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Viewing as a Cultural Tool in the Construction of Meaning with Expository Texts for Young Bilinguals

Lindsey Moses, lindseymoses1@gmail.com
Arizona State University, Arizona, USA

Abstract

This article provides a deeper understanding of how young bilinguals constructed meaning with expository texts in an inquiry-based setting over an academic year. An examination of classroom transcripts and analysis revealed how Viewing became the most frequently used literacy practice and a cultural tool in the construction of meaning with expository texts for first-grade bilinguals. This study builds on research surrounding the academic development of bilingual students, reading comprehension strategies, multimodal viewing, and sociocultural perspectives on learning. Using an ethnographic perspective and discourse analysis, this research provides insight into how first-grade bilinguals mastered and appropriated the inclusive literacy practice of Viewing to construct meaning with expository texts.

Key words: viewing, expository texts, ELLs, cultural tools, comprehension

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The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of how young bilinguals constructed meaning with expository texts in an inquiry-based setting over an academic year. I examined how the literacy practice of *Viewing* (National Council of Teachers of English, 2008) became the most frequently used literacy practice and a cultural tool in the construction of meaning for the first-grade bilinguals (Spanish and English-speaking students). *Viewing*, for the purposes of this study, is when students used what they were viewing (print-based text excluded) to assist in the construction of meaning. Construction of meaning related to a range of topics from understanding classroom expectations and practices to using photographs to build knowledge about a habitat or animal The teacher and students emphasized the *Viewing* literacy practices as a means to acquire information when interacting with expository texts. Students viewed photographs and illustrations and discussed images as a valid source of information that often held greater weight than the print that accompanied the image.

The grade level was of particular importance because many first graders were newly learning to decode. Throughout the year, I sought to understand how they mastered and appropriated (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987) the literacy practice of *Viewing* to construct meaning with expository texts. The following research question guided this study: How do young bilinguals in a first-grade, inquiry-based classroom use v*iewing* as a cultural tool to assist in the construction of meaning with expository texts?

Literature Review

As the current educational demographics become more diversified, there are a growing number of students who speak multiple languages and may be learning English as their second or third language. As reported in current census statistics, the Latino population grew by 46.3% over the last decade (Passell & Cohn, 2011). The growing population of bilingual students often struggles with reading comprehension tasks (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2011). Researchers have documented that many young linguistically diverse learners demonstrate low comprehension skills because of limited background knowledge and underdeveloped vocabulary in their second language, English (Hulme, Muter, Snowling, & Stevenson, 2004; National Research Council, 1997). Because of this documented "achievement gap," researchers have examined different types of instruction and their effectiveness for linguistically diverse learners.

The literacy practice of *Viewing* provides inclusive opportunities for bilinguals to participate in meaning construction because it utilizes comprehensible input (strategies that make content and presentation more understandable, such as gestures, supporting visuals, slowed speech, etc.). Krashen (2003) reported the superiority of comprehensible-input based methods and sheltered subject matter teaching. In addition, Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, and Christian (2005) conducted a meta-analysis that identified many different components that create successful instruction for linguistically diverse learners. The continua of bilingualism and biliteracy has been explained as providing an understanding of the continuity of experiences, practices and knowledge as students are acquiring more than one language. This understanding assists educators in making informed instructional choices (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). Yet, according to the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth, the instructional approaches found in many classrooms across the country need some adjustments to meet the needs of English learners (August & Shanahan, 2006).

Instructional Strategies

Researchers have conducted many studies on reading comprehension with an emphasis on the amount and effectiveness of comprehension strategy instruction (Dewitz, Jones, & Leahy, 2011; Durkin, 1978-79; Gambrell, Block, & Pressley, 2002). Research has revealed proficient readers are able to: preview and predict; use background knowledge; ask and answer questions; visualize; monitor and use fix up strategies to clarify misunderstandings; make inferences; and summarize (Shanahan, Callison, Carriere, Duke, Pearson, Schatschneider, & Torgesen, 2010). In addition to the aforementioned strategies, students need skills to assist in organizing important information to learn from text (Simmons, Fuchs, Fuchs, Mathes & Hodge, 2009) and to write in response to text (e.g, Duke & Pearson, 2002; Guthrie, McRae, Coddington, Klauda, Wigfield, & Barbosa, 2009; Purcell-Gates, Duke, Martineau, 2007).

While cognitive strategy instruction research has been prevalent, educators must move beyond this and "reconceptualize the reader as *reader-viewer* attending to the visual images, structures and designs of multi-modal texts along with printed text" (Serafini, 2012, p. 152). As society's literacy demands increase and readers are required to be more sophisticated in their construction of meaning when they navigate the structures of multimodal texts, educators must consider how they are integrating higher-level thinking skills and strategies for constructing meaning. As Anstey and Bull (2006) note, even in the earliest grades "literacy and literate practices encompass a greater range of knowledge, skills, processes, and behaviors…and these practices will continue to change" (p. 17). Therefore, educators' understanding of effective literacy pedagogy must expand with the constantly changing forms of literacy and literate practices. The emphasis on visual literacy skills (e.g. Elkins, 2007; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Serafini, 2013) is particularly relevant to examining how young bilinguals are engaging with expository texts in an inquiry setting before they are able to decode. Researchers have documented the significant cognitive and social benefits that arise from the engaging, interactive and meaningful learning found in inquiry-based classrooms (Guccione, 2011; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997, 1998). The body of research on constructing meaning with text and effective instruction for linguistically diverse learners is growing; however, there remains a need for interdisciplinary research that examines aspects of learning beyond the text-based instructional methodologies, specific cognitive strategies, and curricular choices for young linguistically diverse learners.

