I, Heather Neal, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Literacy and Second Language Studies.

It is entitled:
Say What?: A Study of Systemic Functional Linguistics as a Literacy Tool for Promoting Word Consciousness and Agency in Postsecondary Literacy Students

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Say What?: A Study of Systemic Functional Linguistics as a Literacy Tool for Promoting Word
Consciousness and Agency in Postsecondary Literacy Students

A dissertation submitted to the
Division of Research and Advanced Studies of the
University of Cincinnati
In partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

In the
College of Education, Criminal Justice and Human Services
College of Literacy and Second Language Studies
University of Cincinnati

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2012

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the use of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a literacy tool for helping developmental or transitional reading students better understand and critique disciplinary texts. In an urban community college setting, five SFL lessons were used to offer explicit instruction on academic language, or language for building disciplinary knowledge and for communicating about disciplinary content (Nagy & Townsend, 2012). This research considered whether these students experienced a shift in word consciousness (Nagy & Scott, 2009) or a heightened interest in word learning and several different forms of metalinguistic knowledge, including critical language awareness. It also examined whether students were afforded opportunities for agentic action (Lewis, Moje & Enciso, 2007) including opportunities to enact and negotiate identities and to impact change. Data were collected over the course of an eleven-week quarter from the perspective of the teacher-researcher and 18 developmental students from diverse backgrounds, including 5 English Language Learners. Several data sources were used including: interviews, a teacher-researcher journal, artifacts, reader response journals, surveys, field notes and video and audio taped transcript data. The data were analyzed using critical discourse analysis (Gee, 2011; Rogers, 2011) and typological analysis (Hatch, 2012). Several key findings emerged from this analysis. Students exhibited growth in word consciousness including academic language awareness and critical language awareness. Students used this awareness to appropriate academic language when it supported social aims. Students also engaged in opportunities for agentic action including enacting disciplinary identities, renegotiating their identities as readers and interrogating systems of power. Future research is needed to elucidate the aspects of SFL and critical literacy that are most beneficial for promoting word consciousness and agency.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe my deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to a number of individuals who have graciously offered me their wisdom, their expertise, their time and their support because without them I would not have succeeded in this endeavor.

First, I wish to offer sincere appreciation to my four committee members. I will be forever grateful for your patience, your insights, your challenges and your dedication. I am filled with gratitude for my committee chair Dr. Susan Watts-Taffe who has nurtured my passion for teaching and for language instruction and has offered me her unwavering support and kindness. I am forever indebted to my committee member, Dr. Connie Kendall Theado for her life-changing coursework on teaching postsecondary literacy students and for her steadfast encouragement. I am so incredibly grateful to my committee member Dr. Holly Johnson for igniting my passion for critical literacy and for complicating my views of literacy, language and culture. Finally, I feel such profound gratitude for my committee member Dr. Lisa Vaughn, a psychologist and educator who has inspired me to think in more global and transformative terms about the aims of research. Words simply cannot express how incredibly blessed I have been to have the four of you on my team.

Next, I would like to extend gratitude to my colleagues at Midland Community College. In particular, I would like to thank my fellow developmental reading instructors for giving me the opportunity to explore SFL with our students and for allowing me to share our experiences with other researchers and practitioners. I greatly appreciate your faith and me and hope that sharing my experience as a developmental reading teacher will help others to better understand the vital importance of the work we do. I am proud to be part of such an innovative
and learner-centered institution. I would also like to extend a special thanks to Midland’s Change Agents for their commitment to social justice and to our students.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family and friends for their patience and for their unfaltering support. I am honored to be the mother of Caleb and Julia, two remarkably astute, ethical and compassionate children who daily remind me of the importance of making a difference in the world and of seeing the very best in people. I also wish to thank my mother Theresa Domsher for a lifetime of unconditional love and for extending that love to my children. Next, I would like to thank my amazing husband and best friend Joseph Neal for his boundless love and for his belief in me and in the significance of this work. I wish to extend my appreciation to my friends for their benevolence, for their kindheartedness, and for the quality time we have spent together. I would also like to thank my extended family for their love and for their moral support.

Finally, I would like to thank my students for sharing their brilliance, their searing insights and their life experiences with me. It has been such a privilege to be your teacher. As is often the case, I am convinced that you taught me far more than I ever taught you.

In conclusion, I offer these humble words of gratitude to all of those mentioned here and to all of the other unnamed individuals who have inspired me and made a difference in my life. In turn, I hope to one day impact humanity in the way that all of you have impacted me.
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CHAPTER 1

Statement of the Problem

Background to the Study

Unprecedented numbers of young adults are turning to community colleges as a way to gain the specialized training needed to compete in a global and information-driven economy (Vaughan, 2000). Of these students, nearly half score below the college literacy readiness standards set by college entrance exams (ACT, 2011). In response to concerns about underprepared students, many community colleges offer postsecondary literacy coursework in order to equip these students with literacy tools for use in their college coursework and beyond. Within these classrooms, postsecondary literacy instructors are challenged both to identify and to appropriately address the literacy needs of their students.

The literacy demands of college coursework are undeniably rigorous and strongly influenced by the interdisciplinary nature of college study. For example, the ubiquitous college textbook features language that has been described as conceptually and lexically dense, abstract, and decontextualized (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2008). The new Common Core Standards affirm the complexity of these texts noting that:

College and career ready reading in these fields requires an appreciation of the norms and conventions of each discipline, such as the kinds of evidence used in history and science; an understanding of domain-specific words and phrases; an attention to precise details; and the capacity to evaluate intricate arguments, synthesize complex information, and follow detailed descriptions of events and concepts (NGA Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), 2010, p, 60).
Likewise, the National Council for the Teachers of English (NCTE)'s 2006 Call for Reform galvanizes literacy instructors toward a vision of literacy that promotes "an ability to recognize how texts are organized in different disciplines and to begin to consider the various social, political, and historical contexts and purposes that surround all texts" (p. 13). This complex and socially-situated view of literacy stands in stark contrast to the decontextualized, skill-based approaches to literacy that often perpetuate rather than disrupt low literacy achievement among socio-economically disadvantaged and minority students (NCTE, 2004).

In order for such an advanced level of academic literacy to develop, literacy instructors must offer students specific guidance on how to critically examine and interpret texts. Since meaning in text is conveyed through language, one promising pedagogical tool is to engage students in a critical and functional analysis of the language that construes academic texts. Systemic Functional Linguistics (hereafter SFL) is a meaning-based approach to language (Halliday, 2004) that offers a metalanguage and analytic tools for critiquing texts. Scholars within the New London Group (1996) have advocated for a metalanguage that helps readers to "identify and explain differences between texts, and relate these to the contexts of culture and situation in which they seem to work" (p. 80).

Research from the California History Project (Schleppegrell & deOliveira, 2006) indicates that teaching students functional language analysis can have a positive impact on content-area literacy, mastery of history content, and engagement with academic texts. Since SFL provides students with a lens for conducting an in-depth analysis of the word choices authors make in texts, it is feasible that this approach could lead to an enhanced awareness of and deep engagement with words—or what some literacy scholars describe as word consciousness.
(Scott, 2005). Nagy has described this important form of metalinguistic awareness as an understanding of "various aspects of words—their meanings, their histories, relationships with other words, word parts, and most important, the way writers use words effectively to communicate" (2005, p. 30).

Word consciousness, as one facet of vocabulary knowledge, is an important part of college literacy since research correlates vocabulary knowledge with college-level learning including reading comprehension (Martino & Hoffman, 2002) and overall course performance (Turner & Williams, 2007). While vocabulary knowledge may be a central part of college literacy, what is less certain is how to best promote vocabulary growth among college students. Given the statistical impossibility of individually teaching students all of the vocabulary words that appear in a college curriculum (Nagy & Scott, 2000) many literacy experts advocate teaching generative word-learning strategies such as effective utilization of context clues and structural analysis.

Central to any vocabulary approach should be a recognition of the complex processes involved in learning new words. Nagy & Scott (2005, p. 575) have asserted that word knowledge evolves along five dimensions of complexity:

- **Incrementality**: Knowing a word is a matter of degrees, not all-or-nothing.
- **Multidimensionality**: Word knowledge consists of several qualitatively different types of knowledge.
- **Polysemy**: Words often have multiple meanings.
- **Interrelatedness**: One's knowledge of any given word is not independent of one's knowledge of other words.
• **Heterogeneity:** What it means to know a word differs substantially on the type of word.

Schleppegrell's (2004) description of academic language suggests that college students will need to develop specialized knowledge about words that includes the dimensions of incrementality, multidimensionality, polysemy, interrelatedness and heterogeneity. As students encounter the specialized lexical items found within the academic disciplines, they must negotiate the multiple meanings associated with each of these words.

To illustrate this process, a dental hygiene student might discover that baby teeth are referred to as "deciduous dentition" within the dental community. At first glance, "baby teeth" and "deciduous dentition" may appear to be synonymous. However, by considering the dimension of interrelatedness, it becomes clear that "deciduous" is related to a broad category of items that fall off at maturity. This expanded definition includes not only teeth but also antlers and trees that lose their leaves and fruit in the fall. Hence, the word "deciduous" is connected to its Latin origins (deciduus) and the fields of biology, botany, and dentistry. It also creates multidimensional meanings, including a formal and seemingly objective affective feel. Most importantly, it is not a new, more prestigious word for "baby" but a new way of viewing nature. Deciduous, then, is a meaning-making tool that biologists use to organize experience. This example is in alignment with current thinking on academic language as "the specialized language, both oral and written, of academic settings that facilitates communication and thinking about disciplinary content" (Nagy & Townsend, 2012, p. 92).

Although Nagy and Stahl's earlier model of word knowledge gives a broad overview of the various dimensions of meaning that a word creates, it does not explicitly tackle the cultural dimensions of word learning. For instance, while "baby teeth" is a widespread phrase that can be
found across cultures and socioeconomic classes, fewer students have access to the phrase "deciduous dentition." This is problematic since "deciduous dentition" is more privileged in academic settings which favor discipline-based lexical terms and their associated meanings.

Gee (1990) has proposed a cultural model of word meanings that sheds light on how such conventions are formed and how they can be contested. This model operates under the assumption that words:

1. Can vary across contexts of use.
2. Are composed of changing stories, knowledge, beliefs, and values that are encapsulated in cultural models, not definitions.
3. Are a matter, as well, of social negotiations rooted in culture, if only in the broad sense of searching for a common ground.
4. For many words at many points in their histories, meaning is relatively stabilized thanks to the fact that many people accept and share a convention about what they mean in different contexts of use.
5. These conventions can be undone, contested, and changed.
6. Finally, it takes social work to enforce and police the meanings of words, work that never in the end can ensure that their meanings will not change or be contested. (p. 15).

Gee's cultural model underscores the importance of viewing the meanings of words as socially-situated and fluid entities that can change through the work of social agents. Implicit in this model is the belief that social groups establish opinions about which lexical choices are
superior to others or which are viewed as most appropriate in a given social context. These beliefs can be contested, renegotiated and changed by social groups. Consequently, academic language is not inherently static and can change to enable new forms of meaning making.

In this study, SFL was used as a critical literacy tool for exploring, critiquing and renegotiating the beliefs that are encoded through academic language. Systemic Functional Linguistics (1994) offers a linguistic model that maps the three simultaneous meanings that language is designed to make or *metafunctions* to their contexts. Halliday used the terms *ideational, interpersonal and textual* (1994) to describe these three meanings. *Ideational meaning* is used to present ideas and is realized through *field*. *Interpersonal meaning* is used to create relationships and is realized through *tenor*. *Textual meaning* is used to define the role that the text is playing in the interaction and is realized through *mode*. These metafunctions and their associated linguistic features will be explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

**Figure 1.1: The Metafunctions of SFL (Halliday, 1994)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiential/Ideational Meaning: Used to Present Ideas</th>
<th>Interpersonal Meaning: Used to Create Relationships</th>
<th>Textual Meaning: Used to Define the Role that the Text is Playing in the Interaction</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realized through Field</td>
<td>Realized through Tenor</td>
<td>Realized through Mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pattern of transitivity as encoded through choice of participants, processes, and logical relations.</td>
<td>Pattern of mood and modality as encoded through choice of finites, adjuncts and adjectives.</td>
<td>Pattern of cohesion as encoded through choices of theme sequencing and reference.</td>
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While different theorists argue for different constructs for considering the multiple meanings that words make, it is clear that word knowledge is highly complex, socially situated, multi-factorial, and develops over time. In light of this complex view of word learning, classroom pedagogies that promote word consciousness can offer students the deep and sustained engagement with words necessary for sophisticated word knowledge to develop. It also creates a foundation of metalinguistic knowledge that can augment other forms of vocabulary learning.

Nevertheless, there is a dearth of research on how to best promote word consciousness, particularly at the postsecondary level. However, since word consciousness has been regarded as a pathway toward critical literacy (Scott & Nagy, 2009) by helping students develop sensitivity to word choice and "conscious control over language use and the ability to negotiate the language of schooling" (p. 10) critical approaches to language and literacy could be key to supporting word consciousness for college students.

SFL holds potential as a deeply contextualized way for students to consider the relationship between an author's word choices and the overarching meanings created in a text. Nonetheless, research on vocabulary instruction has not examined the possibility of SFL as a way to promote engagement with words. To this end, this research addressed this lacuna by exploring the impact of SFL on the word consciousness of postsecondary literacy students.

Further, since SFL was applied to the college textbooks that these students would encounter in their general education coursework, this study expanded upon data gathered in a pilot study (Neal, 2011) that suggests that college reading students are most interested in vocabulary strategies that directly connected to their college and career success. In doing so, this study utilized the literacies that students brought into the classroom and integrated texts from
their daily lives including television scripts, music lyrics, Facebook posts, advertisements and
text messages. These texts were paired with five articles taken from disciplinary textbooks that
addressed the unifying theme of culture. The range of texts selected for these lessons was
shaped by the notion of intertextuality as a resource for teaching developmental reading

This study explored an alternative to deficit or remedial approaches to language
instruction which can lead students to feel further alienated from academic discourse (Delpit &
Dowdy, 2002). Postsecondary literacy researchers and scholars have long found that deficit
approaches to literacy instruction are unhelpful and counterproductive (Greenleaf, Schoenbach,
Cziko & Mueller, 2001; Luna, 2002; Maloney, 2003; Rose, 1985) as students need exposure to
complex reading tasks for advanced literacy to develop. Hull (2010) analyzed the evolution of
negative labels used to describe readers such as "remedial", "bluejays" and "non-college student"
(p. ix) and has concluded that "the propensity to label directs us toward particular explanations
and prescriptions, it appears, and away, far away from others" (p. x).

Critical race theory elucidates the ways in which literacy assessments that regulate such
labels are often biased against minority and working class students (Ladson-Billings & Tate,
1995; Hilliard, 2002) by privileging the language experiences of the dominant culture. Hence,
assessments perpetuate a cycle in which those outside of the dominant culture have less exposure
to the forms of literacy that are the most valued in institutional settings which results in
placement in courses where exposure to these forms of literacy is further restricted. Blommaert
has asserted that "the deepest impact of power everywhere is inequality, as power differentiates
and selects, includes and excludes" (2005, p. 2). In a similar vein, former postsecondary literacy
teacher Rose reflected:
Through all of my experiences with people struggling to learn, the one that strikes me most is the ease with which we misperceive failed performance and the degree which this misperception both reflects and reinforces the social order. Class and culture erect boundaries that hinder our vision…and encourage the designation of otherness, difference, deficiency…[S]ome of our basic orientations toward the teaching and testing of literacy contributes to our inability to see. To truly educate in America, then, to reach the full sweep of our citizenry, we need to question received perception, shift continually from the standard lens (1989, p. 205).

Rose's insights deeply resonate with my direct experiences with postsecondary literacy students. Further, pilot data conducted at the same research site (Neal, 2011) confirms the damage of institutionalized labels. This study explored the metalinguistic knowledge of four postsecondary literacy students and revealed that they effectively used a range of cultural tools to support their language-learning goals. However, several of the participants positioned themselves as unknowledgeable about words and language in spite of ethnographic data that suggested otherwise. For one participant, Monica (pseudonym), a previous label of "learning disabled" eclipsed all of her literacy and language accomplishments and resulted in her belief that she was "not college material." Monica no longer attends college and offers a haunting reminder of the lasting damage of deficit thinking.

In the interest of approaching language and literacy from a perspective that values the language and literacy traditions of my students and allowing students to reflect on the power of language, I was drawn to SFL. SFL, as a form of critical discourse analysis, offers students
access to academic language while allowing them to critique the ideological implications of word choice. Hence, it was feasible that this approach could have fostered traditional curricular goals like the development of word consciousness while positioning students as critical consumers of texts. Unlike traditional or prescriptive approaches to grammar (Eggins, 2004) which make definitive statements and moral judgments about the "correct" ways to use grammar, SFL is a descriptive approach that offers insight into how language is used in practice.

Further, engaging students in critical analyses of academic language could have prompted them to reconsider the way that they positioned themselves within institutionalized settings. Indeed, it was hoped that SFL would support students in reasserting their identities as college students in acts that Lu calls "repositioning" (1990). In these identity shifts, students experience agency or "the strategic making and remaking of selves, identities, activities, relationships, cultural tools, resources and histories, as embedded within relations of power" (Lewis, Enciso & Moje, & 2007, p. 18). When students "dissect, deconstruct, and reconstruct" (NCTE, 2004) their college textbooks, they are transforming the college textbook and the act of textbook reading itself by insisting on a dialogic relationship with the author (Bahktin, 1981). In response to Lewis, Enciso, & Moje's (2007) rousing call for literacy research that explicitly attends to issues of power, identity, and agency, this study also considered the impact of SFL on postsecondary students' sense of agency.

**Research Questions**

This inquiry was united by the following research questions:

1. How do my postsecondary literacy students experience a critical approach to language and literacy?
2. How do my postsecondary literacy students experience the discourse analytic tools of Systemic Functional Linguistics?

3. Do my postsecondary literacy students experience a change in agency over the course of a quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to?

4. Do my postsecondary literacy students experience a change in word consciousness over the quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to?

5. How do I, the teacher-researcher, experience the process of implementing a critical approach to literacy in a postsecondary literacy classroom?

6. Does a critical approach to language and literacy within a postsecondary literacy classroom result in transformative action?

**Purpose and Scope of Study**

In expanding the SFL framework to a postsecondary literacy classroom, I endeavored to broaden our understanding of language learning in the content areas. Specifically, I envisioned a model of content-area language learning that was critically reflective and explicitly married to the prior language knowledge and language experiences of students. As part of this effort, I intended to highlight the metalanguage of SFL as a way to help students transfer their past language knowledge to new language contexts such as those encountered in college textbooks. Further, this study was framed in the belief that terms like "academic language" and "academic vocabulary" could oversimplify the distinctive and specialized language practices of all social contexts—including those found both inside and outside of the academy. I wished to take a more contextualized look at academic language learning, one that guided students in inquiries of the relationship between words and the functional contexts and purposes that they serve. This seemed especially essential when these words served to reinforce power imbalances.
Secondly, I aimed to reconceptualize the nature of a postsecondary literacy classroom to more closely align it with the complex literacy demands of college study. In this move, I was indebted to a long tradition of critical approaches to adult literacy dating back to Paulo Freire's (2000) work in Brazil in the 1950's and furthered by those in the New Literacy Studies (Gee, 2001). These literacy studies are framed in the belief that literacy is inextricably connected to its sociocultural context. To use Street's terminology, literacy is *ideological* rather than *autonomous* (1984). Hence, even the word literacy has been contested by the inherently plural and socially-situated word *literacies*. Scholars working within the field such as Paulson & Armstrong (2010) have argued for the need to foreground postsecondary literacy instruction in a sociocultural theoretical framework.

Indeed, sociocultural theory itself is moving toward a more comprehensive vision of language, literacy and learning. One concern is that the New Literacy Studies and the New London Group "have focused on the social practices of literacy but have not attended sufficiently closely to the nature of learning and of agency" (Street, 2007, p. viii). Critical sociocultural research seeks to investigate "the central role of language and discourse in literacy events and practices" (Lewis, Enciso, & Moje, 2007, p. xi). It was the intent of this study to help postsecondary literacy students and the field as a whole to more deeply consider the language practices of textbooks and how they connected to discipline-based discourse communities and to macro issues of power. Through these investigations, postsecondary literacy students were afforded opportunities for agentic action as they redesigned and transformed their identities, texts and the social worlds that surrounded each.

In spite of this move, it must be noted that traditional and autonomous models of literacy instruction dominate in educational settings and are often institutionalized in mandatory course
objectives, textbooks, and other materials which focus on the discrete teaching of reading skills. While these literacy models are undeniably motivated by positive intentions, these requirements circumscribe the literacy experiences of developmental reading students and offer precious few encounters with the abstract and complex literacy acts required in college study. Yet, as this study took place in an authentic teaching context, it had to work within the tensions between an idealized vision of literacy and the practical constraints of institutional accountability. These tensions offered an opportunity to examine how postsecondary literacy instructors could realistically infuse a more critical approach to language and literacy within curricular guidelines. Hence, I wished to share my experiences as a teacher-researcher researching a potentially transformative and controversial approach to literacy learning.

The predominant focus of this research was on the student experience of SFL as a literacy tool, but I was also deeply interested in how I, as a postsecondary literacy instructor, experienced this approach. Hence, I documented the successes and challenges of teaching with this new tool and my affective experiences. By viewing this study through the lens of teacher-researcher, I endeavored to provide richly descriptive data about the teacher experience of this sociocultural approach to literacy. The research on postsecondary literacy instruction has documented historical trends in postsecondary literacy including major institutional changes related to developmental education (Fox, 1999), but the voices of individual teachers and their classrooms are often lost in the literature. Consequently, I directed this portion of my inquiry to fellow postsecondary literacy instructors wanting to work within the tensions of less dynamic institutional climates.

In the words of Freire (1985):
I have been trying to think and teach by keeping one foot inside the system and the other foot outside. Of course, I cannot be totally outside the system if the system continues to exist. I have to be in it. Naturally, this generates a certain ambiguity and this ambiguity is often risky. That's why many people keep both their feet squarely inside the system. I know people who sometimes slowly try to place their right foot outside, but they are immediately overcome by fear. They see other people who have stepped outside the system and are punished (p. 178).

This quote was the driving force behind Lander's (2005) riveting inquiry into a critical literacy classroom. Lander uncovered some of the "messiness, dilemmas, unanswerable questions, and contradictions" that exist between "traditional" and "critical conceptions of literacy" (p. 268). Cervetti also illuminated the field (2004) by detailing the criticisms and institutional barriers that one high school teacher faced in trying to implement a critical literacy pedagogy that was largely rejected by her students and colleagues. Indeed, one critical pedagogue (Ellsworth, 1989) has raised concerns that highly abstract and idealized visions of critical literacy create "repressive myths" of their own.

Lander's (2005) analysis of the media frenzy surrounding the firing of the progressive educator Cissy Lacks (n.d.) is another stunning example of the need for educators to understand the potential risks involved in enacting a critical pedagogy. Lacks, an award-winning high school teacher, successfully engaged her students in writing projects based on their life experiences. Lacks chose not to censor the so-called "street talk" or profanity that appeared in her students' creative writing "for fear of the inevitable damage" that it might cause them as writers and as human beings. After her legal battles, Lacks has raised awareness for the "scary
and dangerous circumstances that created the atmosphere for (her) firing, circumstances about which we need to talk." In order to contribute to this dialogue and to envision a sustainable model of critical literacy, this report offers an account of how a critical literacy instructor tried to navigate these tensions.

In sum, the purpose of this study was to examine SFL as a literacy tool for supporting the development of word consciousness and agency in a developmental reading classroom. This study generated data about the potential of SFL for engaging students in deep and critical analyses of how meaning is realized through disciplinary language choices. Moreover, this study offers insight into student and teacher-researcher experiences with SFL as a literacy tool and a critical approach to literacy in general.

**Definitions of Key Terms**

**Academic Language.** A collective term for the distinctive and specialized language practices that enable meaning making within the academic disciplines and have been characterized as conceptually and lexically dense, abstract, and decontextualized (Schleppegrell, 2004).

**Agency.** The process of strategically enacting identities and impacting change within systems of power. This process can also include redefining activities, relationships, cultural tools, resources and histories (Lewis, Enciso & Moje, & 2007).

**Critical Discourse Analysis.** Using analytic techniques to better understand the relationship between language and society.

**Critical language awareness.** An awareness of how language is related to issues of power and ideology (Fairclough, 1992a).
Critical Language Awareness. A pedagogical approach that aims to support students in the development of a critically reflective stance toward language or critical language awareness.

discourse. Spoken or written text.

Discourse. Various "ways of talking, listening, writing, reading, acting, interacting, believing, valuing, and feeling (and using various objects, symbols, images, tools, and technologies) in the service of enacting meaningful socially situated identities and activities" (Gee, 2001, p.719).

Experiential. In SFL, the experiential metafunction, also called the ideational metafunction, is used to convey ideas and share information about what is happening in the text. Experiential meaning is realized through field and offers information about who (participants) does what (processes) under what circumstances (circumstances). For instance, in the sentence, "The student is reading an article in the library," the experiential metafunction would involve the participant "the student", the process "is reading an article" and the circumstance "in the library."

Field. In SFL, field creates experiential meaning and is the variable concerned with who (participants) does what (processes) under what circumstances (circumstances).

Funds of Knowledge. The culturally-situated knowledge and skills that students bring into the classroom from their homes, lives, and communities and can be used as a resource in the classroom (Moll, Amanti, Neff, Gonzalez).

Grammatical Metaphor. In SFL, a grammatical metaphor is a linguistic situation where a meaning is realized in a less typical or incongruent language choice (Halliday, 1994). For instance, "The student's reading of the book was insightful," is a grammatical
metaphor of the sentence, "The student read the book in an insightful way," because "read" is typically a verb rather than a noun or a participant.

**Interdiscursivity.** Moments where discourses overlap, interact, blend or compete (Lewis & Ketter, 2009). For instance, if a student says, "Ya'al need to remember that correlation is not the same as causation," there is an interaction between regional and scientific discourses.

**Interpersonal.** In SFL, the interpersonal metafunction is used to establish relationships. This is realized through tenor and a pattern of mood and modality as encoded through choice of finites, adjuncts and adjectives. For instance, the sentence, "You shouldn't smoke," creates a personal meaning through the interpersonal metafunction whereas, "Experts suggest that smoking is correlated with lung cancer," creates an impersonal meaning through the interpersonal metafunction.

**Lexicogrammar.** The word choices (lexical items) and grammatical patterns found in a text (Halliday, 1994).

**Metalanguage.** Language resources for talking about, describing or analyzing language (Halliday, 1994).

**Metafunctions.** In SFL, the three, simultaneous types of meaning that language is designed to make: experiential, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday, 1994).

**Mode.** In SFL, the mode creates textual meaning and is concerned with how the text is organized and what role the text is playing in the interaction. A text might be written or spoken and might play either a major or a minor role in the interaction.

**New Literacy Studies.** Literacy studies that are framed in the belief that literacy is inextricably connected to its sociocultural context (Street, 1984; Gee, 2001).
**Nominalization.** In SFL, a nominalization is a linguistic situation in which a word that is not typically a noun is converted into a noun. For instance, in the sentence, "The bathing of the dog was time consuming," "bathing" could be considered a nominalization because the verb "bathing" has been converted into a noun.

**Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL).** A meaning-based theory of language that offers a metalanguage and analytic tools for analyzing and interpreting texts (Halliday, 1994).

**Textual Meaning.** In SFL, the textual metafunction is used to define the role that the text is playing in an interaction. This is realized through mode and a pattern of cohesion as encoded through choices of theme sequencing and reference. For instance, in a nearly silent game of chess, verbal interaction might play a limited and secondary role to the activity of playing chess. On the other hand, in textbook reading, the text plays a major role in the interaction between the author and the reader.

**Tenor.** In SFL, the tenor creates interpersonal meaning and is concerned with how the interlocutor (the speaker or writer) positions himself or herself in relation to the audience and the subject matter.

**Transactional Theory.** The theoretical orientation that a reader and a text jointly construct meaning as a transaction (Rosenblatt, 1978).

**Word consciousness.** Knowledge about and a positive, genuine disposition towards word learning that includes several forms of metalinguistic awareness including how words operate and how words relate to one another (Nagy & Scott, 2009).
Study Significance

This study addresses the need for scholarship on critical approaches to language learning within content-area and adult literacy classrooms. Developmental reading students can feel that their foundational coursework focuses on their literacy deficits rather than their literacy strengths (Maloney, 2003). However, this study offered students access to a metalanguage designed to help them to transfer their prior knowledge about language to specialized academic contexts. This metalanguage presented one possibility for fostering word consciousness at the college level, particularly in regards to academic language. Moreover, since this study repositioned developmental reading students as critical consumers of texts and engaged them in abstract and critical thinking, it was hoped that it might help them to more effectively meet the robust literacy demands of college coursework.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter 1 describes the study's purpose and offers a rationale for selecting a critical, functional and socially-situated approach to academic language learning in postsecondary literacy settings. Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature on vocabulary and academic language learning and critical approaches to literacy. Chapter 3 offers a description of the research methodology guiding this study, the setting, and the participants. Chapter 4 presents the findings. Chapter 5 concludes with implications for practitioners and researchers.
CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

The intent of this scholarly work was to consider an approach to academic language and literacy that recognizes literacy as a socially-contextualized practice. Consequently, it is necessary to examine the major theoretical and empirical bodies of literature that are embedded in this research design. This chapter will begin with major shifts in literary theory that culminate in an interest in literacy acts as a form of agentic action. Next, the literature on language learning in general and academic language in particular will be surveyed. Finally, critical approaches to language analysis such as critical discourse analysis and how they can be used to promote the development of academic word consciousness will be described.

Major Influences in Literary Theory

The role of the reader in constructing meaning. This section of the literature review will offer an overview of several theoretical works that emphasize the active role that a reader plays in constructing meaning from texts including: Reader Response Theory, Transactional Theory, schema theory, and social constructivism.

Rosenblatt's transactional theory. A major paradigm shift in literacy theory occurred when Rosenblatt (1938) questioned the then dominant belief that reading is a simple matter of unlocking the author's intended meaning. Instead, Rosenblatt asserted the centrality of the reader's response to a text, which makes her a major player in the movement commonly referred to as Reader Response Theory. These ideas were further shaped by her description of reading as a transaction (1978) or Transactional Theory in which the reader and the text jointly construct meaning as a "poem." Rosenblatt also popularized the belief that readers move back and forth
along a continuum between two different purposes for reading--an "efferent" stance or reading for learning, and an "aesthetic" stance or reading for pleasure.

**Vygotsky and schema theory.** The notion that multiple meanings can be created from the same text paved the way for more critical analyses of how different meanings are created. Vygotsky (1962, 1978) conceived of a social rather than cognitive theory of learning that requires learners to internalize, appropriate, and actively construct new knowledge. Vygotsky identified language as the most important meditational tool that learners use in the construction of knowledge. In social interactions, knowledgeable others use language to scaffold new knowledge for novice learners. Vygotsky proposed that this mediated learning occurs in the students' "zone of proximal development," or at an instructional level that is just beyond students' current independent levels of functioning. However, learners do not simply inherit new knowledge through social interaction—they appropriate it or adapt it for use in their own novel pursuits.

**Schema theory.** The creation of knowledge, then, is seen as a process of integrating new experiences into existing knowledge structures called schemata (Bartlett, 1932) in a way that is meaningful to the student. In relation to literacy and language learning, schema theory underscores the importance of utilizing prior knowledge and experiences and the role of the learner in constructing knowledge.

Vygotsky (1978) expanded a cognitive or individual-centered application of schema theory by highlighting the importance of social mediation or what is called social constructivism. Learners need social supports in order to transfer literacy and language knowledge from one context to another by appropriating new cultural tools or by augmenting existing ones. Since educators must scaffold literacy and language learning for students, literacy education must be
framed in an understanding of extant literacies and language practices of students. Finally, since the learner is an active participant in constructing and appropriating knowledge, literacy education must be deemed relevant and meaningful to the student. The impact of social constructivism is evident in many of the major literacy movements of the past several decades including the "social turn" in the literacy studies.

**The social turn in literacy studies.**

**Heath's Way with Words.** Since knowledge is socially constructed, students will necessarily be differentially prepared for school-based literacy tasks. For some students, the transition from home-based and community-based literacy practices to school-based literacy practices is seamless. For others, the disconnect between these social worlds can make it difficult for students to transfer knowledge from one context to another. This phenomenon was explored in depth in the ethnographic research of Shirley Brice Heath (1983). In *Ways With Words*, Heath detailed the language, literacy, and cultural practices of two working-class, Piedmont, South Carolina communities. Since these practices were not well understood or valued by their classroom teachers, the majority of these students struggled in school. Critical race theorists have argued that Heath did not adequately attend to macro issues concerning dominant power structures, particularly related to race. Predergast argued that (2000) "literacy practices that do not acknowledge much less explore the impact of racism on language and literacy are not viable alternatives to essentially racist theories in scholarly and public discourse" (p. 487). Heath's work is noteworthy as it highlights the potential of using students' community-based literacies in tandem with school-based literacies but this potential cannot be fully realized without addressing the political and racial motivations that lead to deficit assumptions based on race and class in the first place.
**Funds of knowledge.** Heath's work is related to the current "funds of knowledge" movement (Gonzalez & Moll, 2002) that seeks to identify the home and community-based knowledge and resources of students and to connect them to the tasks required in schooling contexts. These "funds of knowledge" (Moll, Amanti, Neff, Gonzalez, 2001) have been characterized as "the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being" (p. 133). These legitimate social, cultural, and cognitive resources can be mobilized for use in classroom-based literacy and learning tasks. A funds of knowledge perspective does not imply that a home/school binary is ideal but rather seeks to build on existing knowledge structures to ensure that the prior experiences of all students are utilized, including students who are not part of the dominant culture.

