important things to say. Over the course of my six years in the classroom, I worked with children in kindergarten through third grade, yet Paley's ideas were meant to transcend categories of age and development. Paley also focused on the teacher's role in guiding and supporting students in their development, explaining that experiences ought to be curated to cultivate student ideas and voice. She artfully argued, "No matter what the age of the student, someone must be there to listen, respond, and add a dab of

glue to the important words that burst forth" (Paley, 1986, p. 127). The idea of "bursting forth" leads me to motivating questions for my broader research agenda: (a) How can we create experiences that encourage students to *burst forth* in their fullest capacities in learning environments? (b) How do we support student voice in everyday ways in schools and other learning spaces? This dissertation is but one piece of my broader research agenda.

I would like to acknowledge the community that made writing this dissertation possible. First, I thank my committee members for their encouragement, pushing me to adapt, and offering wisdom to improve my scholarship. Specifically, to Ananda Marin, for concrete ideas on how to organize and review video data I collected to help me jumpstart the data reduction process as well as pushing me to "pop up" my analysis and give names to phenomena. To Bill Sandoval, for early generative feedback and asking difficult questions like the time he showed me a student's self-portrait and asked, "Is this voice?" To Barbara Drucker, for helping me design a visual arts curriculum, asking me to make art myself during our independent study, and for several chats in her Santa Monica home to talk about arts education. And to my advisor, Noel Enyedy, an advocate of mine since the beginning of graduate school. Noel, I could not have written this dissertation without your professional and personal guidance. Thank you for opening your office and new home in Nashville for writing sessions. And thank you for encouraging me to write the dissertation I wanted to write.

In addition to my committee members, Mike Rose helped me think through ideas and make my writing more precise. I value our many talks at The Galley with thoughts recorded on cocktail napkins that made it into this dissertation. Additionally, a mentorship session with Kris Gutiérrez at the NAEd/Spencer Fall Fellows Retreat helped me improve a central representation in chapter six that shows how I conceive of artistic and political voice development. Thank you

to my ltr-G colleagues for offering fresh perspectives and helping me think through messy analytical ideas. Informal conversations with Joshua Danish, Marjorie Goodwin, Louis Gomez, Kim Gomez, Teresa McCarty, John Rogers, and Kylie Peppler have also influenced my thinking in this dissertation.

Thank you to my students—especially focus participants Jo, Natalie, and Benjamin—for sharing your ideas and artwork. Thank you also to the school's principal and art teacher who made this study possible. Thank you to my former students and the educators I worked with prior to attending graduate school for instilling in me a strong sense of purpose for this work.

Thank you to the Dahn and Killacky families, especially my siblings, John, Ryan, Bridget, and Katie, for checking in on me from far away. Thank you to my parents. To my mom, one of the sharpest people I know. And to my dad who has always been my biggest fan. Most importantly, thank you to Josh and Eames.

This dissertation was financially supported by the UCLA Graduate Research Mentorship Program and an NAEd/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship.

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Select Publications and Presentations

Dahn, M. (2019). Thinking backward and forward: Everyday interruptions in school-based research. In T. Ruecker & V. Svihla (Eds.), *Research interrupted: Confronting and overcoming challenges in education research* (pp. 127-139). New York, NY: Routledge.

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Dahn, M., Enyedy, N., & Danish, J. (2019). *Instructional improvisation for science learning: Zed's dead and the missing flower.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

Keifert, D., Lee, C., Enyedy, N., **Dahn, M.**, Lindberg, L., & Danish, J. (2019). *Tracing bodies through liminal blends: The sustained role of embodied experience in science sensemaking.* Manuscript submitted for publication.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

> We also have our social imagination: the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society, on the streets where we live, in our schools. (Greene, 1995, p. 5)
>
> What makes me hopeful, no matter what bad news tomorrow brings, is our infinite capacity for inventing the future, for imagining things otherwise. (Meier, 1995, p. 184)

As both Greene and Meier suggest, the ability to imagine different future circumstances is a unique human capacity that opens up possibilities for changing current conditions. In the field of educational research, one can reimagine schools, design better learning experiences relevant to students' lives, and propose different ways of approaching the problems and questions worthy of pursuit. These goals are valuable because they make for an education that rejects a transactional view of learning and instead centers "the growth of persons, with the education of persons to become different, to find their voices, and to play participatory and articulate parts in a community in the making" (Greene, 1995, p. 132). Centering imagination in this dissertation suggests creating new directions for what learning can and ought to be as it opens possibilities for students to develop their voices. Developing student voice is an important educational goal aligned with a view of learning that is participatory and transformative in which students learn to write and rewrite the world using language from their own experiences (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

In this dissertation, I consider how the unique human capacity for imagination can be harnessed in two practical ways. First, as researchers and educators, we can reimagine and redesign new possibilities for teaching and learning in schools and classrooms in specific contexts. Second, in the design of those experiences, we can call on students to use their imaginations as they engage with tools and ideas to imagine possible futures for themselves and

their communities. In this dissertation, I imagine new possibilities for organizing arts learning in schools as I invite students to use their creative capacities to make art that conveys important messages concerning issues relevant to their lives.

The work of this dissertation is about designing arts experiences in schools that offer students opportunities to make things that represent their experiences in the world and ideas for that world. My primary goal is understanding how students experienced the art making process and developed their voices as they made art about social issues that mattered to them. That is, I am interested in what can be learned by listening and attending to student talk about art and art making in learning spaces. Additionally, motivated by the belief that a purpose of teaching and education is to support students in making sense of complex ideas, a broader goal of this dissertation is to understand how to better design for art making and student discourse around art making in schools. To better frame both the particular and broad goals of this study, in this introductory chapter I describe the current arts education policy context in the U.S. to address the question of why arts education matters, discuss select major concepts relevant to this study, offer an overview of the study design, and preview the chapters of this dissertation.

Broader policy context for arts education and learning

Understanding the arts education landscape is important for setting the context for my primary goal of understanding how a specific arts learning experience in a school supported students in developing their voices as they talked about the art they were making. The arts have long maintained a precarious position in schools (Efland, 1990; Eisner, 2002; Gadsden, 2008; Gardner, 1990; Greene, 1995) as arts education is often the first to go when resources are limited (Efland, 1976). In recent decades, standardization and school accountability measures reinforced by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) have contributed to a practice of curriculum narrowing that

has marginalized the arts in favor of subjects like reading and math (Berliner, 2011). As evidenced through practices like curriculum narrowing, the ways the arts are taken up in schools are tied to broader goals of policy, and national policy is relevant for this classroom-based dissertation study because policy impacts how learning is organized through everyday interactions in schools. Indeed, "policy is not a disembodied thing, but rather a situated sociocultural process" (McCarty, 2011, p. xii). People (like teachers) who take up policy in practice act as "street-level bureaucrats" (Weatherley & Lipsky, 1977) with considerable discretion in developing norms, practices, and procedures as a result of policy.

Sabol (2010) found that arts educators reported secondary consequences of standardized testing under NCLB including a narrowing of student interest in exploring a wide range of artistic content, meaning that students wanted to know if what they were learning would be tested. Additionally, while eliminating the arts entirely has become common practice, arts education is sometimes folded into the mandatory curriculum. Consequently, as teachers try to integrate the arts in these contexts, specifically in light of policies like NCLB, art is often positioned as a "handmaiden" to academic achievement (Chappell & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2013), used to improve performance in other subject areas like teaching math through music to check off the colloquial arts education box.

The most current reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA), has implications for how the arts are and will be taken up in practice in schools. While NCLB casually named the arts a "core academic subject," ESSA more specifically includes the arts as part of a "well-rounded education" and emphasizes that "academic subjects, including the arts, [should be integrated] into STEM subject programs" (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015-2016). Many consider ESSA a minor victory for

the arts (Zubrzycki, 2015), yet the political focus for integrating the arts with STEM is clear in the text of the law: "[The purpose of arts integration is to] increase participation in STEM subjects, improve attainment of skills related to STEM subjects, and promote well-rounded education" (Article VI, p. 1177). In sum, the way ESSA positions the arts is ultimately for the benefit of STEM participation and achievement. Therefore, just as NCLB produced more arts programs that aimed to increase academic achievement in subjects like reading and math, ESSA may produce more arts programs that work in service of STEM achievement and learning. This is important because while the arts and STEM have many complementary goals and practices, each has its own discipline-specific ways of knowing, doing, and being that are valuable in their own right.

While the Trump Administration's recent threat to eliminate federal funding for the National Endowment for the Arts was unsuccessful, it has amplified the more general issue of why art and why arts education matters in our current political context. My focus on arts learning in this dissertation is timely because it is important for arts scholars and educators to take advantage of opportunities when national policy and rhetoric give attention to the arts by putting forward strong visions for arts education (Gardner, 1989). ESSA's updates to the ESEA present an opportunity for arts educators and advocates to shape the larger arts education narrative.

When putting forward visions for arts education, scholars and educators often go to great lengths linking arts participation to a myriad of educational goals to justify the existence of the arts (e.g., Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 2000; Deasy, 2002; Israel, 2009; Miga, Burger, Hetland, & Winner, 2000; Smithrin & Upitis, 2005). For example, Catterall, Dumais, and Hampden-Thompsan (2012) argue that students with high arts involvement demonstrate greater academic success than those with less arts involvement. Additionally, they explain that those with high arts

involvement show interest in current events through volunteering, voting, and engaging with politics. Research has connected arts participation to increased academic achievement and creativity (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012; Deasy, 2002; Peppler, Catterall, & Bender 2015), transfer of knowledge learned in the arts to nonarts disciplines (Fiske, 1999), identity development (Gadsden, 2008), and the cultivation of particular habits of mind useful within and beyond the arts (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2013). A major point of conflict in how the arts are positioned in much of this research concerns whether the arts are considered an instrument to improve other educational means such as academic achievement or if they teach things that are particular to learning in the arts such as communicating ideas, developing thinking dispositions, and engaging with aesthetic experiences.

Importantly, Winner and Hetland (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of studies from 1950-1999 linking arts to academic improvement and found no compelling evidence to suggest that participation in the arts has a causal relationship with achievement outcomes. While met with a mixed response from the arts advocacy community, Winner and Hetland's findings are important as shifts in policy impact the framing for why the arts matter. As this question of the arts' value persists, more rigorous empirical work is needed to show how the arts lead to student *learning* (Gadsden, 2008; Halverson & Sheridan, 2014)—not just achievement. It is therefore important to focus on what the arts *do* teach and how they support development in and of themselves to strengthen the argument for arts education. While ESSA focuses on how the arts can better serve achievement in STEM, in this dissertation, the arts are positioned as a valuable pursuit in and of themselves because they support expression and inquiry into the social world.

This dissertation aligns with a particular vision for the purpose of the arts in schools and what arts education can do for students that stems from Greene's (1995) idea of cultivating our

social imaginations. Additionally, the arts influence culture, shape the way we think, allow us to participate in the creative process, support risk taking, and encourage us to consider multiple solutions to problems. As a classroom teacher, I knew that most of my students would not pursue careers in the arts, but the arts teach so much more than technique particular to professions. In addition to supporting social imagination, Greene (1995) writes about how engagement in the arts supports a sense of *wide-awakeness*. Wide-awakeness is about taking risks, having courage to stand up against injustice, and live life with awareness of the capacity to change the world as it is. The arts can help students grapple with complex issues and ideas so that they can see beyond their realities. Often, the arts are defined in simplistic terms, focused on developing technical expertise. While technique is a component of artistic practice, in this dissertation I position the arts as valuable because like other disciplines, they open up particular ways of knowing, understanding, and making sense of the world. I further ground the rationale for the arts in this study through literature in chapter two.

Local policy context for arts education and learning

The local policy landscape is relevant to this dissertation study because the setting is a charter school situated within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) with a similar profile as a traditional LAUSD public school. Predictably, students of color attending high-poverty schools have the least access to arts programming (Inner-City Arts, 2017; Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). Take for example that by graduation, the average LAUSD student[1] will have spent less than 2% of their learning time in an arts education class (Aquino, Loera, Tandberg, & McCarthy, 2012). Overall, low-income schools in Los Angeles County with more English Language Learners and students of color provide less arts programming and that which is

[1] LAUSD schools are 73.4% Latinx and 82% of students qualify for free or reduced-price meals (LA Unified's Office of Communications, 2018)

provided is lower quality (LA County Arts Education Collective, 2017). A contradiction in state policy comes into play here—arts education is not intended to be a luxury in Los Angeles because a state law requires that all California public schools provide access to music, theatre, dance, and visual arts instruction at every grade level K-12 (Plummer, 2013). However, in reality, only 12% of LAUSD schools offer this type of comprehensive arts instruction (Inner-City Arts, 2018).

As Efland (1990) argues, "Whether the system narrows access to the arts or makes the arts broadly available tells us something about the character of the society" (p. 4). Inequities in arts education are not new, of course; unequal access to the arts has always existed along lines of race and class. Take for example that in early history of Western civilization some arts professions were considered suitable for common laborers as most artists including weavers, painters, and stonecarvers learned skills passed down by family members, while the study of high art was reserved for the rich, mainly white men (Efland, 1990). Eisner (2002) warns about inequity in the form of an institutional elite claiming ownership of artistic ideas; he prefers a broader conception of art and cautions that experiences, expression, and language enabled through the arts should not be "restricted to objects incarcerated in museums, concert halls, and theaters" (p. 123).

This dissertation builds from Eisner's broader conception of art to focus on the value of students making art about their experiences in schools where formal arts opportunities are not always a given. Furthermore, I wanted to design a learning environment specifically for students who have traditionally been marginalized and denied the development of their voices in educational spaces. I aimed to build my study around the fundamental belief that students need to be shown that their voices matter and that they have the imaginative capacity to envision the

future for themselves and their world. Working with students to make art about their experiences in the world in this dissertation is valuable because at its best, art making can be part of a transformative process. When students are most creatively engaged, they develop self-awareness and agency (Eisner, 2002; Greene, 1995), tap into a state of flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1996), and create a world where they want to live (Gude, 2009). I elaborate on the particulars of art making in the curriculum in chapter three.

Major concepts

Designing for talk about art and art making

To achieve my primary goal of understanding how students experienced art making and developed their voices as they made art about social issues that mattered to them, I considered the kinds of data I needed to uncover how students made sense of their experiences. Partly because I could not imagine a clear path for deciphering voice in students' physical artwork, I chose to design for particular kinds of student talk in the learning environment itself. That is, I developed curriculum and other support structures necessary to offer students guidance for talking about art and art making with their peers. My efforts aimed to create a dialogical relationship between students and one another as well as students and myself, one in which we could share ideas without fear of having our interpretations rejected. Dialogue requires time and can be defined as both a process and relationship (Burbules, 1993). Cultivating a dialogical relationship therefore required that I commit to developing relationships with students and act in a way that balanced care and authority as a teacher and researcher (Zander, 2004).

A focus on dialogue in the classroom is particularly appropriate for arts contexts because it reorients the purpose of learning from coming to correct conclusions to understanding different points of view (Zander, 2004). While difficult to achieve in classrooms given the built-in

structures of school (Burbules, 1993; Gallas, 1994; Zander, 2004), working to support dialogue and talk about art was of central concern in this dissertation because by foregrounding talk, I created a context for the conceptual and practical analysis of voice. I elaborate on how I designed for talk in the study overview later in this introductory chapter and also when I discuss the operationalization of student voice in chapter three. Purposefully designing for talk in this dissertation also connects to my broader goal of understanding how to design for student discourse around art making in schools.

Artistic and political voice

Designing for student talk and opportunities for dialogue in this study supported my examination of what I call students' *artistic* and *political voice* development. Aligned with positioning art as a form of expression and tool for inquiry, one of the specific things the arts teach in and of themselves is how to express one's voice through different media, often through the use of symbolization and metaphor (Hetland et al., 2013). For this dissertation, I expand on the notion of expressing voice to study how sixth grade students developed two aspects of their voices—*artistic* and *political*—as they participated in an in-school visual arts class focused on making art about social issues. I define *artistic voice* as how students talked about blending their ideas with art media and tools to construct external representations (Halverson, 2013). *Political voice* is how they articulated ideas about social issues that were relevant to and emerged from their own experiences in the world (Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1989), and by *social issues* I mean topics and themes that impacted a larger community and were important to students (i.e., poverty, immigration, racism, education inequality, environmental problems).

Previous experiences with self-selected social issues gave youth ideas for the artifacts they created as part of the visual arts curricula, ranging from wire sculptures and graffiti art to

abstract watercolor paintings and costume pieces. In classroom practice, artistic and political voice occurred in interaction with one another, but for analysis purposes, I conceptually separated them out, reasons for which I explain in greater detail in chapter three. I acknowledge that this was an analytic strategy, and I bring artistic and political voice together in reflection and discussion of data in chapter six. I position artistic and political voice as having a mutually beneficial and symbiotic relationship as students made art and talked about the art they made.

Making art about social issues

From Picasso's *Guernica* and Norman Rockwell's *The Problem We All Live With* to the Guerilla Girls' anti-misogyny billboards, the history of political art is long and deep. Artist Ai Wei Wei has argued, "Every art, if it's relevant, is political," and the present is an especially rich time for studying this particular kind of art with youth. Taken together, the creative process and politically charged content reveal cognitive, emotional, conceptual, and ideological qualities of learning and making, layers that the arts open up for analysis. The type of art making with which students engaged in this study was directly connected to the policy landscape described previously in this chapter and the fact that students most marginalized are least likely to get opportunities for art making that supports the development of their ideas and voices. Art that is explicitly political connects to the idea of young people imagining different futures for themselves and the world.

While art and politics have always been intertwined, the current political context in the U.S. magnifies this dissertation's aims. Learning and related issues in education are shaped by histories of power and hierarchy (Booker, Vossoughi, & Hooper, 2014), and teaching is itself a political act (Freire, 1970), yet the present moment feels distinct to a generation. In the current time of political contestation when fundamental questions about democracy, human rights, and

what it means to "be American" are posed, it is necessary that people have outlets to share their voices. A recent *New York Magazine* cover story titled "Is Political Art the Only Art that Matters Now?" (Swanson, 2017) suggests an opening for artists to make their political voices heard. And from Shepard Fairy's "We the People" series to homemade Women's March posters, people have already found powerful, everyday ways to use art to make sense of the current context, to protest, to cope, and to exercise their agency for taking action in the world (Dewey, 1934; Goldblatt, 2006). As a vehicle for expression, the arts are a tool for thinking, questioning, and representing diverse ideas.

Overlaps exist with the present study and current work in civics education. Cohen, Kahne, and Marshall (2018) recently published a white paper describing a "Lived Civics" approach to civic education efforts that aligns with the type of art making I center. The Lived Civics approach builds from the lived experiences of youth and encourages a classroom experience built around the diverse ways students participate in the political and civic world. With a focus on community-based knowledge, Lived Civics is anchored by concepts like race, power, and identity to support the development of student voice in learning spaces. In Lived Civics, Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) is framed as an opportunity structure to engage youth in critical examination of the world around them (Cohen, Kahne, & Marshall, 2018; Daus-Magbual & Tintiangco-Cubales, 2016; de los Ríos, Lopez, & Morrell, 2016).

Aligned with a Lived Civics approach, in an arts education context, it is important that youth, particularly those most marginalized in political debates and society, have opportunities to make art around issues relevant to their lives. Approaches such as community-based art education (Ulbricht, 2005), activist art pedagogy (Dewhurst, 2014), and socially engaged art education (Schlemmer, Carpenter, & Hitchcock, 2017) connect youth's personal experiences to

civic and social life outside the classroom. These types of art making are focused on "individual and collective investigations of possibility" (Gude, 2009, p.11) through engagement with complexity, ambiguity, and contradiction. Through making art about socially relevant topics in this study, students gained experience with artistic media as they oriented themselves toward an aspirational future beyond school walls that they are capable of and responsible for shaping. In the next section, I offer an overview and my personal orientation within this study, building from the ideas and concepts thus far described.

Study overview

For the purpose of studying the constructs of artistic and political voice and how they occurred in interaction over the course of an instructional experience, I borrowed methodological tools from the learning sciences and designed an environment that made space for discourse and interaction about art across what I term *conversation spaces*. That is, I planned for specific structures and patterns of discourse in the curriculum so that I could study how students talked about the art they made. The conversation spaces for which I designed included: (a) personal narratives about social issues important to youth; (b) peer critique during art making; and (c) student reflections on presenting their art to a public audience. I hypothesized that as youth created representations, they would engage with studio habits of mind (Hetland et al., 2013), which would mediate their artistic and political voice trajectories as evidenced through discourse and interaction across conversation spaces.

Prior to beginning graduate school, I worked as a classroom teacher in Chicago before moving to Los Angeles to become the founding visual arts teacher at a startup elementary school affiliated with an established charter school network. As our school grew over the four years I worked there, I designed and taught kindergarten through third grade art, coached and managed

teachers, and served as the head of the fine arts department. For this dissertation study, I returned to the classroom and was the primary researcher and visual arts teacher at a middle school where a majority of the participants had been previous students of mine. Returning to the classroom allowed me to try out new ways of thinking about the organization of teaching and learning. I reflect on my role in the research in chapter three.

Using design-based research (Brown, 1992; Collins, 1992; The Design-Based Research Collective, 2003) and case study methods (Yin, 2009), I studied my design of a visual arts unit that consisted of 20 lessons I taught over the course of a semester. I worked with all 127 sixth grade students at the research site and defined the bounds of the case study as one class of 32 sixth grade students. Within that class, I chose three focus participants for a particular level of analysis at the end of the data collection period. My findings chapters focus on data that includes curriculum, student artwork, interviews, and video of whole group discussions with the case study group of 32 as well as more detailed analysis of small group discussions with three focus participants. I elaborate on the study details and curriculum design in chapter three.

Research questions

My research questions attend to the goals of this dissertation, including my particular goal of understanding how students experienced art making and developed their voices as well as my broader goal of understanding how to design for arts learning and arts discourse spaces in schools. Under the umbrella of these goals, I was interested in understanding a number of things about students' creative processes, including what students made art about, how they made that art, how they talked about art as a whole class, and how they talked about their art in private discussions with peers. The following questions focused this study:

- How did an intentionally designed arts experience support students in talking about art and art making, including the topics they chose and the ways they used art media?
- How was student voice engaged, supported, and co-constructed by the curriculum, teacher, and students during whole class discussions about art to define what it meant to "have a voice" in the local classroom context?
- How did individual students develop their artistic and political voices as they engaged with ideas and art media to make their own art and talked about the art they made with peers?

My first research question helped me understand how curriculum and pedagogy supported how students thought and talked about the art making process as well as how my design contributed to the art students made. My second research question focused on what it meant to have a voice in the local context of this particular visual arts classroom as evidenced through classroom discussion and interaction. My third research question delved more deeply into students' individual experiences and allowed me to focus on how they developed their artistic and political voices through the representational process of art making while engaging in small group conversations (i.e., focused on narratives, critiques, and reflections) with their table partners.

My contribution

This dissertation contributes to a call for more methodologically rigorous studies in artistic production (Gadsden, 2008; Goldstein, Lerner, & Winner, 2017; Hetland et al., 2013). I anchor my work in the learning sciences, a field newly interested in generating studies that center arts learning (Halverson, 2013; Halverson & Sheridan, 2014), as evidenced by the inaugural session on this very topic at the 2017 American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting. This study is methodologically significant because it traces interactions at a fine-

grained level to look under the hood of teaching and learning to link elements of instructional and curriculum design to student outcomes (Greeno, 2016). I make the ambitious attempt to do this kind of systematic and empirical work in the arts, a fairly elusive subject in the study of teaching and learning when compared with more broadly researched domains such as mathematics or science.

This study will extend our understanding of how students develop their voices in arts learning experiences and help conceive of ways to frame and organize arts learning experiences in schools. These are critical aims not only because is it important for students to have access to the kind of choice and agency the arts often afford, but the quality of experience and how we design for choice and agency in the arts matters (Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland, & Palmer, 2009). Results from this dissertation connect to broader issues in the research literature, including how student voice is theorized and operationalized, how we understand the value of the arts as linked to particular learning experiences, and how researchers might approach design-based research as practitioners, as integral to both design and implementation processes.

Chapters overview

Following this introductory chapter, in chapter two I frame the arts in this study and review relevant literature, including research on studio habits of mind as I describe how I position these as relevant mediators within students' art making processes. Additionally, I describe how sociocultural theory theoretically grounds this dissertation and detail research on student voice to further articulate my conceptualization of voice in relation to art making. In chapter three I describe my methodology, including how design-based research (DBR) and case study grounded methodological decisions. In chapters four, five, and six I present findings related to each of my three research questions. Chapter four focuses on patterns across student art

making in relation to the visual arts curriculum, including an overview of which social issues students chose as the focus for artwork and how they talked about using different art materials to construct representations. Chapter five includes an analysis of whole group discussion patterns to construct a local definition of what it meant to have a voice in the classroom context. Chapter six follows individual student trajectories over the course of the designed art making experience to examine at a fine-grained level how focus students' artistic and political voices developed as they made art about issues important to them and talked about the art they made with peers. In chapter seven I discuss findings in relation to my primary and broader goals, consider the implications of this work, note its limitations, and suggest possibilities for future research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

To provide background for this dissertation, in this chapter I bring together three strands of literature: (a) arts education and learning; (b) student voice; and (c) sociocultural theories of learning. My goals are to historically situate the present study in relation to why art is taught, outline conceptions of student voice in the literature to support how I operationalize voice in relation to data, explain why sociocultural theory is an appropriate frame for the study of voice in this art making context, and describe how this study contributes to existing research and theory.

To achieve these goals, in my review of the literature I first outline historical conceptions of the purpose of arts education and use a combination of expressionist and reconstructivist perspectives to articulate a clear rationale for arts learning in the present study (Efland, 2004; Siegesmund, 1998). I then describe studio habits of mind (Hetland et al., 2007, 2013) and map them to the curriculum and types of activities with which students engaged in this study to show how habits of mind can be thought of as a mediating process for art making. Following this, I review literature on student voice and explain how I operationalized voice in my analysis, positioning voice as both expression and participation and something that develops across time and situation (Lensmire, 1998). Finally, I describe how sociocultural theory anchors this design-based research study on different planes of development (Rogoff, 1995) and aligns with my rationale for why the arts should be taught.

Throughout this literature review, I aim for theoretical synergy across how I frame arts learning (i.e., aligned with expressionist and reconstructivist perspectives), operationalize student voice (i.e., defining voice as expression and participation that develops across time and situation), and use sociocultural theory to situate this study and its design (i.e., operating on

sociocultural planes of development, including the interpersonal and personal). I elaborate on how literature supports my argument for: (1) the construct of artistic voice aligned with an expressionist rationale for arts education aligned with voice as a form of expression, which is situated on the personal sociocultural plane of development; and (2) the construct of political voice aligned with a reconstructivist rationale for arts education aligned with voice as a form of participation, which is situated on the interpersonal sociocultural plane of development. The value in these points of synergy and alignment are elaborated in relation to existing literature supporting my argument below.

Arts education and learning

Issues concerning teaching and learning in the arts have existed since artists began producing art. Thus, the question as to why art should be taught has always been a matter of debate. Answers to this question have different implications for how the arts are taught, what is included in the curriculum, and how students are positioned in learning environments. Beliefs tied to the purposes of arts learning are rooted in convictions about the broader purposes of learning and education.

Streams of influence for why and how art should be taught

Arts education, including its methods and epistemology, are constructed by culture, history, and policy. As such, approaches to arts education have evolved over time as context has shifted. For example, as part of the common schools movement of the early 1900s, teaching art was generally concerned with teaching the skills of drawing in order to encourage rational thinking rather than cultivate individual expression or inquiry (Efland, 1990). In response to arts educators' dissatisfaction with the accuracy of representations as a measure of artistic understanding and talent, the next widely-adopted approach favored elements and principles of

design in lieu of technical drawing skills (Efland, 1990). Subsequent movements in arts education, included creative self-expression, art in daily living, and art as a discipline, each of which built upon or diverged from previous approaches (Efland, 2004). These movements were each tied to particular beliefs about why art should be taught. Efland (1990) outlines a history of thought in arts education, grouping major rationales for teaching art into three "streams of influence" (p. 260): expressionism, reconstructivism, and scientific rationalism (see Siegesmund, 1998 for a thorough review). Below I briefly describe each stream and then comment on their relevance for the arts learning experience in this dissertation.

The expressionist contends that the child's freedom of expression is central and that teaching in the arts should focus on using art as a way to express emotions and support mental and physical well-being (Lowenfeld, 1947). Expressionism centers imagination and creative play while offering children a space to develop empathy. It also positions art as a break from more traditional academic subjects as it provides children with "navigation tools through an important social world" (Siegesmund, 1998, p. 201). Expressionism is central in this study as students used artistic media to express their ideas and emotions connected to social issues.

The reconstructivist believes that arts education should be in service of reshaping educational outcomes, social transformation (Eisner, 1988), and teaching democratic values (Lowenfeld, 1947). Reconstructivists argue that through education, society can be reproduced, reinvented, or reconstructed and that a goal of arts education should be to teach students how to critically analyze and transform society (Freedman, 1994; Greene, 1995). The reconstructivist reframes art from an observable artifact to a tool for inquiry and critical analysis into the social world (Eisner, 1988). Siegesmund (1998) writes, "Within the reconstructivist stream, art is properly understood as an instrument, not a discipline" (p. 203). As a cautionary note,

Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) warns that arts advocates sometimes use the reconstructivist position to romanticize the arts' effects. In this study, reconstructivism was a grounding force for curriculum and the kinds of issues about which students made art as they considered how to transform their topics into messages for an audience.

Like reconstructivists, scientific rationalists also see art as a tool for inquiry with its own discipline-specific ways of forming judgments and constructing knowledge (Siegesmund, 1998). Scholars aligned with this stream argue that art has its own epistemology and that part of the purpose of an arts education is to support students in decoding symbol systems from visual imagery (Goodman, 1978). Developmental psychologists align with the scientific rationalist perspective because they look for "a natural progression, a graphical taxonomy, within the course of human development" (Siegesmund, 1998, p. 207). For scientific rationalists, arts education is in service of other developmental goals because it provides the foundation for cognitive and other types of personal development to occur (Gardner, 1990). While these other types of development are valuable, scientific rationalism is not an anchor for this study.

Unity of expressionism and reconstructivism to support art making as cultural production

These streams of influence for why art should be taught have implications how the arts are taught, what is taught, and how students are positioned in learning environments. Siegesmund (1998) writes that some teachers and schools align with one stream of influence, but most pull individual ideas from different streams to create their own rationale for the arts to support curricula and instructional decisions. He argues that the co-existence of a myriad of rationales is generally unproductive and that as a field, "art education must build a clearly articulated, persuasive, and enduring epistemological rationale for itself" (Siegesmund, 1998, p. 209). He draws from the scientific rationalists to argue that the strongest and most enduring

argument for arts education is an epistemological stance concerned with "learning to reason through perception" (p. 209). Here I diverge from Siegesmund's call for a singular epistemological rationale across all arts education efforts.

I argue that instead of privileging one stream of influence universally, a rationale for arts education and learning ought to be tied to the particular context in which the arts are taught as well as to current social and political concerns. I align with Siegesmund in that regardless of what serves as a teacher's anchor, a well-developed rationale for why the arts should be taught ought to be purposeful so that the details of learning experiences are thoughtfully designed with broader goals in mind. Indeed, it is important to articulate a clear and precise rationale for why the arts ought to be taught in order to sustain arts education's place in school curricula (Siegesmund, 1998).

However, unlike Siegesmund who argues that the strongest perspective is a singular one aligned with scientific rationalism, in the context of this dissertation, the dialectic unity of expressionism and reconstructivism anchor the rationale for arts learning, the kind of curriculum with which students engaged, and my own convictions about the broader purpose of learning in the arts. Siegesmund (1998) favors scientific rationalism because of its focus on epistemology and writes that an epistemological rationale is more valuable than a pedagogical or curricular one because "educators should be fully aware of how they are teaching students to think" (p. 209). Indeed, it is important for educators to be conscious of their students' thinking (and, I would add, feelings). However, while he argues that neither expressionism nor reconstructivism offer a proper epistemological rationale, I argue that this is only the case when what it means to know something is conceived of in a limited way. When ways of knowing are expanded to include both vertical (school-based) and horizontal (everyday) forms of expertise (Gutiérrez & Rogoff,

2003; Gutiérrez, 2008), expressionism and reconstructivism can be thought of as aligning with epistemologies that position art respectively as a way of knowing about oneself through sensory experience and as a way of knowing about the world through inquiry. These ways of knowing about oneself and the world are worthwhile aims of an education, arts-specific or otherwise.

Bringing together expressionist and reconstructivist streams of influence is a dialectic move in that together they support a view of arts education focused jointly on emotion and inquiry. The expressionist and reconstructivist streams of influence work best for a study focused on student voice development in the arts because they emphasize expression and intellectual transformation, central ideas in this dissertation. I find the intersection of these streams as fruitful because of the possibilities for reconciling tensions that exist between them. For example, while expressionists consider the arts as separate from cognition because they are valuable in and of themselves (Siegesmund, 1998), reconstructivists see the arts as closely connected to matters of the mind (Eisner, 1988). I understand expression, emotion, and cognition as inextricably linked. Additionally, whereas expressionists center the development of appreciation and empathy through the arts, reconstructivists see developing empathy as unproductive in service of emphasizing critical awareness and analysis. However, I have found in my own work with students that empathy and critical analysis can co-exist and make for rich and relevant discussions about artwork.

I find synergy across the dialectical relationship between expressionism and reconstructivism and see the supposed tensions that Siegesmund names as mutually beneficial. In this study, students used art as a way to process and express their ideas about complex emotional experiences, an idea aligned with expressionism. Additionally, students were taught that their ideas and feelings were central to the creative process. Expressionism drove curriculum choices

that prompted students to engage with their emotions connected to social issues that mattered to them (e.g., a personal narrative about LGBTQ rights inspired emotional responses like anger, confusion, and hope) and offered students ways to talk about using artistic tools to represent particular emotions (e.g., using color and composition to represent feelings related to loneliness). As students talked about feelings in relation to issues and art, they naturally shifted to a more critical analysis of the issues at hand, making the tension between feeling and thought part of their sensemaking process. Additionally, as students engaged in conversations about social issues, they considered how they might use artistic tools to reflect on the ideas that came to the surface for them, reconciling a tension between cognition and expression.

In this study, students were positioned as having important ideas about social issues that were relevant to their lives, a stance aligned with reconstructivism. Additionally, students were encouraged to engage with complex social issues and propose ideas for social change, to reimagine society as they thought it should be through art, and to challenge injustice through their messages. In both my design and analysis I tried to resist the romanticization of the arts as a tool for change (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). For example, I consciously did not refer to students as "activists" because I knew that we would not be engaging in a meaningful way on that level through our art making.

Instead, in both theory-building and practice, I focused on what students actually did in activity and how they talked about what they did. Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) suggests that "rather than thinking about the arts as doing something to people, we should think about artistic forms as something people do" (p. 226). The arts in this study were not in service of other developmental goals like scientific rationalism would encourage; *the arts were in service of helping students develop artistic ways of understanding.* Through engagement with materials and

ideas, the arts supported students in creating cultural artifacts that represented their experiences. In summary, in this dissertation, the arts are a way of thinking, knowing, reasoning, and developing cultural artifacts about oneself and broader issues in a social world.

Elaborating on this positioning of the arts and building from ideas rooted in expressionism and reconstructivism, experiences like the one described in this dissertation matter because they push against a view that reduces the arts as a means for teaching other content, yet do not rely only on an "art for art's sake" argument, either. The focus for why artistic activity matters in the present study is grounded in the idea that learning in the arts is an "organization of energies" (Dewey, 1934, p. 168), that the work of art is the conduct of the activity and the sensory qualities of the experience. Student experience is central to both expressionism and reconstructivism.

As students bring together available cultural tools to create representations relevant to their lives, they engage in the experience of art making as cultural production. Culture includes knowledge, artifacts, ideas, and values that have been historically important to a community and shaped over time through activity (Cole, 1996; Medin, ojalehto, Marin, & Bang, 2013). In framing art as a form of cultural production, Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) argues:

> If we understand education as a cultural process, then schooling should be, first and foremost, a place for engaged and continued cultural practice. Symbolic creativity — including perhaps those practices and processes that are sometimes associated with the concept of the arts—should be central to how we conceptualize teaching and learning for all students, not because it *improves* learning but because it *is* learning (p. 227).

If cultural production in the arts is positioned as learning, then activities that foreground the cultural production of artifacts and focus on process are themselves *experiences in service of*

learning. Making sense of how the tools of art and ideas work together is therefore, part of what it means to learn. The expressionist and reconstructivist streams support art making as a form of cultural production because of a joint focus on experience and transformation. In the following sections I focus on what students do as they engage in art making to further support my rationale for teaching art aligned with expressionist and reconstructivist streams of influence.

Studio habits of mind as mediating processes for learning in art making

As people learn to make art, they develop habits of mind that are valuable within and outside of arts disciplines (Perkins, 1994; Hetland et al., 2013). In a study of high school visual arts classrooms, Hetland and colleagues (2013) examined what teachers try to teach to better understand what students learn in the visual arts. They found that teachers aim to instill eight studio habits of mind in arts learning: *understand art worlds*, *develop craft*, *engage and persist*, *stretch and explore*, *observe*, *envision*, *express*, and *reflect*. While expressionism and reconstructivism could be mapped onto each of these habits of mind in different ways, I see expressionism as aligning most with the observe, express, and reflect habits, and reconstructivism aligning most with the engage and persist, envision, observe, and reflect habits. In this section I describe studio habits of mind and map how they align to streams of influence and relevant curriculum to support the kind of art making relevant to this study.

In this dissertation, studio habits of mind are positioned as mediating processes for the development of voice that cultivated particular artistic ways of thinking and understanding as students engaged in cultural production. That is, as students made and talked about art, they practiced habits of mind as a result of the curriculum and their prior experiences and knowledge about art making. Rooted in an expressionist and reconstructivist rationale for why the arts should be taught in this study, here I describe how select habits come to the surface during art

making. In my review of studio habits of mind below I describe how they were useful for students as they engaged across the three types of talk relevant to this study: personal narrative, in-process critique, and reflections on going public. I conceive of studio habits of mind as a boundary process (Wenger, 2000) that mediated the development of voice across sites for talk because as students made art about social issues, they simultaneously engaged with habits of mind as part of the creative process.

Express and reflect to convey personal meaning. The habit of mind, express, refers to the process the artist goes through as she creates art that carries personal meaning, conveys an idea, or evokes a particular feeling. As the artist conceptualizes a piece, she considers different ways she can express meaning using available materials. As she thinks about how to communicate something personally meaningful, she reflects. This reflection includes processing one's self critique as well as others' feedback. The artist often uses express and reflect habits of mind in tandem; as she reflects, she revises her expression. This cycle of expression and reflection shows how artists unite form and function to make sense of the world (Hanley, 2013). Express and reflect align with the expressionist stream of influence because they help students develop freedom and flexibility while working with artistic tools and ideas (Lowenfeld, 1947).

Express and reflect in personal narratives. Students learn how to express in their art making as they begin to understand how artists convey ideas and feelings through metaphorical exemplification (Goodman, 1968). Metaphorical exemplification "[conveys] qualities that the works do not literally possess: A painting can be metaphorically sad, loud, or agitated just through the way it uses line, color, composition, and allusion" (Hetland et al., 2013, p. 66). Hetland and colleagues report how a student reflected on learning about the quality of expression in art making in their initial study outlining studio habits of mind:

> I came...to this school and I basically just was thinking about skill and showing skill and, you know...just show what's real...But with my self-portrait...it's very personal, it's more deep, and it's not about presenting something in a realistic way… It still has a lot of skill in it… But the whole general idea of what I'm trying to present has changed...to connect it with my thinking (Hetland et al., 2013, p. 66).

The student above reflects on the shift in his art making practice from trying to make something technically precise using "skill" to expressing something "personal" and "deep" through metaphorical exemplification. In the present study, as students shared personal narratives in interviews and with peers during class discussions, they grappled with how to embed personal meaning in their work as they made choices about how to express ideas to an audience using available tools. This grappling process is surfaced in chapter six as I follow individual students who engaged with personal narratives during their art making processes. Through narratives, students described their prior understandings and personal connections to social issues as they talked about embedding expressions of their ideas in art.

Engage and persist to stretch and explore. The engage and persist habit of mind encourages artists to commit and follow through with ideas. If they lose interest, engage and persist is a way to find new ways to make work compelling. Stretch and explore is about reaching beyond one's capacities and playfully considering options without a predetermined plan. Stretch and explore can also be a strategy for promoting sustained engagement and persistence with one's art making process. Engage and persist aligns with the reconstructivist stream because it encourages sticking with ideas even in the face of difficulties and can imply that ideas evolve over time as critical awareness is cultivated.

Engaging, persisting, stretching, and exploring during art making. In the present study, engage and persist was part of the curriculum because students were required to follow their interests and choose their own topics for art making. Most students stuck with the same topics over the course of the semester for different projects; they were invested in their topics because they used their own stories and experiences to motivate art making. The interest-driven nature of these projects allowed students to tap into experience that led to a state of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) in art making. Even with initial personal investment, engage and persist can be valuable if students break down during art making; Sheridan (2009) notes that engage and persist is a way to help students push through difficulties they might encounter such as a structure not coming together properly so that they can "learn to embrace problems within the art work and/or of personal importance" (p. 73).

In an example of engage and persist I describe in chapter six, a focus participant accidentally makes a hole in her art as she is working with an oil pastel. With encouragement and prompting from her partner, instead of becoming frustrated with the mistake, she reframes it as an opportunity for conveying deeper meaning in her art. What is of note in this interaction is that her persistence over time actually led to deeper meaning in her expression and supported a more nuanced reflection for presenting her work to a public audience. Through engaging and persisting, this student used art as a tool for inquiry into the message behind her art, an idea aligned with the reconstructivist perspective.

Observe to envision next steps. Another habit of mind the arts teach is to observe, or look closely to see people, things, and environments rather than just notice them on a surface level. Hetland and colleagues (2013) explain, "observation is so fundamental to understanding that it seems almost superfluous to name its occurrences" (p.80). However, observation is

explicitly taught and practiced with precision in the arts, and in fact, it is one of the first things artists are taught to do. Also known as developing an "intelligent eye" (Perkins, 1994) or practicing "slow looking" (Tishman, 2016), observation is cultivated by teaching students to attend to visual features made central in artwork like color, line, shape, and texture. Dancers pay close attention to how their bodies move through space to tell a story and actors observe people in everyday life to embody characters they portray. Observation skills distinguish experts in their craft and contribute to creating a shared professional vision, a group's socially organized ways of seeing and understanding (Goodwin, 1994).

Observation is important in the context of this study because it can support both self-understanding and awareness of an outside world. Through observation in this study, students talked about the complexity of social issues and asked questions, cultivating the critical awareness supported by the reconstructivist stream. Observe and envision habits of mind encouraged students to apply "an initiating, constructing mind or consciousness to the world" (Greene, 1995, p. 23) because observation helps people notice injustices and envisioning helps them imagine a response.

Observing in critique. Observation is a prerequisite for critique. While students usually focus on their own work when making art, during critique they are able to view their work in relation to other pieces, whether they are the artist's own or their peers (Hetland et al., 2013). It is evident that students practice observing during conversations when they compare and contrast their own work with others or notice subtlety in detail that is not immediately evident. Students can observe as audience members by calling attention to artistic features or describing how a work fits within the context of a larger collection. Sometimes the critique of others can inspire artists to look a little closer at their work to see something they had not seen before. When

critique is focused on meaning and representation instead of surface-level aesthetics, it can also push students to consider new possibilities and expose them to different interpretations of their work (Soep, 2006), linking the observe and envisions habits.

Envision to project possibilities. Envision pairs well with observe because artists often first observe something as it is in order to envision what it might become. A young artist steps back from her figure drawing and observes that the hands she sketched are disproportionate in size to the rest of the body. She looks closely to notice inconsistencies and then envisions how she might change the drawing to match her desired outcome. Although she may fail in achieving the detailed elegance of the picture in her mind, the observe and envision habits illuminate a path forward. Envisioning can also be connected to what an artist hopes to convey to an audience, that is, what she envisions an audience will take from her work. Envisioning requires examination of the present, consideration of variables involved, and imagination to project future possibilities for one's art and how one projects a perspective of the world. Envision aligns with imagining possible futures in a reconstructivist perspective on the purpose of art.

Envisioning in going public. Envision is particularly relevant in this study as students reflected on going public with their work for an outside audience and considered how their messages would translate. An artist generally considers the existence of the audience first when initially conceptualizing a piece and then iteratively throughout the representational process (Halverson & Sheridan, 2014). Whether making decisions about how choreography tells a story or deciding on a theme for a public art installation, artists should consider the constraints and affordances of different media as they evaluate the clarity and precision of their representations.