Sociocultural Considerations

Beyond pedagogical approaches and comprehension strategies, research on the sociocultural aspects of the classroom plays a crucial role in understanding reading when the definition of reading shifts from a model of simply decoding printed text (Gough, 1972) to a model of constructing meaning in sociocultural contexts (Gee, 1996). I examined the transformation of students' developmental processes over an entire year using a Vygotskian developmental approach (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987; Wertsch, 1985). This approach was necessary to understand learning and development in regards to the social nature of the activity in context. Vygotsky's approach delineated how cultural tools become resources for individuals to participate in mediated action, and Wertsch (1998) argued that there is an irreducible tension between individuals and the cultural tools, or mediational means, that they use to accomplish their goals. In any given academic setting, bilinguals draw on their "funds of knowledge" (Gonzalez, Moll,

& Amanti, 2005) and "real world" experiences in order to participate in mediated action in-school and out-of-school contexts.

Drawing on the work of various sociocultural theorists, I examined the impact of the classroom community of practice. Lave and Wenger (1991) found that identity forms within the context of the community of practice. The formation of identity, they believed, comes from learning how to adapt and adhere to a specific set of social practices within a given community. For students, this means that their identity changes as they learn and develop a sense of themselves within the system of social practices and relations found in their classroom. However, students do not gain full membership instantaneously, nor does membership remain stagnant. As participants move from peripheral to full participation, their learning changes and is situated in negotiation and renegotiation of meaning (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Sociocultural theorists and researchers have asserted that dialogue that arises from cooperative inquiry is the most effective means of knowledge construction (Beach and Myers, 2001; Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez & Tejada, 1999). However, this research has lacked long-term study focused on an explanation of the integrated nature found between the community of practice, literacy practices (including practices extending beyond print-based text), and construction of meaning for young linguistically diverse students over an academic year.

Tools of Analysis

In order to understand how the young linguistically diverse students constructed meaning with expository texts within the situated context, I examined the take up, mastery and appropriation (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987) of the *Viewing* literacy practice as a cultural tool. For the purposes of this study, mastery included the independent use of the literacy practice beyond the context of the modeling and guided practice; it was the ability to use the *Viewing* literacy practice independently without prompting and for purposes of student's own meaning making. I was able to identify the appropriation of the *Viewing* literacy practice when a student modified the original tool/literacy practice to make it his/her own in order to enhance his/her construction of new knowledge.

The intertextual links to the independent use of the most frequently used literacy practice (*Viewing*) can be traced back to Brian's (the classroom teacher) introduction, modeling and guided practice. Brian utilized an inquiry-based approach to instruction with a strong emphasis on facilitating meaningful literary interactions related to students' curiosities. He viewed literacy practices as a tool to construct meaning, not as a decontextualized skill that students must master. Understanding the introduction to a cultural tool is important in order to understand the mediated action. Mediated action (how people use cultural tools when engaging in various actions scaffolded by social interactions) must be considered within the context of the specific community of practice. In the inquiry classroom community of practice, students used the *Viewing* literacy practice as part of the patterned ways of constructing meaning with expository text.

Methods

I investigated the research question using a weighted qualitative approach (Creswell, 2002). This approach privileges or "weights" either the qualitative or the quantitative data that is collected and evaluated. For this study, I gave the qualitative data greater weight, whereas I used the descriptive statistics for identification and frequency counts. I used quantitative data to identify case studies according to English proficiency levels as well as to conduct frequency counts of the use of the *Viewing* literacy practice. The weighted methodology consisted of an ethnographic approach to explore how young bilinguals in a first-grade, inquiry-based classroom used *viewing* as a cultural tool to assist in the construction of meaning with expository texts. By collecting qualitative data once a week as a participant observer for an academic year, I was able to provide thick rich description to explore the research question.

Data Sources

I used video and audio recordings to capture data once a week during the Language Arts period for an entire academic year. In addition to the recordings, I interviewed the teacher and all of the students in the class at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year regarding their perceptions on language and literacy learning, the classroom community of practice, and inquiry setting. I took and catalogued still photography weekly, kept detailed field notes and researcher journals, and collected student artifacts and assessment data.

Setting

The inquiry-based instruction site was located in the western United States. I was a participant observer, and the students and parents knew I would be in the classroom for the academic school year when they provided consent and assent to participate in the study. The classroom teacher and I decided it would be best that I act as any other adult in the classroom would by talking to and reading with students when appropriate.

Seventy five percent of the school's population was learning English as a second language. Ninety percent of the students qualified for federally subsidized lunches. All students who participated in literacy instruction in the designated first-grade classroom were the student participants. All participants were included in this study in order to gain an understanding of the development of the classroom community of practice. However, I purposefully selected three first-grade, linguistically diverse students with the widest range of English language proficiency scores on the state English Language Assessment in an inquiry-based public classroom to be the three case studies. I used pseudonyms for all study participants.