At times, however, educators lack an appreciation for the literacy and linguistic strengths of their students and themselves contribute to the artificial and socially constructed boundaries between schools and the everyday lives of students. In community colleges, words like "academia" widely circulate and convey an air of mystical otherness and exclusivity that reify the boundaries between social worlds like the home and the school. At other times, educators are simply more familiar with the language and literacy practices of the dominant culture, a trend that puts students who are already marginalized by society at risk of not developing privileged literacy skills. In light of these concerns, the approach to SFL utilized in this study endeavors to honor the everyday language and literacy resources of students and use them as a resource for exploring academic language and literacy.

**Critical approaches to literacy.**
Critical literacy. Concern about the unequal social distribution of certain forms of literacy knowledge (Lave & Wenger, 1991) has urged some educators to approach literacy education from a more critical vantage point. Critical literacy "involves interrogating texts by positioning readers and authors as active agents in text creation and analysis" (Larson & Marsh, 2005, p. 3). Freire (1971) is widely known for his work in teaching marginalized adults to simultaneously "read the word and the world" thus more fully exposing literacy as an agent of social change. Freire's critical approach to literacy has inspired a number of literacy scholars and researchers who wish to teach literacy in the context of meaningful social transformation. At the postsecondary level, critical literacy pedagogy has been shown to more effectively promote literacy growth (Lesley, 2001) than traditional methods and has helped sustain a more inclusive campus culture.

Sociocultural theory. Inherent in a critical approach to literacy is an emphasis on integrating literacy with the social and cultural lives of learners or a sociocultural approach to literacy. Lave and Wenger (1991) described learning as situated movement from legitimate peripheral to central participation within communities of practice. In doing so, learners adopt what Gee called Discourses with a capital "D" (2001, p. 718) or "ways of talking, listening, writing, reading, acting, interacting, believing, valuing, and feeling (and using various objects, symbols, images, tools, and technologies) in the service of enacting meaningful socially situated identities and activities." Gee's scholarship explicated the connection between language practices, or discourses with a lowercase "d", and the social and cultural purposes they serve, or Discourses. While Gee's comprehensive look at the distinctions between discourses and Discourses has transformed the literacy studies, others use the term discourse to refer to both the
language practices of social communities and the broad social identities and activities that accompany them.

**Agency and interdiscursivity.** College is an especially complicated social context, especially when viewed as a community of practice or discourse community. A common social aim undergirding college study is to get a degree that will result in eventual employment in a self-selected career. Consequently, college coursework is often a tool for helping students enact the intermediary identity of college student as on the pathway to enacting a professional identity. In theory, all college students should have access to the identity of college student in an open-doors institution. However, some students who test into developmental coursework have not always had their knowledge and literacies valued or feel that the coursework is a barrier that keeps them from entering general education courses, not to mention their professions.

In order to enter professional discourse communities students must first move through a sequence of general education courses that might seem disconnected from or even in conflict with their eventual career-related identities. At the very least, the process of moving through general education coursework entails understanding some of these discrete discourse practices of each disciplinary discourse community and, at times, these discourse memberships must be validated to the degree that they meet practical purposes such as passing exams.

To cite an example, a student in a biology class who experiences a clash between a religious community and the biological community might find the concept of evolution troubling. Some students respond to such tensions by adding new dimensions to their identity. A student might re-consider the possibility of both divine and evolutionary forces, attend a new church, or more thoroughly research an alternative viewpoint such as creationism. But the scientific community, as with many discourse communities, has an extensive history, set of
values, pattern of reasoning, and stabilized set of practices that only change through social negotiation. For a college student then, passing a biology exam might require a student to answer questions in a particular way to show evidence of "scientific" reasoning even when the student does not find the reasoning particularly compelling. Moreover, college professors have hierarchical power over the students as evidenced by their ability to define course objectives, select textbooks, design exams, and assign grades. Stakeholders within the community, such as those who stand to financially profit from the success of the college and those who determine which college graduates to hire, also shape college practices. College-affiliated discourse communities, then, can govern the type of knowledge and identities that they see as legitimate.

Moje and Lewis (2007) offer a cautionary look at the socially-constructed boundaries that shut some students out of discourse communities:

Opportunity to learn also requires that participants have the space and support for agentic action, that is, that learners have opportunities to make and remake themselves, their identities, their discursive toolkits, and their relationships on the basis of new ideas, practices, or discourses learned through their participation in a learning activity (p. 20).

Hence, students from a range of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds need literacy instructors who support the development of agency or "the strategic making and remaking of self and sometimes material conditions surrounding the self" (Moje & Lewis, 2007, p. 24). Agency has also been defined as "the capacity to of a person to act and create change in a given context" (Miller & Kirkland, 2010, xvii). The construct of agency also bears close resemblance to Gee's definition of Discourse, with the exception that Gee's definition does not
explicitly address the impact of power. Indeed, postsecondary literacy classrooms offer especially fertile ground for examining the supports that students need in order to appropriate the literacy tools that help students to enact the identity of college student and for revealing the ways that these tools are remade in the process. At times, students might enact identities that "conflict with the subjectivities and identities typically built in the learning place" (Moje & Lewis, p.24). These new identities have the potential for transforming discourse communities or communities of practice.

Lesley (2001) used a critical approach to literacy to address a troubling concern: Students enrolled in the traditional developmental reading course on her campus not only failed to show significant gains by the end of the quarter as measured by the Nelson-Denny comprehension test, their scores actually decreased. In response to this concern, Lesley exposed students to texts that explicitly addressed literacy issues like tracking, marginalization, and remediation (Rose, 1989). Questioning strategies, dialogue journals, and literacy narratives were used to engage students in a critical analysis of and, at times, a rearticulation of their socially-constructed identities. Students who were placed in the critical literacy section of this course gained an average of three years as measured on Nelson-Denny comprehension test—nearly two years more than students enrolled in the other sections of the course. More importantly, several of these students reframed their identities as literate beings by appropriating the literacy models and tools presented in the course.

Bernstein (2004) also used literacy narratives in a basic writing course to help students "unpack the inequities of past schooling experiences" (p. 129). Bernstein found that students were able to use creative writing to counter the institutionalized label of "remedial." Nonetheless, she also warned educators not to be seduced by a desire to use critical literacy as a way to placate
standardized and institutionalized notions of literacy. Rather, Bernstein has argued that "the responsibility of resilience should not rest on students alone" and that "we need to address the conditions that produce basic writing courses and “basic writers” long before these students arrive at college" (p. 130).

Morrell (2003) designed a critical literacy approach called Critical Textual Production to move Los Angeles high school students beyond a "critical consumption of dominant texts" (p. 6) and toward the production of counternarratives. These students were enrolled in Morrell's college-level critical research and writing seminar and used writing to transform communities and to eradicate oppression. Students not only learned to "read the word and the world" (Freire, 1971) but to "rewrite the word and the world" (Morrell, 2003, p.22) by using literacy tools and ethnographic research to create widely publicized texts that advocated for social justice.

Rogers & Fuller (2007) identified transformative literacy practices that helped students to experience agency and to "redesign" their "histories of participation.” The research explores the literacy and identity work of African-American students in Fuller's GED classroom. This community of practice negotiated the shared goal of developing the literacy practices required for the attainment of a GED. Fuller also promoted critical literacy by exposing students to counternarratives, such as those of Frederick Douglass and Sister Souljah. Over time, the students mobilized these cultural artifacts and cultural models for use in their academic and general endeavors.

An equally viable and especially ambitious study is the Literacies for Learning in Further Education Project (Ivanic et. al., 2009). This large-scale, longitudinal research project examined the "border practices" and literacy processes that mediate in helping students to move from the informal literacy practices of the home and the community to the formal practices of the
university. Key to this scholarship is a legitimization of the everyday literacy practices students used which were identified as being: Multimodal, multimedia, collaborative, non-linear, agentic, purposeful, and self-determined. In response to these data, several writing tutors made writing instruction more explicit, engaging, and relevant and allowed students to use extant literacy practices to develop college-based literacy practices. For instance, students who were skilled at using online databases to conduct Internet searches might be able to write a career-oriented blog as a college writing assignment. This approach is revolutionary because as it channels everyday literacy practices into college and career-based literacies it also works to redefine them. This approach resulted in improved student engagement and confidence. One major implication of this work is the importance of better aligning college literacy instruction with the complex literacies of the 21st century and the social aims of students.

Guerra's research on transcultural repositioning (2004) and Lu's scholarship on using writing as a tool for repositioning (1990) also prompt us to consider how the tensions and dissonance created by competing discourses can be channeled as resources for enacting identities. In doing so, students use interdiscursivity (Fairclough, 1992b; Lewis & Ketter, 2009), or moments where discourses interact, overlap, blend or compete, as a resource for agentic action. For example, a student who is taught in childhood not to question authority might find a critical form of literacy disconcerting. Hence, the identity as an "obedient student" might clash with the identity of a "critical thinker."

Interdiscursivity is believed to have the potential to transform individuals and social groups (Lewis & Ketter, 2009). To cite an example, a student from rural Appalachia might note that "ya'al" is considered a less privileged plural pronoun in academia. In response to this observation, the student could, of course, adopt another way of referring to a group of
individuals. However, if the student feels a personal connection to this expression and continues to use it to assert her identity as a college student with an Appalachian background, she is exhibiting agency. For example, if the student integrates traditional academic terminology with Appalachian vernacular such as in the sentence, "Ya'al need to remember that correlation is not the same as causation," the student is experiencing interdiscursivity. This option has the most potential for transforming the social space.

While interdiscursivity might initially appear to be entirely driven by the individual, identities, as social goods, can be regulated by those in power. Take, for example, an active adult male who begins running three miles a week at a twelve-minute mile pace. If this adult were to call himself a "runner" to most people, this identity is unlikely to be questioned. If, however, he were to call himself a "runner" to a marathoner, the marathoner might not fully validate this identity or might modify it with qualifications like "amateur" rather than "elite."

Hence, language plays a key role in assigning privilege. The adult male might not be bothered by this lack of validation, and might favor a more broad identity as a "cross-trainer", as an "athlete", or simply as someone who is "fit." If, however, he wants to pursue an identity as an "elite" runner, this identity is, in part, regulated by historical traditions and artifacts which include language. Elite runners have been afforded status based on distance and speed. Therefore, if this male wishes to adopt the new identity of "elite runner" he will likely set goals based on distance and speed which might include new terminology such as "personal record", "long runs" and "running form." Identity work, then, takes place in contexts that are impacted by power and can impact the degree to which interdiscursivity is accepted.

Ethnographic research has been used to explore the role of interdiscursivity in the lives of English Language Learners, research that bears relevance to this study since a growing number
of postsecondary literacy students are ELLs. McKay and Wong (1996) explored how four Mandarin-speaking ELL students learned to reposition themselves in academic settings by resisting dominant discourses and by creating counterdiscourses (Pierce, 1995). The focal students were subject to multiple discourses including: a model minority discourse, a colonialist/racialized discourse, a Chinese nationalist discourse, a school-based discourse, and a gendered discourse. McKay and Wong argue for a recognition of the inherent complexity of social beings, noting:

As subjects with agency and a need to exercise it, learners, while positioned in power relations and subject to the influence of discourses, also resist positioning, attempt repositioning, and deploy discourses and counterdiscourses. In general, they constantly conduct delicate social negotiations to fashion viable identities (p. 28).

This study rests at the juncture of these major movements in critical literacy studies. At this point, however, this report will turn to word consciousness as a potent construct for examining language learning.

**Relevant Theories of Language Learning**

**Language as a social semiotic.**

Theories of learning often cite language as a critical element of the creation of knowledge or what Halliday (1993) has asserted is the "essential condition of knowing, the process by which experience becomes knowledge" (p. 94). Indeed, language is the most salient meaning making or *semiotic* (Halliday, 1993) tool in most classroom settings. The primacy of language is magnified in college classrooms where textbooks, class discussions, and lectures abound. While
conversation about the role that visual, digital (Gee, 2007) and other semiotic tools might play in literacy education has been on the horizon for quite some time, college classrooms have been slow to fully utilize these other meaning-making resources. Hence, language remains the predominant form of sharing knowledge in college-level classrooms.

**Features of academic language.**

Postsecondary students enter college classrooms with a wealth of linguistic resources that have evolved to meet the demands of their prior schooling experiences and social worlds. Nonetheless, the language practices encountered in content-area classrooms and texts are highly specialized and, at times, unfamiliar. To offer a starting place for a discussion about these specialized language practices, the construct of *academic language* as a category for describing the patterns of language that enable meaning making about disciplinary content will be used, such as the language found in content-area textbooks. Academic language has been given other labels such as "the language of schooling" (Schleppegrell, 2004) "scientific" language (Vygotsky 1978) and "synoptic" language (Halliday, 1993) or a specialized way of speaking that has become conventional within each field of study. Undergirding this study, however, is the belief that "academic language is the specialized language, both oral and written, of academic settings that facilitates communication and thinking about disciplinary content" (Nagy & Townsend, 2012, p. 92). Nagy and Townsend's definition empowers teachers to conceive of academic language as a potentially dynamic resource for creating meaning within the content areas. It naturally follows, then, that academic language instruction should focus on enabling students to make meaning from disciplinary texts and to appropriate disciplinary identities. To this end, the discussion will now turn to functional theories of language.

**Systemic functional linguistics and functional theories of language.**
Indeed, one of the most significant contributions to language studies has been Halliday's (1994) creation of a *functional grammar* often called *Systemic Functional Linguistics* (SFL), an analytical toolkit for examining the language patterns of a text and for discovering the purposeful function of each language choice. Halliday insisted on an integrated system of meaning making in which several meanings are created simultaneously. These meanings are created through a variety of language choices that are often called the *lexicogrammar* of a text. In traditional theories of linguistics, a distinction is made between words or lexical items and grammar. Halliday (1994), however, used the construct of lexicogrammar to underscore the interrelated nature of words and grammar.

According to the principles of functional linguistics (Halliday, 1999, p. 80), language development consists of six steps:

- Movement from an interpersonal orientation to an experiential orientation.
- Movement from a dialogic mode to a monologic mode.
- Movement from self-centered to other-centered.
- Movement from concrete experience to abstract experience.
- Movement from simple categories to complex taxonomies.
- Movement from generalization to prediction, reasoning, and explanation.

It is essential to note that language can evolve both in response to new experiences or as a means of reorganizing experience or what Halliday has termed a *progressive reconstruction* (Wells, 1994). Language development, then, occurs whenever new meaning making resources are necessary or available. For instance, a child might know the simple category of "tools" and know a few items that fit under this category such as a hammer and a screwdriver. Over time,
this category might be expanded and refined based on experience. For instance, a child may have direct experience with a flathead and a Phillips head screwdriver before knowing their specific names. In learning these new terms, these everyday experiences are reorganized through a new linguistic filter. New distinctions might be made, such as the distinction between a manual screwdriver and an electric screwdriver. Less familiar synonyms, such as a turnscrew, might also be utilized. Furthermore, language can be developed to incorporate new experiences, such as adding a jeweler's screwdriver as a new type of screwdriver.

Language learning involves discovering "…the kinds of choices of meaning which will be highlighted or given prominence in different types of situations" (Halliday, 1978, p. 25-26). For example, a baker and a scientist make occupation-specific distinctions with language even when the conceptual underpinnings might be similar. What a baker might consider "bread dough rising" a chemist might consider "carbon dioxide buildup from yeast consuming sugar." It is unlikely that the baker would not have some awareness that it is gas that enables the bread to rise. Instead, the baker is focused on the task of baking bread and might consider the chemistry to play a subordinate role to the end product.

Halliday's theory of progressive reconstruction complements Nagy and Scott's (2000) complex view of the dimensions of word knowledge (incrementality, multidimensionality, polysemy, interrelatedness and heterogeneity) and offers one possibility of how new meanings are created and refined over time. Nevertheless, Halliday’s six steps of language development suggest a unilateral progression through stages such as from “concrete” to “abstract” language development. In some social contexts, this movement can be considered a progression, such as when a child moves from using a private label for an object to a standard label that can be understood by a wider audience and discussed apart from the object. This move can be
considered “progressive” because it is a new use of language that supports a social aim. However, language development can also progress from abstract to concrete experiences, such as reading about a rain forest before having direct experience with one. Halliday’s model, if interpreted linearly, could serve to reify the privileged stance of particular uses of language, such as those forms most closely associated with academia and dominant power structures. Hence, language development is differentially progressive in the sense that new meanings are continuously created, negotiated and refined based on social experience and need.

**Content-Based Instruction.** As the previous example of the baker and the scientist illustrates, specialized language practices exist in a range of contexts, including within the academic disciplines. Resting on the premise that language and content are inseparable, a current trend in ELL education is to foreground language learning in content-area learning. A major movement in this tradition is Content Based Instruction (CBI) (Snow, 1998), a language-based pedagogy that emerged in the 1980’s. CBI often utilizes strategies like pre-teaching vocabulary, graphic organizers, and cooperative learning. While CBI emerged out of a desire to help ELLs develop content-area knowledge and language simultaneously, other language-based pedagogies have been applied to language learning within the academic disciplines for all students.

**Genre theory.** Academic language uses specialized lexis and patterns of arranging words that contribute to meaning and make the text recognizable as a specific genre such as a science textbook or a history article. In each genre, there are obligatory lexicogrammatical features such as poetry being arranged in stanzas or history textbooks sharing interpretations in chronological order. Conventions can be disrupted and, in fact, genres do evolve to meet the demands of new
purposes. Nonetheless, genres have a general stability that enables us to speak somewhat confidently about the language patterns of each.

The relative stability of these genres makes it possible for us to make generalizations about academic language, such as that it involves specialized lexis or vocabulary, abstract language, nominalizations and distinctive grammatical patterns. However, a caveat is in order. While the general stability of a genre makes its language features predictable and easily recognizable, this stability can lead to a rigid naturalization that does not invite critical analysis or change. Indeed, some pedagogical applications of SFL have been criticized for emphasizing access over transformation (Lankshear & Knobel, 1998; Luke, 2000), leading some to argue that a rigid application of SFL could reinforce power imbalances. Consequently, the approach to SFL utilized in this study guided students toward an analysis of the dominant language features found in academic language to support a form of reading that some SFL scholars have called "both mainstream and resistant" (Achugar, Scheppegrell & Oteiza, 1998, Hasan, 1996). In doing so, learners were able to appropriate and customize these linguistic resources to meet the needs of their own social worlds.

**Metafunctions and associated language features of academic texts.** From this broad picture of the possible language features of academic texts, it is important to understand how each component is realized through the word choices that an *interlocutor*, or a speaker or writer, makes. In Chapter 1, Halliday's (1994) three metafunctions were described: experiential (also called ideational) (field), interpersonal (tenor) and textual (mode). At this point, it is necessary to look more closely at the language resources that are utilized in each metafunction as they will play a key role in the critical literacy approach explored as part of this research. Since metafunctions overlap and interact, it is important not to view these metafunctions as categories.
An overview of the three metafunctions is summarized in Table 2.1. This table summarizes the linguistic resources associated with each metafunction and a guiding question that helps to identify the social purpose of each.

### Table 2.1: The Three Metafunctions of SFL

**(Adapted from Achugar, Schleppegrell & Oteiza, 2008)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Metafunction</th>
<th>Linguistic Resources</th>
<th>Questions for Identifying Function/Social Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Field (Experiential) | •Participants: Agent, sensor, beneficiary, goal.  
•Processes: Action, saying, thinking, feeling, relating.  
•Circumstances: Time, place, cause, manner, reason. | •What is going on in the text? |
| Tenor (Interpersonal) | •Mood: Clause type (interrogative, declarative, exclamatory)  
•Modality: Modal verbs and adjuncts to express degrees of obligation, certainty.  
•Appraisal: Words that convey attitudes, emotional, judgment, appreciation. | •What is the orientation of the writer to the information?  
•What is the relationship between the reader and the writer? |
| Mode (Textual) | •Cohesive Devices: Reference, repetition, ellipsis)  
•Theme Sequencing  
•Cause Combining: Hypotaxis or parataxis, embedded clauses. | How is the text organized? |

*Field and the Experiential Metafunction.* The variable of field is concerned with who (participants) does what (processes) under what circumstances (circumstances). This dimension of field—the participants, processes, and circumstances—create what is referred to as
the *transitivity system*. Participants form the subject of the text and can take on a variety of
different roles including that of agent, sensor, beneficiary, or goal.

However, not all participants begin as participants. Processes can become participants
through a process called *nominalization* (Eggins, 2004). A nominalization is a form of language
where things that are not normally nouns are turned into nouns, such as when a concrete process
becomes a noun. For example, the word "fabricate" could become the noun or participant
"fabrication." In disciplines like science and history, nominalization allows interlocutors to
construct elaborate chains of meaning. Nominalization is one type of *grammatical metaphor* or
a case where meaning is realized in a less typical or incongruent language choice such as when a
process becomes a noun or when a noun becomes a process.

### Table 2.2: Nominalizations and Grammatical Metaphors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic Form</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nominalization</strong></td>
<td>A type of grammatical metaphor in which parts of speech that are not typically nouns become nouns.</td>
<td>abolish → abolition, hate → hatred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical Metaphor</strong></td>
<td>Meaning is realized in an incongruent language choice.</td>
<td>task → tasked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Incidentally, there are meaning-based ramifications for using grammatical metaphors
such as separating an action from an agent. For instance, if a village that was "destroyed"
becomes a "destruction," it becomes an abstract thing that is no longer strongly associated with
the individuals who contributed to the destruction.
The next component of the transivity system is processes. Processes are the actions that take place in a text such as saying, thinking, feeling, or relating. By analyzing processes, we can better understand the types of actions that an interlocutor finds the most significant. For instance, if an author describes a war using predominantly feeling processes (loved, hated, regretted, hoped) rather than action processes (obliterated, armed, fought) the reader is predisposed to thinking about feelings over actions. Similarly, if females are described using feeling processes whereas males are described using thinking processes, it contributes to a rearticulation of gender stereotypes.

The final component of the transivity system is circumstance. Circumstances give information about the time, place, and context. This variable helps the interlocutor to contextualize a situation for the audience.

*Tenor and the Interpersonal Metafunction.* The variable of tenor is concerned with how the writer or speaker positions himself or herself in relationship to the audience and to the subject matter. These relationships are enacted through the elements of mood, modality, and appraisal. The mood of a text is conveyed through the clause type: declarative, interrogative, or exclamatory. For instance, asking a question (an interrogative clause) can be used as a way to position the reader or speaker as an active participant in the conversation. Conversely, asking a question can be used to minimize the reader or speaker's role such as in the sentence, "How could you possibly think that there is life on other planets?" Since the focus of SFL is on meaning and function, the clause type per se is not as important as the function of the clause type.

Another way to create a particular mood is to use modality. Modality, as realized through modal verbs and adjuncts, expresses degree of obligation and certainty. Modality can be
expressed through words like "probably" or "certainly." Generally, when a speaker or writer is positioning himself or herself as an expert, he or she will avoid the use of words like "probably". For instance, notice the differences in modality in the sentences below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.3 : Differences in Modality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Example 1: Earthquakes are most likely caused by friction along tectonic plates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example 2: Earthquakes are probably caused by friction along tectonic plates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In these two sentences, the experiential meaning remains the same. The difference is in mood as expressed by the differences in modality. Indeed, the difference between "most likely" and "probably" is subtle. However, the second sentence seems more like an opinion than an expert opinion.

Mood can also be conveyed through appraisal. Appraisal is the element of mood that shows attitudes, judgment, emotion, and appreciation. When interlocutors make a particular word choice from a pool of potential words with similar meanings, it can reveal attitudes. For instance, in choosing a label for a female, one might choose from a range of words including those like "woman", "girl", "hag", matriarch", "girl" or "sweetheart." By selecting the word "woman" over the word "hag", it suggests a more neutral attitude toward the participant.

However, caution must be used in attributing attitudes to an interlocutor. Oftentimes, these choices are driven by the functional needs of the activity that the interlocutor is engaged in. These choices are often constrained by convention, purpose, and culture. To cite an example, in labeling a women's bathroom door in a five-star restaurant, the words "hag" and "sweetheart"
would be wholly inappropriate or even offensive whereas the word "gal" simply conveys a nuanced meaning that seems unexpected, playful, and inappropriately informal.

Mode and the Textual Metafunction. The variable of mode is concerned with how a text is structured and the role that the text plays in the activity. For instance, in looking at a scenic landscape, such as the Grand Canyon, verbal interaction might be minimal, whereas in a class lecture, language might play a central role. Mode can also refer to differences in spoken or written language.

Mode is also used to consider the general structure of a text such as how ideas are linked together through cohesive devices, such as: therefore, but, or however. At first glance, these linking devices can seem insignificant. However, each time when an interlocutor makes choices such as whether to use "then" or "because" to link together events, it creates different interpretations. For example, consider the following two sentences:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2.4: Differences in Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example 1:</strong> The young children were playing animatedly. Then, father spilled his coffee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example 2:</strong> The young children were playing animatedly. Consequently, the father spilled his coffee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Sentence 1, the two events are organized chronologically. They are connected by their occurrence in time, but they are otherwise unrelated to one another. In the second sentence, the spilled coffee is attributed to the animated play of the children. By using the connector "consequently," the children's agency is enhanced whereas the father's agency is diminished. From the perspective of critical discourse analysts, causality is an important element to consider, particularly when it connects to global or macro-level issues of power.
A final element of mode is how themes are structured. Writers and speakers can position words in a particular place in a sentence or text such as the starting place (the theme) or a later point in the text (the rheme) where new information is valid. Consider the difference between the two sentence arrangements:

Table 2.5: Differences in Theme

| The youthful puppy was responsible for the destruction of the entire house. |
| The destruction of the entire house was caused by the youthful puppy. |

Notice that in the first sentence, the theme is "youthful puppy" whereas in the second sentence the theme is "the destruction of the entire house." By making choices about how to position words, the interlocutor is able to give prominence to some ideas over others.

Field, tenor, and mode work together to create what is called the context of situation or a specific language event. The context of situation is always connected to a global context referred to as the context of culture. The relationship between local discursive choices and a global context will now be considered in more detail.

Critical discourse analysis.

Inherent to SFL is an awareness of the fundamental role that interlocutors' word choices play in creating deeply sophisticated sets of meaning. In applying the principles of SFL to analyzing these word choices, readers become immersed in the act of determining the function of lexicogrammatical choices. Indeed, this close analysis of word choices sometimes uncovers biases and ideological perspectives that might otherwise go unnoticed. It is this analysis of language that is often referred to as Critical Discourse Analysis (Rogers, 2011). While
approaches to CDA vary according to purpose, the overarching purpose is to use analytic
techniques to better understand the reciprocal relationship between society and language.

Traditionally, Critical Discourse Analysis has been employed in educational settings by
researchers who find that it offers a rich form of qualitative data. For instance, CDA might be
used to analyze classroom talk to better understand the interpersonal relationships found within
the classroom. However, some educators are turning to critical discourse analysis as a way to
foster critical literacy skills.

Bean and Moni used CDA techniques to guide adolescent readers toward an analysis of
the language choices made by the authors of adolescent literature. Central to this work is an
emphasis on the adult construction of adolescence and how this construct can be constraining.
Bean and Moni used prompts to stimulate discussion and thought about gendered, raced, and
other ideological positionalities embedded in texts. Students used this analysis to drive more
informed identity constructions.

Critical discourse analysis has also been explored using content-area texts (Fang &
Schleppegrell, 2010). Many of these studies are unified by their use of the SFL metalanguage as
an analytic lens for examining language choices in context including their relationship to genre,
power, and ideology. Hence, the "poem" that the reader creates in transacting with the text is a
potential way for students to experience agency and to shape dominant discourses. Indeed, these
literacy acts themselves can be agentic acts as they ask students to interpret and potentially
disrupt the relationship between language and systems of power.

One ambitious study of SFL as a critical literacy tool is the work of Achugar,
Schleppegrell & Oteiza (2008) who have coordinated professional development programs in
California, Washington, and Pennsylvania. The first of these endeavors, the California History
Project, used an intense focus on language to successfully build content-area literacy and knowledge in students, as measured by an independent evaluator. Similarly, in Pennsylvania educators were trained to identify relevant language features in social studies texts in order to create relevant discourse analytic questions for classroom use. Finally, the Washington project used the metalanguage of functional linguistics to help students vary language choices in writing order to meet the needs of changing audiences and purposes.

Other scholars have affirmed the use of content-based critical literacy models based on the principles of SFL (Unworth, 1999). Unworth offers educators a list of potential "coloring strategies" (p. 518) and their associated lexicogrammatical resources.

While these studies are promising, a considerable vacuum in the literature exists in regard to critical uses of SFL in content-area literacy classrooms. This vacuum is noteworthy since an intense focus on language, such as with functional forms of language analysis like SFL, could also impact vocabulary growth, particularly word consciousness. Research indicates that vocabulary learning can be accelerated by word-attentive classroom environments that support the continual reexamination of words in a variety of contexts and formats over an extended period of time (Blachowicz, Fisher, Ogle, & Watts-Taffe, 2006). In addition to this possibility, much of the analysis conducted through SFL reinforces a complex understanding of the meaning of words, such as a nuanced understanding of meaning that considers the interplay between meaning and contextual factors.

**Critical language awareness.**

Indeed, a construct closely related to both word consciousness and critical discourse analysis is *critical language awareness* or an awareness of how language is interconnected with issues of power and ideology (Fairclough, 1992a). Critical Language Awareness (CLA) can also
refer to any pedagogical approach, including Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) that seeks to foster critical language awareness. While word consciousness is not inherently critical, critical language awareness overlaps with many of the features of word consciousness and could be considered an element of it. For the purpose of this study, word consciousness will be defined as a deep engagement with, interest in, and knowledge about words including how they connect to systems of power and ideology.

Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Language Awareness (hereafter CLA) are burgeoning pedagogies at the adolescent and adult level (Bernstein, 2004; Cole & Wall, 1987; Hull, 1993) with great potential for supporting students' language development and their socioemotional needs, particularly in regards to identity and agency.

Teacher/researcher Sanchez (2008) used CLA to assist college-level transition writing students in identifying the naturalized, "common-sense knowledge about the world that is tied to language practices" (p.172). The students engaged in a deep analysis of literature that included an analysis of how language can be used to maintain asymmetrical power relations. Further, they used their own life experiences to interpret the social words created in the texts and to examine their own histories as students.

Rogers used Critical Discourse Analysis as a part of home-based literature circles with adolescents. CDA techniques were used to identify tensions and to interrogate imbalances of power within the shared texts and within the discussions. Many CDA studies analyze the local level of microdiscursive practices, such as word choice or word order, and the global or societal level of meta-narratives and how they reinforce or disrupt power imbalances. Roger's research is noteworthy because it also explores the intermediary level of institutional practices such as Rogers' own teacher/student interactions and the curriculum. While Rogers found that CDA
supported the adolescents in some form of critical text analysis, portions of the discussion reinforced asymmetrical power relations at the local level—specifically, traditional teacher/student roles.

While these studies show great promise, much of the literature on CDA and CLA focuses on using these tools as a research methodology rather than as a pedagogy. Furthermore, few studies have used CLA or Critical Discourse Analysis with college students or with the textbooks that will comprise the bulk of a college student's reading. In addition, SFL seems a particularly helpful tool for supporting the development of critical language analysis with informational texts.

The paucity of theoretical perspectives and empirical data on word consciousness at the college level needed to be addressed, particularly in regard to academic texts. In order to remedy that void, this study endeavored to evaluate the potential of SFL as a literacy tool for promoting word consciousness and agency in postsecondary literacy students.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Research Design

The research design utilized in this study was qualitative and transformative in nature and underpinned by a sociocultural perspective on literacy learning. Naturalistic inquiry was a methodologically appropriate choice since this study seeks to offer illumination into student and teacher-researcher experiences with SFL in a college literacy classroom rather than a statistical evaluation of SFL. In addition to traditional standards of rigor appropriate for qualitative inquiry (Hatch, 2002) such as: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), this study also strived to maintain transformative measures of rigor (Miller & Kirkland, 2010) such as: "fairness, ontological authenticity, attention to voice, critical reflexivity, reciprocity, and social change" (Mertens, 2010). In order to address these multiple factors, a range of data sources were used including: observations, interviews, artifacts, observations, videotaping, a survey and a teacher-researcher journal.

Research site and participants.

Midland Community College. The setting of the study was a developmental reading course in a large, Midwestern (pseudonym) community college. As a community college, Midland is a "regionally accredited institution of higher learning that offers the associate's degree as its highest degree (Vaughan, 2000, p. 2). The majority of community college students are first-generation college students. Nearly half of all minority students who attend college attend a community college (Vaughan, 2000, p. 2). Following this trend, Midland has a racially and culturally diverse campus, including many international students. Like many community colleges, Midland has the following commitments (Vaughan, 2000, p. 3):
- Serving all segments of society through an open-access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all of its students.
- Providing a comprehensive educational program.
- Serving the community as a community-based institution of higher learning.
- Teaching and learning.
- Fostering lifetime learning.

According to the college's website, Midland boasts a strong national reputation as one of the Vanguard Learning Colleges in the U.S. and Canada. In 2009, Midland's innovative work retraining displaced workers was featured in a major national newspaper\(^1\).

While Midland is a commuter school and attracts students from a range of neighborhoods in the greater Midland area, many of its students are from the moderate-sized urban city of Midland. Midland houses a major air force base, several colleges and universities, a thriving healthcare industry, and a number of large corporations. Nonetheless, the recent closing of a local automotive plant and other industries has transformed the region from an industrial economy to a post-industrial, service-based economy. The city itself has also recently experienced a revival through the development of a metropark on the river bank, a new performing arts center, and a minor league baseball team. Midland Community College is one of the most prominent and successful businesses located within community. Within the greater Midland community, Midland Community College is well known for its affordability and accessibility.