Halverson (2013) reports how a student making a film about her experience envisioned and pitched the idea for her film before making it:

> And at times my thoughts and opinions will be heard in voiceovers. And the observational footage will be paired with the voiceover. The main story will be supported by interviews with three of my friends and their moms who share similar experiences about their own separations and reunions. And, the style will be intimate personal, such as shooting in their living rooms (p. 137).

Through envisioning how a potential audience would experience her work, this student thought about how to reconcile the artistic tools involved in her communicative process with the story she hoped to tell. After envisioning aloud, she received and internalized critique from her peers and teachers to push her vision forward and express her ideas in intentional ways.

Constructing representations in the arts and developing artistic voice

Studio habits of mind are embedded in a broader representational process, a descriptive feature of art making (Eisner, 2002; Gardner, 1982). As students construct representations of their ideas in the arts, they do not simply make something out of nothing; they engage with ideas and materials to get their work done. Greene (2001) writes that "creation has to do with reshaping, renewing the materials at hand, very often the materials of our own lives, our experiences, our memories" (p. 96). As students constructed representations of their ideas in this study, studio habits of mind became a mediating process for learning and the development of artistic and political voice. In this context, as students created artifacts that represented their ideas, they called on studio habits of mind for support, creating a conversation between ideas and form. In the representational art making process, form and expression are interwoven because learning in the arts involves the creation of symbols that convey meaning to make sense of complex ideas (Vygotsky, 1978; Dewey, 1934).

The creation of conceptual and physical representations is not exclusive to learning in the arts as Enyedy's (2005) work on children's progressive symbolization in mathematics and diSessa's (2004) description of metarepresentational competence in science inquiry demonstrate. Across disciplines, the representational process marks deep engagement with content (diSessa, 2004; Enyedy, 2005; Halverson, 2013). diSessa (2004) even argues that constructing representations is a fundamentally creative endeavor. Yet perhaps what differentiates the representational process in the arts is the expectation for the artist to explicitly consider how an audience will respond (Soep, 2006). With art, meaning is co-constructed between artists and audiences; the artist anticipates the presence of an audience throughout the creative process from conception to presentation (Halverson & Sheridan, 2014).

From dance sequences to sculptures, arts education is focused on the construction of artifacts and processes of making (Halverson & Sheridan, 2014). Halverson (2013) argues that as young artists learn how to make art they engage in *representational trajectories* during the creative process as they begin with narratives, come to understand how the tools of art can further develop those narratives, and finally, synthesize tools and story to create cohesive artifacts (in the case of Halverson's study, digital artifacts). Depending on the artistic medium, artists need to master different tools and design grammars that will work in particular artistic contexts to communicate particular perspectives (Halverson, 2013). That is, having a keen understanding of the relationship between tools of a medium and narrative or ideas to be communicated is fundamental to developing fluency in different types of art making. The concept of a representational trajectory is a fitting frame from which to build for this dissertation study because I am interested in how students developed their voices over time and how they

brought their ideas and stories into conversation with art materials to transform materials into mediums that communicated messages to an audience.

It is at the intersection of tools and narrative where students developed artistic. (I discuss the concepts of artistic and political voice more concretely in relation to data later in this chapter.) As students engaged with materials, they tried to figure out how to best represent their ideas using arts-centered language. They developed artistic voice as the materials they used became mediums to communicate emotions and ideas relevant to the worlds they created around their social issues. While tightly interwoven with political voice and at times overlapping, the concept of artistic voice is focused on how students used available art making tools and what they understood about art as a form of expression to convey ideas through cultural artifacts. Artistic voice as it is conceived of in this study aligns with the expressionist argument that art is about the expressive and emotional qualities of art.

Political art making with young people and developing political voice

When Efland wrote *The History of Art Education* in 1976 he noted that most schools at the time had arts programs that emphasized technique and mastery of skills over constructing meaning. He elaborated that programs were only marginally influenced by the society outside of school if at all. In the present study, students made art that was *explicitly* influenced by their lives and world outside of school, and their emotions were key to helping them make sense of it all. Therefore, as they made art, they were grappling with both expressive and intellectual qualities related to their chosen social issues.

While technique is an important component of all arts disciplines, given the increasing cultural diversity of our society, meaning making is a better anchor around which arts pedagogy ought to be created (Greene, 1997). Freedman (2000) describes the social purpose of a visual arts

education in a democracy is to "reveal its complexity, diversity, and integral cultural location" (p. 314). McFee (1966) describes "art as one of the major communication systems of social interaction and of society in transition" (p. 122), meaning that the arts help people express ideas and feelings about societal change. These ideas translate to learning in school because when teachers listen to students and build curriculum around socially relevant issues that are important to them and their lives, the results can be personally and politically transformative (Freire, 1970; McLaren, 1989; Shor, 1987, 1992). To prepare teachers to work in urban schools, Howard and Milner (2014) advocate that an understanding of racial and cultural knowledge about students and communities is as critical as subject knowledge and pedagogy. Research suggests that good arts teachers teach with an understanding of students' lives and histories more than teachers in other subject areas (Gray & MacGregor, 1986; Flinders, 1989). Therefore, being an exceptional arts educator is not a matter of using "best practices" but requires the teacher engage in deep reflection about the purpose of arts education (Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland, & Palmer, 2009) and align that purpose with decisions that are responsive to student experience.

Particular pedagogical approaches aligned with the reconstructivist view such as "socially engaged art education" helps students make sense of the world and imagine possibilities for their lives in the future (Darts, 2006; Stuhr, 2003). From a socially engaged art education perspective:

> [The role of the arts teacher is to] help students to make sense of their experiences and themselves, to facilitate critical inquiry and creative problem solving, and to support the creation of meaningful interactions and interconnections between and within the world(s) around them (Darts, 2006, p.11).

Darts (2006) also sees the role of the curriculum as cultivating an ethic of care that offers students opportunities to transform themselves while also transforming the world in which they

live. Connecting an ethic of care to facilitating critical inquiry brings synergy between expressionist and reconstructivist perspectives.

Educators who use a socially engaged approach often push for arts pedagogy focused on inspiring the next generation of arts activists. Aligned with the perspective that art should be a form of activism, Dewhurst (2014) notes three learning processes consequential for making art centered on social justice issues—connecting, questioning, and translating. In her work she uses these learning processes as a springboard to describe how what she calls an "activist arts pedagogy" can offer educators a common language for talking about activist art projects in formal and informal learning spaces. Dewhurst (2011) argues for a better articulation of the kinds of art making and learning processes for which social justice arts educators advocate.

Like the earlier referenced Lived Civics approach (Cohen, Kahne, & Marshall, 2018), I center an arts education experience that is connected to the lives of young people. My rationale for designing the visual arts unit in such a way is that there ought to be more opportunities in schools for students to talk about issues that are meaningful to them. By providing a range of artistic media and project structures through which students could express their ideas about those social issues, I assumed students would develop their voices through art, a worthwhile aim of education for both private and public reasons. Freedman (2000) explains, "Students make art not merely for its formal, technical, or even private value, but to communicate about social issues in social ways" (p. 323). She elaborates:

> The primary purpose of such student art is not therapeutic—it is social. It is not just about individual emotions, it is about the personalization of social issues. The complexity of this, perhaps subtle, difference is critical if we intend to teach students about art in relation to their world (p. 324).

Freedman's reflection is relevant to the larger role of student voice in this study. While the issues about which students made art were indeed personal and while this exploration may have had therapeutic benefits, their art was not "just about individual emotions" (Freedman, 2000, p. 324). Their personal narratives got students thinking deeply about broader implications of the issues at hand to figure out a way to use available tools to take topics and transform them into messages about their world. I conceive of political voice development as taking an issue and working with it to project a message to others; political voice is also intertwined symbiotically with artistic voice as students figured out how to available tools of art to project that message in a unique way. (While I never used the term "political" explicitly with students during lessons, the art students made was decidedly political because through their art, they embedded their perspectives, emotional experiences, and evolving ideologies.)

Conceiving of student voice in arts classrooms

Art making is a way of supporting students in developing their voices through the representational process. *Student voice* is a concept used in several related but different ways in the literature, and in this study, I draw from diverse influences to theoretically and practically situate the concept of student voice in relation to the arts. Broadly, I build on literature to position voice as something that is supported internally through creating representations in the arts (Eisner, 2002; Gardner, 1982; Halverson, 2013) as students consider what they want to say to an external audience. This view of student voice considers how the arts create opportunities to examine inner workings of the self as they simultaneously open spaces for dialogue and engagement with the world. Greene (1995) argued that art is a channel for youth to interrogate complex histories as they seek to "find their voices and play participatory and articulate parts of a community in the making" (p.132) and "speak in their own voices in a world where other

voices define the mainstream" (p. 190). To explicitly connect voice to the representational process and studio habits of mind, *observing* teaches students how to better read and attend to the world, and through *envisioning*, students construct representations to write and rewrite the world using language from their own experiences (Freire & Macedo, 1987). I elaborate on the theoretical and practical components of voice that ground this study after reviewing literature on student voice in the following section.

Conceptions of voice from the literature

Voice as personal self-expression. There are various perspectives on the role of student voice in education, most of which stem from progressive and radical schools of thought (Lensmire, 1998). One perspective positions voice as a form of individual expression, particularly in the teaching of school subjects like writing. This perspective aligns with an expressionist rationale for teaching the arts, in this case, supporting students in expressing ideas rooted in their experiences through written language. Advocates of a writer's workshop approach prefer curriculum in which students choose their own topics for their writing in pursuit of finding and exercising their authentic voices (Calkins, 1986, 1991), yet those topics need not necessarily concern the social world. The writer's workshop method of cultivating voice is focused on bringing the individual voice out of the student through writing activities in which students work on their own to translate their ideas to writing.

Voice as personal expression is relevant for the present study, yet conceiving of voice only in this way does not go far enough to focus students on the kinds of causes for which they might use their voice. Furthermore, the idea of voice as personal expression is aligned with Enlightenment conceptions of voice as a singular expression of the self rather than one that is dynamic and formed with others in social interaction (Lensmire, 1998; Willinsky, 1990). This

position overlooks that voice is something that can be co-constructed with others over time through social relationships (Lensmire, 1998). The writer's workshop conception of voice is relevant for this study because it takes student experiences and ideas seriously (Lensmire, 1998). However, advocates of voice as personal expression do not explicitly view voice as a critical tool for inquiry or change making within a social world. The kind of voice I discuss below offers this missing dimension.

Voice as participation in a social world. A second perspective on student voice is rooted in critical pedagogy and focuses on the development of voice as a form of participation in an emancipatory education (Freire, 1970, 1985; Giroux, 1988; Giroux & McLaren, 1989; Simon, 1987). This conception of voice is focused on students actively participating in the production of meaning, because "critical pedagogy wants students to be active participants in the construction of their worlds, rather than trapped in the meanings, subjectivities, and forms of authority determined by powerful others" (Lensmire, 1998, p. 268). While in writer's workshop student voice is the intended outcome of engaging in particular learning activities, critical pedagogues see voice as part of the collective work to be done, as part of the project itself. Also, voice as participation positions student voice as necessarily partial and encourages both affirmation and questioning of how student voice develops (Lensmire, 1998). Voice as participation aligns with a reconstructionist rationale for arts education because it focuses on how students can use their voices to reconstruct the world.

Aligned with voice as participation, student voice is often used in the context of educational reform efforts (Fullan, 1991; Kozol, 1991; Levin, 1994; Mitra, 2001), grounded in the belief that students should have a voice in creating tangible change. Voice is a component of civic education efforts and what it means to be part of a democratic society (e.g., Morgan &

Streb, 2001). It is important for students to have space to make sense of the current political context, and as Freire and Giroux (1989) argue, "to locate themselves in history, find their own voices, and establish the convictions and compassion necessary for exercising civic courage, taking risks, and furthering the habits, customs, and social relations essential to democratic public forms" (p. viii). When students have a high level of voice in service learning projects they show a higher degree of civic engagement (Fielding, 2004). This kind of civic voice is connected to how students participate in projects and effect tangible change. To illustrate, a project with a low level of student voice would be one in which the teacher selects the issue to be addressed, plans how the class will address it, and students participate in the carrying out of the plan. In a project with a high level of student voice, students would assess community needs, choose an issue to be addressed, and design a plan they work to make happen. A project has a high level of student voice if students feel they had real responsibilities, engaged in challenging tasks, helped plan the project, and made important decisions (Conrad & Hedin, 1985; Melchior, 1998).

Scholars argue that student opinions should be counted in ways that have a real influence on their lives and education (Beyer, 1996; Cook-Sather, 2006; Dewey, 1938; Nagle, 2001) to acknowledge that teachers are not the only experts in the classroom (Delpit, 1988). This position makes it possible for students to engage with issues that matter to them and their peers; that is, students can use their voices to craft their opinions around issues that impact their everyday lives. While this sounds like a powerful way to position students as having agency in their own educations, schools as institutions of power can constrain the impacts of student voice (Fielding, 2004), meaning that students do not always have the power to change things as they are. This misalignment with the reality of what is possible can lead to what Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) calls the romanticization of student voice in educational contexts. Calls for incorporating more

student voice of this kind in schools are not universally endorsed. Orner (1992) describes that the illumination of an "authentic" voice of the people is a pursuit met with "a great deal of suspicion" (p. 76) by oppressed groups. She argues for taking a critical perspective on student voice to consider why the "oppressed" are speaking, for whose benefit they speak, and how others control speech. Therefore, there need to be additional goals when the focus is student voice in school contexts, especially if the goal of changing the existing system is not feasible.

Because creating tangible change is not or should not always be the primary goal of learning, developing the capacity to express one's ideas is a reasonable, complementary goal to that of using voice as a tool for building critical consciousness and change. Thus, just as ideas from expressionist and reconstructivist streams of influence complement one another in articulating a reason for why arts education matters, voice as expression and voice as participation pair well to support student voice development in this study. On one hand, students developed their voices as a way of expressing their ideas and emotions related to their lived experiences, and on the other, they used the art making process to engage in the social and political world outside of school.

Voice as project developing across time and situation. In this study I add the idea of voice as a project in development (Lensmire, 1998) to voice as expression and participation. While voice as a project can include the strengths of defining voice as both expression and participation, it uniquely positions voice in the process of becoming, that is, student voice "is not construed as already-finished or frozen but developing across time and situation [as it is] taken up by actual students as part of their everyday schoolwork" (Lensmire, 1998, p. 279). Lensmire (1998) argues that this conception of voice is closer to the ground of what it is that students actually do in their daily work in classrooms and honors the complexities of the dynamic role of

voice in learning and development, making it an appropriate layer for situating voice in the present classroom-based study. Lensmire (1998) argues that the construction of voice involves processes of appropriation, social struggle, and becoming. Through appropriation, students craft their voices by taking on and transforming the words of others (Bakhtin, 1986). Through appropriation, students engage in social struggle during which they must give new meanings to words with the intention of satisfying audiences. And finally, through becoming, Lensmire (1998) acknowledges that voices can be supported or shut down and that student voice development is only possible through collaboration with others. The combined theoretical layers of voice as expression, participation, and project support my rationale for teaching the arts and set up how I operationalize the construct of voice to study its development from different angles in chapters five and six.

Operationalizing voice in the present study

In this study, voice is theoretically conceived of as a project of becoming that develops across time and situation; voice is jointly focused on students' personal experiences and the production of meaning about an outside world through the representational process. Practically, voice consists of how students (1) chose personally relevant social issues for their visual art; (2) developed unique points of view on those social issues; (3) expressed their perspectives through the use of representational tools and how they described their art; and (4) engaged with an imagined or real audience in receiving their work. In developing their voices along these different dimensions, students were engaged in a process of self-understanding and becoming through their development of ideas as well as a process of engagement and participation in developing intersubjectivity with others. Each dimension of voice is valuable because the development of voice concerns both how a student's own point of view comes to be and how a

student reflects on what happens when that point of view comes into context with others. Voice is simultaneously about the self and also throwing something out there to see what happens when others respond.

The operationalization of student voice in the present study builds from ideas embedded in the literature reviewed here. My practical positioning of voice is aligned with how Furman and Barton (2006) operationalized student voice in their study of students creating a science documentary. They conceived of student voice as students' perspectives and participation enacted through their talk and choices. In this study, students' perspectives and participation were a central part of the art making process and engagement in conversation spaces; the data I collected includes how they talked about the art they made and the choices they made across that art making process as they prepared their work for an audience. A thread that remains constant in this study is that voice is importantly conceived of as something that is in a constant state of revision and analysis, as something that evolves over the course of experience. Furthermore, voice is both internally developed and externally projected.

Building from this plan for operationalizing voice, I further break down the construct into different "kinds" of voice in analysis. In chapter five, I use data from whole class discussions to show how student voice was co-constructed with students and myself in the classroom. In this analysis, I looked for evidence of what it meant to have a voice more generally in whole class discussions, including what students contributed and how others took up those contributions in interaction. In chapter six, I further disentangle voice. Rather than use the broad conception of having a voice from chapter five, I break down artistic and political voice into distinct elements that come together in classroom activity. The artistic and political strands of voice worked symbiotically because as students grappled with the ideas they wanted to convey about particular

social issues, they simultaneously considered how to best represent them using art media and tools. I offer a breakdown of description and examples of these kinds of voice in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1.

Conceptions of voice

Voice category	Description	Hypothetical example
Having a voice (chapter five)	How voice is defined and develops in the whole class context as it is engaged, supported, and co-constructed by the teacher and students in interaction	As students discuss a work of art, multiple ideas are shared; students are encouraged to debate the differences in ideas in whole class discussion, yet there is not a need for drawing concrete conclusions, only dialogue
Artistic voice (chapter six)	How students talk about taking art materials and transforming them into mediums to support their ideas (expressionist stream)	A student talks about how to use colors and shapes to convey a mood connected to her point of view and narrative about her social issue; she considers how an audience might interact with her choices
Political voice (chapter six)	How students talk about taking topics and transforming them into messages for an audience (reconstructivist stream)	A student talks about the ideas and message for what he wants to show through his art based on his experience and understanding of the social issue, he considers what an audience will take from the message he puts out there

How sociocultural theories of learning support this work

Thus far I have provided rationale for teaching in the arts rooted in expressionist and reconstructivist streams of influence and described how student voice aligns with these respective streams. To summarize, in the present study art is positioned as a way of learning how to express oneself and how to better understand the social world through a creative inquiry process. Art is at once both cognitive and expressive, a process and inquiry tool, inwardly focused and outward facing. The arts in this context support a pedagogical focus on expressing emotion and transformation of the social world; in the curriculum, the art making process centers

self-expression and the intellectual construction of ideas related to students' self-selected social issues. Aligned with the purpose of the arts in this context, student voice is cumulatively a form of expression, participation, and conceived of as developing across time and situation. Given the rationale for the arts I have articulated and the aligned conceptualization of student voice, in this section I argue how sociocultural theory is an appropriate framework suited for the arts learning context that focuses this study.

The present study is rooted in the sociocultural tradition of learning and development, which acknowledges that learning is a fundamentally social, situated phenomenon (Greeno, 1998). Core tenets of Vygotskian sociocultural theory maintain that learning is tied to development, situated and inseparable from practice, and mediated by cultural tools (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). Sociocultural theory aligns with expressionism because it positions students' prior knowledge and experiences as valuable assets to learning and supports the role of imagination and creative activity in learning. Vygotsky (1930/2004) writes, "in actuality, imagination, as the basis of all creative activity, is an important component of absolutely all aspects of cultural life, enabling artistic, scientific, and technical creation alike" (p. 9). To Vygotsky, imagination and creative activity are the result of combinatorial action, meaning that as people create new things and ideas, they embed how cultural and historical tools have been used and appropriated over time. Thus, the capacity to imagine and create something new does not come from nothing; creative work is based on prior understandings of and experience in the social world. The capacity for creativity is a uniquely human endeavor and integral to constructing new meaning in and for the world.

A focus on imagination supports the idea of constructing meaning for the future. Vygotsky explains, "It is precisely human creative activity that makes the human being a

creature oriented toward the future, creating the future and thus altering his own present" (p. 9). Vygotsky elaborates on this point that people combine their prior experiences and impressions to construct new realities in order to consider how to create possible futures (Enciso, 2017). The related concept of "social dreaming" (Gutierrez, 2008; Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez, Alvarez, & Chiu, 1999) calls participants to consider how to re-envision history and make space for new constructions of their future selves, thus working together to change the world as it is. A sociocultural focus on development based on prior knowledge and experiences in a social world and orientation toward future change support the expressionist and reconstructivist arts argument that anchors this dissertation.

Sociocultural theory provides a grounded framework for the study of student voice as a project developing across time and situation (Lensmire, 1998). I am concerned with how individual student voices developed through participation in the designed instructional experience yet also account for the collective nature of voice. The focus for analysis in chapters five and six are classroom interactions that highlight the co-constructed nature of voice development. In chapter five, the connection to the collective is explicit as I use whole class conversations as my unit of analysis for defining what it meant to have a voice in the whole class context. In chapter six, the focus is on individuals, yet co-construction of voice in social interaction is an active part of students' individual voice development as other voices were internalized and embedded within individual student meaning making (Bahktin, 1981).

Sociocultural theory makes sense as an overarching lens for this study because of its focus on co-constructed meaning making and interaction in activity (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978); according to sociocultural theory, learning is mediated by tools, rules, and divisions of labor in a community of practice, all of which were significant mediating factors

in the arts learning environment in this study. Furthermore, sociocultural theory defines learning as a change in participation linked to a change in identity. Bakhtin (1981) claims that identity can be thought of as a dialogical process taken up in situated interaction as people attempt to make meaning through interaction. While identity is not a focus of my analysis, it might be argued that what students said and did in interaction with their peers was part of how they developed their voices and their worldviews to better understand themselves.

A sociocultural lens shifts learning goals from knowledge acquisition to changing participation within a community of practice. Sociocultural theory describes education as learning to participate in an activity system (Engeström, 1987), accounting for students' cultural histories so multiple ways of participating are legitimized. The specific sociocultural perspective I take is one that acknowledges that development in activity operates on interconnected levels, what Rogoff (1995) calls operating on "three planes" of sociocultural development: the community/institutional; the interpersonal; and the personal. Rogoff (1995) argues that these three planes mutually constitute one another in development, and while one of the planes might be the focus of analysis at different points, the others are embedded. I take this to mean that to understand analysis on the community, interpersonal, or personal planes one must also aim to understand how the background planes contribute. In the case of this dissertation, the community plane is constituted by the particular social contexts of the social issues about which students made art (i.e., the evolution of LGBTQ rights or immigration reform in the U.S.) and the longer history and context of political art making both within and outside of educational spaces (i.e., Dadaists making art in reaction to World War I). The community plane is outside the bounds of this dissertation but is worth acknowledging as it informed how students engaged in art making in the present study. The interpersonal plane involved how students and I worked together within

the bounds of the curriculum to generate ideas about art and art making through conversation and interaction about social issues with which students had personal experiences. The personal plane refers to how students participated as individuals creating cultural artifacts and how their participation and ideas developed as they engaged with one another in the art making process.

Because this study is about designing learning experiences specifically for students whose voices are often marginalized, it is valuable to note the limitations of mainstream versions of sociocultural theory concerning issues of equity. Sociocultural theory can indeed reveal microprocesses of power, agency, and identity development, yet it generally neglects larger historical and institutionalized systems of oppression (Lewis & Moje, 2003). Lewis and Moje (2003) argue that situated learning always occurs within discourse communities that contend with specific resources, cultural tools, and participant identities associated with larger systems of power that determine what type of participation counts. Aligned with a Freirean notion that through education students should develop "critical consciousness" to become "transformers of [the] world," Lewis and Moje (2003) suggest the synthesis of critical social theories and sociocultural perspectives to illuminate power relations between "the social and individual, the global and the local, the institutional and the everyday" (p. 1992). While the analysis in this dissertation is not expansive enough to do justice in reconciling sociocultural and critical theories, I describe and recognize political tensions inherent in the landscape across which student-teacher interactions occurred.

Below I briefly describe how my pedagogical approach was informed by sociocultural theory. While sociocultural theory is a theory of learning, not teaching, it can inform the design of learning environments and the instructional decisions a teacher makes before and during

moments of classroom interaction. Here I focus on the broader framework of the approach, and in chapter three, I describe the curriculum.

Overview of pedagogical approach informed by sociocultural theory

Sociocultural theories of learning informed my approach to teaching and instructional design. Principles of sociocultural theory encourage a shift from competitive school practices focused on individual success toward more collective forms of learning, an appropriate frame for the kind of art making I envisioned happening as part of this study. While individual development was still valuable, rather than focus on performance outcomes of individual students, sociocultural theory supports learning through joint activity. The class was positioned as a community-of-learners (Rogoff, 1994), in which process was emphasized, I was a facilitator, student interest drove instructional decisions, and student evaluation occurred through collaboration. In a community-of-learners, participants define expertise, novices are apprenticed into collective work, and through legitimate peripheral participation, they eventually become full participants (Lave & Wenger, 1991). A community-of-learners encourages expansive forms of expertise and learning (Engeström, 2001) that can cross boundaries, settings, and time to break down artificial barriers between school and home and formal and informal settings (Gutiérrez, Larson, Enciso, & Ryan, 2007). Students and teachers co-construct relevance through curriculum content, connecting learning to life outside of school, and through the reorganization of processes and participation structures (Enyedy & Mukhopadhyay, 2007; Enyedy, Danish, & Fields, 2011). As students shifted between classroom roles, their very identities were socially constructed within the community of practice (Fields & Enyedy, 2013).

Positioning teaching and learning as social was not without community and institutional tensions in this study. Some of the tensions are highlighted when I describe the study setting in

chapter three. To offer one example, before data collection began, the art teacher whose class I was taking over asked me to come up with a plan to give students grades since she was required submit them twice throughout the semester. While not relevant to what I hoped to study, I tried to reconcile my desired approach and the art teacher's institutional need for grades by asking students to self-evaluate their participation and assess the work of their groups through co-written reflections. Working through these tensions was part of the work that needed to be done; sociocultural theory informed all aspects of the study from theoretical grounding of relevant constructs to instructional decisions I had to make as the teacher.

Contribution to existing theory

This study contributes to existing theory because it brings together ideas about arts learning and student voice that have traditionally been separate and presents a novel way to study voice in a specifically designed learning context. I contribute to literature on how student voice has been theorized and operationalized in how I situate having a voice as well as the constructs of artistic and political voice. Additionally, by conceiving of the arts learning experience as one that is both about supporting students in expressing their ideas and applying a constructing mind to ideas, I frame the purpose of art as both intellectual and emotional, anchored in the expressionist and reconstructivist streams of influence for the arts. That is, students used their emotions and experiences to transform materials into mediums as they simultaneously engaged with their emerging critical consciousness to transform topics into messages about the world. Part of the contribution here is in linking a rationale for arts education to the particular instructional context for which it is intended. A final contribution is in how I positioned myself as researcher and designer with a unique perspective on the design and implementation process;

my role within the research helped advance how we think about connecting purpose to the design and organization of learning spaces to support student talk in arts learning environments.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology and Methods

By methodology, I mean how theory and method were integrated in the present study, or as Vann and Cole (2004) describe, "the logic by which theoretical principles are linked to data through *combinations of methods*" (p. 152). In this chapter, I describe both the methodology of this dissertation study and its methods—the modes of inquiry and techniques used to collect and analyze empirical data.

Classroom discourse is a central organizing feature of this study and integral to its methodology. Classroom discourse has been a focus of extensive research in subjects like literacy (Brown & Palincsar, 1989; Cazden, 2001), mathematics (Cobb, Gresalfi, & Hodge, 2009; Nasir, Hand, & Taylor, 2008; Schoenfeld, 2002; Sherin, 2002), and science (Brown, 2005; Driver, Newton, & Osborne, 2000; Lemke, 1990), however, research on talk in arts learning environments has been limited to studies that look at talk as related to individual students in teacher-student interactions (Zander, 2003). In this dissertation I shift the focus in the visual arts classroom from solely individual teacher-student interactions and reframe the arts learning environment as a dynamic discourse community in which interactions are distributed amongst the teacher, students, and materials. Since little work on arts classroom discourse currently exists, this study is exploratory in nature as I aim to understand more about the kinds of participation frameworks and what I term conversation spaces that support students during art making through intentional design. This focus on the arts discourse community has the potential to reveal understandings about student learning in the arts because learning within a discipline is intimately tied to learning to talk and think with others within that discipline's community (Lemke, 1990). Participation as part of an arts classroom discourse community can be a

transformative learning experience as students and teachers work together to collectively make sense of ideas (Enyedy, 2005; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejeda, 1999)—in the case of this study, by discussing how the tools of art can be used for thinking, questioning, and representing their diverse perspectives.

In this chapter, I detail the design-based research (DBR) and case study that organized this dissertation. I describe the intervention itself and my role within the study. I also detail my data sources, design process, data collection procedures, and analysis plan. For reference, my research questions were:

- How did an intentionally designed arts experience support students in talking about art and art making, including the topics they chose and the ways they used art media? (analysis in chapter four)
- How was student voice engaged, supported, and co-constructed by the curriculum, teacher, and students during whole class discussions about art to define what it meant to "have a voice" in the local classroom context? (analysis in chapter five)
- How did individual students develop their artistic and political voices as they engaged with ideas and art media to make their own art and talked about the art they made with partners? (analysis in chapter six)

For the first research question, I generated an overview of the social issues with which students engaged and included how they talked about using artistic tools to represent their ideas, linking their participation in whole group discussions to my curriculum and design decisions. For the second question, I looked at patterns of interaction in whole group discussions about artwork, and for the third question, I used students' participation in small group discussions and interviews about their artwork to trace individual artistic and political voice development.

Overview of the intervention

The intervention included 20 visual arts lessons taught on most Wednesdays and Fridays from September 2017 to December 2017 during students' regularly scheduled art class. On data collection days I would travel to the school early to prep for the day's teaching and research. I worked with four 6th grade art classes from 8:05am to 1:00pm with five minutes of transition time between periods. In total I taught 127 students and 32 were in my focus class. I was the only teacher in the classroom, and the regular art teacher took on administrative duties during this time. I only collected video data for my focus class. Each day I traveled from class to class using a cart to bring necessary art and research materials with me. My days followed a similar pattern, but my flexibility was essential as we were often interrupted by the everyday happenings of school (e.g., fire drills, picture day) so as expected, my lessons did not always go according to plan. (These interruptions in class time caused the lessons to shift and one project incorporating drama and script writing was entirely eliminated.) I elaborate on specific stories of these interruptions in my teaching and research elsewhere (Dahn, 2019). Here I write about my lessons with the intentions I had for design, acknowledging that plans sometimes changed and shifted given the often messy and improvisational nature of teaching in a classroom nested within a school. Dealing with these interruptions as part of the work I aimed to do grounded the intervention research in a more realistic way.

In terms of the curriculum I initially designed, the first ten lessons consisted of students mainly working on individual art projects. These projects included abstract watercolor paintings, creating symbols for change, and word art (an overview of planned lessons is included in Table 3-1 below). The second set of ten lessons focused on students working in small groups to create costume pieces. I intentionally designed the curriculum in this way because I had wanted to look

at individual and collective voice development side-by-side, however, during analysis I ultimately decided to focus on individual art making during the first ten lessons for the dissertation because I found such rich data in the conversations students were having about their individual projects, and I wanted to do their individual stories justice before diving into the collaborative work. I plan to analyze data from collaborative costume making in the future. Additionally, I found that their individual stories incorporated the voices of their peers from discussions during art making and so I reasoned that in my analysis I could still observe how voice was collectively co-constructed even within the individual projects.

As might be inferred from reading the essential questions in Table 3-1, some lessons were not explicitly focused on collecting data relevant to my research questions. For example, I considered the first two lessons to be "warm-ups" focused on building relationships with students and setting the tone for our work together. I included whole class conversations from these first two lessons in data analysis for my second research question but did not use students' individual art making from these lessons for the analysis of artistic and political voice in my third research question. Also, whole class conversations about art did not really occur during the last three lessons of the unit; for lessons 18, 19, and 20 we focused on preparing for the public presentation and ensuring artist statements reflected the messages students hoped to convey to an audience.

Table 3-1.

Essential questions for curriculum and art projects

Lesson	Essential questions	Art making focus
1	What is a self-portrait? What should a face look like? What is art? What is beautiful? What is ugly?	Self-portrait contour drawings
2	What is a self-portrait? What should a face look like? What is art? What is beautiful? What is ugly?	Contour drawings with wire portraits

3	What kinds of art do people create about social issues? What are topics people use for art making around social issues?	Modern calligraphy; choosing social issues
4	How do artists express emotion through color, shape, and line? How do artists show action using tools of art?	Abstract expressionism I
5	How do artists express emotion through color, shape, and line? How do artists show action using tools of art?	Abstract expressionism II
6	Who are you? What roles do you play? What does your name say about you?	Modern calligraphy – name going into watercolor
7	Can art change the world? How do artists create symbols of change?	Social issue symbol prints
8	Can art change the world? How do artists create symbols of change?	Social issue symbol prints
9	What does collaborative art making look like? How do we make decisions together when making collaborative art?	Exquisite corpse activity
10	What does collaborative art making look like? How do we make decisions together when making collaborative art? How do we create abstractions from different forms?	Abstract body drawings
	Formal first interview	
11	What is the role of young people in social movements? How do we communicate messages about social issues through costume?	Chagall costumes (planning)
12	How do we communicate messages about social issues through costume?	Chagall costumes (assembling)
13	How do we communicate messages about social issues through costume and performance?	Chagall costumes (assembling)
14	How do artists tell stories? What forms of verbal and nonverbal communication can we use?	Chagall costumes (assembling)
15	How do artists tell stories? What is the role of the audience?	Chagall costumes (assembling)
16	How do artists tell stories? What is the role of the audience?	Chagall costumes (assembling)

17	How do artists use public space in creative ways? What is the role of the audience?	Buffer day – discussion of audience and public space
18	How do we summarize our work for an audience through writing?	Artist statements
19	How do we summarize our work for an audience through writing?	Artist statements
20	How do we curate an artistic experience for the public?	Presentation prep
	Formal second interview	

I collected data for all 20 lessons, but for this study I focus mainly on the individual art making videos during the first ten lessons and include a few whole class conversations about art making from the second set of ten lessons in my analysis. For tracing the voice development of individual focus students in chapter six I use data from lessons three and four during which students chose social issues and made abstract and word art. As I explain in more detail later, I also use student interviews and written artist statements to supplement my descriptions of their individual voice trajectories.

The general structure of lessons remained fairly consistent, yet some lessons were markedly different such as those in which students wrote artist statements (i.e., because students had been in the practice of writing them, they required minimal direction during these lessons). Here I explain this general structure of the first ten lessons so that the excerpts I describe in chapters four, five, and six are understood in context. At the start of each lesson I usually posed a question to activate students' prior knowledge and engage them in the day's topic. For example, during the third lesson I began by asking students to generate a class list of social issues. Students briefly discussed ideas with their table partners and we then created a list as a group. Following an opening activity, we usually discussed a few works of art related to the day's topic

and art making activity. For example, during the third lesson we discussed a few pre-selected works of art. To structure these discussions I sometimes used Visual Thinking Strategies (Yenawine, 2013) as a tool but let students guide the discussions and asked more specific probing questions about what and how artists were communicating through their work. I also offered some background on the different works of art discussed so that students began to understand and think about the historical context and rationale behind why artists were making their art. After these discussions about artwork, I demonstrated the art making activity for the day. Students then gathered materials and got to work during studio time. While each day had a focus, because students worked at different paces, they sometimes worked on different projects during studio time. During studio time students talked to their table partners, sometimes prompted by me when I would bring the class together and frame the conversation spaces by asking students to share personal stories, critique one another, or share reflections on presenting to an audience. These foci for discussions were an integral part of the arts pedagogy I had hoped to implement because they all related to the creative process. Sometimes this more private student talk was about art and sometimes it was not. After their work time I would close the lesson by previewing what we would be doing during our next lesson together and ask students to reflect in their research journals for a few moments. While a valuable part of the class rhythm, I did not use their written reflections for this study.

Choice to take on the role of teacher and researcher

As part of my research design, I took on the role of visual arts teacher and researcher, following the tradition of teacher research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Lampert & Ball, 1998; Vossoughi, 2014). Combining research and teaching in such a way is a well-supported theoretical argument (e.g., Berg & Smith, 1988; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Jansen & Peshkin,

1992). My choice was initially inspired by Erickson (2006a), who draws from the history of ethnographic research to argue that instead of researchers studying teachers and schools from a top-down lens, researchers and teachers ought to work *side by side* and engage in inquiry together through co-research. Building from Erickson's idea, I decided to take on the intellectual, physical, and emotionally-charged work of teaching, making my own teaching the experiment, an inseparable part of the research (Wilson, 1995). While the decision to be the primary teacher in the study resulted in decreased objectivity, the goal of this dissertation was never really about being more objective; in fact, my continuous reflexivity (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995) as teacher and researcher was integral to developing deeper insights and practical understanding during the design process (Maxwell, 2013). My position is similar to Alan Peshkin, who in reflection on his research argued:

> The subjectivity that originally I had taken as an affliction, something to bear because it could not be foregone, could, to *the* contrary, be taken as "virtuous." My subjectivity is the basis for the story that I am able to tell. It is a strength on which I build. It makes me who I am as a person *and* as a researcher, equipping with the perspectives and insights that shape all I do as a researcher, from the selection of topic clear through to the emphases I make in my writing. Seen as virtuous, subjectivity is something to capitalize on rather than to exorcise (Glense & Peshkin, 1992, p. 104).

I was motivated to engage as both researcher and teacher in this study for a few central reasons. First, because design-based research is concerned with connecting theory and practice, I wanted to use this experimental space to improvise and make changes in practice while documenting the reasons for those changes myself. My flexibility and ability to quickly adapt as a teacher became imperative to my goal of supporting students in having conversations about art,

and because I was embedded in the situation in a rich way, I was able to make swift evaluations and new choices when necessary. Second, my previous experiences as a classroom teacher allowed me to quickly implement the changes I saw necessary in curriculum and instructional design. I was able to make changes myself, know what those changes were, and understand how they were connected to the broader purposes of the study. My previous experiences gave me unique qualifications to make changes in reasonable ways that were true to how a classroom teacher might in practice. I acknowledge that these decisions made on-the-fly were influenced by my goals, beliefs, and knowledge as a teacher (Schoenfeld, 1998) and thus, were integral to my reflexive process in ethnographic memos. I was not concerned about generalizing my choices across teachers because I reasoned that even if I had worked with a teacher other than myself, that teacher would have made choices aligned with her own particular goals, beliefs, and knowledge. Third, my subjective place at the center of the decision-making process ultimately offered me better insight as to how a real teacher might prompt students to engage in conversation spaces and support an arts discourse community during a real school day with 32 (or more) students in a classroom. Indeed, understanding difficult pedagogical decisions teachers must make may be easier when a researcher studies her own practice (Vossoughi, 2014). I reflect more on the benefits and challenges of my role as the primary teacher and researcher elsewhere (Dahn, 2019). Overall, my subjectivity as a researcher and teacher offered me a better understanding of how my theoretical ideas developed in practice.

Notes on setting, context, and my positionality

Here I explain the basic dynamics of the setting and broader context in which the school operated, as well as my positionality within those dynamics, acknowledging that my perspective is necessarily partial. This study involved individual students situated in a classroom that was

impacted by the ebbs and flows of daily activity within a school, nested within a larger community and sociopolitical context. It is valuable to consider how these contexts overlapped because the multiple contexts in which students are situated are important for understanding how student identity develops (Enyedy, Goldberg, & Welsh, 2006), and for the present study, the development of student voice.

On the institutional level, the study happened at school, an institution that traditionally constrains and enables particular kinds of learning and participation. Schools are not static, and there were shifts within this particular school that impacted the study. For example, after repeated staff absences during data collection, I learned that after winter break, the lead teacher of my focus class, a second sixth grade teacher, and even the principal quit and left the school mid-year. Mid-year departures can have detrimental impacts on student learning and continuity of student experience (Henry & Redding, 2018). From a wider lens, schools operate within a sociopolitical context that makes its way into classrooms through the content of what is discussed and the actual subjection of students within that context. For example, as immigration issues and growing xenophobic rhetoric took center stage in national politics, related topics made their way into our classroom discourse space. And even closer to home, during the data collection process, one of my students had a parent who was deported, and he then had to leave the school community of which he had been part since he was in kindergarten.

It is important for researchers invested in designing for more equitable learning environments to reflect on blindspots in work on how learning happens and examine how micro, meso, and macro contexts interact. This push for examination is especially important as research in the learning sciences attempts to find ways to engage more effectively with macro level issues of power in learning contexts (Esmonde & Booker, 2017). While the present study does not

reach to the macro level in analysis, a focus on classroom conversations about social issues impacting students' lives reveals how students made sense of macro-level issues in a micro-level classroom context.

My positionality within teaching and research. In addition to considering the school setting from a wider lens, it is also important to reflect on my own positionality as an actor within this study given that teachers might inadvertently perpetuate inequities in arts education (Spillane, 2015). These reflections might also be valuable to others because the majority of pre-service art teachers are white (Galbraith & Grauer, 2004), which "entrenches white art teacher identity as normative" (Spillane, 2015, p. 64).

My teaching was part of the research work I was doing and it was therefore necessary I incorporate my identity and experience into all aspects of design and analysis. Specifically, my identity as a white woman teaching students of color from a low-income community is relevant to the ways I interacted with students in the classroom, the decisions I made for curriculum design, and how I defined my role as the teacher. Peeling back the layers of my positionality and tracing the story of who I am as a teacher and researcher was vital to understanding the ethical decisions I made as a white art teacher for the present study.

My identities as a teacher and researcher have evolved since I first began my career in education over ten years ago. My first job out of college was as a first grade teacher on the Southside of Chicago at a charter school in a predominantly Black community. In these early years teaching I came to understand how little I knew about the community in which I found myself. I had grown up in the suburbs of Chicago about an hour drive from where I was teaching and went to a public high school that was about 60% white with a graduation rate over 90%. I mostly interacted with white and Asian kids in my AP classes on the "honors" track, and my

interactions with Black and Latinx students were mainly limited to experiences in the arts through drama, debate, and chorus. My older brother had been adopted from Vietnam and so my most intimate understandings of racial difference were through his perspective and experiences. Overall, growing up I did not find myself in many situations that presented the opportunity to discuss race nor did I intentionally seek out opportunities to do so.

As someone who had previously interacted with mainly white people on a daily basis throughout both high school and college and thought little of my own race, my first experiences teaching in a Black community necessitated I confront the limitations of my own perspective. My whiteness had thus far offered me economic, social, and cultural privileges (McIntosh, 1990) that were invisible to me because I had not needed to consider not having them. Additionally, had I been pushed to confront the privileges afforded to me because of my race, it is likely that I would have been uncomfortable considering them (Haney Lopez, 2006). As a novice teacher I was mostly unaware of the centrality of race, its relevance to education, and why or how one might strive to be a culturally responsive educator. Furthermore, my own education about becoming a teacher was through an alternative certification program that had particular ideas about what and how low-income students of color should learn strongly linked to neoliberal practices emphasizing student achievement as the primary indicator of success. The values of the program quickly became my values. I thought that operating with my best intentions was enough despite that my whiteness automatically put me in a position of power within a system that perpetuated racial inequities.

During these early years teaching my focus on results and achievement above most things was likely detrimental to my students' development. Given the incentives provided by my school and through my certification program, my initial identity as a teacher was wrapped up in how

much my students were learning as measured by standardized tests and other quantitative measures. At the time, being a teacher to me meant that I had *control* over the classroom (something that was difficult to achieve for a long while), students were performing well on tests, and my supervisors thought I was doing a good job. At the time, I believed I was doing well when I finally figured out how to "manage" a classroom, meaning that I had a controlled sense of how to handle student behavior. In looking back however, I know that I was not quite the teacher my students needed. Despite the complex feelings I now feel in reflection on this time, one big success was that I cultivated and maintained deep relationships with a few of my former students and their families.

I took this learning about building relationships with me to my next career move as the founding visual arts teacher at a new charter school in Los Angeles. In the move from Chicago to Los Angeles I was also transitioning to work in a predominantly working class Latinx community so I experienced a renewed sense that I knew very little about the community in which I was now embedded. This was a dream job opportunity for me, however—I was able to teach *and* create an arts program from the ground up for the students I had. However, the ideology that drove the school was very much concerned with closing the "achievement gap," again stressing a focus on test results. Our school was part of a larger charter network that had an achievement-based perspective on what and how students should learn. (I explain more details about this setting in the following section.) Of course, I made the choice to work at this school, however, as the art teacher, I was able to transcend the system in ways the classroom teachers could not. In teaching art, I figured out how to support student learning through more creative outlets, focusing on cultivating student voice rather than achievement. I had the freedom to use more qualitative measures of success. During this time I realized that teaching art in this context

was a much better fit aligned with my personal beliefs about education; teaching art helped me be the kind of teacher I hoped to be.