Data Analysis

I provided the first layer of video analysis each week by watching the recordings and creating video running record summaries that documented events and timed location of events approximately every 30 seconds to one minute. I used open coding to document and discover meaning during the creation of the video running records. Once the video running records and open coding were complete, I began axial coding (Strauss, 1987) that included relating codes to

each other utilizing inductive and deductive reasoning. I created a separate code for data related to multiple aspects of examining how young bilinguals constructed meaning with expository texts. I used the broad codes of Literacy Practices, Constructing Meaning, and Community of Practice.

The broad code of Literacy Practices included the following language arts subcategories: Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Viewing, and Visually Representing. When the specific uses of Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Viewing, or Visually Representing as a part of a literacy event were visible, I coded the data as a literacy practice. I then created an event map of the academic year. The event map included rich moments that contained intertextual and intercontextual links (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, Shuart-Faris, 2005; Kristeva, 1980). I categorized these events language arts subcategories for each day of research, and briefly described the data documentation location (e.g. field notes, video with file name and time, audio with file name and time).

The next layer of axial coding for literacy practices included specific identification of observed reoccurring practices. I coded for reoccurring practices that teachers introduced, practiced with teacher guidance, modeled by peers, and were eventually independently taken up and used by students. After conducting a frequency count to find the most commonly observed literacy practice used to construct meaning with expository text (*Viewing*), I used discourse analysis to examine the individual case study's use and appropriation of the literacy practice. I used forward and backward mapping using the event maps to identify intertextual and intercontextual links across time. I analyzed how students used and appropriated the *Viewing* literacy practice to construct meaning with expository texts.

By using the following four strategies suggested by Merriam (1998), I was able to enhance the internal validity of the study: (a) I had multiple sources of data and methods; (b) I took data and tentative interpretations back to the teacher for member checks to ask if the results were reasonable; (c) I conducted long-term observations (1 academic year); and (d) I used peer examination to critique the findings as they emerged.

Results

I observed eleven accepted literacy practices utilized to construct meaning with expository text (see Table 1). *Viewing* was the most common literacy practice and was observed and coded in the video running records 233 times. The *Viewing* literacy practice immediately became an accepted literacy practice when Brian introduced it. Students viewed and discussed photographs in expository texts while Brian was welcoming new students and parents during the first moments of the first day of school. The *Viewing* literacy practice became part of the daily Book Club and all research presentations. *Viewing* settled debates and encouraged future research. I examined how students used the *Viewing* literacy practice to assist in the construction of meaning with expository texts for the three different case studies. I did this by examining rich moments with intertextual and intercontextual links to examine the case studies' independent use and appropriation of the *Viewing* literacy practice. First, I report the results of the analysis by describing the introduction and guided practice of *Viewing* as a literacy practice. Then, I report the findings, including discourse analysis, of each of the three case studies' independent use of

the literacy practice. The final findings section reports the appropriation of the *Viewing* literacy practice for each case study.

Table 1

Literacy Practices	Frequency Count
Viewing	233
Learned	202
Interactive Components	202
Schema	193
Connections	136
Questions	113
Art Strategies	108
Decoding	79
Text Features	66
Code-switching	37
Sources	27

Viewing with Guided Practice

I first observed guided practice of the *Viewing* literacy practice to aid in the construction of meaning with expository texts during the second week of school. The students gathered around a large board that Brian had filled with color photocopies of a desert nonfiction text. He had not planned to address the text until later, but the students were pointing to the pictures and talking about what they knew, questions they had, and pictures that confused them, so he listened to their conversations and began a lesson.

Brian modeled his thinking and wondering about one of the photographs. He used a Post-It to write down an "I Wonder" statement about the desert photograph before reading the small caption. Brian verbally shared what he learned from viewing the photograph and reading the caption, and he wrote this down on a Post-It using the language frame "I Learned." He then invited all of the students to share their "I Wonder" and "I Learned" statements that arose from viewing all of the photographs. Brian scribed every student's statements on a Post-It and pasted it on the board. All three case study participants verbally shared a statement in response to viewing the photograph.

Independent Use of *Viewing*

The independent use of *viewing* played an important role in meaning construction with expository texts. In the following sections, I present the findings for each case study's independent use of the *Viewing* literacy practice.

Ivette's independent use of *Viewing*. Ivette was approximately five years and eleven months old when she entered the first grade. She attended kindergarten at the research site. Her English proficiency was not high enough to register a score on her entry English language assessment, so

her score was a zero in all areas assessed, proficiency level 1 (Non English Proficient, NEP). I selected Ivette to be the case study participant that was representative of the least English proficient student in the class, according to the state English language assessment. While Ivette's language proficiency scores categorized her as NEP, she participated in most all classroom routines and particularly enjoyed sharing during Book Club.

Book Club took place immediately after the students entered the classroom. It was their "homework" to read self-selected books and be prepared to share their favorite part or something interesting from what they read the previous night. The student presenting would often have the classmates view photographs from the text as they discussed their favorite part. Transcription 1 illustrates Ivette using the *Viewing* literacy practice to construct meaning with expository texts. She shared her knowledge about puppies and referred to the photographs during her presentation despite being unable to read the text. Students were all sitting in a circle with books in front of them for Book Club when Transcription 1 begins.