\(^1\) Note: References that might reveal the research site have been concealed in order to protect confidentiality.
Midland is situated just blocks away from the Midland River, a river that has historically served as a metaphor for the city's pattern of de facto segregation. According to the local newspaper, Midland was named one of the nation's most racially segregated cities in the nation. Midland Community College, however, affords the region an opportunity to transcend these divisions by bringing together students from a variety of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

This vision of a diverse and inclusive campus is complicated by the college's history of a disproportionate number of minority students testing into developmental coursework. The most recent public report of student demographics on the college’s website indicates that the overall percentage of Midland students who are African-American is significantly lower than the number of African-American students who placed into the section of developmental reading under analysis in this study. Critical race theorists (Hilliard, 2002) might point to the entrenched relationship between testing instruments, tracking and institutionalized racism. Some developmental educators, however, according to action research data taken from Midland campus (University of Cincinnati Action Research Group, 2012), attribute this trend to the K-12 Midland Public School District. The school district, according to a local newspaper, had the lowest statewide assessment scores. The school district also has more African-American students than any other racial or ethnic group. Local educators who subscribe to this theory tend to attribute differential placement in college coursework to past schooling experiences. It is also plausible, however, that these educational inequities have served to replicate or even exacerbate the city's historical race and class divisions.

One of Midland's most focused efforts is to improve the success rates of developmental reading, math, and English students. Placement in developmental coursework is determined by
the Accuplacer (Board, n.d.) college entrance test. As part of the Developmental Education Initiative, Midland, as well as fifteen other Achieving the Dream schools, is committed to exploring innovative pedagogical and institutional approaches for helping more students who begin in developmental education classrooms successfully complete college. The college has also recently been awarded a Completion by Design (CbD) Grant by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. As part of these initiatives, I teach students in the two-class developmental reading series at the college.

**Teacher-Researcher.** I remained in the role of teacher-researcher throughout the study. In order to fully interpret and contextualize the findings of this study, it is important to problematize this social positioning. I was mindful of Ellsworth's (1989) warning that critical pedagogues can reproduce systems of domination and oppression and silence diversity "in the name of liberatory pedagogy" (p. 299). In implementing critical literacy in her college course, Ellsworth found that she was able to moderate this tendency by moving toward "classroom practices that were context-specific and seemed to be much more responsive to our own understanding of our social identities and situations" (p.299).

In light of this insight, I wish to make my own identity and situation transparent. I am a white, middle-class woman in her thirties. I am native to the city of Midland and currently reside in a small suburb directly adjacent to Midland. From kindergarten through high school, I attended schools within the Midland public school system. Part of this history places me as an "insider" within this community. Nonetheless, my status as a faculty member and my current residence simultaneously place me as an "outsider" to this community. I am a change agent for the campus' Diversity Initiative which aims to address institutionalized racism on campus and engage in social justice projects across the Greater Midland area. I am also a Safe Space ally for
students who are GLBTQ (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, or questioning) and part of the Hispanic Dream Team.

I have taught developmental reading courses at Midland Community College for six years and am an annually contracted faculty member. The Academic Foundations department which houses all developmental and English Language Learner coursework is one the largest departments on the campus. The department is comprised of a blend of tenured, tenure-track, annually contracted and part-time faculty members. The area is currently challenged by competing demands, such as a focus on innovation and completion as part of the CbD grant and a desire to standardize the curriculum with mandatory shared teaching syllabi and an emphasis on basic skills to ensure that students in all course sections attain the same basic standards. The developmental English and developmental math sequences feed directly into the math and English departments, but the reading courses are relatively independent of other college courses. The department is primarily housed in a specific building, although due to a recent surge in enrollment, the courses can take place in virtually any building.

**Classroom Context.** This study focused on one of my sections of the second course in the developmental reading series--DEV 065: Academic Reading. To differentiate this section of DEV 065 from my other sections of DEV 065, the section that is the focus of this dissertation will hereafter be referred to as the SFL section of DEV 065. The course DEV 065 is described on the master syllabus as follows:

Through individual and collaborative activities, course will prepare students for college-level reading and will introduce basic critical reading and thinking strategies, and a variety of study skills that promote student development and achievement.
To this end, this course has the following objectives:

1. Develop college level vocabulary, using structural elements and context.

2. Identify stated and implied main ideas, supporting details, and patterns of organization in college-level textbook readings.

3. Display the ability to effectively apply text marking, note taking, and SQ3R study skills to college level textbook readings.

4. Demonstrate the ability to outline and articulate the topic, controlling idea and supporting details of articles taken from college level materials.

5. Demonstrate sound judgments about written materials by applying critical thinking strategies.

As part of all of my sections of this course, I used an active learning model which includes hands-on activities, discussion small group work, and computer activities. This teaching model is not entirely compatible with the physical classroom environment itself which was a computer lab located in the busy third-floor hallway that also serves as a tunnel linking together many of the campus' twenty buildings. Most sections of this course offered on campus take place in a computer lab to give student access to departmental materials and exams which are housed within the ANGEL course management system. For example, quizzes on each textbook reading selection and modules for skills like main idea are accessible through the classroom computers.

On a typical class day, the students began writing about the previous night's reading in their reader response journal, discussed the story first in small groups and then as a whole class,
and had a mini-lesson combined with an activity or review game related to the current chapter. Each class meeting lasted 100 minutes and the course met biweekly for eleven weeks.

The five lessons on SFL explored the following five topics:

1) Attitudinal Language and Author Positionality
2) Subjects and Nominalizations
3) Writer/Reader Relationships
4) Signal Words (Cohesive Devices) and Interpretation
5) Processes and Circumstances

These five lessons began during the second week of the course and took place approximately once every two weeks. Each lesson followed a similar format. Students were given an introduction to the new SFL principle and applied the principle to an everyday text such as: Song lyrics, Facebook posts, advertisements, texts messages, local newspapers, television shows and transcripts. These texts were used to build from students' extant literacies and to underscore the metalanguage of SFL as a way to talk about texts. Many of these lessons included a hands-on or active learning component. Finally, the SFL lessons were extended to a college textbook reading. While each lesson introduced a new SFL principle, students were encouraged to use all aspects of SFL when conducting a discourse analysis of a text. To aid students in this task, they were given a two-sided sheet on discourse analysis. The first side, called "Tools for Analyzing the Language Features of a Text" (see Appendix D ) is a modification of the discourse analytic questions of Achugar, Schleppegrell & Oteiza (2007). The modifications made to this form were used to align the study more closely with the local context. For instance, the term "pattern of organization" was used to describe text structure.
rather than design and "signal words" were used in place of cohesive devices. The second side, "Tools for Conducting a Macro Analysis of a Text" was informed by Pietrandrea's (2008) use of the three lenses of feminism, Marxism, and critical multiculturalism as a critical literacy tool and Gee's (2011) Seven Building Tasks of Language. These sheets were used to guide students toward an understanding of the connection between micro and macro discursive practices.

These lessons were informed by the theoretical frameworks explicated in Chapter 1 and 2.

**Student Participants.** All students in the SFL section of DEV 065 were given the opportunity to serve as participants for this study. No data were analyzed from students who did not consent to participate in this study. The class is representative of a community college course and consisted of eighteen students. Of these eighteen students, five were English Language Learners (from Colombia, Russia, India and Sarajevo), eight self-identified as African-American, one self-identified as biracial or what she prefers to call "of urban culture," and four self-identified as white. The English Language Learners elected to not place themselves in racial categories and instead named their countries of origin. There were seven females and eleven males. Five of the students were non-traditional students, a category used at Midland to describe older students and displaced workers. Pseudonyms have been given to all participants in order to help protect their privacy.

Of the participants, five were selected to be interviewed. In order to gather rich data that included the perspectives of individuals from a range of different backgrounds, stratified purposeful sampling (Mertens, 2010) was used. In stratified purposeful sampling, participants first divided into subgroups and then individuals are randomly selected from these subgroups. For the random selection, the Microsoft Excel function "randbetween" was used to generate
random numbers associated with participant names. The subgroups were based on demographics such as race, gender, native language, and age. While stratified purposeful sampling was used to include diverse perspectives, the individuals selected are not intended to be representative of any demographic group. Indeed, such an assumption would undermine the integrity of the findings and reify the belief that groups are homogenous entities.

**Data Collection**

**Interviews.** Five participants were interviewed at the beginning and the end of the quarter in order to gain a rich understanding of the student experience of SFL as a literacy tool. The *Initial Interview Protocol* (See Appendix A) featured open-ended prompts that were used to explore initial student attitudes about language, literacy, identity, and agency. The questions were developed by examining descriptions of word consciousness prominent in the literature (Blachowitz & Fisher, 2010, Graves, 2006; Graves & Watts-Taffe, 2002; Nagy & Scott, 2000) and agency (Lewis, Moje & Enciso, 2007) and by creating questions that highlighted salient features of each construct. These interviews were audio taped and transcribed. The *Final Interview Protocol* was used to gather student perceptions about SFL and to reassess student attitudes about language, literacy, identity, and agency.

**Videotaping.** The five SFL lessons were videotaped and the audio was transcribed. These videotapes were viewed multiple times and the transcriptions were checked by a peer. Further, field notes were created during and after the viewing of the videotapes. This data source was utilized in order to capture a holistic sense of the classroom dynamics during the SFL lessons.

**Artifacts.** Several artifacts served as data for this study. Reader Response Journals were used in the SFL section of DEV 065. Reader Response Journals are journals that students use to
record reactions to and reflections on texts. In this course, Reader Response Journals were used in conjunction with shared readings and were completed in class. A total of over 200 entries were collected as part of this study. Copies of these journal entries were made weekly. Since these journal entries were both open-ended and prompted, all prompts are listed in the appendix. These data sources offer an ontologically authentic assessment of literacy growth that recognizes multiple truths and is grounded in transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1978). The intention of this data source was to identify change in word consciousness and agency over time. In spite of the broad definition of agency that has been operationalized as part of this study, the thrust of the data analysis on the Reader Response Journals was on the making and remaking of identities within contexts of power. Further, because the Reader Response Journal was used in conjunction with a variety of readings unrelated to the SFL lessons, it offered an opportunity to assess far transfer. Far transfer refers to the transfer of a skill or strategy to a new context whereas near transfer refers to the transfer of skill or strategy to a similar context.

In addition, materials used for the SFL lessons such as handouts, student work directly related to these lessons, the SFL Feedback form (L) and any textbook passages used with these lessons were collected. The materials are located in the Appendices section of this report.

**Teacher-researcher journal.** In an effort to record the teacher-researcher experience in detail, a journal was kept chronicling the study from inception to completion. This data source was used to help me to better understand my perceptions, interpretations, and biases. It also provided an opportunity for me to critically examine my own practice and to record impressions immediately following all class sessions and major campus events. Finally, since this study explored whether transformative action occurs within this course section, the teacher-researcher journal enabled me to document such change.
**Survey of word consciousness and agency.** An early data source, the researcher-created *Survey of Word Consciousness and Agency* (See Appendix B), was used to ascertain student perceptions related to the constructs *word consciousness* and *agency* as defined in Chapter 2. The survey was not developed to offer comprehensive or statistically meaningful information about word consciousness or agency. Rather, it serves as an additional opportunity for students who were not interviewed to share their voices and perceptions. While the Reader Response Journal was designed to provoke detailed introspective reflections, many postsecondary reading students have limited histories of participation with writing. For these students, this data source offered an alternative means of communication.

All participants took this survey through the secure course management system ANGEL (Blackboard, 2011) at the beginning of the quarter. The survey featured both close-ended and open-ended items and was designed to garner student attitudes related to word learning and agency. The same survey was given at the end of the quarter.

The process for developing this survey was similar to the process of developing the interview questions. First, the literature on word consciousness and agency was surveyed for rich descriptions of each construct. These descriptions often included attributes such as Nagy's (2005) assertion that word consciousness includes "various aspects of words—their meanings, their histories, relationships with other words, word parts, and most important, the way writers use words effectively to communicate" (p. 30). These attributes were turned into questions. In some cases, the questions tapped contextual factors that were not addressed in the literature. For instance, a contextually-specific definition of agency would include attention to identity formation within college.
**Member checking.** Member checking was used to expand upon teacher-researcher interpretations of the data. Each participant was emailed any participant-specific data and asked to consider its authenticity and utility. Participants were encouraged to offer counter interpretations of the data when necessary. This data piece was a critical part of recognizing the multiple perspectives and interpretations inherent in any social context. Member checking was also used when clarification was needed.

Table 3.1 provides a summary of the research questions and affiliated data sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Data Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| How do my postsecondary literacy students experience a critical approach to language and literacy? | • Surveys  
• Interviews  
• Reader Response Journals  
• Artifacts  
• Videotapes  
• Transcripts  
• Field Notes  
• Member Checking |
| How do my postsecondary literacy students experience the discourse analytic tools of SFL? | • Surveys  
• Interviews  
• Reader Response Journals  
• Artifacts  
• Videotapes  
• Transcripts |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Research Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do my postsecondary literacy students experience a change in agency over the quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to?</td>
<td>Field Notes, Member Checking, Surveys, Interviews, Reader Response Journals, Artifacts, Videotapes, Transcripts, Field Notes, Member Checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do my postsecondary literacy students experience a change in word consciousness over the quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to?</td>
<td>Field Notes, Member Checking, Surveys, Interviews, Reader Response Journals, Artifacts, Videotapes, Transcripts, Field Notes, Member Checking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do I, the teacher-researcher, experience the process of implementing a critical approach to literacy in a postsecondary literacy classroom?</td>
<td>Teacher-Researcher Journal, Field Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does a critical approach to language and literacy result in transformative action?</td>
<td>Teacher-Researcher Journal, Field Notes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

This study drew from a number of data sources both to triangulate the data when appropriate and to build a polyvocal construction of the truth into the research design. The Reader Response Journals, classroom materials and surveys were encoded using typological analysis (Hatch, 2002) or an analysis technique that uses theory-driven categories to serve as the basis for coding. The typologies of "word consciousness" and "agency" were used as broad lenses for identifying potential growth or shifts.

Critical discourse analysis was used to analyze any written documents such as artifacts and transcribed speech (Rogers, 2011) for evidence of agency, particularly through the lens of Gee's Building Tasks of identities (Gee, 2011) and Lewis and Ketter's principal of interdiscursivity. A similar hybrid critical discourse analysis (see Figure 1) technique was utilized in my pilot study on informal word consciousness and metalinguistic knowledge at the same site (Neal, 2011). In this study, these analytic techniques were used to identify moments of interdiscursivity that might be used to pinpoint moments of agentic action or tension between discourses. Next, guided by Gee's seven building tasks that students use to "build and rebuild" social worlds (2011), I identified linguistic markers that students used to achieve social aims, such as to: Heighten or lessen significance, to engage in specific activities, to enact identities, to create, maintain or dissolve relationships, to give or withhold social goods (politics), to create or sever connections, and to endorse or resist sign systems and knowledge. Gee's guiding questions and the linguistic markers that I used to answer them are detailed in Table 3.2. These linguistic markers are a compilation of those commonly used in CDA research (Gee, 2011; Rogers, 2011)
or functional linguistics (Fairclough, 1992b; Halliday, 1994). Scholars working in the Critical Discourse Analysis tradition (Rogers, 2011) emphasize the importance of customizing the data analysis to fit with the individual study and associated research questions.

In this study, the scope has been narrowed to the building task most central to the operationalized definition of agency utilized in this study—identities. As the reader may recall from Chapter 1, agency was defined as "the process of strategically enacting identities and impacting change within systems of power." However, in order to contextualize the findings related to identity, the other building tasks are used to add additional insights. Therefore, some mention of the other building tasks will be featured in the findings section of this research report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2: Building Tasks and Guiding Questions (Gee, 2011)</th>
<th>Potential Linguistic Markers (Neal, 2011)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Significance:</strong> How are words used to build up or lessen significance for certain things and not others?</td>
<td>1) Identify Theme/rheme (order of clauses).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Identify modifiers: Intensifiers to build significance and qualifiers to lessen significance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Attitudinal language: Evaluative (good, bad) and comparative (adjectives, adverbs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Shifts in topics or moments of interdiscursivity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Identify words that are appropriated/rejected or highlighted/minimized for others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Note repetitions which build significance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities:</strong> What activity or activities is this communication building or enacting or seeking to get others to recognize as being accomplished? What social groups, institutions, or cultures support and norm whatever activities are supported or being enacted?</td>
<td>1) Identify activities that the student participates in during the observation. Examine whether any conflict or negotiation arises which can be encoded linguistically through interruptions, adversative conjunctions (but) or words that negate the previous speaker or writer's position (not, unlike, disagree, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Note activity-specific lexical items (hypothesis, piston, easel).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Note any reference to the presence or absence of social support in carrying out these socially recognized activities such as direct references or negative/positive word choices.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identities:</strong> What socially recognizable identity or identities is the speaker trying to enact or get others to recognize? How do the speakers and/or authors position one another?</td>
<td>1) Examine personal pronouns, adjectives, articles and determiners to assess whether they are personal or impersonal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Analyze sentences that combine personal pronouns with being verbs. These sentences can offer insight into how an interlocutor views himself/herself. Also, note verb tense to identify whether the interlocutor is referring to past, present, or future identities.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Analyze sentences that combine personal pronouns with cognitive and affective verbs to better understand how the student thinks and feels.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4) Examine adjectives, labels, or other descriptive phrases that the student uses to describe himself/herself or that others use to describe the student.

5) Identify nominalizations that deemphasize human agency.

6) Identify traditional and more subtle cause/effects relationships that either convey or obscure agency of the student or others.

7) Note references to systems of power in relation to identity, such as in the sentence "I want to be ____, but ____.”

| Relationships: | 1) Examine personal pronouns, adjectives, and determiners to gauge whether a personal or distant the relationship is being enacted. |
| | 2) Look for conjunctive relationships such as causal, temporal, additive and adversative. |
| | 3) Look for words that indicate hierarchal relationships, affection, or tension. |
| | 4) Identify sentence type (declarative, interrogative, imperative) to see how the student positions himself/herself. |

| Politics: | 1) Look for evidence of a position related to social goods: Statement of belief, modality related to social goods, or hypothetical statements. |
| | 2) Identify conjunctions used to link individuals, groups, or institutions with social goods. |
| | 3) Identify words used to convey modality such as expressing degree of certainty. |
| | 4) Identify words that are selected to convey or obscure agency in the student or others. |

| Connections: | 1) Look for conjunctive relationships such as: causal, temporal, additive and adversative. |

| Sign Systems and Knowledge: | 1) Identify words that indicate the student's position on how knowledge is distributed or reference to the tools or institutions that norm them through personal pronouns combined with thinking or feeling verbs. |
| | 2) Note references to languages, dialects, modalities, and other semiotic tools. |

While the linguistic markers listed above might enable the reader to understand the systematic nature of the data analysis, many of these features are will seem intuitive to the reader. Identity, for instance, is often shared through "being" verbs such as in the sentence, "I am sensitive." However, identifying such a statement as a statement about identity is a fairly natural process and one that can be conducted without critical discourse analysis. The systematic tools used in this dissertation are designed to make my thinking processes explicit and to ensure a consistent analytic procedure. By using critical discourse analysis as a form of pedagogy and as
a form of methodology, this research is united by a general theme of analyzing how
microdiscursive practices contribute to the creation and sustainment of macrostructures.

Measures of Quality

This portion of the research report will explicate the standards of rigor that were adhered
to in this study. Typical quality indicators for qualitative research have been compared to typical
quality indicators for quantitative research by Guba and Lincoln (1989) and the following
parallels have been established: Credibility with internal validity, transferability with external
validity, dependability with reliability, and confirmability with objectivity. In light of the
ontological, axiological, epistemological, and methodological differences between the two
research paradigms, I remain unconvinced that such "parallels" are entirely possible.
Nonetheless, these comparisons do enable readers more familiar with quantitative terminology to
assess the quality of this research. In addition to these standards of rigor, transformative criteria
will be assessed.

Credibility. In qualitative research, credibility involves establishing whether the results
seem credible or believable to the participants. Several components of credibility have been
proposed including: "prolonged and persistent engagement, peer debriefing, member checks,
progressive subjectivity, and triangulation" (Mertens, 2010, p. 256). Since this research was
conducted in both my hometown and in my workplace of five years, I have a strong
understanding of the broad contextual factors that impact this research. Perhaps more
importantly, my most deeply held convictions about teaching and learning center around the
importance of personally engaging with students and recognizing them as unique individuals.
This personal attachment resulted in insights about the participants that aided my interpretation
of the research.
This study also benefitted from the use of peer debriefing. Peer debriefing is the practice of conferring with other researchers and scholars as part of the data analysis process. In this study, ongoing peer debriefing was conducted with researchers within the fields of education and psychology. Throughout the study, my dissertation committee offered alternative perspectives and insights on the data. The challenges, resources, and provocative thought that this multidisciplinary team offered helped to ensure that the data analysis revealed multiple realities, truths, and perspectives. I also utilized colleagues across Midland campus in order to interpret data related to their disciplinary texts. For instance, when I noted that a student appeared to be enacting the identity of a "sociologist," I shared data with a professor of sociology in order to assess whether this interpretation was valid. I also spoke with other developmental reading teachers on campus to compare my experiences with this group of students to their experiences. In order to add to the credibility of this study, a polyvocal approach was adopted and many possible interpretations of the data raised are included in this report.

Member checking was also used as a data source and as a way to ensure credibility. Participants were emailed any participant-specific data and asked to share any additional or counter interpretations of the data. This process was conducted throughout the study to allow the participants opportunity to participate in the data analysis process. In addition, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences with SFL and a critical literacy model as part of their Reader Response Journals. These participant perspectives are offered in detail in Chapter 4.

Progressive subjectivity is when a researcher confronts his or her own subjectivities and biases to ensure that they do not slant the data. For instance, a researcher might begin research with a hypothesis and be predisposed to find confirmation of the hypothesis. In order to avoid this tendency, I used the Teacher-Researcher Journal to reflect on my own feelings and
subjective experiences. I was careful to include both positive and negative feelings and experiences in the journal and used them to interpret the data.

Multiple data sources were used as a part of triangulation or checking for trends across data sources. This helped to establish consistent patterns and to identify potential outliers or counter explanations. In addition to using multiple data sources, the two different forms of data coding, the hybrid discourse analysis and typological analysis, offered an opportunity for triangulation.

**Transferability.** Transferability explores the degree to which the results might transfer to a similar context. Researchers have identified "thick description and multiple cases" as key elements of transferability (Mertens, 2010, p. 256). In this study, thick descriptions are offered to help the reader establish whether the findings might have implications for other teachers or researchers. Qualitative data are typically not considered "generalizable" but the insights that emerge from qualitative data are often beneficial to those in similar contexts. To aid such comparisons, detailed descriptions of contextual factors and specific participants are offered.

**Dependability.** Dependability establishes the degree to which the researcher documents change. Dependability audits (Mertens, 2010, p. 256) are one way of ensuring dependability. Dependability audits are used to track whether protocols are adhered to. In this study, protocols for gathering data are shared and any changes to these procedures were documented.

**Confirmability.** Confirmability considers the degree to which the results could be confirmed by others. Confirmability can be established through "confirmability audits" and "chains of evidence" (Mertens, 2010, p. 256). In this particular study, original data sources such as video and audio and secondary data sources such as transcripts and field notes were reviewed by peers.
Study Limitations

There are a number of limitations intrinsic to this research design. First, this study was limited by institutional constraints. This study took place within an existing curricular framework including specified course outcomes, mandatory textbook, universal testing materials, and a predetermined course duration of eleven weeks. Hence, this study did not allow for a full exploration of the potential and shortcomings of SFL as a critical literacy tool or fully embrace a critical literacy pedagogy. Nevertheless, this limitation is one faced by many postsecondary literacy instructors and can simultaneously offer data on how to enact a critical literacy program that supports other curricular objectives.

Further, while SFL offers a complex look at academic language, this study predominantly focused on word consciousness. It was not within the scope of this study, for instance, to assess whether students appropriate other forms of academic language.

Moreover, I must remain mindful of the hierarchal differences in power between a teacher and a student. While every effort was made to ensure that multiple perspectives were heard and validated throughout this study, it is possible that students offered opinions that were believed to be teacher-sanctioned rather than opinions that were authentic.

It also must be noted that one participant, Hannah, was a previous student from the course DEV 064. While SFL was not a part of DEV 064, this student was exposed to elements of critical literacy in this previous course. Nonetheless, every effort has been made to make this instance explicit in the data analysis.

The classroom design also served as a limitation and impacted the quality of the videotaping. While comments directed to the entire class were picked up by the audio,
one and small group conversations were not always reflected in the recording or in the transcriptions.

The data were also limited by class attendance and work completion. Most students were unable to attend all of the class sessions and did not complete all of the assignments. As a result, there was more data for some students than for others. Also, the general course completion rate for a developmental reading course on Midland campus is approximately 50%. While this course fortunately experienced a relatively high success rate (approximately 70%), two participants, Levi and Antwan, withdrew from the class while the quarter was in session. Antwan was able to be contacted and reported that he withdrew because he recently had a baby and was overwhelmed by the challenges of working full-time, taking care of an infant, and attending college. Levi, on the other hand, was unable to be reached. Shamika and Steve did not pass the course but attended until nearly the very end of the quarter (the second to last week of the quarter). Shamika re-enrolled in another one of my sections of the same class for spring quarter.

Finally, my paradigmatic assumptions about literacy and social justice are interwoven throughout this research design. Since the findings and conclusions of this study necessarily rest on the integrity of these paradigmatic assumptions, this study may have uncovered some truths while leaving others unexplored.

Timeline of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Research Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>● Protocol for IRB Approval was submitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012</td>
<td>• Dissertation Proposal was presented to and approved by committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• IRB Approval was granted on both the University of Cincinnati and Midland campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recruitment letters were sent and informed consent was obtained from participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 2012 – March 2012</td>
<td>• Data were collected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2012</td>
<td>• First draft was given to doctoral committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2012</td>
<td>• Final draft was presented and defended.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4

Findings

Overview

This chapter will begin with a detailed exploration of the five lessons on Systemic Functional Linguistics in a developmental reading classroom. This reporting format is intended to allow the reader to experience the five SFL lessons as they were taught and the progression of time. In doing so, the reader will be better positioned to draw conclusions from the data. Next, the initial attitudes and life histories of the participants, particularly in regards to agency and word consciousness, will be explored and compared to later attitudes. For this portion of the research report, data sources such as participant interviews, surveys, anecdotal records and reader response journal entries will be offered. Finally, data on transformative change and teacher-researcher experiences will be detailed.

Introduction

In Chapter 3, a broad description of Midland campus and DEV 065 was offered. At this point, this specific classroom context will be detailed beginning with the first class meeting. On the first day of the winter 2012 quarter, Midland campus was full of bustle and excitement in spite of the early morning class period. Numerous faculty and staff volunteers were stationed across campus to welcome students with bright red t-shirts, maps, and packages of cookies. The third-floor hallways that connect most of the college's buildings were swarming with students. It is from this scene that the eighteen class members of the SFL section of DEV 065 entered our computer lab classroom with looks of bewilderment and relief.

The first class meeting of a college course is a tremendously exciting time for students and teachers alike. Over half of the students in this course were new to Midland and to college
study and were eager to begin this new chapter of their lives. My intention in the first class session was to model enthusiasm and hospitality by eagerly welcoming students, bringing in homemade treats, and using games and other icebreakers to reduce tension. These early moments are a critical part of building a sense of community in the classroom. Also, since this class section was fortunate enough to have students from a range of different backgrounds it offered an especially rich opportunity to build a vibrant community. The class of eighteen students included: five English Language Learners, eight African-American students, four white students, one biracial student, five students in middle to late adulthood, seven females and eleven males. A detailed description of participant demographics can be found in Chapter 3.

When a new community is being formed, identity work can be especially prominent. As students filled out index cards with their contact information, history, career and college goals and learning styles, the conversation drifted to their placement in this course. Steven, a white male in his sixties, commented, "I actually am an avid reader. I literally read two books a week. I can't figure out why I'm in this course." Shamika, a young, female African-American student chimed in, "Yeah, I was in honors English in high school." Sasha, an English Language Learner from Russia was ebullient and exclaimed, "I am so proud to be here in a college classroom!" Two other students, including one with a brand-new Midland sweatshirt smiled. Other students remained silent while inscribing their perspectives on their index cards. On them, these students shared their concerns about themselves as readers and found their course placement to be an expected follow-up to years of placement in special education classrooms.

In our postsecondary literacy classroom, we began the quarter wrestling with competing identities and goals. I wanted to enact the identity of a critical literacy teacher but I also wanted to be viewed by my institution as a "good" teacher who effectively taught the course objectives.
I also found myself relying on normalized teaching practices, such as using part of the first day to share policies and procedures. Students also experienced competing demands on their identities. Many students felt proud of their newly forged identities as college students while simultaneously finding their placement into a developmental reading course discouraging. This identity work played a pivotal role in the five lessons on Systemic Functional Linguistics.

**Lessons on Systemic Functional Linguistics**

This portion of the chapter will be devoted to exploring the five lessons on Systemic Functional Linguistics in order to address the first two research questions: *How do my postsecondary literacy students experience a critical approach to language and literacy? How do my postsecondary literacy students experience the discourse analytic tools of Systemic Functional Linguistics?* Each of the five lessons on SFL explored a topic such as: attitudinal language and author positionality; subjects and nominalizations; writer/reader positionality; signal words (also called connectors, cohesive devices, and transition words) and interpretation; and processes/circumstances. Table 4.1 offers an overview of the SFL Lessons and their associated texts. These lessons invited students to explore the microdiscursive practices that authors use and how they relate to context. In addition, students considered the relationship between these microdiscursive practices and macro issues related to power, gender, and culture. The two sheets used to guide student inquiry can be found in Appendix G.

**Table 4.1: SFL Lessons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SFL Topic</th>
<th>Everyday Text</th>
<th>Textbook Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudinal Language and Author Positionality (Pronouns, Sentence Type)</strong></td>
<td>Advertisements</td>
<td><em>Bridging the Gap</em> (Smith &amp; Morris, 2011, p. 344-345; 406-412).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subjects and</strong></td>
<td>Facebook Posts</td>
<td>&quot;World War II&quot; (Goldfield et. al., 2012, p. 772-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data shared comes from videotaped and audio taped transcript data, student work samples, the teacher-researcher journal and member checking. These data sources will offer formative data related to research questions 1, 2 and 5 which inquire about student and teacher/researcher experiences with critical literacy and the discourse analytic tools of SFL. While this is the predominant focus, some themes related to agentic action and the development of word consciousness will also be shared as they are situated in these SFL lessons.

**Lesson 1: Attitudinal language and authorial positioning.** The first lesson was designed to provide students with an overview to Systemic Functional Linguistics and to attitudinal language and authorial positioning. The introduction was modeled after Eggins' (2004) introduction to SFL which asks readers to attempt to identify the source of three texts on crying babies. In similar fashion, I began by asking students to compare three paragraphs written on love—a psychology paragraph on interpersonal relationships, a gossip column, and a horoscope—and to speculate about where they might have come from. The rationale behind this activity was to have students note how language varies according to context and to consider the discursive markers that they attended to in making their choices. Some of the observations shared by students during the class discussion are shared in Table 4.2. Students frequently used their intuition to postulate about the possible source of the text as evidenced by the repetition of
"sounds" or "sounds like" to share their ideas. In order to guide students toward giving specific text examples, I often prompted them with questions like: "What do you notice in the text that helped you to identify that?" The student responses to such prompts are also recorded below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.2: Three Texts on Love</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nathan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;same topic, different structure&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makayla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;stars, signs...sounds like a horoscope&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shamika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;sounds like a friend&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;sounds informal&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;you can't say &quot;you&quot; in formal writing&quot; (prompted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Deon&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;sounds more scientific&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Anthony&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;she sounds more sure of herself&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;she keeps saying &quot;you will&quot;&quot; (prompted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;She says &quot;transiting&quot;, mentions an event, and then says because of that you will have something happen in your love life.&quot; (prompted)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this early, inductive analysis of language, I gave a brief introduction of SFL and passed out a two-sided sheet (see appendix D) on conducting a functional and macro analysis of a text. I described SFL as a metalanguage (Halliday, 1994) for talking about, describing, and analyzing language. I shared that one fundamental advantage of a metalanguage is that it is universal or can be used with any type of text, such as any of the three texts on love.

Next, we moved on to the SFL principle of attitudinal language. For many of the students, terms like "connotation", "denotation", and "tone" were more familiar. Since the intention of these lessons was to build on students' extant schemata, we used all of these terms alongside "attitudinal language." Next, we created a word spectrum on the dry erase board with a plus sign on the left-hand side of the spectrum and minus-sign on the right-hand side of the spectrum. Students were given Post-It notes with words such as "supportive", "helpful" and "overbearing" and were asked to place them on the spectrum.

Finally, students selected a current magazine in order to select an advertisement to analyze. Students were asked to look for examples of word choices that conveyed either a
positive or negative tone and to look at the advertisement through the lens of one of the Macro Analysis questions (see Appendix G—SFL Introduction: Attitudinal Language). This was the first time that students were asked to connect microdiscursive practices to macro contexts. We also discussed the notion of authorial positioning and how we can either accept or resist the role of "ideal reader" that an author assigns us.

Students became verbal and animated during this portion of the lesson. This shift first occurred when we looked at a sample advertisement together. The advertisement was for Boar's Head lunchmeat and came from a parenting magazine. The ad featured a father and son holding hands and walking down the street in what appears to be an affluent neighborhood. Sample Text 4.3 is the transcription of this advertisement being read to the class and part of the dialogue that ensued. This dialogue offers an opportunity to see multiple and competing opportunities for agentic action.

**Transcript 4.1: Transcript from Boar's Head Advertisement**

_Heather:_ "Up until now, you were your child's world. Will he make friends? Will he be a good student? Will he sit still? You want to make him feel like you're there. You make him lunch. He likes classic chicken. Whatever you choose, you can't lose because you are getting the highest quality chicken you can get. A far cry from burger chains or fast food joints. So you pack him a Boar's Head sandwich on whole wheat with raw carrots, chips (very few) and an apple. Funny. You start off showing your child you love him. You end up giving him a lesson on the right way to eat. A healthy lunch is in the bag." So first of all, let's think about the author's word choices and what they suggest about the author's beliefs. In the world that this ad has created for us, what is good and what is bad?