During this time I learned how to design curriculum that was responsive to my students' interests and culture by creating experiences they loved. I came away understanding that my students were most engaged in the arts when the curriculum was relevant to their lived experiences (e.g., my students loved learning about Los Angeles-based street artists) and when I organized the experience so that they had choice and mobility within the classroom environment. Based on my experiences facilitating classroom discussions, I have a strong conviction that it is important to give students time and space to explicitly talk about race and express their feelings, ideas, and experiences, acknowledging the myriad of issues associated with colorblindness in schools and pedagogy (Atwater, 2008; Howard, 2010; Lewis, 2003; Pollock, 2004). Additionally, I am in a constant state of reflection on my own level of racial identity development (Carter & Goodwin, 1994), and my place in these critical conversations is not to impart my own ideas or beliefs.

I take the time and space to describe my past experiences because the tensions I have grappled with about who I am and why I am doing this work drove decisions I made for this study. From my more recent experiences as a visual arts teacher in Los Angeles, tensions include how I am both proud of our students' achievement and disappointed that many of their art classes were replaced by test prep once testing season was upon us. As a school, we created an environment families loved and trusted in but knew that we were part of a larger neoliberal system that diverted resources from public schools. It was humbling to have been part of such an amazing staff and school community and yet I felt conflicted knowing that I would never feel

like a fully legitimate member based on my background. I felt creatively fulfilled as a visual arts teacher but always had a sense that it was not the right career fit for me.

For this study I made a number of decisions that were informed by some of the tensions I experienced. To start, I made the decision to be the primary teacher and researcher in this study because I knew how difficult it was to be the teacher making decisions for curriculum and during moments of instruction and I wanted to honor that decision-making process at part of the research. Furthermore, I made an ethical choice to teach all 6th grade students at the school rather than just one class or a small group. Teaching all students required much more work on my end in terms of time and energy, including materials prep, planning, and relationship-building. There were days when I was frustrated that a lesson had seemingly gone so well with one class but not with my focus class. There were days when I was tired or struggling with classroom management and thought to myself that I did not "need" to be teaching everyone. However, this decision was rooted in my ethical beliefs about what it means to do interventionist research in schools. An additional decision I made informed by tensions I experienced was to use a sociocultural framework as a theoretical lens for teaching and learning in this study. This perspective forced me to reorient my role as a teacher within the classroom. Instead of seeing the role of the teacher as one that needed to *control* or *manage* the classroom, I did everything I could to position myself as a guide who supported student talk about art and art making. While I slipped into my old teacher habits emphasizing my prior values during this study, operating from a sociocultural framework and framing learning as participation is a harder way to teach. If done well, I reasoned that this practical orientation would better align with my beliefs about how my students should learn and my role as a guide within that learning. A final decision I made was about how I shaped the curriculum, building from students' lives and experiences, attempting to make fewer

assumptions about what and how they wanted to learn and make art. Acknowledging that my experiences as a white teacher were very different from my students resulted in me being a better listener during discussions and letting students take control of our conversations. Also, while not included in the analysis for this dissertation, I purposefully planned for collaborative costume making to offer students an experience to learn with one another. The particular decisions I mention here were informed by my previous experiences and what I believe we should expect of researchers doing interventionist work in schools.

Setting

The school setting for this study was a public charter middle school called Esperanza Prep, situated in a working class Latinx community in Los Angeles County. The study occurred during the fall of the 2017-2018 academic year, the school's second year of operation. While the school only served 5th graders in 2016-2017, Esperanza plans to offer one additional grade level per year, adding a new class of 5th graders each fall until 2019-2020 so the school will ultimately serve 5th-8th grade students. In the 2017-2018 academic year, Esperanza Prep had fifth and sixth grade students. Of the sixth grade class, 97% identified as Latinx and 92% qualified for free or reduced-price meals. Special Education students made up 10% of the sixth grade. The class was 62% male and 38% female.

In its first year Esperanza Prep shared space with a local church and operated out of four classrooms and an office. As is the reality with many startup charter schools in Los Angeles County, Esperanza's location is not yet permanent; the teachers and students are required to move when there is no longer space for them to expand in their current location. Sometimes students and teachers must move and adapt on very short notice. Case in point, I discovered about a month before beginning the study that the new location would no longer have a dedicated

space for art. While I already had most of my curriculum written, I had to quickly figure out a way to travel with materials from classroom to classroom and change art projects accordingly. At the time of writing this dissertation, Esperanza Prep was at its third location in three years.

Additional details about Esperanza Prep's culture and organization are consequential for contextualizing the present study. As a branch of a well-known charter school network following a "no excuses" model, working at Esperanza came with certain affordances and constraints for my research. One affordance gave me the freedom to conduct my study without additional paperwork required by traditional LAUSD schools. Esperanza Prep was selected as the study site through purposeful sampling (Maxwell, 2013) mainly because of this ease of access and based on the previous relationships I developed with the school leader, art teacher, and students. Additionally, Esperanza is a place where visual arts is designated a "core academic subject" and students receive formal visual arts instruction for an hour and 20 minutes twice a week (although in practice, art class time was often used for extra test prep or as a placeholder for events like Picture Day). Still, the frequency of arts instruction at Esperanza Prep is in stark contrast with most traditional LAUSD schools.

The relationships I formed with the principal and art teacher were critical to supporting my research. The middle school principal was Ms. King, who had been involved in education as a teacher and administrator for over 15 years. Ms. King referred to my research at Esperanza as an "opportunity" for the school. Shortly after the study ended, Ms. King unexpectedly resigned from her position, and unfortunately, I have not had contact with her since. The visual arts teacher, Ms. Kennedy, was in her fourth year of teaching during the study. When I first met with her she said that her first year at Esperanza had been "challenging." As evidence of this, she explained that during its first year Esperanza Prep lost three of its six teachers in the first eight

months. Ms. Kennedy became my trusted partner and friend throughout the study. We have maintained a professional and personal relationship since the end of data collection, and she has helped arrange visits so I could maintain a connection with the sixth grade class.

While affordances of working at this school made the study possible, particular constraints made it difficult to implement the type of pedagogy I envisioned. In schools like this one, there is often an intense focus on student achievement and assessment from the very beginning of the year. Let me briefly illustrate a few classroom practices that were at odds with the kind of arts environment I hoped to create. At schools like Esperanza students are often expected to sit in the "S.L.A.N.T. position" at their desks during class. S.L.A.N.T. is a teaching strategy popularized by Doug Lemov in his *Teach Like a Champion* book series that aims to encourage student attentiveness during class discussion. The acronym S.L.A.N.T. stands for Sit up, Lean forward, Ask and answer questions, Nod your head, and Track the speaker. In many schools, these directives have become a routinized way of measuring compliance from students during whole class discussions rather than actually getting students invested in class conversations. Adding complexity to the matter was that teachers at Esperanza implemented strategies like S.L.A.N.T. inconsistently across classes, leading to what I witnessed as student confusion and apathy. Overall, in my observations, discussion practices at Esperanza followed a pretty traditional turn-taking model and collaborative group work was rare. In light of the practices that were part of Esperanza's culture, working from the sociocultural perspective I described in chapter two required complex navigation as I reflected on my daily experiences of success and failure leading the class.

Design-based research and conjecture mapping

Drawing from the design-based research tradition (Brown, 1992; Collins, 1992; The Design-Based Research Collective, 2003), this study aims to improve educational practice (Edelson, 2002) through the development of humble theory about domain-specific learning (Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer, & Schauble, 2003). Because educational settings are complex, design experiments present a way to research them (Brown, 1992; Collins, 1992; Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer, and Schauble, 2003). The design work in this study is aligned with the goals of social design experiments (Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez & Jurow, 2016; Gutiérrez & Vossoughi, 2010) because the visual arts learning environment in this study leveraged students' diverse forms of expertise and provided space for youth to create representations of their own futures through a transformative experience in the arts (Gutiérrez & Jurow, 2016).

This study differs from traditional design-based research in two specific ways noted here. First, I did not have a plan for macrocycle iteration, meaning that while I made changes to my design throughout the first iteration of this study and parts of this design will likely be part of my future research agenda, I did not plan on teaching the entire visual arts unit again. Second, while much design-based research involves co-design with researchers and teachers, I am both the primary researcher and teacher so co-design was not part of the process.

In order to organize "theory-guided bricolage" (Gravemeijer, 1994) involved in design-based research, I used a technique called *conjecture mapping*, a way of specifying learning environment design that differentiates the practical elements of design from theoretical predictions that lead to desired outcomes (Sandoval, 2014). My conjecture map helped me think about the research as I was doing it. I revisited my conjecture map at times when I felt stuck or unsure of a path forward with the research. While I made several small changes over the course

of data collection and initial analysis, I include a final version of my conjecture map in Appendix A. In this section, I describe how my thinking about design conjectures changed over the course of the study.

Design embodiment. The conjecture map specifies embodied elements of design, including tools and materials, discursive practices, and activity structures that translate the high-level conjecture to tangible elements of learning environment design. Embodied activity structures specify how participant roles and responsibilities are organized.

In my initial conjecture map, I specified that I would create a learning space in which art materials were readily available and accessible like in a professional artist's studio (Hafeli, 2015; Hetland et al., 2013). I reasoned that this embodied element of design would honor and build from students' existing knowledge and practices. The embodied discursive practices of design refer to the ways in which discourse was intentionally structured. In my initial design for activity structures I envisioned curriculum in which students would engage in both individual and collaborative art making and thought this would be consequential for producing my specified mediating processes. For example, I predicted that collaborative art making time would allow students to *stretch and explore* new ideas for their art because they would have to collectively think about how to synthesize several ideas to make something different than they might have imagined on their own.

In my final conjecture map I rearranged how I conceived of embodied elements of design because I realized that the mediating processes I had hoped to produce were the conversation spaces themselves and that conversation spaces would not organically happen without some sort of embodied design (i.e., my prompts for students to engage in focused discussions about art). Also, as described in my literature review, studio habits of mind were embedded in the art

making process and how students talked about the art they made so I did not explicitly include them as part of the embodied design I studied. For example, as students told personal narratives connected to the issues about which they made art, they practiced *expressing* and *reflecting* on their ideas for their artwork. As students offered critique to one another in conversation, they practiced *observing*, and as they received critique, they *reflected* on their choices as they *stretched and explored* to consider alternative ideas. And furthermore, as students *reflected* on going public with their work, they *envisioned* what their artwork might look like and how an imagined audience might respond.

I included diverse art materials and student-selected social issues as salient features of embodied design. Instead of naming the conversation spaces as elements of design however, I highlighted the prompts I offered students as part of the embodied design that produced the conversation spaces. As the teacher, I often prompted students to talk to one another and offered them a focus for discussion. These moves were critical to getting students to talk about the art they were making as they were making it; the prompts directed the topics to be discussed. These prompts helped to set norms, or how discourse was expected to be used on a classroom community level (Ryu & Sandoval, 2012). As I engaged with students in the space, I came to realize that my prompts for students to engage in narrative storytelling, critique, or reflection led to the types of conversations and interactions I was after. Students constructed their own classroom norms in relation to these prompts, yet the prompts set the stage for their participation. Additionally, my final conjectures include embodied aspects of activity like producing written artist statements, engaging in studio time, and preparing for a public presentation because these curriculum structures had a strong influence on how students talked about their artwork in conversation spaces.

Mediating processes. The serious theoretical work of conjecture mapping is embedded in how the embodied elements produce mediating processes that orient students toward activity in particular ways. These mediating processes are ways that students engage in the designed environment to produce desired outcomes.

In my initial conjectures I identified different studio habits of mind as mediating processes I hoped the embodied design would produce. However, as I began engaging in research and design work, I realized that these habits of mind were implicit and embedded in students' art making processes. Therefore, in my conjecture map redesign I named the conversation spaces I hoped my prompts would produce as the mediating processes. In this context, storytelling was a theory-building activity (Ochs, Taylor, Rudolph, & Smith, 1992) in which students engaged as they came to understand their peers' connections to the social issues about which they made art. In telling stories, critiquing, and reflecting on these stories, students developed their voices through the messages and artistic representations they created as they engaged in interaction with others. Overall, this reframe of my theory of design aided by conjecture mapping helped me to better understand what I was trying to do in my study and maintain a focus on the research as I engaged in the day-to-day work of teaching.

Data collection and procedures

Case study class selection and focus participants

All 127 sixth grade students participated in the visual arts class, and all 32 students in my case study class were part of the study. Classes were grouped heterogeneously and so I chose my case study class according to the number of students for whom I had parental consent forms, a choice approved by the IRB. Over half of the students in the case study class were former students of mine. My theoretical framework supports a case study methodology (Yin, 2009),

which translated to a data collection approach that focused on the experiences of the whole class of students as well as individual focus participants. This case study is a holistic, single-case study design where the case is a bounded, integrated system (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995).

My first and second findings chapters focus on the whole case study class of 32 students, and for my third chapter, I chose three focus participants to illustrate how individuals created art and developed their voices and ideas over time during the designed experience. My primary goal was not overall representativeness because there was such wide variability in how individual students worked, but I wanted to tell different stories of voice development. Focus participant selection was guided by availability of video data as well as diversity in topics for art making and perceived student engagement. I reasoned that choosing students who were invested and engaged in the art making process (and for whom I had substantial video records) would help me better see patterns across participants and gather rich data (Becker, 1970). I narrowed my focus participant selection to the 18 in the class who were former students because they were more likely to open up and take the art making projects seriously from the beginning while students I did not previously know were more hesitant to open up about their personal connections to social issues. The students I chose were Benjamin, Natalie, and Jo. These three students fit my selection criteria and also represented variability in the amount of personal distance they kept from their topics, something that became an emergent finding in tracing the development of artistic and political voice.

Data sources

The data for this study come from a semester long visual arts class that I designed and taught. The class met twice per week from early September through mid-December 2017. Data were collected in alignment with my conjecture map, research questions, and methodology.

Broadly, I collected data that would help me understand student voice development and reflect on design work. Data sources included my own post-lesson ethnographic memos, video of whole group discussions and classroom lessons, video of students engaged in partner conversations, video of student interviews, and written artist statements. I collected all video, wrote interview protocols, conducted interviews, and transcribed data myself.

Because I was the only researcher working on this dissertation project, including diverse data sources allowed me to paint a fuller picture of student experience; triangulating these sources helped reduce systematic bias, improve the validity of my results, and demonstrate the credibility of my interpretations (Maxwell, 2013). While triangulation does not automatically increase validity (Fielding, N. G. & Fielding, J. L., 1986), it certainly helped by requiring I reason across sources like interviews, written artist statements, and student talk in interactions to report conclusions rather than relying too much on one source. By engaging in the intellectual work of triangulating across students' participation, reflections, and artifacts, I was able to better understand the construct of student voice as it developed across time and situation (see Sandoval, 2012 for a similar argument on triangulation). Table 3-2 includes an overview of the data sources I collected, the analytical and practical purpose of each, and the research questions for which they were used. In addition to the data sources I used for analysis in this dissertation, I had students keep research journals and took photographs of the art they made over the course of the semester. I reduced data for analysis according to needs of each research question as I explain in the next section.

All 32 students in my case study class assented to participate in the research and had parental consent. Data collection occurred on Wednesdays and Fridays from September through

December 2017. More detail on the content of the lessons and curriculum are highlighted in my first findings chapter, and an overview of each lesson can be found in Table 3-1. In addition to Table 3-2.

Data sources

Data Source	Sample	Analytical and *Practical* Purpose	RQs
Daily recorded and transcribed post-lesson ethnographic memos reflecting on practice, studio habits of mind, and conversation spaces	After all 20 lessons I recorded stream-of-consciousness reflections on the drive home and then transcribed them (50 single-spaced pages)	Identify whole class discussion periods for second research question; identify case students for third research question; adjust theoretical framework; *reflect on lesson and make necessary adjustments for instruction*	2, 3
Video of focus participant interviews (semi-structured, artifact-based)	All 32 students in case study class—one interview after lesson 10, one after lesson 20 (interviews ranged from just under 4 minutes to just over 12 minutes; median=7; mean=7 minutes, 8 seconds)	Capture how students talk about the art they made and explain ideas in their own words; *time for individual check-ins with each student*	1
Video of whole class lessons	All 20 lessons from two cameras—one at back of room, one at front of room (25 hours, 30 minutes of possible footage, 24 hours, 10 minutes of actual footage due to recording error in lesson 8)	Capture whole class discussions for analysis of student voice in patterns of interaction; *record for general research purposes as I was teaching and could not write field notes during lessons*	2
Video of student pairs, randomly moved to different groups each day according to student absences	Lessons 1-6: six videos of pairs each lesson (three recording errors; 33 hours) Lessons 7-18: nine videos of pairs each lesson (three recording errors; 105 hours) Lessons 19-20: no video, prepping for exhibition	Capture individual student trajectories of voice and art making; *better understand individual student experience away from whole group discussions*	2, 3
Written artist statements	All 32 students wrote artist statements for the art they displayed in public presentation (at least one per student, approximately 4-8 sentences each)	Capture how students write about the art they made; capture individual student trajectories of voice; *written record for every student and for exhibition display*	1, 3
Conjecture map iterations	Refined conjecture map throughout intervention (final conjecture map included in Appendix A)	Identify salient design features in learning environment; *reflect for future iterations and replication*	1

days spent teaching, I conducted interviews after the tenth and final lessons, and the final public exhibition occurred the Monday after the last lesson. I also led a field trip for all sixth grade students to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in September. The purpose of the field trip was to show students a few pieces of political art I had included in the curriculum, to see the Marc Chagall costume exhibition, and to spend time with students in a more informal setting.

I created interview protocols (Appendix B) to elicit student explanations of their art and creative processes. Questions explicitly asked students about their participation in conversation spaces with other students. My main goal with interviews was to give students a chance to verbally express the ideas they had hoped to convey through their art so I could then triangulate their verbal explanations with their written artist statements and classroom interactions. Interviews also allowed me to focus on each student individually for a short period of time as it is difficult to get much one-on-one time when handling the responsibility of teaching a class of 32. I tried to keep the interviews informal and conversational. I told students I was interested in their ideas and that the interviews were not about assessing right or wrong answers.

Video of whole class lessons usually began recording before students entered the classroom. I started recordings of student pairs a few minutes into class. As the study progressed, I gradually gave students more responsibilities with respect to the research such as helping pass out GoPro cameras, starting and stopping the recording process, and making sure cameras were returned to the office as I transitioned to the next art class. My decision to release some control over how data was collected resulted in a few errors and erased videos (perhaps these mistakes would have happened anyway), but overall it made the data collection process more practically manageable. Prior to beginning the study, I had created a strict rotation schedule for the GoPro cameras, but I quickly learned that my ideal schedule would not work as students were

unexpectedly absent or pulled out of art class for testing or Special Education services. I tried to keep the cameras rotating as best I could given these constraints, but understandably, many rich conversations were missed in the process.

Students wrote artist statements in preparation for the final exhibition. Most students were familiar with writing about their artwork, but I provided a guiding frame so that the statements were focused on what students tried to show, how they tried to show it using the tools of art, and what they hoped an audience would take away from their work. Some students wrote artist statements for all of the art included in their portfolio and others wrote just one for the piece they intended to display in the exhibition. I include the prompts for artist statements and examples in Appendix C.

Data preparation

Before beginning analysis I prepped my data so that I had a complete picture of what I had collected. Because I had transcribed my ethnographic memos throughout the data collection process, these did not need further preparation. I took photographs of artwork and transcribed students' handwritten artist statements. I had already organized my videos each day after data collection so all data were clearly labeled and sufficiently organized.

Although organized, classroom video data required the most preparation for analysis. In order to get a handle on the full video corpus, I created a log that included all cameras during each lesson and what was happening on the camera during that lesson. For example, during the first lesson, camera 01 included a whole class video from the back of the room, and cameras 02-07 were labeled according to student pairs (camera 02 captured a student pair at front as well as the whole class from the front). I completed this log for all cameras and then used different colors to label each student pair video according to whether or not both students in the video

were previous students of mine, if one was, or if none were because I thought that our prior relationships might guide focus participant selection. Additionally, I created a separate color scheme that allowed me to quickly see if I had consecutive days of video with pairs because I knew that availability of rich video data would also factor into my focus participant selection. On any given day, 12-18 individual students were filmed as they worked in pairs.

Analysis

I began analysis by spending time with the data, watching videos I had noted in my memos as particularly interesting, following students throughout the unit to get an idea of how they participated, and reviewing written artist statements. By spending time processing the data in a less formal way, I was able to work instinctually, commenting on themes or ideas I thought might be relevant in my analysis. After spending a few weeks exploring in this way, I began my planned data analysis. This included three levels of analysis aligned with each research question. In this section, I break down the description of my analysis by research question, emphasizing through narrative what I did, why I did it in such a way, and what the approach in each analysis level did to advance my understanding of the study constructs.

RQ1: The bird's-eye view

For my first research question, I hoped to illustrate broadly how the visual arts class operated by documenting how curriculum choices influenced students' public talk about art, which, in turn, influenced their private talk about the art they made. In pursuing this analytically, I showed how particular curriculum and instructional choices prompted talk in the whole class discussion space. I then documented the types of social issues about which students made art and the representational choices they talked and wrote about using in their art making. My goal for this first level of analysis was to construct a birds-eye view of the learning environment to

explain how particular curriculum and instructional design choices influenced how students talked about art and art making in the whole class; tracing this development ultimately helped me understand how students talked about themes and representational choices for their individual works of art.

Conjecture map iterations, curriculum, whole class conversations, videos of interviews, and students' written artist statements were relevant data sources for this first analysis level. While I did little explicit analytical work with the conjecture maps and curriculum, an explanation of the most salient design features and consequential curriculum design choices framed students' public talk about art and art making. I reviewed interview transcripts from all 32 students to highlight the social issues students talked about using for their art and how students defined them. To cross-reference student reporting, I also reviewed their artist statements to find how they defined their chosen social issues in writing. Many students had multiple issues they embedded in their artwork so I counted each as a unique social issue/topic/theme. In total I counted 53 unique student-described social issues/topics/themes (i.e., ideas like love and happiness were counted separately at first). I then used a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to create categories of responses, resulting in 16 salient categories (Table 3-3). I grouped responses together that seemed to be about a similar issue (e.g., LGBTQ rights and gender equality; love and happiness) but kept separate categories for issues that had similarities and overlap but were described differently by students (e.g., police and racism). I wanted to preserve variability across student responses while acknowledging common themes. I also counted particular social issues/topics/themes that did not fit with my initial understanding of social issues but were tied to emotional experiences related to social or

political issues. In chapter four, I offer the frequency with which particular themes were chosen as well as students' rationales for choosing the topics noted in Table 3-3.

Table 3-3.

Social issues/social issues/topics/themes across case study class

Social Issues/topic/themes that fit with my initial understanding of social issues	Social Issues/topics/themes included that did not fit with my initial understanding of social issues
war, LGBTQ rights, police, bullying, suicide/depression, breast cancer, DACA, domestic violence, homelessness, racism, animal cruelty, global warming	darkness, happiness, being brave, going through a tough situation

In my review of interview transcripts and written artist statements I also looked for how students talked about using the tools of art to express their ideas. I used the same strategy as above and identified 47 student-defined ways to use tools of art to convey a thing, idea, or message (e.g., using color to represent feeling; using shape to represent a literal object). I then identified eight categories across these 47 responses (see Table 3-4). One category (color choice) included 23 responses, while two categories were only mentioned by one student each. I tracked how students talked about variations in use; I elaborate on how students talked about these different variations along with the frequency across student responses in chapter four.

Table 3-4.

Variations in how students used artistic elements/concepts

Artistic element/concept	Variations in use
Color	To represent feelings; to represent literal objects or people; to represent a state of feeling mixed-up; to represent a personal preference; to represent a state of being or state of mind' to represent thoughts or ideas
Symbolism	To represent a feeling; to represent an idea; to represent a thing; using or transforming an existing symbol
Technique	To show an idea; to mix colors; to make something using given materials
Shape	To represent something literal; a symbolic idea; coupling with size to show contrast

Line	To represent something literal; directionality; referencing lines in general
Texture	To represent an idea or feeling; referencing texture in general
Size	To show contrast
Style	To imitate a known style

A broad strokes analytical approach allowed me to step back from the experience and assess how curriculum and pedagogical design choices influenced student choices in art making. That is, while depth of student experience was not explored in this analysis level, through my survey of students, I could tell if and how students selected unique topics for their art that mattered to them (aligned with developing political voice) and how students talked about using the tools of art making to translate their ideas to representations (aligned with developing artistic voice).

RQ 2: Systematically identifying whole class discussion patterns

Drawing on Rogoff's (1995) three planes of sociocultural activity, this second level of analysis helped define how the interpersonal plane operated. For my second research question, whole class conversations were the relevant unit of analysis. My purpose in reviewing whole class discussions was to define and describe what it meant to have a voice in the local classroom context. That is, I wanted to understand how students' contributions were taken up in social interaction to determine what counted as legitimate participation and define the local model of participation. A local model takes into account how classroom norms shape students' learning and development (Cazden, 2001; Lemke, 1990).

I was guided by a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in my approach for identifying interactions relevant to defining what it meant to have a voice in this context. In order to identify relevant data to construct the local model of whole class participation, I first

reviewed my ethnographic memos to mark lessons when students and I engaged in whole class discussions about art and art making. 13 lessons included conversations of this nature (most were from the first ten lessons and some occurred during the second set of ten). After identifying these lessons, I then created activity logs using video of whole class discussions. In these logs I described how students and I participated by focusing on what was happening during discussion, including who was talking, what was said, and how others responded. I used an open coding process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) with activity logs, which resulted in initially identifying 62 types of interactions during whole class discussions, 18 of which I found relevant for defining, engaging, and supporting student voice in whole class discussions because they were related to how students contributed to class conversations. I synthesized these 18 types of interactions into three that I determined to represent the most comprehensive picture of what was happening in the classroom in relation to student voice. As I reviewed the data again, I found that these broader themes occurred routinely, meaning they each occurred at least 10 times or for long periods of time during the unit (see Table 3-5 for overview).

Table 3-5.

Tracing the identification of relevant types of interactions in whole class discussions

62 types of actions/interactions noticed on initial pass with activity logs
teacher grounds lesson in central questions; teacher prompts turn and talk; quick switch between participation frameworks; students could move freely around classroom; teacher ignores off-topic callouts; on-topic callouts were acknowledged; students get excited to work with new materials; teacher directs students how to think within materials; teacher and students practice observing and talking about art; multiple interpretations are validated, encouraged, and expected; teacher offers her interpretation as one of many; teacher reinforces and takes up student ideas; not all students engage in conversation; students and teacher use humor in conversation; leaving "already answered" questions open; teacher recalls past relationship with students; teacher makes space for students to think in different ways (e.g., in head, through sketching, talking to a partner; controlled chaos is okay; student answers are validated when teacher documents them; students have expertise/knowledge teacher doesn't have; teacher reinforces norms of participation; multiple perspectives elicited; students share personal stories; students participate while sketching; students and teacher reference past discussions; teacher models art making; teacher gives students constraints while offering latitude with choices; students develop fluency in talking about feelings and color; teacher asks for clarification/elaboration; students talk about artist's perspective and what he/she might be feeling or thinking; teacher comments on students' passion and enthusiasm; prior knowledge elicited before new concept is introduced; teacher uses students to model

conversation; writing in journals and sketching is always optional during conversation; teacher thinks aloud to talk students through art making process; personal distance from social issues is acknowledged and negotiated; teacher reminds students art making and emotions are personal; self-assessment is emphasized; teacher introduces nuance to concepts; teacher encourages students to use others' artwork to inspire ideas; teacher stops students for short bursts of conversation; students express initial fear of sharing work with audience; teacher summarizes student responses as they talk about art; students add on to one another's comments; students pushed to show school values when others are sharing; students are given process time before whole discussion; students agree and disagree with one another; students resolve issues on their own; teacher offers history and context of art during discussion; teacher regulates number of students who can share at a time; students guess when they don't know an answer; teacher has students turn their bodies and/or eyes toward the person sharing; teacher spontaneously has students share with partners during discussions; students and teacher engage in Visual Thinking Strategies routine; students and teacher work to get conversations back on track when derailed; talk about how to negotiate collaboration; some students always seem to be sketching; teacher moves on, pushes for elaboration, or asks students to clarify; class engages in conversation about voice and if their voices matter; students talk about how to negotiate when making a collective work of art; teacher positions students as experts teaching each other; teacher circulates as students make art

18 refined types of actions/interactions on second pass

students turn and talk and think-pair-share in relation to a prompt; off-topic callouts are generally ignored; on-topic callouts are a form of legitimate participation; teacher directs students how to negotiate and think within materials; multiple interpretations are validated, encouraged, and expected as teacher offers her interpretation as one of many; students are offered time to think in different ways; student responses are validated through teacher documentation; norms of participation are reinforced by teacher and students; students participate in conversation while sketching; students develop fluency in talking about feelings and color; students talk about artist's perspective; teacher stops students for short bursts of conversation; teacher offers art history and background knowledge on art; students and teacher engage in Visual Thinking Strategies; class engages in conversation about voice and why voice matters; teacher positions students as experts in collaboration

Three salient types of interactions across whole class discussion space

(1) bursts of conversation about artwork with partners; (2) validation and taking up of on-topic callouts to support non-normative ways of participating; (3) encouraging the extension of ideas of others about art and offering different interpretations

As an example of my thought process in this analysis, in reviewing activity logs, I noticed that although a general classroom norm of participation was raising a hand to speak, students often called out responses without my calling on them. As callouts began happening more often during discussion I noticed that some student contributions were on-topic and others seemed to be off-topic; the interesting part for the development of voice was that most off-topic call outs were ignored by myself and the group, while on-topic call outs were integrated into discussion. This was important for defining what it meant to have a voice in the whole class space because students were able to participate using a non-traditional framework (i.e., calling out) because they were contributing on topic suggestions. Students and I were both actors in co-

constructing the conversation and defining what it meant to have a voice in discussion. The patterns I name as most salient in analysis are not meant to be exhaustive of the ways students and I participated in whole group discussion. Indeed, as I continued to review video again and again, I found new and interesting things each time. However, by analyzing how student voice was engaged, supported, and co-constructed on the whole class discussion level I developed a general understanding of how voice operated on the interpersonal plane of development, constituted by the local classroom context.

RQ 3: Following student trajectories during the art making process

For my third research question I moved from developing an understanding of the interpersonal plane to individual analysis of student voice development as students engaged on the personal plane while talking about and making their art. Theoretically, the interpersonal plane is still embedded in analysis for this third research question because students developed their individual voices on the personal plane as they interacted with others in the local classroom context.

To explain how I conceive of voice analytically on the personal plane of development, I draw from Halverson's (2013) idea of *representational trajectories*, which describes the process artists go through as they first begin with a narrative or idea about what they want to convey through their art, then move to a focus on how the tools of the artistic medium work to create desired forms, and end by balancing these dual purposes—story and function—in a finished work of art. Dewhurst (2011) similarly describes an activist's creative process as imagining new ways to translate ideas about action into artwork while balancing activist and aesthetic goals. As students engaged in creating political art about issues that were meaningful to them in the present study, they came to better understand the nuances of the issues and embed their progressive

understandings in representations. I am interested in how students developed their voices during the moment-to-moment processes of art making as they blended story (the message they wanted to communicate) with form (the artistic tools they used to communicate).

The data I used for this third research question included video of student pairs, video of whole class discussions, and student interviews. As previously noted, I focused on individual student art making during lessons three and four for this analysis. Erickson's (2006b) iterative approach to video analysis guided systematic review of video data on my own and in a few viewing sessions with colleagues. For this analysis level, I pulled ideas from interaction analysis (Jordan & Henderson, 1995) to work up an understanding of the data; methods that stem from traditions like conversation analysis (e.g., Goodwin, 2000) and privilege a distributed, endogenous unit of analysis are suited for the study of collaborative, socially constructed conversations (Enyedy & Stevens, 2014).

Analysis template for student voice trajectories. To begin tracking students' creative processes in a systematic way I first looked at ethnographic memos for reflections on studio habits of mind I observed in classroom talk or interaction. For example, during one lesson I noticed Jo practicing the habit of mind, envisioning, something that supported the development of her artistic voice:

> *Some of them really thought about what they would make before they did. They started thinking about okay, what is my emotion? What colors would I choose? Jo, for example, she wanted to show that she was suppressing a lot of emotions. She said she feels a lot of things, like her parents fighting and things going on at home, and she says at school she feels like she needs to hold it back and not say anything. Her art had kind of this yellow*

streak and blues hidden underneath so I thought it was cool how she decided to show that idea.

After reviewing memos I began watching video of case students making art timed with lessons I called out in memos to get a better feel for how they were participating and talking about their art. I attended to how they talked in whole class, partner, and small group discussions. I also skimmed interviews across students—both focus participants and others—to create a template that represented student trajectories' of art making and voice development in this creative process. In my review of video, I mined for common elements across individual students' creative processes and also noted variation while creating an analysis template (Figure 3-1). While I acknowledge that of course each student's voice development was unique, I wanted to create a template to use as an anchor for my analysis so that I knew what to search for when reviewing data and so that I could identify common and divergent themes when looking across the three student experiences highlighted in chapter six. This analytical approach was, therefore, both bottom-up and top-down. I used the trajectory in Figure 3-1 as a baseline when tracking case students' voice development. The elements included in the template are partially a result of pre-determined design choices I made and were partially constructed with students and myself in interaction. That is, some of the elements were a result of how students exercised agency and participated in the experience itself and not pre-determined by curriculum or pedagogy. I included select mediating factors in the template as well as approximately how much time elapsed between events, which were represented by nodes. Through the representation in this template, I tried to paint a fuller picture of how I witnessed students engaging with the creative process throughout the instructional unit.

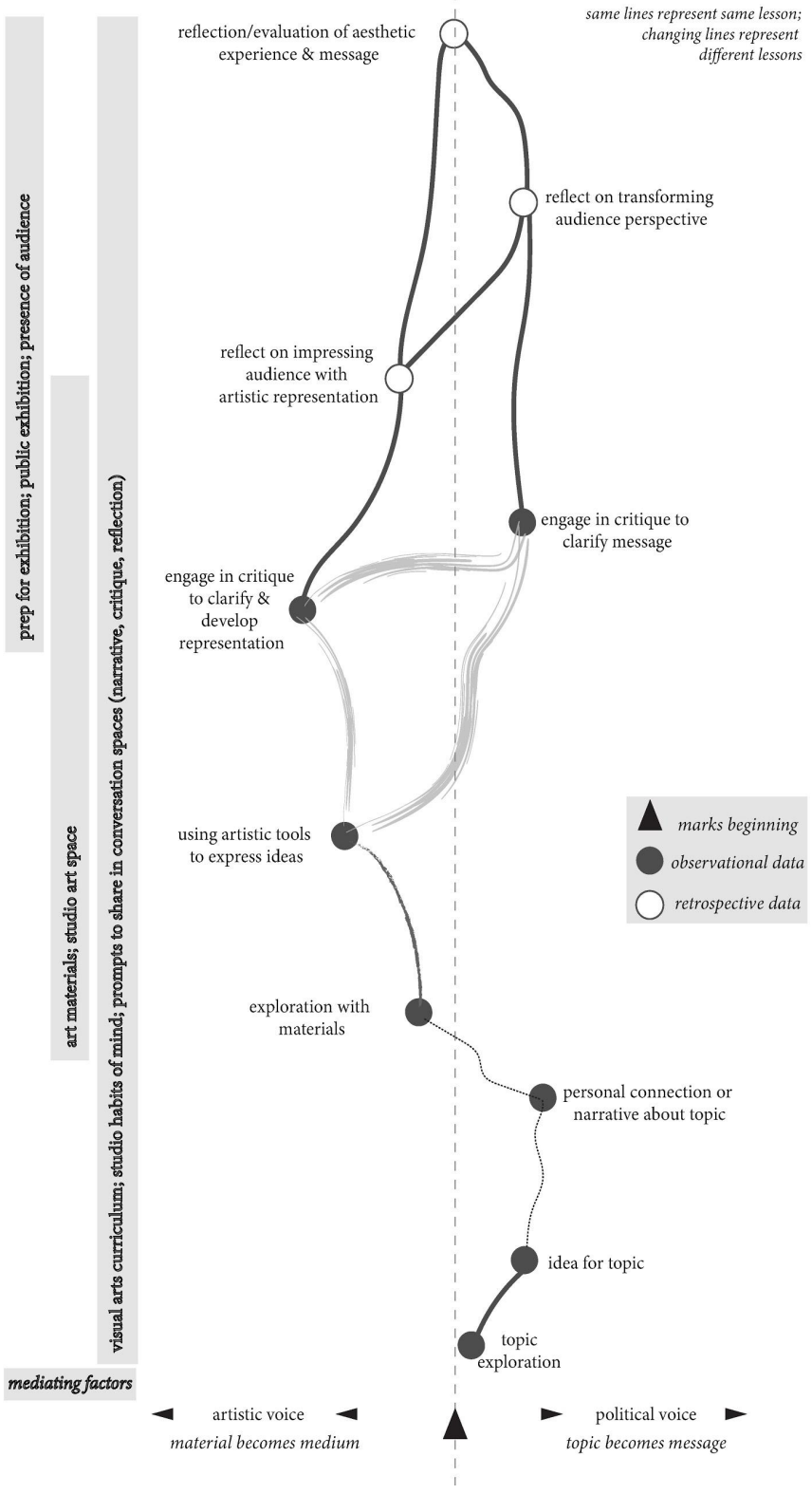


Figure 3-1. Analysis template for student trajectories of artistic and political voice

A short narrative of how Figure 3-1 traces a general story of student voice might be helpful here. The trajectory starts at the bottom: when students began creating art, they considered multiple topics and settled on one idea or fusion of ideas for the work of art they would make, most often connected to a personal narrative related to the topic(s). Students then explored with available materials to try to figure out how the materials might help them create something related to that topic. As students reflected on their narratives and topics, they made specific artistic moves such as choosing particular colors to express particular emotions and ideas or playing with the composition of their artwork. After initial art making, I prompted students to engage in critique sessions with peers to further develop their artistic representations and clarify the messages of their artwork. In interviews, most students noted that critique was important to their creative process. After critique, I prompted students to think about the audience and write artist statements to explain the intended meaning behind their artwork. Students explained that they were concerned with impressing the audience with what they had made and changing the audience's perspective or building a connection with the audience in relation to their issues. Finally, students reflected on how others' received their work.

As an analytic tool, Figure 3-1 can be read from the bottom, growing upwards. To the left of the dotted lines are activities students engaged with that I theoretically associated with developing artistic voice and the representational process through which students took materials and made them mediums; artistic voice is how students talked about the creative process they went through when making external representations as they got into a flow-like state (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). It is important to note that the space to the left of the line designates a physical space in the figure for artistic voice development; there are not meant to be "positive" or

"negative" values in the figure. (It might be helpful to think about the template as an artwork rather than graph or coordinate plane.)

Since artistic process and developing an artistic voice is primarily concerned with the work of constructing representations (Halverson, 2013), those activities related to artistic voice in the figure are about how students talked about using materials to construct external representations of their ideas. To the right of the dotted lines are activities students engaged with associated with developing political voice, the process of figuring out how to transform the topics they chose into messages they hoped to convey through their art. Both artistic and political voice were refined over time and worked together as students blended artistic tools with their ideas to create art that made sense to them and spoke to an intended audience.

As students engaged in multiple activities in a row that I marked as developing either artistic or political voice, the line representing that part of the trajectory gets progressively farther from the midline, suggesting that students were getting deeper into that kind of voice development. Additionally, the line sometimes splits or branches off as particular activities I tracked impacted both aspects of students' voices. For example, as students engaged in critique conversations with their partners, they sometimes simultaneously developed both their artistic representations and the political messages they hoped to convey. As both sides were engaged, artistic and political voice move closer together and become entwined to the point where they eventually merge and overlap. In the general case presented in this template, the artistic and political aspects of voice overlapped as students reflected on and evaluated the aesthetic quality and impact of their messages on an audience.

The figure highlights consequential mediating factors in the designed experience and the time elapsed between nodes representing particular activities or moments. The rough passage of

time is represented through changing types of lines, meaning the lines change when data was drawn from different lessons and the lines stay the same from node to node when data was collected from the same lesson. The nodes that represent data marking these moments in student trajectories are either solid or outlined. This convention helps to analytically distinguish between observational data such as videos of student conversations and interactions (solid node) and retrospective data such as video of student interviews or written artist statements (outlined node). In this study, retrospective data was used in cases when interactional data was not available, yet both served important purposes in illustrating different angles on student experience. While observational data showed what students actually did while engaged in activity, retrospective data helped illuminate how students made sense of their work in reflection. (Some time to think about and reflect on an experience may be necessary for certain ideas to come to the surface.)

Creating this figure was helpful for analysis because it called my attention to similarities and differences across individual voice development and how the learning environment design contributed to students' creative processes. It is important to note that I made creative choices with the data that provide *a window* into individual voice development in students' individual trajectories. The way I represented their development might not be identical to how someone else would, however, creating the template so that I knew what I was looking for across individual focus participants helped increase the validity of my conclusions because it reminded me to consider not only what happened in each case but how individual cases were related to a larger collective trace.

Tracing individual student trajectories of voice development. The representational process progressively unfolded over time as students created artistic representations that were meaningful to them (Halverson, 2013) and projected messages to an audience. By merging tools

and narrative in the process of art making, students developed their visual, verbal, and written expressions of their messages. By analyzing individual student trajectories and presenting traces of students' artistic and political voice development, I was able to better understand how individual learning occurred in interaction on the personal plane of development.

After identifying three focus participants through the process described earlier in this chapter, I reviewed all video data that included footage of participants making and talking about their artwork. I then used interviews to supplement student participation when I was unable to find a specific interaction to show how students made sense of the art making process. I identified interactional turns between students as they engaged in making art. These interactional turns included their bodies, physical materials, and some aspects of the environment (Goodwin, 1994, 2013; Jordan & Henderson, 1995) that were consequential for illustrating how students developed their voices as they made art about social issues important to them. For each participant, I created a trace of development, using the template in Figure 3-1 as a guide to look for different moments present in students' individual art making processes. In my analysis of these interactions I attended to how students co-constructed their voices in conversation with other students. I noted what mediated the points in development as well as how this process evolved over time during lessons. It was necessary that I also triangulated students' interviews with their interactions in the classroom to paint a full picture of their participation. I present findings aligned with the analytical choices described here in chapters four, five, and six.

Limitations

This dissertation has limitations related to my choice of analysis methods, data reduction procedures, and constraints of solo dissertation work. To begin, the breadth of my analysis included the story of one case study class and three individual students within that class. A

limitation of this approach is that I was unable to sufficiently account for variability in the class or across all 127 sixth grade students I taught. Therefore, rather than tracing a more complete picture of participation, my analysis provided a window into very particular student experience in this study. A benefit of this approach is that it allowed me to trace details of student experience in a more nuanced way because of my limited focus. However, an additional relevant limitation involves the grain sizes I chose because while my scope was not large enough to account for a wide range of variability, on the flip side, I did not attend much to more micro interactional elements like gesture, gaze, spatial relations, and body postures that might have also been relevant for students' voice development. Even though video data would have allowed me to attend to these nonverbal elements, my conceptual framework and approach was heavily biased toward privileging student talk.

Additionally, the amount of data I had to ignore in order to focus on answering my research questions illuminates a weakness of the present study. While I taught twenty lessons over the course of several months, moments from only a few were included in analysis. Additionally, students spent nearly half of the unit working on collaborative costume projects, yet I did not include any of this data in my analysis. Attending to this unused data may have allowed me to comment on how student bodies were involved in the interactional work of constructing norms around voice development.

A final limitation worth noting regards my positionality in this study. While my unique perspective is exactly what allowed me to write this dissertation, my own perspective and the general constraints of doing solo dissertation work limited design and analysis. Because I was not a full-time teacher at the school, it took considerable effort to build relationships with students even though I had known many of them as younger students. I attempted to spend as

much time as I could with students before the study began by visiting their classes, attending their elective classes at the end of the day, and planning a sixth grade field trip to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. I also visited with students after the study, but it was clear that my time at the school would be temporary. The brevity of the experience did not allow me to build the same kinds of relationships I had when I was teaching full-time and embedded in the school culture so I do not know how my role might have affected results. I return to aspects of these limitations when I discuss future directions for this work in chapter seven.