Transcription 1: Ivette's Book Club Sharing

Key: [ ] indicates overlapping speech, / indicates pause in speech, ( ) indicates non-verbal information. Explanation of researcher analysis is indicated after the transcription with an asterisk.

Ivette:	This is my- (Ivette looks at a picture in the book she is holding) um-
	* *Viewing* photographs to identify her favorite part of the nonfiction text
Ivette:	This is my favorite part (Ivette turns the book to show the photographs to the rest of the students) because the girl is putting her finger inside the dog's mouth. (Ivette points to the photograph while students look on)
	*Describing the photograph to explain why it was her favorite part.
Ivette:	Like- like- like- the little dogs have like- they're small- they can't have teeth. (Ivette points to her teeth)
Juan:	But little teeth? (Juan points to his teeth)
Ivette:	Yeah/ just like little small ones. (Ivette points to her teeth)
Emilio:	Are they blind?
Ivette:	Yeah. (Ivette moves the book so she can see the photograph in the book) They can't open their eyes yet.
	*Views photograph to respond to and support her response to questions
Juan:	No they're not [blind.]
Amy:	[Yeah.]
Adrian:	But they just can't see because they're [just (Adrian moves his hands up to his eyes)]
Leo:	[They're eyes] are stuck shut- and they- and [they (Leo puts his hands over his eyes)]
Ivette:	[When they] grow up they can open their eyes.
	* This information is represented in a photograph in the book which she later references

While Ivette requested Brian read the text, she remained the presenter and expert on puppies. In this brief literacy event, Ivette independently drew on the *Viewing* Literacy Practice to support her knowledge and understanding when she could not read the text. She felt comfortable enough to volunteer to present and respond to questions and comments by referencing photographs she had previously viewed. As support and clarification for her presentation, she had other students view the photographs to enhance their understanding and construction of meaning about the expository text on puppies.

Juan's independent use of *Viewing*. Juan was approximately six years and seven months old when he entered the first grade. Like Ivette, he also attended kindergarten at the research site. Juan's overall English Language Proficiency Level was categorized as NEP. However, examining the scale score summary broken down into categories provided a more detailed picture of his English proficiency. Juan scored in the Beginning category in the following areas: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Comprehension. He scored in the Early Intermediate category in the following areas: Speaking and Oral. I think it is important to note that his writing score was the lowest possible score, so it significantly brought his overall average down. I selected Juan to be the case study participant that was representative of the median English proficient student in the class, according to the state English language assessment.

Juan independently used the *Viewing* literacy practice on a regular basis when constructing meaning with expository texts. In Transcription 2, he used what he viewed on two occasions to support his argument that toucans could fly. During this literacy event, students were researching the rainforest when a student disagreement arose about whether or not a toucan could fly. The teacher called the class together to discuss their thinking. I provide information about how students use the *Viewing* literacy practice to settle a debate and support new knowledge construction in Transcription 2.

Transcription 2: Viewing Settles Toucan Debate

Alexis: (Alexis holds up 3 sheets of white paper that have been glued together so that the rest of the students sitting in a circle can see it. There is a large illustration of a toucan along with writing. The writing includes questions about the rainforest and toucans as well as "I think" statements) I did my research on toucans//
*Students are *Viewing* Alexis' toucan illustration

Brian: Okay, Alexis, just wait. Do a quick scan/ (Brian points around the circle at the students) just make sure that everyone is looking at you.
* Expectation that students need to *view* the presenter

Alexis: (Alexis scans with eyes around the group until everyone is looking at her. Adrian is not looking at her)// Adrian. (scolding tone) I was learning about toucans. I learned the toucan lives in the canopy. // I wonder if the toucan can fly./ I don't think// the-they can fly because I have a lot of different reasons. / They have a big beak. I don't think they can carry it// (Alexis turns the poster around so that the students in the circle can see it)
* *Viewing* large beak supports claim that they cannot fly
*Students *view* the large beak on her poster after she has explained her beak/flying logic

Eli: *(quietly mumbles)* They can fly.
* Refuting *Viewing* logic established by Alexis

Brian: Do you want to take questions and comments?

Alexis: Questions, comments or connections? (Other students go around and share their ideas on whether or not they can fly. Juan starts talking before she makes eye contact with him)

Juan: I saw a channel from birds/ and saw that birds can fly.
* *Viewing* television to construct knowledge about toucans flying
* His *Viewing* overrides her suggested Viewing logic

Alexis: (Alexis furrows her brow and rolls her eyes) They don't live in China.

Juan: I didn't say China. I was saw it on TV.
*Repeating his *Viewing*
(Brian reminds students that everyone can share their thoughts)

Alexis: Thank you, Juan. Who else would like to share their thoughts? (Students share and she thanks them after)

Ed: I think it can fly.

Alexis: Well, what about the big beak that they have?// It's really, really, really big. (Alexis holds a large Time magazine with a toucan on the cover) It's a really big beak and / it's like- /almost like half of its body is its beak.
*Providing evidence that can be *viewed* to support claims
*Visually representing while students *view* the size of the beak to support her *Viewing* logic.
(Brian explains that we went online to a specific website to find out about this very topic. He hands the sheet of paper with information and a photo of a flying toucan to Adrian. Adrian shows it to the class)

Alexis: (Alexis is smiling- doesn't yet realize this photo and information is proving her wrong) Toucan!

