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Literacy Through Photography: Multimodal and Visual Literacy in a Third Grade Classroom

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Abstract This article reports findings from a diverse third grade classroom that integrates a literacy through photography (LTP) curriculum as a central component of writing instruction in an urban public school. A case study approach was used in order to provide an in-depth, multi-dimensional consideration of phenomena by drawing on multiple data sources to examine and describe the LTP program in this third grade classroom. Data were gathered, on average twice a week, throughout a full school year. The findings of this study demonstrate how utilizing different forms of communication, such as photography, alongside traditional school literacies, such as writer's workshop, expands the options that children have of processing and expressing their understanding.

Keywords Qualitative research · Visual literacy · Literacy instruction · Photography

Introduction

It is time for the language arts instructional block in Ms. Brown's third grade classroom. Students, sitting in groups of 4 or 5, look to the front of the room where a photograph of a child sitting in front of a windowsill is projected on the screen. The photo is black and white and has an optical illusion—it looks like he's floating in the air. Ms. Brown explains to students:

> Okay, so the photographer has given you several clues. And I want to let you try and figure out what's going on here, let's use our detective work. You've told me about how his body is positioned and what kinds of gestures he's making. We've talked about the color and about how this black and white makes it look like he's floating. And then Jiro [a student] noticed how it's white here and it's dark here and the windowsill is white. You can't see it as much here. What do you think the photographer was trying to accomplish with the colors? What mood does it create?

Ms. Brown tells the students to be "photo detectives" and consider what is happening in the story, use their critical thinking to analyze the scene, and talk about setting, tone, and mood. She believes that an important connection exists between this visual, arts-based curriculum and the traditional reading and language arts objectives. Therefore she integrates photographs, drama, and drawing to support comprehension, understanding, and meaning making. The curriculum in this classroom reflects the integration of visual literacy alongside reading, writing, and talking. There are several reasons for this, including, as Mrs. Brown explained: "…what good readers do when they are reading is they are making pictures in their heads".

Literacy researchers have recognized the significance of visual modes of literacy and how they can expand options for writing and reading in the classroom (Ranker 2009; Siegel 2006). Specifically, photographs have been used to support reflection and critical thinking as well as connect to the multiple contexts of children's lives. Teachers have used photographs as a way to integrate knowledge of

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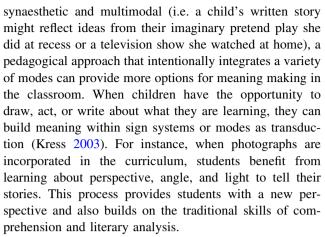3 Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway

children's families, linguistic practices, and cultural backgrounds (Allen et al. 2002; Keat et al. 2009; Wissman 2008). Incorporating visual images such as photographs or videos hold the promise of supporting writers, including reluctant writers (Zenkov and Harmon 2009) and English Language Learners (Ranker 2009), because it allows them to work with images and ideas beyond textual responses.

While this literacy through photography (LTP) curriculum has been implemented in this particular urban public elementary school for many years, the teachers struggle to maintain their creative, multimodal approach as standardized tests and scripted curricula are being promoted as the solution to teaching struggling learners. Each year, teachers at this school wonder if they will have access to their darkroom or camera equipment so they can continue the projects with students. In addition, scheduling time for the projects is often challenging due to other curricular requirements and assessment demands. The struggle to balance the photography projects with the increased assessment and requirements reflects two important issues in literacy education that work in opposition of each other: research demonstrates that using an expanded notion of literacy that incorporates visual literacy practices supports students' development (see for instance Schofield and Kupiainen 2015; Hassett and Curwood 2009; Jewett 2009; Ranker 2009; Siegel 2006) yet teachers and students are struggling with the impact of standardized testing and teaching that promotes a very narrow view of literacy (Allington and Cunningham 2002).

This article reports findings from a year-long qualitative study in a third grade classroom that integrates photography, drama, art, and writing in the language arts curriculum. This research connects with research on visual literacy, which supports the idea that photography can be a method of engaging with the world, capturing human experiences, and building upon social relationships (Rose 2008). Using a descriptive case study approach (Yin 2013), we present two students from this classroom to provide insight into the LTP curriculum and possibilities for multimodal curriculum. The primary question this research attempts to answer is: How does the integration of a LTP curriculum affect how children learn in a third grade language arts classroom?