_Makayla:_ Bad—fatty food.

_Heather:_ Yeah.

_Makayla:_ But it is really good meat. You can get it in the deli. It's good meat.

_Heather:_ I agree. It is. And the ad talks about the quality. Does the ad communicate anything else?
Nathan: No friends. That would be bad.

Charles: Being without your mama.

Shamika: Can't sit still.

Dustin: Why are we talking about me? So this lunchmeat will give you a perfect suburban kid who sits still and has friends. The parents need therapy, not lunchmeat. (Laughter).

Dustin: Don't laugh.

Heather: I think you're on to something. It's not just about the product. Sitting still is also being promoted as a good thing. The parent isn't worried about whether the child is having fun, engaged, or learning, but about whether the child is obedient and compliant. As Dustin says, we are looking at a perspective on "the perfect child."

(Anthony rolls eyes.)

Makayla, for instance, appeared to resist a critical stance toward this particular advertisement. In educational settings, teachers are often afforded more institutional power than students. Makayla's willingness to question or remake the activity of critically analyzing this ad or, at least, to share her direct experiences with the product, could be considered an agentic move. My response to Makayla was intended to support her agency and to affirm her observation about the quality of the lunchmeat. Nonetheless, I also tried to encourage her to consider what else the ad communicates. Nathan, Anthony, and Shamika shared that "no friends", "being without your mama", and "can't sit still" are considered "bad" in this ad. Dustin showed agency by resisting this stance and was met with laughter. Dustin asked them not to laugh to emphasize that he was being serious and the students complied. Dustin's comment resonated with my views about education, my concern over the myth of the "perfect child", and my desire to have students consider issues raised by critical literacy. Anthony, however, rolled
his eyes perhaps to communicate that he disagreed or to communicate that he did not think that this is what Dustin meant.

This transcript demonstrates the complexity of a construct like agency in a group setting. For instance, Dustin's agentic action conflicted with Anthony's agentic action. These tensions sometimes resulted in negotiations either at the group or the individual level.

These tensions carried over to students' individual analyses of advertisements. Some students simultaneously used critical literacy tools to question dominant systems of power and (albeit subconsciously) to reinforce them. When working independently, students often used humor to interact with one another. At times, this humor centered around marginalized groups (such as male homosexuals) or focused on the appearances or sex appeal of male and female models. These themes can be found in Table 4.3. In their independent work, however, the students exclusively shared critical stances. These students appeared to want to be both "humorous" and "good students" and were adjusting their identities to match these social desires, a hallmark of agency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.3: Themes from SFL Lesson 1</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme 1: Reinforcing the Norm through Classroom Conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;guy love&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female students scrambling for <em>Men's Health</em> magazine, subsequent class laughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;she's smokin' hot&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;oooh, sex kitten&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I just want to enjoy the magazine.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;nooooooo.....is that a gay thing?&quot;, subsequent class laughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme 2: Noticing and/or Questioning the Norm through Classroom Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;resisting mind power&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;just because it (house in the suburbs) looks nice doesn't mean it is&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I reject that stereotype&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the end of this lesson, students were asked to take a moment to share their thoughts about the SFL Lesson on an index card. Students experienced the lesson as "fun", "Confusing" "Frustrating because I never got to read the magazine", "Hard because I haven't ever looked at ads that way" and "Surprising because there are all sorts of messages out there that I never noticed."

In addition to this intragroup ambiguity, I experienced a great deal of intrapersonal ambiguity about the lesson, particularly when I watched and transcribed the video. As students worked on their advertisements, I spent most of my time having one-on-one conversations with students and missed an opportunity to address dominant views related to gender and sexuality. Indeed, these thoughts were recorded in my teacher-researcher journal entry dated January 30, 2012.

One significant challenge posed to any teacher who wishes to promote both agency and a critical approach to literacy is that the two are not always entirely compatible. For example, it might be "strategic" for a student to align himself or herself with a dominant belief system. Critical literacy tools are less useful when students do not see the harm in sustaining these systems. My students and I seem to have much in common such as the desire to end racial oppression. Nevertheless, I cannot help but wonder if literature
itself, such as reading a memoir written by a student who is also LGBTQ might have been a better introduction to critical literacy or put a human face to the harm caused by some forms of humor.

I experienced a range of feelings in response to this first lesson. First, since this was a relatively new class, I was still learning the names, personalities, and needs of my students and was not always able to effectively read their cues. This was challenging because critical literacy depends on candid dialogue about difficult issues. I worried, in particular, about whether using critical literacy activities so early in the quarter would make my students uncomfortable. I also wondered if starting with SFL lessons without first exploring the human consequences of oppressive systems might make the lessons seem more superficial. In my teacher-researcher journal, I noted my observation that a powerful piece of literature might have made a better introduction to these lessons.

Lesson 2: Identify key participants and their roles. The second lesson on SFL took place on February 6, 2012. This lesson began by revisiting the first lesson on attitudinal language. Students first considered the attitudinal or connotative meaning associated with word choices about participants, particularly in regards to participant labels. Next, students were introduced to the participant roles of "agent" and "beneficiary" and used these roles to analyze history textbook passages. Finally, students learned about the grammatical resource "nominalization." This lesson happened to fall on the day after the Super Bowl, a major event in the lives of many of these students. In order to work with rather than work against this engagement, I began talking about the Super Bowl as a way to help students understand the functional purpose of talking about groups rather than participants.
Transcript 4.2: SFL Lesson 2 Introduction

Heather: Okay, so before we get started here, I want you to tell me something. Who won the game last night?

(Animated talk begins.)

Deon: The Giants won.

Anthony: The Patriots disappointed.

Heather: So what you just told me ties in to something that we're going to talk about today. An important part of language is the subject or the participant—who or what a passage is about. So when I asked about the game, who did you talk about?

Deon: The Giants and the Patriots.

Heather: Right. So why didn't you talk about the individual players?

Silence.

Heather: Can you think of why the players didn't come up?

Deon: Because you asked who won the game. You didn't ask for specifics, you asked for an overview.

Heather: Right. And when you give an overview, it makes sense to talk about the groups rather than the individuals. One thing that we'll be considering today is who or what is made the subject of a text. Authors have many choices to make about how to talk about a subject. Are they individuals? Group members? Do the groups have positive or negative social status? Are the individuals seen as active or passive, good or bad? We'll also look at how these choices play a key role in an author's interpretation.

From this introduction, the class began to explore the notion of subject/participant labeling. In SFL, the term "participant" is generally used rather than "subject." However, since my students reported that the on-campus English department (and, indeed, many English classrooms) favored terms like "subject" and "processes", I initially used the more familiar "subject." In order to build from everyday literacies, we then used the in-class
computers to visit either a social media site like Facebook or any other web-based text (such as blogs). Students were asked to gather examples of subjects. One student was unsure about whether this would be possible.

**Transcript 4.3: Participants from Everyday Texts**

*Anthony:* But that won't work with Facebook.

*Dustin:* Works on my Facebook...I've got loser, geek, cheapskate....

*Heather:* Ouch.

*Dustin:* They weren't about me.

*Heather:* Still. But Anthony, it doesn't look like your computer is on...and it doesn't have to be Facebook. What else?

*Demeko:* Haters.

*Shomari:* Ladies.

*Nathan:* Liars. Fools.

*Anthony:* You people have mean friends.

*Shamika:* No, I've got "my girls" and "sistas."

*Nathan:* It's like the classic high school show. Like Glee. You've got your jocks, you've got your Cheerios...

*Heather:* Is high school like that?

*Many voices:* Yeah (yes, yep, etc.).

*Heather:* What a shame. Okay, so these labels are like identities. Does it matter which roles people assign to you? Are some better than others?

*Nathan:* I'd rather be a hater than a geek.

*Heather:* I'm hearing that some of these identities are better than others which makes it all the more important to question these labels and to think about where they come from. After we explore this, we're going to look at subtle devices that textbook writers can use to achieve that same effect and consider what that might mean for us as readers.
In order to contextualize this dialogue and to consider the multiple and competing goals for this activity that emerge from this dialogue, it is important to understand that this lesson was an unusual approach to literacy for many of the students in this classroom. As will be reported in the initial survey, the majority of the students in this classroom held fairly traditional views about literacy. For some students, it was more comfortable to maintain a separation between at-home and community-based identities and school-based identities. Moreover, using a social media site in the classroom can make some students feel as if their literacy tools are being appropriated for academic purposes, what was for some an unwelcome move. This belief was shared by Anthony through member checking. Furthermore, my own experience in including multiple literacies in the classroom was limited but driven by the belief that the metalanguage of SFL is of little use if only privileged texts are used.

Nevertheless, this dialogue shows evidence of agentic activity. Anthony, for instance, resisted the web portion of the activity, but engaged in a critical analysis of the label named by classmates. It is unclear whether Anthony chose the distancing word choice "you people" because he did not have direct experience with such labeling or because he did not want to be included in this category. In either case, Anthony willingly participated in the discussion that ensued. Anthony appeared to be engaging in the portions of the activity that supported his social needs and verbalizing his rationale for abstaining from others, perhaps to keep from being perceived as a noncompliant or a "bad" student.

In this dialogue, I struggled to balance curricular goals with the socio-emotional needs of the students. I wanted to address Anthony's concern but could not determine whether he was truly unable to find subject labels or felt uncomfortable with the activity. Likewise, I had not
anticipated the plethora of explicitly negative labels that were offered in this activity. I wanted to convey my empathy for the students (or, as it would turn out, the people that their friends were labeling on their Facebook walls) and my dislike of such labels. Furthermore, I wished to offer students options for deconstructing such messages. Nevertheless, I found it difficult to address these things simultaneously, something that is linguistically encoded in this dialogue through my rapid topic changes.

After this activity, we moved toward a discussion of the participant roles of "agent" or the participant who actively does something and the "beneficiary" or the recipient of action. The students readily offered examples of each from their lives and everyday texts. In keeping with the theme of the Super Bowl, some students gave examples of game highlights such as when Anthony said, "The Giants sacked Tom Brady." Students were eager to discuss "agents" and "beneficiaries" and later reported finding this lens useful.

Next, we began applying these discourse analytic tools to one of their textbook readings called a "Concept Prep" on World War II (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 121-122) and another section on World War II from a college history textbook (Goldfield et. al., 2012, p. 772-802). We discussed the first reading as a class and then students analyzed the history textbook selection using the handout "SFL Lesson 2: Identify Key Participants and Their Roles" (Appendix H). In our discussion of the "Concept Prep" a rich dialogue ensued, one that complicated our understanding about how Hitler was being portrayed in the passage.

Transcript 4.4: Hitler as a Participant

Heather: Okay, so, as you mentioned, we only see Hitler being mentioned in the first few paragraphs. Why might this be?

Ben: They needed a bad guy. I mean, well, and he was a bad guy.
Makayla: Yeah, but...in some ways they make him look good.

Heather: Tell us what you see in the text that makes him look good.

Makayla: "Adolf Hitler, a skillful and charismatic leader, seized this opportunity. Hitler strengthened the military, forged an alliance with Japan and Italy, and attacked and conquered much of continental Europe." It's kind of positive.

Heather: So we agree that Hitler is the key player but some of the language could be positive. Why do you think he is the key player? Ben touched on this, but I'd like to hear from the rest of you.

Amber: It makes people uncomfortable to have to hear about regular people getting involved. That's not something they want to hear about. They'd rather it be one bad guy than a whole country of people involved in it.

In this interchange, students used the SFL tool of analyzing participants to navigate through conflicting messages about Hitler. Students were able to consider how word choices functioned within the text and to articulate the possible overarching meanings these choices created. Students continued this close and critical analysis of language in their discussion of agents and beneficiaries described in the Concept Prep.

Transcript 4.5: Agents and Beneficiaries in the Concept Prep

Heather: Who would be willing to share another observation?

Nathan: Okay, so Harry Truman is the beneficiary when he is "told of the plan of the Manhattan Project." And then the "Enola Gay" is the agent.

Deon: I was going to say that, the airplane is the agent. It flew itself. (Laughs.)

Heather: Tell us why you found this interesting.

Nathan: So...Truman is the president...head of the army. But they don't talk about his order. They don't mention the pilot. They are beneficiaries.
Ben: The devil made me do it...

Deon: And Hitler "ordered" and "attacked."

Anthony: They don't say anything about Truman ordering it!

Heather: So why might the author choose to make this interpretation?

Nathan: Because Hitler is the bad guy and America is the good guy. And the readers are Americans so they might prefer that version.

In this portion of the discussion, the students were tying observations about word choice to issues of power and identifying some of the perspectives that are left out of this interpretation of events. The students did not convey their attitudes about these events through affective or cognitive verbs or processes (I think, I feel, etc.), as is often the case. Instead, these attitudes were conveyed on videotape through exclamations, high-pitched voiced and nonverbal gestures. The students also used attitudinal language such as "devil" and repetition of the phrase "they don't" to draw attention to the voices missing from the passage. Unlike some of the sample texts viewed thus far, in this text the speakers (Nathan, Deon, Ben and Anthony) were united by a common agentic purpose which was to engage in the classroom activity and to expose a bias in the text.

This common purpose continued to evolve as students talked to one another as they applied the SFL principles of agent, beneficiary and nominalization to the history textbook selection on World War II (Goldfield, et. al., 2012, p. 772-802).

Transcript 4.6: Common Sense and Science

Hannah: (Reading text.) "The world has wondered ever since whether the United States might have defeated Japan without resorting to atomic bombs, but recent research shows that the bombs were the shock that allowed the emperor and peace advocates to overcome military leaders who wanted to fight to the death." And our question is: "In
In this conversation, Nathan, Hannah, and Amber used a textbook selection and SFL to consider the way that this text reinforces a privileging of scientific knowledge over everyday knowledge. Indeed, these three students disagreed with the author's perspective that scientific research is a neutral, objective truth. These students exhibited agency by recontextualizing this text to include their perspectives and to include examples of when research has not revealed an objective truth. Furthermore, these students were arguing for the validity and knowledge behind a less privileged sign system that they call "common sense", something that was generally absent from early reader response entries on language and slang. In fact, the students were using a tool of historical discourse which is to offer a well-reasoned interpretation of events.

In spite of this apparent sense of solidarity, students voiced a wider range of opinions when asked to respond to the prompt: *Take a moment to evaluate this passage overall and to compare it to your own perspective on World War II*. Specifically, it became evident that the varied perspectives of international students were left out of both the textbook selection and the class discussion on the article. Examples of these transactions can be found in Table 4.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.4</th>
<th>Transactions of World War II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>I think that the author wanted to create an image of US as a strong, neutral country with no destruction who couldn't help it that they got rich afterwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasha</td>
<td>Yes, we won the war but a lot of people died in the process. We won the war at a high cost. Since I am from Russia I was surprised to see how to Americans this war was about the United States against Germany and Japan without any talk about the USSR or Stalin. This story is missing an important piece. It was one of the most destructive wars in human history.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>I am a veteran and I think that while the atomic bomb was needed, it's not because of the &quot;research&quot; it is because of my own view that it was the only way. Unlike the author, I know it's subjective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie-Carmen</td>
<td>This is a very American article. Colombia had a small role in the war but it was very interesting. There were many camps across the globe that the author did not discuss. I think because we watch movies and read stories about Jews, we like to hate Hitler more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amir</td>
<td>I think that in India people fought on both sides. That makes for a more interesting story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>The author tried too hard to be neutral and instead confused everyone. Maybe it would be better for several people who really have different opinions to share them. That seems more complete. I think we all agree that this was a horrible war.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the students engaged in the agentic act of transacting a response to the text that reflected their values and life experiences. Nevertheless, the voices of international students and a war veteran would have greatly contributed to the class discussion of World War II if they had been shared. It is possible that the emergence of a group identity or group perspective in Transcripts 4.5 and 4.6 served to silence alternative viewpoints.

I had a more positive experience with this lesson than the first lesson. The Super Bowl seemed to help the students connect the new SFL concept of agent and beneficiary to an everyday experience and then transfer that knowledge to the history textbook. I was also encouraged by the way that the students seemed to grasp aspects of historical discourse and SFL. The Facebook activity, however, was not an especially positive experience. In these early lessons, I found it challenging to design lessons on a fairly complex linguistics theory that were
accessible, built from extant literacies, transferable to academic discourses, and both engaging and meaningful. Some of the lessons I crafted met this aim better than others. In order to engage the sustained and earnest critique of my own practice that was a necessary part of this undertaking, I began building a support system of colleagues and friends who shared my most deeply held convictions about literacy and social justice.

**Lesson 3: Writer/reader relationships.** The third lesson on Systemic Functional Linguistics was designed to help students explore how authors position readers in terms of distance, power and familiarity by looking at pronouns and sentence types (declarative, imperative, interrogative). In this lesson, students looked at both a television clip and a sociology textbook selection drug abuse and differential association theory. The lesson began with an introduction to the principle of author positionality. Next, the class discussed potential reader responses to this positioning such as accepting the role that the author has prescribed or negotiating new roles. Finally, the class looked at ways that this positioning can be encoded linguistically (such as through pronouns or sentence type).

From this introduction, the class began applying these SFL principles to a video clip of the popular sitcom *Scrubs* (Lawrence et al., 2007). This particular episode was entitled "My Own Worst Enemy." The students were asked to attend to the use of pronouns and the way that the characters position one another and to consider the way that these language choices affected meaning. The students first filled out Part I (see Appendix H) of a teacher-created handout and then discussed their findings as a group. In Part I, students shared similar reactions to a scene where an African-American resident is first referred to as "Snoop Dog Resident" then "Snoop Dog Intern" and finally, when corrected, "Snoop Dog Attending" by the two main characters J.D. and Turk. Student perspectives on these word choices are shared in Table 4.5.
Table 4.5:
Student Analyses of Physician Greeting (Lawrence et. al., 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>&quot;They could have been professional and greeted him by Dr. X. This affects meaning because they made a joke out of it.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shamika</td>
<td>&quot;Since they didn't greet him by name, this shows that they did not take him seriously as a doctor.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>&quot;They called him Snoop Dog. I think this is a racist joke.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deon</td>
<td>&quot;This changes the seriousness of the conversation and makes it playful.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>&quot;He is not getting noticed for his success but because he looks like a rap star.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the class discussion, the students expanded their perspectives to include dialogue about the function of these comments and the implications of such comments.

**Transcript 4.7: Physician Greeting Discussion**

*Nathan:  It's like nobody took him seriously.*

*Hannah:  It's like his real identity doesn't matter. He's being seen as a black rapper rather than getting credit for being a successful doctor.*

*Heather:  Sure. And don't get me wrong, Snoop Dog has been incredibly successful, it's just that this isn't Snoop Dog. They're taking somebody who has accomplished something huge, he's a physician, and they're...*

*Nathan:  Just making him another stereotypical black male who looks like a criminal...*  

*Rashad:  If he's lucky a dealer or a rapper.  

*Ben:  But we all laughed. That's the bad thing. It was kind of funny.*

The students also noticed a discrepancy between the implicit messages about race that they saw in this portion of the text and the explicit attention to race given in another scene. In that scene, Carla and Turk are trying to decide which candy bar Turk, who is diabetic and can only eat a regulated amount of sugar, should choose. Turk says, "I want to eliminate any candy
that seems even remotely racist including all dark chocolate and, surprisingly, Jujubes." The students speculated about this shift.

**Transcript 4.8: Discussion of Racism on Scrubs**

*Anthony:* They don't talk about how the show is racist, but they talked about racist candy.

*Marie-Carmen:* That was odd.

*Deon:* They made racism itself seem like a joke. They paired it with candy.

*Heather:* Why do you think they address race only in this part of the clip?

*Rashad:* To make it seem like racism is over. They make that the issue, something that we can brush off and leave feeling happy about. It kind of makes people think that people exaggerate when they talk about racism, like they can't move on.

After this portion of the discussion, the students read the textbook selection on "Differential Association Theory" from a sociology textbook (Ballantine & Roberts, 2012, p. 153). This selection defines "differential association theory" as "two processes that can result in criminals learning how to engage in crime" (p.153). Drug use and, in particular, the use of heroin is used as an example of differential association theory.

In this text, the students noticed that the authors engaged the reader through the use of familiar pronouns and questioning techniques such as in the paragraph below:

*If someone offered you heroin, what would determine whether you took it? First, would you define sticking a needle in your arm and injecting heroin as a good way to spend your afternoon? Second, do you typically hang around with others who engage in this type of behavior and define it as "the thing to do"? Third, would you know the routine—how to cook the heroin to extract the liquid if you have never seen it done? You likely would not know the proper technique for how to cook the drug or how to inject it. Why? Being a drug user depends on whether you have associated with drug users and whether
your family and friends define drug use as acceptable or deviant (Ballantine & Roberts, 2012, p. 153.)

For some students, the language choices made in this passage were problematic.

**Transcript 4.9: Examples that Matter**

_Nathan:_ "Would you define sticking a needle in your arm and injecting heroin a good way to spend the day?" Why'd the author say it that way? Nobody likes the needle--people do it to get high. That's the number one reason people use drugs. Especially heroin.

_Rashad:_ I think heroin itself is the problem. Pills...you see pills getting abused in all kinds of places but that would ruin the point. That one politician, the one that got addicted to pills a bit back. Remember him? Nobody taught him how to do it, the doctor prescribed it. He was wealthy but he became an addict. So she picked heroin because, yeah, even I'll admit that's a bit complicated to get and figure out how to use on your own. He himself thought it was "deviant"...and his family, his friends, too. I'm just saying.

_Makayla:_ Right. It doesn't "depend" on whether you have "associated with drug users." You might become an addict and then start associating with them. That's how I think it usually goes.

_Hannah:_ I'm a poor, single mom and I think drugs are bad.

_Deon:_ Exactly. My mama raised me right. We sometimes struggled to make those right choices, but my mama raised me right.

_Makayla:_ This reminds me of Whitney, about how all anyone can talk about is how she was an addict. People love to judge an addict.

_Anthony:_ But we all know what they say about Whitney because we read it.

_Makayla:_ You do it, I do it. We know it's wrong, we don't want to be like that, but we are. Who hasn't made fun of a crackhead? It's actually even worse when you know it's wrong and you want to beat the system but see how you're wrapped up in it.

_Anthony:_ I feel you. But. But this is just an example of the theory. It's not even supposed to be about drugs.

_Makayla:_ But the example she picked. That matters.
Makayla's comment points to a theme that began to emerge during this class session. Makayla was beginning to talk explicitly about difficulty of resisting oppressive systems and an awareness of her own, at times, participation in them. Makayla's comment also bears resemblance to Ben's comment in Transcript 4.7 ("But we all laughed. That's the bad thing. It was kind of funny.").

The example of heroin use was especially troubling for many of the students because they felt that it reified class stereotypes. One paragraph often cited by the students is shared below to aid the reader in following along with the students followed by student reactions to this portion of the text.

Some theorists contend that lower-class life consists of a distinctive subculture in which delinquent behavior patterns are transmitted through socialization. The values, beliefs, norms and practices that have evolved in lower-class communities over time can often lead to a violation of laws. These values and norms have been defined by those in power as deviant. Just as upper-class youth seem destined to succeed, lower-class youth may learn other behaviors that those with privilege have defined as deviant and criminal (Ballantine & Roberts, 2012, p. 153).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.6: Student Reactions to Differential Association Theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shamika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the most striking features of the student responses to this text is the way that students appropriated a sociological lens or the identity of "sociologist" and used it to question the sociology textbook itself. The students generated critiques of this text that are nuanced and reflective and draw on their life experiences. The students were deeply engaged with the reading material and are thinking deeply about how the text connects to the world. They also questioned whether drug abuse would simply be "defined as deviant" or would be "a dangerous practice for any individual." This criticism is a fair one. An alternative style of dress, for instance, might be considered "deviant" but does carry the same high risk of physical harm.

At the end of the lesson, students were again asked to fill out index cards summarizing what they learned and what they liked and disliked about the activity. Many found the use of television engaging, particularly because it employed the use of humor. The students also felt confident about their ability to critique this text and felt that they had strong prior knowledge about poverty and drug addiction. Hannah and Anthony worked together to write an email to the
authors of the textbook, asking them to consider using another example for the portion on differential association theory.

This lesson also marked a shift in the group dynamic. In transcribing the video and audio tape from this class session, there were extensive student-led conversations about the article that were not present in the first two lessons. In the first two lessons, the only lengthy conversations took place as a whole class. In this class session, a collective identity started to emerge. The students in this class were united in their resistance to oppression and their acceptance and appreciation of one another. In the videotape, students could be seen clustering close to one another, exchanging phone numbers, laughing with and teasing one another, and giving one another positive reinforcement.

Perhaps in response to this trend, I had an incredibly positive experience with this particular lesson. I found the conversation stimulating and reinforcing of my own identity as a critical reader and social activist.

**SFL lesson 4: Signal words and interpretation.** The focus of the fourth lesson on SFL on February 29, 2012 was on the relationship between signal/transition words and interpretation. In particular this lesson focused on the difference between causal, temporal, additive, or adversative transition words. The lesson began with a hands-on activity, moved on to an analysis and discussion of Tupac Shakur's poem "A Rose from the Concrete" (1999, p. 3) and ended with an analysis of the psychology textbook selection "From Stereotypes to Prejudice: In Groups and Out Groups" (Hockenbury & Hockenbury, 2010, p. 512-513).

This class session began with an activity I created called "Transition Word Mash Up.” Students in one half of the classroom received index cards with the beginning of a sentence such as: "Your girlfriend cheated on you…” or "You won the lottery…” . Students in the other half of
the classroom received index cards with various transition words written on them. The students with partial sentences were instructed to think about whether they wanted their fates to continue in the same direction or whether they wanted to nudge them in a new direction. Students then paired off with student holding a transition word that helped them to achieve this aim. Finally, they completed the sentence together. This activity was used as a starting place for conversation about how transition words link together ideas.

Next, the class read the poem "The Rose that Grew From Concrete" from a collection of poems by Tupac Shakur (1999) and answered the questions found in Appendix J. This poem was selected both because Tupac's music has special significance for some of the students in this class and because it afforded an especially rich opportunity for students to transact with a text. In relation to the SFL lessons, the poem also utilizes subtle linguistic devices for linking together ideas. Hence, this poem was used to help students identify strategies for moving beyond an overreliance on signal words.

The poem selection itself elicited a great deal of conversation.

Transcript 4.10: Tupac Fan

Anthony: Mrs. Neal! You are a secret Tupac fan?

Heather: No, but I think that this poem says something important. It's been widely published and well received. I like thinking about what it means. Take a second to read it on your own first, and we're going to wonder together about what it might mean. Poetry offers such a rich opportunity to personalize a text's meaning. I really want you to individually consider what this might mean so we don't limit ourselves to just one interpretation. We'll also look at how relationships are communicated in the poem.

Shamika: Was this written by him?

Heather: Yes. It was later turned into a song/spoken word version by Tupac and Nikki Giovani. But yes, he wrote it.

Deon: You like rap?
Heather: More so than rap itself I like texts that mean something, texts that say something deep and try to make a difference in people and in the world. And I do like rhythm. But no, I do not generally listen to rap.

Dustin: This is scary coming from you, Tupac. I would never have guessed that you know who he is. It's kinda cool, kinda scary.

In this portion of the conversation, it was my intention to both validate the work of a less privileged artist and to emphasize the importance of multiple perspectives on what a poem might mean. I was also, however, trying to remain neutral about an artist that does not always share views that line up with my personal belief system. I wondered later in my Teacher-Researcher journal whether I should have used this moment to incorporate a discussion of or an analysis of rap as a genre. My perspective on rap is uncertain since I have seen it used to question, interrogate and resist oppressive systems, but I have also seen it used to reinforce oppressive systems. Tupac's rap, in particular, explores a wide range of themes that I am not well positioned to fully interpret. This ambivalence made me hesitant to speak further.

My focus at the moment was also centered around this specific poem. The students had a number of insights and perspectives to share. In particular, students considered the meaning of "concrete" as a symbol. Students were asked to explore the meaning of the word "concrete" in the poem to illustrate the socially situated nature of language. These observations are recorded in Table 4.6. Students were also asked to reflect on the linguistic resources that Tupac used to create causal relationships in the poem.

The poem itself reads:

Did you hear about the rose that grew from a crack in the concrete?
Proving nature's law is wrong it learned to walk without having feet.
Funny it seems, but by keeping its dreams, it learned to breathe fresh air.
Long live the rose that grew from concrete 
when no one else ever cared (Shakur, 1999, p.3)

| **Table 4.6: Student Reflections on Concrete as a Symbol** |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Daya            | "America"                                  |
| Marie-Carmen    | "cities, the power of being sensitive"     |
| Deon            | "hard, cold and broken to show that people can grow where they are planted, grow without any support" |
| Dustin          | "a battle, an obstacle to overcome"        |
| Nathan          | "a cold hard place without color"          |
| Steve           | "hard, impenetrable, inflexible, unsophisticated" |
| Makayla         | "something permanent that can't be undone to show people how serious the topic is" |
| Anthony         | "the base, the foundation to show how you build success from the ground up" |
| Hannah          | "not being alive, something that's dead"   |
| Shamika         | "it holds different kinds of things together" |
| Ben             | "rough, hard, unforgiving"                 |
| Amber           | "people who seem hard but are actually vulnerable" |
| Rashad          | "cities, gangs, bad news"                  |

The discussion on the meaning of "concrete" to individual students and how it works as a literary device in the poem was an attempt to hear the perspectives of multiple students within the classroom. In SFL Lesson 2 (see Table 4.4), only a limited number of student perspectives on World War II were shared in the classroom. To address this concern, after students responded to the questions found in Appendix J, students first shared their thoughts with a partner. During this time, I circulated around the class to get a better understanding of the range of ideas being shared in hopes that they would be included in the whole-class discussion. In the Transcript 4.10, questioning strategies were used to encourage more students to share their ideas with the class.

**Transcript 4.11: Discussion on Concrete**

*Heather: What did you have to say about the meaning of "concrete"?*
Numerous voices at once: Permanent, strong, independent, hard as a rock, solid.

Nathan: Cold-hearted, hardened.

Deon: Hard, cold, sometimes broken.

Steven: Solid, difficult to break. Impenetrable.

Dustin: Scraping your knees as kids.

Heather: I think it's great to see all of the different places that this word is taking us. It really enriches our understanding, I think. Did everyone grow up in a place where there were sidewalks made out of concrete? If not, let's have you share that experience and whether it changes how you view concrete.

Ben: No.

Daya: In India there were not sidewalks, not usually.

Nathan: Seriously? I wouldn't have pictured that.

Daya: Usually people ride their bikes right with the cars. It is different.

Heather: Did anyone grow up in the country? If so, what was that like?

Hannah: We just had-

Nathan: We just had the roads.

Heather: Think for a moment about where your experiences with "concrete" have come from and whether this understanding has been expanded by listening to your classmates.

After discussing the potential meaning of this poem and the subtle cause-effect relationships built in the poem, the class moved toward an analysis of signal words and the overarching themes found in a psychology passage on stereotypes called "From Stereotypes to Prejudice: In Groups and Out Groups" (Hockenbury & Hockenbury, 2010, p. 512-513). This passage was selected because allowed students to examine a new discipline and, in particular, some of the cause-and-effect relationships that can be found within the discipline of psychology. This specific selection examines the human tendency to stereotype, the strategies that humans
use to maintain a stereotype, and the harmful effects of stereotypes. The authors describe stereotypes as "natural cognitive processes" and an "inescapable fact of social reality" that help humans to "organize social experience" (Hockenbury & Hockenbury, 2010, p. 512). The students were asked to reflect on this idea. In light of the title of the paragraph and the core values of many of the students in this class, many students applied an affective filter to the reading of these portions of the text. Early in the text, the authors use "stereotypes" to talk about the process of "generalization" but this conversation shifts toward a focus on derogatory stereotypes. Many students were confused by the first question on page 2 of Appendix J. These comments are shared in Transcript 4.12.

Transcript 4.12: Simplifying Social Experience

Part A

Ben: I'm not sure I get what they mean by "simplify social experience."

Heather: Okay. So people use the word "generalization" to describe patterns or trends. I might make the observation that many of my students work and form a generalization like "Midland students usually have jobs." That helps me to understand an average pattern and to make choices based on it. I might be more careful about the homework I assign, for instance. But if I were to overgeneralize, I might take it one step further and think that all of my students work and forget that there are students who do not work. It would especially be a problem if I believed something bad about all of my students.

Part B

Shamika: The author thinks that stereotyping is okay? The author is making excuses for it?

Deon: That's kind of what it sounds like.

Part C

Hannah: The author thinks that people have to stereotype? That it's natural? That is really biased.

Nathan: That's wrong. It's never good to stereotype.
Part D

Heather (addressing the class): Let me give you an example that might help clarify what the author is saying. I'm not suggesting that you see things this way, but we can make a more informed decision by fully understanding what the author is communicating about "simplifying social experience.” When you are young, you need to figure out the difference between "children" and "adults" and a generalization about "adults" might be helpful. For a toddler, believing that "adults" are helpful might help you to know who to turn to if you have a problem. Over time, the category "adults" might break down into a category like "family members" and a new category for adults that you have to be careful around or "strangers" might form. Over time, people come to realize that not even all family members are helpful. The individual becomes more important than the group. This is what I think that the author is saying in paragraph 3, with the exception of that last part. That "stereotypes" help us to organize social experience and see patterns. Knowing that New Yorkers tend to move quickly might be a helpful thing to know if you visit New York. Sometimes, we start from stereotypes or general patterns and learn to think in more complex ways over time. But for many of us in this classroom, myself included, it is hard to look at a word like "stereotype" neutrally.

Unlike in some of the other lessons, the students were struggling with the idea that stereotypes could ever be beneficial. The students were able to re-read and discuss this passage to build an understanding of the author's intended meaning. Nevertheless, they did not find the author's logic compelling and felt that accepting such a "truth" would compromise their core values.