CHAPTER 4

Learning to Use Art Media to Represent Political Ideas

I am interested in understanding the details of student voice development and more generally answering the question of what is gained by young people making and talking about art they make about social issues that matter to them. These interests anchor my analysis and presentation of findings. This chapter includes an overview of curriculum and resulting patterns of the social issues/topics/themes students chose for their artwork and their representational choices. My aim in this chapter is to offer a birds-eye view on particular mediating processes across the overall learning experience before I present analysis of whole class and small group conversations and interactions in chapters five and six.

My first research question is the focus for this chapter: *How did an intentionally designed arts experience support students in talking about art and art making, including the topics they chose and the ways they used art media?* To answer this question, I draw from my conjecture map and curriculum materials, student interviews about their art, and written artist statements. My purpose is to understand how, in general, all 32 students in the case study experienced art making, report what they made art about, and define how they talked about using the tools of art to represent their ideas. In Figure 4-1 I show how I broadly conceive of how high-level curriculum and instructional choices made their way into students' individual art making processes to show how curriculum design resonated in public and private talk.

This chapter has two parts related to the progression in Figure 4-1. In the first I describe intentional choices I made in curriculum and instructional design and provide illustrative excerpts from public whole group classroom conversations, representing the first two rectangles in Figure 4-1. For the second part I show how students processed the curriculum and public talk

privately through an overview of students' chosen social issues/topics/themes and how students talked about using artistic tools to represent their ideas. This second part is represented in Figure 4-1 in the final rectangle.

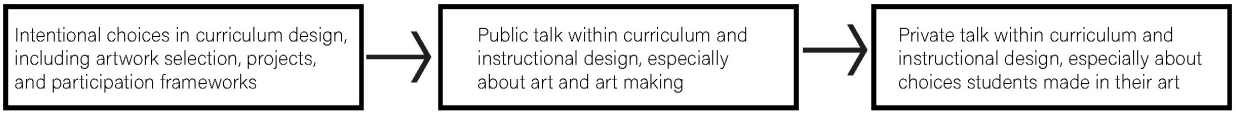


Figure 4-1. How curriculum design resonated in public and private talk

Curriculum and instructional design connected to public talk about art

Conjecture mapping to produce mediating processes and outcomes

The design choices embedded in my conjecture map (Appendix A) were consequential for how student voice developed, including the ways I helped students self-organize in different participation frameworks to discuss their ideas in conversation spaces, the artwork I used in curriculum slides, and the types of projects I designed for students. While I made many choices ranging from how many lessons I would teach to in-the-moment instructional decisions during classroom interaction, choices that were most consequential for the study's relevant constructs are highlighted in the conjecture map. As detailed in my methods chapter, the conjecture map informed design choices I made both before and during the intervention. Throughout the study, the conjecture map also centered me on the most important features of design.

The two most important areas of interaction in my conjecture map are between the design features and mediating processes and the mediating processes and outcomes. That is, the map shows how particular tools and materials, discursive features, and activity structures in the environment led to particular mediating processes as well as how those mediating processes led to particular student outcomes. Because I aimed to study student conversations about art making, it was important that I designed an environment that would make student conversations integral

to the art making process. Therefore, as a teacher I implemented my design conjectures to the best of my practical ability so that students were having frequent and focused conversations in different configurations. These configurations were defined by the focus of student talk (i.e., narrative, critique, and reflection) and the arrangement of participation framework (i.e., paired, small group, and whole group discussions).

As detailed in my methods, the conjecture map helps explain how design elements produced mediating processes. For example, by providing a variety of art materials, giving students time and space to select meaningful social issues for their art, prompting students to share stories with peers, and including workshop/studio time during which students could talk with one another as they made their art, students produced and refined personal narratives connected to the social issues they chose as topics. Personal narratives were a productive mediating process because as students developed their narratives, they transformed the topics they chose into messages for their art as they also transformed materials into mediums that supported those messages. Evidence of how individual students moved through these mediating processes is detailed in a fine-grained way in chapter six.

Discussions about artwork

Visual Thinking Strategies. Although not included explicitly in my conjecture map, for whole class discussions I recruited a research-based discussion tool called Visual Thinking Strategies (Yenawine, 2013). Visual Thinking Strategies begins with a minute of quiet looking at an artwork followed by a teacher asking, "What's going on in this picture?" A student volunteers and describes what he thinks is happening. After a student shares, the teacher summarizes the response as she gestures to the appropriate points on the image and verifies validity of the summary with the student. If the student offers an interpretation that might be better supported

with evidence, the teacher may give the floor back to the student by asking, “What do you see that makes you say (student’s initial interpretation)?” After the student includes evidence, the teacher briefly summarizes again and turns the floor back to the rest of the class by asking, “What more can we find?” to prompt additional student contributions. The whole class discussion cycle repeats as individual students continue to share their own interpretations and ideas in relation to the artwork. Variations on the sequence include giving students time to think-pair-share before sharing more publicly with the whole group and asking students to make explicit connections to other students’ ideas in their responses.

Selection of artwork for discussion. We had several whole class conversations about art and so it was important that I made purposeful choices as to the kind of artwork we discussed; these choices framed each lesson and influenced the kind of art students ultimately made. To emphasize political voice development, I chose examples of how artists have used their points of view to spark social awareness or change around the social issues that were the focus of their work. To emphasize artistic voice development, I chose artwork that conveyed emotion and perspective through an array of mediums and intentional artistic choices.

The following questions informed artwork selection for the curriculum: (a) did the artwork inspire social change? (b) did the artist evoke emotion and empathy in the audience through intentional artistic choices? (c) does the range of examples represent both individual and collective investigations in political art making? Below, I offer an example of art aligned with each guiding question and describe the public classroom talk that accompanied intentional curriculum and instructional choices. In the second part of this chapter I show how these same ideas embedded in design were privately integrated into student artwork.

Did the artwork inspire social change? When Dorothea Lange's iconic photograph, *Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California* (Figure 4-2), was taken in 1936 it captured the suffering endured by farmers as they made the trip from the Great Plains to California during The Great Depression. The 32-year-old Cherokee woman depicted in the photograph, Florence Owens Thompson, married young, had six children, and moved west to find farm work. Along with many others living in rural poverty, she did whatever she could to survive and support her family despite a persistent fear of starvation. While working for a relief agency called The Resettlement Administration, photographer Dorothea Lange captured this moment and inspired action through sharing her work. Thompson never received direct financial or other benefits from the photograph, yet her picture appeared in newspapers and magazines, which ignited public compassion to support relief efforts that brought aid to others. I used this image in the seventh lesson during which students created symbols to represent social issues. By including this particular photograph, I wanted students to understand that artwork was connected to particular historical moments and also that art could ignite public consciousness to generate tangible measures of change. While their own projects in the class were not intended to raise money for a cause, I did want students to think about how their art could influence others' awareness, perspectives, and assumptions

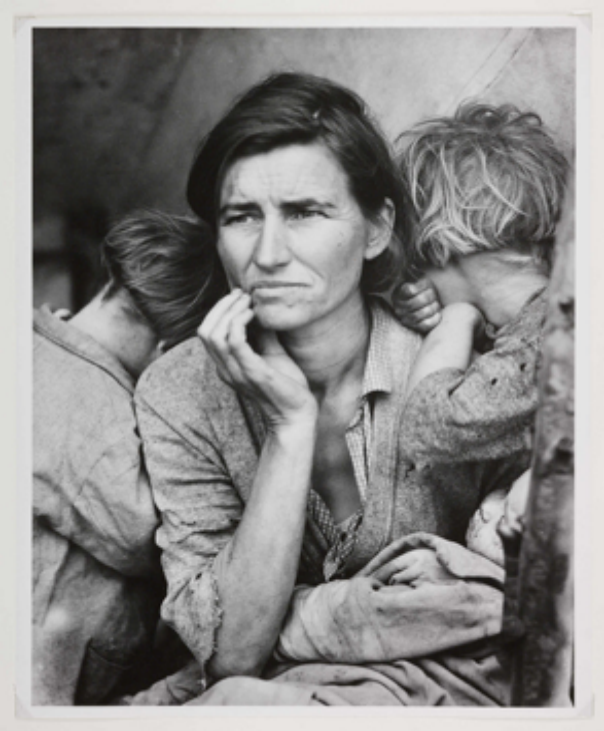
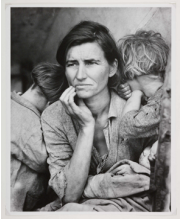


Figure 4-2. Lange's *Migrant Mother, Nipomo, California* (1936)

about a social issue.

I projected the photograph at the front of the room, and we engaged in a brief discussion during lesson seven (Excerpt 1). While I guided most of the public talk about the image through direct instruction, students made connections and shared their prior knowledge.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn[2]	I'm going to show you some different kinds of art that inspired some kind of social change. Raise your hand if you've seen this before	 *Five hands go up immediately*
02	Benjamin	We seen that last year	
03	Carlos	Yeah, we saw that, we saw that like two weeks ago	*Teacher responds, "Oh, cool" and several other students indicate that the artwork is familiar*
04	Mrs. Dahn	Awesome. Who can tell me something about this drawing, or this photograph?	*Teacher moves to back of room to turn off lights*
05	Several students		*Several students engage in discussion about whether subject is a boy or a girl*
06	James	I meant to say it's a poor mother and her two kids	
07	Elena	It's a human, guys	*A few students continue to talk about whether it is a boy or girl; one student says "be quiet"*
08	Mrs. Dahn	Some of your classmates are trying to tell you that they're ready to move on. So who can tell me something they know about this photograph? Evan?	*Evan raises his hand, teacher calls on him*
09	Evan	One thing I notice or what I can tell about this photograph is it shows a migrant mother and her two children and that she's in poverty and she can't afford food or a house	

[2] I refer to myself as "Mrs. Dahn" in excerpts from lesson transcripts because this is the name students called me

10	Mrs. Dahn	Yeah, and she was a migrant worker during um-	*Teacher at back of room*
11	Sam	-The Great Depression-	*Student interjects*
12	Mrs. Dahn	-during The Great Depression. So you know a bit about this. Now something you might not know about this is that it was used as a symbol for social change during the time of The Great Depression and they used this photograph for victims of The Great Depression so this photograph became the face of a campaign as a way to raise money for a lot of people who were suffering	*Teacher walks toward front of room*

Excerpt 1

When I first displayed the photograph many students immediately recognized it. Benjamin said in turn 02, "We seen that last year," which I learned was during a previous art class, and in turn 03 Carlos said, "We saw that two weeks ago." I later learned that they were talking about The Great Depression in their social studies class and had recently discussed Lange's photograph. Because they saw this photograph when learning about history, students were eager to share facts they recalled. In turn 09 Evan identified the woman as a "migrant mother" and explained that "she's in poverty and she can't afford a house." In turn 10 I attempted to add to Evan's description by situating the photograph in the context of The Great Depression, which Sam provided in turn 11 as I momentarily paused, making it clear I could have instead asked students more about the photograph. I then continued in turn 12 by explaining that the image was used to raise money for "victims of The Great Depression...who were suffering." I explained how this photograph was used as a way to raise awareness and money not because I wanted students to make art that would raise money for their chosen causes, but because I wanted students to think about connecting art to concrete change by using an empathetic point of view. In addition to Dorothea Lange's photograph, we discussed an arts movement called "Artists vs. Walmart" that organized rallies and protests to advocate for a higher minimum wage for Walmart workers. In our discussion, I connected this movement to the

potential for improving people's lives through a unified vision for change. Conversations were meant to get students thinking about how the messages of their own art might connect to change related to social issues and how they might evoke an emotional response in an audience.

Did the artist evoke emotion and empathy in the audience through intentional artistic choices? Because I wanted students to consider how emotion connected to the social issues they used as the focus for their art as they tapped into their own personal narratives, in much of the selected artwork I called out how art evokes empathy or emotion in an audience. Eric Almanza, an LAUSD District teacher, makes art that examines social and political issues such as the criminalization of immigrants connected to Mexican American and Chicano identity. I selected his 2012 painting, *In Search of New Home* (Figure 4-3) for discussion during lesson four. Almanza made purposeful decisions in composition and color to evoke empathy, fear, and hope from an audience. This intentionality is made visible through the surveillance helicopter hovering overhead, the theme of freedom implied by the bird's flight back and forth over the wall, the American university prominently displayed on the father's shirt, and the family's coordinated red, white, and blue clothing. The artistic choices Almanza made center the complexities of the story behind the real-life people in the painting, inspiring larger conversations about immigration. In looking at the child pulling on his mother's hand and the

Figure 4-3. Almanza's *In Search of a New Home* (2012)

father offering assistance, a viewer is moved to empathize with the family searching for a new place to call home. I use public talk related to this image in the next chapter to illustrate a pattern of interaction in whole group discussion.

I was also interested in supporting students in understanding how more abstract depictions of emotions and ideas could be achieved through an artist's purposeful choices in color, line, shape, and composition. Therefore, in lessons four and five I included a few more abstract artworks to get to this idea of evoking emotion and empathy in a different way than they might initially consider. I did this because abstract art making allows an artist to create some distance between herself and the subject about which she is making art, and I thought that personal distance between artist and topic might be important for voice development.

Figure 4-4. Picasso's *Guernica* (1937)

As an additional example of art that foregrounds emotion, Picasso's more abstract *Guernica* (Figure 4-4) brought attention to the Spanish Civil War and the suffering civilians endured from its tragic and senseless violence. Picasso used his characteristic style to produce a scene of extreme devastation. The horrifying narrative depicted—the mother crying with a child in her arms, the wounded horse, the flames surrounding the screaming woman—mark the

horrific bombing of Guernica by Nazi German and Fascist Italian warplanes through images that penetrate the viewer's memory as articulated through Picasso's cubist abstractions. I used Picasso's art as a bridge between more representational art like Almanza's painting above and more abstract work created by artists like Jackson Pollock, Lee Krasner, and Robert Motherwell.

I included Robert Motherwell's painting, *Elegy to the Spanish Republic 100* (Figure 4-5), as a more extreme example of abstract work that conveys an emotional or empathetic response. Figure 4-5 is one of over one hundred and forty similar works he created over the course of his life as a way for him to express feelings of loss, mourning, and grief. Through his collection, Motherwell aimed to author a new visual language to communicate shared feelings of what it means to be human through intentional choices in shape, color, and form. What I hoped students would take from this art is how to translate complex emotions and ideas about social issues to a visual language. I hoped they would understand that an audience can be moved to feel deeply in many ways drawing from personal experience and interacting with different styles of visual imagery.

Figure 4-5. Motherwell's *Elegy to the Spanish Republic, 100* (1963-1975)

I used Motherwell's painting in lesson five when we were beginning to talk generally about how artists use tools of art to convey particular emotions. After discussing a few pieces by Jackson Pollock, I projected Figure 4-5 and asked students to think about the emotions they thought the artist might have been trying to show in the art. In sharing with her partner, Kourtni, Natalie explained, "I think this is loneliness because it looks like two birds or something, and then one of them is ignoring the other one. I really don't know." Rosemary shared with her partner, Elena, "I think the artist is feeling very sad because it looks very black and white and there's nothing, I think there's no meaning." After students shared with their partners, I brought them back to a whole group discussion about this work of art. In my questioning, I tried to focus them on the emotions the art suggested. We had a brief discussion included below (Excerpt 2).

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Mrs. Dahn	Who can share what feelings or emotions- I hear some people saying yeah, we see some images in it and all of these ideas, but what feelings do you think that the artist might have been thinking? Maria?	 *Teacher is trying to fix research cameras*
02	Maria	He might have been thinking that he was mad because he only used two colors	
03	Mrs. Dahn	Because he only used what?	*Teacher leads conversation from the back of the room*
04	Maria	Two colors	
05	Mrs. Dahn	Okay, other ideas? I see quiet hands. Benjamin?	
06	Benjamin	I think, um, um, no I forgot	
07	Mrs. Dahn	It's okay. Elijah, thank you for your quiet hand	*Teacher is still trying to fix cameras*
08	Elijah	I think he was maybe feeling awkward because that picture looks like a banana	
09	Mrs. Dahn	Okay, you think he was feeling what?	

10	Elijah	Awkward	*Jo has her hand raised*
11	Mrs. Dahn	Oh, okay. Jo?	
12	Jo	I think um he or she feels like a water glass, half full, half empty	*Natalie makes a silent connection signal*
13	Mrs. Dahn	Why do you think that?	
14	Jo	Um, like only half of the painting is filled with black and the other half is filling with white	
15	Mrs. Dahn	Other feelings? So this artist, I'll just give you a quick history, he actually, he created over 100 paintings that were like this and that's because he lived during the Spanish Civil War and it really impacted him, and it really made him sad and depressed throughout his life. He writes that he created these paintings to kind of show a black hole feeling of sadness and depression and anger	*Teacher gives up trying to fix cameras*

Excerpt 2

While I was preoccupied with my malfunctioning cameras in Excerpt 2, I attempted to lead this public talk about emotions connected to artwork by opening the floor to the group in turn 01. Maria shared that the artist "was mad" in turn 02 because "he only used two colors." While she may have meant that the artist was mad in reflection on using only two colors in his artwork and I could have probed more to get to the real essence of what she was trying to convey, I take Maria's comment to mean that the artist chose two colors—black and white—to represent the feeling or state of being mad. In turn 12 Jo offered a metaphorical interpretation when she described the artist as feeling "like a water glass, half full, half empty." When I asked her why, in turn 14 she backed up her interpretation with her observation that half of the painting is black and half is white, noting the artist's composition, and like Maria, his color choices. She explicitly connected the artist's artistic choices to her interpretation of the feelings or mood he tried to convey. To end the public conversation about this image, in turn 15 I asked for additional interpretations, "Other feelings?" I then offered background about the artist and his intentions.

While I am distracted by research mechanics throughout this conversation, it is important to note that I did not explicitly endorse specific student responses. This was an intentional instructional choice because I wanted multiple interpretations to be an accepted norm in our discussion space; I also hoped to steer students away from purely representational depictions of emotional experiences. We had multiple conversations about abstract art during two particular lessons so that students became comfortable talking about links between emotion and artistic choices. I also historically situated the work of art at the end of our conversation to reinforce the idea highlighted in the previously referenced conversation about Dorothea Lange's photograph. Students ultimately moved from this public talk about emotion and empathy when they integrated emotional connections and artistic choices within their individual works of art as shown in the second part of this chapter focused on students' private talk about their artwork.

Does the range of examples represent both individual and collective investigations in political art making? The range of examples included in the curriculum showed different configurations of artists working together because I was interested in having students make individual and collective artwork. The artwork mentioned so far were all made by artists working alone, and below I offer examples of artists that worked as part of a collective or individuals that inspired social movements that were taken up by other artists. For example, an artist who first worked on her own yet inspired other artists is Tatyana Fazlalizadeh. She created the critically acclaimed street art series titled *Stop Telling Women to Smile* (Figure 4-6) as a reaction to routine catcalling harassment women face as they walk down New York City streets. By purposefully placing her images on public walls and writing her messages as commands directed to offenders, her art conveys a powerful statement both in what it communicates and through her reclaiming of

the streets. The power in her art is that she cultivated awareness about street harassment in the very place where it happens and invited others to make art with her, inspiring a movement.

Figure 4-6. Fazlalizadeh's *Stop Telling Women to Smile* (2014)

An example of collectively taking a stand with the arts through intentional placement of a message is the theatre angels from Orlando's arts community who blocked anti-gay protesters at funerals after the tragic 2016 mass shooting at Pulse Nightclub (Kennedy, 2016). Artists took up the agency offered through public space and made a powerful statement through a simple performative act by blocking protesters from view with large "angel wings" they constructed using plastic piping and fabric. The Orlando theatre angels are also an example of how collaboratively produced performance art can convey a political and powerful emotional message. Similarly, the 1972 installation performance art exhibition titled *Womanhouse* featured a group of female artists who took a Hollywood home that would soon be demolished and transformed it into a temporary exhibition that reflected critical commentary on the prototypical suburban housewife. The artists installed artwork throughout the house that revolved around a central theme and championed a feminist perspective that challenged traditional gender roles, economic inequality, and standards of beauty. The show gained notoriety because of its focus on a collective work of feminist art when the elite art world typically only recognized the work of solo artists (Lampert, 2013). While these examples are mature in content, I wanted students to understand the political power in collective art making to prepare them for their own collective costume making project. Before I offered

context, we had a brief group discussion about the Orlando theatre angels during lesson nine included in Excerpt 3.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Ken	I think maybe it's a religious family maybe celebrating God or maybe it could be like a church, they go outside and maybe they celebrate about God	*On slideshow I show and image of the Orlando theatre angels*
02	Mrs. Dahn	Great, what more can you find in this picture? Jo	
03	Jo	Maybe um it's a group of people celebrating someone who has passed	
04	Mrs. Dahn	Okay, what do you see that makes you say that?	
05	Jo	They're just kind of like angels and they're holding roses	
06	Mrs. Dahn	You say they look kind of like angels and they're holding roses. James, what do you think?	
07	James	Um, they're dressed as angels and yeah	*James holds throat*
08	Mrs. Dahn	Are you okay?	
09	James	Yeah, I need to go drink some water	
10	Mrs. Dahn	Okay, so I hear people saying things about angels, saying that this could potentially be about something religious. Raise your hand if you heard last year there was a shooting at a nightclub	*10 hands go up at once; many students say "yeah" and "o:::h"; students begin side conversations*
11	Mrs. Dahn	So I heard Elena say it was an LGBTQ friendly, a gay club, and what happened when people passed, at their funeral, there were people who would come to protest the fact that they were gay, and think about that would feel like if someone were protesting someone's funeral who you loved. So what these people, these are not the protesters, this is a group of theatre artists who came together and knew this was happening and they said, let's create costumes that cover up the protesters so that the people at the funeral don't have to see them. So what you don't see in this picture-	
12	Ken	-that's pretty smart	
13	Mrs. Dahn	Yeah, why do you think so, Ken?	

14	Ken	Because at first I thought that the wings stand for angels but now I know that the wings stand in front of protesting signs
15	Mrs. Dahn	Maybe it can kind of serve both purposes, Ken, right? It covers the people behind who are showing all this hate, but also-
16	Ken	-they're haters-
17	Mrs. Dahn	-kind of has this spiritual quality to it. Jo?
18	Jo	It's like the angels are protecting them
19	Mrs. Dahn	Yeah, kind of like the angels are protecting them or watching over them. So, the point is this couldn't have happened if only one person decided they should do this, that they should cover up these protesters for the people who were mourning. They got together, it is a collaborative effort when a group of people come together to do something powerful

Excerpt 3

In Excerpt 3 Ken shared his initial interpretation in turn 01, explaining that the people in the photograph looked like a "family maybe celebrating God" and in turn 03 Jo said she thought it might be "a group of people celebrating someone who has passed." I asked Jo for evidence to back up her claim in turn 04, "What do you see that makes you say that?" which she offered in turn 05. I then called on James to share his interpretation. In turn 10 I connected the image to a particular event that was familiar to some students. After students had short side conversations, I then explained what the group of theatre artists were trying to do, to which Ken said, "that's pretty smart" in turn 12. Jo shared her idea that "the angels are protecting them" in turn 18, and I ended our conversation by driving home the message that one person alone could not have made the same impact as the collective.

Overall, the range of examples in the curriculum provided a foundation for the types of art I imagined students would create. The artists who created the political art in these examples ignited social change, used the tools of art to evoke empathy and emotion from an audience, and

capitalized on the power of individual and collective voice. From students' points of view, they observed and talked through their initial ideas about what they saw in each artwork, including how they felt and what they thought. Following this, I added context for students so they could talk through new insights and feelings based on their initial ideas. Students brought their ideas, the context I provided, and ideas about the artist's intentions from these examples with them as they moved from interaction in the public discussion space to private art making.

Through curriculum choices I hoped to cultivate students' agency in the artistic process to tap into students' "capacity to change the world into what [they] imagine, whether for good or for ill, and even to establish the moral compass that will determine our direction" (Hanley, 2013, p. 3). In schools, art making should be positioned as an activity that creates and sustains an active citizenry by helping students realize their capacities and potential not just within the arts but for future change making (Greene, 1995). In this study, the arts are a forward-looking, creative activity through which students project their voices, identities, and possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986).

Projects and essential questions

In addition to selected artwork, the projects with which students engaged mediated how they considered materials in relation to the topics they chose for their art. An overview of the projects and aligned essential questions that guided lesson design can be found in Table 3-1. For example, with the abstract piece in lesson six, students considered how elements of art could be used to express different emotions linked to the social issues that were meaningful to them. With the symbol print in lessons seven and eight, students had to condense a message about a social issue to a single, simple image. And with the costume pieces that dominated activity for the second half of the unit, students worked in small groups to synthesize their ideas and create a

functional work of art out of fabric, wire, beads, and found objects. Each configuration of constraints prompted students to represent their ideas in different ways. Essential questions were connected to broader ideas about art I wanted students to consider in relation to their art making practice. For example, for lessons six and seven I had students explore the question: How do artists express emotion through color, shape, and line? Additionally, as described in my literature review in chapter two, studio habits of mind (Hetland et al., 2013) were an always present mediating process throughout students' art making as I encouraged particular habits during discussions.

Planning for conversations

Intentionally structuring and studying student conversations was a central aim for this research and so it was necessary I made purposeful decisions in curriculum planning that would support students talking to one another during art making. I had students share with their partners and in small groups at several points nearly every single lesson. I supplemented this partner talk with whole group discussions and one-on-one discussions with me. Additionally, for the costume project, I had students work in groups of three or four, and I allowed them to form their own groups. Naturally, because they were able to choose their group members, many of the groups were comprised of students who knew each other well. While this led to students having more social conversations about topics other than art, it also led to more student talk in general.

Influence of curriculum design and public talk on students' private talk about art

The curriculum design influenced public talk in the whole class conversations as illustrated in the first part of this chapter. These public conversations show how students processed and made sense of artwork in the context of this study. What I am trying to argue in this chapter is that ideas from these public conversations eventually made their way into

students' art making and how they talked about their art privately. In the second part of this chapter, I show how students privately talked about their artwork, especially in relation to curriculum and instructional decisions highlighted thus far. I first discuss how the social issues/topics/themes students chose were influenced by the types of artwork included in the curriculum and how artists were positioned in relation to their art making. Next I discuss how students' representational choices were influenced by our public talk about how artists made creative choices with artistic tools to represent emotions and ideas. I close by describing how students' reactions to presenting their work to the public touched on both individual and collective possibilities for art making.

Choosing social issues/topics/themes for artwork to ignite social change

The social issues/topics/themes students ultimately chose for their art were personally relevant and related to the artwork included in the curriculum. I transcribed all written artist statements and interviews in which students self-selected a work of art they made and described what they tried to show through the artwork. Using these data sources, I identified social issues/topics/themes for artwork and marked frequency across students. I accounted for nuance in students' choices by aiming to use the words students used to describe the social issue as the defining mechanism rather than my own generalizations. When categorizing the issues into social issues/topics/themes, I noted that some students defined more than one social issue as part of their artwork and counted each social issue they named as a unique contribution to the overall frequency count. While most students only defined one social issue as the focus for their art, some had as many as three different social issues incorporated within a single artwork.

I identified 16 social issues/topics/themes across the class. In Table 4-1 I represent a number of important variables: (a) the social issue/topic/theme for which I coded; (b)

descriptions from student interviews and artist statements to show what counted as belonging to a social issue/topic/theme; (c) an example student rationale for choosing a social issue/topic/theme; and (d) the number of students who identified a social issue/topic/theme as part of their art. As seen in the frequency table, for six of the social issues/topics/themes, only one student mentioned each.

Table 4-1.

Social issues/topics/themes across case study class, example student rationale, and frequency

Social issue/topic/theme	Description of social issue/topic/theme	Example rationale for choosing social issue/topic/theme	# of Students
War	War and violence, violence and people getting killed	*A bunch of people die in war when they're like innocent*	7
LGBTQ rights	LGBTQ rights, LGBTQ and gender equality	*I went to a summer camp and I met a lesbian and everybody was scared of her because they didn't want her liking them and I thought that was just kind of ridiculous because it's just a person, it's not an alien*	6
Darkness*[3]	Darkness in the world, everyone having a little negativity in them	*I want to be the one that helps get rid of the darkness*	5
Happiness*	Happiness, positivity in the world, peace and love	*I'm happy all the time, and I'm always positive about stuff, I have positive in my world*	4
Police	Different response to white and Black people by police, Black Lives Matter	*Like if this guy did something bad like for like example, police they're kind of racist and if like a black person's doing something bad they might shoot them and if a white person they might just arrest him*	3
Bullying	Mental abuse, cyberbullying	*I want to defend my friends that get called a lot of bad names and they get hit or punched, and if they're getting bullied tell someone, don't just stand there*	3
Suicide/ depression	Sadness and depression, depression and suicidal thoughts	*I decided to pick depression because I've been through depression, and one of my friends has, too*	3

[3] As noted in chapter three, the asterisks indicates social issues/topics/themes that were not in my initial definition or understanding of social issues. While not all of the social issues/topics/themes were the neatly-defined issues I had imagined when writing the original curriculum, all were related to an emotional aspect of a problem and connected to a message for change

Being brave*	Being brave, fitting in with the crowd, facing fears and fighting fears	*People should not be ashamed of what they do and what they believe in*	2
Breast cancer	Breast cancer, sickness, not being able to afford doctors	*There are a lot of people that are sick and a lot of people die of it because some people can't afford to pay for surgeries and stuff*	2
DACA	DACA	*One of my cousins is heading to college right now, he's having kind of problems about going to college since he comes from another country*	2
Domestic violence	Domestic violence	*Me and my mom went through a lot of stuff from my other country. We were so scared. And we couldn't stand up for ourselves*	1
Homelessness	Homelessness	*Whenever I go home I always see homeless people, they try to ask for money, but people don't really care, they just walk past them, and people should see that they need serious help*	1
Racism	Racism	*No matter like what color you are, you're still the same way. And if you're white or brown or black or yellow it still means you're the same*	1
Animal cruelty	Animal cruelty	*I be seeing dogs dead on the street, I be seeing dogs that are harmed by people, owners, they just get into, they do something with their life, they beat them*	1
Global warming	Global warming	*If everything melts then everything else that's on land will go all the way to the bottom of the sea because of all the extra water*	1
Going through a tough situation*	Going through a tough situation	*It's more private than I want… I was going good in school until that thing had to happen and then I had this friend who also got mad at me because of what had happened and that ruined my friendship with another*	1

The range of social issues/topics/themes that students chose were the anchor around which they envisioned and created artwork. Also, most of social issues/topics/themes were what one might think of as typical social issues, that is, they were issues or problems that impacted students and broader society. However, I wanted to properly represent the nuances of student contributions so there were a few ideas that I counted as social issues/topics/themes, yet noted as different from typical social issues because they connected to messages for social change. For

example, the social issue/topic/theme of LGBTQ rights carries the implicit message that LGBTQ rights are worth fighting for, that they are an important issue that ought to be discussed. And while darkness was a more general theme, it could be tied to messages for change in students' art making processes. Even happiness and being brave, neither of which clearly identifies a particular problem, can each be tied to a message for changing audience perspective or consciousness. These social issues/topics/themes highlighted the emotional aspects student experience. In looking across the social issues/topics/themes students chose, it is important to note the frequency of themes because while students made individual artwork, as described earlier, one of my intentions in curriculum design was to show the power behind collective art making and multiple voices uniting for a single cause. Therefore, it was significant that six students chose LGBTQ rights because this resulted in more artwork on one issue displayed in the exhibit at the end of the unit. Students' choices about social issues for their artwork were mediated by the curriculum choices I made detailed earlier in this chapter as well as through conversation and interaction with other students and myself throughout the unit.

Students covered a wide range of social issues/topics/themes and no particular social issue was overwhelmingly privileged over others across the class. War was incorporated in many students' art likely because I used it as a demonstration example, making my own personal connection to war through the experience of my brother's multiple deployments. In looking across the range of rationales, it is clear that the social issues/topics/themes were meaningful to students. For some, the social issues/topics/themes were intimately meaningful and relevant to personal experiences as evidenced by one student's rationale for choosing domestic violence: "Me and my mom went through a lot of stuff from my other country. We were so scared. And we couldn't stand up for ourselves." For others, the connection was through relationships with

others such as one student's rationale for choosing bullying: "I want to defend my friends that get called a lot of bad names and they get hit or punched, and if they're getting bullied tell someone, don't just stand there." Other students explained that they chose particular social issues/topics/themes for more general reasons or they took a personal reason and applied it more generally. For example, one student had an aunt who passed away from breast cancer yet offered a more general rationale for her social issue/topic/theme: "There are a lot of people that are sick and a lot of people die of it because some people can't afford to pay for surgeries and stuff." These varying levels of personal distance between students and their artwork were influenced by how artists positioned themselves in relation to their art in the curriculum. Because the curriculum highlighted social issues/topics/themes that were important to society at particular historical moments and because we talked about artwork that was personally meaningful to the artists who created it, these factors influenced students' private art making and how they talked about their art. Students ultimately chose topics for both personal reasons that connected to their lives in different ways as well as for social ones that could be viewed by the outside world as important and in need of change.

Making artistic choices to represent emotions and ideas

Because this research concerns how students use the tools of art to convey political messages and ideas, in addition to describing their social issues/topics/themes, I present a broad overview of how students talked and wrote about making artistic choices here. A primary aim of this work is to understand how students bring their artistic and political voices together to create meaning through art making and so it is important to consider how students talked about making decisions during the art making process in explaining how they used the tools of art to convey emotions related to their ideas. For this part of the analysis, I considered the range of

participation across the case study class using students' written artist statements and interviews. Using these data sources, I searched for how students talked and wrote about using artistic elements and concepts to convey their messages.

In interviews, students talked about how they would use combinations of different elements and artistic concepts. They described a range of choices, including how they used color, line, shape, and texture, played with the relative size of shapes in the composition, appropriated or created symbols to stand for particular ideas, employed a particular artistic style, and tried out different techniques. Some of their descriptions included overlap between elements and concepts. In Table 4-2 I include a number of variables related to how students talked about artistic elements and concepts, including: (a) artistic elements/concepts students referenced; (b) variations in how students talked about using elements/concepts; (c) examples of variations in use; and (d) the number of students who referenced elements/concepts. In Table 4-3 I detail how students talked about using color since 23 students mentioned it in interviews or artist statements and there was greater variation in how they explained its use.

Table 4-2.

Discussion of artistic elements and concepts in students' art

Artistic element/concept	Variations in use	Examples of variations in use	# of Students
Color	See Table 4-3 for variations in use of color	*See Table 4-3 for examples of variations in use*	23
Symbolism	To represent a feeling; to represent an idea; to represent a thing; using or transforming an existing symbol	*A lightning bolt to represent madness; bricks to represent hard times; a rainbow to represent equality, a broken heart; a paw to represent animals; a thumb to represent a "like"; fusing the boy and girl symbol together for gender equality*	9
Technique	To show an idea; to mix colors; to make something using given materials	*Using tape and paint to show something is broken; using fat sponges to mix colors together; making a stamp*	5

		out of cardboard	
Shape	To represent something literal; a symbolic idea; coupling with size to show contrast	*To show a drop of water; little hearts all around to show love is everywhere; to show big circles shouting at little circles*	3
Line	To represent something literal; directionality; referencing lines in general	*Lines to represent flags of North Korea and America; a black line to show the darkness going in; using different lines*	3
Texture	To represent an idea or feeling; referencing texture in general	*Using texture to show its impact on me; using texture like drawing lines and different colors*	2
Size	To show contrast	*Big circles shouting at little circles*	1
Style	To imitate a known style	*Making it simple, like comic book style*	1

As evidenced in Table 4-2, artistic elements like color, line, shape, and texture were used in varying frequency across the class. For example, of 32 students, 23 mentioned color choice in interviews, three talked about using lines, three referenced shapes, and only two talked about texture. Students who talked about lines used them to represent something literal ("lines to represent flags of North Korea and America"), to show directionality ("a black line to show the darkness going in"), or talked about them generally ("using different lines"). Students who mentioned using shapes used them to represent something literal ("to show a drop of water"), a symbolic idea ("little hearts all around to show love is everywhere"), or coupling shape and size as a way of showing contrast for narrative effect ("to show big circles shouting at little circles"). One student who talked about texture used it to represent an idea or feeling ("using texture to show impact on me") and the other talked about texture more generally without a specific link to what it represented ("using texture like drawing lines and different colors").

Nine students talked about how they incorporated symbols in their artwork to represent feelings, ideas, and things. Some talked about transforming existing symbols in their artwork. Their symbolic representations included "a lightning bolt to represent madness," "bricks to

represent hard times," "a rainbow to represent equality," "a paw to represent animals," "a broken heart," "fusing the boy and girl symbol together to show gender equality," "a thumbs up for a 'like'," and "birds to represent freedom." Five students talked about using particular techniques to achieve desired results, which included showing an idea, achieving an aesthetic effect, or making something out of available materials. The one student who discussed style described his art as imitating a comic book. Looking across these variations represents how students privately took up ideas from the curriculum and public talk in diverse ways.

Of the 23 who mentioned color choice, there was a wide range in how students talked about what colors did for their artwork. In Table 4-3 I show: (a) how color was used as a representational tool in students' artwork; (b) examples of how students talked about what counted as that representation; and (c) the number of students who talked about color in a particular way. For example, five students used color to represent literal objects in their art such as "red for fire" and "black for smoke" while 10 students used colors to represent feelings such as "warm colors for anger," and "dark colors for sadness."

Table 4-3.

Variation in how students talked about color in relation to their artwork

How color was used in art	Examples of student descriptions of color representation	# of Students
To represent feelings	*Warm for anger and dark for sadness; lighter to show happiness and darker to show sadness; gray for darkness; colors to represent sadness and happiness; using color to represent like good green; blue green to represent fears; blue for sadness and black for loneliness; red for anger and blue for sadness; color to represent emotions like blue for sad and purple for happy; color splash to show different feelings*	10
To represent literal objects or people	*To show a green cross; black to show smoke and red to show fire; to show different people and who they are; soldiers wear green; blue to represent water*	5
To represent a state of feeling mixed-up	*Lots of colors to show mixed up; bright colors mixed up to show what I feel inside*	2

To represent a personal preference	*Green and orange are very nice; choosing colors because I like them*	2
To represent a state of being or state of mind	*Colors for not being able to concentrate*	1
To represent thoughts or ideas	*Colors to represent different thoughts*	1

Of the ways students talked about using color, students most often used color to represent feelings, although they did not all use the same colors for particular feelings. Relating color choice with emotions was embedded in the curriculum design, came up in how students talked publicly about art in the whole class conversations, and eventually made its way into students' individual artwork. Furthermore, most students pushed beyond simplistic and one-dimensional notions of color. As indicated in Table 4-3, three students explicitly related blue with sadness but fewer students did than I would have initially expected. At one point during the sixth lesson, I said, "Blue can mean what you want it to mean. It's not like blue, there's like one right way to do things, there's not one right way to show something, there are reasons behind why blue might mean sad, but it doesn't need to mean just one thing." In their final works of art, blue did not always represent sad and red did not always represent anger (although they sometimes did). Taken together, in interviews and artist statements, no two students talked about using the elements of art in exactly the same way, and each choice was contextually relevant to how students made sense of their social issues and available art materials as they engaged art making.

The range of ways students talked about artistic elements and concepts in relation to their art making illustrates how through engagement with curriculum and public talk as a whole class, students made specific artistic choices as they used available art tools and materials to convey messages and emotions. This shows that students were exploring the language of art and the processes that would help them best articulate their ideas given available mediums. They were

appropriating and reconfiguring the language and symbol systems of art to convey new meanings. This idea aligns with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, that one's language affects perception and patterns of thought (Whorf, 1956). Cotner (2001) extends the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis to language in learning environments such as art classrooms when she argues, "the language that is used to talk about art in the...classroom will shape the teaching and learning that takes place in that particular environment" (p. 15).

Setting students up for political art making

The design of the learning environment led to students expressing their unique points of view. Teacher prompts ignited partner and whole group conversations in which students shared interpretations of art, talked about their personal connections to artwork, critiqued one another, and reflected on showing their creative work to other people. Student participation in these conversations influenced the choices they made about the social issues/topics/themes for their art and how they chose to represent ideas using artistic elements and concepts. Additionally, through interaction with diverse art materials and participation in a range of art making activities, students took up and applied their own ideas about their social issues in their art making practice.

Overall, artwork was purposefully selected for discussion to get students thinking about if and how art could inspire social change, if and how artists evoked emotion and empathy through their artistic choices, and if and how art making could be both an individual and collective endeavor. Artwork included in the curriculum was meant to inspire students as they made their own artwork about the social issues they cared about. Lessons were organized around essential questions that prompted students to consider ideas about their social issues and art making. The focus questions for the first and second lessons, for example (i.e., What is art? What is beautiful? What is ugly?), prompted students to think about art from a broader angle and push beyond

traditional notions of beauty. The focus question for lessons five and six (i.e., How do artists express emotion through color, shape, and line?) helped students explore artistic ideas. And because these questions guided students through lessons but were not meant to be definitively answered, all students could use these questions as jumping off points for exploration. And they did, as evidenced by their explanations of how they used color and other artistic elements and concepts for various representational purposes. The variation in explanations is key here—through giving students choices, a wide array of examples, and encouraging diversity in interpretation, students were able to work in ways that made sense to them, embedding their personal experiences and interpretations in the art making process.

Summary

To answer my first research question (i.e., How did an intentionally designed arts experience support students in talking about art and art making, including the topics they chose and the ways they used art media?), I looked at how the curriculum influenced how students talked about art in the whole class discussion space, which, in turn, influenced how students made individual choices in their art making processes. The designed experience encouraged students to engage with a range of topics for which they developed narratives that included different levels of personal distance. Students made art aligned with messages for social change, that expressed emotion and empathy through representational choices, and was uniquely their own yet tied to a collective voice about the issues. Students developed competence in using language particular to art making and engaged with the curriculum to apply ideas to their individual processes. By attending to this first research question, I was able to understand how the design of the environment worked for both public and private talk—most importantly, for

how individual students ultimately took up and appropriated intentional choices I made in curriculum and pedagogy for their own purposes and creative processes.

CHAPTER 5

Co-constructing voice: Patterns of interaction during whole class discussions

I begin this chapter with a reiteration of how I conceive of voice in my second research question: *How was student voice engaged, supported, and co-constructed by the curriculum, teacher, and students during whole class discussions about art to define what it meant to "have a voice" in the local classroom context?* As described in my methodology, in this chapter I mean student voice as a general construct related to how students participated and contributed during discussions involving all students and the teacher. That is, I am interested in how students had a voice in whole class conversations and how student voices were engaged and supported by the teacher and students in such discussions. Because student voice can be conceived of as a process of becoming that develops across time and situation (Lensmire, 1998), teachers and students co-construct how voice is locally defined through activities and actions embedded in the social organization of classroom interactions. This chapter focuses on how voice developed on the interpersonal plane (Rogoff, 1995). This chapter provides a foundation for understanding how students and I co-constructed what it meant to have a voice in the classroom space during whole class discussions.

Voice as a co-constructed whole class project

Rights, roles, responsibilities, and participation frameworks

As what it meant to have a voice was co-constructed in classroom interaction, students and I made moves that communicated and negotiated our rights roles, and responsibilities in relation to how one ought to contribute to and have a voice in the conversation. Students oriented toward one another within different participation frameworks (Goffman, 1981; C. Goodwin, 2007; M.H. Goodwin, 1990, 1997; Kendon, 1990) throughout lessons; the analysis in this

chapter focuses on the whole class participation framework. Participation frameworks were constituted by an interaction frame (Tannen & Wallett, 1987) that supported how students' bodies and talk were organized. Classrooms also operate within historical and cultural frames that include traditional norms of participation (i.e., teachers generally stand at the front of the class and teach, students are generally expected to sit, listen, and learn) (Cazden & Beck, 2003), yet participant roles and norms are in constant negotiation as students and teachers align with, resist, and disrupt these traditional norms in interaction. That is, through interaction within a participation framework, students are able to challenge and modify how the framework is constituted. As the teacher in this research, I set norms for how students ought to contribute, and these norms were both upheld and contested by students during discussions.

As I described previously, over the course of the study, the main frame for structuring participation dramatically shifted. For the first half of the semester (lessons 1-10) students worked on individual projects, leaving their seats only to acquire necessary art making materials during lessons. During the second half of the semester (lessons 11-20) students worked in groups of three or four and were constantly in movement, collaboratively making costume pieces in various locations around the classroom, including the floor. In contrast to the more traditional classroom orientation during the first half of the unit, a flurry of activity and movement of bodies dominated the second. These overarching frameworks influenced what students noticed and attended to, including how they oriented toward others in conversation. While I had initially intended to look at both individual and collective art making, I found the first ten lessons so very compelling and so the individual art making participation frame used during the first ten lessons is most relevant for the present study.