Related Research

Children naturally engage with activities that build on multiple modes and they may use different artifacts or media as they learn (Pahl and Rowsell 2005). For example, they may draw, build blocks, role-play, or sing to express meaning (Albers and Cowan 2006; Albers and Harste 2007; Cappello 2006). While all texts can be considered synaesthetic and multimodal (i.e. a child's written story might reflect ideas from their imaginary pretend play she did at recess or a television show she watched at home), a pedagogical approach that intentionally integrates a variety of modes can provide more options for meaning making in the classroom. When children have the opportunity to draw, act, or write about what they are learning, they can build meaning within sign systems or modes as transduction (Kress 2003). For instance, when photographs are incorporated in the curriculum, students benefit from learning about perspective, angle, and light to tell their stories. This process provides students with a new perspective and also builds on the traditional skills of comprehension and literary analysis.

Visual literacy has always been relevant to young children's literacy development; however, with the rapid development of technology, children are making meaning with visual images with greater frequency and in unique ways (Serafini 2014). As children's understanding develops, a strong connection to visual literacy supports learning in literacy as well across the content areas, such as diagrams, maps or timelines that can be used in math, social studies, science, or language arts (Moline 2011). Visual literacy incorporates color, shape, spatial representation, print, messages, meaning and communication. When teachers use visual methods as a tool for thinking and communicating, students can experience new ways of learning that builds on their identities and knowledge outside of school (Rowsell et al. 2012).

When teachers incorporate various modalities in their literacy instruction, they create more inclusive classroom contexts (Cappello and Hollingsworth 2008). Rose (2008) describes how photographs provide ways that children can represent their views of the world and connect with their own cultural understanding. In the classroom, it is often the case that certain literacies are privileged over other forms. Yet, when multiple ways of learning are incorporated, it broadens children's understanding and perspective while also promoting critical and higher level thinking that comes from creative thought (Greene 2000).

Methods

Context

There are 22 students in the classroom, eight males and 14 females, and one teacher; and their racial background is: four Hispanic, seven White, ten Black, and one Multi-racial. Five of the students have been identified as Academically Gifted, four receive services for English Language Learning, and only 20 % passed their End of Grade reading test, which is supposed to indicate whether

they are ready to progress to the next grade. Ms. Brown (all names in this article are pseudonyms), the teacher of this classroom, is a Caucasian woman who has taught in public schools for more than 10 years. The principal and teachers of this school have maintained the arts-based curriculum despite intense pressure to improve test scores and adopt more rigid methods of teaching.

This study documented a diverse third grade classroom that integrates a LTP curriculum as a central component of writing instruction in an urban public school that is a magnet for the arts and humanities. LTP is a teaching method and learning approach based on the premise that photography can be used to connect writing and critical thinking across disciplines (Ewald 2002). Designed by Ewald (2002), the LTP curriculum encourages students to use creative understanding as they learn to read pictures and then create their own photographs. As stated on the LTP website, "LTP uses photography and visual imagery as tools to stimulate students' writing, analytic abilities and communication skills…photographs (film-based and digital) serve as effective catalysts for the related writing assignments" (http:// documentarystudies.duke.edu/projects/past-projects/literacy-through-photography). The teacher of this classroom, along with many of her colleagues at this school, went through specific training delivered by artists and educators to build professional knowledge about how to integrate this approach into her own curriculum. The school supported their work with a darkroom and photography material.

Students completed projects related to three themes: self-portrait, African proverbs, and community photographs (see Table 1 for a full description of students' projects). In each project, students worked in groups to develop ideas by using learning modes such as photography, drama, art, writing, reading, and other methods of understanding. The three projects took approximately 3–5 weeks to complete and were integrated in the language arts curriculum.

Data Collection

Data collection began with approval from the Institutional Review Board at Angela's university. Ethnographic techniques of participant-observation and descriptive analysis were applied to the classroom setting as data were gathered, on average twice a week, throughout a full school year (Creswell 2013). A descriptive case study approach (Dyson and Genishi 2005; Yin 2013) was used in order to provide an in-depth, multi-dimensional consideration of phenomena by drawing on multiple data sources to examine and describe the LTP program in this third grade classroom. Data were generated from classroom observations, student writing and photographs, and interviews and discussions with students as well as the teacher.