After studying some of the cause-and-effect signal words in this text, most of the students in this class were concerned by the cause-and-effect relationships shared in this text. One concern was the relevance of "stereotype threat" to local testing practices. In the text, the authors mention that learning about negative stereotypes associated with any of a person's group memberships can lead to stereotype threat. The authors described research that showed that awareness of these stereotypes can impact test performance.
Transcript 4.13: Stereotype Threat

Heather: What does the author cite as some of the negative effects of stereotyping?

Anthony: It affects performance on tests.

Makayla: Yeah, like. On the Accuplacer. They asked us about race, gender. You've got to wonder if that makes a difference.

Heather: Maybe we should research this more and see whether it's something that we might want to change.

Dustin: Let's bust in to the placement center and hang up some diverse pics.

Heather: That's a good idea, without the busting in, of course.

Makayla: What would be their answer for why they ask?

Heather: Hmm, maybe to look at bias? To see if the test is culturally biased? I could try to look into that.

Makayla: But they could be used to show that some people score lower and that feeds that cycle.

Heather: Right. If it harms some groups and not others, maybe we should look at it. There aren't really pure races, anyway, so even the categories are problematic. I wonder whether it would help to at least move the questions to the end of the test.

Marie-Clare: They should do that.

In light of this concern, Rashad started to write an email to the testing center about this practice. Other students also voiced a concern about one of the authors' key points—that people can maintain a stereotype even in the face of contrary evidence. Many students believed that this was an overly pessimistic outlook at that individuals can and do change. Nathan, however, had encountered this tendency in his life and shared that experience with the class followed by the reactions of other students.
Transcript 4.14: Exceptions

Heather: What reactions did you have to this text?

Nathan: The part about the Zeegs. Where they said you might make an exception. I was about nineteen and I worked with a girl, she was a white girl, and one day she came up to me and said, "Nathan, you are an exceptional black man because my father said that all blacks are lazy," and I used to come in early and stay late and I was like, "What are you talking about? My whole family works hard." So I couldn't understand that part about making one exception. That's crazy—people doing that. That's crazy. And it can leave you feeling hopeless because you'd like to believe that seeing an exception would make a difference.

Shamika: For me, the voice that was missing was that there wasn't any talk about how to move away from racism or stereotypes or any examples of people who have at least improved the situation. It doesn't talk about dialogue or how people change their views.

Heather: Good point. And to be fair, later in the chapter they do explore some of those things. But I'm glad that you brought this up. It's important. What else did you notice?

Anthony: I don't believe that everyone believes in the most damaging stereotypes. The world isn't all black and white. People learn to see shades of gray. This wasn't talked about in the article. The authors stereotyped us by calling it a "natural tendency", like it's a rule we have to follow. But look at this class, look at us.

Makayla: We also discussed the social categories of "us" and "them" and how we're all in this together. We think that the best people see things in a more complex way than that. Getting educated about these issues makes a difference.

Dustin: So, like, I am always stereotyped just because of the way I dress, I listen to hard rock. People judge. Take the time to read the lyrics. I wear tight jeans, but I'm not gay. Like, seriously. No. Naw. But...stereotypes, being judged. Like, someone might look at Anthony and say he looks like he's from the hood.

Anthony: What did you say about my hood? What did you say about my hood?

Dustin: You are from the burbs. That's the point.

Unfortunately, this conversation was cut short by the end of the class period. I felt incredibly disappointed that we were unable to explore these ideas at length. For instance, Shamika, Anthony and Makayla shared a belief in society's potential to transform. This would have been a perfect opportunity to share options for getting involved in local and institutional
social justice projects. Furthermore, Dustin's comment about being stereotyped was difficult to interpret. On the one hand, Dustin was sharing his frustration over being inaccurately labeled. On the other hand, this comment combined with other class discussions seemed to reinforce the ideas that being gay was "bad", something to deny. Even Anthony's choice to enact a stereotyped identity in jest would have been interesting to consider in light of the article.

The students were unable to share their immediate reactions to this lesson in class, but they did share them during the next class section. Most students reported finding the Signal Word Mash-Up activity interesting and liked both of the texts. Dustin commented that it would have been more effective to "hear the poem spoken since it was meant to be an oral text." Makayla felt that this text did not "tell it like it is" quite like some of the sociological texts. Indeed, when Makayla shared this opinion, her classmates concurred, arguing that "natural processes" are shaped by culture. The class also seemed to appropriate the SFL notion that cause and effect relationships are often a matter of interpretation.

With the exception of the time constraints, I had a positive experience with this particular lesson. In particular, I appreciated the way that the class dialogue prompted the class to consider deeply important issues that other scholars have wrestled with such as the function of generalizations in the production of knowledge. I also noted that such a deep exploration of terms like "generalization" and "cognitive processes" helped the students to access not only a dictionary-like definition of the words but a situated understanding of them.

However, I also felt less confident in my own identity as a "psychologist" than my identity as a "sociologist." While this can also be said about my identity as an "historian", I did not note this trend after the first SFL lesson. This is likely because in my work as a Change Agent on campus, I interact with far more sociologists than psychologists. Like my students, I
found that adopting a sociological lens more directly supported my work as an agent of change. Potential consequences and solutions for this affective experience will be shared in detail in Chapter 5.

**SFL lesson 5: Theme/rheme, processes, and circumstances.** The fifth and final lesson on SFL took place on March 5, 2012 and was designed to help students explore the concepts of theme/rheme, processes, and circumstances. This lesson featured two texts written on the topic of the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. The first was a recent article in a local newspaper about community members who were interned during World War II.² The second article was taken from a college history textbook article and entitled "The Limits of American Ideals" (Norton et. al, 2012, p. 749-752). In this lesson, students analyzed the two texts for theme/rheme, processes and circumstances to better understand how newspapers and history textbooks arrange language differently to create different meanings.

In the interest of time, the students were asked to read "The Limits of American Ideals" before coming to this class session. Students also reflected on this passage in their Reader Response Journals before this lesson began. Students were given time to read the newspaper article in class. As a starting place, each student was given a tag board sentence strip taken from one of the two articles. The tag board strips were color coded by article to help students make observations about the language patterns used in each text. The students were next asked to cut apart their sentences in order to divide them into subjects/participants, processes and circumstances. Then, students taped these cut sentence strips under the category of "subject", "processes" or "circumstances" on the large classroom dry erase board. This enabled students to visually see the kinds of word choices that were made in each text.

² Note: This source has been concealed in order to protect confidentiality.
The students were able to draw several conclusions from this activity. First, they noticed that the newspaper article favored individual subjects. They concluded that when groups or nominalizations were used, they were used to offer the reader background information or historical content. In the history article, most sentences began with group participants, nominalizations or transition words. Students also noticed that the newspaper article often used processes related to thinking, feeling, reflecting, or sharing their stories such as "talked", "noted", "described", "marvel(ed)", "shocked", "realized", "yearned" and "struggling."

They also noted that the history article used action processes such as "fought", "controlled", "dehumanized", "defend(ed)" and "confronted."

The students were undecided about whether these differences in processes and, in particular, the way that they made the internees seem more passive than the Allied forces contributed to stereotypes or accurately reflected the power imbalances that characterized this event in American history.

For the second part of this lesson, the class looked at one paragraph of "The Limits of American Ideals" in detail. This part of the lesson was based on the work of Fang & Schleppegrell (2008) who have recommended analyzing short portions of dense text as a way to apprentice students into the language of a discipline. The selected paragraph is listed below:

\footnote{American anger at Japan's "sneak attack" on Pearl Harbor fueled the calls for internment, as did fears that West Coast cities might yet come under enemy attack. \footnote{Long-standing racism was evident, as the chief of Western Defense Command warned, "The Japanese race is an enemy race."} Finally, people in economic competition with Japanese Americans strongly supported internment. Although Japanese nationals were forbidden to gain U.S. citizenship or own property, American-born Nissei (second generation) and}
Sansei (third generation), all U.S. citizens, were increasingly successful in business and agriculture. The eviction order forced Japanese Americans to sell property valued at $500 million for a fraction of its worth. West Coast Japanese Americans also lost their positions in the truck-garden, floral, and fishing industries (Norton et. al., 2012, p. 751).

In order to aid interpretation of student responses to this paragraph, it is important to begin by noticing some of the linguistic challenges that this paragraph poses. First, the paragraph as a whole breaks down into two major sections. The first three sentences focus on the reasons why (some) Americans wanted to intern Japanese Americans. The last three sentences, on the other hand, offer contextual details to explain how those in "economic competition" with the Japanese Americans financially benefitted from the internment.

The second major challenge of this text is the first sentence. The first half of the sentence states the first reason why there were American calls for internment—American anger over the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. Identifying the second reason—fears that West Coast cities might yet come under attack—is more challenging because it requires readers to notice subtle language clues. Students typically find it easier to identify reasons when explicit signal words are used. For instance, the beginning of this paragraph might be rewritten as:

There were four reasons why Americans thought that Japanese Americans should be interned. First, Americans were angry about the "sneak attack" on Pearl Harbor. Second, Americans were fearful that West Coast cities might yet come under attack. Third, many Americans had racist beliefs about the Japanese. Finally, some Americans were in economic competition with the Japanese and profited from their internment.
While this paraphrased paragraph is easier to understand and to learn from, it lacks some of the formality and sophistication of the original paragraph. It is also less easily recognizable as a history textbook. Nevertheless, paraphrasing a textbook selection can help students to note parallels between how ideas are shared from one context to another.

Paraphrasing can also help teachers to identify the challenges that students face when reading texts. In Transcript 4.15, the class discussed their paraphrasing of the first sentence of the selected paragraph. The discussion, however, moved toward an analysis of how students experienced reading this passage. While using SFL to analyze this text made it easier for the students to understand it, it also raised the question of why textbooks are not written in a more accessible manner.

Transcript 4.15: Paraphrasing History

Heather: Let's look at this sentence from "The Limits of American Ideals" using this process. American anger at Japan's "sneak attack" on Pearl Harbor fueled the calls for internment, as did fears that West Coast cities might yet come under enemy attack. First, let's try out paraphrasing this sentence to make it more clear. (Students write down their paraphrases.) What did you come up with?

Nathan: American anger from the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor caused people to want internment and to feel afraid.

Heather: How else did we try rewording this?

Steve: Because of the attack on Pearl Harbor, many people were afraid of a west coast attack.

Heather: I want you to notice that all of these different ways of paraphrasing make sense. It's reasonable to think that the attack on Pearl Harbor caused anger, calls for internment, and fear of attack. It's a cause and effect sentence and a logical interpretation. But it can be difficult to unravel exactly what cause and effect relationship or interpretation the author is suggesting. Let's try to clear this sentence up.
a bit. Let's split this sentence into the subject, verb/process and circumstances. So what is the subject?

Daya: American anger over the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Heather: Let's start there. This is the psychological subject, the theme. Are there any other subjects?

Nathan: No.

Heather: So for now, let's stick with this one and move on to processes. What did the anger do?

Amber: Fueled the calls for internment.

Heather: So another way of wording that might be: American anger over the attack caused them to ask that the Japanese be interned. What do we do with "as did fears that the West Coast cities might yet come under enemy attack."

Deon: I think I may have missed what the author was trying to say.

Heather: That's a great way of wording it, isn't it? We might want to make our own informed interpretation of these events, but we also want to know what the author is trying to communicate with us. Notice the words "as did." If you were to pick one type of signal word that "as did" is most like, what would you pick?

Nathan: Addition. It's like "also."

Heather: So what we need to decide is what the authors are adding on to.

Amber: Oh! So it's another cause. Both the anger and the fear both made people want to intern the Japanese.

Dustin: Why did they make that so hard to understand? They left us high and dry without any signal words. Honestly, I think they do it on purpose.

Heather: Tell me more about that.

Dustin: If you can say it an easier way and don't...that limits who is going to understand it. The textbooks should be written for us.

Heather: So one frustration in reading a text like this one is feeling that it's more difficult than it has to be.

Anthony: My English teacher would make me rewrite a sentence like that.
Heather: I'm hearing that it also seems disorganized. Is that accurate?

Deon: Yes!

Heather: Well, one possible reason is that textbook authors are not writers. They are experts in their fields. Another possible reason is that it serves a functional purpose. For instance, when we paraphrase this, do the paragraphs get longer or shorter?

Dustin: Longer.

Heather: Exactly. So it's more efficient to write like this. It makes it easier to talk about and link together ideas. It helps historians to think like historians. But I share your concern that it limits the number of people who can understand it. These types of sentences get easier with practice but they can seem confusing or frustrating. And sometimes it's just a few sentences or phrases that seem that way. In the passage from the psychology text, for instance, we really grappled with trying to understand what was meant by stereotypes being called "natural cognitive processes" that "simplify social experience." We thought a lot about that one sentence and really had to dig deep to understand what it might mean and what it means to us. It's like a ball of string that we have to untangle. So would I use a strategy like this for every sentence? No way. But sometimes, it helps to have a strategy for those times when the meaning just doesn't seem clear, especially if you get the sense that the sentence is an important one. That doesn't mean that we can't look at the issue from another perspective, through another lens. It just means that we're trying to be an active listener, trying to hear the author.

This transcript offers insight into one of the reasons why students can feel shut out of academic discourse or, in this case, historical discourse. While many of the students in this class found this passage confusing, Dustin shared an additional critique of this passage--that the distinctive use of language limits the number of people who can understand it. In all of the previous SFL lessons and class discussions related to history textbooks, the students were willing to enact the identity of "historian" and contribute their own interpretations of historical events. However, since none of the students in this class planned on majoring in history and would only take a history course to meet a general education requirement, it is reasonable that they did not feel attached to this particular identity. Indeed, Dustin saw historical discourse as a potential threat to a more important identity—that of a college student.
This class session did not include a whole-class discussion about the content of the article due to time constraints. However, the students did have an opportunity to engage in, reflect on, and evaluate the text in their Reader Response Journals. Excerpts from these entries are shared below (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Reader Response Journal Entries on "The Limits of American Ideals"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>&quot;I appreciate how blunt this text is. It says what needs to be said. The other passage on WWII made it seem like America had to drop the a-bomb—so not true. It said that the research showed that we had to do it. In this article, it's not just about war and protection. It talks about racism, anger, greed. I think that this one gives a more accurate interpretation.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandi</td>
<td>&quot;Whenever I read history, I find the topics of Pearl Harbor and the Holocaust the most interesting (I dislike history). I was surprised at how neutral and nonchalant the author was—6,000 prisoners! I know that historians interpret, but how can an author be neutral? How can any explanation make this okay?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deon</td>
<td>&quot;This passage initially reminded me of the concentration camps in Germany, with exceptions of course. The US lumped together everyone of Japanese decent as being spies, saboteurs paying no attention to who served this country proudly. This reminds me of a time further back with Native Americans when their lands and possessions were taken and they were stripped of their dignity. So sad that America has this notion that paying someone makes everything alright. So sad!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathan</td>
<td>&quot;This story is yet again another sad look at the kind of world we live in. This story was a real eye-opener for me. How can someone ask families to give up their land and homes and be asked to live like livestock? Some people wonder why the world is the way that it is now. Take a look at our history. We let this happen.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daya</td>
<td>&quot;The US lost their power and they would do anything to get it back, even mistreat innocent people. So that is something else to think about, something that the author didn't talk about. How powerful countries want more power. They make mistakes to get more power.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>&quot;As a country, we are forced to follow a government and if one speaks against it or thinks outside the box there are consequences. They are rebels or ones not following the sheep to the slaughter. They talked about Japanese Americans who weren't loyal after the war, and we get that. But they should have talked more about the smiling Japanese posing for the camp pictures. That's an uglier side of it. Smiling because you have to.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These six responses are indicative of the deep reading and active analysis that students engaged in. While the responses differ considerably and come to very different conclusions, they all offer interpretations of historical events and use supporting details to take a position related to the topic of internment camps. The conclusions that students drew are, perhaps, less important than the reasons behind them. For Amber, the article was refreshing because it talked openly
about the less flattering reasons why Americans placed Japanese-Americans in internment camps. From Mandi’s perspective, however, offering reasons or explanations seemed to rationalize the atrocities. In both cases, they were enacting identities as historians, critical readers, and discourse analysts. The range of transactions evidenced here shows promising data about the room for students to negotiate personal identities within the academic disciplines. It is also important to honor the contributions that each of these students brought to this particular text. Moreover, the meaning-making capacities of all students were enhanced by creating space for them.

This final lesson on SFL concluded with a feedback form where students were asked to reflect on the five SFL lessons (Appendix L). This form gave students another forum for sharing their experiences with these discourse analytic tools.

**SFL feedback form, part A.** This section of the research report will focus on student responses to the first three questions as they specifically addressed SFL. The last three questions focus on identity, agency, and word consciousness and will be discussed in the next section of this research report. Student feedback to these three questions is summarized by question according to theme in Table 4.9.

As students reflected on their experiences with SFL, they cited two major positive experiences, the class discussions and learning new material and perspectives. They felt that the class discussions supported their comprehension of the texts and enabled them to think more critically and globally about important issues. For many students, the best part of SFL was learning new concepts that enabled them to access new perspectives. Unlike familiar topics that are also part of the course such as main idea or context clues, SFL was a new topic for every student. The only negative experience cited in question one was the difficulty of the material.
In response to question 2, many students again cited the importance of the class discussions. Some students reported that the class discussions helped to balance out any potential bias in the textbooks by integrating new voices and perspectives into the texts. Many of the students appreciated having exposure to and strategies for dealing with content-area textbooks and found that using Midland textbooks helped to contextualize the lessons. Students reported finding the everyday texts engaging, easy-to-grasp and connect to, and a pathway to feeling confident about the concepts found in textbooks and SFL. Similarly, students liked hands-on and experiential learning activities. Finally, many students found that the lessons encouraged introspection and discussion about important social justice and civil rights issues.

The students also offered insight into the aspects of SFL that were the least helpful to them. Many of the students did not like writing in conjunction with the SFL lessons, even for students who liked the Reader Response Journals. Some students did not like writing in general, even apart from the SFL lessons. These opinions were found in other data sources, such as in the videotape transcriptions. For instance, in SFL Lesson 5, Dustin said, "Ugh! We have to write!", Anthony said, "I need a scribe!" and Hannah said, "All those poor trees!". However, on the feedback form, students offered more rationale about this perspective. Some students simply disliked writing, but others felt that since writing is an independent activity, it is not conducive to broadening perspectives.

The history texts were cited by many of the students as a least favorite part of the SFL lessons. For some students, the historical texts lacked immediacy and seemed divorced from current events. Other students found historical discourse distancing and difficult to comprehend. The students were less interested in interpreting historical events than analyzing current events
and tendencies and identified with the identity of "sociologist" more strongly than the identity of "historian."

Finally, for some students, the metalanguage of SFL was confusing and unhelpful. Dustin likened it to "when verbs became predicates in school", suggesting that a new term for a known concept does not serve a functional purpose for the students.

Table 4.9: Student Responses to SFL Feedback Form, Questions 1-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1: How did you experience these lessons?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Class Discussions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I really liked the discussions because it helped me to understand the articles better than I understood them by myself.&quot; –Mandi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The comments that people shared in class helped with outside-of-the box thinking.&quot; –Steve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Great lessons overall (great teacher to have for these lessons) and meeting and talking with new people from around the world about this was a great experience.&quot; –Makayla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 2: Learning Something New</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I liked the lessons because it was a different way to think about things.&quot; –Shamika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I enjoyed them, learning new things that I've never even thought about before.&quot; –Hannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;(I liked) different ways of learning and looking at things from a different perspective.&quot; –Ben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Everything was helpful to me, learning new information and refreshing me on information I need to know.&quot; –Makayla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;The lessons were intested (sic) and entrataining (sic) because they were about different subjects that are brand new but relative to our own lives.&quot; –Marie-Carmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I experienced it in a way that I can't describe. But for the gist of it, it was exciting, new and informative.&quot; –Dustin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I enjoyed learning how to take a more sociological look at articles from Midland, so SFL was enjoyable.&quot; –Mandi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Theme 3: Challenging

"At first it was hard for me, but I worked hard to learn the tools of analyzing texts." -Daya

"I have never studied psychology or sociology lessons before so this was a little hard for me." -Amir

Question 2: Which part of the lessons did you find the most helpful? Why?

Theme 1: Discussions

"The discussions because I got to hear other people's opinions and see things I wouldn't have noticed on my own." –Shamika

"Class discussions because you see a lot of different thoughts from everyone in the class. Everyone's view mattered and that added in more perspectives than just the author's." -Hannah

"A lot of important facts and issues got brought up and discussed." –Ben

"I felt like part of a community every time we had the discussions. They made the stories come to life." -Daya

Theme 2: Discipline-Specific Reading Strategies

"I liked seeing a preview of our textbooks and found the articles informative. I'll know how to switch up my reading for each of them." –Shamika

"Learning to see how the support was arranged in each text was helpful to me." -Amir

"Identifying the differences between textbooks in college and ways to understand it, how they are written." -Marie-Carmen

"I liked learning about how to use signal words and how to have a backup plan when there aren't any." -Anthony

Theme 3: Everyday Texts

"The everyday texts were easy to grasp and relate to." -Shamika

"TV! Everyday texts! I like how we could connect the text to our lives." –Ben

"I like the everyday texts. They make me feel confident." -Amber

Theme 4: Experiential Learning
"I liked learning through hands-on activities and experiences." – Deon

"The activities and games were the best. There wasn't a game for this topic, but all the active stuff was good." - Rashad

*Theme 5: Important Issues*

"I learned things about the way the world works that I should have known already. I had to really think and look for evidence." – Nathan

"I learned my voice and actions make a difference." – Deon

"I learned to be a better person." - Steve

"A lot of important issues got brought up and discussed." – Ben

"Learning how to notice and move beyond stereotypes." – Rashad

---

**Question 3: Which part of these lessons did you find the least helpful? Why?**

*Theme 1: Writing*

"I didn't like the sheets because I don't like writing very much." – Shamika

"The writing because it just didn't seem as thought-provoking." – Rashad

"Writing because you are limited to your own POV." – Steve

*Theme 2: History*

"Textbook articles from history were too long and often very hard to understand." – Deon

"The history text because you couldn't relate to it. You could interpret it, but that's it. You can't do anything about it like with the other texts." – Anthony

"The history textbooks and how they are written in a way that is too difficult to understand." – Hannah

"History has very hard vocabulary (nominalizations) that confuse me and are hard to understand." – Daya

"History, especially when we read it out of class. I get confused and discouraged. Looking at them in class helped." – Mandi
Theme 3: SFL Terminology

"The part where all the parts of speech got new names was frustrating. It's like when verbs became predicates in school." - Dustin

"The terms could make things seem harder than they were." - Amir

"Some of the new vocabulary wasn't helpful. I liked agent and beneficiary but I hated nominalizations." - Hannah

In summary, students had an overall positive experience with SFL and enjoyed the class discussions, learning something new and/or challenging, discipline-specific learning strategies, activities, everyday texts, and the opportunity to discuss important issues. The students did not find the writing portions of the activity especially helpful and felt that the SFL terminology was unnecessarily challenging. The history textbook comments, however, were focused more on history textbooks as a genre as opposed to using SFL with history textbooks. Therefore, I used member checking on March 7, 2012, to get clarification from the students who referenced history books.

Mandi stated that using SFL with history textbooks helped her to comprehend the text better, but that she found it challenging to read extended portions of text independently. She felt that the SFL lesson would have been more helpful before the independent reading of "The Limits of American Ideals." The other students felt that the SFL lessons would have been more enjoyable without any history textbook selections, even though most of them believed that it helped them to comprehend the text better. Student opinions about history textbooks centered around a dislike of the complexity of the discourse and a concern that discussing negative past events was less productive than actively changing present circumstances.

In many instances, the student responses echoed my observations. However, I was surprised by some of the data shared. For instance, I was unsure as to whether students were
having a positive experience with the SFL tools. After hearing this feedback, it became clear that many students simply disliked the written responses and for important reasons, such as preferring that knowledge be socially constructed.

The focus of this research report will now turn to student growth related to agency.

**Student Experiences with Agency**

The focus on this research will now shift to student experiences with agency. In the five lessons of SFL, some student experiences with agency have already been detailed. For instance, students exhibited agency when they negotiated classroom activities, adopted and resisted authorial positioning, enacted and renegotiated disciplinary identities such as an identity as a sociologist, and created an identity as a community of learners. This rich description of the SFL lessons was designed to enable the reader to experience these lessons holistically. Nevertheless, it is now important to narrow the scope to student experiences related to agency. This section of the research report is intended to allow the reader to have a more synthesized view of student experiences related to agency.

**Initial attitudes related to agency.** As the reader will recall, identity work was especially prominent in the first few days of the participants’ college experiences. In order to more fully explore and unravel the complicated initial attitudes of some of the students in this course, particularly in relation to agency, the initial interviews, surveys, and reader response journal entries will now be described. The initial interviews and surveys will take a broad look at agency and look at college-specific attitudes. The reader response journals will also explore initial attitudes about agency, the interplay between language and identity, and student responses to authorial positioning. These data sources will be shared in order to answer the third research
question: *Do my postsecondary literacy students experience a change related to agency over the quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to?*

**Initial survey of agency.** On the second class session, student participants shared their perspectives on agency through the survey (see Appendix B). Agency, as operationalized in Chapter 1, is a multi-faceted construct that looks at how individuals enact identities and impact change within contexts of power. At times, this agentic action will include redefining activities, languages, cultural tools and relationships such as shaping the activity of textbook reading or teacher-assigned activities. In order to gather the most useful data from this source, the survey will be explored from a number of different angles. One important consideration is the emergence of themes across participants. While these themes are most often holistic in nature, numerical analysis will occasionally be employed to facilitate discussion. These analyses must be interpreted with great caution. For instance, an "average" Likert scale of "neutral" (or the numerical equivalent of 3) would suggest that many students are neutral or undecided about a question. However, this average can also be obtained when a class feels strongly about a question but differs in whether those beliefs are strong agreement or strong disagreement. In these instances, the open-ended responses will be used to highlight the range of student perspectives.

This section will begin with an overview of participant responses related to agency beginning with the Likert responses. Table 4.10 shows the average numerical equivalent for each statement.
Table 4.10 Likert Responses Related to Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Average Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel confident about my identity as a college student.</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are parts of my identity that others do not recognize.</td>
<td>4.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am able to add new dimensions to my identity to meet the needs of new environments.</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that I have ideas and perspectives that are of value to my college.</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that my life experiences and perspectives will shape how I experience course content at Midland.</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that my life experiences and perspectives will shape how other faculty and students experience course content at Midland.</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that the real meaning of a text is fixed and created by the author.</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When I read a text, I help to create meaning by interacting with the author's words.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can contribute to positive change in the world.</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can contribute to positive change in my college.</td>
<td>3.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can contribute to positive change in systems and institutions (the government, businesses, etc.)</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student responses reflected a great deal of variance and, at times, ambiguity in regards to agency. In relation to their nascent identities as college freshman, some students felt confident while others were unsure or even insecure about them (see question 1). Most students, however, felt that parts of their identities were not always recognized by others (see question 2). Many students reported feeling unsure about their ability to impact change, particularly at the institutional level. When asked about their sense of agency in relation to literacy, most students strongly identified with a traditional literacy model and believed that meaning is created by an author and resides in the text (see question 7). In general, students brought differing stances
toward agency into the classroom. In order to delve into these stances more deeply, it is necessary to look at some of the insights that emerged from the typological analysis and hybrid critical discourse analysis of the open-ended student responses.

Table 4.11 shows the general themes that emerged from the data. The themes cluster around two major themes—barriers to agency and sources of validation. The barriers to agency included societal barriers such as being a minority student or being judged by others based on appearance, language, dress, or past behavior. Students also reported that self-judgment diminished their sense of agency. Students reported several factors that promoted agency such as reaching milestones, using literacy tools, life experiences, and forging strong identities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.11 Themes Related to Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Judgments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Related to Appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Related to Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Slang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Related to Dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Related to Past Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-Judgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Based on Past Experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Based on Perceptions of Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources of Validation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Milestones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When asked to elaborate on their experiences with making and remaking their identities, many students discussed societal factors. A common theme reported by five out of the eight African-American students was the impact of race on agency. Deon reflected, "Sometimes being an African-American, I am not deemed good enough." Makayla shared a similar view. "Just being a black person gives me limitations in the world." However, Makayla saw these limitations as a potential source of strength, adding, "But that just makes me stronger, gives me
Two of the African-American students who did not report this theme, Anthony and Nathan, did not grow up in the Midland school district. Nathan spent his childhood in a rural community on the west coast and Anthony lived in a suburb of Midland. Hence, all but one African-American student who spent their childhood in Midland reported race as a barrier to agency.

Students also disclosed other societal factors that constrained their sense of agency such as judgment based on their appearances or past choices. Dustin remarked, "I have been judged based on my appearance just about anytime I met someone." Levi experienced judgment based on life events and commented, "I had experiences in life that change how people see me and because of that it changed how I see myself." Antwan noted, "People judge you based on your experience or the way that you speak."

Through discourse analysis, it is possible to notice subtle changes in word choices that are relevant to agency. For instance, note the difference between Makayla's and Levi's comments about agency in the box below:

Table 4.1: Sample of Discourse Analysis on Initial Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Makayla</th>
<th>Levi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just being a black person gives me limitations in the world. But that just makes me stronger, gives me drive (Makayla).</td>
<td>I had experiences in life that change how people see me and because of that it changed how I see myself (Levi).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One form of critical discourse analysis is to look for the conjunctive words that a speaker or writer uses (see Table 3.2). Conjunctions are the grammatical resources that join together words, clauses, or phrases. They play a key role in several of the building tasks of language (Gee, 2011) including identities, connections, and relationships. Conjunctions can be additive
(words used to signal a continuation of thought such as "and" or "moreover"), temporal (words used to signal time order such as "then", causal (words that signal cause and effect relationships such as "because") or adversative (words used to signal a contrast such as "but" or "however").

In the above example, Makayla used the adversative conjunction "but" to show that while she recognizes that her race can be a limitation in American society, she used it to become "stronger" and to have more "drive." Hence, Makayla's comment indicates that she had a strong sense of agency because she felt free to assert her identity and worth when confronted with racism.

Levi, on the other hand, used the additive conjunction "and" and the causal "because" to continue speaking about how his life experiences have changed how others see him and, consequently, how he viewed himself. Unlike Makayla, who resisted the racist beliefs that drive the limitations she faces, Levi found himself agreeing with "people." It is important to note that Levi's experiences were not in relation to race. Indeed, Levi was not a racial minority. Nonetheless, Levi was also reacting to a limitation and responded to it by enacting the identity that "people" have chosen for him. Hence, Levi experienced a more constrained sense of agency than Makayla. Levi's experience is important because he is the only participant who did not attend class after the first week of the quarter.

In the Likert questions, many students did not report feeling "confident" in their identities as college students. It is questionable whether this differs from the experiences of other college freshman. In addition, through the open-ended responses, the participants shared a more nuanced view. Numerous students made reference to the positive impact that college had on their identities. Antwan noted that entering college had made him "more responsible", Levi said that he "feels better about himself", Makalya offered that she has a "stronger identity of being something in this world" and Sasha felt "so proud" of being in college, an accomplishment that
he felt would not have been possible in his native country of Russia. Shamika was "surprised" to find out that she had placed into a reading test because she had a high academic record in high school and a previous placement in honors English. Students may not have necessarily reported "confidence" in their identities as college students, but by and large, they found that college had a positive impact on their identities.

Several students also pointed to other milestones as important sources of agency, such as entering college, getting a driver's license, reaching adulthood, and graduating. For some students, reaching a tangible milestone made it feel more plausible that other milestones were within reach. Levi, for instance, reported "[W]hen I was in high school kids use to say that I would never go to college and I was driving before them."

Enacting the identity of a "strong" person, taking on leadership roles, voicing opinions, and independently choosing clothes were also noted as important to the development of agency.

A number of literacy tools were mentioned for their positive influence on the formation of identities. Music, in particular, was mentioned by several participants and was one of the only tools cited as helpful for bringing about transformative action. Students found it especially beneficial to write lyrics that addressed social justice issues. Other students found it rewarding to serve as literacy tutors in schools and in G.E.D. programs.

The survey offered an opportunity to examine collective and individual attitudes about agency. In the first two entries of the Reader Response Journal, students offered further insights about their beliefs regarding agency. The overall themes and specific examples from these entries will now be shared.

**Early Reader Response Journal Entries.** In this course, students completed twelve reader response entries related to short articles from their textbooks, other college textbooks, and
anthologies. The texts that were paired with these entries and any prompts used can be found in Appendix E. Suggestions for open-ended prompts are included in Appendix F. The Reader Response Journal was used to engage students in reflection and analysis of the assigned readings and to promote classroom discussion. It was also used as a form of assessment that is in alignment with the theoretical perspective that reading is a social and transactional practice. The first two entries took place before the SFL Lessons. In many cases, these student work samples offer data about agentic action (research question 2).

The first Reader Response Journal entry will be discussed in the section on word consciousness. The second entry was in response to the article "Unity in Diversity" (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 125-128) and was written in class on January 30, 2012. This article originally appeared in a sociology textbook and explores different cultural practices and sociological concepts such as norms, cultural relativism, adaptation, and ethnocentrism. This entry was open-ended and did not include a prompt. All students addressed themes related to agency or identity although most references to identity or agency were contextually bound and related to sociological constructs.

Student attitudes related to identity or agency were identified using some of the linguistic markers summarized in Table 3.2 and the data analysis procedures explicated in Chapter 3. In particular, many students used "being" verbs such as "I am" to share their identities. Students also varied verb tense to share how their identities have been remade or how they plan or wish to remake them. Finally, students used cognitive ("think", "know") and affective verbs ("believe", "dream") and attitudinal language ("wrong", "shocking") to convey their attitudes and values.