Background on the organization of time and space in this particular classroom paints the

broad picture of how participation frameworks changed over time in this study. In this chapter, I am focused on making an argument about how voice was co-constructed during the more traditional whole class conversations about art. During these discussions, students were mostly sitting in pairs, talking about an image projected on a screen at the front of the room. As the teacher, I did my best to act as both guide and listener. During these whole class discussions, other students oriented toward the central image or the current speaker. While usually implicit, in one case during lesson three, I explicitly directed their attention and gaze by giving students guidance of where to look when a student, Maribel, was sharing, "You can either look at the screen print on the slide or at Maribel." The whole class discussions were more traditional because students took turns speaking and I elected who would speak next, orchestrating the turn taking. These whole class conversations also included short partner sharing exercises, the mechanics of which I illustrate in this chapter.

Patterns of voice in whole class discussion

To address the question of how student voice was engaged, supported, and co-constructed, I created and analyzed activity logs from all whole class discussions and found common patterns of interaction that I found relevant and consequential for how participants had a voice in the conversation. That is, I was interested in the question of what counted as a valid contribution or way of participating that directed student talk and action. Situated within the unit, whole class conversations provided a platform for students to share ideas for artwork and were instrumental in shaping how students developed artistic and political aspects of voice with peers. I was interested in specific questions related to my analytical goals such as: Which comments did the group pick up? How did private ideas transform as they became public? How did small group conversations help students reevaluate, reconstruct, and elaborate on their ideas?

The patterns highlighted in this chapter occurred repeatedly during lessons and in multiple lessons over time. As described in my methodology chapter, I used an open coding process with activity logs from all lessons that resulted in the identification of 62 types of interactions during whole class discussions, 18 of which I found relevant for supporting student voice because they directly related to how students contributed over time during lessons. I consolidated the nuances in these initial passes into three themes that represented the most cohesive descriptions of recurring and salient patterns of interaction within and across lessons that related to the idea of what it meant to have a voice. It is important to note that my transcripts do not include every or even most utterances or gestures students made; in a class of 32 students, attempting to do so would not allow me to tell the more general story I hope to tell in this dissertation. I aim to balance between specificity and more broadly applicable patterns throughout my analysis.

Table 5-1.

Patterns of interaction consequential for co-construction of student voice in whole class discussions

Patterns of voice in whole class discussions	What did the pattern do for students?	How pattern contributes to what it means to have a voice
(1) Bursts of conversation about artwork with partners	Students could test, elaborate, and refine their ideas in a smaller group before sharing more publicly with the whole class	Voice is collaborative and builds from multiple contributions before being shared in a public space
(2) Taking up of on-topic callouts to support non-normative ways of participating	Students had agency to participate in ways that made sense to them and construct new norms for whole class participation; students could show support for ideas and publicly rally behind others	Voice is democratic; voice means that everyone has equal rights and opportunities to talk and take the floor; voice is on the public floor and built from individual interpretations and ideas in the public space
(3) Encouraging the extension of ideas of others about art and offering different interpretations	Students were able to elaborate on existing ideas and offer different perspectives, which were accepted as part of how we talk about art	Voice is heterogeneous; voice is a collection of ideas shared in the public space, even if those ideas are in conflict

The three patterns presented in Table 5-1 include: (1) bursts of conversations with partners in relation to a prompt to help students test their ideas as they think and talk about art; (2) taking up of on-topic callouts to support non-normative ways of participating; and (3) extending others' ideas about art and offering different interpretations to encourage diverse thinking. These emergent findings show how student voice was supported and engaged during whole discussions and illustrate what I found to be most compelling and consequential for co-constructing what it meant to have a voice.

Pattern 1: Bursts of conversation with partners about artwork to help students test, elaborate, and refine their ideas before sharing in public whole group discussion. Short bursts of conversation with partners emerged as a central whole class discussion feature. While I had planned for some amount of partner talk in the curriculum, as the unit progressed, I found it beneficial for students to participate in even more partner talk before sharing with the whole group. A typical example of this pattern began with showing students an artwork related to the day's essential questions. Loosely using Visual Thinking Strategies (Yenawine, 2013), I would ask students to take some time looking at the art to practice the act of observing, a critical yet often overlooked practice in arts education programs (Hetland et al., 2013). Following time spent quietly looking, I would then tell students to turn to their partners and share what they thought was going on in the picture or

Figure 5-1. Kahlo's *The Two Frida's* (1939)

comment on what they noticed. After 30 seconds to two minutes, the group would come back together and a few students would share their developing ideas. After students shared, I would summarize, adding vocabulary or making connections between ideas.

An example of this partner talk exchange occurred within the first few minutes of the very first lesson. In Excerpt 4 below I prepared students for a discussion about artwork so they could begin to define what art is as a group and so I could get a sense of how they were thinking and talking about art. I asked them to consider the meaning and purpose of several works of art and told them that we would discuss their ideas as a whole group in just a few moments. To begin the partner talk process, I showed Kahlo's *The Two Frida's* (Figure 5-1) on the projected screen and several students called out, "Frida Kahlo," identifying the artist who painted it (note: while it is likely that students had additional exposure to Frida's work, I taught a unit about women surrealist painters when many of them were in 2nd grade). After students vocalized their initial recognition, in Excerpt 4, turn 01 I narrowed their focus for partner talk by encouraging them to think about two specific questions. After students shared with partners, I brought the group back together in turn 03 and called on Natalie to share in turn 04.

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Mrs. Dahn	I want you to think about two questions. Why is this art? What is its purpose? So that means like what is it for or why did she make it? Turn to your neighbor and share with them what you think.	*Mrs. Dahn projects artwork, "The Two Fridas" on slideshow*
02	Most students		*Students share with partners for 50 seconds*
03	Mrs. Dahn	Alright, I'd love to hear what people have to say. And we're back	*Mrs. Dahn rings bell to bring class back together*
04	Mrs. Dahn	Who can share what they and their partner talked about? I've seen–I've called on all the, yes–Natalie	*Natalie raises hand, Mrs. Dahn calls on Natalie*

05	Natalie	What me and my partner discussed is how we see the two hearts on Frida and I'm guessing her imaginary twin and how I was saying how maybe it was when she was in the hospital and she was laying in her bed and how in the book it talks about how she had an imaginary friend that looked exactly like her	

Excerpt 4

It is interesting to consider what students ultimately shared in the public whole class discussion after just 50 seconds of partner talk. In this case, Natalie offered her imaginary twin interpretation in turn 05 and gave background on Frida. Natalie's offering begs for further exploration, however, and it is interesting to peel back the layers to reveal what Natalie discussed with her partner in their private conversation. In my analysis, I was interested in understanding more about what Natalie thought would be a legitimate contribution to the whole class discussion. I was also interested to understand if what she initially shared with her partner was transformed in any way as she brought her idea to the public floor. In looking more closely at partner talk, I thought I could better understand how voice was expressed, altered, and remade as students shifted participation frameworks from partner sharing to whole group discussion. Examining this shift and pattern of interaction helped to illuminate how voice was co-constructed during whole class discussions.

Prior to sharing with the whole group in Excerpt 4, Natalie and her partner, Kourtni, shared in a conversation presented in Excerpt 5 below. The partners began by looking at the image. Kourtni started talking in turn 02, but Natalie took over in turn 03, offering her "imaginary twin" interpretation. Kourtni then offered additional observations in turn 04. The girls discussed "the blood" before I brought the class back together to share in turn 06.

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Natalie and Kourtni		*Both students begin by looking at the image*

02	Kourtni	She probably–	
03	Natalie	–oh, I know why, I read the book. She, this, the purpose of this art is to basically tell herself like when she was in the hospital and she couldn't do anything, she had an imaginary friend, an imaginary twin called Frida. So basically it's her with her imaginary friend, her	*Natalie gestures to one figure in Frida painting followed by the other figure to support her explanation*
04	Kourtni	So basically what I'm seeing here is right now I see a heart on both of them, blood everywhere on one of their shirts, and then I see scissors cutting a rope or something	*Kourtni holds her hand over her chest to indicate "heart"*
05	Natalie	I think that's the blood	
06	Kourtni	That's very scary. Ugh, I can't even look at this no more	*Mrs. Dahn rings bell to bring class together to discuss*

Excerpt 5

In looking back at what Natalie chose to share with the whole group, it is clear that she leaned heavily on the initial interpretation she shared with Kourtni in turn 03 that "[Frida] had an imaginary friend" but then also added part of Kourtni's voice, creating a new contextual configuration (Goodwin, 2000) from their partner talk. Natalie sharing with the whole class that "we see the two hearts" in the discussion in Excerpt 4 provides evidence that partner sharing helped students elaborate on what they would share on their own. Also of note is the way Natalie assigned ownership throughout her contribution. She explained, "*We* see" followed by a shift to "*I'm* guessing" and "*I* was saying." Her semantic shifts between "we" and "I" throughout her turn at talk suggests a symbiotic relationship between individual and collective ownership over the ideas after partner discussions. In this specific case, what was initially a student's own idea became partially shared after 50 seconds of partner talk time. And because she raised her hand and I called on her, Natalie had agency to distribute ownership and decide who got credit for what when presenting to the group.

Short partner discussions were productive practice spaces for students to try out and

refine ideas before sharing in a more public way. Natalie crafted a more coherent response when describing her interpretation to the whole group whereas in her initial partner sharing she started off with a jolt of recognition, "-oh I know why, I read the book" in turn 02 of Excerpt 5. When sharing with the whole group, she did not start off with the same outburst, although she did reference "the book" (presumably a book about Frida's life); in her public explanation, the reference came later, serving as supporting evidence for her idea. Additionally, the elaboration Natalie offered to the whole group included Kourtni's noticing of the hearts (shared by Kourtni in turn 04 in Excerpt 5/shared by Natalie in turn 05 in Excerpt 4). And like her semantic shifts between "we" and "I," Natalie's move to include Kourtni's idea suggests that having a voice was a co-construction of ideas, that individual ideas became shared between partners, which then become shared amongst the group once they were made public. Indeed, voice can be an accumulation of collective ideas and interpretations (Cook-Sather, 2006; Hill, 2003; MacBeath, Demetriou, Rudduck, & Myers, 2003).

After I responded to Natalie's whole group share out by noting that she used the history of the artist and artwork to inform her interpretation, I pivoted to a different student, Jo, who was raising her hand. Jo shared in turn 02 of Excerpt 6 that she and her partner discussed that the art was about Frida's depression. I responded in turn 03 by linking her share out to the earlier discussion question I posed about the purpose of art.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	Jo, you want to add onto that?	*Jo raises hand; Mrs. Dahn calls on Jo*
02	Jo	Me and Maribel were talking about how she um, when she made this art she might be showing her depression and feelings because of the tough times she went through	*As Jo is sharing, Elena makes a silent connection gesture*

03	Mrs. Dahn	Mm, showing feelings. So maybe that's one of the purposes of art?

Excerpt 6

Like Natalie, Jo used joint ownership when publicly sharing her comment by including Maribel as part of the conversation in the beginning of turn 02. Jo also added information about the artist and connected the painting to "depression" and "tough times" Frida endured. In turn 02, Elena, a student sitting a few desks away from Jo and Maribel, made a silent connection gesture (i.e., pinky and thumb up, other fingers down, making back and forth motion towards speaker) as Jo shared, indicating her agreement with Jo. Following Jo's turn, I saw Evan's hand and called on him to offer one last whole group share out for the Frida image. Evan added to the whole class conversation in turn 02 of Excerpt 7 before I moved to the next work of art for discussion.

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Mrs. Dahn	Last comment and then we're going to move to another painting	*Evan raises hand; Mrs. Dahn calls on Evan*
02	Evan	I agree with Jo, and what me and her said is that they were probably showing exactly what they were trying to feel and what they were going through	*Points to his partner, Ariel, when he says "her"*
03	Mrs. Dahn	Great, next piece	*Mrs. Dahn displays new artwork on slideshow*

Excerpt 7

While it seems that Evan just rephrased what Jo already shared, it is important to note that his addition was still part of the legitimate class conversation, making is acceptable to share closely related ideas in the whole group setting. That Evan's contribution became part of the whole class discussion was consequential for other students who may have been reluctant to share and wondered whether their ideas were unique enough to offer to the group. And as with Natalie and Jo, Evan attributed joint ownership of his comment to his partner, "her," thus socially positioning the contribution as a joint idea. This consistent shared attribution of

ownership across student share outs is important because it illustrates that the class understands that while voice can be individually developed, it can also be collectively shared. Evan's comment is also evidence that because students hope to have their ideas accepted when they make them public, they may attempt to align their ideas with those already shared amongst the group.

Only Kourtni and Natalie's more intimate partner conversation was sufficiently captured on camera from the students that shared out in the whole group during this first partner sharing exercise (due to logistics of data collection, including the number of available cameras and where they were placed for this lesson, not all partner talk was captured). However, additional partner talk conversations were captured from students who did not share in the whole group setting. For example, two students sitting next to Kourtni and Natalie—Elena and Rosemary—had a brief conversation about the artwork that resonated with some of the responses shared in the whole group. They began by looking at the image (Excerpt 8). Elena shared in turn 02 what she observed in the painting, "her heart and some of her lungs," and linked this to her prior knowledge that Frida was in "a bunch of accidents." In turn 03 Rosemary explained that the art showed Frida's feelings and also referenced the idea of a twin before turning to Aiden, a student sitting behind them (Aiden's partner was in the restroom). Elena also tried to get Aiden's attention, but he responded with a shrug in turn 06 before I brought the class together to share.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Elena and Rosemary		*Both students are looking at the image on slideshow*
02	Elena	I think she made this art um because it's showing her heart and some of her lungs, and maybe she made it to demonstrate about what she's been through when she was in a bunch of accidents	

03	Rosemary	I think it shows how she feels and she feels like, she had a twin or something. Um yeah, how about you, Aiden?	*Rosemary gestures to her own heart, turns to Aiden; Aiden is drawing, shrugs*
04	Elena	Aiden	*Elena pauses a few seconds; Aiden draws*
05	Elena	Aiden	*Aiden looks up*
06	Aiden		*Aiden shrugs; Mrs. Dahn brings class back together*

Excerpt 8

Like students who shared in whole class discussion, Elena and Rosemary talked about what they knew about Frida's life, that she had "accidents" and had "been through" things. As mentioned previously, Elena was seen making a silent connection gesture as Jo shared with the whole group. Interestingly, Elena chose this nonverbal way of participating in contrast to Evan who took up space in the whole class discussion by sharing a nearly identical comment as Jo with the group. While she did not share out verbally in the public space, Elena's choice to make a silent connection was also consequential for how students had a voice in the whole class conversation. That is, while Evan had a voice by revoicing Jo's comment, Elena showed nonverbal support as a way of participating and making her voice known.

It is important to note that asking students to repeatedly engage in short conversations with peers did not always yield desired results, meaning that students did not always share about the projected artwork or have productive conversations. For example, although he overheard Elena and Rosemary share, Aiden's shrug in turn 06 above indicated his wish to opt out of the conversation, and my ringing of the bell to bring the whole class back together gave him permission to do so. Time for sharing ran out and because I could not listen to every conversation at the same time, I could not monitor if all students had shared during these quick partner talk episodes.

Another example of the unevenness of the partner sharing method is illustrated through a conversation between Ken and Carlos during the same 50 second period. I include their conversation in Excerpt 9. Ken and Carlos began by looking at the image and Carlos offered his interpretation in turn 02, noticing the blood and her heart, hypothesizing that perhaps "she got a gunshot." Ken whispered something inaudible on video to both Carlos and Rita at the next table in turn 03. In turn 04 his exploration of the idea that the painting means "when her life was broken" quickly shifted when he interrupted himself, "Dude, she looks like a frickin' dude." This utterance prompted Carlos to join him in turn 05, elaborating that "she has a unibrow." Ken added, "she has a moustache" in turn 06. They ended their conversation by likening Frida's appearance to Noah's mom. (Noah sat at a desk a row behind them.)

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Ken and Carlos		*Both students are looking at the image on slideshow*
02	Carlos	Because maybe she got a gunshot because there I see blood like everywhere I see the heart right there	*Carlos gestures to the painting as he talks*
03	Ken		*Ken whispers something to Carlos and then to Rita at the next table; Carlos laughs; Rita ignores him*
04	Ken	I think it means when her life was broken – dude, she looks like a frickin' dude	*Carlos laughs*
05	Carlos	She has a unibrow, no that's, that's-	*Carlos gestures behind him at Noah*
06	Ken	She has a moustache right here	*Ken gestures over his own face where a moustache would be*
07	Carlos	That's, that's Noah's, that's Noah's, that's-	*Carlos laughs, gestures toward Noah*
08	Ken	That's Noah's mom	
09	Carlos	They both have uh, they both have a unibrow	*Carlos gestures over his eyebrows*

10	Ken		*Ken laughs; Mrs. Dahn rings bell to bring class together; Ken raises his hand*

Excerpt 9

Ken and Carlos started off looking at the painting. Carlos made an inference in turn 02, yet their conversation quickly digressed, prompted by Ken's indecipherable whisper in turn 03. Ken attempted to respond to Carlos in a serious way he knew was aligned with my expectations by sharing his idea in turn 04, "I think it means when her life was broken," but then made a comment about Frida's appearance, that she "looks like a frickin' dude" at the end of the exact same turn. When Carlos joined in, noticing her "unibrow" in turn 05, followed by Ken pointing out a "moustache," they equated Frida with a traditionally masculine figure. Ken and Carlos took it one step further in turns 07-09 as they made a connection between the image of Frida and a different student's mom. (It is unclear if the students literally meant Noah's mom or if they were referring to Noah's "mom" in the form of a comeback or way to insult Noah.)

It is most interesting that in turn 10 Ken raised his hand to volunteer to share with the group after their conversation. While it is impossible to guess what Ken would have publicly shared had I called on him (presumably he would leave particular parts from their conversation out of his response to the whole group), perhaps for Ken, the partner talk pattern gave him time and space to think of something meaningful to add to the group discussion. Although most of their talk seemed unproductive (especially turns 04-09), Ken found something he thought might be worth contributing in the public classroom space. I come back to Carlos and Ken's conversation from Excerpt 9 in framing the second pattern consequential for having a voice in the next section.

In looking at examples of partner talk during the very first moments of the very first lesson, it is evident that the shift from more private partner talk to public share outs supported

what it meant to have a voice in this context. Students frequently shared in partners first before sharing out with the whole class; for example, in the first 12 minutes of the first lesson, students had four partner sharing opportunities. And regardless of whether or not the partner sharing pattern elicited responses aligned with my intentions as a teacher, it contributed to how students decided what was appropriate and worthwhile to share with the whole group.

By giving students time to think and test out their ideas in a smaller setting, they could elaborate and reconstruct their initial ideas about artwork and make decisions about what was worth sharing publicly. This pattern emphasized that having a voice in the classroom space involved building collaborative ideas from multiple contributions in private partner talk. Through partner talk, voice was transformed as students made decisions about how to translate their discussions to make a cohesive contribution. Even the marginal cases can be viewed through this lens as when Ken wanted to share publicly but did not have the opportunity and when Elena gestured to show agreement with Jo's public contribution; through their efforts to participate, these students also collaborated in the public construction of voice.

Pattern 2: Taking up of on-topic callouts to support non-normative ways of participating. While it would be easy to write off the interaction in Excerpt 9 between Ken and Carlos as unproductive, their conversation can be repositioned as a non-normative but relevant way of participating. They were indeed talking about the artwork at hand, even if they were likening Frida to "Noah's mom" in a somewhat disparaging way. And importantly, it is surprising that despite the content of their conversation, Ken still wished to share out with the group as evidenced by his raised hand at the end of Excerpt 9. In reviewing additional video, I noted that Ken did not raise his hand for every subsequent turn and so it can thus be assumed that their partner talk sparked something that made Ken want to share an idea. (In my experience,

Ken is not a mean-spirited kid, and it is unlikely that he would have made public exactly what he and Carlos said about Noah's mom in their private conversation.) I bring up the partner sharing case of Carlos and Ken because it provides a nice frame for the second pattern of interaction that I found consequential for shaping student voice in this study. That is, throughout the unit, non-normative ways of participating were frequently supported and taken up in both partner and whole class discussions.

In the third lesson, students talked about social issues that were important to them so they could brainstorm different ideas for the art they would make as part of the unit. After sharing ideas in partners, I asked students to make a list of social issues and explain some background. I then called on students one by one. Student responses included "cyberbulling," "DACA," "deporting/la migra," and "police." Students jumped in to add to other students' ideas, resulting in many students calling out at once. An example of this pattern of interaction occurred when Ariel offered the idea of "Donald Trump" as a social issue and then elaborated in turn 01 of Excerpt 10 below.

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Ariel	Just because the NFL took the knee, they were doing the flag something during the that's going on with Mexico, he doesn't, and they had an invitation to the White House, but Donald Trump doesn't want them to go to the White House, and now he gave the invitation to some sport that only white people do	
02	Many students		*Many students talk; a few students in the back can be heard saying "golf, tennis"; a student in the front says "volleyball"*

Excerpt 10

After Ariel's comment, many students spoke out of turn to contribute. In these moments when the class took over, I understood that as the teacher I did not have control and

acknowledged that students were participating in a way that made sense to them; in these moments, their engagement was evident as some were practically jumping out of their seats to contribute to the discussion.

In reflection on Excerpt 10, I was simultaneously aware of students' desire to be heard as well as my positionality within Ariel's comment. While it is likely that students knew that I was not a Donald Trump supporter based on my participation and the topics I chose for us to explore, I was the only white person in the classroom. Therefore, grappling with the content of what students discussed in many of these whole class conversations and my role within these conversations was critical. The social issues they discussed—racism in this case, police brutality in a different example of this same pattern—were serious realities reflective of what students saw and heard in the world around them.

Given my conviction about the types of discussions that ought to happen in classrooms, rather than elaborating or commenting on Ariel's contribution, in Excerpt 10 I stepped back to listen and left space for other students to have their say. Most students were engaged in conversations with people at their tables about what Ariel just shared. Once the side conversations dissipated, I attempted to regain control of the class rhythm and frame their participation in a positive light before moving forward with a traditional classroom turn taking framework. My interjection is included in Excerpt 11.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	I love that you're contributing, but this is getting a little unwieldy...I can tell you are getting like, you're getting passionate about it, and I love that. I like that you feel that, I like that you feel that	

Excerpt 11

While not an initial design choice or classroom norm as indicated by my marked uneasiness with how unstructured the conversation feels (e.g., “this is getting a little unwieldy” in turn 01), allowing on-topic callouts to be a legitimate way to participate in the whole class discussion space gave students agency to contribute in ways that make sense to them even if what they had to say did not fit with norms of the classroom environments students were used to.

When I offered the floor back to Ariel to continue her turn prior to Excerpt 12, she elaborated on how she felt about Donald Trump in turn 01, and students continued to make on-topic callouts, including Ken’s declaration that Trump has a “big lengua” in turn 03. This exchange reified on-topic call outs as a legitimate form of participation, strengthening its position as a new norm. And while in turns 03 and 06 of Excerpt 12 I tried to steer students toward defining the social issues that Donald Trump made us concerned about (and not defining Donald Trump himself as a social issue), students ignored my attempt at making the distinction, continuing to add on-topic callouts to the conversation in turns 04, 05, 07, and 09.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Ariel	It's kind of like that, but like when he speaks, he doesn't know how to stop his tongue 'cause he just doesn't think about it.	*Teacher nods and says okay; many students nod or utter some form of agreement*
02	Ken	He's a person with a big lengua	*Ken calls out; many students laugh*
03	Mrs. Dahn	I'm gonna put in like a question mark, Donald Trump, to think about-	*Some students are talking about the topic*
04	Benjamin	Racism	*Benjamin calls out*
05	Oscar	He doesn't want Curry to go to the White House	*Oscar calls out*
06	Mrs. Dahn	He, he makes us think about a lot-	*Some students continue talking about the topic*
07	Ariel	And wants to create America better again. How is that happening?	*Ariel calls out*

08	Many students		*Many students begin talking at once; Evan, Ken, Benjamin, Natalie, and Teo simultaneously make "air quotes" with their hands in reference to Ariel's comment*
09	Oscar	Great again!	*Oscar calls out*
10	Many students		*Many students begin talking at once*
11	Mrs. Dahn	I love, I love these conversations. Okay, who has another, who has another issue?	

Excerpt 12

Because the topics discussed were meaningful to students and because students had a lot of ideas, questions, and emotions about these topics, they felt comfortable calling out, adding on, and supporting one another's contributions in the public whole class discussion space. Even when I tried to get words in as the teacher, my speech was cut off by additional callouts relevant to our conversation. The direction and quality of this conversation is not normal for a traditional classroom discussion and resulted in a very different participation structure from typical school. The overlapping talk, collective sharing, and story making became a new classroom norm as the class made and talked about social issues and art relevant to their lives. Students' intentional resistance to traditional classroom norms therefore shaped our whole class conversations and what it meant to have a voice in consequential ways. As evidenced in the repeated callouts throughout Excerpt 12, when students had something to say, they felt that they could say it aloud to make it a part of our collective talk. That is, they anticipated that other students were going to approve of their contributions by either laughing, adding on, nodding, or at the very least, listening.

While not explicitly part of my initial curriculum or pedagogical plan, callouts became a driving force for conversation. Take for another example Excerpt 13 in which a student offered

"the police" as a social issue; while I attempted to help the student clarify why "the police" were a social issue in turn 04, a pattern of on-topic callouts ensued when Ken shouted, "Yeah, they shoot dogs!" in turn 05 and Benjamin added that "they just kill people" in turn 06. Ken agreed with Benjamin's contribution and added that "they're also racist" in turn 07 and Elijah brought in some personal experience that he "saw more cops in the 7-11" in turn 08 before I interrupted him to bring the class back together.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Benjamin	Um, the police	
02	Mrs. Dahn	Tell me more	
03	Benjamin	Because um sometimes the police don't do anything 'cause um sometimes and on YouTube they kill random animals because they like on YouTube like this dog got killed because the dog was like, it wasn't barking or anything, it just wanted to play	*A few students call out after Benjamin shares*
04	Mrs. Dahn	Mm so we have some issues where police aren't doing their jobs and things like that	
05	Ken	Yeah, they shoot dogs!	*A few students call out Ken calls out*
06	Benjamin	And one time, they, they just kill people, they don't say something first	*Benjamin calls out*
07	Ken	Yeah, they're also racist!	*Ken calls out*
08	Elijah	Also, I saw more cops in the 7-11 everytime–	*Elijah calls out; many students begin talking*
09	Mrs. Dahn	Woah, we're really getting some conversations–	*Most students continue talking; a few students say "shhh"*
10	Mrs. Dahn	I love that we're super passionate about this, and it sounds like people have a lot of ideas, and you guys obviously have a ton of experiences, but I want us to be able to hear each other so please raise your hand	

Excerpt 13

While I tried to reinforce my own idea of how students ought to participate by raising

their hands in Excerpt 13, students resisted this traditional classroom norm. The momentum of the discussion was palpable; once a student made a contribution that others were excited about, they picked it up and added information. In turn 02 I attempted to control the floor and made a move that encouraged Benjamin to take a second turn. In turn 03 Benjamin referenced YouTube as his primary source of information supporting his social issue of "the police." In turn 04 I tried to build on Benjamin's idea, and the result was that Ken joined me in turn 05 when he added, "Yeah, they shoot dogs!" Elijah used his personal experience when he shared with the group in turn 08, adding to Benjamin's contributions. The type of information they shared also transformed as they took more turns at talk. Benjamin started off by explaining that he thought "sometimes the police don't do anything" and referenced a video he saw of police "[killing] random animals." I attempted to clarify so that students who did not see the video could contribute as Ken interjected, "Yeah, they shoot dogs!" Ken's callout gave Benjamin support to continue and transition from his contribution that the police kill animals to the police "kill people, they don't say something first" in turn 06. Ken again showed support for Benjamin's ideas when he exclaimed, "Yeah, they're also racist!" followed by Elijah adding a personal connection. Elijah's contribution prompted the whole class to begin talking at once, making their own personal connections. Students aligned their ideas and voiced general agreement with the conversation at hand. This snapshot of whole group conversation is aligned with the notion of cooperative overlap (Gumperz & Tannen, 1979) that has been used to show how working class girls overlap in conversation to show support for the speaker (Hemphill, 1989). The callouts in these excerpts were supportive; students were both sharing their unique ideas and contributing to part of a collective narrative.

In Excerpt 13 I tried to organize their participation following traditional turn taking

norms as I made a meta-comment in turn 09, “Woah, we’re really getting some conversations–” and when I more explicitly said “please raise your hand” in turn 10. However, my efforts were largely unsuccessful and in reflection, misaligned with my research goals of developing student voice. My desire to have control over the conversation represented a tension inherent in teaching and with my framework of sociocultural theory. Teaching is constant work in decision making, and sometimes the best laid plans must be thrown out. Despite my efforts to manage the class discussion as one in which students took turns speaking, students continued to participate in ways they preferred. On-topic callouts were encouraged by other students and eventually, by me. By stepping back and allowing students to take over conversations, I gave students opportunities to take up space in the classroom. This reconstruction of norms disrupted the typical rights, roles, and responsibilities of a traditional classroom discussion space. Students came to understand that their ideas, interpretations, and voices mattered and they could be heard even if they did not raise their hands. Whole class conversations became a space for students to make their ideas public to their peers. By reframing the whole class discussion space as one in which students had agency to contribute in non-normative ways, they were able to share their emerging thoughts. While partner discussions allowed students to privately test out ideas, this pattern allowed for public testing.

The pattern of on-topic callouts gave everyone equal opportunity and power to talk in the public classroom space because the collective goal of the group was to share personal interpretations. Voice was therefore something that was democratic and about bringing individual and privately constructed ideas to the public floor. Voice was further iterated on and developed on that public floor as students added on to interpretations and voiced their support for others’ ideas.

Pattern 3: Extending ideas of others is encouraged and multiple, conflicting interpretations are expected and valid ways of contributing. Most often lessons began with students and I observing and talking about artwork. Students contributed by adding to others' ideas, expressing agreement or dissent, and at times, offering wildly different interpretations. As students participated in conversations about artwork, they usually explained why their prior knowledge or experiences influenced their perspectives. While engaging in these conversations, students and I developed norms that included adding on to ideas of others and that encouraging multiple, even conflicting, ideas to coexist in conversations.

Extending ideas of others. The episode in Excerpt 14 is from the same lesson featured in the previous pattern. Prior to this point students had been defining and talking about different social issues that mattered to them, including ideas like cyberbullying and immigration. I then began showing students art that was about particular social issues to ideas for the kind of art they might make. Excerpt 14 illustrates how students used their prior understandings of the world to talk about their interpretations of different works of art and build on other students' contributions.

In Excerpt 14 students and I looked at a collection of pieces by Los Angeles street artist Shepard Fairey as part of his "We the People" series (Figure 5-2). I first gave students the floor in turn 01 to offer their interpretations as I gestured toward the image on the board to focus their joint attention (i.e., an intersubjective experience through orientation toward an object of shared focus and gaze) (Goffman, 1963; Goodwin, 2006; Kidwell & Zimmerman, 2006, 2007; Marin, 2013; Tomasello & Carpenter, 2007). I offered a few seconds of wait time and encouraged more students to participate. After this wait time, Sam, a student who had not yet spoken to the whole

group that day, offered his noticing that the people in the artwork were "Muslim, Latina, and African American," and I asked him to elaborate on what the artist might have been trying to show. Before I finished probing Sam, he shared his prior knowledge and ideas that "white men are making fun of Muslims" in turn 10; Benjamin interjected "like Trump" in turn 11, adding to the co-constructed interpretation they were building together. Sam acknowledged and validated Benjamin's participation in their "joint accomplishment of the activity in progress" (Goodwin, 2007, p. 62) in turn 12 when he said "yeah" before extending his explanation of what the artist was trying to show, that "white people are saying that Muslims are terrorists." Sam further explained what "white men" and "white people" were saying about "Latinas," and Oscar offered an affirmation, "That's Mexicans." As Sam explained his interpretation, I stepped in to clarify and summarize his contributions.

Figure 5-2 Fairey's *We the People* series (2016)

After a few students made additional contributions, I pivoted the joint attention of the class to Maribel, who suggested that the artwork had a different message, that "we're still human" and "shouldn't be treated differently because of our religion." Jo agreed with and added on to Maribel's contribution to highlight the inclusion of the American flag in the artwork and explained that "America is a place of different cultures, not just one culture," drawing attention to the artwork, explaining that the three women were all "from different places."

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	I'm gonna show you another piece of art that's about a different social issue– oh no, it's actually kind of along the same lines, but do you remember this? Or, have you seen this at all?	*Shows "We the People" by Shepard Fairey* 
02	A few students		*A few students call out yes, a few call out no*
03	Ken	I heard it	
04	Benjamin	I seen it	
05	Mrs. Dahn	What do you think it might mean?	
06	Ken	We the people	*Reads text under image*
07	Mrs. Dahn	I've seen a lot of the same hands, I'm gonna call on someone I haven't heard from yet. Sam, what do you think?	*Teacher raises her hand; Sam raises his hand; teacher calls on Sam*
08	Sam	I think she is Muslim, Latina, and African American	*Sam gestures to image as he explains*
09	Mrs. Dahn	Alright, and what do you think the artist was trying to show maybe by making-	
10	Sam	-like Muslims are, um Muslims are um, white men are making fun of Muslims-	
11	Benjamin	-like Trump-	
12	Sam	-yeah and whi-, and white people are saying that Muslims are terrorists, like Islam and Latinas, they think that they're the narcos, like they sell drugs-	
13	Oscar	That's Mexicans	
14	Mrs. Dahn	So you're talking about stereotypes that people-	
15	Sam	- and African Americans like they say [unclear]	
16	Mrs. Dahn	So you're talking about stereotypes that people have of people because of their religion or their race or where they come from, right?	

17	Many students		*Many students begin talking at once*
18	Oscar	The one in the middle means El Chapo	*Teacher calls on Maribel*
19	Maribel	I think what it means that even if becau-, even if we are of a different religion, we are still the same, we're still human, and we shouldn't be treated differently just because of our religion	
20	Mrs. Dahn	Jo, you want to add on to that?	
21	Jo	I want to add on, and I think it's saying because they all have a part of the American flag, I think it's saying that America is a place of different cultures not just one culture because they're all different um, they're all from different places	

Excerpt 14

There are a few key points in this episode that are consequential for understanding how student voice was engaged in the whole group discussion space concerning how students took up and extended others' ideas. First, I opened the floor to students to contribute by asking if anyone recognized the work of art, and I asked students if any of them had ideas about its meaning. I gave students time to think and suggested it was okay for them to offer their initial thoughts.

When Sam, a student who had not yet participated publicly in the earlier whole class discussion, offered an idea in turn 08, I engaged with him further, asking him to talk about what he thought the artist was trying to show. Benjamin called out by adding to Sam's point, "like Trump," which Sam acknowledged and took up as part of his contribution as he continued with his initial train of thought in turn 12. Because Sam acknowledged the on-topic callout, Benjamin's addition was positioned as a legitimate way to contribute, and Sam was able to make his point while simultaneously validating Benjamin. As he continued, Sam explained that "white people are saying that Muslims" are terrorists. Oscar interjected, sharing his prior knowledge in turn 13, clarifying that it's specifically "Mexicans" that Sam referenced when he said, "they sell drugs." In an attempt to summarize what Sam explained, I offered that they were talking about

"stereotypes that people have" based on different parts of their identities. There is always a power imbalance between teachers and students in classrooms as part of the social fabric of schools and teaching (Cazden & Beck, 2003), yet interestingly enough, no individual student took up my comment. Instead, in turn 17, many students began talking at once about their ideas prompted by the image.

It is evident that the work of interpreting art in this context did not just belong to Sam—it was also Benjamin's, Oscar's, mine, and other students' as eveyone began talking and adding their ideas to the whole class conversation. Additionally, as in previous examples, it is important to note the impact and influence of issues of power and race in these interactions, both in the content of what was discussed and in how interaction was affected. As was the case in the previous pattern, aware of my positionality and presence in this space, I took a step back in the conversation and helped students navigate turn taking, offering my perspective as one of many. Students discussed for a few moments on their own before I brought them back and gave Maribel the floor. Jo and Maribel's contributions brought the discussion of the artwork from the literal image to its potential for conveying a larger message. Maribel said "even if we're of a different religion, we are still the same, we're still human and shouldn't be treated differently because of our religion" in turn 19. Jo added on by tying the imagery in the artwork to what it means to live in America, an especially relevant topic given the current political context.

The conversation in Excerpt 14 followed an arc from Oscar and Sam's connections between the artwork and what was going on in the world to Maribel and Jo's additions that there might be a larger message about humanity and what it means to be American. All students found valid ways to take part in the exchange—most students who did not talk in the public group setting made side comments or reacted to what other students shared—and all contributions co-

constructed a collective interpretation. Students connected interpretations to their prior understandings of the world. The conversation was cooperative because individual contributions all became a part of the story the class was trying to tell.

Offering different interpretations based on prior knowledge. The second part of this pattern highlights how students used their prior experiences to constructively disagree within a conversation about a work of art. Students would debate concepts concerning a work of art based on their prior knowledge and experiences. The presence of debate was consequential for student voice in whole class discussions because it reinforced the idea that conflicting ideas and interpretations were part of co-constructing a shared understanding.

The episode that most clearly illustrates this pattern is broken into several connected excerpts. Excerpt 15 below begins much like the one above as I flipped the slideshow to a new image. In turn 02 Oscar commented that "they" (the three people in the image) were climbing the border to America. I acknowledged his contribution with a quick "great" and pivoted to Mallory who offered more, adding that "the police helicopter [was] looking for them so they could get arrested" in turn 04. As Mallory shared, Oscar tried to elaborate on his comment; he seemed to be talking a bit to himself and was whispering to other students at the tables around him. I circled back to him in turn 05, sensing that he wanted to add more.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	What's going on in this picture?	
02	Oscar	They're climbing the border between Mexico and, and America	
03	Mrs. Dahn	Great. What more can you find? Mallory?	

04	Mallory	Like um, I can also find, the police helicopter, I think it's a police helicopter that's trying to, that's looking for them so they could get arrested for trying to uh and the baby is trying to hold the mom back	*As Mallory is sharing, Oscar is quietly trying to explain logistics of what the police are allowed to do*
05	Mrs. Dahn	Yeah, alright. What more can you find? What else is going on in this picture? What do you think? Oscar?	

Excerpt 15

Oscar's contribution prompted student interest in discussing the real life specifics implied through the artwork. He began by calling out what he identified as the primary activity of the subjects, which served as a starting point for a co-constructed story. Mallory contributed to this narrative, adding detail, including that the baby was holding the mom back.

Prior to Excerpt 16, I gave Oscar the floor so he could pick up where he left off with his initial comment. Drawing from his prior knowledge, he explained that when the people crossed the border from the United States to Mexico, the helicopter could no longer chase them. I asked, "Wait, can it?" in turn 02, which prompted Benjamin and Ken to also question Oscar's insight in the following turns. I joined with Benjamin and Ken to protest the legitimacy of Oscar's claim with a "Yeah, yeah" but Oscar pushed back and physically oriented his body toward Ken and Benjamin as he gestured to the painting to clarify and reiterate his initial point that, "You can't because that's that's from America and on that side it's Mexico" in turn 06. Through his persuasive argument, Oscar was able to recruit support from Noah and Sam who called out that it's illegal for the police to cross sides in turns 09 and 11. While he initially protested, Ken eventually bought Oscar's claim. The conversation ended with Benjamin questioning, "Why don't they just dig under?"

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Oscar	Um um something that is like when they cross the border to Mexico, the helicopter can't chase them no more because it's on the other side, and it's not Mexico.	

02	Mrs. Dahn	Wait, can it?	
03	Benjamin	They can still chase them	
04	Ken	Yeah, they could just go over it	*Ken makes a gesture indicating "over"*
05	Mrs. Dahn	Yeah, yeah-	
06	Oscar	-no, you can't because that's that's from America and on that side it's Mexico	*Oscar turns his body to direct his comment to Ken and Benjamin*
07	Ken	Wait, what?	
08	Oscar	So the Mexico people, the Mexico cops have to chase them	
09	Noah	That's illegal, apparently that's-	
10	Ken	O:::h	
11	Sam	That's illegal to go to the other side	
12	Oscar	Yeah, it's illegal	*Oscar nods in agreement with Sam and Noah*
13	Benjamin	Why don't they just dig under?	

Excerpt 16

In Excerpt 16, the class conversation diverged from students extending others' ideas to students taking a stand and voicing disagreement in the public whole class discussion. Oscar picked up Mallory's mention of the helicopter and added information based on his prior knowledge—that the police from Mexico are not allowed to arrest people once they cross the border. While Benjamin, Leo, and I all pushed back, Oscar continued to make his case. Oscar's passionately defended his perspective, specifically in turns 06 and 08, a consequential move for how student voice was co-constructed in the whole class classroom context as including disagreement. Additionally, my opinion was just part of the collective and in this case, my

control over how the co-constructed narrative took shape was no more important than students'. In fact, Oscar's addition was ultimately accepted by most of the group as the most plausible interpretation.

The conversation continued in Excerpt 17 as I pivoted attention to a different student, Kayla (on the opposite side of the room). In turn 03 Kayla made a personal connection to the image and experience with "the deport police." She explained in turn 03, "When I was driving from the freeway there was this sort of van, it was full of like men and I learned that there is like the deport police and they stopped them and then like all, like a lot of men came out and they were like that [puts hands up] they were deporting them." I took this opportunity to make a connection between the kind of art they were studying and the personal stories they all had connected to this kind of art making in turn 04, emphasizing that "this stuff is real, right?"

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Kayla	Miss, can I say something?	*Kayla is waving her arm in the air*
02	Mrs. Dahn	Yeah, Kayla, hold on- y'all I like your conversation, Kayla wants the floor, she wants to add something	
03	Kayla	When I was driving from the freeway there was this sort of van, it was full of like men and I learned that there is like the deport police and they stopped them and then like all, like a lot of men came out and they were like that they were deporting them	*Kayla raises both hands up by her shoulders as she explains, "they were like that"*
04	Mrs. Dahn	Yeah, this is like, this is part of the reason we're talking about this kind of art, trying to make this kind of art, because this is stuff that is real, right?	

Excerpt 17

Kayla contributed her personal experience to the conversation, that she actually saw something related to this issue happen when she was driving on the freeway. Her narrative about "the deport police" is relevant to the collective class voice. At the end of the exchange, I legitimized her contribution as part of the class story by connecting it to the broader purpose of

why we were talking about and making art about these types of issues, that "this stuff is real."

A final part of the episode further illustrates this pattern in Excerpt 18 below. I returned to the work of art and drew students' attention to a few symbolic aspects of the painting, such as the "patriotic American colors" of their clothing. As I began to explain what I thought the bird could symbolize at the end of turn 01, Ken jumped in, "America!" in turn 02 and Elijah added, "It's the Mexican flag!" in turn 04, connecting the bird in the painting to the bird on the flag. To both these suggestions I said, "Maybe" and "Or that," respectively, but then added an additional interpretation that "the bird has this freedom" in turn 06. I acknowledged that maybe the artist was working with one of these interpretations in mind, and Sam circled back to connect this interpretation to Oscar's initial argument, and explained that "they can't like chase birds like people across the border."

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Mrs. Dahn	I just wanted to point out two things really quick that I thought were interesting. First of all, you notice that the colors they're wearing, they're all kind of like patriotic American colors, and then what I really love about this bird repre-and what the bird represents to me–	*Teacher gestures to particular places in painting as she explains*
02	Ken	America!	*Ken calls out*
03	Mrs. Dahn	Maybe, but to me, actually, my-	
04	Elijah	-it's the Mexican flag	*Ken calls out*
05	Mrs. Dahn	Or that. My interpretation was like this freedom, right. The bird has this freedom-	
06	Ken	-oh yeah-	
07	Mrs. Dahn	-that the people don't have and can fly back and forth so that was maybe what the artist was thinking, maybe he was thinking something more along the lines of you're saying	

08	Sam	Miss-	*Sam calls out to get teacher's attention*
09	Mrs. Dahn	Quickly, yeah	
10	Sam	I agree with um Oscar 'cause they can't like chase birds like people across the border right-	
11	Mrs. Dahn	-yeah-	
12	Sam	-they could also go to jail and the government is gonna have a lot of problems with Mexico	
13	Mrs. Dahn	You're gonna have to look up more information about that for us, okay?	*To Oscar after Sam references his earlier point*

Excerpt 18

I reasoned that my purpose as the teacher in the beginning of this episode was to steer the conversation toward talking about representational choices the artist made, including color and symbolic elements like the bird flying overhead so that students could think about similar choices in their own art. Ken and Elijah called out their own interpretations of what parts of the painting could mean. What is most interesting about this excerpt is that the conversation connects back to the earlier disagreement. Sam positioned Oscar's major contribution as something that connected to the symbolism of the bird in the painting. Sam explained, "they can't chase birds like people across the border right" in turn 10. I then told Oscar that he should look up information for the group so that we could continue this conversation at a later point. My final contribution marked the disagreement as unsolved (while most students were on board with Oscar's comment, not all verbally expressed agreement, and I was also unconvinced). This episode illustrates that presenting opposing viewpoints was part of what it meant to have a voice in the classroom context. Resolution was not necessarily the goal; uncertainty and grappling with different ideas became part of what it meant to develop and interrogate ideas.