Juan: (Juan is leaning in to look at the picture closer) They can fly! (Alexis stops smiling and looks at the picture)
* Photograph overrules all debate as students accept that toucan can fly

Adrian: (Adrian says to Alexis while showing the picture to her*)* I told ya'.

Alexis: (Alexis shoves Adrian) Meanie!
(The students talk about it being able to fly and that they need to find more information. Adrian passes the sheet around, and Alexis refuses to look at it and just passes it on to the next student. She then wipes tears away from her eyes)

Alexis originally used *viewing* to try to refute the idea that toucans could fly. She showed the students a photograph of toucans and the ratio of their beaks to their body and claimed that it would be too heavy to fly. Juan first supported his claim that toucans could fly by referencing that he had seen them flying on a television show. The teacher prompted him to tell what he thought rather than what he saw, but he constructed knowledge about toucans from *viewing* that influenced his beliefs. Finally, before Brian read any information about whether or not toucans could fly, Juan exclaimed, "They can fly!" after viewing a photograph of a toucan flying. Juan's independent use of the *Viewing* literacy practice influenced his initial stance in the discussion; he used it to settle the debate and confirm what he had previously viewed and taken as fact.

Emilio's independent use of *Viewing*. Emilio was approximately six years and ten months old when he entered first grade. Like the other two case study participants, he also attended kindergarten at the research site. Emilio's performance on the English Language Assessment indicated his level of proficiency should be categorized as NEP. However, examining the scale score summary broken down into categories provided a more detailed picture of his English proficiency. Emilio scored in the Beginning category in only one area, Writing. He scored in the Early Intermediate in the following areas: Listening, Reading, and Comprehension. He scored in the Intermediate category in both Speaking and Oral. As with Juan's results, I think it is important to note that Emilio's writing score was the lowest possible score, so it significantly brought his overall average down to the proficiency level 1 (Beginning- NEP). However, if the outlier writing score were eliminated, he would have been on the higher end of proficiency level 2 (Early Intermediate). I selected Emilio to be the case study participant that was representative of the most English proficient student in the class, according to the state English language assessment.

Emilio used the *Viewing* literacy practice as a way to facilitate the acquisition of new questions and new knowledge. Emilio often wrote his "I Learned" and "I Wonder" statements after viewing a photograph. In addition to creating written artifacts in response to *viewing* part of an expository text, Emilio also used *viewing* in more social settings and discussions with peers. For example, during free-reading time, Emilio, Adrian, Ivette, and Adriana had gathered in the back of the classroom with their book tubs. As documented in Transcription 3, Emilio used photographs in the expository text he had previously viewed to construct knowledge and share it with the other students. Then, he referenced a photograph that was his favorite part of the book and flipped through the book to find that page and show it to the others.

Transcription 3: Free-Reading *Viewing* Discussion

Adrian:	This is an alligator. **Viewing* to label
Emilio:	It could- it could (Emilio points to photograph in book) open its mouth like this like more wider (He motions his arms to try to demonstrate opening a mouth wide) than a snake- but it could still// but they could still/ do stuff. * *Viewing* photograph to construct knowledge about animal * Creating a physical representation for others to View to clarify concept
Adrian:	Yeah I've seen 'em on tv. (Emilio moves Adrian's hand because it was covering the photograph in the book)
Emilio:	Here. And then here's my favorite part. (Emilio flips through the book *Viewing* different photographs of reptiles). (Emilio stops on a page) Wait wait wait! I've seen a real one of these (He points to the picture on the page) that my dad [said * *Viewing* photographs to identify and reference previous reading and favorite part * *Viewing* photograph to make connection to "real life" *Viewing*
Adrian:	[Hey] it's my book!
Emilio:	Wait I want to show you something. I have seen this one in real life// for real. (Emilio points to the photograph again). See you could break his bones really

easily. (Emilio points to the photograph) See right there. It could break easy like that. See that part that's blue? It could break. (He points to the photograph)
* *Viewing* photograph to make connection to "real life" *viewing*
* *Viewing* photograph to support knowledge about the reptile and explain to others

Adrian: (Adrian looks at the photograph and then points at it while speaking) I know and then it can grow back.
* *Viewing* photograph to confirm Emilio's claims

Adrian and Emilio held the book together, and although Adrian claimed the book was his, Emilio had obviously viewed the book before because he referenced various photographs throughout the text. Emilio viewed the photograph of the alligator, and then used his body to gesture and provide a physical visual of how wide an alligator opens its mouth for the other students. Next, he searched through the text to find a photograph that he previously viewed of a reptile he claimed to have seen in "real life." He referenced the different body parts in the photograph and explained how its bones could break. After viewing the photograph and hearing Emilio's corresponding explanation, Adrian agreed. Emilio used his previous *viewing* to construct knowledge about the reptiles in this book, and then he used that knowledge to reference and discuss photographs in the text with his peers.