The article describes how cultural universals drive cultural practices that might initially seem quite different. For instance, a practice of "wife sharing" is described as evidence of the
cultural universal "hospitality." Key to this passage is a discussion of the difference between 
*ethnocentrism* or the human tendency to view one's cultural norms as "right" and *cultural relativism* or the belief that "right" and "wrong" vary according to culture. In responding to this passage, many students compared their own values and belief systems to the practices they read about. Furthermore, students had read chapters about active learning and schema theory in Chapters 1, 3 and 6 of their textbooks (Smith & Morris, 2011) and were more likely to explore these connections. In doing so, many native-born students focused on their identities as Americans. In many cases, these students resisted the authorial stance that cultures are more alike than different.

### Table 4.13: American Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name</th>
<th>Relevant Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dustin</td>
<td>&quot;we believe in doing things the opposite way&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deon</td>
<td>&quot;we pride ourselves on monogamy&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>&quot;we view things differently&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rashad</td>
<td>&quot;we raise our children to respect our parents&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;we are different than other cultures&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>&quot;we believe in treating our wives with respect&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other students, however, allied themselves with the author's stance. The majority of these students were English Language Learners. These attitudes were more closely aligned with the author's description of cultural relativism.
Table 4.14: Identity as Cultural Relativist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marie-Carmen</td>
<td>&quot;I feel the same way as the author. I have lived in countries where extended breastfeeding is common. I can see why this adaptation is unnecessary in American culture. Both groups want what is best for their children. I respect that.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>&quot;I believe that it is important to understand why people do what they do. I believe we should understand and respect it.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shomari</td>
<td>&quot;...everyone has values.&quot;&lt;br&gt;&quot;We should respect all cultures.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daya</td>
<td>&quot;I think people should be open to new ideas. I no longer believe in arranged marriage and I am glad that I was open to a new way of doing things. It has led to more happiness for me.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of all of the entries on "Unity in Diversity", a few students attempted to negotiate the seemingly competing constructs of "cultural relativism" and "ethnocentrism.” Sasha, a student who emigrated from Russia in high school, shared the following (unedited) reflection:

I understand the importance of different cultures. I believe that we should try to understand and go in there shoes. I have learned many lessons from these stories. This will make me a better person. I saw many examples I agree with. I want to keep a value about too much shareing. It is good to share but not wives. I want to keep my value that husbands should respect their wives as people not objects. In any culture this is the truth.

Sasha's response is noteworthy because it highlights a unique form of agentic action in response to authorial positioning. The passage "Unity in Diversity" sets up a dichotomy between ethnocentrism and cultural relativism. Sasha, however, negotiated an identity that is situated between these extremes. This move allowed Sasha to access and understand the sociological
concepts embedded in the article and to integrate elements of them into his identity. Nevertheless, he also asserted his core values, such as the belief that women should be respected. This strategic identity negotiation allowed Sasha to try on the lens of "sociologist" as part of his identity as a college student without compromising his core beliefs. Many students eventually used a similar form of negotiation as the quarter progresses, particularly beginning with the third SFL lesson.

Thus far, early student experiences with and attitudes about agency have been described. Early in the quarter, students often reported concrete themes related to agency, such as wearing clothing as an identity marker or getting a driver’s license. A few students considered more abstract themes, such as Makayla who spoke of being a strong woman and voicing her opinions. With the exception of Sasha, students often used dichotomous language to describe their identities. This trend was seen in the reader response journals where many students embraced a homogenous “American” identity. In the survey, students cited a number of life experiences and choices that supported the development of agency, such as reaching milestones, using literacy to help others and embracing an identity as a strong, independent thinker. The students also cited a number of barriers to agency, such as societal and self judgments based on appearance, race and behavior.

Later attitudes related to agency. In the next section of this report, student responses to the fourth question on the SFL Feedback Form will be shared alongside data on agency that was collected after the five SFL lessons began. This form will be shared before the post survey data. This was a conscious choice to position the students' experiences, interpretations and insights before any teacher-researcher experiences, interpretations or insights.
**SFL feedback form part B.** The first data source was taken from the last three questions on the SFL Feedback Form (Table 4.15). This question was not as comprehensive as the Post Survey on Agency but the students conveyed the belief that they found this data source important. Specifically, the students were aware that their answers would offer other postsecondary teachers and researchers insight on the student experience of this literacy tool. Since this data source was gathered at the end of SFL Lesson 5, any opinions shared orally were video recorded and transcribed. The overall trends will be presented first followed by a transcript where students shared additional thoughts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.15: Student Responses to SFL Feedback Form, Question 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 4: Has your identity overall, as a student, or as a reader changed this quarter? If so, why do you think that is?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Identity as a Reader</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I believe I have taken my reading abilities to a higher level because I slow down and know how to direct the process better.&quot; - Ben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I think my identity as a student (and a reader) has changed because I am a person who didn't like to read who is now open to read passages and talk about how I feel and (how it compares to) the author's point of view.&quot; - Anthony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I have changed as a reader because I now try to put myself into (the text) and know what is the important information to remember. I'm bettering myself every quarter.&quot; - Makayla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;My identity as a reader has changed but not my identity as a student. The way I read and look at things has a broader prospect.&quot; - Shamika</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes, because it makes me want to pay more attention and pick out the details. I was in this class before (another section of DEV 065) and I wasn't reading any of the lessons or doing the questions. But this quarter I am reading the lessons and feeling confident.&quot; - Amir</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes, it's caused me to look strongly at other's views and to understand that just because they write on a subject doesn't mean they are right.&quot; - Deon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes, I find myself looking for and analyzing main points in almost everything that I read now. This is something I had never done before. I have a much better understanding of what I read now.&quot; - Nathan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"I'd say sure. It's all about how the material is presented and explained—how we were able to perceive it as a reader/student." -Dustin

"I think my identity as a reader has because I have learned to analyze and read things more closely." -Amber

"Yes, because I learned different ways to evaluate and comprehend the text." –Mandi

"Yes, because now I have a better understanding of what I read for the fact that we learned the different ways that textbooks are written." -Marie-Carmen

"Whenever I read I know what to do. I have become more attached to my classes and my learning." -Daya

One of the most prominent themes found in response to the question: Has your identity overall, as a student or as a reader changed this quarter? If so, why do you think that is? is that students noticed a change related to their identities as readers. In fact, this was true for all students although there was some overlap between identities related to reading and being a student (see comments by Daya, Makayla and Amir). These shifts related to a range of aspects of reading including: motivation, engagement, understanding of reading strategies and processes, critical reading, and confidence. With the exception of Marie-Carmen, most students interpreted the question differently than I originally intended it. I asked students, "Why do you think that is?" to elicit feedback about what students attributed this change to. Most students, however, thought that the question was intended to garner specific details that students used to make a determination about whether they had changed.

As students were being given the SFL Feedback Forms, some students verbally shared additional, unprompted themes related to agency while casually talking to one another. This classroom interaction can be found in Transcript 4.16.
Transcript 4.14: Classroom Interaction during SFL Feedback Form on Agency

Hannah: Oh, so some of these are about agency or at least identity.

Anthony: I love to share my opinions but I hate writing them.

Makayla: That's exactly it.

Heather: Do you need a scribe?

Anthony: Ha. Yeah. I need a scribe to say that I like the TV clips.

Amber: They need to ask our opinions about math. The classes are not interactive at all. We can't keep up with our other classes or our jobs because of the work.

Anthony: Okay, so we need to write our opinions. Will the math teachers read it?

Nathan: I like that you check in with us.

Daya: I'm glad that you are taking the time to share our ideas with other people.

Marie-Clare: I think it is hard to do this because all of the class blends together. I liked all of your comments and encouragement.

Anthony: Oh, yeah.

Deon: That's the best part.

Makayla: The teacher makes the biggest difference. It doesn't matter what you teach if you don't have a teacher that cares.

Dustin: Yeah. I need that.

Heather: What feedback do you find most helpful?

Marie-Clare: The comments on the work. And also how you always tell us how smart we are.

Deon: You aren't afraid to be wrong. You listen to us. And yeah, the comments.

Anthony: She calls me by name and thanks me for my important contributions to class.

Dustin: I have stunning insights.

For these students, teacher feedback and support contributed to their sense of agency.
In particular, the individual comments written to students in their Reader Response Journals seemed to support their nascent identities as college students and their identities as readers. For Makayla, the individual teacher was more important than the curriculum or pedagogy.

In the SFL lessons, students engaged in important identity work. In class discussions, in particular, students gradually constructed a group identity as critical readers, critical discourse analysts and social activists. They strongly identified with the identity of a sociologist. They were willing to enact the identity of an historian and contributed their own interpretations of historical events, but did not enjoy enacting this identity. They had neutral feelings about reading a psychology text, but approached this text critically. The students shared their objections to some movements within the field of psychology in their reader response entries on "Monkey Love" (Smith, 2011) which will be shared later in this chapter. Finally, the class constructed a group identity as cultural pluralists who value the cultural contributions of all class members. The next section of this research report will explore the final survey of agency followed by middle-to-late reader response journal entries related to agency. The reader response journals will address the individual identity work of students, as these experiences at times differ from the collective experiences of the group.

**Final survey of agency.** On the second half of the final survey, students considered their attitudes related to agency. This survey was given to students one week before the end of the quarter. Since some of students in this course withdrew from the course, two pre and post measures will be shared. The first number value is a raw average and is entitled "Average." The second number value only included participants for whom there is both pre and post test data and is entitled "Average for Students with Pre and Post Test Data." This portion of the survey uses a
five-point Likert scale with "1" representing "strongly disagree" and "5" representing "strongly agree."

This portion of the survey took a broad look at the construct of agency including identity, perceived control of identity, and perceived ability to impact change. This survey also asked questions specifically related to agentic action as a reader. One question in particular must be analyzed carefully because it asks students to consider the statement: "I believe that the real meaning of a text is fixed and created by an author." This statement reflects a transmission model of reading as opposed to the transactional model detailed in Chapter 2. Hence, a low score would be more closely aligned with a transactional and more agentic literacy model wherein students co-construct meaning with the author. Conversely, consider the statement: "When I read a text, I help to create meaning by interacting with the author." This statement reflects a transactional model of reading. Likert responses to the Post Survey of Agency are shared in Table 4.16 followed by open-ended responses related to agency.

### Table 4.16: Pre and Post Survey of Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Likert Scale)</th>
<th>Pre Survey Average</th>
<th>Pre Survey Average for Students with Pre/Post Test Data</th>
<th>Post Survey Average</th>
<th>Post Survey Average for Students with Pre/Post Test Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I feel confident about my identity as a college student.</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. There are parts of my identity that others do not recognize.</td>
<td>4.31</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I believe that I have ideas and perspectives that are of value to my college.</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am able to add new dimensions to my identity to meet the needs of new situations.</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I believe that my life experiences and perspectives will shape how I</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.16: Open-Ended Responses on the Final Survey of Agency

**Question 1: Describe any new experiences with identity this quarter.**
- Great overall experience. I feel accepted and celebrated.
- I met new people who shaped me—people from all over the world.
- Friends, community, more optimistic.
No.

Question 2: Have you ever felt like others have placed limitations on your identity this quarter? Explain your answer.
   - No, everyone welcomes me.
   - People in this class like me the way I am.
   - I have a strong support team.

Question 3: Has the experience of entering college impacted your identity? If so, how?
   - Yes. I can do difficult things with reading.
   - Yes. I now believe I can do anything that I set my mind to.
   - I feel I am finding myself more in college.
   - I feel more like a college student than in 064. Sometimes we were treated like children. We all talk intelligently this quarter, even though we have fun.
   - I believe in myself and my classmates.
   - We have grown so much!

Question 4: Have you ever used literacy as a tool for bringing about change? If so, describe that experience.
   - Listening to different students from different cultures changed how we read and what we took from the articles.
   - It's changed by outlook on life.
   - When I had my first adult-sounding conversation with my parents.
   - Maybe? Can't think of one right now.

In response to these questions, many students shared their feelings of acceptance and their appreciation of one another. This contrasts with the views shared by many students at the beginning of the quarter. In the initial survey, many students reported that society had placed limitations on their identity based on characteristics like race, language and appearance. As in the SFL Feedback Form, some students commented on their successes with challenging reading tasks and how it impacted their identities.

Students shared fewer perspectives on using literacy as a tool for bringing about change. Students did not mention their efforts to impact change through writing, something that occurred in several instances in the classroom. For instance, the students who wrote a textbook publisher did not consider this to be a form of transformative or agentic action or, at the very least, did not remember it when filling out the survey. Other students, however, commented on how literacy
expanded their horizons, their understanding of texts, and one student's outlook on life. From this broad picture of some of the experiences that these students had in this course, this report will now turn to the middle-to-late Reader Response Journals.

**Middle-to-late reader response journal entries.** Early in Chapter 4, initial reader response journal entries were shared. These entries revealed several general themes. Students used writing to enact a range of identities such as that of a college-level English student, an American, and a cultural relativist. The hybrid critical discourse analysis is particularly useful in analyzing reader response entries for themes related to agency. As in the early entries, many students used "being" verbs such as "I am" to share their identities. Students also varied verb tense to share how their identities have been remade or how they plan or wish to remake them. Finally, students used cognitive ("think", "know") and affective verbs ("believe", "dream") and attitudinal language ("horrible", "exciting") to convey their attitudes and values. By attending to these linguistic clues, it is possible to notice growth related to agency such as the making and remaking of identities in contexts of power.

Since these entries were paired with reading selections, a key component of agency will be the readerly identities that students enacted. In the early entries, students tended to either adopt or resist the author's point of view. In the reader response journals, students could be found wrestling with identities that complicated this binary. After the first few entries, many students moved away from passive or transmission model of reading and toward an active model that required them to deeply analyze, interpret, or evaluate texts. Nevertheless, not all students passed this course and, as a whole, those who were not successful with the course did not read the assigned selections. These students still completed the reader response entries when they attended class, but these entries were generally more a reflection of the coping strategies students
use when asked to reflect on a story that they have not read such as selecting a more general prompt.

The themes that will be shared in this section are general patterns that can be found across many participants. The three most salient themes are: Language and identity, student identities, and identities that resist and reproduce societal norms. The first theme, language and identity, will be discussed under the section on word consciousness. While these themes were found across participants and reader responses, the themes did not manifest themselves in the same way for each student. As a result, examples of different patterns within each theme will be shared to construct a more polyvocal understanding of the class experience.

**Theme 1: Identities as students.** The students were particularly passionate about the selection "Who Gets Ahead and Why" (Ballantine & Roberts, 2012, p. 333-336), a sociology article that addresses the role that educational systems play in reproducing society, often through segregated schools and tracking. Many of the students in this class section attended a presentation by civil rights activist Ruby Bridges held at the Midland Art Institute. Ruby Bridges gave a powerful speech about the forces that continue to segregate many schools, including institutionalized racism. This speech prompted several students in the class to offer to volunteer to work with local high school student in order to prepare them for Midland's placement test. While this event never transpired due to the difficulty of trying to coordinate the schedules of students with a high school, the students were very motivated to get involved locally.

Consequently, the students were incredibly interested in the topic of social stratification. Some students found the author's argument compelling and believed that it fit with their life experiences. Other students, however, felt that the article limited the status afforded to students
from inner city schools. An example of each type of response can be found below. In this entry, students were especially likely to directly quote portions of the text to support their arguments.

*I found that I had a strong reaction to the line, "Lower-class minority students fall disproportionately at the bottom of the educational hierarchy." Okay so the students may not have the same resources or all of the culture. But I used to go to Midland City Schools and that doesn't mean that I'm dumber than someone that goes to (name of a local suburb). Midland may not have all of the fancy equipment but the textbooks and the subjects aren't so different. Lower-class students have the same credentials as higher-class students.* –Amber

*I felt that the statement "students from lower social classes and minority groups are clustered in the lower tracks and complete fewer years and lower levels of schooling resulting in failure in early adolescence" is true. As I think back to my earlier years of schooling, I wasn't the best student and always had issues learning but pushed myself to get ahead. Five friends dropped out of school only to get their G.E.D.s. I feel the school system failed us. I can't blame the teachers because we did have a few good teachers that really cared but were overworked. This leaves me wanting to do it all over again sometimes.* –Nathan

Amber and Nathan initially appear to be arguing for very different things. Amber, for instance, disagreed with the author's stance that lower-class minority students "fall at the bottom of the educational hierarchy.” Amber, as an urban, minority student, was a strong high school
student and knew that this quote did not fit with her life experience. From Amber's perspective, agreeing with the author would have served to reify stereotypes about the cognitive abilities and accomplishments of urban youth. Amber was as interested in an equal distribution of social goods as the author, but was attending to an analysis of more abstract social goods, such as status. She was asserting her identity as a good student, rather than a "student at the bottom of the educational hierarchy."

Nathan, on the other hand, saw a relationship between educational systems and achievement for minority youth. He had friends who dropped out and succeeded because he was incredibly committed to doing so. Nathan felt that the "school failed him" and that he might have been a better student if he had different life experiences.

The students also addressed their identities as students in "Fear the College Years" (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 389-392) in the second to last week of the quarter. This story talked about a college student who cheated on all of his college exams and earned a degree without being able to effectively read a menu. In response to this prompt, many students chose to talk about their lingering fears about college.

Amber wrote:

*When I was in grade school I had a hard time with comprehending the material presented so like John I tried to have the other students in the class help me. I was a shy kid who felt like if I asked for help people would think that I was slow or stupid. So after that not working out for me, I learned how to break things down to make it easier to comprehend. This I feel has helped me generally in life because obstacles that I encounter I can get through, including in college.*
Amber was able to relate to this selection and used it to reflect on the ways that she responded to academic challenges, including in college. This entry fits with my early impressions of Amber. Amber shared some of her early experiences with literacy with me and told me the kind of support that she found the most helpful. Amber came to my office for help with the comprehension quizzes at the end of each story in the textbook. She not only wanted to be successful in the course, she wanted to earn an "A." Therefore, she worked through the first two selections one question at a time and had me check her answers before she moved on. After this meeting, she felt that she had internalized the process and went on to get "A"s on the assignments independently and earned an "A" in the course overall. Amber seemed especially confident in her ability to handle the challenges she might face while enacting the identity of a college student.

While Amber's experiences did not surprise me, the responses of many of the other students did. Mandi, for instance, was a student who earned an "A" on nearly every assignment and came across as a confident if shy student.

*I fear the never accomplishing anything at college stereotype. Since I go to Midland, it is nothing compared to an OSU or OU education. Due to John Corcoran's article/story, I felt a sense of relating and understanding. My reading and comprehension abilities are average and I struggle with even being literate.* —Mandi

Mandi did not assign herself the identity of college student but a community college student, an identity that she afforded less status. Her comment that she struggled "with even being literate" is perplexing in light of her strong academic performance both in this particular
class and in her other classes. Mandi explained this discrepancy by comparing Midland to other four-year institutions, thus minimizing any of her accomplishments. Mandi's entry hints at the possibility that even graduating from Midland would not feel like much of an accomplishment. Mandi reported on the SFL Feedback Form that her identity as a reader has changed because she was more apt to evaluate texts and had tools for better understanding them. Nevertheless, this change in Mandi's readerly identity was not radical enough to erase her fears that she was not a particularly strong reader.

Similarly, earlier in this chapter Nathan's reflections on his reading process were shared, such as an improvement in comprehension and his new approach for identifying and analyzing main ideas. Nathan was also a bright and articulate student with writing abilities that stood out even in a talented group of students. Nathan also minimized these accomplishments and worried that he would eventually give up.

_The one fear that I have about college is that I will give up. After reading "Fear the College Years", I can relate on some level. Reading and writing aren't now and haven't ever been something that I feel that I'm good at. It seems in my early years I never really had anyone to push me. Nobody ever said don't give up on yourself and your dreams. Now, many years later, I have that support system I need from my mom and dad and teacher saying they are proud of me and I can do it._ –Nathan

Anthony, however, discussed more concrete barriers to his identity as a college student.
My lingering fear would be that I'll have too much work in college and not be able to keep up. I think that teachers can support students with this lingering fear by not making it too overwhelming for students. –Anthony

This fear is one that students voiced on nearly a daily basis. The homework load for developmental reading students on campus is rigorous, particularly when students take an English, math and reading class together.

The final reflection that will be shared as part of this report comes from Dustin. Dustin was nearly always an active participant in class and engaged in most of the reading tasks that were assigned in class. However, Dustin was not completing any of the reading assignments that took place outside of class and was in danger of failing the course. An Early Alert was submitted for Dustin, a system in place at Midland that notifies students of a potentially low grade and offers counseling and tutoring services. I also sent Dustin emails and printed off lists of missing work plus his current grade. However, these approaches were not effective for Dustin.

A lingering fear that I have about college is failing completely. I really try my best to be a good student and let everyone know that I'm a good person. I honestly don't know who could help me with this. I have quite a few friends but I haven't seen any of them try to communicate with me about this problem. Hopefully that will happen soon! -Dustin

After reading this response, I wrote Dustin a long note in his reader response journal so
we could talk about options and to offer him encouragement. My biggest concern was that he correlated "good student" with being a "good person." In class, Dustin's incise and thought-provoking comments gave the impression that he resisted institutionalized pressures such as in SFL Lesson 1, and on some level, he very well may have. On the other hand, his comment suggests that he also grappled with feelings of inferiority. This approach was much more effective for him, perhaps because it felt far more personal to him. After this talk, Dustin was able to successfully complete the course. In his final interview, Dustin talked about persistence and, in particular, how an engaging and supportive classroom environment helped him to return to class even when he was afraid of failure.

**Theme 2: Identities that resist and reproduce societal norms.** The next major trend in students was related to their identity construction within the confines of society, institutions, and other systems of power. This constrained view of identity offers insight on the role that agency plays in the lives of students. In particular, students tended to critique texts for bias related to gender, culture, and the class and celebrate texts that included multiple perspectives. Several student entries that show qualitatively different forms of these responses will be shared based on two different reading selections. This theme was viewed in responses on nearly all of the selections, but it is not within the scope of this research report to present the entire data pool. These responses are, however, representative of the other reader response entries.

The students engaged in critical thinking and critical reading in response to the passage "The Importance of Being Beautiful" (Smith, 2011, p. 488-491). The article shared research on the differential treatment of individuals based on attractiveness. For some students, this passage prompted an analysis of society and how it promotes beauty norms.
I really want to take a stand about the ideas in this passage. It's not right that people who are more attractive get ahead much quicker (sic) than someone else. I don't think it's right when you go to a job interview and they pick the person who looks better rather than the person who is better qualified for the job. I have seen this happen to a friend of mine where they picked someone who might have looked a little better. –Anthony

What a passage. I asked myself why are there not more heavy set females as newscasters? That's because beauty matters to the public. I was taken by this article and it caused me to reflect on things in everyday life and pay closer attention. I disagree with the writer whose focus was on exterior beauty. That type of beauty will fade with age, but inner beauty will last a lifetime. –Deon

I feel that the world is full of wrongful norms that we have decided to accept (mainly US citizens) because it is what we have decided to accept. Personally, I think that a "short" man should have the same success as a "tall" man if both men have the same knowledge and skill. On the other hand, I know it's biased and I know it's wrong, I try not to judge by race, gender, or beauty, but it's what I've grown up around. At the end of the day, I wanted to be accepted. I wonder if I only pretend to resist these norms. –Amber

I disagree that it is necessary to be beautiful to get ahead! This article really makes me mad. You may need to be beautiful to be a model, but to be beautiful you need to be educated and smart. In the real world, though, the attractive woman will probably get the job at the restaurant even though it has nothing to do with the job. –Mandi
Beauty is necessary to get ahead in life. That is the mean-sounding but honest to God truth. Beauty is also in the eye of the beholder because trends come and go and depend on the cultures. What one group of people find attractive might be considered ugly to others. Someone who is overweight, for instance, might have to work to lose weight to avoid being judged and losing opportunities. –Rashad

The reader response entries based on this passage represent a range of stances based on this passage. Anthony wanted to "take a stand" about the ideas shared in the passage and both he and Mandi argued against discriminatory hiring practices. The article prompted Deon to observe and reflect on these phenomena in everyday life and to argue for the importance of internal beauty. Amber shared an honest account of her concern that she might only be pretending to resist norms in order to be accepted by society. Rashad shared his belief that beauty is a necessary part of success even if those norms are regulated by cultures and change over time.

These responses represent qualitatively different forms of agency. Anthony, Deon, and Mandi criticized discriminatory hiring practices to enact the identity of people who value success based on accomplishments. Anthony and Mandi shared in class that they always had these values, whereas Deon did value inner beauty but had not given serious thought to societal norms based on beauty. This passage offered an opportunity for them to resist a message that went against their values. Mandi, on the other hand, experienced a moment of interdiscursivity. She appropriated the sociological lens of a "norm" and applied it to this reading. She found herself wrestling with a desire to critique society and a desire to earn its approval. She struggled to negotiate an identity that allowed her to be perceived as beautiful without contributing to what
she calls "wrongful norms." Consequently, she found herself simultaneously critiquing and reproducing society, a pattern that also emerged in SFL Lesson 5. Rashad preferred brutal honesty about ephemeral beauty norms that, in his view, do impact success. Hence, for Rashad, a "strategic" way to work toward success would include working toward embodying local beauty norms, when possible.

It is critical to note that while all of these students resisted standardized notions of beauty, they did not independently consider options for translating these values into societal change. As a matter of fact, students rated their confidence in their ability to impact change at the institutional level on the final survey relatively low. In the class discussion, however, the group collectively considered ways to make a difference. Several students discussed options for "voting with their dollars", such as refusing to buy products from business that promote monolithic beauty standards. In the end, however, the class was concerned that such small, individual actions would translate into significant societal change.

The second set of examples come from the reader responses to the passage "How Boys Become Men" (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 506-507). This reader response was given with a set of possible prompts. These prompts are listed below in Table 4.18 to contextualize the responses. The first response is taken from the journal of Deon and the second is from Nathan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.18: Reader Responses to &quot;How Boys Become Men&quot;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The author offers an unwritten &quot;Boy Code&quot; that boys must follow. What is your take on the &quot;boy code&quot;? Are there any benefits, and if so, for whom? Would you change anything about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Is there a &quot;girl code&quot;? If so, how would you describe it? Are there any benefits to it? If so, for whom? Would you change anything about it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Where should society draw the line between teasing and bullying?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you agree with the author's view that the &quot;boy code&quot; interferes with a male's ability to be sensitive? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What conflicting demands do males and females face? Is there a solution for them?</td>
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</table>
As I read this article, I was reminded of this code in my childhood. I would change everything about this code because the long term effects into adulthood are not worth it. What I learned as a child was a desensitization to communication, as if boys are not allowed to say what they feel. Our American culture teaches children, boys in particular, that if you cry or show fear you are a sissy or weak. And many communities do this because their fathers did them this way and somehow we see this as being right. I strongly disagree with this code. It's taken me years to get away from this kind of thinking. –Deon

Being a sensitive man myself, I fully agree with the author's view about the "boy code" interfering with a male's ability to be sensitive. As a boy with older brothers, I was taught not to cry. That made you weak, or a sissy. So I held it in for many years. Over the years, the tears turned to anger and kinda made me cold inside. So not me! I cry now at the drop of a hat, or so I've been told before by my best friend. It's funny how long it took for me to get to this point in my life. For years, my friends called me "the black knight." It seemed as if I've had no feelings at all or when I did cry I had to be all alone and get over it as fast as I can. I'm different now, and look at life differently. I have no fear of tears at all. –Nathan

In these responses, Deon and Nathan were reflecting on the difficult process of becoming
sensitive males in a society that promotes an implicit "boy code." For Deon, this boy code resulted in a "desensitization" and "long-term effects into adulthood." To Nathan, an identity as a cold and angry male did not feel like his true identity ("so not me"). Both men were committed to rewriting the boy code to enable the next generation of males to avoid the painful experience of breaking free from these societal constraints. In fact, enacting the identity of a sensitive male in American culture and resisting societal pressures can be seen as a form of societal transformation.

Dustin and Amber discussed the boundaries between teasing and bullying. This prompt ended up being a timely one as it was assigned in class on the morning of a school shooting in a major metropolitan city in Ohio. The news was released only moments before class began and at the time of the prompt, students were speculating on whether this incident was related to bullying, as it played a role in similar events. Dustin shared his personal experience with bullying.

*Society should draw the line between teasing and bullying after the first or second time they say something to somebody because I believe once or twice is enough. Anything after that is considered bullying! I've been there many times myself and it's no fun. I actually snapped when I was about ten or so and had to stop someone who was bullying me. I don't tolerate it...never have, never will!* -Dustin

Dustin's response not only addressed the topic and enabled him to take a strong stand
against bullying, it also helped him to enact the identity as an assertive young man rather than a victim of bullying. Amber also took a strong stand against bullying, proposed a possible solution and talked about the kind of identity that she'd like to have as a future mother.

*I think that the moment for society to draw the line between teasing and bullying is when the child is old enough to understand the difference between right and wrong. But honestly, teasing and bullying go hand-in-hand. It’s just that younger kids don't get the full concept of what being mean really is and they just look at it as playing. I think that parents should start drawing the line as soon as the child starts school so that way they have some understanding of what teasing and bullying is. That's what I'll do.*  -Amber

Hannah took a different approach to her response and addressed gender roles and how they have changed over time.

*Nowadays, men and women don't have conflicting demands and are finally equal. There can be a stay-at-home mother or a stay-at-home father. Mothers/females are in a professional world and the money makers in the home. And there's nothing wrong with that. I had to become a money maker of my household but I would have rather stayed home and raised my children. In my country, women were to stay home, no questions asked. They wouldn't complain or anything—they would just do it. Men had to get jobs and take care of business.*  –Hannah

Hannah used her experiences as an immigrant to compare gender expectations in
Sarajevo with those found in America. A current emphasis in feminist studies, particularly in regards to being a working or stay-at-home mother, is having access to options. In her response, Hannah achieved the complicated aim of celebrating the more flexible gender roles that she saw in America and lamenting the fact that she was unable to do what she wanted the most, which was to stay home with her children. Hence, Hannah's identity as a former Sarajevoan offered her a different frame of reference for gauging the progress of gender equality in the United States. However, she qualified these statements by sharing how she did not have access to the desired identity of a stay-at-home mother due to financial constraints.

The reader response entries centered around three major themes related to agency: Language and identity, student identities, and identities that resist and reproduce societal norms. The students often experienced spiral rather than linear shifts in growth. At times, they appeared to have a stronger sense of who they wanted to be and what they wanted the world to be like than a clear understanding about how to create such substantial changes. In the words of Makayla during SFL Lesson 3: "I want to change the world, but sometimes I feel like I'm building sandcastles next to the ocean. I don't know if I'm creating anything new at all because my work keeps getting knocked down by something more powerful."

In sum, through the Reader Response Journal entries students considered the relationship between language and identity, enacting identities that both reinforced and deconstructed societal norms, and offered insight about the construction of their identities as students. The next section of the research report will explore student experiences with word consciousness.

**Student Experiences with Word Consciousness**

This portion of the research report will detail student experiences with word consciousness, beginning with the initial survey and moving on to early reader response journal
entries. Next, the SFL Feedback Form and the final survey will be explored. Finally, late reader response entries will be detailed. This section will explore answers to the fourth research question: *Did my postsecondary literacy students experience a change related to word consciousness over the course of the quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to?*

**Initial attitudes related to word consciousness.** The next section of this report will describe initial student attitudes about word consciousness.

**Initial survey of word consciousness.** The first data source comes from student responses to the Survey of Word Consciousness. This will begin with an overview of the Likert responses displayed in Table 4.18 as a succinct way to explore trends.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question:</th>
<th>Average Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am interested in learning new words.</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I pay attention to the author’s word choice in texts.</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I believe that differences in word choice can have an impact on the overall meaning of a text.</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I like to experiment with word choice in writing.</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I notice differences in word choice in texts related to the type or purpose of writing.</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I know how to find resources for learning new words.</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I think it is exciting to learn new words.</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I enjoy reading texts that use words well.</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my college career.</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my workplace success.</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my life outside of college or the workplace.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I like studying the history of words (etymology).</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I enjoy looking at how words relate to one another.</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One of the most important insights that emerged from this portion of the survey is that these students were indeed interested in learning words, particularly because of their potentially positive impact on college study or the workplace. The students' dispositions toward word learning, however, an important facet of word consciousness, were less consistent. Some students had positive affective experiences such as "liking" or "enjoying" elements of word learning or finding the process "exciting." The majority of students, however, were either unsure about or had negative experience with word learning, particularly etymology, word relationships or genre study.

The typological analysis of the open-ended responses provides additional themes on student attitudes toward word learning. These themes can be organized around the guiding theme of "motivations." However, it must be noted that nearly all of the students who answered "neutral", "disagree" or "strongly disagree" on the Likert items either left the open-ended responses blank or answered with responses like "I cannot think of an experience like that."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.20 Themes Related to Word Consciousness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivations</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cognitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Broaden Vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Broaden Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o College Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Positive Impact on Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Playing with Word Choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Music Lyrics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students most frequently noted cognitive motivations for word study, including intellectual growth, college study, and workplace needs. Makayla, for instance, said that she wanted to learn new words, "To make me smarter than I am…lol (laughing out loud). To upgrade my learning ability to do well at a higher level." It is interesting to note that Makayla chose the word "smarter" as opposed to more knowledgeable. This suggests that Makayla believed that vocabulary is connected to intelligence, although the certainty of this belief was tempered by Makayla's use of "lol" to qualify her remark.

A closely related theme was student motivation to learn new words in order to be viewed as more intelligent in social groups. Some students, like Anthony, wanted to learn new words to sound "sophisticated." Dustin wanted to "sound intelligent to all of the beautiful girls and possibly pick one.” Through critical discourse analysis of the comments made by Makayla, Anthony and Dustin, it is clear that their comments function to support the privileged status of
certain vocabulary words as markers of intelligence and sophistication (see *sign systems and knowledge*, Table 3.2). However, even in academia a range of attitudes about language can be found. In developmental English classes on Midland campus, for instance, the focus is often on grammar and the "correct" way to write, particularly in the first course DEV 075 or "Paragraph Writing.” Hence, these comments also functioned to reinforce their identities as college English students, an identity far more relevant and familiar to these students than one such as a sociolinguist.