For the research study, Angela formed a focus group of five students to study closely and interview during and after projects. The students from this focus group were selected, with the teacher's assistance, as a group that is representative of the classroom based on race, ethnicity, academic success, and interest in photography (Krueger and Casey 2009). After each project, Angela conducted a retrospective think-aloud protocol (Schellings et al. 2006) with focal students as they watched videos of themselves, discussed and analyzed their writing, photography, and art, and reflected on the process of learning using the different modalities. In literacy research, think aloud protocols have been used with children to study students' thinking as they verbalize their thoughts as they complete a task (Young 2005). Think-aloud protocols can be used to focus on a single aspect of reading, for example a strategy such as identifying the main idea or the totality of the reading process (Hilden and Pressley 2007). In this study, retrospective think-aloud protocols were used that focused on a holistic view of how students were using the particular modality (photography, drama, writing, or drawing) and were triangulated with other data such as observations and student work. Using a PowerPoint presentation, artifacts that were created by the children during the projects, such as photographs, videos and writing, were viewed and students were prompted to talk about what they understood about the concept or project. As students read their stories or viewed videos of their skits, they were prompted to "tell me what you thought while you were creating this (i.e. photograph or skit)" and "explain how this helped you

Table 1 Literacy through photography projects

Project	Description	Product example
Self portraits: "Best Part of Me"	Students reflected on their physical abilities and photographed their "best parts"	Ella took a picture of herself at the hairdresser because she loves doing that with her mom. She's proud of how her hair looks like her mom's hair
African proverbs	Students created photographs of their understanding of African proverbs, which often feature a moral or life lesson	Two students selected "the early bird catches the worm" and wrote, acted, and photographed one of them waking up early and keeping his job while the other slept in and lost his job
Community photographs	Students captured an aspect of their community (outside of school) that was important to them	Rebecca took a picture of her family's house and how it represented different aspects of her family's life

understand the LTP project". These interviews were videotaped and transcribed for analysis.

The two case studies presented in this article were intentionally selected for different reasons. Ella was selected because she struggled with reading and writing; however, she was quite articulate about how photography supported her learning in this class. Rebecca, the second case, was profiled because she was considered "academically advanced" and her learning was guided by her social interactions with another classmate. Case studies, such as the ones presented in this article, provide the opportunity to develop a multi-dimensional understanding of a particular aspect of literacy learning (Dyson and Genishi 2005; Yin 2013). These two cases demonstrate how integrating photographs in the literacy curriculum can affect students that represent different levels of academic achievement and instructional needs.

Data Analysis

Analysis of data occurred in two different phases. The first phase involved using descriptive analysis of the LTP program, reading/language arts block, and classroom routines (Merriam 2014). Interviews with the teacher and students, student work, and field notes were used for creating a thick description of the classroom context.

The second phase of data analysis incorporated the involved identifying two students from the focus group of five students who would give us insight on different types of learning, with the intention of portraying possible

outcomes for different types of learners. During this phase, Angela collaborated with Reijo and Marita, who have studied students in multimodal classrooms. The selected cases included a students described by the teacher as academically successful and another student described as struggling. We felt that this diversity would provide a stronger picture of different types of learning in this classroom. After selecting the two cases, we began analysis by bracketing the two students' experiences across the projects, looking for how the integration of photography influenced their learning (Stake 1995). After identifying how photography was part of learning for the students, we used thematic analysis to consider how their experience illustrated their learning in the LTP curriculum. In order to analyze and identify emergent themes, we read through the data multiple times, engaging in ongoing reflection, review, and analysis of the data. Themes were developed and linked in order to build theory and consider relationships among observations (Creswell 2013). *NVivo* software was used as an aid in developing the codes and categories, linking similar themes and events, and extending ideas and analysis with research memos.

After considering codes for both cases, we considered both similarities and differences across the two cases (Yin 2013). The cross case analysis was helpful in understanding how the themes were similar and different for learners in this classroom. Collaborative analysis revealed three main themes: (1) Students' description and use of visual strategies; (2) Social interaction and the influences on learning and (3) Students' use of out-of-school interests