Appropriation of *Viewing*

Students initially used the *Viewing* literacy practice in the form modeled by the teacher. However, as students became more proficient with their independent use, they altered the original form to meet their needs. In the following sections, I present the findings for each case study participant's appropriation of the *Viewing* literacy practice.

Ivette's appropriation of *Viewing*. I asked Ivette if I could ask her some questions about her research and things they had been researching as a class. I was always behind the camera or sitting next to the tripod viewing the students, but she said she wanted to look through the camera. I agreed. Transcription 4 is a transcript of Ivette talking to me while viewing the classroom, her research, and a book through the lens of my video camera. During this specific literacy event, Ivette used the *Viewing* literacy practice to facilitate her reflection about her experiences and knowledge. Additionally, during her time looking through the video recorder, she referenced how she used *viewing* to help her construct meaning about deforestation.

Transcription 4: Ivette Using Video Camera

Lindsey: What are you writing about here? (In the camera view we are looking at her research poster)

Ivette: If they cut down the rainforest- um- they-um that will be like a desert and- um. I made a road- and um- that means like- um- if they don't- um- if they don't cut down the trees it will not be like a desert.
* *Viewing* her research poster to assist in her explanation

Lindsey: Ohh. So why do you think people are cutting down the trees?

Ivette: To make houses and plates and food//and beds and pillows. And from the birds some blankets and pillows. And they do something like cups plates and even food from the animals. If they find a jaguar- jaguars can scratch them or they kill the jaguar and if they kill all the animals and kill all the trees and everything// that will be all- all- like the desert.
* Referencing a photograph that is later found in one of her sources

Lindsey: Wow. So where did you find all this information?

Ivette: In a book- like this kind of book. (Ivette begins walking away and camera follows. Ivette is now in front of the camera and holds up a book titled Rainforest Destruction) Like this kinda book.

Lindsey: So that is one of your sources?

Ivette: Uh huh (Indicating yes. Ivette walks back over to the research poster with the book) and I wanna show you the pages. Look it. (Ivette opens the book and begins flipping through it) This one is gonna be a lake. (Ivette is flipping through and looking at the photographs) This one. That one is- (Ivette is flipping through and looking at the photographs) that one is- (She is flipping through and looking at the photographs) that one the- right over here they're trying to get a bird down and some flowers and some medicine for their eyes and their chests and their bodies and their stomach (She stops on a page that has a picture of a labeled human body and picture of birds and medicine). And some food right there- (She flips to a page with food and then continued flipping pages) and look it right there (She points to picture showing deforestation time sequence) they burned the rainforest.
* *Viewing* nonfiction texts with photographs to construct meaning and provide support for her research
* Turned to the photograph that was referenced previously about birds and food

Lindsey: Who. Why are they burning the rainforest?

Ivette: To make some houses and stuff. (Ivette points to the pictures to show where they burned forest to clear land for houses and to grow crops)
* *Viewing* nonfiction texts with photographs to construct meaning and provide support for her research

As seen in Transcription 4, Ivette was not only using the *Viewing* literacy practice independently to construct meaning, she also made this literacy practice her own and altered it for a more sophisticated use to meet her research needs. She did not just respond with the "I See" language frame used during guided practice. Ivette's research poster included questions, factual information, visual representations, sources, and connections about rainforest deforestation. Ivette could not decode the text, but with the support of conferencing with Brian, she used the *Viewing* literacy practice to facilitate her construction of meaning about rainforest deforestation. She documented her construction of meaning through her research poster artifact where she displayed what she learned by viewing and discussing photographs in expository texts. Ivette again referenced the *Viewing* literacy practice when she viewed and asked me to view photographs from expository texts while she discussed her research poster and deforestation with me.

Juan's appropriation of *Viewing*. For Juan, the *Viewing* literacy practice took on a variety of forms beyond "I See" or even beyond being a source of information for what he learned. Juan

asked me to sit down and help him read a book about echidnas. I provided a great deal of support with decoding the difficult text and vocabulary, while he often referred to the photographs to discuss and make sense of the text. In Transcription 5, Juan read the title, but then referenced the pictures to construct meaning. He then made a connection between the photograph and my hand, thus demonstrating his understanding about how big baby echidnas are and that he was constructing meaning by using *viewing* with expository text.

Transcription 5: Echidnas *Viewing* and Connections

Juan:	How / big / are echidnas? (Juan reads word by word the title of this section of the book. He looks at me) Echidnas!
Lindsey:	Echidnas. How big are they?
Juan:	This big (He points to a photograph of a football on the next page). Look! It's this big. (He points to the photograph on the title page that is a baby echidna sitting in the palm of a hand) Like their babies are like this. (He points to the picture of the baby echidna in the hand) They are cute. Right? * Referencing photograph, not printed text to construct knowledge about their size
Lindsey:	They are cute.
Juan:	It's this big- it's big like your hand! *Connecting his *viewing* of the photograph to his *viewing* of my adult hand
Lindsey:	It is- yeah that's what it says right here. Young echidnas can fit in your
Juan:	(He reads from the book) Hand.