A few students found word study beneficial when writing, particularly when writing lyrics. Other students reported feeling curious when encountering new words in the reading selections. In some cases, students found that they struggled to create meaning from a text when they encountered a plethora of unknown words. Consequently, students used dictionaries to figure out the meaning of unknown words.

Other students noted the importance of vocabulary as a communicative tool. This motivation was found exclusively among participants who are also English Language Learners. Sasha, for instance, wanted to "speak better English and make friends" after immigrating to the United States.

In sum, the participants used the initial survey to share a range of experiences related to word consciousness. Next, student experiences with word consciousness will be explored from the vantage point of another data source, the reader response journal.

*Early reader response journal entries.* At this point, several sample early reader response entries will be shared. These work samples also offer data about word consciousness, particularly in passages that explicitly related to themes related to language.
The first entry was used with the article "Watch Your Language!" (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 303-306) on January 18, 2012. This passage was taken from a business textbook and focuses on international marketing mistakes related to language. Students were given a list of several prompts and asked to choose at least one to address within a fifteen-minute block of time. The list of potential prompts is listed below.

**Watch Your Language: Reader Response Prompts**

1. Have you ever experienced a communication breakdown? What do you think contributed to this problem?
2. What is a language barrier? Can it happen within the same country?
3. How is language related to identity?
4. The dictionary defines a culture as "the beliefs and traits of a religious, social, racial, or ethnic group" and many of us belong to multiple cultures. Have you ever felt like "outsiders" have a difficult time understanding one of your cultures? Why might that be? What mistakes have they made? How might they communicate more effectively with you?

Many students chose to explore the relationship between language and identity in their entries on "Watch Your Language!". These entries offer an early look at student beliefs related to language and their word consciousness. One especially dominant theme was an internalization of prescriptive language norms and the belief that language could be either "good" or "bad." Examples of some of these comments can be found in Table 4.21.

**Table 4.21: Prescriptive Language Norms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name</th>
<th>Relevant Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deon</td>
<td>&quot;not correct&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>&quot;their language problems&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levi</td>
<td>&quot;vulgar language&quot;; &quot;bad English&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The examples cited in Table 4.21 show a brief overview of some of the most commonly conveyed attitudes as identified through typological analysis. The hybrid critical discourse analysis, however, is useful for offering a more contextualized analysis of this theme. Ben, for instance, talked at length about his language attitudes, but his language attitudes are not reflected in Table 4.21 because Ben's attitudes are embedded in complex grammatical structures that cannot easily be shortened (see discussion on transcript 4.16).

While the predominant focus of the data analysis in this report is on identity, the impact of the building task "sign systems" cannot be isolated from "identity" when students discuss the impact of language on identity. Slang, in particular, was a commonly referenced sign system. This group used the term "slang" to refer to informal lexical items that appear in peer, regional, or social memberships. Slang is not always viewed by students as a sign system, perhaps because it is time-sensitive and does not often find its way into word compilations such as dictionaries. In coding the data, however, slang was identified as a sign system according to sociolinguistic principles (McKay & Hornberger, 2009). References to slang were, therefore, analyzed according to critical discourse analysis in order to more fully understand how slang, as a sign system, is viewed by students.

The first text comes from Makayla, a young, female, African-American student.
In the Greater Midland area, most teens speak English using slang. Most of the time you can tell what part of the city one another is from by the slang that they use. Many people let the area they are from define who they are. If a young, black male lives on the west side of Midland and uses horrible English and uses slang, he will never make it.

A great deal of information is packed in Makayla's entry. First of all, one must note that Makayla was not simply talking about "slang", which, she felt, most teens in the Greater Midland area used. She was specifically referencing slang associated with the west side of Midland, a part of Midland that, as the reader may recall from Chapter 3, has historically housed more African-Americans. While this urban region is home to a number of successful, middle class African-Americans, it also includes a number of poverty-stricken enclaves such as a large-scale housing project. For Makayla, use of this slang, especially when spoken by a "young, black male" would lead to judgment. Makayla's view is reminiscent of Gee's theory of capital "D" Discourses as an "identity kit." Makayla viewed the slang and the "horrible English" that accompanies it (which we can infer refers to the grammatical configurations found in African American Vernacular English) as part of a larger identity, that of the young, west-side, black male.

In this entry, Makayla exhibited an early form of critical word consciousness in which she recognized the relationship between language the distribution of social goods. Nevertheless, Makayla did not offer a critique of this view of language or try to afford it more social status. Indeed, she used the word "horrible" to describe it. Makayla grew up in west Midland but moved with her mother and children to a nearby suburb with highly rated schools. Makayla was
most interested in the language practices that best served her interests, which helped her to construct a viable identity as an educated female within an institutionalized context that regulated what “counts” as educated.

Ben, a white male in his twenties, also discussed slang and talked explicitly about how it related to his own identity.

Language says to me what our mom and dad taught us how to speak. When I was in school, I saw a lot of people trying to talk in slang because they thought it was cool. I think that this "slang" can show our true identity in other people's minds. When I got into my first year of college, I was questioning myself....how and why people can still talk in this "slang" as adults now. My parents told me to treat people with respect and not to judge anybody in any way because they would get hurt and sad.

Like Makayla, Ben had a strong grasp of the social dimensions of language. Ben's text is especially relevant, however, because it offers a strong example of interdiscursivity. Ben vacillated between pronouns, sometimes using the personal "I" or "we" and sometimes using othering pronouns like "they.” This text is best viewed in the context of Ben's life. I asked Ben for clarification on this comment and he said that he was unsuccessful in his first quarter in a developmental writing course. The first course in the developmental writing course at Midland is heavily focused on grammar which may have led to Ben "questioning himself" or at least his language practices. Ben also explained the somewhat contradictory statement that "slang" reveals one's "true identity in other people's minds.” This "true identity" is not "true" per se but the identity that others construct based on slang, the "judgment" that "makes people sad.” Ben
did not support judgments based on language practices, but did not necessarily value "slang" as a sign system, either. As noted early in Chapter 4, Ben was strategically aligning his language to enact the institutionally-sanctioned and regulated identity of college student.

It should be noted that due to the language-based subject matter and the possible prompts offered for "Watch Your Language", student entries focused on word consciousness and agency simultaneously.

_Late themes related to word consciousness._ This section of the research report will focus on late themes related to word consciousness. It will open with the SFL Feedback Form, Part B and then turn to the final survey of Word Consciousness. As the reader might recall from the discussion on agency, the feedback form is being positioned before other data sources because the participants felt that it offered the most meaningful data. This open-ended feedback form was designed to elicit student feedback about whether they experienced any change related to language over the course of the quarter.

Table 4.22: SFL Feedback Form, Question 5-6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 5: Has your interest in or awareness of language changed? If so, why do you think that is?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Critical Language Awareness</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes, because of the material in the texts that caused me to think outside of the box.&quot; –Deon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes, my awareness of language has changed. I feel like stereotypes and racism are stronger than I had realized.&quot; –Amber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes, by changing the words or structure of a sentence it opens up one way of thinking.&quot; –Steve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 2: Learning Through Language</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes because it seems easier to me to look at the text and understand the message from the text.&quot; –Mandi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I think it has because I have a much better idea of what I read now.&quot; –Nathan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Yes, because I have been putting my brain to good use.&quot; –Daya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 3: Interest in Other Languages or Vocabulary</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
"Yes. I improved my vocabulary but not as much as I want. I am still learning English, but it changed how I analyze a textbook." –Marie-Carmen

"My interest has changed because I want to learn a language other than English." –Makayla

"Yes. I want to learn about other languages because the stories we read gave me a bigger interest in other cultures." –Shamika

"My interest in language changed because of the class activities and because the teacher teaches to teach." –Amir

"My interest in language changed because of reading new texts and hearing new words and me wanting to know what they mean." –Anthony

Question 6: Has your awareness of how language relates to issues of power, gender, or culture changed? If so, why do you think that is?

Theme 1: No Noticeable Change

"I'm not really sure but I wouldn't think it's changed." –Anthony

"No, not really. My awareness has always been on high alert." -Shamika

Theme 2: Reading Selections

"Yes, because I explored all of the stereotypes they have on gender, culture, and race in the stories I read." –Makayla

"Yes, it has changed some because after reading some of the selections I've learned about different ways of life and thinking that I never knew about." –Nathan

"Yes, because of looking over the articles and looking at real-life scenarios." -Ben

Theme 3: SFL or Language-Based Lessons

"Yes. By manipulating the sentence, words or the paragraph, it can persuade one's thinking." –Steve

"I can see another's point of view and feel more comfortable analyzing it." –Marie-Carmen

"Yes, because I am more educated on these topics." –Daya

"Yes, because I learned about how some texts can be biased against power, gender, and different cultures." –Mandi

"Gender and culture would be most related to my change. It all falls back to stereotyping…one may be judged via gender or culture. I know how to find it by looking at the language clues we talked about." –Amber

Theme 4: Yes, Not Attributed to a Cause

"I think yes." –Amir
The students' responses to Question 5 *Has your interest in or awareness of language changed? If so, why do you think that is?* emphasized three themes: Critical Language Awareness, Learning Through Language, and Interest in Learning Other Languages and/or Vocabulary. Students who shared themes related to critical language awareness reported an understanding of the relationship between word choice or text structure and bias. Students who shared themes related to learning through language shared how a better understanding of how language works supported comprehension and/or cognition. Finally, many students talked about how their experience in a pluralistic classroom setting and their exposure to multicultural texts made them more interested in learning a foreign language. This is an undertheorized aspect of word consciousness that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. Other students talked about their interest in learning new vocabulary. Anthony, for instance, found that the reading selections made him curious about and motivated to learn new words.

Student responses to Question 6: *Has your awareness of how language relates to issues of power, gender, or culture changed? If so, why do you think that is?* were less consistent. Two students did not note a change, particularly Shamika who felt like her "awareness has always been on high alert.” Anthony, however, was one of the most vocal participants in the SFL lessons, particularly when texts were critiqued.

Of the students who noticed a change in their critical language awareness, most attributed it to either the reading selections assigned in the class, some of which explored issues of culture, gender, or power, and the SFL and/or other language-based class activities.

In the SFL lessons, students also attended to and critiqued the word and language choices made by the author. At times, these behaviors were prompted by specific directions and
assignments, such as when students were asked to reflect on the meaning of the word "concrete." However, students also attended to language when viewing a text through the lens of culture, gender or power, such as when students questioned the author's use of the word "delinquent" to describe drug addiction. Students also attended closely to language in order to comprehend a text in order to interrogate it or as a way to discuss the text with classmates.

This research report will now highlight prominent themes from the final survey of word consciousness.

**Final survey of word consciousness.** The Final Survey of Word Consciousness was given to students one week before the end of the quarter. Since some of students in this course withdrew from the course, two pre and post measures will be shared. The first number value is a raw average and is entitled "Average.” The second number value only included participants for whom there is both pre and post test data and is entitled "Average for Students with Pre and Post Test Data.” This portion of the survey uses a five-point Likert scale with "1" representing "strongly disagree" and "5" representing "strongly agree.”

**Table 4.23: Pre and Post Survey of Word Consciousness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement (Likert Scale)</th>
<th>Pre Survey Average</th>
<th>Pre Survey Average for Students with Pre/Post Test Data</th>
<th>Post Survey Average</th>
<th>Post Survey Average for Students with Pre/Post Test Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am interested in learning new words.</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I pay attention to the author's word choices in texts.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I believe that differences in word choice can have an impact on the overall meaning of a text.</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I like to experiment with word choice in writing.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I notice differences in word choices</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I know resources for learning new words.</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>I think it is exciting to learn new words.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I enjoy reading texts that use words well.</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my college career.</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my workplace success.</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my life outside of college or the workplace.</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I like studying the history of words (etymology).</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I enjoy looking at how words relate to one another.</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This survey shows that students often agreed with many of the statements related to word consciousness at the end of the quarter. In some cases, (questions 5, 12 and 13) students moved from a slight disagreement to agreement. Students showed attitudinal gains on nearly all facets of word consciousness, including facets such as etymology which were not a part of this particular course.

One seemingly contradictory finding, however, can be found on question 9: *Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my college career.* The average response for this question (4.8) at the beginning of the quarter was slightly higher than at the end of the quarter (4.6). To better understand this phenomenon, I used member checking to elicit student feedback about this question. Amber shared her rationale for choosing “agree” rather than “strongly agree.”
One thing I've learned this quarter is that you don’t have to feel intimidated if you don’t know all of the prestigious words. You can other strategies to figure out what the author is talking about and focus on the words that are most important to the author’s point.

Since numerical responses mask the complex decision making processes utilized by students, this survey data is best interpreted by pairing it with the short-answer responses from the same survey. However, not all students filled out this portion of this survey, particularly if they believed that the data had not changed since the pre-survey. These data are summarized in Table 4.24.

**Table 4.24: Open-Ended Responses on the Final Survey of Word Consciousness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1: Can you think of a time this quarter when you were especially interested in word learning?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 1: Games and Active Learning Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Structural Roots Game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Charades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Jeopardy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 2: Learning Something New</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Greek and Latin Roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I liked trying new things, new approaches, GAMES.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theme 3: Reading and Writing Texts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When writing stories and reading selections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When our class would have a text to read for homework and there would be a word that I didn't know but sounded cool to use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Anytime I don't know a word. I carry my dictionary with me at all time now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When writing music lyrics.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 2: Are you aware of any new reasons for wanting to learn new words?**

**Theme: Knowledge**

• I want to be more knowledgeable.
• To understand more.
Theme: Expand Vocabulary to Communicate and Succeed

- To broaden conversation. In our class, the guys kept trying to work the vocabulary from the selections into the conversation.
- To expand my vocabulary and sound more interesting.
- To build up my vocabulary to succeed.

The students shared a wealth of insights about interests and motivations related to word learning. Many students highlighted games and active learning strategies as a way to build excitement for word learning. In this class section and many others that I have taught in, games in general seem to promote engagement. Some students liked learning something new about words, vocabulary or language, a theme that was also evident in student responses to the SFL Feedback Form. The students also found that the reading selections facilitated an interest in word learning, either because they were intrigued by a new word or because they wanted to better comprehend the text. The students also wanted to use interesting words when writing stories and music lyrics.

The students were motivated to learn new vocabulary by a desire to learn, communicate and succeed. Students also shared similar internal motivations to learn on the SFL Feedback Form. In both of these data sources, the students listed a desire to communicate with others, especially one another. The students also believed that vocabulary learning is important to college and career success, a view that many students also brought into the classroom and strengthened over the quarter.

Middle-to-late reader response journal entries related to word consciousness. Three themes on word consciousness emerged from the middle-to-late reader response journal entries
on word consciousness: Language and identity, academic language and critical language awareness.

Earlier in this discussion on word consciousness, reader response journal entries from the reading selection “Watch Your Language” were offered. In these entries, the students shared their views about “good” and “bad” English, views that often reinforced prescriptive language norms. Students further considered these views in future reader response journals. The first theme on word consciousness is a continuation of the theme of language and identity.

Theme 1: Language and identity. Many students wrote about the relationship between language and identity after reading "Mother Tongue" (Tan, 1990, 2008), a narrative about the language experiences of Amy Tan, an author and Asian-American woman. The students reported liking this story and were able to connect it to some of their own experiences with language. However, the native English speakers interpreted the story quite differently than the English Language Learners. Most of the native speakers felt that Tan was arguing for the importance of standardized English, whereas the English Language Learners thought that Tan was trying to build compassion and understanding for the experience of acquiring a new language and for having family members who struggle to learn English. Interpreted as such, the native speakers did not necessarily read this story as an opportunity to create a more expansive view of language. Two journal entries are shared below:

My feelings on "Mother Tongue" are that Amy Tan as a whole kinda wants us to stop using limited or broken English. For some it may be harder than others due to the fact that we do as we are taught and sadly a lot of teaching is done at home as small children.

I myself take notice when my mother uses broken English. This came from my
grandmother who was born in the south in nineteen-ten and only went up to the fourth grade. I try my best not to speak that way, but I fall short sometimes, I guess because she lived with us until I was about fifteen. I just never wanted to grow up and be looked down upon for using broken English. –Nathan

It seems to me that the broken English of her mother bothered her to great heights. I would assume partly because of her success as an accomplished writer. After her success came much embarrassment because her mother had been in the country many years and had yet to master the English language as much as her daughter would have liked her to have. –Deon

These two entries convey some of the same beliefs but are used to enact two very different identities. Nathan's response feels much more personal, something he achieved by weaving his own life experiences into his discussion of the text and through the use of personal pronouns ("I", "us") and verbs that convey his wants and motivations ("try", "wanted"). Nathan believed that Tan wanted her readers to speak standardized English and agreed with her. Otherwise, he might be "looked down upon", something that Tan also gave numerous examples of. Nathan understood that more status is afforded to speakers of so-called standard English.

Deon, on the other hand, did not personalize Tan's message or even seem to fully agree with it. Deon worded his opinions carefully, making choices such as "had yet to master the English language as much as her daughter would have liked her to have." Deon repeated the word "she" several times and only used "I" to show when he is making an interpretation of Tan's perspective. Deon did not, at least linguistically, appropriate his perception of Tan's views about
language. In fact, in the class discussion, Deon made it clear that he disagreed with the idea that standardized English should be spoken by everyone. Deon did not yet know me well as an instructor and was unsure of my own beliefs about language. As a result, he made a prediction based on his past experiences with teachers. Deon strategically crafted a response that did not threaten his identity as one who respects all dialects of English but did not risk angering an instructor in a position of power.

Several of the English Language Learners seemed to grasp Tan's intended message. Hannah, for instance, wrote:

*I come from another country and language is one thing that connects us to everybody. My biggest fear about it was whether I ever was going to understand it fully. My mother was the same way as Amy's mother—spoke "broken" English like Amy called it, although we both disagree that it is. It's very hard to put words together when you come from another country because it messes up the meanings of a lot of the words.*

These three different student perspectives were first written in the reader response journals and then shared with the class as part of a discussion. Many students shared their own experiences with language discrimination. In addition, the English Language Learners shared their experiences as "language brokers" for other family members. The tenor of the conversation changed when Mandi argued that Tan did not suggest that standardized English was best. When students disagreed, I asked Mandi to share what she saw in the text that made her draw that conclusion. The other students turned to the text as she read, "Language is the tool of my trade and I use them all—all of the Englishes I grew up with" (p. 76). Some students were quizzical, wondering where their own conclusions had come from. Nathan found a line that seemed to
support a different stance such as: "My mother has long realized the limitations of her own English as well" (p. 78). As part of this discussion, the students combed through the text to look for supporting details and the thesis that seemed to be driving them. In many ways, this text offered a unique challenge as Amy addresses both the limitations and advantages of being an English Language Learner without a simple comparison/contrast story structure. Similarly, students used the same process that they used when they corrected their answers to comprehension questions at the end of the reading selections in the textbook but collaboratively.

This rich discussion may have contributed to a shift in language attitudes between this entry and one written one week later. In addition to writing a response to "On the Sidewalk Bleeding", students responded to the prompt: "Have you noticed a difference in your interest in or awareness of vocabulary or language this quarter?". These responses represented a marked shift for some students. For many students, an awareness of the functional purpose of "register switching" or moving back and form between different types of speech within the same language was helpful. This allowed them to hold onto the identity of "college student" and the benefits of a prestige dialect without judging their primary or home discourses. Student responses to this prompt are summarized in Table 4.25.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.25: Response to Language Prompt, 2/13/12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I have noticed a difference in my awareness in and interest in language. It is a multi-diverse school. It has taught me more about how I use and change my language.&quot; –Ben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I've noticed differences in my own language such as when I talk to my family versus when I talk to a teacher.&quot; –Shamika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I am very interested in the vocabulary words that we see in the stories.&quot; –Anthony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I have a big interest in how language works and wish I would have started learning earlier!&quot; –Hannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I am now aware of how I move from slang to formal talk without even thinking about it. I see that the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
two languages aren't better or worse, just do different things." - Amber

"I find myself looking into the language of everything I read today. Believe it or not it has helped me with comprehension." - Deon

**Theme 2: Academic Language.** The second major theme on word consciousness from the reader response journal entries is an interest in learning and an awareness of academic language. In their reader response journals, students appropriated much of the vocabulary from the reading selections. In order to offer a succinct means of surveying this pattern, this trend will first be shared in Table 4.26. The table also reports the academic discipline from which each selection has been taken.

**Table 4.26: Academic Language in Reader Response Journals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of Academic Language</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;muscle enhancement&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Steroids&quot; (Health)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;performance enhancing&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;atrophy&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;roid rage&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;hypertension&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;correlated&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;legalized&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;privileged&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Mother Tongue&quot; (Narrative/Linguistics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;ethnicity&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;semantics&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;ethical&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Monkey Love&quot; (Psychology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;behaviorism&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;experimentation&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;instinctive&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;consumed&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;primates&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;cognition&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;development&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;evolved&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;implications&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;inborn&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;genetic&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;stratification&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;Who Gets Ahead and Why&quot; (Sociology)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;meritocracy&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;tracking&quot;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In this research report, academic language has been operationalized as a specialized language practice that enables discussion and thinking about disciplinary concepts. The reader response journals appear to have supported the appropriation of academic language. In writing about the selections, the students often needed to refer back to lexical items in order to communicate a point. For instance, all of the students used the term "internment" to write about their concern over the internment camps. Furthermore, many of the words that were selected have a high level of utility within each specific academic discipline. To illustrate that, "ethical", "behaviorism", "experimentation", "cognition", "implications" and "development" are words that might be found in other stories written in a psychology text. In some cases, these words were not limited to those found in the text itself. Cognition, for instance, was used in class discussions both to discuss metacognition and the psychology passage "In Groups and Out Groups.” These different language experiences may have been mutually reinforcing.

Students also included a number of the key vocabulary words from the reading selections in their reader response journals. At times, the students attended to words that were not only equivalent to those selected by the textbook publisher, but more closely aligned with the academic disciplines. Moreover, they often approached these writing assignments intertextually and used relevant words from previous selections and from class discussions. Table 4.27 includes a comparison of the words that students used to reflect on "Monkey Love" (Smith & Morris, 2011, p, 188-192) and the words selected for contextual study in the textbook. The
words selected by the authors are well-suited for the purpose for which they were intended, which is to offer students practice in inferring the meaning of an unknown word from context. Indeed, the students answered these contextual questions and comprehension questions from the book as part of this reading assignment. However, in their responses, these students achieved a different purpose, which was to appropriate academic language in order to communicate about disciplinary ideas and content. This purpose is more closely aligned with the aims of academic language study.

Table 4.27: Comparison of Textbook-Selected and Student-Selected Words on "Monkey Love" (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 188-192)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textbook Selected</th>
<th>Student Selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>surrogate</td>
<td>ethical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>functional</td>
<td>behaviorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anatomy</td>
<td>experimentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tentatively</td>
<td>instinctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>novel</td>
<td>consumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desensitized</td>
<td>primates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ingenious</td>
<td>cognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deprived</td>
<td>development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>persisted</td>
<td>evolved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deficient</td>
<td>implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>inborn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>genetic</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This finding mirrors some of the feedback that students shared on the SFL Feedback form and final survey. In these data sources, students reported that they liked using the vocabulary from the selections in conversations with one another. Having a communicative purpose for talking about disciplinary content and texts seems to have supported their awareness of academic language.

**Theme 3: Critical Language Awareness.** The third theme to emerge from the reader response journals was a critical form of language awareness. This form of word consciousness was used by students who attended to an author's word choices in order to critique his or her stance or to evaluate his or her argument. In the passage "Monkey Love", Harlow's controversial research with infant monkeys was discussed. In response to this passage, Sasha questioned the author's use of the word "brilliant."

*It really troubles me that this research is considered "brilliant." They could have gotten this knowledge in another way. Science is one thing. Harming animals is another. I do not believe in animal research of any kind.*

Sasha was driven to this analysis by his experience growing up in Russia where he not only saw examples of animal abuse but serious human right violations.

Deon's life experiences also prompted him to closely attend to a text. In his response to "On the Sidewalk Bleeding", Deon noted that the author wrote about Andy in the first person and painted an emotional picture of a young man being stabbed because of his gang affiliation.
Even the title of this story—"On the Sidewalk Bleeding"—seems to be about making the reader feel sorry for Andy. The story really downplays gang violence. It makes it appear as if Andy's only crime was falling into the wrong crowd and becoming a Royal.

After writing this response, Deon opened up to the class about his experiences in a gang and his subsequent stay in prison. Deon was committed to speaking out against gang violence and believed that local churches and organizations too often minimize the injustices committed by gang members. In order to address this problem, Deon founded a non-profit organization that aims to help former gang members by having them take care of animals on a farm. Deon read this passage in a different way than his classmates, and they all felt that his story enhanced their understanding of the text.

Makayla also used the title as part of her critique of a text.

*I think it is awful that the article talks about the "four essential freedoms" and then called the passage "The Limits of American Ideals"! How can you limit something essential? Freedom from fear? I bet the Japanese were afraid.*

Dustin noted that the author of "The Importance of Being Beautiful" presented vague references and anecdotes as fact.

*Beautiful people attract "hordes of friends and lovers"? I think the author throws this comment out there for shock value and hopes no one realizes it's not even support. It's just an opinion—and a shallow one at that.*
These critical language analyses only took place when students disagreed with the author's position from a moral or ethical standpoint. This differs from the references to academic language which could be found in virtually every reader response entry. They did not reference or analyze language in reader responses that embraced the author's stance. For instance, most students agreed that there was an implicit "boy code" that impacted the development of sensitivity in males. Hence, in this passage, none of the students critiqued the author's word choices.

In sum, in the reader response journals, students examined the relationship between language and identity, used academic language as a resource for talking about disciplinary content and engaged in critiques of language when they encountered a passage that conflicted with their core values.

In this section on word consciousness, early attitudes were compared to later attitudes. Across data sources, students became more conscious and critically aware of the relationship between words and their functional purpose and context. Students found many forms of word learning motivating such as active learning, journaling, and class discussions. Students prioritized learning words that served an important purpose such as communicating with others or working toward career and college success. To this end, students often appropriated academic language when it served a meaningful purpose for them such as communicating with others, enacting an identity, working toward social justice, or moving toward a personal goal.

The next section of this report will examine teacher-researcher experiences with critical literacy.

**Teacher-Researcher Experiences with Critical Literacy**
This portion of the research report will answer the fifth research question: *How do I, the teacher-researcher, experience the process of implementing a critical approach to literacy?*

Throughout this chapter and, especially, during the presentation of the five lessons on Systemic Functional Linguistics, I have attempted to record and share my own experiences as a teacher-researcher. The teacher-researcher journal has been a powerful tool for recording my experiences and examining and interrogating my subjectivities. However, a narrative reporting format seems most appropriate for sharing a first-person account of my direct experiences with this study.

My initial experiences with this study were characterized by the competing emotions of enthusiasm and fear. I was incredibly excited about having the opportunity to examine a literacy practice that lines up with my most deeply-held convictions about literacy. However, with any innovation comes some degree of risk. I was unable to offer any assurances that this particular approach would produce the results that I hoped it would. I also found it challenging to develop lessons that tapped into the most beneficial aspects of SFL but could be used alongside everyday texts and engaging college textbook selections. During this time, I relied on a support team of colleagues both on Midland and University of Cincinnati campus as well as family members and friends. These allies offered the emotional support that I needed to navigate these changes. I share this information in the hopes that other educators seeking to implement critical literacy approaches will reach out for similar support.

A marked shift in my perception of the study occurred after meeting my students. I have never been so deeply touched by a group of students. This dynamic, courageous, brilliant group of individuals played a key role in some of the transformations that occurred within me during the time that this study was conducted. I was able to relive and revisit many of our class sessions
by watching and transcribing audio, writing my own reflections of our time together, and talking with my students outside of class about our class. Through this, I developed a keen awareness of the importance of this one classroom community. I have gotten to know this group of students better than I ever have gotten to know a group of students. They are truly an inspiration to me.

I share these reflections because they played a pivotal role in constructing my own identity and, indeed, in my own sense of agency. When I conceived of this study, I had not considered examining the construct of agency in my own life. However, in spending so much time reflecting on and getting to know these students, I became even more motivated to advocate for them. I am not always as assertive as I'd like to be, but this process made me more confident about making my views about literacy explicit. Perhaps even more importantly, I discovered ways to nurture this fundamental part of my identity while upholding the high standards set by stakeholders. I maintain that it is possible to teach critical literacy tools and a complex literacy curriculum while addressing foundational processes such as differentiating between major and minor ideas. Nevertheless, I listened to my students when they shared that the way that a teacher interacts with them is far more important any curricular approach.

In this class, I experienced as many failures as successes. I believe in the importance of critically examining my own practice even--and especially--when it is uncomfortable. At times, I missed teachable moments and reinforced hegemonic systems. I was unable to impact global or even local transformative change. In spite of these disappointments, I had the opportunity to work with some of Midland's finest students, to build relationships with students who have left an indelible mark on my identity and life history, and to support their important work as social agents. In the end, I have to consider that a success.

Now, this report will turn to findings related to transformative change.
Findings Related to Transformative Change

This section of the research report will consider the final research question: Does a critical approach to language and literacy within a postsecondary literacy classroom result in transformative action? The findings related to transformative change could have potentially spanned at least four different forms of change—change at the individual level, change at the institutional level, change at the local level (such as in the Greater Midland region) and change at the global level. No change was evidenced, however, at the local or global level.

Change at the individual level. Much of the data on change at the individual level has already been shared as part of this chapter. For instance, the identity work and agentic action that students engaged in is, indeed, an important form of transformative change. Likewise, I consider my own identity work during the time of this study to be transformative in nature. However, since this data has already been shared, it is most appropriate to begin with change at the institutional level, with the recognition that change at this level is always through the efforts of committed individuals outside of this particular group of students.

Change at the institutional level. The data on institutional change related to this study is limited. In an effort to contextualize the change that can specifically be attributed to this course, an overview of other changes at the institutional level and student involvement with them will be outlined.

In chapter 3, the reader was given background information about the Completion by Design grant. During winter quarter, several events designed to transform Midland occurred which allowed individuals to impact the institution. Fortunately, several students from this course took advantage of these opportunities. One such event was a Completion by Design meeting on February 8, 2012. One student attended this event to share his view about what
would help more students to successfully complete college. While his participation was not necessarily related to this course, it is significant that students across campus were offered opportunities to share their experiences. This initiative is designed to elicit feedback from all stakeholders, including students themselves. It also validates students' voices and is supportive of agentic action. Similarly, two students attended a MLK Speaks to Midland series called "How We are Living the Dream" and one student attended a dialogue on racial relations on campus.

In Completion by Design and Change Agent meetings, I shared student perspectives on barriers and supports related to agency. Deon was eager to share his story about being a former gang member who transformed his life in prison and his current work with local youth. I initially learned about Deon's cause through his initial interview. In response to this need, a group of committed faculty offered him two opportunities to speak about his experiences on campus.

Another exciting campus initiative is a weekly open mic that will enable student performers to share their talents with the campus. Several students from this course found that music helped to support their identities as readers and as agents of change. This new opportunity for agency will be important for students like those featured in this research report.

With the exception of Deon, the institutional changes recorded here cannot be attributed to this specific classroom experience. Even in Deon's case, it was the interview rather than the five SFL lessons that made me aware of his social justice initiative so I could better support him. These examples, however, represent institutional change that will ultimately support the development of agency within Midland students.

The final change is related to two of the textbook selections read in class. Hannah and Anthony emailed the textbook publisher to suggest that the authors reframe the passage to avoid reifying stereotypes about class or drug addiction. They had not heard back from the publisher at
the time that this was written. Rashad also started an email in class to address the issue of possible stereotype threat with the placement center. It is uncertain whether the email was ever finished or sent.

**Summary**

This chapter explored the findings of the study including initial attitudes related to word consciousness and agency, the five lessons on SFL, late attitudes on word consciousness and agency, data related to transformative change and data related to the teacher-researcher experience. In the next chapter, these findings will be summarized according to research question, followed by implications for practitioners and researchers.
CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

Overview

This study investigated SFL as a literacy tool for promoting word consciousness and agency in postsecondary literacy students. This research is significant because students need to develop an awareness of academic language in order to access and critique disciplinary content (Nagy & Townsend, 2012). Beyond that, as a critical literacy tool, SFL offers college students opportunities to construct viable identities within contexts of power. As students engage in the discourse analytic tasks of SFL, they are offered access to new identities, including that of a critical reader, a discourse analyst, an agent of change, a member of a community of practice, and a scholar learning in new disciplines. Since the use of this critical literacy tool in postsecondary literacy settings is limited, this study offers insights into the process of enacting a language-based pedagogy in a college-level, content-area reading classroom.

Summary of Research Questions

Chapter 4 offered a detailed description and analysis of the postsecondary literacy setting in which the five SFL lessons were taught, including student and teacher/researcher experiences, growth related to agency and word consciousness and data related to transformative change. In this chapter, key findings from the six research questions will be outlined as a guiding framework for summarizing the data thus far. Then, implications for practitioners and researchers will be shared.

Question 1: How do my postsecondary literacy students experience a critical approach to language and literacy? Across data sources, students reported finding a critical
approach to language and literacy beneficial. In particular, they felt that it enabled them to look at texts from multiple perspectives, to think more critically and more globally about important issues and to become more ethical and caring people. In fact, they found that looking at a text through the varied perspectives of the individuals in the class was one way to think more critically about a text. The students found that class discussions around controversial texts helped to sharpen their critical thinking skills and promoted a deep engagement with the texts. They believed that discussions contributed to the development of a classroom community (or what literacy scholars might refer to as a community of practice) in which the values, opinions, life experiences and cultural backgrounds of the other students were viewed as a valuable resource. Nevertheless, many students also developed a growing awareness of the ways in which they participated in or reinforced oppressive systems.