Table 2 Themes from data analysis

Themes	Ernestine	Rachel	Across cases
Visual strategies	"I was thinking about what was really in the picture and how could I describe it. Um even though my dad wasn't in there he was beside me and we were just standing there together while I was taking a picture of the pond" "I'm just closing my eyes to remember what the picture looked like…"	"… also I think that the picture is also related to writing because um when you have, you had to plan, you plan your story, and what you, and when you plan your story you get a whole bunch of what you're gonna have in it. And when you plan your picture, you get exactly what you want in it"	Thoughts about how photographs can help with adding information Metacognition about how photographs help communication
Social collaboration—photography projects	After working together and talking through how to create the photograph, Ernestine bent backwards like her head was in the sink and Dasia posted her hands like she was washing Ernestine's hair. Yaqueline followed E's description to frame the shot (AW's field notes)	Rachael has planned out a volleyball shot. She is going first, which means that she sets up the scene, has Kylek pose in her place and then she gives him guidance about what she sees through the camera lens. Then they trade places and Kylek will take the picture as she has described it	Because the children are working together, communication is central to how the photo is created and interpreted
Connections with experiences outside of school	"I was thinking about what was really in the picture and how could I describe it. Um even though my dad wasn't in there he was beside me and we were just standing there together while I was taking a picture of the pond"	"(If I could photograph anything), I would have my family. All my family—my grandmas and grandpas and uncles and cousins and 2nd cousins and 3rd cousins and so on"	Photography shows how their family is important to them

and experiences in LTP projects. Table 2 represents the themes and provides examples from each case as well as how the themes were similar or different across the cases.

The findings are presented through two case studies that illustrate how these themes were present in the learning of two students in this classroom.

Findings

These two cases demonstrate how two students incorporated photographs and built on literacy practices in their language arts classroom. With Ella, the first case, she was able to use photography to expand her methods of communication and understanding. The second case study of Rebecca illustrated how the visual mode of photography and collaborative nature of the projects helped her explain her ideas and enhance her story.

Ella's Case: My Picture Helps Me with My Story

Ella is a 9 year old African-American female who describes herself as a writer and told me that, "I like to write stories and poems because the poems basically are about me and my family and what I do and the regular stories are about what happens in my life and who's around me and where I live and stuff." Her favorite thing to photograph was her family and her most important photo would be of her mom and dad together. Ella enjoyed working with others during the LTP projects and was motivated to learn, but struggled with articulating her thoughts and writing out well-developed ideas during writers' workshop. Her teacher identified her as a student who "struggled with both reading and writing" and her scores on the end of grade assessment indicated that she was in the bottom quarter of her class.

The first LTP project that students worked on was entitled "The Best Part of Me." Using a book, also entitled "The Best Part of Me" (Ewald 2002), students were told to think of something they could do with a part of their body (i.e. "My hands are special because they paint beautiful pictures"). The first step involved students sketching their body and brainstorming stories and events about different body parts. During this time, students talked about their various hobbies, sports, and events related to their feet, hands, arms, etc. Ella started brainstorming with a sketch of herself where she pointed out things such as, "My smile looks like my moms [sic]," "I have short hair like my moms [sic]" and decided to write about going to the hairdresser with her mom.

After brainstorming, students selected which story they would depict in their photograph. Ella decided she would focus on a trip to the hairdresser with her mom. Mrs. Brown gave them instructions an on how to visualize their stories in the form of a photograph and then how to use the photograph. Their teacher provided instruction on how to use Polaroid cameras by telling the class that:

> … we're going to be using Polaroid pictures so your image will be square. So you need to decide what you're gonna put in your photograph. Then I ask you two questions, where will you take your picture? Because remember photographers think about what's in the background. So we will take these pictures at school, ok? And then if you need any props to bring from home. For example…Jaime…was talking about her legs how she likes them because she uses them to play soccer so she needed to bring in a soccer ball. And so she had her legs next to a soccer ball. So it may be something where you need to bring a prop, ok?

In order to plan for her photograph, Ella sketched out her ideas and wrote and discussed with a partner. She spent quite a bit of time thinking about how to recreate the scene of the hair salon collaboratively with two classmates.

An important aspect of any form of communication, including visual, written, or oral, is to understand how meaning is made using the tools or equipment that are associated with the particular modality (Kress 1997). Ella's planning involved locating where she would take her picture and how she would set up the shot. She decided that she would need a sink to represent her trip to the hairdressers with her mom. She and two classmates scouted out places in school and decided that the best place was in the girls' bathroom near their classroom. Ella revised her ideas after looking through the camera viewfinder and told me that, "…I had picked her [a friend] to be my mom, but my mom wasn't in there [the picture]. She worked better as the hairdresser. That's how I saw it in my mind." Her comment demonstrates her understanding of her own visual literacy. After critically viewing the shot and considering her own meaning, her friend became the hairdresser rather than her mother; therefore, her "…mom wasn't in there". She was happy with her decision and how her photograph looked.