For this third pattern, voice was defined as something that was heterogeneous, meaning

that all voices were valuable to the class discussion space and could co-exist. Multiple ideas actually made our conversations about artwork richer and supported students in thinking more clearly about their rationale for taking up particular interpretations. Students could contribute in ways that supported and conflicted with others; in fact, because art was understood as something personal and tied to individual experiences, diverse ways of participating and thinking were encouraged in public talk about art.

Summary

While the three patterns in this analysis—repetitive bursts of partner talk, taking up of on-topic callouts, and extending ideas about art and offering conflicting interpretations——are not the only ways that students participated in whole group discussions, they illustrate broadly how students and I co-constructed what it meant had a voice in whole class discussions in this classroom context. First, by sharing privately with their peers, students were able to refine and add to their ideas in a smaller setting before making them public to the whole class. Second, because on-topic callouts were taken up by others in the public discussion space, students had agency to participate in ways that made sense to them in the moment as they publicly showed support for ideas and rallied behind one another. Third, as students became comfortable adding on to one another's ideas and offering conflicting perspectives, it became a norm for diverse ideas to coexist when talking about and making art. These whole group patterns defined having a voice as collaborative, democratic, and heterogeneous in the local classroom context, which provided the foundation for student trajectories of artistic and political voice during individual art making, the focus of chapter six.

CHAPTER 6

The reciprocal, symbiotic development of artistic and political voice

In this chapter, I focus on my third research question: *How did individual students develop their artistic and political voices as they engaged with ideas and art media to make their own art and talked about the art they made with partners?* My goal is to show how particular students moved through the designed learning experience and how their artistic and political voice developed as they made art about social issues.

I draw from Furman and Barton (2006) to operationalize voice as students' individual perspectives and participation enacted through their talk and choices while making and talking about art. I take their approach a step further as I disentangle the kinds of voice in which I am interested: artistic and political voice. Artistic voice can be uncovered by examining students' talk and choices in relation to the representations they made and how through interaction with others, students *transformed materials into mediums* to create images (Eisner, 2002). Through both exploration and purposeful work with materials, students learned to think within mediums to convey ideas. Political voice can be understood by examining students' talk and choices in relation to the topics they chose for their art and how they *transformed topics into messages* to present to a public audience. Artistic and political voice were intertwined in students' creative processes, but I found it useful to keep them separate for analysis to articulate more precisely how they engaged in the creative process as they constructed representations. To find evidence of artistic and political voice in the data, I looked at how individual students talked and wrote about the art they made in classroom interaction, interviews, and artist statements.

Through engagement in various participation frameworks (i.e., whole class, partner, small groups) and by moving through designed conversation spaces (i.e., personal narratives,

peer critique, reflections on going public), students came up with, elaborated on, and refined ideas for their artwork. These structures, along with curriculum and projects outlined in chapters three and four, mediated students' art making processes. In this chapter, I show broadly how within this designed experience, artistic and political voice were influenced by the ways students selected topics, the level of personal distance[4] students had from their topics, how peer interactions were incorporated into artwork, the ways students developed arguments around their topics, and how they experimented with materials to convey meaning.

Review of focus participant selection

I chose Benjamin, Natalie, and Jo as focus participants. As previously explained, selection was guided by availability of video and written data. Additionally, their creative processes represented a range of topics, each had a unique level of personal distance from their topics, and each took a different approach to experimentation with materials. In this chapter, I tell their stories separately, yet because voice is a co-constructed project and talk is a focus for this study, by necessity, other students' ideas were incorporated in the individual trajectories of Benjamin, Natalie, and Jo. Therefore, the stories in this chapter became a collection of many voices. I end by noting similarities and differences across focus participants, and reflect on their creative processes and voice development.

Benjamin's voice development as a co-construction of stories

I think the purpose of art is to inspire people and to try to make the world a better place.

-Benjamin

To tell the story of Benjamin's voice development, I first offer background on how his participation changed over the course of the study. One thing I remembered about Benjamin

[4] While not part of this dissertation, this construct might also be explored as psychological distance (see Liberman, Trobe, and Stephan, 2007 for discussion).

from when he was younger was that he loved doodling so it was unsurprising when I watched sixth grade Benjamin draw in his notebook during our whole class discussions. As he drew sketches of planets, cartoon characters, and what he described as "every fruit and vegetable," he also participated in discussions, raising his hand to share and talking to himself about the topic at hand as captured in GoPro footage. He and Leo talked about art in their partner conversations, and at one point, he agreed with Leo, who wished that they had art everyday "like last year." Benjamin's invested participation in art class did not last, however. In fact, throughout the course of the semester, my relationship with Benjamin was rife with tension. When Benjamin was not interested in a project, he withdrew, making it difficult for me to focus on anything else other than helping him get back on track.

My struggle with Benjamin can best be illustrated through the final group project in which students made costume pieces in small groups. When I proposed the project and students began forming groups, Benjamin resisted and said he did not want to work with anyone. Although several students wanted him in their group because he was good at drawing, he declined and said, "Art is stupid." Despite my repeated encouragement and attempts to find a way for him to participate, Benjamin spent the majority of these lessons walking aimlessly around the classroom. When I asked him why, he said, "Because I'm bored." My attempts at trying to help Benjamin were unsuccessful; when I said he was a great artist and I knew he loved art, he responded with, "Nah, I hate art."

As an experienced teacher, Benjamin's behaviors were not unfamiliar to me, but because I was trying so hard to make the research work, his actions had control over my emotions and how I felt about myself as both an educator and researcher. In the moment, it was difficult for me to resist demanding compliance as I might have when I first started teaching, yet, as I gained

experience, I tried to reorient my teaching and classroom management practice toward more culturally responsive goals like self-regulation, community building, and social decision making (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, Hambacher, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). Although I tried to find a more relationship-centered way to solve this dilemma, my attempts were unsuccessful. The complexity of my interactions with Benjamin and associated feelings of failure as an educator and researcher are beyond the scope of this dissertation, and I reflect on details elsewhere (Dahn, 2019). Teaching can be emotionally exhausting, yet research that includes raw and detailed accounts of emotion is often discouraged (Ruecker & Svihla, 2019).

Background on Benjamin is useful for illustrating that his participation was not one-dimensional. That is, while his voice developed in particular ways for the individual project on which I focus in my analysis, his trajectory would not look the same if I were tracking his voice development during the group costume project. This anecdotal comparison serves as a reminder connected to this study's theoretical frame that voice is a project that develops over time in particular interactions as people make sense of the world. The data I pull from in this dissertation is context-dependent, situational, and represents snapshots in time unique to particular student experiences.

For analysis of Benjamin's artistic and political voice development in this chapter, I focus on the artwork he created in Figure 6-1, an abstract painting about his chosen social issue of "the police." In his art, he included a central image that he explained was supposed to represent "the eye of the person" who was about to be arrested. He said that the lines swirling around the eye were the thoughts going through that person's mind. In Excerpt 19 I show how this artwork

Figure 6-1. Benjamin's abstract art about "the police"

ultimately came to be, beginning with Benjamin's participation as he shared with the whole class. An extended version of this interaction was included in chapter five, but it is worth reviewing here, as it marks an important point of Benjamin's individual political voice development. As a reminder, after I called on him, Benjamin suggested "the police" as a social issue and then elaborated that police "don't do anything" adding that they "[sometimes] kill random animals," referencing a YouTube video. Other students rallied in support of Benjamin's claims and Benjamin added that the police "just kill people," too. Again, other students chimed in to offer support.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Benjamin	Um, the police	
02	Mrs. Dahn	Tell me more	
03	Benjamin	Because um sometimes the police don't do anything 'cause um sometimes and on YouTube they kill random animals because they like on YouTube like this dog got killed because the dog was like, it wasn't barking or anything, it just wanted to play	*A few students call out after Benjamin shares*
04	Mrs. Dahn	Mm so we have some issues where police aren't doing their jobs and things like that-	*Mrs. Dahn is writing down "the police" on the board*
05	Ken	-yeah, they shoot dogs!	*A few students call out; Ken calls out*
06	Benjamin	And one time, they, they just kill people, they don't say something first	*Benjamin adds on*
07	Ken	Yeah, they're also racist!	*Ken calls out*

08	Elijah	Also, I saw more cops in the 7-11 everytime–	*Elijah calls out; many students begin talking*

Excerpt 19

This point in Benjamin's political voice development marked his topic choice for the abstract project. It is interesting that he did not draw from personal experience in his own life but experience watching a video on YouTube, a medium that has been shown to impact students' civic engagement and identity formation (Lenhart, Smith, Anderson, Duggan, & Perrin, 2015). Based on their conversations, Benjamin and his friends had seen YouTube videos in which police did things they viewed as wrong. In turn 03 of Excerpt 19 Benjamin explained the relevance of a YouTube video, noting the innocence of the dog, that "it wasn't barking or anything, it just wanted to play." After my attempt to make Benjamin's topic more broadly applicable to the whole class, Ken reiterated what Benjamin shared, that "they shoot dogs!" in a passionate outcry, prompting Benjamin to add to his whole class contribution in turn 06 when he turned the conversation from police killing dogs to police killing people. He aligned the innocence of dogs with people, saying that cops "just kill people, they don't say something first," explaining that police give no warning before they are willing to take a person's life. In looking at the specific turns in this conversation, it seems that Benjamin's contributions were supported and made possible by others in the interaction (in this case, myself and Ken), specifically when I said "Tell me more" in turn 02 and when Ken called out, "they shoot dogs!" in turn 05. In response to these affirmative responses, Benjamin offered additional information. Viewing injustices perpetrated by police on YouTube is very real for Benjamin, even if he did not have a personal example in his own life from which to draw. Additionally, the relevance and importance of the topic to other students was evident through their callouts. Overall, in the whole class conversation, Benjamin's elaborations were made possible by the public support he received.

Benjamin's political voice continued to develop in small group conversation. In Excerpt 20 Leo and Ken continued to add to the narrative about police we were co-constructing as a class in Excerpt 19. Ken asked Benjamin what he was going to "do" for his artwork, to which he replied, "Nothing." Ken asked him specifically if he was going to make his artwork about the police, and Benjamin replied, "Yeah." Leo agreed that he was also going to do the police. They all voiced agreement with the position that the police do bad things. They elaborated on the idea that police hurt innocent animals, and Leo made gun sounds with his mouth to imitate police shooting. Benjamin participated but did not direct their conversation as he had in the whole group setting. Instead, he mainly listened to his partners' stories connected to his original idea.

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Ken	What are you going to do, Benjamin?	*Benjamin is sketching*
02	Benjamin	Nothing	
03	Ken	Are you gonna do police?	
04	Benjamin	Yeah	
05	Leo	I'm gonna do the police. They do nothing	
06	Benjamin	They do nothing good	
07	Leo	I know, like a cat, imagine you just have a cat, and he just scratched him. Boom	*Leo imitates a cat scratching and then shooting a gun with "Boom"; Ken laughs*
08	Benjamin	Or like he even touches their suits	*Leo imitates a machine gun noise*
09	Ken	I see this video where this guy shoots a labrador	
10	Benjamin	What's a labrador?	*Benjamin is still sketching*

11	Ken	It's a-	
12	Benjamin	-oh a dog, yeah. Aren't they-	*Benjamin stops sketching*
13 …	Ken	-the nicest dogs on earth	*Students talk about different kinds of dogs*
14	Ken	Just 'cause a labrador, dude, dude, you know why the police shot the dog? It's just 'cause the Labrador was dancing, I mean like walk, running, and just like shaking his tail, he shot the poor dog	
15	Leo	That's why I hate police	
16	Benjamin	Really?	

Excerpt 20

In Excerpt 20 Ken and Leo elaborated on what Benjamin contributed to the whole group, making their own connections to his publicly broadcasted comments. They continued to discuss the police, offering Benjamin support and affirmation for his contribution. There are two important points of Benjamin's voice development in this excerpt worth noting. The first comes in turn 06 when he took an explicit position on the police, "They do nothing good." Here Benjamin moved from selecting and describing his topic to taking a position to develop his argument, drawing from evidence he gathered from his prior knowledge and his friends' stories. Benjamin's peers affirmed his topic choice throughout the exchange, and their conversation helped Benjamin further develop his political voice as he used their stories as evidence.

A second important point in Benjamin's voice development is in turn 16 when he asked, "Really?" in response to Ken's story about the police shooting a Labrador that was "just like shaking his tail." His "Really?" resounded with genuine surprise and shock, almost as if he had not already shared with the whole group that he has seen police shoot dogs on YouTube. He may

have responded in this way because Ken's story corroborated what he shared, enriching his narrative. Through the ways he contributed and reacted within the conversation, it is clear that Benjamin indeed cared about his peers' affirmations. That is, his individual voice development and topic choice were made stronger through collective support. In Benjamin's political voice development, he began with his own experiences (via viewings on YouTube) and gradually incorporated evidence from his friends' stories to build a collective composite narrative. Using the analysis template from chapter three, in the trace of his voice, Benjamin's trajectory begins by orienting itself to the right of the midline toward deeper engagement with political voice as he gathered stories to incorporate in his artwork while he and his peers co-constructed a narrative about police. I include a trace of Benjmain's voice development trajectory in Figure 6-2.

Benjamin's evidence collection continued in Excerpt 21 below as he, Leo, and Ken transitioned from talking about police killing animals to killing people. During this part of the conversation, they each took a longer turn. Leo began by talking about another YouTube video in which a "white" police officer confronted a "Black guy" at CVS, asking him to show his identification while he was just "waiting there for his Uber." Ken shared a story of a "Black girl" and police officer in a school (a scene he saw on a viral YouTube video) and explained how the police officer "dropped her from her desk, and started like dragging her." Benjamin then shared a personal story, that he was at his grandma's house after a fire broke out in the neighborhood and heard that the police didn't believe the "Black guy" that tried to tell him what happened.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Leo	They just do nothing	
02	Benjamin	They don't tase them	
03	Leo	Well if, if it's like it's like and also Black people, if they was, I remember seeing the YouTube video but it was the white police, there was a robber at like the CVS and	*Leo gestures emphatically throughout his story*

		there was this guy sitting down, he's Black of course...and the next thing you know, the police just comes up to him and is like show me your ID, show me your ID...it was racist. I mean he could have went to any, any other person next to the CVS. This kid's literally just waiting there for his Uber	
04	Benjamin	Oh	
...			
05	Ken	-yeah there was this kid messed up to um, messed up to a Black girl like there was this white kid and he came to the school, right, the police he said to the white kid, can you get out of your seat? And the kid said no, and he kept saying no, and he was like ok, I'm going to have to call your mom. And when the Black kid said no, the police got her from the shoulders, like dropped her from her desk, and started like dragging her on the floor	
06	Benjamin	Why?	
07	Ken	Like she was on her desk, you know those high school desks that have like, right here, he pulled her out and she fell on the floor and she broke her leg, it was scary	*Ken gestures to show what desk looks like*
08	Benjamin	Last time um when I was at my grandma's house when um um uh there was like a little fire in my neighbor's house, my grandma's neighbor's house, and um um a Black guy was trying to tell the cops what happened and then he said oh, I don't believe you, um 'cause you're Black, and then he only believed the white person, and they were in Compton, but they were the firefighters, no not the fire fighters, the police	*As Benjamin ends his story, Mrs. Dahn rings the bell for everyone to come back together as a whole group*

Excerpt 21

Leo began in Excerpt 21 by reiterating his position on police and Benjamin added supporting evidence for why the police are bad, that “they don’t tase them” in turn 02. Each student then took a longer turn to tell a story related to the topic. An important shift occurred at this point in the interaction that was consequential as Leo and Ken told stories that became central to Benjamin’s creative process and voice development. Leo’s story about the police officer asking for a Black man’s identification became part of Benjamin’s artwork that dealt with a person’s confused thoughts while getting arrested. Leo’s long turn was important because it explicitly brought the issue of race to their conversation, highlighting that it is important to

recognize that police don't just kill people in general—they sometimes target people because of race. In listening to Leo's story, Benjamin developed empathy and internalized Leo's dialogue as part of his own position in relation to his topic. In his artwork, Benjamin's embedded Leo's discourse and their collective sensemaking so his art ultimately included multiple perspectives and voices, not just his own (Bahktin, 1981).

In Excerpt 21 Leo's long turn created a snowball effect, prompting Ken and Benjamin's subsequent long turns. In turns 05 and 08 Ken and Leo respectively highlighted the racial differences between the police officers and the people with whom they interacted (i.e., white and Black). Benjamin participated throughout their conversation in two important ways consequential for his voice development. First, he stopped sketching and instead focused on listening. His short utterances in turns 04 and 07 were evidence of his engagement as an active listener. And as he listened, he used his partners' stories as evidence to deepen his narrative about the police. Second, during Benjamin's longer contribution in turn 08 he made sense of how race was part of his story and again made his position implicit when he said "[the cop] said oh, I don't believe you, um 'cause you're Black, and then he only believed the white." This turn marked an important shift in his political voice because he appropriated Leo's earlier reference to race as an added layer of context. In the trace of his voice development in Figure 6-2, the line continues to deepen toward political voice as Benjamin further developed and transformed his topic into a position and argument. Taken together, the collection of stories in this conversation supported Benjamin's earlier theories shared in the whole class discussion and fueled his art making process. Of note in these interactions is that all three partners discussed the relations of police officers and Black people, although none of these students identify as Black or white. While in other conversations about social issues they talked about immigration and DACA as

issues that affected people they knew personally, when they talked about issues involving police, events were removed from talk about the immediate impact on their lives.

While I do not have additional data from classroom interactions to trace Benjamin's artistic and political voice development as he created his abstract piece, his retrospective explanation of his art making process in interviews and written artist statement described the rest of his creative process. In Excerpt 22 from our first interview I asked Benjamin to tell me about the process he went through to create his artwork.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	So can you tell me about the process you went through to make that piece of art?	 *Benjamin chose his abstract art for interview*
02	Benjamin	Well, like how I thought about it?	
03	Mrs. Dahn	Sure, like how you thought about it	
04	Benjamin	Well, since like like last week or last month I was watching a video um on YouTube it said that um um police shoots um um Black persons because of um I forgot why, but he was doing something but not as bad as something else um but and then and then that's where I got an idea from	

Excerpt 22

When Benjamin explained how he chose the topic for his art in Excerpt 22, it became clear that ideas from YouTube videos and classroom conversations with his peers motivated his topic selection. He mentioned YouTube as a primary source and brought up race in relation to his topic, which Leo had originally brought to their small group conversation. Benjamin's artwork and voice remained abstract and descriptive, never becoming personally connected to his

life experiences. However, his political voice still developed in co-construction with Leo and Ken as he added race to the meaning of his artwork, creating a synthesis of their stories.

Benjamin described his artistic choices in Excerpt 23. He began by explaining that he used colors of police lights in the center because his artwork was about a person who was getting arrested. He began to explain what each of the colors around the police lights in the center represented. When he got stuck, I asked if the circular pattern in the art was a specific choice. He explained that the circle around the artwork represented the person's thoughts around the central image of his eye.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	Can you tell me about the colors and lines and shapes you chose? The other elements of art and why you chose them?	
02	Benjamin	Well I chose um these colors right here because that's what the person that's gonna get arrested, that's like the police lights	*Benjamin gestures to the middle of the artwork*
03	Mrs. Dahn	Mm, oh right in the middle there? Okay, interesting. What else?	*Benjamin nods*
04	Benjamin	Um and then I drew some dots like the red represents like um like sad, the purple represents um like, what's it called? Like...	*Benjamin takes a long pause at the end of this turn*
05	Mrs. Dahn	It's okay, you don't need to remember what exactly you were trying to show for each part. So did you mean to kind of put it in this circular pattern? Yeah, why?	*Mrs. Dahn gestures over artwork in circles; Benjamin nods*
06	Benjamin	Mm, because that's the eye of the person	*Benjamin gestures to middle of artwork*
07	Mrs. Dahn	Oh wait, explain more to me	
08	Benjamin	Um, that's the eye, like this is the main part and then all around that's what he's thinking	
09	Mrs. Dahn	Oh, I didn't even see that before. So like what is the circle supposed to represent, like all of his thoughts?	

10	Benjamin	Well, the the circle he's like like what did I do bad or something	
11	Mrs. Dahn	And is this like a reflection of the police car? Is that what it is? That's very interesting	*Benjamin nods*

Excerpt 23

Benjamin's reflections on his artwork represent evidence of the depth of his engagement in matching artistic choices with an imagined scenario about the police. Through his art making, Benjamin closed the personal distance between him and his topic because he made his art from the point of view of someone getting arrested. In turn 04 Benjamin began to describe what different colors meant in his artwork, showing the development of his artistic voice as he matched feelings and ideas with color. In turn 06 Benjamin explained that the middle of the artwork represented "the eye of the person." Through his descriptions, Benjamin demonstrated empathy for the character he created in his art by focusing on the person's thoughts during an intense moment of experience. He explained in turn 10 that the circle pattern around his eye represented his thought of "what did I do bad?"

Benjamin minimized the personal distance between himself and his artwork through the empathy he expressed for the subject of his art. His artistic voice development came to the surface as he described how he used color, line, and composition to convey meaning through his artwork. As he explained, he used color to represent the literal police car and the thoughts of the person who was about to be arrested. Benjamin used different colored dots and lines to distinguish between different kinds of thoughts in his representation. He used his canvas in a thoughtful way, placing the eye in the middle as the thoughts moved in a circular motion around the eye of the person. Although in this retrospective interview it is not possible to know exactly how and when he made these particular choices during our art class, in developing his artistic voice, Benjamin engaged with habits of mind throughout to make purposeful artistic decisions

connected to his position and argument. In the trace of his voice development in Figure 6-2, the line moves into the artistic voice space as Benjamin used artistic tools available to him to advance the narrative of his art.

I probed Benjamin to consider personal connections he had to his topic of the police in Excerpt 24. Instead of responding with a personal connection, he connected his work to a broader, more general message he hoped to convey.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	So um do you have any personal stories or personal connections to that idea, that social issue? You talked a little bit about YouTube videos, but is there a personal reason as to why it is meaningful to you?	
02	Benjamin	Mm, it's just that um that that everyone should be equal and not not not like different races should be um like if this race was more powerful than this other race	

Excerpt 24

As I tried to push Benjamin to share a personal connection to his artwork beyond YouTube videos, he expressed that "everyone should be equal" and that it should not be that "this race was more powerful than the other race." While Benjamin did not explicitly make a personal connection in our interview, he transformed his chosen topic to a broader message of racial equality. His earlier position and argument that the police "do nothing good" continued to transform as Benjamin thought about how he would convey his message to an audience. His message that was co-constructed with Leo and Ken centered on race and while his explanation "that everyone should be equal" was rather general, perhaps Benjamin did not feel comfortable elaborating on his message for his white teacher in an interview setting.

For his final artist statement, Benjamin used race in his explanation to say something about the world, making his message more specific: "My title of my piece is police. Through my

art I tried to show Black Lives Matter. I tried to show by drawing what people think when they are going to get shot. I also made this to represent that just because someones skin is dark doesn't mean they are the worst." In this artist statement, Benjamin again explicitly linked his art to earlier conversations with Ken and Leo about police and issues of race when he wrote that his art tried to show "Black Lives Matter" and "just because someones skin is dark doesn't mean they are the worst."

Benjamin's artistic voice developed alongside his political voice as he engaged in the creative process. Although not included in the excerpt, I asked Benjamin how critique changed how he thought about his art or social issue. He explained that Leo suggested he add specific lines to his artwork in order to make the person's eye pop out and look more realistic. Technical corrections like these were part of students' conversations as they made art together. In the trace of his artistic voice in Figure 6-2, Leo's suggestion marked a moment in which Benjamin thought about refining a technical choice to make his art more clear. In Excerpt 25 below I explicitly directed Benjamin's attention to an imagined audience.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	So what do you think an audience is going to think of your art and why might your message about um your social issue also be important to other people?	
02	Benjamin	It might be important to other people because like some other people will also agree with this um idea because everyone, everyone should be equal	
03	Mrs. Dahn	So knowing that we're going to present our work in December, we're going to have like a presentation of it, knowing that, does that impact or change how you think about your art while you're making it?	
04	Benjamin	Um, no	

Excerpt 25

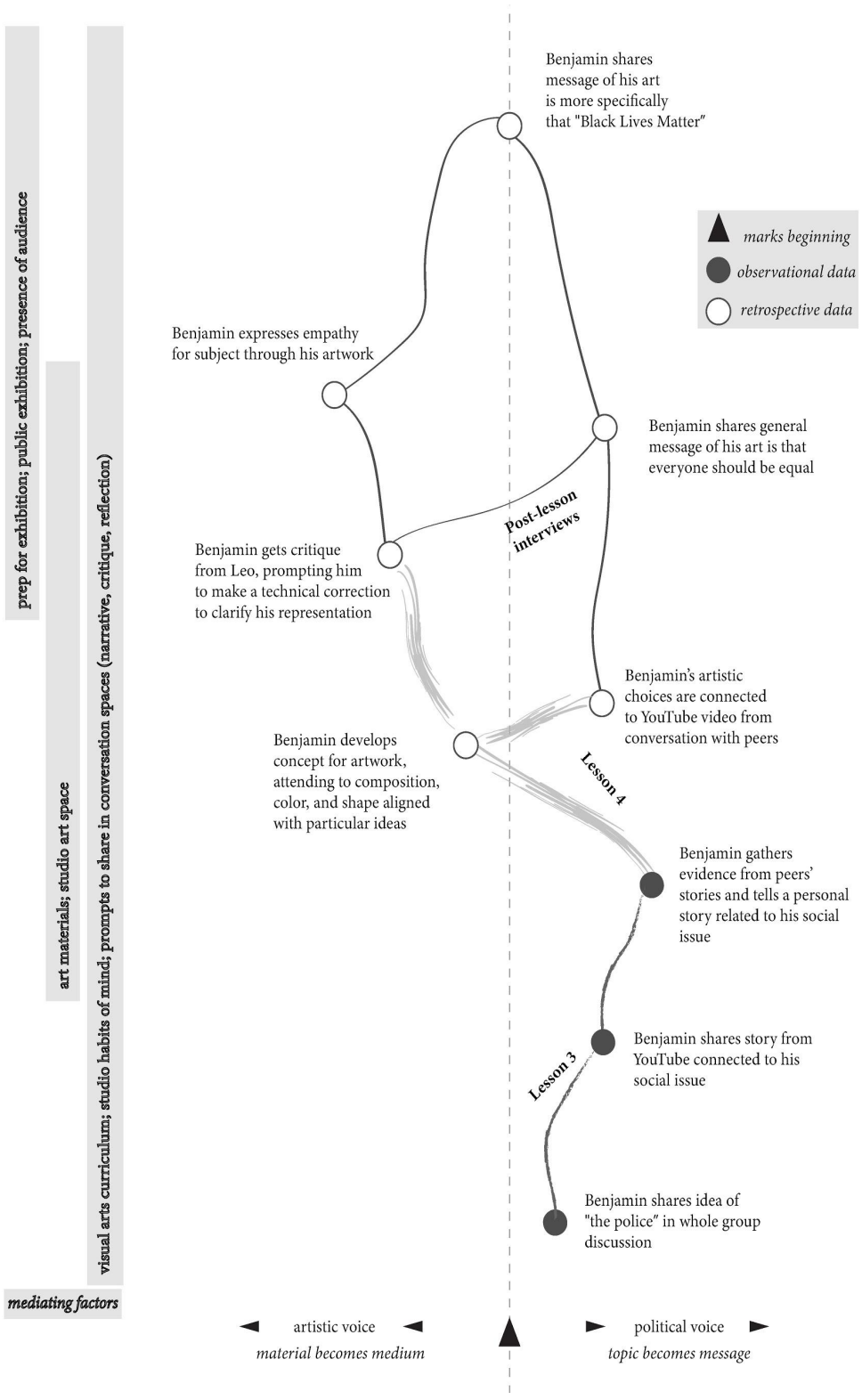


Figure 6-2. Benjamin's trajectory of artistic and political voice development

Excerpt 25 is interesting for a couple of reasons. First, Benjamin took his idea about police, connected it to the idea that "everyone should be equal," and said that his message "might be important to other people" because they "will also agree." Second, in turn 04 Benjamin said that he did not think about the audience while he was making his artwork. While I did not offer the opportunity for him to elaborate, he provided an honest account of his process. In the trace of his voice development, his line comes together in political and artistic voice as he explained in his artist statement the message of his artwork centered on race, that "Black Lives Matter."

As illustrated in Figure 6-2, Benjamin's artistic and political voice developed throughout the art making process as illuminated by classroom interactions and interviews above. Overall, Benjamin's political voice was marked by his steady engagement in conversations with his peers to build his argument around his social issue. Benjamin engaged with habits of mind and sustained engagement with a single topic from his very first suggestion in the whole class discussion to his final work of art. Through sharing stories with peers, Benjamin came to understand his topic as an important one. In developing his artistic voice, Benjamin attended to how elements of art like color, shape, and composition worked together to create art that conveyed a message and told a specific story. His conversations with Leo and Ken were critical to his political and artistic voice development throughout the creative process. Their stories became part of his artwork, and Leo's technical suggestion caused Benjamin to make a minor change in his artwork to improve the clarity of what he was trying to convey through his artistic voice. After making this correction, Benjamin flipped back to developing his political voice as he considered the message he hoped to share through this artwork. Benjamin shared that he wanted to show that everyone should be equal and aligned his work with the broader message that "Black Lives Matter."

Benjamin's case demonstrates a few noteworthy points about artistic and political voice development in this study. First, Benjamin put personal distance between himself and the topic. Instead of choosing something that directly impacted his own life, he made his art about something that was removed from his experiences but based on stories and evidence from YouTube videos. The choice to put some distance between oneself and one's art could be for many reasons, but perhaps Benjamin felt less vulnerable choosing something with which he did not feel directly involved. This positioning allowed him to be an ally and take an empathetic stance through his art. Second, Benjamin did not create his artwork or develop his voice alone. Benjamin's artwork was a representation of a collection of stories and voices. His topic was first vetted in whole group discussion and his peers then helped him co-construct his political voice through their small group conversations. Benjamin understood voice as a relational construct and was willing to pursue a topic he knew would be well-received by peers. These peers also supported his artistic voice through giving him technical critique to help him revise his work-in-progress. Third, Benjamin's political voice was furthered as his message developed into one that was about the police and issues of race. And finally, Benjamin's artistic voice developed as he made creative choices connected to the narrative he was trying to tell and audience response he hoped to evoke. He used color and line to represent thoughts and composition to show confusion and isolation of a person for whom he developed empathy.

Natalie developed her voice as an advocate for her friend and others

> *I think the purpose of art is to express how you feel or show an emotion you have through—not through physical or verbal—but in a way that no, no one would get hurt or you'd hurt yourself, but in a way that you can express it and show it to others.* - Natalie

Natalie's voice development overlapped with and diverged from Benjamin's in a few important ways. For example, her process was similar in that she also focused on a social issue with which she identified specific problems that she felt she needed to speak out against. Her process diverged however, because her connection to her chosen social issue drew from an experience with a friend in contrast to Benjamin who collected evidence through YouTube videos and storytelling with peers.

I include a brief sketch of Natalie's participation here. In contrast to Benjamin, Natalie never doodled during whole class discussions. Natalie sometimes ate a snack or held onto a stuffed animal she brought to school while actively contributing to the conversation. Natalie had several friends in class and often shared inside jokes and food with them, but she was not as socially friendly with her partner, Kourtni. For example, Kourtni once asked to have a grape after Natalie shared with three other girls at tables close by, and Natalie explained that she did not have enough to share. Kourtni did not seem phased by this—it was clear that Natalie and Kourtni did not interact much outside of class. While not a central component of this analysis, a basic understanding of Kourtni and Natalie's relationship is an important frame for their interactions.

Figure 6-3. Natalie's word artwork

I include Natalie's artwork in Figure 6-3 and Figure 6-4; both relate to her chosen social issue and represent her ideas in different, yet complementary, ways. Figure 6-3 is her word art project in which I asked students to choose a social issue and any word to represent that social

Figure 6-4. Natalie's abstract artwork about "LGBTQ"

issue. Natalie chose LGBTQ rights as her social issue and "love" as her word, which she chose to surround with small hearts. All projects were designed in an effort to get students focused on artistic and political voice development. That is, students were asked to make choices about both the content of their art and how they would represent something related to that content. Figure 6-4 is Natalie's abstract watercolor in which she made choices in color and composition to represent ideas and feelings associated with LGBTQ rights. As she explained to her partner, Kourtni, she wanted to make her rainbow different colors than the traditional gay pride flag.

Natalie's trajectory in Excerpt 26 began from a similar point as Benjamin's, a time when she contributed an idea to the whole group discussion during the third lesson. Prior to Excerpt 26 I asked students to brainstorm social issues around which they might make their art. After they shared with partners, I asked for suggestions in the public, whole group discussion space. Natalie was the first to raise her hand, and she shared "cyberbullying."

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	A social issue is something that impacts you that maybe you think is a personal problem and affects you and your life and also impacts your community, maybe your family. So, who can give me an example of something they think might be a social issue? Natalie?	*Natalie raises her hand; a few other students raise their hands*
02	Natalie	Cyberbullying	
03	Mrs. Dahn	Okay, cyberbullying. Can you tell me more about what that is?	*Mrs. Dahn writes cyberbullying on board*
04	Natalie	Cyberbullying is, cyberbullying is when you like when you say mean things to someone on social media	

Excerpt 26

Natalie was the first student to raise her hand to share. When I asked her to explain more about cyberbullying, she offered an elaboration in turn 04 that "cyberbullying is when you like when you say mean things to someone on social media." In the whole group discussion space she did not take a stand or position on the topic; she simply offered a definition. This whole group share out came from her initial more private conversation with her partner, Kourtni, in which Natalie said, "I would say cyberbullying because sometimes my friends get cyberbullied or sometimes start fighting online." She elaborated more in this partner conversation but her reference to "friends [getting] cyberbullied" remained general. While Natalie did not end up using cyberbullying for her own artwork, like Benjamin, Natalie felt comfortable sharing her initial idea in the whole group discussion space. In the trace of Natalie's political voice development in Figure 6-5, this share out with the whole class represents her initial topic exploration.

Later in the same lesson, Natalie drew from her prior knowledge to share her interpretation of a work of art featuring Martin Luther King, Jr. During this part of the lesson I showed students art with messages connected to social issues. Prior to Excerpt 27 Natalie raised her hand, and I called on her to share her interpretation of the painting.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Natalie	I think the issue is finding equality for African Americans	*I project an artwork featuring MLK, Jr.*
02	Mrs. Dahn	Tell me more	
03	Natalie	I think that like Mallory said, um the I Have a Dream speech was about trying to get African Americans to have the same equality as white people, and Martin Luther King was one of the main people who tried to help that happen	

Excerpt 27

What is important in Excerpt 27 is that Natalie provided an explanation of what she thought the painting was about but did not take a position/stance or make an argument. In the trace of her voice development, Natalie was again exploring a possible topic for her art, but without a clear argument or personal connection, she did not elect to pursue it further. Considering potential topics, Natalie ultimately chose a social issue personally meaningful to her around which she developed a narrative. Prior to Excerpt 28 below I prompted students to think about the social issue they would choose and a word associated with that social issue to inspire their artwork, balancing the political and artistic aspects of voice development through my instructional design.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Natalie	I'm gonna do the LGBTQ, and my word is gonna be equality	
02	Kourtni	Mine, mine's gonna be cyberbullying and I'm gonna do, I have no idea, I don't know, mine's gonna be racism	*Long pause after Kourtni shares*
03	Natalie	What's the word you're gonna use?	

Excerpt 28

In this exchange, Natalie quickly committed to choosing LGBTQ as her social issue and made her creative choice with the word, "equality." After Kourtni shared ideas for her social issue, Natalie helped her partner in turn 03 by asking, "What's the word you're gonna use?" We glean more insight as to why Natalie chose LGBTQ in Excerpt 29 below as the partners continued their conversation.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Natalie	I'm choosing LGBTQ. I'm choosing it because when I went to summer camp I had a lesbian friend, and she actually had a girlfriend, but then um there was another lesbian girl in our group	*As she shares with Kourtni, she is laughing at something Oscar is doing off camera throughout*

02	Kourtni	I know, everybody's a lesbian	
03	Natalie	Not everybody	*Natalie shakes her head*
04	Kourtni	My cou, my two cousins are	
05	Natalie	My family's straight, at least all that I know of, and then um I'm choosing LGBTQ once this girl, the lesbian girl in our group, named Olivia, told us that she was a lesbian, some of the girls in our group were saying that they're scared of her because they didn't want her to like them, and—I can't take you seriously like that—okay and then um I started to think that it wasn't fair that they're scared of Olivia because she's a lesbian—you better stop making those faces	*As Natalie is explaining to Kourtni, she is still smiling at Oscar, to whom she directs her "I can't take you seriously like that" and "you better stop making those faces" comments*

Excerpt 29

There are a few moments in Excerpt 29 that mark how Natalie developed her political voice. In turn 01 she offered a personal story related to her social issue as the primary reason she was choosing it for her art. She drew from her experience at camp with a "lesbian friend," her lesbian friend's "girlfriend," and "another lesbian girl." In this turn Natalie positioned herself as someone who has friends who are lesbians even though she would not identify as gay herself. Kourtni said, "I know, everybody's a lesbian," to which Natalie shook her head and responded, "Not everybody." In her response Natalie rejected what she considered Kourtni's normalization and dismissal of her social issue. Natalie's disagreement pushed Kourtni to offer rationale and clarify her statement in turn 04, "My two cousins are." In turn 05 Natalie moved on from Kourtni's earlier dismissal and explained, "My family's straight, at least all that I know of." Turn 05 is an important point in Natalie's political voice development because she deepened her narrative and connection with her chosen social issue when she explained that some girls were scared of her lesbian friend because "they didn't want her to like them." Natalie moved from description of her narrative to taking a position as she explained her analysis of the situation: "I started to think that it wasn't fair that they're scared." Through this statement, she separated

herself from the group who was “scared” of Olivia, and positioned herself as Olivia’s friend and ally. As she told her story to Kourtni, she also tried to avert Oscar’s attention, telling him, “You better stop making those faces.” She actively tried to ignore Oscar’s attempts to distract and make her laugh because she was serious about what she was explaining to Kourtni.

In a later interview about her art, Natalie retold her story about Olivia, and added to her position related to the issue: “Everybody was scared of her because apparently they didn't want her liking them and I thought that was just kind of ridiculous because it's just a person, like it's not an alien.” By explaining that the behavior of the other girls was “ridiculous” and that her friend was not “an alien,” she showed how others distanced themselves from Olivia and further emphasized her position about the unfairness of the situation. In grappling with her own emotions connected to this unfairness, Natalie transformed her topic into a message for an audience. Through her own analysis of her personal story, in Figure 6-5 the trace of Natalie’s trajectory veers deeper into the political voice space as she developed the message of what she might say to an audience through her art.

Students began deciding on the topic they would use for their abstract art pieces (Excerpt 30). Natalie remained committed to LGBTQ and offered additional rationale, continuing to nuance her message and deepen her political voice development.

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Natalie	I’m gonna do LGBTQ still ‘cause I know, this year I know we have gay people at our school	
...			*Kourtni shares her social issue will be racism with rationale that Donald Trump is racist*
02	Natalie	I chose LGBTQ because Oscar and Marco told me that there’s a gay-	

03	Oscar	-what?	*Oscar overhears Natalie say his name*
04	Natalie	You told me that there's a gay fifth grader	
05	Oscar	Oh yeah	*Oscar resumes talking to his partner*
06	Natalie	Yeah, he told me that there's a gay fifth grader, and I think that people are saying we have a gay–	
07	Kourtni	–boy or girl?	
08	Natalie	It's a boy. And then people are telling me we have a gay teacher, a fifth grade teacher, Mr. Hernandez, I think it was his name, I don't know but like this year apparently we have gay people at our school, which has never happened before, and like people are judging	

Excerpt 30

Natalie made a few moves in Excerpt 30 that were consequential for the development of her political voice. First, she explained the broader relevance of her topic when she said that there were gay people at their school in turn 01. Natalie brought this information to the conversation because she wanted to show that her chosen social issue was not just personal to her experience, it was also relevant to others. She continued broadening the relevance of the topic and her developing her argument in turn 08 when she added, "people are telling me we have a gay teacher." In addition to widening the scope and impact of her chosen social issue, Natalie also advanced her analysis of why it was important. In Excerpt 29 she explained that people were fearful of her friend who is a lesbian, and in Excerpt 30 she explained, "people are judging," adding a layer of rationale to her position. In conversations with her partner, Natalie's analysis advanced in how she considered nuance between judgment and fear related to her issue. Throughout her exploration of "LGBTQ," Natalie used the experiences of others to develop her voice as an ally and eventually as an advocate to speak out for others. Natalie's political voice developed in Figure 6-5 as she chose her topic, took a position, and formed an argument based

on her experiences and narrative.

I prompted students to consider the emotions they felt connected to the social issues they would use for their art (Excerpt 31). I did this because emotion is connected to both artistic and political voice. Artistic choices can be bound by an attempt to convey particular emotions through the use of elements of art, and political issues are deeply emotional as they are evidence of how people make sense of their worlds. Kourtni and Natalie began by brainstorming emotions; Natalie specifically called out "angry," "free love," "sad," and "anxious" and explained that people should be able to love whoever they want.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	Turn to your partner and tell them about the emotions that are connected to that story	
02	Kourtni	Hurtful	*Kourtni writes in research journal*
03	Natalie	You're not supposed to be writing it down. Emotions I feel are angry and free love	
04	Kourtni	The emotions I feel is painful-	
05	Natalie	-I don't know, I-	
06	Kourtni	-the emotions I feel is hurtful, mean, painful, and sad	
07	Natalie	I feel sad and anxious 'cause like people should be able to love whoever they want to love. Except for Chuck, he don't deserve to love nobody	

Excerpt 31

Excerpt 31 represents an important point in Natalie's artistic and political voice development as she began to verbalize the emotions she felt as witness to someone being judged for coming out as gay or for others being scared of gay people. Natalie moved beyond listing her emotions in turn 07 to explain her reason for feeling particular emotions: "People should be able to love whoever they want to love." In turn 07 there is also explicit evidence that Natalie had

empathy for people who were feared or judged when she said, “I feel sad and anxious.” These sad and anxious feelings motivated her art making as they further cemented her identification as a protector and advocate. At the end of turn 07 she said, “Except for Chuck, he don’t deserve to love nobody,” a contradiction in her message. This comment represents her personal grievance with a peer, disconnected from her topic of LGBTQ rights.

After students shared personal stories and emotions related to their chosen social issues, they began working with materials to make their abstract art pieces. Natalie and Kourtni worked in silence, listening and singing along with the music I played during class, so it was difficult to know what Natalie was thinking as she made creative decisions about how to represent her ideas. As she worked on her piece, at one point she said, “I don’t know the exact gay pride colors, but I’m making it in different colors” and “I don’t pay attention to the rainbow.” Her stated intentions to make hers “different” marked her artistic voice development. As she painted, Natalie took creative agency to make something that was unique but familiar, drawing inspiration from the gay pride flag.

In an interview, Natalie reflected on her partner’s critique of her abstract piece: “My partner critiqued me by saying maybe I should use like more colors like the orange and purple and blue to fit more with the color scheme of it and maybe to make it like darker or lighter colors.” When I asked her if the critique helped her, she responded, “I think it did help me because now I know that maybe I should choose a color scheme that fits more with the, the type of art I'm making.” Although Natalie’s art making was not as co-constructed as Benjamin’s, she noted that her partner helped her think about a technical artistic choice.

Natalie reflected on what she hoped the audience would see in her art (Excerpt 32).

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Mrs. Dahn	What do you think an audience is going to think of your art and why might your message about LGBTQ also be important to other people?	
02	Natalie	I think what the audience will see in my art is that like there's just, there's just love all around and I want the audience to know that LGBTQ they're human too they're just like us. Just because they like a different gender it doesn't mean that they're so different than us	

Excerpt 32

Natalie's turn in Excerpt 32 showed evidence of her artistic voice development. When I asked Natalie about the message she wanted to show through her artwork, she explained that she wanted people to know that "there's just love all around." This idea was literally present in her artwork through the tiny hearts surrounding the word, love. She also embedded empathy in her description of her art when she said that people who are LGBTQ are "human too they're just like us." She emphasized that LGBTQ may "like a different gender" but aren't "so different than us."