After Juan and I read the text about echidnas, I left to go check on other students. Adriana, another Spanish-speaking student, came over to Juan, and as shown in Transcription 6, began telling her about what he learned about echidnas using photographs as reference points to speak in Spanish. Juan created a more sophisticated way to use the *Viewing* literacy practice. While he had previously used the *Viewing* literacy practice to make connections and understand the expository text, as seen in Transcription 5, he now used the photographs to remind him of what we discussed in English in order to show it to Adriana and to translate his new knowledge into Spanish. This appropriation of the cultural tool of *viewing* demonstrated his authentic and complex use of the original literacy practice.

Transcription 6: *Viewing* for Translating New Knowledge

Juan:	Aquí está la bebé. Mira. Le dijo en inglés o en español? {Here is the baby. Look. Should I tell you in English or in Spanish?} * Referencing photograph to translate into Spanish
Adriana:	Español {Spanish}
Juan:	Okay. You see this baby? (Juan points to the photograph in the book). * Referencing photograph and speaking in English Aquí está. {Here it is} Here's the mom. Se va a meter con la, la bebé. {She's going to get in with the baby.} * Referencing photograph to translate what was previously discussed in English with Lindsey into Spanish for Adriana

> La predator/ So like/ Va a comer la mamá. {It's like the predator is going to eat the mother.} So la mamá le hace como una bola. (Juan points to the photograph in the book and gestures that something is hiding under him.) Es una bola como una pelota para que le parece sola. {So the mother makes herself look like a ball. She is a round thing like a ball so it seems like she is alone.}
> También mira esta. (Juan points to the picture.) Le va a comer. Okay? Pero no puede porque le parece así. {Also, look at this. It is going to eat him. Okay? But it can't because it looks like this.}
> * Referencing photographs to translate what was previously discussed in English with Lindsey into Spanish for Adriana
> Mira este {Look at this.} (Juan points to another photograph on a different page of a hand holding an egg the size of a quarter) Este es un huevo como una cota {This is an egg that is like a quarter.} Mira este. Este es el grande (Juan points to the photograph) y este es la mano de ella// {Look at this. This is the big one and this is her hand}
> * Connecting *viewing* photograph to *viewing* my adult hand and translating into Spanish
> Your hand is in the book! (Both look at me and point at my hand)

Emilio's appropriation of *Viewing*. Emilio, Adrian, and Adriana altered the original literacy practice of *Viewing* to make it their own when learning about snakes. Adrian and Emilio took out an expository text about snakes. Adrian said, "Let's watch it. Let's watch the movie." He then opened the book and held it up high as though they were *viewing* a movie. Emilio told him to put it down so they could see the movie. Then, they flipped through the book page by page *viewing* the book as if it were a movie. They did not attempt to read any of the text, but instead took turns creating a running commentary on the visuals. On the first page, Emilio said, "He's slithering crazy!" referring to the picture of the snake slithering in the sand.

A few moments later when Brian (the teacher) asked how they were doing, the students looked surprised and almost as if they were just caught doing something they should not have been doing. Brian did not set guidelines for what they were supposed to be doing and did not use a tone that indicated disapproval. However, they stopped pretending like they were watching a movie, and Emilio said, "We even saw this page in Adrian's book where a snake was eating a pig!" Adrian took out the previous book they were looking at and showed Brian the picture. In this example, it seemed as if the students created a new version of the *Viewing* literacy practice that they did not think would be accepted by the teacher, although there was no indication of this from Brian. They used their alteration of the *Viewing* literacy practice to create a multimodal "movie" with running narration of what they were *viewing* in the expository text. However, I can assume they felt their appropriation of this literacy practice was only appropriate with peers and teachers would not accept it.

Discussion

The *Viewing* literacy practice was inclusive because students were able to take up and use *viewing* to assist in the construction of meaning regardless of their English proficiency level or decoding abilities. Choice was prevalent. The teacher introduced and used this literacy practice

not because students' were required to demonstrate that they could use the skill, but instead, because the teacher gave the students a choice in using the various literacy practices for purposes that best suited their needs. This first-grade inquiry classroom had a large impact on how these young bilinguals constructed and shared meaning as they were simultaneously developing their receptive and expressive English skills. Emerging speakers of English and emerging decoders of text were able to construct meaning and participate in mediated action where they all developed identities as experts, presenters and learners by using inclusive literacy practices like *Viewing*.

The findings related to how aspects of the community of practice influenced Ivette's use of literacy practices and construction of meaning with expository texts were revealing. Because of the accepted community practices and inclusive literacy practices, she was able to position herself as an expert and competent member of the classroom community of practice despite being a beginning language learner. During the exit interview, Ivette positioned herself as a competent member and identified herself in her own words as being good at "painting and coloring, and actually, everything!"

Juan was able to use the meaning he constructed from *viewing* in conjunction with his understanding of the expectations for patterned ways of inquiring to position himself as a knowledgeable, competent, and full participant in the classroom community of practice. Members of the classroom community of practice constructed and shared knowledge using patterned ways of interacting and inquiring. Juan's participation in the literacy events seen in Transcriptions 5 and 6 where he appropriated the *Viewing* literacy practice provided evidence of how the community of practice influenced how both he and Adriana constructed meaning with expository text. Juan authentically used *viewing* and two languages to share knowledge with another interested community member. His use of accepted literacy practices and ways of interacting supported Adriana's construction of knowledge and Juan's developing identity as a bilingual expert.