The integration of visual elements, both sketching and photographing, were important aspects of Ella's meaning making and reflected her representation of community, family, and values (Rose 2008). Ella said that taking photographs helps her add details to their writing and explained that, "…my picture helps me and my story because it talks about in my story it talks about my hair and
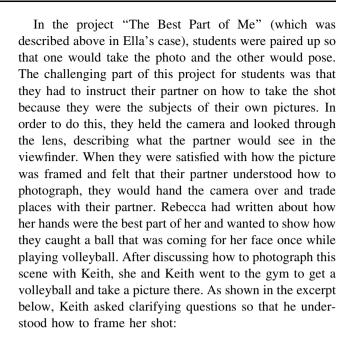
the hair dresser and my mom being there and she got her hair done."

Integrating visual artifacts supported her comprehension and communication in the classroom. Across projects and during various points in the school year, Ella expressed that photography helped her plan and develop her ideas. In one interview, where I asked her how she got ideas for a story, she told me that, "…I had to see it over again and in my mind…I could close my eyes and see what the image was like." She explained to me that when she takes a picture of something, it particularly helped her writing because "…I can add more details. After I looked at it and imagined it, I added more details [to my story]". As the school year progressed, Ella began to use visual images and incorporate the strategy of visualizing adding details to her work.

For Ella, photography was a visual language that provided her with distinct ways of thinking about her understanding. Moran and Tegano (2005) describe the particular language of photography as, "Just as speakers search for the right word, teachers who use photography as a language of inquiry search for the right angle or how closely the camera comes to the children or scene being photographed in order to convey a particular message…" (p. 1). Photography enhanced and extended her process of communicating meaning and ideas and the social nature of the classroom was an important aspect of her literacy learning. Ella expressed in many instances that "seeing pictures in her mind" helped her learn and convey ideas. Integrating the visual aspect of photography supported specific understanding of that skill but also supported her developing of more traditional language arts skills, particularly as she worked to add details and clarify her writing.

Rebecca's Case: Collaborating, Planning, and Understanding Through Photography

Rebecca was a 9-year-old Caucasian student. She was a very confident student who was labeled as "academically gifted" and often chose to work on her own in the classroom. She also attended the academically gifted pull-out program. Rebecca was quick to share ideas in any assignment or answer questions independently and when she was required to pair up, she often overshadowed her partner. However, in this project, it was clear that she benefitted from the social interaction with her partner Keith who helped her reflect on her project and refine her thinking. Keith was a smart and insightful African-American male student who was not in the gifted and talented program. He was quiet in the classroom and mostly befriended male classmates. The teacher assigned Rebecca and Keith as partners—he was someone she had not been particularly close to her prior to the project.

In the project "The Best Part of Me" (which was described above in Ella's case), students were paired up so that one would take the photo and the other would pose. The challenging part of this project for students was that they had to instruct their partner on how to take the shot because they were the subjects of their own pictures. In order to do this, they held the camera and looked through the lens, describing what the partner would see in the viewfinder. When they were satisfied with how the picture was framed and felt that their partner understood how to photograph, they would hand the camera over and trade places with their partner. Rebecca had written about how her hands were the best part of her and wanted to show how they caught a ball that was coming for her face once while playing volleyball. After discussing how to photograph this scene with Keith, she and Keith went to the gym to get a volleyball and take a picture there. As shown in the excerpt below, Keith asked clarifying questions so that he understood how to frame her shot:

> Keith: Do you want this (the ball) to come at my face? (He models how this would look by throwing the ball up and demonstrating how the ball could come to his face just before he catches it.)
> Rebecca: (When Keith gets into his pose). I like that. I can see the exit sign, the red mat in the back. A little bit of the basketball court, a little bit of the net in from the basketball court. And then I want you to be positioned like this (she takes the camera and gets down on her knees and looks up).
> Teacher: So you want him to be looking up, right?
> Rebecca: Yes. She wants us to do that (the teacher). (Keith takes the camera and stands at the angle she showed him, setting up the shot with her directions.)
> Keith: So, does this look right?
> Rebecca: Do you have me in the picture? Make sure you have a little bit of that, a little bit of that, and do you see the exit sign? (She's pointing to items in the gym).

The interaction between Rebecca and Keith was essential to shaping Rebecca's finished product; she had to explain how she saw the shot clearly enough for her classmate to replicate it. Rebecca was describing the angle and perspective he was to use in order to get the picture she imagined. Meanwhile, Keith's questions and assistance helped her clarify her ideas and even provided her with other ways of thinking about her picture. Specifically, when Keith asked her, "Do you want this (the ball) to come at my face?" he actually presents a new idea that helps her think about how to visually represent her story, prompting Rebecca to think about how her face could convey an important aspect of the story. Keith's questioning caused Rebecca to both clarify and extend her own ideas.