In her artist statement she included a call to action: "When an audience sees my art, I want them to know if you love someone go for it." While Benjamin incorporated evidence from YouTube videos and his friends' stories, Natalie created her art based on her experiences. In the trace of her voice trajectory, Natalie moved from her personal experience with her friend and thinking she was treated unfairly to creating a broader message to which others could connect. Figure 6-5 shows the trace of Natalie's overall voice development during art making. Overall, her creative process was an opportunity to take her topic and develop it into a message so that she could position herself as an advocate for her friend and others. Natalie began her creative process by considering multiple topics, but then decided that she would make her art about LGBTQ because she had a personal narrative connected to the issue. She recommitted to this same social issue for an additional work of art and broadened the reach of her topic by

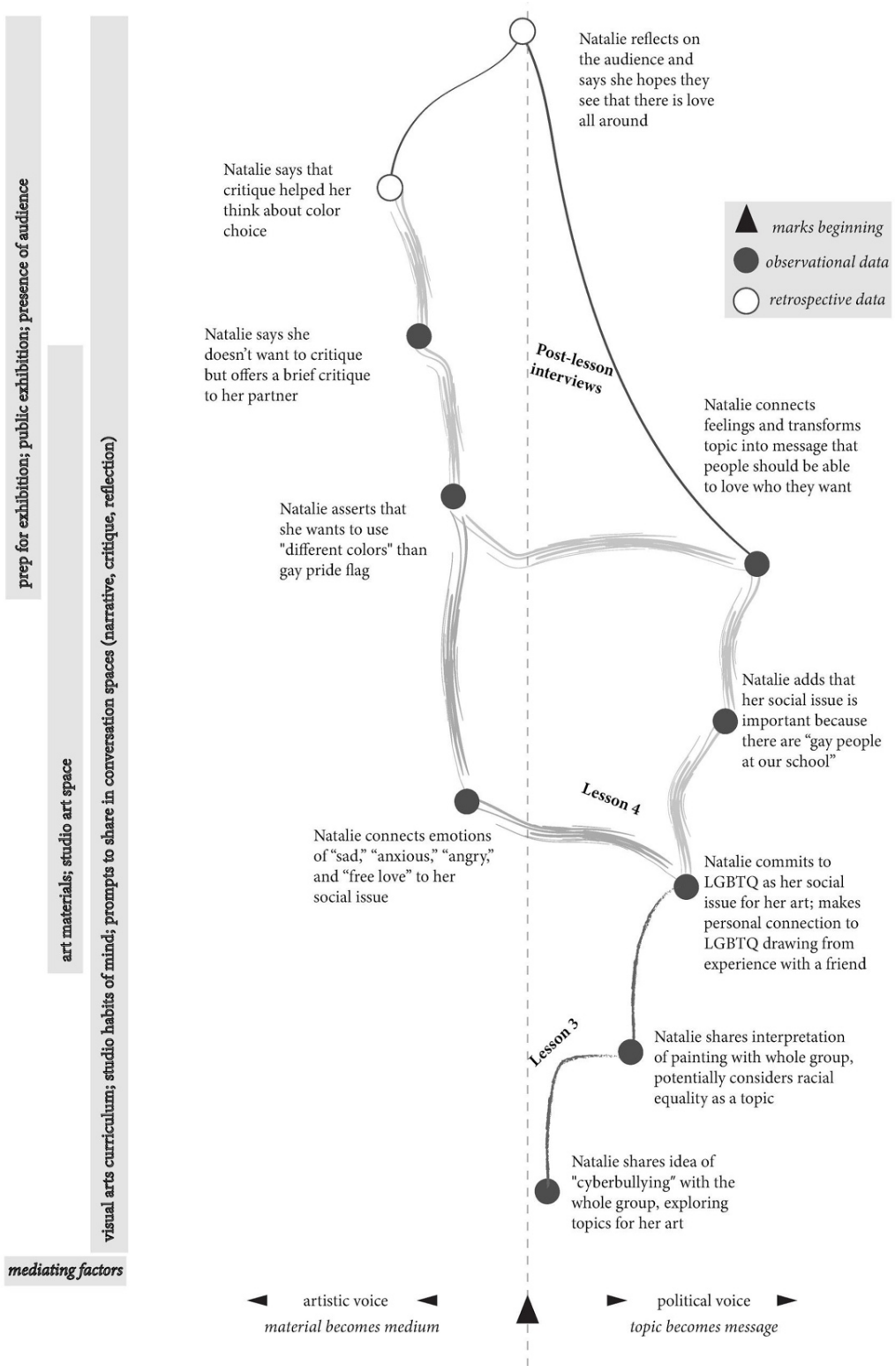


Figure 6-5. Natalie's trajectory of artistic and political voice development

commenting that there were gay people who went to their school and even a gay teacher. In conversations with her partner, Natalie shared her feelings of anger, sadness, and anxiety around LGBTQ issues. Through exploring the consequences of these emotions, she transformed her topic into the message that people should be able to love who they want. As she began working with materials, she put her own spin on the gay pride flag symbol, explaining that she did not "really care" about the colors of the original gay pride flag. Through this move, Natalie asserted her artistic voice as one that was unique because she did not copy an existing symbol—she appropriated the flag, and made it her own. Natalie expressed that she hoped an audience would get the message that love is all around and that people who identify as LGBTQ are "human too."

Both Benjamin and Natalie developed their voices as they interacted with the same curriculum in the same classroom space so while there were individual differences, it is unsurprising that there were similarities in how their voices developed over time. The mediating processes noted in the trajectory template were at play in their individual voice development and guided students in a general direction. All students selected a topic and then described and analyzed that topic using prior knowledge and experiences. Students then took a position in relation to the topic and developed an argument for a potential audience. Keeping the audience in mind, students then crafted a more articulate message and offered a call to action in relation to the topic. While the direction was similar across, students' individual trajectories differed in how they processed their ideas and worked with materials within the designed experience.

There are unique points about Natalie's individual voice development that are important to highlight. First, Natalie chose a topic that was personally close to her own experience and she developed her narrative around that experience. Additionally, as Natalie drew from her experience with a friend at camp, she also made her topic of LGBTQ more broadly relevant.

Natalie's artistic voice was supported by her peers' critique, but she did not co-construct her position and argument around her topic with her partner as much as Benjamin did (although Natalie did report that Oscar told her there was a gay fifth grader). Finally, Natalie created a call to action through two different messages in her art. One message was for LGBTQ people when she explained, "If you love someone go for it" in her artist statement and her second message was for others with the hope that an audience would be prompted to reflect and understand that LGBTQ are not as different as they might initially think.

Jo's voice development as a deeply personal process

> *Art can be literally anything because it's kind of putting your thoughts, it's putting your thoughts and imagination into reality like even, even dreams could be art... a lot of things can be art, like I think nature is art, our homes are art, texture, it's all art* - Jo

The above quote illustrates the kind of art student Jo is: a self-defined artist with a broad definition of what counts as art in her world. I begin the story of Jo's voice development as she and her partner, Maribel, began talking about potential social issues to focus on for their art making. Like Benjamin, Jo and Maribel frequently doodled during class, something I explicitly allowed students to do as long as they participated, meaning they were listening to others, sharing with partners when it was time to think-pair-share, and occasionally contributing to the whole group discussion. The classroom map in Figure 6-6 indicates which students took up this offer and how often. Of 32 students, 20 rarely or never sketched during whole class discussion (less than two times), seven sometimes sketched during whole class discussion (indicated by *; two-five times), and five drew almost always during whole class discussion (indicated by **; more than five times). At only six of the 16 tables neither student sketched and only one table included two students that almost always sketched (Jo and Maribel).

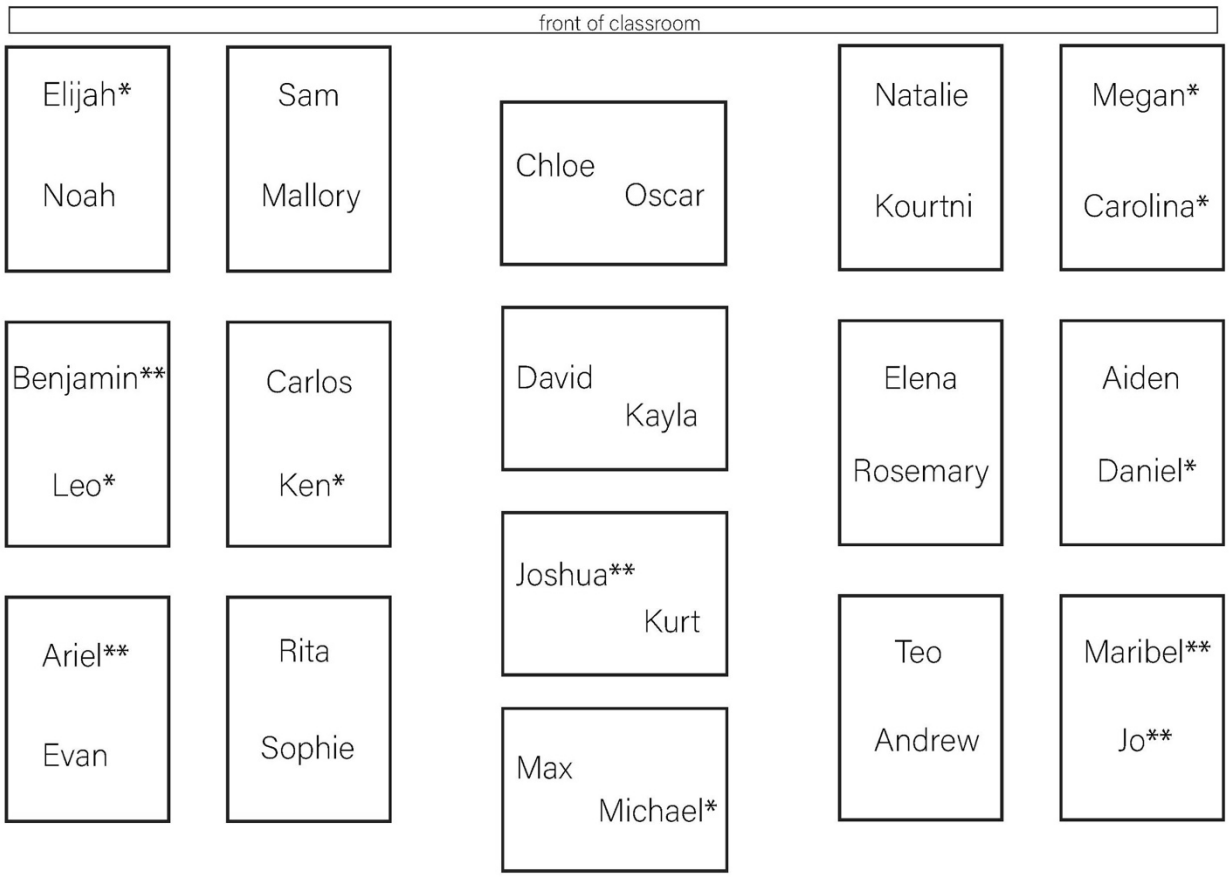
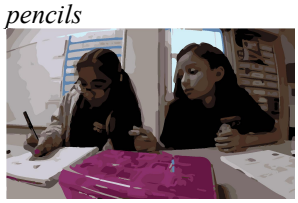


Figure 6-6. Map of classroom space for first ten lessons of unit (*indicates students who sketched two-five times during whole class discussion; **indicates students who sketched more than five times during whole class discussion)

Students' interactions with materials during conversations about art were interesting for a few key reasons. First, because I did not regulate what students drew, students used this time to sketch things that they were interested in; they most often drew known anime characters, their own cartoons, and practiced lettering in their notebooks or on scratch paper. Second, sketching during whole class discussion seemed to help students engage with the material. For example, a review of video shows that Benjamin consistently made quiet comments to himself related to class conversations as he was sketching. Sketching was not a distraction but served as a thinking tool for students as they thought about what they might say and processed others' interpretations. Additionally, by sketching, students refined their creative practice as they talked about artwork,

thus reinforcing studio habits of mind like observation and developing craft (Hetland et al., 2013). Because I emphasized talking about art and ideas in the curriculum, less time was left for explicit technique instruction so through sketching, students were able to develop craft on their own and make artistic choices about how to represent their ideas. While not central to this dissertation, the norms around sketching during discussions provides background that may be explored in future analysis.

The beginning of Jo's story begins as she and Maribel began exploring social issues for their artwork. Prior to Jo and Maribel's conversation in Excerpt 33 the class made a list of social issues. As they shared, Jo and Maribel were working in the same notebook, drawing a character by passing it back and forth or sometimes both drawing or coloring the character at once. They talked about the hair of the character in turns 01-07 and then abruptly transitioned to the on-topic conversation about social issues beginning in turn 08. Jo said that she was trying to think about what her social issue should be but did not know what to choose.

Turn	**Speaker**	**Talk**	**Notes**
01	Maribel	Her hair, we can make it-	*Maribel is drawing, Jo is watching, holding colored pencils* 
02	Jo	-gold?	
03	Maribel	We can make it gold, we can make it just like the ends of the bangs and the end of the ponytail and the end right here, instead of the whole hair	*Maribel runs finger over top of drawing as she explains*
04	Jo	And the rest is grey?	*Jo touches drawing where she thinks it would be grey*

05	Maribel	Like the rest, it could be brown or something	
06	Jo	So let's just-	*Jo reaches for Maribel's pencil, but then pulls back*
07	Maribel	-let me just outline the hair	
08	Jo	I don't know what my my issue should be because I'm trying to think about it	
09	Maribel	I think I already know what g- what I'm gonna do	*Maribel continues to draw while she and Jo are talking*

Excerpt 33

Jo and Maribel acknowledged that their sketch was a jointly constructed project as they decided together what color to make the character's hair in turns 01-07. What is important is that as they made decisions in their co-drawing, they also talked about class content. In turn 08 Jo shifted their conversation to deciding what her social issue should be, explaining that she was "trying to think about it," and Maribel took up Jo's change of topic in turn 09 when she explained that she "already know[s]" what she will do. As Jo changed the direction of their conversation, Maribel continued to outline the hair. Jo wanted to identify something that "triggered" her and came to the idea of "thinking people are dumb because of their skin color."

During the next lesson, Jo shifted direction and chose a different social issue with which she had a deeper personal connection. Figure 6-7 shows Jo's abstract watercolor produced as a result of engaging in this creative process over the course of a few lessons. Jo used contrasting bright and dark colors to show the tension between positive and negative thoughts of someone

Figure 6-7. Jo's abstract watercolor artwork about "suicide"

who was depressed and contemplating suicide.

As Maribel and Jo talked about potential topics in Excerpt 34, Maribel elaborated on the issue she was going to choose and Jo helped her clarify what she meant, at first referencing "LGBTQ" and then self-correcting to "sexism" in turn 02. Maribel nodded and suggested that Jo could do LGBTQ, which prompted a long silence from Jo as she watched Maribel continue the sketch of their character. Jo eventually responded that she needed more time to think, maybe at home, and explained that she needed the social issue she chose for her art to be something that "like calls me" in turn 06. Maribel continued to make suggestions, including immigration, bullying, and cyberbullying, but none of her ideas sparked Jo's interest. Jo reiterated that the issue needed to be something that called to her in turn 06 and added that the issue needed to be something "that triggers me." Both girls paused and made eye contact when Jo expressed this; Jo broke the brief silence with, "You know what I mean?" In an attempt to help Jo decide on an issue, Maribel then offered one more suggestion.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Maribel	I already know what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna do the one of gender, the segregation of gender	*Jo is watching Maribel draw; Maribel pauses her sketching for a moment*
02	Jo	Oh, LGBTQ? Oh no, sexism	*Maribel nods to "sexism"; Maribel returns to sketching*

03	Maribel	You could do that one. Um, LGBTQ	*There is a long silence, Jo is looking around, watching Maribel draw*  *Jo leans closer to Maribel* 
04	Jo	I'm trying to think but I don't know. I think I'm going to go home and think about it 'cause it needs to be som-	
05	Maribel	Maybe you could do immigration	
06	Jo	No it needs to be something that like calls me	
07	Maribel	Bullying	
08	Jo	I don't know	*Jo shakes her shoulders up and down*
09	Maribel	Cyberbullying	
10	Jo	I know I those are all really big problems that I don't enjoy, but it needs to be something that like like mm that triggers me. You know what I mean?	*Maribel and Jo make eye contact when Jo says "triggers me"* 
11	Maribel	Oh thinking people are dumb because of their skin color	
12	Jo	It's like racism. Yeah, I really um	

Excerpt 34

As Jo considered her options, Maribel outlined the hair on their jointly created character and offered suggestions. Maribel was sketching as she offered ideas. What is most interesting is

that despite the fact that Jo and Maribel were sketching something that had nothing to do with the lesson topic, Jo was trying to think of a topic that was meaningful to her. Their joint attention focused intermittently on the character drawing and one another's ideas about the social issues for their art seemed to balance the serious conversation with a playfulness.

In Excerpt 35 as Maribel continued to draw and Jo continued to watch her, they got deeper into conversation. Maribel asked Jo a question in turn 01, "What do you think triggers you?" Jo then launched into a personal story about where she was going to high school, explaining that she was going to a school where she was "gonna be the only Latina there." She hesitated when she said that she thinks "they," meaning students at her new school, were "gonna be nice" as Maribel offered a reality check in turn 05. Jo agreed and highlighted racial difference between herself and "white and Asian" students. Jo then connected her personal story to the larger social issue of thinking "someone is dumb just because of [their] skin." This led Maribel to ask Jo if that issue was something that "triggers" her. Drawing from her personal experience, Jo confirmed in turn 12 that it did.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Maribel	What do you think triggers you?	
02	Jo	I don't know, but I've thought about things, like scenarios 'cause I haven't told anyone so don't say anything but I've told you about where I'm going to high school, right? [inaudible whispers] white and Asians [inaudible whispers] I'm gonna be the only Latina there	*Jo leans over to whisper to Maribel* 
03	Maribel	I feel bad for you. Are your parents making you go to that one school?	
04	Jo	It's 'cause it's a really good school. Anyways, we're gonna move to Pasadena, and it's really nearby and it's like a super good school. It has a water polo team so, it's like water polo and cheer so it's really good. I mean it's	

		a good school, but I, I think they're gonna be nice	
05	Maribel	But not all, not all of them are gonna be nice	
06	Jo	No, there's a lot of haters out there [inaudible whispers]	*Jo leans over the whisper to Maribel and covers her mouth* 
07	Maribel	There might be, yeah I know you're advanced	
08	Jo	And they might think I'm dumb just because of my skin	
09	Maribel	Does that trigger you?	
10	Jo	I'm gonna prove them wrong-	
11	Maribel	-does that trigger you?	
12	Jo	That, that's one thing that triggers me	

Excerpt 35

In Excerpt 35 Maribel continued to draw as she supported Jo in making a personal connection related to a social issue. Here Jo began to engage in autobiographical counter-storytelling as a response to deficit perspectives on people of color (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Her discussion of what triggers her was guided by her personal experiences and imagining what she might encounter (i.e., "they might think I'm dumb just because of my skin") and how she might deal with these deficit views (i.e., "I'm gonna prove them wrong"). As Jo began to construct a counter-narrative, Maribel supported her by asking questions (i.e., does that trigger you?), offering evidence in support of Jo's story (i.e., "I know you're advanced"), and explaining the problem (i.e., "not all of them are gonna be nice"). As Jo developed her ideas and counter-

narrative with Maribel's support, Maribel's sketching occurred throughout their talk, offering them something to attend to outside of their conversation at they constructed the idea for their joint artwork.

Prior to Excerpt 36 I prompted students to discuss ideas with their partners and choose a social issue for their art. Jo began by explaining that she had been thinking about changing her social issue. At the end of this brief exchange, Jo shared a personal connection to her new topic.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Jo	So::: I don't know, I think I might want to change it because I do have my social issue, but there's also one more I think um a really big social issue is that when people are not being their true selves um and they do negative things just to be like cool I think a big issue is um suicide, suicidal thoughts, because a lot of the times it hap-	*Andrew joins Jo and Maribel since his partner is absent; Andrew quietly asks to borrow a pencil sharpener; Maribel gets it for him while Jo shares*
02	Maribel	-or just plain old suicide-	
03	Jo	-yeah, just suicide. Because a lot of the times there are people who've been depressed because bullying or things at home and they don't do anything to change that, they just they get, they keep it like that and then they end up killing themselves because of depression and they just don't want to go on with that, and my personal story is my cousin committed suicide um and it was really sad for my family, he committed suicide a couple of months ago, um, and he played guitar and he sang but like he was really depressed from his parents and he committed suicide	*Jo seems to be talking mainly to Maribel because she is facing her; Andrew is sharpening his pencil*

Excerpt 36

In Excerpt 36 there are a few interesting points that mark Jo's voice development. First, she acknowledged both general and specific applications of her chosen social issue. In turn 01 Jo noted a connection between the layers of "people not being their true selves," "[doing] negative things to be cool," "suicide," and suicidal thoughts." Rather than immediately name suicide, Jo commented on activities and behaviors that she reasoned could lead to suicide or suicidal thoughts. In turn 02 Maribel affirmed Jo's storytelling and suggested more generally "just plain

old suicide," with which Jo agreed at the beginning of turn 03. While agreeing with this general application, in this same turn Jo also made her rationale for her chosen social issue specific and decreased the personal distance between herself and her topic when she told a story about her cousin's suicide. In telling this narrative, Jo moved from describing suicide to taking a position in turn 03, which helped her develop her topic into a message she might project to an audience. In her description she implicitly included the element of time as an important dimension leading up to suicide when she described, "people who've been depressed...and they don't do anything to change that" and "they just don't want to go on with that." She also noted possible general and specific causes from her point of view such as "bullying," "things at home," or "from his parents." In this same turn she made her position personal when she explained that "it was really sad for my family," positioning herself and her feelings in relation to the issue. In a trace of Jo's voice development in Figure 6-8, the line veers into the political voice space as she described, analyzed, and took a position to develop her argument.

In this same lesson, I brought the class together and asked them to explicitly focus on the emotions that came up when they talked about their chosen topics. This prompt was meant to guide students through the art making process because I wanted them to use the emotions associated with their social issues to inspire choices they made for their artwork. In Excerpt 37 Jo elaborated on her feelings in relation to her story. Andrew and Maribel offered support by listening and adding to Jo's narrative as she explained the impact her cousin's suicide had on her. Jo eventually turned her attention to what she would want to say about suicide through art, moving from her personal story to crafting a more general message and argument.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Jo	It's really sad because I didn't really get to know him. I only met him when I was really younger so yeah, I was	

		really li- I was like little, little girl, 'cause I was probably like six years old, um my sister was still a baby, I don't even know if she met him, yeah she did, but she was a baby still and uh it was really sad for me because I always thought oh it's like things on the news you always think, this is never gonna happen to me–	
02	Maribel	–and the next day–	
03	Jo	–and so you're like the next day, that happened to me. My family, family member committed suicide. And it's like crazy because you just can't get it out of your mind, you're like how is that possible? Like you never think that's gonna happen to you and like it does	*As Maribel listens, she begins doodling on her research notebook*
04	Andrew	'Cause like they're depressed or something like that	*Jo makes eye contact with Andrew and nods; Jo begins writing on her pencil sharpener*
05	Maribel	Same depressed, sadness	*Maribel continues to doodle on her notebook*
06	Jo	And it's important to reach out to people and tell them about that or else you're gonna like hurt yourself–	*Jo continues writing*

Excerpt 37

It is interesting that Jo focused on her own experience of emotions to motivate her artwork rather than her cousin's experience in Excerpt 37. She explained in turn 01, "It's really sad because I didn't really get to know him...it was really sad for me...you always think, this is never gonna happen to me." Jo added to the position she was crafting as she talked about thoughts and feelings of people who were left behind after her cousin's suicide. In turn 06 she added a call to action for people who were in a mental space like her cousin when she explained, "it's important to reach out to people and tell them." In this move, she shifted her message from her personal experience to one that was outward looking about what she might say to a potential audience. This move from personal to caring for others aligned with Maribel's earlier suggestion of making her message general—"just plain old suicide." In turn 06 Jo projected a future self, imagining what she might do and would hope others would do if they experienced suicidal thoughts, that "it's important to reach out to people and tell them." Locating this equilibrium

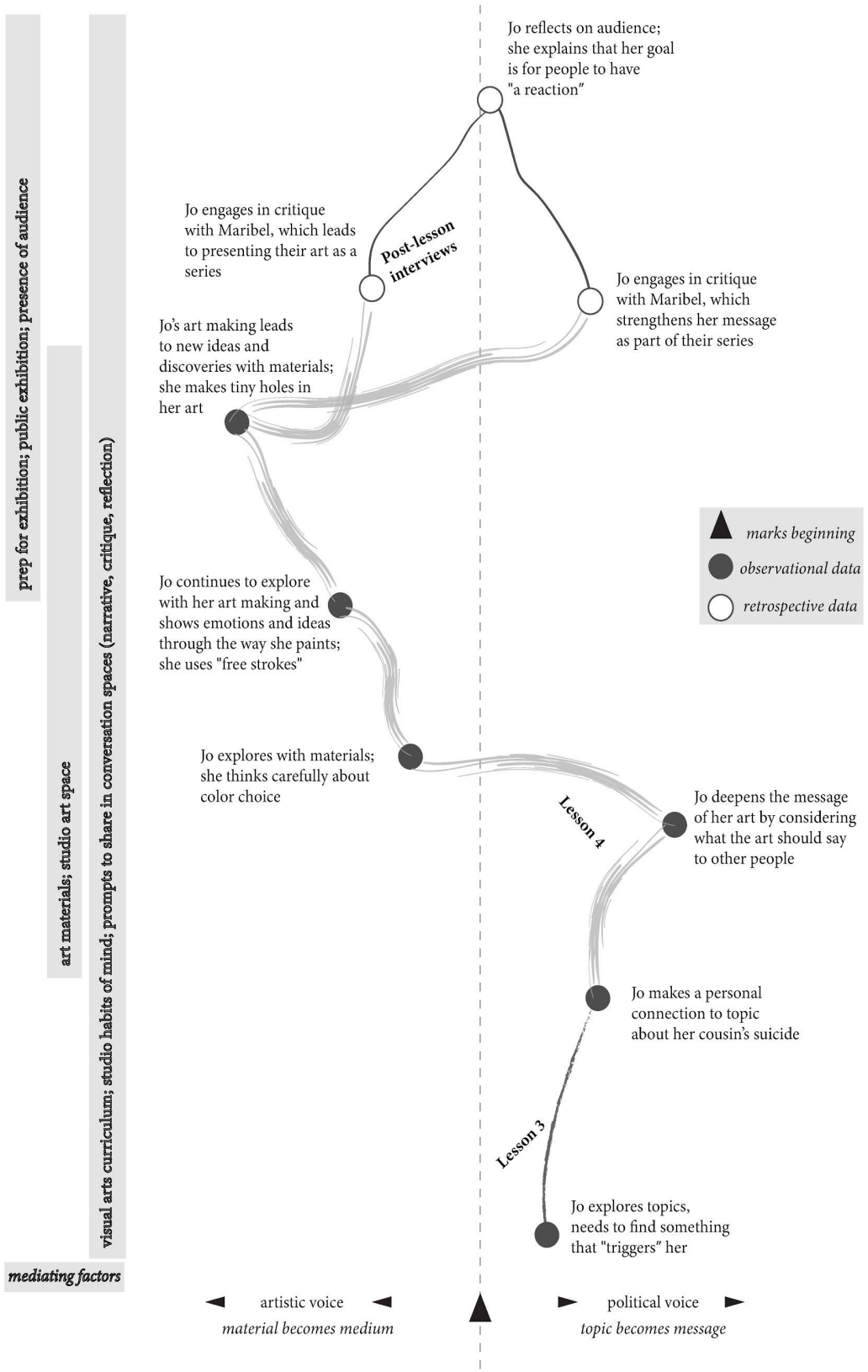


Figure 6-8. Jo's trajectory of artistic and political voice development

between a personal connection and something that would speak to a broader audience was an important shift in Jo's art making process that marked her voice development from creating a story that spoke to a very specific experience to co-constructing a narrative that could be more broadly applied. Throughout this excerpt, Andrew and Maribel offered support by listening and interjecting when appropriate. Their moves made Jo feel validated in her topic choice and supported her concept development.

In Excerpt 37, with support from her conversation with Maribel and Andrew, Jo moved along the spectrum of political voice development from description and analysis of her topic to taking a position and forming an argument to transforming her topic into a message and call to action. Her message was that if someone felt depressed, they needed to tell people they felt that way before they did something to hurt themselves and consequently, hurt their families and people who cared about them, an experience with which Jo was familiar. In the trace of her voice development trajectory in Figure 6-8, the line slopes more deeply into political voice as she transformed her chosen topic into a message, which she authored and refined in conversation with her peers.

Jo, Andrew, and Maribel continued their conversation about Jo's topic in Excerpt 38. During this exchange, Maribel and Jo engaged in a back and forth discussion, working up a simile for describing Jo's feelings about her cousin's suicide, that it feels "like a ride" where you "feel like you can't move."

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Jo	I don't want that to happen to other people, it's like a very negative feeling like your heart starts beating, you feel like you can't move-	
02	Maribel	-it's like the ride-	

03	Jo	-like I think about it I feel just like-	
04	Maribel	-it's like a ride, there's this ride at the fair that you can go on, it spins around in circles so fast that on the inside you only feel like you can't move, like you're made out of metal-	
05	Jo	-you feel like you can't move, you're just stuck there	*Jo puts hands up above desk as if she is frozen*

Excerpt 38

Jo continued to elaborate on her personal connection with her topic as well as the outward message she hoped to convey in Excerpt 38. She said, “I don’t want this to happen to other people” in turn 01 as she described her physical response to her cousin’s suicide as “a very negative feeling like your heart starts beating, you feel like you can’t move.” Prompted by Jo’s comment on the physical takeover of her body, Maribel began to co-construct a description with Jo in turn 02 when she said, “it’s like the ride.” Jo continued with her train of thought as Maribel clarified her analogy in turn 04 when she described the specific “ride at the fair.” She offered an additional simile for how it felt, “like you’re made out of metal.” Jo dropped her train of thought and instead responded to Maribel’s descriptions in turn 05, adding that “you’re just stuck there” and physically freezing her body. Like Benjamin, for Jo, the creative process was not individual; in fact, much of her understanding of her social issue and the message she eventually hoped to convey through her artwork was co-constructed in interaction with others, mostly Maribel. But while Benjamin’s co-construction with his peers was focused on storytelling and telling separate stories sequentially, Jo and Maribel co-constructed meaning back and forth within a shared narrative.

As Bahktin (1981) has argued, all talk is dialogical as it takes on the perspectives of many voices. The development of Jo’s story can therefore be conceived of as both dialogic and a type of double-voice discourse (Gilligan, 1987; Miller, 1986) that included both her point of

view and incorporated the perspectives of her peers. Double-voice discourse is often used in the context of solidarity groups as one's own voice is enmeshed with the voices of others (Sheldon, 1992). Repeated conversations with Jo, Maribel, and Andrew were indeed an exercise in creating solidarity as the three students worked together to help Jo develop her story, perspective, and understanding of how issues of suicide and depression might be important to a broader audience. Importantly, small group and partner collaboration was not unidirectional; through their repeated conversations, Jo also helped Maribel flesh out ideas for her artwork and together the partners constructed a collective story about one another's social issues through double-voice discourse. Additionally, Jo's voice developed in this exchange as she took her message and deeply explored how emotions manifested in the physical body.

As students began working with art materials they continued to co-construct meaning around their chosen social issues. Students had paper, pencils, oil pastels, and watercolors available to them. While it was practically necessary that I constrained the available materials, I also told students they could ask me for additional art materials they needed. For sake of brevity, I did not include an excerpt of their talk here, but in summary, Jo, Maribel, and Andrew began by talking about different colors they were going to use for their art as well as feelings and ideas they associated with particular colors. There were disagreements about color associations (e.g., Maribel and Andrew said red could mean love, Jo disagreed and said she thought of orange when she thought of love). The group never came to a consensus as to what emotions particular colors could represent, and that was okay with them. Their disagreement on color-emotion associations was consequential for Jo's voice development as Jo defined her artistic voice as something that was uniquely her own. In this case, consensus building around color-emotion associations was not necessary; in fact, it seemed that disagreement on a universal color to represent any one

emotion was part of what defined Jo as an individual artist. Like political voice, Jo's artistic voice was personal, rooted in her experience, and defined through how she translated that experience to an external representation. For example, Jo explained that orange and yellow made her think of positivity and happiness because they were her mom's favorite colors, too.

Interestingly enough, while their initial conversations about colors did not directly concern their chosen social issues, talking about their general likes and dislikes gave students something else to discuss as they created art, creating some distance between them and the social issues with which they engaged. This lighter bit of social conversation gave students something else to attend to and talk about when making art related to emotions that could be heavy. Their digressions to other topics were a part of their natural conversation and did not need to be redirected. Generally, when children talk to peers in arts classrooms, their conversations can quickly turn from content-related talk to social talk and back again, diverging from the academic topic at hand in unanticipated ways (Zander, 2003).

A final point relevant for Jo's artistic voice development is how she physically engaged with materials while making art. Using oil pastels, she made strokes in sweeping gestures and smudged the pastel as she turned her paper in a circle. At one point, Jo put down the paintbrush she was using, grabbed the yellow and orange oil pastels and said, "Now I just feel like spreading everything out. I'm sorry, I'm gonna use my hands and blend." In a later interview, Jo added to the explanation of her technique: "I've always really liked just doing free strokes for a long time...they make me me feel free, and I could like express my emotions through strokes, depending on the shape of it." Jo's explanation connected the very nature of her individual art making technique to the emotions she expressed through her artwork, suggesting that emotion in

artwork can be conveyed not just through an element of art like color choice but also through *how* artists physically engage in the artistic process.

Jo, Andrew, and Maribel began to talk more about different colors related to emotions that connected to their social issues and personal narratives (Excerpt 39).

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Jo	Where's my paint brush?	*Jo looks around, finds paint brush in palette tray*
02	Maribel	What color can mean hurt?	*Maribel wets her paint brush in the shared water*
03	Andrew	Um like red I guess	
04	Jo	When I think hurt I think red and black. I don't know why, I have no idea why	
05	Maribel	I'll use, what's this color? I think I'm gonna use this color	*Maribel covers her brush in deep blue paint*
06	Andrew	I have to draw a perfect circle	*After Andrew says this, there is a 23 second silence as they paint*
07	Andrew	I'm thinking non-violence, so what color should it be?	
08	Jo	When I think non-violence, I think green because I think like green, I don't know, green's like a zen color for me, like when I'm stressed out I think green and blue...and purple sometimes	*Jo puts paintbrush down and makes a"yoga mudra" gesture; leans on Maribel's shoulder*
09	Maribel	Greens, blues-	

Excerpt 39

Jo, Maribel, and Andrew asked one another for suggestions in Excerpt 39. Whether or not they incorporated the suggestions is not the point; the point is that while artistic voice is about developing one's own unique way of conveying an idea or feeling, artists make art for an intended audience and so feedback and others' opinions were always worth consideration. (Others' suggestions were also relevant for political voice.) For example, while red and black were suggested when Maribel asked how to show "hurt," she used her artistic agency to choose a

deep blue, perhaps trying to convey a different level of hurt than the one Jo and Andrew were proposing through their suggestions of red and black. And sometimes peers' suggestions did make it into other students' artwork. Take for example that Andrew asked in turn 07 what color he should use for "non-violence." In turn 08 Jo recommended green because "green's like a zen color." While he still created art that expressed his own voice, Andrew included a central green image (Figure 6-9).

Figure 6-9. Andrew's abstract artwork

As they continued working on their art in Excerpt 40, Jo made strokes with oil pastel on top of her watercolor and accidentally ripped her paper. In a short exchange with her partners she was encouraged to make the mistake part of her artwork—which she did. Jo added that she liked to "[get] deeper" with her artwork as she considered how to incorporate the mistake into her art's meaning.

Turn	Speaker	Talk	Notes
01	Jo		*As Jo makes art, her paper rips; she gasps in shock*
02	Maribel	Oh my god, no, you can use it into your artwork	
03	Jo	I know, that's what I was actually doing, look	*Jo uses her fingers to spread the oil pastel and cover the hole*
04	Maribel	But you can use the little hole right there as his mind is breaking	
05	Jo	I know	
06	Andrew	Don't you just hate that?	*Jo continues to work*

07	Jo	I like it	
08	Maribel	When you put too much color in it and then it breaks	
09	Jo	I'm gonna do that, I'm gonna do that on purpose	
10	Andrew	It's like paper	
11	Jo	See, that's what I do a lot, I start getting deeper and so the happiness is breaking apart because the depression is too strong and it's trying to fight the suicidal thoughts	*Jo begins making more little holes in the paper*
12	Maribel	Like trying to fight the urge not to cry	

Excerpt 40

As Jo worked on her art in Excerpt 40, she did not intend for her paper to rip but she swiftly reacted when it did. Her peers offered their ideas and empathy as Maribel suggested, "you can use the little hole right there as his mind is breaking" in turn 04 and Andrew asked, "Don't you just hate that?" in turn 06. Jo's quick recovery showed that she was not upset by the paper ripping—in fact, she welcomed the mistake as a way to deepen the meaning of her artwork.

The interaction in Excerpt 40 reinforced the idea that Jo's artistic voice was co-constructed with her peers. While it was probable that Jo would have made the decision on her own to incorporate the accidental hole into her artwork, at the very least, Maribel reinforced the decision to make the hole a part of Jo's message. Additionally, Maribel's push led to Jo making more holes in turn 11, thus deepening her interaction with the materials and message of her art. In a later interview Jo explained, "A lot of people were weird because they were like 'Jo, you messed up by putting holes in it,' but I didn't, I put that on purpose because the positive thoughts are losing, and kind of like it's like a war I guess you could say, between depression and positivity." In reflection, although initially surprised by the first rip, she reframed the holes as a

purposeful choice. In the trace of Jo's voice, she gets deeper into her artistic voice development as she reframed the holes she made, adding a layer of meaning to her artwork.

While Jo took ownership of her art, she also acknowledged how critique and collaboration with her partner, Maribel, led to the discovery of new things about her message. In an interview, Jo explained both the process of how they chose to collaborate and opened up about her own vulnerability in relation to her chosen topic:

> At first I didn't really realize how much our art pieces, both of ours, connected very well to each other because mine's more the aftermath of it, and hers was the cause...it made me think more of why you would choose that because sometimes you think your life is great and I don't know why they would choose to commit suicide, but when you think of maybe they weren't showing it...and it's really like I've been sad a lot at home for personal reasons and my mom told me it's not good to hold it in because when you get those depressional thoughts you have to let it out or else it's going to get really bad.

In this interview, Jo positioned critique as a way to make connections across artwork and engage in deeper reflection about her own art. Jo focused on the element of time in the progression of their art pieces when she referred to hers as "the aftermath of it" and Maribel's as "the cause." For Jo, critique was not just a moment in time but something that happened consistently during art making. Jo and Maribel kept each other informed as to changes in direction and offered suggestions related to their artistic choices and messages they wanted to express. As they wrote formal artist statements during the last lessons before the art show, they even proposed displaying their art pieces together as a series of three (Figure 6-10). (Jo created two abstract pieces to include in their series.) Because they had been working side-by-side for the entirety of the study, Jo and Maribel realized that their artwork connected and decided that displaying the

work as a series would make a powerful statement in the art exhibition. The first piece in the series was called *The Tear in the Middle*, which Maribel described in her written artist statement:

> Through my art I tried to show the anger from the people shouting at the small blue person and the sadness from the little one as it is getting shouted at...he/she has many emotions kept inside but they do not show. I want them to see that some people suffer a lot and pretend to be happy all because of abuse.

Figure 6-10. Jo and Maribel's artwork series (From left to right: *The Tear in the Middle, Brain Fighting Darkness, Darkness in the Light*)

The second artwork in the series, *Brain Fighting Darkness*, is the artwork Jo worked on throughout the classroom interactions highlighted in this chapter. In her written artist statement she explained, "[I used] bright colors to show positivity and dark colors showing the negative depressional thoughts. The holes represent the depression is winning." In the final work of art, *Darkness in the Light*, the depression prevailed, as Jo explained that it represented "what depression and negativity of the brain look like to me." In her artist statement for the final piece, she explicitly acknowledged the audience, opening up to viewers in closing, "This is my opinion. Tell me what yours is." This desire to reach an audience was also articulated in an interview when she explained that she wanted to "put more effort" into her artwork when there was a

public audience because it made her "really badly want to change their opinion" and "to hopefully change their lives."

Overall, Jo's trajectory in art making and political and artistic voice development was a personal process during which she co-constructed ideas with her peers and made a work of art with a message that could both be important for an audience and was also personally meaningful to her. Figure 6-8 shows Jo's political and artistic voice development as she created her abstract art. She began developing her political voice by considering possible topics and choosing one that "triggered" her and was also personally meaningful. Jo deepened the message of the art she made by co-constructing meaning around her narrative with Maribel and Andrew. She then transformed her personal message into one that was outward looking for a potential audience. She wanted her art to tell people that they did not need to quietly suffer, that they should tell people how they were feeling if they were thinking about hurting themselves. She deeply engaged with the emotions related to her art making and used those emotions to inspire her message and her artistic choices. She developed her artistic voice by experimenting, thinking carefully about emotions, color, and the way she painted. In the art making process her artistic voice further developed as she accidentally made a hole in her art and then reframed this as part of her artwork to deepen its meaning. Finally, reflecting in an interview, Jo said that she hoped people would have "a reaction" to her art, something that can be both aesthetic and intellectual.

While the focus of my analysis has been Jo's voice development over the course of the designed experience, this story does not only belong to Jo. Both Maribel and Andrew were key players in her process, making suggestions at pivotal points and in Maribel's case, collaborating so much as to display their artwork together as a cohesive unit. What Jo's case makes evident about artistic and political voice development is that art making can be a very personal process,

one that can help an artist make sense of complex issues—in this way, making art mediated Jo's self-understanding. This kind of personally meaningful work of developing the self is important and not something students are usually prompted to do in school. Additionally, Jo's trajectory highlights the collaborative nature of both political and artistic voice development; while having a unique voice is something students might strive to achieve as artists, that voice is partially co-constructed by collective social interaction as students take up and build on others' ideas in their work.

Summary

The sketches of Benjamin, Natalie, and Jo's art making processes reveal how their artistic and political voices developed as students conceived of and created art in the present study. Broadly, their voices were influenced by how they arrived at topics for art making, the level of personal distance they kept from their topics, the ways they co-constructed meaning with peers, and the ways they worked with materials to convey particular ideas. Additionally, their individual artistic and political voice development was supported by how the class co-constructed what it meant to have a voice in the public discussion space—that is, artistic and political voice were influenced by the collaborative, democratic, and heterogeneous interactions in whole class conversations.

For Benjamin, it was important that his topic would be well received by others and after receiving support for his idea from whole and small group discussions, he decided to focus on the police. Of the three focus participants, he had the most personal distance from his social issue at first, but he worked to developed empathy for others with a closer personal connection to his chosen issue. Conversations with peers became central as he incorporated their stories and voices into his artwork. His artistic choices were also connected to the narrative he developed. He

demonstrated empathy in his art as he tried to show what a Black person who was about to be arrested might have been thinking. Natalie explored a few potential topics and chose LGBTQ because she had a personal connection and story related to the issue. At the same time, she worked to make her topic more broadly relevant, moving from her personal story to making connections to gay people at their school. Her artistic choices were a symbolic result of the broader message she hoped to convey to her audience, and her call to action aimed to bring awareness to a shared humanity. After exploring other ideas, Jo chose a topic that was deeply personal. She used her personal story about her cousin's suicide to delve into complex emotions related to depression and suicide. As Jo co-constructed her artistic and political voice with others, she considered how she could send a message to people impacted by depression and suicide and their loved ones, transforming her personal story to one that would be useful for an external audience. As she engaged with materials, Jo considered how she might simultaneously embed her personal story and convey this broader message. She ultimately collaborated with Maribel to co-construct a powerful and layered message for the public.