Emilio and two other students appropriated the *Viewing* literacy practice to narrate a book as if it were a movie. In this case, the signaled identities of appropriating students who might get in trouble with their teacher reinforced the negotiating identities as co-community members as they worked together to appropriate the *Viewing* literacy practice and conceal their interactions from the teacher. Emilio appropriated *viewing* with the expository text to create a multimodal text that garnered social interactions imitating media and the construction of knowledge with expository text.

In the exit interview, the teacher commented, "I just try to think of all the different kinds of modalities that there are that they can show what they know." While he attempted to find meaningful ways for students to construct meaning and demonstrate their understanding, he also felt extreme pressure about standardized assessments even as a first-grade teacher. He followed the initial comment with, "Although, then of course, I hear these little voices 'It's not on the state test. Are they taking too much time drawing this or looking at this? Get to the print.' So I always hear those voices and they're questioning what I am doing." It is disheartening that a resourceful teacher meeting the needs of young bilinguals carries such a heavy burden of worrying about standardized assessments. This becomes particularly problematic when the teacher is providing instruction geared toward authentic reading (utilizing multimodal texts), but the assessments are

not representative of this type of reading and responding. As a veteran teacher, he felt the freedom to give less weight to the standardized "voices" as he continued to make choices that supported the needs of his students, encouraged classroom community development, and focused on the integration of inclusive literacy practices such as *Viewing*. He said, "This to me is what counts as learning. Thinking about a dispositional stance where the kids have the inclination, the abilities and then the sensitivity or knowing when to use these things." The independent use and appropriation of the *Viewing* literacy practice is a perfect example of the dispositional stance to which he refers.

All three "Non-English Proficient" case study participants displayed this disposition when they were able to participate in meaning construction and sharing as they took up and appropriated the *Viewing* literacy practice. Regardless of the ability to decode text in their second language, these students were able to take on roles as participants, experts, and learners in the inquiry classroom community of practice. The best way to lessen the "achievement gap" is to recognize and value the impact of the inclusive literacy practice on young bilinguals. Unfortunately, most standardized assessments are not yet incorporating multimodal texts, so students are often at a disadvantage when the assessments fail to include opportunities to utilize *viewing*. Using inclusive literacy practices like *Viewing*, which provide access to academic content while simultaneously encouraging the expansion of literacy skills related to critical thinking and meaning construction with multimodal text, helps foster positive educational identities for young bilinguals. When teachers present literacy practices with choice and the understanding that they are a tool with which students can facilitate the membership in a classroom community of practice by constructing and sharing meaning, students become engaged and motivated as they participate in dialogic inquiry with their peers.

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Appendix A:
Student Interview Protocol (They were 6 at the time of the interview, so questions were modified and included multiple follow up questions and clarification.)

1. What do you do everyday when you first come in the classroom?
2. What's your favorite part about when you share books or when other people share books during that time?
3. What do you share?
4. Why do you think people read?
5. What kinds of things can you learn from reading?
6. What do you like to read about?
7. What kinds of things do you do when you're reading? Or what kinds of things do you think about when you're reading?
8. What kinds of things do good readers do? What does a good reader do or what do they read?
9. What's your favorite part of this classroom? What do you like to do most in here?
10. What do you do normally during reading time in the morning? What kinds of things do you guys do?
11. How do you learn new things?
12. What do you do if you don't know something? How do you find that out?
13. What are you really good at doing in school? What are you really good at in this classroom?
14. What do you learn from pictures or seeing other people's pictures in books? Does that help you?
15. Is there anything else you want to tell me about this classroom? What do you love to do in here?

Appendix B:
Teacher Exit Interview Protocol

1. How do students in your class make sense of text?
    a. Does this differ for ELLs and native speakers?
    b. How do you think this has evolved over the academic year?
    c. What have you done to help students be able to make sense of text?
        i. What strategies, skills, etc. have you introduced/taught to aide in this process?
2. How do students in your class engage with text? (here I am talking about how texts become an interactive component-they write to each other, they use post its and write on them in books or move them to posters, they read and reread not only "books", but also their writing and each other's writing, your letter/notes wall, picture/word walls, etc.)
    a. Does this differ for ELLs and native speakers?
    b. How do you think this has evolved over the academic year?
    c. What have you done to help students engage with text?
3. Describe the classroom community including how students interact with you and how they interact with each other.
    a. Does this differ for ELLs and native speakers?
    b. How do you think this has evolved over the academic year?
    c. What have you done to help facilitate the classroom community?
    d. What patterned ways of interaction do you see in this classroom community?
4. Talk about the ways students in this setting acquire and demonstrate knowledge.
5. What counts as knowledge in this classroom?
6. How do you think the classroom community affects how students make sense of and engage with text?
7. I'd like to discuss the literacy development over the academic year of a couple of students: Case Studies. Can you talk about each student individually and how you perceive their development of reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing, and representing over the academic year?
    a. Does this align with what they demonstrated on the formal measures of literacy? (CELA and DRA)
    b. What insight about their proficiency can you provide that is not evident from the formal literacy measures?
    c. Can you describe their participation in the classroom community?
    d. How do you think their identity is affected by being a member of this classroom community?
8. How, if at all, do you perceive the aforementioned areas of development to differ from those of native English speaking students?