Rebecca was not satisfied with her first shot and decided to take another photo. Keith played a significant role in helping her with the revision of her project by asking questions and making suggestions that informed her planning. The conversation below happened as they discussed how she wanted to revise her picture:

Keith: I think you can just catch it like in front of your face like that, Rebecca! Rebecca, you can um like the ball is coming at you and you catch it but it hits your face like that.

Rebecca: that's what I tried to do I was like *gasp* [she acts out how she wanted to catch the ball at a certain place in front of her face for the photo] but I think I wasn't ready, it was like go, and I was like not ready.

When we discussed what she learned from this project and how she revised her photograph with Keith's help, she told me she learned as much from planning her photograph as she did in completing the final product.

In this project where the students had to communicate, photograph, and write, Rebecca's social interactions with her partner affected her understanding. Keith's questioning reflected critical thinking and showed Rebecca how important it was to use the photographs to communicate her story. Rebecca learned from both the social interaction and the multimodal representation that resulted from this project. In this way, representation was an important part of Rebecca's meaning making (Rose 2008).

Writing for an audience is one aspect of writers' workshop that adds to its authenticity, yet this project expands the social nature of literacy in significant ways. As Rebecca and Keith collaborated during both planning and producing their projects, two things occurred. First, they were aware of their audience through the entire process, not just as they shared their final product. Second, through the collaborative nature of the projects, they refined and extended their understanding as they worked together. Rebecca had to explain to Keith how she wanted to photograph to look and he asked clarifying questions so he could understand how to take the picture.

Across Case Analysis

Ella's and Rebecca's experiences in the LTP curriculum reflect important themes for both learner. First of all, having opportunities to integrate photographs resulted in meaning making and representation. With Ella, she used photographs to represent human experiences and represent her understanding. Rebecca was able to collaborate with another student as she communicated who provided questions that pushed her meaning forward. Second, social interactions were an important component of learning in this classroom and facilitated through taking pictures. Ella articulated that social interactions with peers were beneficial to her learning even before this particular photography project. Also, analysis revealed how Rebecca's peer collaboration was strengthened as she worked with photography in ways that were beneficial to her learning as well as her partner's.

Educational Implications

The findings of this study point to implications and future directions for both literacy research and classroom pedagogies. The interactions between students in this classroom involved using semiotic resources from various modes as they worked with partners to create their photographs (Mavers 2007; Ranker 2009). The process could be considered a design-team approach that required attention to the audience, purposes, and aesthetics of her multimodal work in a social context.

This collaborative approach runs counter to the idea of students sitting quietly, developing or writing their ideas in isolation or being grouped by "ability". Rather, it represents a shift to the agentive action of students, which is common in everyday and out-of-school settings in communication, when participants for example write wiki articles, remix videos and reshape photos. Kress (2010) calls this "disposition towards agency" (p. 144), that has deep effects on design process and pedagogy. In this study, we saw how students benefit from exploring and expanding various ways of knowing as they engage with different modalities. This is the case for learners that are considered "struggling" as well as "advanced" and we wonder if the labels might become irrelevant when children have more options for learning in the classroom.

Further work should be done to understand effective pedagogical strategies for exposing students to various modalities in order for students to develop their own ways of integrating knowledge (Stein 2008). Using photography instruction as a way to "read," incorporating technical instruction on how cameras work, and showing students how perspective and angles affected the meaning of a photograph were significant aspects of this instruction. Applied to the visual mode of photography, students had the opportunity to develop their use of visual representation as they used photographs in the curriculum.

Finally, as literacy researchers, it is important to consider how we might theorize the importance of visual literacy in the digital age and how research can provide answers as schools and classrooms are increasingly abandoning curricula that encourages diverse and creative ways of knowing in lieu of teaching practices that focus on repetitious and standardized learning (Siegel 2006). Cultivating the interrelatedness of literacy practices often results

in deeper and more complex understanding (Bezemer and Kress 2008); yet teachers often feel that such teaching is not encouraged with assessment standards. As we consider the complex nature of literacy and language, we should strive for understanding expansive and inclusive ways of learning that embrace the diverse perspectives found in our twenty-first century classrooms.

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