While individual students developed their voices in particular ways summarized above, political and artistic voice development followed similar overall paths across students as represented in the figures of their trajectories. Political voice development generally began with students exploring ideas for a potential topic and eventually selecting one for art making. Students would then move to describe their chosen topics using prior knowledge and experiences. During this process, students developed positions in relation to their social issues and used their prior knowledge, experiences, and conversations with other students to craft arguments related to their issues. Students would then consider the audience and think about the broader message they hoped to convey through their art. Their messages took many forms and

included an implicit or explicit call to action. In terms of artistic voice development, students generally began by developing concepts for their art through the conversations they had with peers. Following this, students explored with available materials to match artistic choices with ideas and emotions related to their issues. Students then constructed their art, making small decisions throughout the creative process as they engaged with studio habits of mind. Students would finally refine, revise, and reflect on their art as they considered what they wanted to communicate to an audience who would receive their work.

CHAPTER 7

Discussion

The purpose of this chapter is to review results within and across my research questions, elaborate on discussion points connected to student voice, the purpose of an arts education, and design-based research, and suggest future directions for this work.

Results within and across research questions

My first research question (i.e., *how did an intentionally designed arts experience support students in talking about art and art making, including the topics they chose and the ways they used art media?*) required I broadly consider how the design of the arts learning environment influenced student talk and choices in that environment. The scope of this analysis allowed me to illustrate how, in general, the curriculum and pedagogy worked, focusing on how students and I co-constructed an understanding of what it meant to talk about and make more overtly political kinds of art. This analysis highlighted how the curriculum and pedagogy with which we engaged mediated students' understandings and orientations toward art making. Overall, students' different levels of personal distance from their topics mediated how they talked about and conveyed emotion and empathy through their representational choices. Furthermore, discussion of representational choices was linked to students' appropriation of communicative practices of art making and how they talked about ideas and emotions they hoped to express to an audience through their art. Students worked within the curriculum framework that emphasized both the personalization of social issues and the communicative purpose of art making to project a message about personal issues to an outside, social world.

Analysis for this first research question required examining how students talked about art in the public whole class discussion space, which influenced how they talked about art in their

private conversations. Students' private talk included the reasons they gave for choosing social issues and how they described representational choices they made in their artwork. Through analysis of interviews and written artist statements, I showed that students engaged with a range of topics for which they had different levels of personal distance and argued that as they did so, they expressed emotion and empathy through intentional artistic choices, concepts that were explored in the curriculum and the whole class discussion space. Additionally, students created art that was rooted in their individual, personal narratives, yet meant for a public audience. I showed how students talked about communicative practices particular to art making for audiences, including how they used their emerging understandings about art to make and talk about specific representational choices for their artwork.

My second research question (i.e., *how was student voice engaged, supported, and co-constructed by the curriculum, teacher, and students during whole class discussions about art to define what it meant to "have a voice" in the local classroom context?*) extended results from the first strand of analysis to develop an understanding of how having a voice was defined as students and I interacted with curriculum in the classroom context. My analysis supported the student voice construct as something that was interactionally developed as we engaged in conversation around artwork and social issues. Overall, the patterns I explicated with data showed that voice was collaborative, democratic, and heterogeneous. The whole class participation structure required many voices, challenged traditional norms of power in classrooms, and involved the coexistence of both consensus and disagreement without the necessity of resolution.

Consequential patterns of interaction contributing to the whole class participation structure included bursts of conversation about artwork with partners, taking up of on-topic

callouts to support non-normative ways of participating, and encouraging the extension of others' ideas while allowing conflicting interpretations to co-exist. These patterns of interaction supported students in a number of more specific ways that contributed to creating the collaborative, democratic, and heterogeneous discussion space: bursts of conversation allowed students to test, elaborate, and refine their ideas in a smaller group before sharing publicly in the collaborative and democratic whole class space; on-topic callouts offered students agency to participate in ways that made sense to them as they collectively engaged in the democratic process of constructing new norms for participation; and elaborating on existing ideas while offering conflicting perspectives supported students in building on and challenging ideas in the public arts discourse space, thus supporting heterogeneity of participation and ideas.

Findings from my first and second research questions were linked because curriculum and pedagogy supported students in how they talked about art and art making, which, in turn, shaped what students talked about when they participated and constructed norms around having a voice in whole class discussions about art and art making. Analysis from the first research question focused on the arts content students discussed from the curriculum, which complemented analysis from the second research question focused on patterns of how students shared *about* the arts content in the social interactional classroom space. As students used language relevant to political art making and how artists talk about constructing meaningful representations for their audiences, they also co-constructed what it meant to have a voice in the emergent class discourse space.

My third research question (i.e., *how did individual students develop their artistic and political voices as they engaged with ideas and art media to make their own art and talked about the art they made with peers?*) necessitated I shift focus from the public whole class space to

uncover how students individually experienced and developed their voices as they engaged in the art making process. Students developed their political voices as they transformed topics into messages for an audience, and they developed their artistic voices as they worked with materials to transform them into mediums for their artistic representations. By analytically separating the constructs of artistic and political voice, I argued that particular mediating artifacts including the curriculum, studio habits of mind, prompts to share in conversation spaces, art materials, a studio environment, and the public exhibition supported the development of each kind of voice throughout the creative process. Broadly, their artistic and political voices were influenced by how they arrived at topics for art making, the level of personal distance they kept from their topics, the ways they co-constructed meaning with peers, and the ways they worked with materials to convey particular ideas. An integral part of developing artistic and political voice was about finding a balance between the personal and social aspects of art making—that is, communicating about personally important issues in social ways.

This strand of analysis required I attend to the individual level of student experience and voice to understand how students developed their voices as they made sense of and constructed representations of their ideas. Here I was able to trace individual trajectories of development throughout the art making process and observe how students' artistic and political voices symbiotically influenced one another as they made art about issues important to them.

Findings from my second and third research question complement one another because the second concerns the local model and how voice was defined in general by the group, which influenced the third, concerning how students developed their voices on the individual level. A key difference is the unit of analysis for which voice was defined and analyzed—while having a voice in the public classroom space was about making collaborative contributions public,

democratic, and heterogeneous, the private development of artistic and political voice was about how individuals took up available materials and resources to link messages related to their topics to the representations they constructed. Despite operating on these different analysis levels, the questions were connected; that is, the local model and norms constructed in the public whole class space supported how students privately talked about their ideas and art with partners as students appropriated ideas from public talk and incorporated them into their artwork. Across my three research questions, the mediating processes involved in constructing students' experiences with art making, including studio habits of mind, prompts to share in conversation spaces, art materials, a studio arts environment, and public exhibition were mechanisms that helped explain the various phenomena of student voice development.

Implications for research and practice

In light of results within and across my research questions, I consider the broader value of this dissertation to be threefold: (1) in how I have theoretically and methodologically conceived of voice as students engaged in the creative process, including what it means to have a voice in the local classroom context and the constructs of artistic and political voice development; (2) in how I have argued for the value of the arts in this context; and (3) in how this study suggests researchers might position themselves as designers and teachers within design-based research.

Research on student voice

I frame student voice as an interactional accomplishment that can be supported in classrooms through purposeful design of participation and conversation structures. Participation and conversation structures specific to this study included different configurations of talk (i.e., partner, small group, and whole class) as well as targeted foci for student talk (i.e., narratives, critique, reflections on audience). A collection of mediating processes, including curriculum, art

materials, and studio habits of mind, were consequential for how students developed their voices as they engaged in participation and conversation structures. Additionally, voice was not positioned as one-dimensional; different kinds of voice shaped one another in interaction (i.e., artistic and political), and it was productive to separate out these kinds in analysis for conceptual and practical purposes. Framing student voice as an interactional accomplishment supported by particular learning environment structures has implications for theory, design, and method in student voice work.

Theory. My framing of voice includes an accumulation of ideas from the literature. I have considered voice to be at once expressive (Calkins, 1986, 1991), about participating in a social world (Freire & Giroux, 1989), and something that develops across time and situation (Lensmire, 1998). Unique to this study, voice is an interactional accomplishment between people as they engaged with one another and materials. Voice was enacted through talk and activity in classroom interaction as students and I co-constructed what it meant to have a voice in our shared classroom space. Voice concerned the actual words students used and how those words were developed in collaboration with others as they engaged with ideas and tools of art making to construct representations. Voice was also a process of coming to articulate and understand one's developing point of view on social issues. To be clear, student voice was not a thing to be collected and quantified in terms of its impact on policy or other tangible measures of change, but voice was how students came up with, developed, and articulated their ideas and creative expressions through conversation and engagement with one another using available artistic and cultural tools.

The theoretical anchoring of student voice as an interactional accomplishment pushes against how student voice is traditionally positioned in much of the literature as a practical thing

to be measured in terms of its impact on educational reform at the institutional level (e.g., Mitra, 2001). Working within the traditional perspective on student voice work, Toshalis and Nakkula (2012) created a student voice typology that considers the range of ways student voice can be engaged in middle and high school contexts. They rate student voice efforts from "expression" on the low end of their spectrum through categories like "participation," "activism," and "leadership" on the higher end. Toshalis and Nakkula argue that most student voice activities in schools reside on what they consider the lower end of their typology, and that on the higher end (i.e., student voice efforts related to participation, activism, and leadership), teachers demonstrate more trust, offer students more authority, and learn more from students. The way voice is framed as an interactional accomplishment in this dissertation however, suggests that the typology Toshalis and Nakkula propose too narrowly conceives of the potential value of their categories of student voice in learning contexts. While Toshalis and Nakkula acknowledge that expression activities are generally positive for student voice because they offer space for student opinions, they position expression activities on the lower end of their typology because they stay in the classroom and are not linked to "real" institutional change.

The typology Toshalis and Nakkula present underestimates the power of expression in work that views student voice as an interactional accomplishment. Their typology suggests that student voice is most valuable only when adults listen and implement students' proposed changes, resulting in policy shifts or institutional change. Additionally, their typology inadvertently communicates that the thoughtful development of ideas for action is not of central concern to researchers and educators interested in centering student voice. While empowering students as partners and leaders of change can lead to positive development and growth in social capital, self-confidence, and problem solving skills (Zeldin O'Connor, & Camino 2006), tangible

change is not the only thing worth measuring in relation to student voice. The interactional processes involved in developing ideas for change and consequently, learning about oneself, also warrant careful consideration. I wonder, is it not important to consider how students learn to process and articulate their ideas about the world? Isn't action before careful and reflective thought reactive? Importantly, how do we impact student learning and promote desirable skills like collaboration through dialogue with others in efforts to support individual and collective development of student voice?

Robinson and Taylor (2007) call attention to four components integral to theorizing work on student voice that support an interactional point of view: a conception of communication as dialogue; a requirement of participation and democratic inclusivity; recognition of power relations; and a focus on change and transformation. Centering expression and dialogue in the classroom environment as I do in this study is aligned with research on student voice that positions student-led dialogue as an integral part of the engagement process (Fielding, 2004). Dialogue is "more than conversation, it is the building of a shared narrative [in which] dialogue [is] about engagement with others through talk to arrive at a point one would not get to alone...dialogue is able to produce engagement, openness, and honesty" (Lodge, 2005, p. 134).

Building from the idea that developing voice involves dialogue, participation, questioning of power, and change, in this dissertation, I show how voice is not just a competence that someone has or something that can be extracted from an individual; voice as an interactional accomplishment requires joint activity and conversation as part of a development process. Thus, if student voice is to be important in schools, there must be opportunities for students to express voice and develop their voices in interaction with others. Voice is as much about *the process* of the development of ideas about social issues that matter to students and the ways in which

students are supported in articulating and expressing their perspectives through art making as it is about resulting change. Furthermore, it is not only important *that* opportunities for developing voice through the arts exist, but it is the *quality* of that experience (Seidel, Tishman, Winner, Hetland, & Palmer, 2009) and the ways in which student voice is supported, conceived of, and engaged that matter for student experience. Put simply, there is great variability unaccounted for within much traditional student voice work and specifically within the categories Toshalis and Nakkula name in their typology. Researchers interested in better understanding student voice might do more to attend to the ways in which students learn to express their opinions and ideas in the social classroom space.

Design. Framing voice as an interactional accomplishment has implications for how researchers and educators might design for supporting student voice in classrooms. In this dissertation, voice involved how students were supported in talking about social issues and art making in the interactional space of the learning environment. Future efforts to design for studies and learning experiences that position student voice as an interactional accomplishment will require that opportunities are created for students to construct their voices in public and private ways, that students have a purpose around which they are developing their voices, and that skills are embedded in curriculum and pedagogy that mediate the development of voice.

In the whole class discussion space, voice was interactionally developed as students and I interacted within the curriculum, including the participation and conversation structures described throughout this dissertation. We co-constructed what it meant to have a voice in a specific context, defining it as collaborative, democratic, and heterogeneous, the meaning of which was brought to life through our conversations. Take for example how we developed the construct of voice as we debated the real life implications of Almanza's 2012 painting, *In Search*

of a New Home (chapter five). In whole class discussion, Oscar, Mallory, Ken, Benjamin, and I drew from our prior knowledge to publicly debate what the police were and were not allowed to do, after which Ken, Sam, Elijah, and I publicly co-constructed interpretations of the work of art. Kayla added to the co-construction when she contributed a personal narrative about "the deport police" connected to our discussion. Through interactions like this example from my data, voice was interactionally defined as collaboratively constructed, democratic, and heterogeneous. Through our interactions, students and I worked together to create new norms for participation that included repeated bursts of conversation, on-topic callouts, and the coexistence of different ideas in the social classroom space. Furthermore, voice was also an interactional accomplishment in the private partner discussion space as can be argued from Benjamin incorporating his peers' stories from YouTube into his artwork and through the way Jo and Maribel co-constructed meaning about their topics as they made the choice to co-present their artwork for the public exhibition audience (chapter six).

The learning environment design in this study is aligned with a call for the previously referenced Lived Civics (Cohen, Kahne, & Marshall, 2018) approach to civics education. While Lived Civics does not discourage actionable change in student voice efforts, the focus is different. Related to this study, Lived Civics challenges traditional definitions of student voice and centers how learning experiences shape student agency and support student voice as students use language from their own experiences to talk about the central roles of identity and race in civic issues. In Lived Civics, developing student voice through classroom learning experiences is highly valued. The principles of Lived Civics center community-based knowledge and "emphasize the need to acknowledge and validate the voices and experiences of marginalized youth" (p. 10). Lived Civics suggests the validation of student voice ought to be cultivated

through activities that deeply involve youth, attending to how youth shape the topics covered, how their lived experiences and ideas are made relevant, and how they are invited to co-construct the classroom community. Lived Civics focuses on creating "opportunity structures" for youth in classrooms to "promote constructive skills for critically processing, analyzing, and responding to experiences and systems of discrimination" (p. 4).

In this dissertation, art projects, participation structures, and conversation spaces were opportunity structures created for students to develop their voices around critical ideas that were relevant to their lived experiences. Students worked within given constraints of the curriculum but generally had freedom over their choice of topics, the stories they told about those topics, and the representations they produced. The Lived Civics approach diverges from traditional views of civics education by focusing on students' social and emotional development around civic issues much in the same way the visual arts curriculum in this dissertation focused on students' personal narratives and emotional experiences connected to their self-selected social issues. Both Lived Civics and the arts learning experience in this dissertation suggest that purposefully designing around students' lives and supporting learning and development as an interactional accomplishment requires reimagining traditional notions of student voice development. Requiring imagination as a prerequisite for design may be necessary to make the purposeful development of student voice integral to learning experiences.

Method. I aimed to link design and method for studying voice as an interactional accomplishment by designing an arts discourse community to support the methodological strategies I used to analyze student voice. Students' literal voices produced analyzable data across the conversation spaces for which I designed. Major methodological contributions of this dissertation include how I conceived of having a voice in the public whole class discussion space

as well as how I disentangled the constructs of artistic and political voice in students' private partner discussions and talk about their art. Designing around talk and using methods that privilege talk can be useful approaches for researchers and educators looking to find a model for how to support and study different kinds of student voice as they develop across time and situation in designed learning contexts.

While Lensmire (1998) acknowledges the situated nature of voice in classroom interactions, this dissertation goes a step further to show how we might systematically analyze kinds of student voice as an interactional accomplishment as students engaged in classroom activity. I name this methodological contribution the *weaving of artistic and political voice* to call attention to the separate yet intertwined parts of voice development over the course of a creative process and to show how the symbiotic relationship created by different kinds of voice combine to create a structured whole. (Also see Figure 7-1 for how students' overlapping trajectories of voice suggest a loosely woven pattern.) Different kinds of voice (in the case of this study, artistic and political) developed alongside one another, and through conversation and interaction with peers, the teacher, and materials, students brought them together as they made art. For example, Benjamin discussed stories about police with his peers to develop a narrative around a Black person who was confused as to why he was getting arrested and then used communicative practices of art to construct a representation that communicated his thoughts and feelings through his intentional choices in color and composition.

Weaving has rich cultural, historical, and social roots; it is a useful metaphor for the development of voice as an interactional accomplishment because of the various layers of

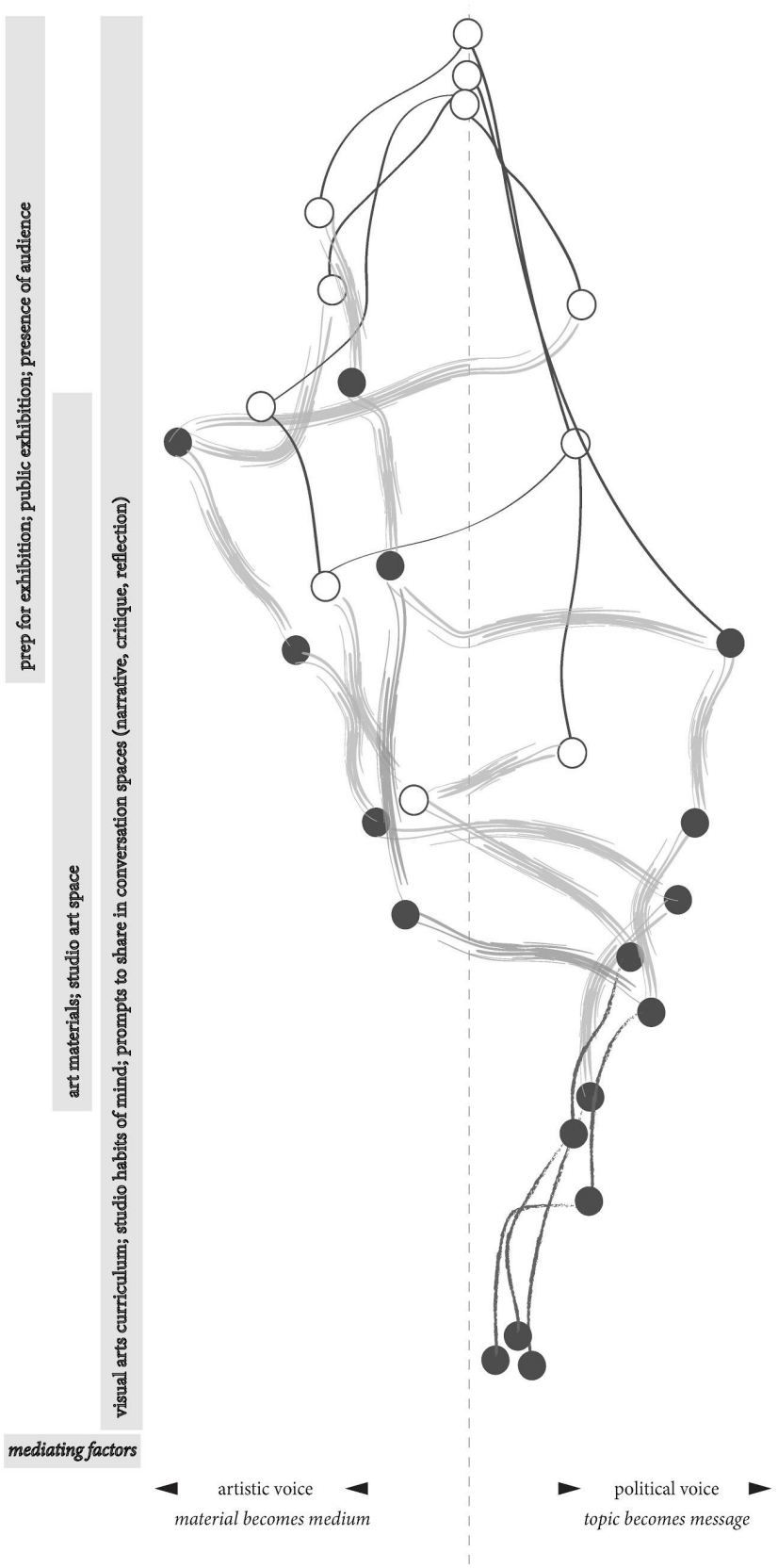


Figure 7-1. Overlapping trajectories of artistic and political voice development

meaning it implies (i.e., weaving as an art, practice, and method). Furthermore, weaving is a productive way of visualizing the creative process and the intertwining of the different kinds of voice I attend to in analysis, as well as the mediating factors involved. The image of a weaving brings together loosely connected threads in this study—the many moving pieces in the interactional accomplishment of student voice.

The weaving metaphor can also be helpful for highlighting the value of attending to particular things and processes that mediate the development of student voice in learning experiences. Looking more closely at tools involved in voice development aligns with that Pickering (1995) calls the *mangle of practice* in science. He argues that both humans and materials have agency, and as scientists try to act on the world, the materials with which they work respond back because they have their own material agency. As students worked with materials in the artistic context of this study, the materials exercised their own agency as in the example from chapter six when Jo's paper ripped after too much water interacted with her oil pastel strokes. A sharper methodological focus on aspects material agency in the development of voice in creative spaces might be interesting to researchers as they consider how materials and other mediating factors and processes can be part of the interactional work of voice development in learning spaces.

The weaving metaphor extends to how I operationalized voice in analysis by following student participation and the development of two "strands" of voice (i.e., artistic and political) over the course of an experience. The operationalization of voice was rooted in an idea form Furman and Barton (2006) who conceptualized voice in a science education context as students' perspective and participation enacted through their talk and choices. I similarly traced students' change of voice throughout a creative process by focusing on their talk and choices about art

making; I refined Furman and Barton's operationalization by disentangling the artistic and political aspects of voice because I considered these strands important to the work students were doing in this specific study and in need of closer analysis. For example, I followed how Natalie explored different topics for her artwork and developed her narrative connected to her self-selected topic, "LGBTQ" as she participated in whole class and partner talk. (Figure 6-5 from chapter six offers an overview of how I tracked Natalie's artistic and political voice development by analyzing her talk and choices over the course of the instructional experience.)

The way I analyzed voice in this study is a move toward how Wortham (2000; 2006) created a systematic method for understanding interactional positioning in relation to identity and narrative self-construction in classrooms. Wortham has looked at empirical evidence including talk and interaction in classroom environments to construct detailed arguments for how student identities are co-constructed over the course of educational experiences. The exploratory methods I used to study voice as an interactional accomplishment might support others in thinking about how to analyze and represent both individual and collective voices in creative and systematic ways as they develop in interaction over time within designed learning experiences.

Positioning the value of the arts

A major contribution of this dissertation is how it positions the value of the arts to support the argument that the purpose of an arts education should be tied to the particular context in which it occurs. As framed in this study, art is important not because of other academic or developmental goals with which it might be associated, but because it is an intellectual and emotional pursuit in and of itself. Art is its own way of thinking, knowing, reasoning, and questioning about oneself and about the world. Rooted in ideas stemming from expressionism and reconstructivism, art making is about learning to attend to and communicate about one's

own experiences and emotions using available cultural tools as a form of inquiry into a social world. That is, art is both personal and social, or as Freedman (2000) has argued, making art is "about the personalization of social issues" (p. 324) and "students make art…to communicate about social issues in social ways" (p. 323).

Art making in this study concerns learning about oneself and one's emotions and figuring out how to communicate something about that to an audience. The dialectic unity I highlight between expressionist and reconstructivist goals for arts education demonstrates that art can serve multiple worthwhile educational purposes at once, especially if these purposes are productive in their counterbalance. As students developed artistic ways of knowing and understanding as they made art about social issues important to them, the goals of expressionism and reconstructivism were complements, supporting both the cognitive pursuit of art making and the emotional work it took for students to make something meaningful related to their lived experiences. (And while I separate cognition and emotion for rhetorical purposes here, I do not see them as separate.) Art making is about making social issues personal, reflecting on emotional responses related to those issues, and expressing something about those social issues in public, social ways. My argument supports the idea that art need not serve one purpose; multiple goals can support the private and public aspects of the art making process. Furthermore, the purposes for making art are not just individual, yet individual development is one part of the narrative I have constructed in this dissertation.

As part of my broader research agenda, I am interested in communicating what young people gain by making art about social issues. I found that making art about political, social issues is important because these issues really matter to students, and even at a young age, students have a real awareness of social justice as evidenced by the range of issues with which

they engaged in this study—from LGBTQ rights to police brutality to immigration—along with the personalized rationales they provided for choosing particular issues. The designed arts experience offered students an explicit opportunity to attend to and think creatively about the kinds of issues that mattered to them and why. Art can therefore be a mediating process for students to make sense of complex issues and ideas that matter to them. Furthermore, using the time, space, and resources of school for this kind of activity communicates that this kind of arts learning matters to their teachers, too.

This dissertation centers arts learning that builds from students' lives and emotional experiences. Thus, it has the potential to connect to important ideas from culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and sustaining (Paris, 2012) pedagogies. Culturally sustaining pedagogy "seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" Paris, 2012, p. 93). Paris (2019) recently tweeted, "Art (visual, performing, literary...) is a central feature of culturally sustaining educational settings as the arts have always been vital in sustaining communities, selves, in loving movements for justice and liberation…" The experience detailed in this study connects to culturally sustaining pedagogy because it illustrates the value of building curriculum around students' lives and offering students space and time to communicate their ideas about the world using language from their own experiences. Creating opportunities for these kinds of arts experiences is especially important for students who have traditionally been marginalized within the dominant curriculum.

On the topic of why the arts matter, it is worth noting that there are indeed practical benefits to engaging in art making, but I want to make it clear that practical benefits are not sufficient reasons for why people should make art. Indeed, as Eisner (2002) has argued, "The arts should be justified primarily in relation to their distinctive or unique educational contributions"

(p. 234). However, it is to the arts' benefit to articulate how the arts might fit within broader narratives about why education matters, social justice, and concerns at the forefront of the current educational narrative. Linda Darling-Hammond has argued that some of the most powerful things we can do to transform education in the U.S. include: taking care of children by improving child poverty rates; keeping an eye toward the future by using inquiry learning methods to teach problem solving; and helping teachers understand how students learn and develop in all ways (i.e., cognitively, physically, morally) while closely attending to how learning and emotion are related (Schwartz & Pope, 2018). Furthermore, Darling-Hammond has explained her position on the role of the arts in curriculum reform:

> We have come to treat as frills many of the areas of study like music, arts and world languages, that are in fact central to developing children's cognitive capacity and overall intelligence. Furthermore, social-emotional learning and the development of social responsibility are critical to the survival and success of both individuals and of entire societies (Rubin, 2012).

As Darling-Hammond suggests, the arts might be considered central to children's intellectual pursuits and social emotional learning. In the same interview, she elaborates on centering the role of the arts when she argues, "We need to recognize that educating the whole child is essential to the human race" (Rubin, 2012). Here she connects arts education to fundamental ideas about what an education is for, in this case, about teaching and understanding what it means to be human. While not practical in the same sense as linking art to academic achievement, it can be useful in some situations to consider the connections between participation in the arts and these broader aims of education.

Importantly, when I asked my focus students what they thought the purpose of art was, none of them linked art to other subject areas or developmental goals. Jo commented on how art is ubiquitous and an imaginative practice: “Art can be literally anything because it's kind of putting your thoughts, it's putting your thoughts and imagination into reality like even, even dreams could be art... a lot of things can be art, like I think nature is art, our homes are art, texture, it's all art.” Natalie described how art making can help people express emotions in nonviolent ways: “I think the purpose of art is to express how you feel or show an emotion you have through—not through physical or verbal—but in a way that no, no one would get hurt or you'd hurt yourself, but in a way that you can express it and show it to others.” And Benjamin explained how the arts can impact an audience and make change possible: “I think the purpose of art is to inspire people and to try to make the world a better place.” In summary, as these students described, the arts are valuable in their own right, in part, because art is about imagining possible futures, learning how to represent emotions and ideas through the representational process, and impacting others’ sense of the world.

Designing for structures of participation and conversation

A final contribution of this dissertation concerns how I designed for and implemented public and private participation structures and conversation spaces within the design-based research project. In this dissertation, I have shown how student voice is developed by students’ appropriation of public talk and discourse about art making, which is a result of how I intentionally designed for that public talk and discourse. I have also been interested in how the design choices I made as an extension of my research contributed to and supported forms of participation that developed into constructing new norms in whole class discussions. I have asked myself several questions about the overall design process, including: Which mediating

processes were most consequential for student voice development and learning? How did the mediating processes work? What did I have to do as researcher, designer, and teacher to ensure they were part of the environment, and what was I looking for in student interactions as a result? How did I explicitly support participation frameworks in practice so that students could engage in the types of conversations I envisioned them having?

My central focus in design was to create the type of classroom discourse space I hypothesized would lead to development of the kinds of student voice in which I was interested. As referenced in chapter three, the study of classroom discourse and "ways of talking" has been a focus of research in literacy, mathematics, and science (e.g., Brown & Palincsar, 1989; Nasir, Hand, & Taylor, 2008; Lemke, 1990), yet similar work in arts learning environments has been limited (Raney & Hollands, 2000; Zander, 2003). Research that does exist is centered on the teacher's role in instigating talk, examining how teachers encourage creativity and create opportunities for individual students to share in discussions (e.g., Barkan, 1960). In a study of middle school art class conversations with a teacher, Hafeli (2000) explains that students "have a remarkable capacity for revealing and musing about their ideas and intentions, and for evaluating their artwork through dialogue with their teachers" (p. 143). However, while art teachers generally agree that it is important for students to have opportunities to discuss and critically reflect on their art making, most traditional arts classroom discussions follow the typical Initiate-Respond-Evaluate sequence (Millbrandt, 2002). Creating a discourse community around art making for this learning environment necessitated a focus on supporting particular kinds of classroom dialogue (Cotner, 2001). Greene (1991) emphasizes the value of arts classroom discourse:

> We take classroom discourse to be at the very heart of the teaching-learning process, as it represents the meaning systems mutually constructed by teachers and their students .... The power of narrative and dialogue as contributors to reflective awareness in teacher and students is that they provide opportunities for deepened relations with others and serve as spring boards of ethical actions .... understanding the narrative and contextual dimensions of human actors can lead to new insight, compassionate judgment and the creation of shared knowledge and meanings that can inform professional practice (p. 8).

Greene's view is that classroom discourse is central to teaching and learning because it is how people work together to construct shared meaning. She highlights the value of narrative and dialogue in this process, noting how these types of talk can improve relationships.

The work I do in this study is related to research on cultivating discourse communities in classrooms and the production of discussion frameworks in other disciplines. A related example is the *talk moves* framework Michaels and O'Connor (2012) present for productive science talk in classrooms. They argue that classroom science discussions serve different purposes, including elicitation of ideas, critical examination, explanation, and consolidation of ideas. Within these discussions, the teacher can use general talk moves to support students in achieving her goals like asking students to provide evidence or rephrase another student's idea. While their work focuses on supporting student talk in relation to the target science content the teacher hopes students will learn, I see the work of this dissertation as a related idea focused on supporting talk in visual arts classrooms in relation to the types of materials and ideas I hope students explore. Additionally, the way I organized for talk in this study was not just about the moves I made as the teacher, but it was more holistically about the social organization of talk and how students and I co-constructed talk in the shared classroom discourse space.

The teacher talk in this dissertation directed students to talk about the processes related to their art making: to tell stories to one another about their ideas, to critique others' work, and to reflect on making art for a public audience. Rather than thinking about how to get students to achieve particular curricular objectives tied to content they needed to master, my goals in directing talk were concerned with supporting student-directed discourse about art making and the cultural and social organization of classroom activity. We engaged with this work through different participation structures (or what Michaels and O'Connor call different *talk formats*), including the whole class level in which students negotiated norms for participation and in partner and small group discussions during which students refined their ideas in a more private setting. Overall, a major difference between Michaels and O'Connors' work and my own is that their primary goal is to support *talk about science content* through inquiry whereas my goal is to support *talk about the process of art making* through a focus on the social organization of classroom activity.

Value of a teacher-researcher's perspective within design-based research. I am not alone in thinking about research, design, and teaching as intertwined. Indeed, other scholars have made teaching an integral part of their research practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Lampert, 1999; Lampert & Ball, 1998; Vossoughi, 2014). Taking on the role of teacher and designer in research can be a complex undertaking, however. For example, Lampert's (1999) reflections on her teaching and research resonates with my earlier discussion of how the sociocultural pedagogy I aimed to support conflicted with traditional norms of the school context in this study. Lampert (1999) writes:

> The teaching and learning I have been doing occurs in an ordinary public school classroom, among one adult and many children, with constraints on time and space and

> other physical resources, with a responsibility to a diverse community to teach an agreed-upon curriculum, and learners who are compelled to participate. All of that is quite typical. But the teaching I have been doing is unconventional in that I am trying to make it possible for elementary school students to do different kinds of activities than those that are usually associated with learning in school (p. 167).

Like Lampert, my efforts in this dissertation were about reimagining possibilities to systematically change the way learning took shape in a particular setting. I find this to be one of the great benefits of doing the work of teaching and research myself—I already understand the purpose for the changes and am invested in the research pursuit. Furthermore, I had the luxury of being free from many of the constraints placed on teachers working full-time in schools and was therefore able to pay closer attention to the research I aimed to do.

Lampert reflects on bridging the work of teachers and researchers as a way of changing ideas about who is responsible for producing professional knowledge about teaching (Lampert, 2001). I see this dissertation as a bridge from work with which scholars like Lampert engage to that within the modern learning sciences community to think more deeply about how to use design-based research in a more participatory way in which researchers consider embedding themselves more considerably in issues of practice. I see this move to practice as something worth integrating with goals of the learning sciences community. I wonder, can researchers qualified to do so take up the messy work of teaching more consistently, and is there room for partner teachers to more fully take up messy work of theory-building research within their own processes? This dissertation provides one point of departure for discussing future possibilities for more participatory approaches to design-based research.

Future directions

Future work might look more closely at the case study video data I collected to include multimodal, nonverbal communication in students' trajectories of voice development. Including these factors might help me better articulate and further systematize artistic and political voice constructs as they develop in interaction. Additionally, in future analyses, attending to both individual and collaborative voice development as an interactional accomplishment by following students as they worked individually and then in small groups to create collective works of political art might be valuable for understanding if and how these different levels influenced one another. Furthermore, I am interested in exploring analysis that looks at how bodies move around the classroom space and how body movement (or lack thereof) may or may not be related to individual voice trajectories and ways students construct norms for what it means to have a voice in the classroom. While it would present its own challenges, it might also be advantageous in future studies to find a partner teacher with whom to co-teach who has already formed solid relationships with students.

An additional future direction includes extending research on arts classroom discourse because there is insufficient research from a sociocultural perspective that explicitly conceives of the arts classroom as a community of practice in which teachers and students engage as a discourse community (Zander, 2003). Calls for more research on talk in arts learning environments often overlook elementary and middle school classrooms as potential sites for study, instead focusing on the value of arts discourse in supposedly more sophisticated high school art classes (e.g., Cotner, 2001). Research that shifts the focus from individual teacher-student interactions and instead centers the arts classroom as a collective discourse community (Zander, 2003) in which students interact with the teacher but also with each other can be

valuable to understanding how participation in the arts contributes to student learning because learning within any discipline is intimately tied to learning to talk and think with others within that discipline's community (Lemke, 1990). Future studies focused on arts discourse could also be useful for understanding how power plays out during interactions in the learning environment, something insufficiently theorized in the present study.

A focus on student identity development is a final point for future work because voice and identity are linked. Bakhtin (1981) has argued that identity is a dialogical process taken up in situated interaction as people make meaning together. How students position themselves and are socially positioned by others can be considered an active "bid" to be recognized as a certain kind of person in a given context (Gee, 2001). In the case of this study, students positioned themselves with respect to the representations they made and how they presented them, putting forth external expressions of their artistic and political voices. Sullivan and McCarthy (2007) describe the symbiotic process of identity development in art making,

> as reciprocal, where artists simultaneously invest themselves in their artistic activity and, in the process, change themselves, perhaps by changing their sense of how their activity contributes to the world they inhabit. That is, they create who they are as a part of what they do including the affective, emotional, and cognitive sense they make of what they do (p. 237-238).

As students engage in art making, the process is as much about learning how to use the tools of art to communicate ideas as it is about learning to understand and communicate something about oneself. Thus, this dissertation might connect to and extend ideas related to social and cultural theorizations about identity (Wenger, 1998), including identity as endorsable narratives (Sfard & Prusack, 2005), identity as an act of social positioning (Wortham, 2000, 2006), and the central

role of imagination in identity construction (Nasir, 2002). Wenger (1998) talks about how imagination is related to constructing one's identity as "the ability to dislocate participation…in order to reinvent ourselves, our enterprises, our practices, and our communities. Imagination requires an opening, the energy to explore new identities, and new relations" (p. 185). In relation to the present study, students used their imaginations and stories from their lived experiences to reinvent ideas for their world about the social issues they care about; there is reason to consider that perhaps the creative process was also connected to transforming students' identities as learners and artists.

Conclusion

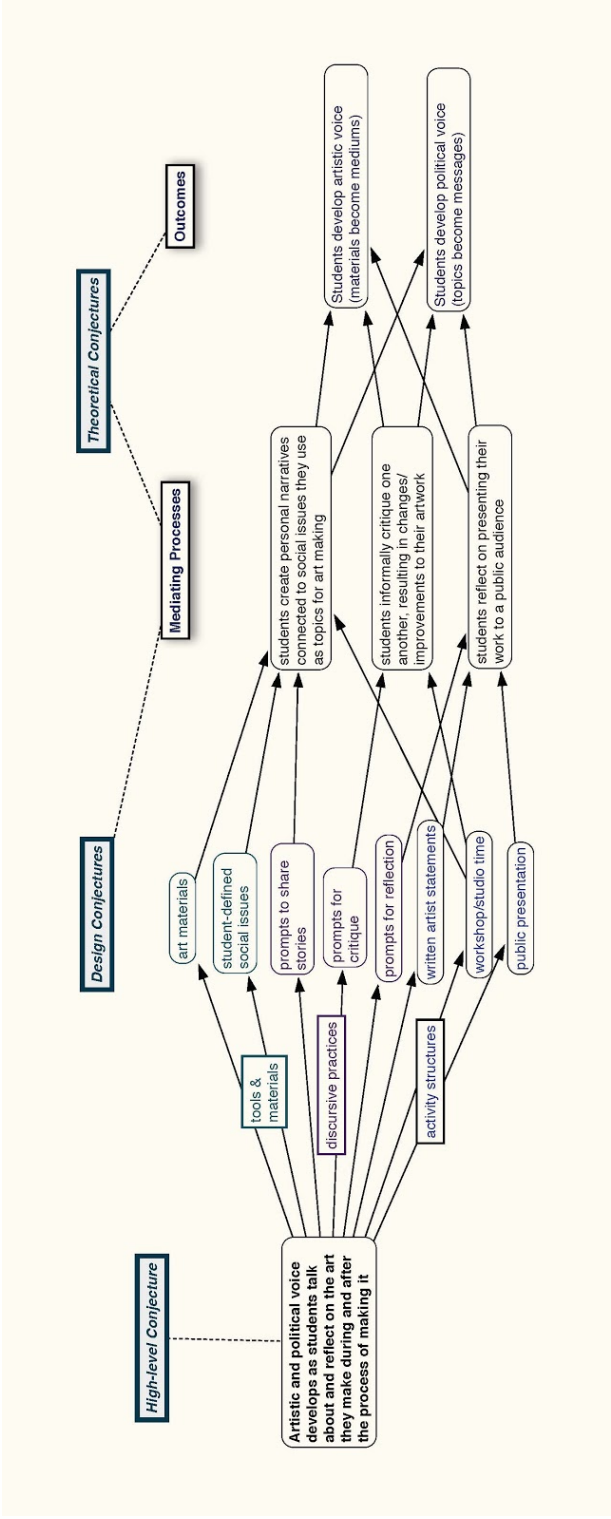
I began this dissertation with Vivian Paley's work centered on listening to what children have to say, anchoring my focus on cultivating and supporting student voice. I also referenced Deborah Meier and Maxine Greene who discuss the human capacity for imagining different circumstances and futures. In translating these big ideas to a classroom learning context, my primary goal has been to understand how sixth grade students developed their voices—what it meant to have a voice in the local classroom context and their individual artistic and political voices—as they engaged in art making by attending to how students talked about the art they made in whole class and small group settings. I hope that through this study I have shown that students have sophisticated ideas about reconstructing their worlds and that it is valuable to design and implement learning experiences in schools that support students in making their private ideas public. I also hope that I have shown that art making is a valuable medium for the thinking, reasoning, and doing required to bring students' ideas to representational form for the purposes of moving, challenging, and inspiring audiences. I have aimed to show that learning experiences in the arts should be purposefully designed to support participation and conversation

structures relevant to the overall goals of the learning experience. Finally, by providing opportunities for dialogue and engagement, listening to students, and centering imagination, I hope this dissertation has suggested possibilities for reframing what arts learning can be in schools as well as what it can do for supporting the development of student voice.

Appendix A

Conjecture Map

Figure A1. Final conjecture map for design-based research



Appendix B

Interview Protocols

Semi-structured interview I protocol for October 26, 2017 (during intervention)

Before interview students chose one piece of work from their portfolio to talk about in interview.

1. Can you tell me about the process you went through to make this piece of art? Maybe talk about some of the different tools you used to make it?
2. How did you choose the colors or lines or shapes or other elements of art for this piece?
3. Can you tell me more about the social issue you chose for your art and why that social issue is meaningful to you?
4. What critique did you get from your partner?
5. Do you think your partner's critique helped you think about this art piece or for the future? If so, how?
6. What do you think an audience will think of your art? And why might your message be important to other people?
7. How does knowing you're going to present your work to other people impact how you think about it while you're making it?
8. What do you think is the purpose of art?

Semi-structured interview II protocol for December 12, 2017 (after public presentation)

Students were shown a picture of one group member in the group costume piece(s) to prompt reflection in interview.

1. Can you tell me about the process you and your group went through to make your costume?
2. What was your role in the group?
3. Did your idea for the group costume change over time? If so, how?
4. How did you and your partners bring together your personal connections to the social issues?
5. Which works of art that we made together did you feel most personally connected to?
6. Did any critique from others in class impact how you thought about your work? If so, how?
7. What did it feel like to make your art public and show it to other people?
8. What do you think art is for?

Appendix C

Prompts for Artist Statements and Examples

Table C.1. Artist statements in curriculum and examples

Artist statement description as written in curriculum	Most artists write some kind of artist statement to go with their work. This statement serves a few purposes—one is to tell the story the artist was trying to convey through the art. Another purpose is to invite the audience in to interpret the work of art however they see appropriate. A third purpose is to offer background on how the art was created.
Artist examples in curriculum	*The title of my piece is unity swoosh. Through my art I tried to show that even though we are different genders, races, and come from different places, we have a lot of things that connect us as human beings, and those things are beautiful. I tried to show my message of equality by using different colors and joining them together with a bright, hopeful golden equal swoosh sign. To me, the gold color means strength. This art and the social issue of equal human rights is meaningful to me because I have seen throughout my life that not everyone has the same opportunities. I feel lucky for the opportunities I have been given throughout my life, but not everyone has similar chances. When an audience sees my art, I want them to connect with this idea and feel moved that no matter who you are or where you came from, you have certain rights that can't be taken away.* -9th grade participant in separate research project *Getting outside is good for the soul. Through my artwork, I try to bring the outside in. While I make no attempt to portray actual plants or animals, I do want my creations to look like they could have lived or grown somewhere. Living with beautiful objects that pay tribute to the natural world reminds us to slow down and helps us reconnect with nature.* -Alison Sigethy, glass artist
Writing prompts	What were you trying to show through your art? How did you try to show it? What personal connections do you have to the topic of your art? How do you want an audience to react to your art? Were there any critiques that you received that helped improve your art?

Student examples	*The title of my art is brave. Through my art I tried to show that you do not have to fit in with the other but be your self. I tried to show it by how it looks and the colors. This art and the topic of brave is meaningful to me because it shows how people can not be ashamed of what they do and what they believe in. When people see my art I want them to know it is ok to be different then others. I tried this by give people a example of braveness and more.* *The title of my peice is LGBTQ Rights. Through my art I tried to show that LGBTQ's need people to support them. I tried to show it by drawing the colors from the LGBTQ flag. This art and the topic of LGBTQ is meaningful to me because they deserve to love who they want, not who others tell them too. When an audience sees my art I want them to think, am I being non-judgemental to all.*

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