**Question 2: How do my postsecondary literacy students experience the discourse analytic tools of SFL?** The students had mixed feelings about SFL. Many reported that it aided comprehension, particularly with historical texts, and helped them to access and critique disciplinary content. They also found it meaningful and challenging to learn a novel and complex academic concept. Several students felt that their success in learning this topic helped them to feel more confident as readers. On the other hand, students did not like the SFL terminology, particularly when it did not offer a new conceptual lens. They did, however, like concepts such as "agents" and "beneficiaries" that enabled new ways of thinking about or critiquing texts. The students preferred discussing SFL concepts over writing about them as they felt that such an independent activity did not enable them to take advantage of the collective wisdom in the classroom.
Question 3: Do my postsecondary literacy students experience a change in agency over the quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to? The students reported feeling more confident about a number of their identities including their identities as college students, their identities as readers, their identities as social agents, and their identities as members of a classroom community. Nevertheless, they also experienced moments where they questioned these new identities and worried about their ability to enact them. In such moments, they found that having a support system and having a teacher who was willing to reach out to them, especially through written comments, and a caring group of classmates could help them to navigate these uncertainties. They experienced growth that could be categorized as spiral rather than linear. The students also engaged in a number of opportunities to transform the campus such as sharing their ideas and perspectives and participating in social justice projects. They also used literacy as a way to impact change by sending emails that voiced their concerns about textbooks and institutional practices to those in power.

Question 4: Do my postsecondary literacy students experience a change in word consciousness over the course of a quarter? If so, what do they attribute it to? Most students reported being more aware of and interested in language, particularly academic language and language found in the shared reading selections. They reported gains related to their awareness of how language differs according to context and purpose. They found that academic language enabled them to communicate within the classroom community of practice and could support their success. Many also noticed a shift in their awareness and appreciation of other languages, including other registers. They found a more critical form of language analysis helpful when encountering a text that seemed biased or conflicted with their core values.
Finally, they found that active learning activities such as charades, skits, Pictionary and Jeopardy promoted an interest in word learning.

**Question 5: How do I, the teacher-researcher, experience the process of implementing a critical approach to literacy in a postsecondary literacy classroom?** My experience in implementing a critical approach to literacy was overwhelmingly positive. Like my students, I struggled with the competing and sometimes incompatible demands placed on my identity. However, these struggles were overshadowed by my faith in the cognitive abilities of my students and my belief that they need access to a challenging literacy tasks in order to successfully tackle the rigors of college study. The most valuable part of this study, from my perspective, was gaining insight on the forms of literacy instruction that my students find the most beneficial and ways to build a supportive community of practice.

**Question 6: Does a critical approach to language and literacy within a postsecondary literacy classroom result in transformative action?** A critical approach to language and literacy appears to have supported transformations at the individual level. In particular, the students were able to enact viable identities within a college setting that enabled them to maintain their core values and still benefit from the wisdom of one other and from academic study. There were few instances of institutional change other than student involvement in campus initiatives that helped them to craft identities and engage in agentic action. However, numerous individuals on campus are committed to listening to and learning from students. One student, in particular, has been recognized as an asset to the college community and is being utilized as a public speaking resource. Furthermore, I plan to circulate the insights that my students had to offer both locally and globally. I remain confident that the experiences of these
students are, indeed, important and that these students will engage in important work at Midland and beyond.

It is customary to begin the next section of this research report with researcher implications. However, since one major aim of this work has been to consider the impact of hegemonic structures on educational institutions, the practitioner implications will be considered first.

**Implications for Practitioners**

The findings from this study suggest much about the needs of developmental reading students. From these findings, there are ten key implications for practitioners.

**Implication 1: Integrate a critical literacy approach into developmental reading classrooms.** One major implication of this study is that a critical literacy approach is compatible with a traditional reading program. This study explored a critical approach to literacy and offered students opportunities to explore literacy as a contextually-situated and transactional practice. Nevertheless, a large portion of class time was spent on curricular mandates such as teaching the course outcomes and mandatory assessments. While these assignments often ran counter to the aims of a critical literacy approach, the students were able to adjust their reading strategies to accommodate different reading tasks. For instance, when completing the vocabulary exercises in the textbook, the students used dictionaries and other tools to give a standard definition of a word. In the critical literacy activities, however, the students would consider and analyze numerous options for what a word might mean. This implies that postsecondary instructors can create a hybrid curriculum that meets local standards and incorporates new thinking about literacy.
Moreover, this study demonstrates that a critical approach to literacy reinforces and offers an alternative approach to addressing course outcomes. The transcripts from the SFL Lessons show students engaging in deep and critical comprehension of college textbook material. In order to take a position on the author's stance, students needed to first identify the author's stance, which is the main idea of a text. Furthermore, in evaluating this argument, students needed to cite the major supporting details of the author. The students demonstrated not just an ability to identify main ideas and supporting details, but an ability to evaluate these ideas. Similarly, the self-selected word studies that students engaged in through class discussions and writing were not only comparable to the publisher recommendations for building vocabulary, but enabled students to process and communicate about disciplinary content. Hence, these students met and exceeded the minimum course outcomes.

**Implication 2: Engage in practitioner inquiry.** A second major implication of this study is the importance of practitioner inquiry. This study demonstrates the potential of practitioner inquiry for engaging in deep thought and reflection about pedagogy and the needs of individual students. Hence, it can be used as a tool for understanding how to best support the agentic desires of students.

Moreover, practitioner inquiry is needed due to recent shifts in institutional accountability. Currently, the state of Ohio has moved to eliminate developmental coursework from four year institutions (Fain, 2011). As a result, developmental studies in the state of Ohio will eventually take place exclusively in community colleges. Many of the key players in developmental studies cited in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 (such as Paulson, Armstrong and Rose) are located in four-year institutions. Hence, if this statewide trend is any indication of future national trends, the scholars who have been most vocal about the need for integrating literacy
theory into postsecondary literacy classrooms may no longer be situated in schools that offer such coursework.

Consequently, it will be much more important for practitioners to engage in rigorous examinations of their practice. In this study, the teacher-researcher journal was a particularly viable tool that might benefit other practitioners. In addition, action research (Mills, 2011) offers practitioners a framework for improving their pedagogy. While there are a number of approaches to action research, most involve cycles of identifying a problem, generating potential solutions, implementing a solution and gathering feedback about whether the intervention was successful. This cycle can continue indefinitely. In many cases, the participants are actively involved in generating solutions and are treated as co-researchers. If used in a literacy classroom, this approach could be used to engage students in inquiries of their own reading experiences and responses to various literacy tools. In this study, asking students to offer feedback about the curriculum, such as through the SFL Feedback Form, generated rich data that could be used to inform practice.

High-standards of accountability and student progress are a necessary part of any teaching endeavor. Currently, many developmental reading programs are located in two-year colleges that operate under the assumption that a basic-skills curriculum is the best way to prepare students for college study. This assumption needed to be investigated more objectively, including through attention to meta-analyses of extant literature of those practices (Flippo & Caverly, 2009) from a range of methodological traditions. In my experience, community colleges do not currently benefit from access to the same research databases or library collections as four-year institutions. Similarly, research at the community-college level is much more likely to be conducted by non-practitioners who are gathering different forms of data, such as student
success rates. Of course, literacy instructors are also interested in such measures, but the curriculum is of special relevance to an instructor. Hence, the field could benefit from more research conducted by more postsecondary literacy educators working within community college settings.

For instance, the students in this course section had unusually high scores on the Chapter Test over Patterns of Organization. If a postsecondary literacy instructor wished to assess the impact of an approach like a language-based pedagogy, pre-test and post-test data on a test such as Patterns of Organization might offer important data about whether new literacy approaches might support traditional curricular aims. Furthermore, a more integrated approach to addressing foundational processes such as literacy circles or reciprocal teaching could also be compared to performance on traditional assessments.

In order to effectively assess growth, however, stronger assessment pieces are needed. Consequently, the next implication tackles the need for better assessments.

**Implication 3: Create strong assessments of course outcomes that are aligned with future coursework and careers.** The course outcomes of developmental reading courses in community college settings tend to mirror those of Midland. In Chapter 3, the full course outcomes were shared. A condensed version of these outcomes would be: Main idea, vocabulary (structural analysis and context clues), identifying patterns of organization, notetaking, outlining, SQ3R and critical thinking. While these outcomes seem straightforward enough, they can vary greatly in their interpretation. For instance, main idea is often described as a basic skill, but it is a process assessed on the competitive Graduate Record Exam (ETS, 2012). In fact, by perceiving this process as a "basic skill" we minimize the important cognitive work that students are engaged in, something that would, indeed, run counter to supporting
students' sense of agency. The field would benefit from investigations of the kinds of main idea, vocabulary, or critical thinking work that stakeholders most value. In particular, instructors of future coursework and employers can offer developmental reading instructors data on these contextualized literacy skills. Currently, traditional forms of assessment use decontextualized paragraph readings to assess these outcomes. This differs even from standardized tests like the GRE which pull questions from a complete reading selection. If assessments can become more closely aligned with the aims of college and career study, it would open up possibilities for instructors to engage in novel teaching practices that attain those high standards. This study, for instance, might have been able to argue more persuasively for a critical or situated literacy approach if more viable local assessments were used to measure growth. Given the high-stakes nature of our examinations and the low long-term success rates of community college students and low predictive value of college placement tests (Scott-Clayton, 2012), it seems imperative that these examinations be grounded in the ultimate outcome which is success in college and careers.

**Implication 4: Include academic language as a vocabulary outcome.** The findings detailed in Chapter 4 show that this classroom environment supported the growth of academic language. Moreover, academic language enabled these students to attain high levels of comprehension and engagement with disciplinary texts. Nevertheless, these findings point to a larger implication—the lack of academic language outcomes within many developmental reading classrooms. The research on the importance of academic vocabulary for accessing the disciplinary concepts found within academic texts is compelling (Nagy & Townsend, 2012) and requires action on the part of developmental educators. As reported in Chapter 1, the Common Core Standards have already embedded academic language standards into the content-area
reading and disciplinary strands for college and career readiness (NGA Center & CCSSO, 2010).

This move came after considerable investigation into current research on informational literacy and an analysis of career and college literacies. There is an obvious disconnect between national standards and community colleges which interferes with the seamless alignment between high schools and colleges. I propose that academic language outcomes should be integrated into developmental reading coursework. In most community colleges, there is a process available for curriculum revision, particularly based on consistent research findings.

However, this recommendation comes with great caution. The literature on academic language (Nagy & Townsend, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004) suggests that all approaches to academic language are not equal. Students are unlikely to benefit from isolated word lists without a strong understanding of the academic discipline or register from which they are taken. The section on implications for researchers will describe the forms of language instruction that merit further investigation.

**Implication 5: Use discussions and writing to support the development of academic language.** The students in this course pointed to the critical role that communication played in promoting an awareness of and an interest in academic language. If academic language is, as described in Chapter 1, a set of tools that enable thinking and communication about disciplinary content, it seems perfectly appropriate to offer students opportunities to discuss meaningful ideas related to the academic disciplines. Students were more likely to appropriate academic language when it served a functional purpose. Another key advantage of this approach is the way that it affords students to benefit from the varied language, culture, and life experiences of all students in a pluralistic classroom setting. This promotes a more global perspective on the academic disciplines.
Implication 6: Support the development of agency through a multi-faceted approach. The findings in Chapter 4 also suggest that agency is best supported by a multi-faceted approach. Many of the students pointed to the importance of relationship building within the classroom, both with the teacher and with other students. Other students found that frequent, specific feedback, especially in writing, seemed to support their identities as students. It seemed particularly helpful to offer this feedback in the reader response journal. In these entries, the students often talked about specific challenges that they faced as students, such as struggling with homework demands or the need to balance schoolwork with family life. Some students described struggles that were too personal to detail here, but ones that they very much needed encouragement and emotional support about. Through writing, a teacher is able to offer individualized help and support to students as they struggle to enact identities and inform change.

Institutional support also played a vital role in supporting the agency of students. I am fortunate enough to work on campus with colleagues who are invested in the futures of developmental students and are committed to their success. These faculty, particularly the Completion by Design team and the Change Agents, created a number of opportunities for students to engage in agentic action.

Nevertheless, careful planning is needed to involve busy community college students in local or global social justice work. In this study, I hesitated to pre-plan an in-class service learning opportunity without the feedback of the students as I worried that it would diminish their sense of agency. In retrospect, reserving a class session for a service learning project may have been a better move. The specifics of the event could have been informed by student
feedback. Practitioners may want to consider integrating a service learning project into the curriculum as a pathway for supporting agency.

**Implication 7: Support the development of word consciousness through a multi-faceted approach.** The findings reported in Chapter 4 also suggest the importance of using a multi-faceted approach to support the development of word consciousness. The students benefitted from several elements related to this study including: Lessons on how language functions within the academic disciplines and in everyday texts (SFL), critiques of language related to gender, culture, and class, written responses to textbook selections and class discussions. However, students also received direct instruction on targeted words, context clues instruction and structural analysis instruction. Some of the activities related to this work, such as classroom games, skits, and charades also promoted word consciousness. Consequently, students seem to benefit from a variety of language activities that promote engagement or directly tie to college and their careers.

**Implication 8: Work more closely with textbook publishers.** The findings also indicate a need to work more closely with textbook publishers. In many community college settings, a mandatory textbook is used to lend consistency to a program and to aid adjunct faculty. As such, it becomes imperative for practitioners to work closely with textbook authors and publishers to ensure that these texts are in alignment with current thinking and research on literacy. For instance, the textbook used on Midland campus (Smith & Morris, 2011) includes "Concept Preps" which are designed to help students build background knowledge in several academic disciplines. However, without explicit instruction in how to read in these specific content areas, these lessons fall short. Furthermore, a better distinction between the academic language that enables thinking and communication about disciplinary content and academic
language that is selection-specific could help students to engage in more meaningful language study. These words could be integrated into the current writing and discussion prompts.

The chapter on Patterns of Organization could also be expanded considerably based on an understanding of functional grammar. For instance, discussion of how patterns such as cause-and-effect and time order tend to work together to enable an historian to offer interpretations would help students to recognize complex patterns and access historical content. I argue that it is more important for students to understand the functional purpose of language patterns than to identify them. To illustrate that, cause-and-effect patterns are important to a physicist because this kind of thinking is at the heart of the scientific method. Without this contextualization, students are likely to view language work passively rather than experience a new form of thinking. I plan to share some of the research from this study and from other academic language research with the author and/or publisher in the hope that these concepts will be accessible to more developmental reading students.

Thus far, this implication has focused on developmental reading textbooks. However, the findings in Chapter 4 indicate a pressing need for postsecondary literacy instructors to work more closely with general education textbook publishers. To a certain degree, the language of academic textbooks is functional in nature and supports a particular kind of thinking about disciplinary content. Nevertheless, textbooks can also lack clarity for purposes unrelated to function. It is important for textbooks to be student friendly or they will limit the number of students who can access the material. Furthermore, authors must be vigilant about soliciting feedback from readers from a range of different backgrounds, including individuals from all socio-economic classes and cultural backgrounds.
Implication 9: Research and model academic language. Strategies for teaching academic language are not featured prominently in K-12 or postsecondary literacy training programs. In particular, few literacy teachers are exposed to theories of language that offer insight into how language differs across disciplines or the functional purpose of these differences. Currently, there are a number of resources that might aid a teacher wanting to study academic language. Schleppegrell's book *The Language of Schooling: A Functional Linguistics Approach* (2004) and Fang & Schleppegrell's (2008) *Reading in Secondary Content Areas: A Language-Based Pedagogy* are excellent resources for practitioners, as well as Zweirs' book (2008) *Building Academic Language: Essential Classrooms for Content Teachers*. These resources help literacy teachers better understand the language of the content areas so it can be more effectively scaffolded for students.

Implication 10: Work more closely with disciplinary instructors. In this research, students were able to access disciplinary identities and disciplinary ways of thinking by studying and appropriating academic language. However, the potential for this work could be greatly enhanced by working closely with disciplinary instructors to better understand the kinds of disciplinary thinking most valued in local disciplinary settings. Furthermore, disciplinary instructors can offer literacy instructors a more nuanced understanding of the tensions and competing paradigms within a field to aid students in enacting a range of within-discipline identities. For instance, a literacy student who enjoys sociology might be more interested in being apprenticed into social psychology than in behavioralism. Conversely, literacy instructors can share current thinking on academic language and content-area literacy practices with disciplinary instructors to help them include some attention to disciplinary literacies within their classrooms. Some of the suggestions recommended here, such as class discussions that
incorporate academic language and writing prompts would be equally beneficial in a general-education classroom.

**Implication 11: Engage students in language study.** The findings imply that language study helps students to access academic language, engage in meaningful conversations about disciplinary content and create meaning within the content areas. SFL is one approach to language study that helps students to better understand the most challenging uses of language within the academic discipline. However, the use of a metalanguage in general—or a language for talking about language—is also an important part of language study. For instance, when students are asked questions about the different connotations or denotations of words, they are utilizing a metalanguage.

In this study, student resistance to some of the materials used to teach SFL should not be interpreted as a resistance to SFL. These materials are specific to these lessons and are not inherent in a functional approach to language. In member checking and on the SFL Feedback Form, they said that they opposed the writing itself rather than the SFL questions. They did, however, oppose the SFL terminology and this directly relates to this implication.

The biggest resistance that students had was learning new labels for known concepts. Indeed, the greatest advantage of a systematic metalanguage is that the same terms can be used to study nearly every aspect of language. However, this advantage is lost when these lessons are condensed to five short lessons in adulthood. If more K-12 schools were to use a functional rather than traditional approach to grammar, it might ameliorate some of the burdens of learning so many new terms and help more students to understand, analyze, and interpret academic language.
However, since SFL requires some degree of study by a practitioner in order to implement instruction on it, it is also important to address aspects of language study that can be more readily implemented. Language study, and a metalanguage, in particular, holds potential as a way to use everyday literacies as resources for traditional academic tasks. For instance, discussing language bias in video clips made it easier for students to then identify language bias in college textbooks. The students in this study began with limited views of language and did not enter the classroom believing that their language heritages and resources were of value. Through exposure, dialogue, and self-study students can begin to construct a better understanding of the situated nature of language and make observations about the functional purposes that all language serves.

**Implications for Future Research**

The next series of implications are for future research in both developmental studies and literacy studies. These implications are in addition to the previous recommendations for practitioner-inquiry at the community college level.

**Implication 1: Methodological diversity is needed.** This study was framed in a specific theoretical framework and the methodology employed reflected that framework. I remain confident that the qualitative data collected in this study offers illumination into SFL and the needs of developmental readers. Nevertheless, these data are not persuasive to all of the stakeholders who make critical decisions affecting developmental classrooms. As such, movements within the literacy studies such as sociocultural theory will need to offer data that is of interest to these stakeholders. If these decisions are data-driven and there are parameters placed on what kinds of data "count", it may be necessary to cross paradigmatic divides and offer quantitative data on the effects of different literacy models. This position is needed if
developmental education is to move forward in a time of intense scrutiny and of financial insecurity. Mike Rose (2011) reminds us, "...if we hope to really do something transformational with remediation, we’ll need all the wisdom we can garner, from multiple disciplines and multiple methodologies, from multiple lines of sight.” Further, past experiences with the National Reading Panel (NICHHD, 2000) and current meta-analyses of developmental approaches that make claims such as "...the most rigorous studies use an experimental design" (Rutschow & Schneider, 2011, p. 2) ensure that the findings of qualitative data may not have the same potential to impact decision making.

Implication 2: Collect data on the impact of SFL or functional language analysis on comprehension. In this study, students attributed SFL to comprehension growth. This is a significant finding with major implications for literacy studies. At present, vocabulary research has identified a correlation between students' vocabularies and their comprehension of texts (Davis, 1944). However, much of the research on vocabulary instruction focuses on the impact of teaching vocabulary words on learning those vocabulary words (Beck & McKeown, 2007). This body of research has not yet yielded expansive data about the impact of vocabulary instruction on the comprehension of unrelated texts, particularly in regard to a functional approach to language.

In this study, however, students were able to access disciplinary content with relatively little direct vocabulary instruction. This is promising because SFL appears to be an efficient way to accelerate the development of academic language in order to support comprehension. It is also significant because many of the participants were English Language Learners or came from high poverty backgrounds, students who have traditionally been considered to be impacted by what is often referred to as a "vocabulary gap" (Hart & Risely, 1995). This study suggests that
SFL is another potential avenue for supporting student comprehension of content-area texts through attention to academic language. This research would be especially valuable in secondary and postsecondary settings where textbooks are used to present disciplinary content.

Future research could more closely examine the relationship between SFL or functional language analysis and comprehension of academic texts. For example, a comprehension pretest and posttest could be given to garner data on the potential impact of SFL. Since all students are likely to exhibit some comprehension growth over the course of a quarter, a control group could be used to establish average comprehension growth without an SFL intervention. Other research could help establish which components of SFL are the most helpful to readers. While I maintain that individual transactions and critiques of texts are at least equally valid measures of literacy, it is also important to collect the quantitative data that is so highly valued in institutions.

Implication 3: Collect data on the impact of functional language instruction on academic language. In this study, students showed evidence of growth related to academic language such as appropriating it within their reader response journals and in their conversations. This finding adds to previous research on the appropriation of academic language (Corbo, 2011) which found that middle school students appropriated academic language with explicit instruction such as being asked to highlight vocabulary words. Studies on functional language analysis are in their nascency and it will take time and the commitment of scholars working in different settings, with different populations, and with different pedagogical approaches to identify best practices within this tradition. In particular, research on functional language instruction in high school and college classrooms is needed, especially as a tool for moving between the disciplines. Research from secondary contexts is ideal due to the alignment of SFL with the Common Core Standards and because high school students remain in a classroom for
nine months rather than eleven weeks, as was the case in this study. High school contexts also offer an opportunity to collect longitudinal data about a long-term intervention.

Another promising topic for future research is the use of a language-based pedagogy for supporting academic language growth in English Language Learners in postsecondary contexts. This research follows in the tradition of other scholars (Achugar, Schleppegrell & Oteiza, 2007) who have found that functional language analysis supports the growth of content-area literacies at the secondary level. As reported in Chapter 4, the participants reported that a critical and functional approach to language enabled them to better understand disciplinary texts and read with a more global perspective. This finding also applied to the five English Language Learners in the classroom. Future research could narrow the scope to the experiences of English Language Learners to elucidate which aspects of SFL are the most helpful for supporting academic language acquisition.

Finally, more data on the most effective instructional approaches for teaching SFL is needed. The participants of this study shared that they preferred to learn SFL lessons through active learning. Since SFL is a comprehensive set of linguistic tools, it will take time and the concerted efforts of researchers and practitioners to identify best practices within this field.

**Implication 4: Gather more data on the impact of critical literacy approaches on literacy outcomes.** The participants in this study experienced comprehension gains related to a critical and functional approach to language. This finding echoes Lesley's (2001) finding that a critical literacy program had a significantly bigger impact on the comprehension of developmental readers than a traditional developmental reading course. Certainly, the critical approach to literacy utilized in this study differs markedly from Lesley's approach. Hence, more research is needed to identity which aspect of critical literacy instruction contributes to enhanced
reading comprehension for developmental learners. One possibility is that critical literacy asks readers to engage in reading for a specific purpose and to revisit texts to analyze them from new vantage points. For many participants in this study, this purpose had value because it supported their identities as spiritual and ethical beings.

While this data is compelling in its own right, it would also be worthwhile to consider the impact of critical literacy on developmental reading outcomes such as differentiating between major and minor ideas. Traditionally, developmental reading instruction has relied on decontextualized, skill-based practice exercises to meet this aim. In this study, however, students developed these skills as they built background knowledge across the academic disciplines, engaged in identity work, wrestled with complex moral dilemmas, viewed texts from multiple perspectives, and built relationships with one another. These additional outcomes are valuable assets in future college courses and in the workplace. Further research is needed to affirm the impact of critical approaches to literacy on traditional literacy outcomes.

**Implication 5: Continue research on the interplay between literacy, agency, and power.** The field has been much informed by the work of several visionaries (Gee, 2011; Lewis, Moje & Enciso, 2007; Rogers & Fuller, 2002; Street, 2007) who have argued that the literacy studies must attend more explicitly to issues of power and agency. The field needs continued insights on how to best research these issues in a climate of institutional accountability and mandated standards that often strengthen hegemonic systems. In particular, literacy instructors need concrete examples of individuals who have been able to impact change on the institutional level and the processes they used to bring it this change.

This work is especially needed for those students who have been marginalized by society such as readers who have been labeled as "learning disabled" or "remedial." While many of the
students placed in this class were either unaware of or unconcerned by their placement in a remedial course, they often had poor self concepts about themselves as readers. The participants did, however, have positive experience with advanced literacy tasks and felt that it helped them to redefine themselves as readers. This is a promising find, indeed, and one that should be investigated more fully in other contexts. Specifically, the role that agency plays in the lives of students who are considered "struggling readers" is worthy of the attention of literacy researchers.

**Implication 6: Continue Research on Word Consciousness.** The importance of word consciousness has been affirmed by recent federal recommendations (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002) on best practices in literacy instruction. Nevertheless, word consciousness is a relatively new construct (Anderson & Scott, 1992) and has thus received far less attention from researchers than other aspects of vocabulary instruction. In light of the importance of this dimension of vocabulary learning, several findings from this study offer new directions for this burgeoning area of research.

The participants in this study cited several facets of their reading course that promoted word consciousness. First and foremost, several of the participants cited social motivations for wanting to learn new words. Many students were interested in having access to words that promoted success in college and in their careers, words that supported their identity work, and words that helped them to communicate with one another. Future research on word consciousness could help to clarify social factors that hinder or support the development of word consciousness. At the college level, in particular, it would be worthwhile for researchers to consider any potential change in word consciousness that occurs as students move from prerequisite and general education coursework into their major fields of study.
Another relevant find was that critical discourse analysis successfully engaged the participants in critical re-examinations of the language choices used in the texts. This literacy tool transferred to some new contexts. Participants were more likely to critique the language of texts that had bias or violated their core values. This finding suggests that critical inquiries into language can be motivating to older students and can support the development of word consciousness. Future research could delve more deeply into the relationship between critical language awareness and word consciousness.

One unanticipated find from this study was the impact of language diversity on word consciousness. Several participants noted that having English Language Learners in the classroom piqued their interest in learning a foreign language. While foreign language learning is not typically conceived of as an aspect of word consciousness, the participants felt that this shift was indicative of a heightened interest in word learning. Future researchers could consider the impact of having English Language Learners in the classroom on foreign language word consciousness. This new line of inquiry is intriguing because it suggests a more reciprocal language learning relationship between English Language Learners and native language speakers.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore student and teacher-researcher experiences with a functional approach to language analysis, or SFL, in a developmental reading classroom in a large urban community college. This study also looked at whether growth in word consciousness, growth in agency, or transformative change occurred. This study identified several factors that contribute to the development of word consciousness and agency in
developmental reading students. It also highlighted moments of transformative change, including individual transformations and some limited institutional changes.

This study explored constructs that all too often remain unexplored in postsecondary literacy classrooms. This study was an attempt to offer students access to rigorous and meaningful academic material and to explore whether this shift made a difference in the kinds of identities they enacted or how they viewed themselves as readers or overall. All too often, developmental readers are offered a simple curriculum based on instructors' unchallenged beliefs about their cognitive abilities. The stories recorded here paint a very different picture of their abilities. In our time together, I watched this remarkable group of eighteen students enact some of the most meaningful identities that life has to offer—identities as social agents, identities as members of a community of practice, identities as critical thinkers and readers, identities as ethical beings, identities as sociologists and historians, and identities as college students. At times, they doubted themselves as readers or as students, resisted identities that seemed to conflict with their core values, or feared failure too much to fully engage in coursework. The stories of the two students who did not make it to the end of the quarter and the two who did not successfully complete the course serve as a painful reminder of the limitations of any one classroom environment. But overall, they beat the odds and engaged in critical literacy tasks as active constructors of meaning.

Now more than ever, the field of developmental studies needs practitioners, researchers, leaders and policymakers who are willing to rethink developmental education or "remediate remediation" (Rose, 1989). The current data on success and completion rates (Fain, 2011) offer compelling reasons to raise our expectations of developmental readers and to aspire towards standards-based innovation. In this time of accountability, there is a pressing need for committed
stakeholders to listen carefully to the needs of developmental learners, to abandon misinformed assumptions about their deficits, and to offer them the transitional literacy experiences that they need to succeed in college and in their careers. Only then will community colleges fulfill their promise as "democracy's college" (Boggs, 2012) and truly open doors for the hopeful developmental learners who begin their college careers there.
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Appendix A

Initial Interview Protocol

Name of Participant (Pseudonym): __________________________________________________________

Date of Interview: ______________ Start Time: ___________ End Time: ______________
Location: ____________________________________________________________________________

Hello, Participant. Thank you for allowing me to interview you. The purpose of this interview is to learn about your experiences with language and identity. We will also talk about your identity has or has not changed over time and in new places. This will take about 15-30 minutes. With your permission, I'd like to use an audiotape. May I have your permission to use a tape recorder?

1. Tell me about your experiences with word learning.

2. Can you think of a time where you have been especially interested in words? If so, can you tell me about that experience?

3. Do you notice a connection between language and identity? If so, can you tell me about that connection?

4. What experiences have you had with identity in general?

5. Have you had any major shifts in your identity?

   a. If so, what have those shifts been like?

   b. How did others react to those identity shifts?
6. Is there a part of your identity that you feel is fixed and cannot be changed?

7. Describe your experiences with reading or literacy in general.

8. Which goals, if any, has literacy helped you to meet?

9. Have you had any negative experiences with literacy or with reading?
   a. If so, can you describe those experiences?

10. What have your experiences with reading nonfiction been like?

11. Are there any issues in the world, in your community, in your school, or in your workplace that you would like to address?
   a. If so, do you know how you would like to accomplish that?
   b. Do you have any concerns about your ability to make those changes?

12. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about your experiences with: word learning or textbook reading?

13. Is there anything else that you would like to share with me about identity or agency?
Appendix B: Survey of Word Consciousness and Agency

Word Consciousness (Questions 1-13 use a Likert Scale)
1. I am interested in learning new words.
2. I pay attention to the author's word choices in texts.
3. I believe that differences in word choice can have an impact on the overall meaning of a text.
4. I like to experiment with word choices in writing.
5. I notice differences in word choice in texts related to the type or purpose of writing.
6. I know how to find resources for learning new words.
7. I think it is exciting to learn new words.
8. I enjoy reading texts that use words well.
9. Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my college career.
10. Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my workplace success.
11. Learning more about words will have a positive impact on my life outside of college or the workplace.
12. I like studying the history of words (etymology).
13. I enjoy looking at how words relate to one another.
14. Can you think of a time when you have been especially interested in words? If so, describe this experience.
15. Are you aware of any specific reasons for wanting to learn new words?

Agency (Questions 16-26 use a Likert Scale)
16. I feel confident about my identity as a college student.
17. There are parts of my identity that others do not recognize.
18. I am able to add new dimensions to my identity to meet the needs of new environments.
19. I believe that I have ideas and perspectives that are of value to my college.
20. I believe that my life experiences and perspectives will shape how I experience my course content at Midland.
21. I believe that my life experiences and perspectives will shape how other students and faculty experience the course content at Midland.
22. I believe that the real meaning of a text is fixed and created by the author.
23. When I read a text, I help to create meaning by interacting with the author's words.
24. I can contribute to positive change in the world.
25. I can contribute to positive change in my college.
26. I can contribute to positive change in systems and institutions (the government, businesses, etc.).

27. Describe your experiences with identity.
28. Have you ever felt like others have placed limitations on your identity? If so, please explain.
29. Has the experience of entering college impacted your identity? If so, how?
30. Have you ever used literacy as a tool for bringing about change? If so, describe that experience.
Appendix C

Final Interview Protocol

Name of Participant (Pseudonym):________________________________________________

Date of Interview: ________________  Start Time:  ___________ End Time:______________
Location:  ___________________________________________________________________

Hello, Participant. Thank you for allowing me to interview you. The purpose of this interview is to learn about your experiences with language, literacy and agency or "the strategic making and remaking of selves" this quarter. This will take about 15-30 minutes. With your permission, I'd like to use an audiotape. May I have your permission to use a tape recorder?

14. Have you had any new experiences with language this quarter?

   a. If so, describe these experiences.

15. Have you experienced any shifts in identity this quarter?

   a. If so, describe this experience.

16. Describe any new experiences with literacy that you have had this quarter.

17. Has your approach to literacy changed this quarter?

   a. If yes, in what ways?
18. Have you had any new experiences with textbooks or other nonfiction texts this quarter?

   a. If yes, describe these experiences.

19. Consider your perspective on SFL as a literacy tool. How did you experience this literacy tool?

20. Can you think of a positive change that you have made in your community, school, workplace or the world at large over the course of this quarter?

   a. If yes, please describe this change.

21. What else would you like me to know about your experiences with language, literacy, identity, and agency this quarter?
Appendix D

Tools for Conducting a Functional Analysis of Text

• **What is the social purpose of the text?** *Identify how the text is structured.* *What is the genre of the text?* *What pattern of organization does this text use?*

• **What is going on?** *Identify the events (processes):* verbs (action, saying, thinking, feeling, relating); *Identify key participants and their roles:* noun phrases that appear as subjects or objects of the verbs (agent, sensor, beneficiary, goal); *Identify the circumstances:* context (time, place, cause, manner, reason, and so on).

• **What is the orientation of the writer to the information?** *Identify the position:* words that express probability, obligation, frequency (for example, modal verbs such as *will, must, have to, usually*); evaluative vocabulary/tone (attitudes: emotions, judgments, appreciation).

• **What is the relationship between reader and writer?** (How are readers positioned in terms of power, distance, familiarity?) *Identify the social roles:* Types of clauses (declarative, interrogative, imperative); use of terms of address and pronouns.

• **How is information organized?** *Identify signal words and cohesive devices:* theme (beginning of each paragraph and sentence); connectors (for *example, because, furthermore, however, first,* and so on); nominalizations (packaging of information into noun phrases, for example, “system of settlement”).
Tools for Conducting a Macro Analysis of a Text

• What is the broad cultural context of the text?

• What view about the distribution of social goods is represented in the text (such as fame, identities, money, honor, etc.)? Does the author seem to be giving or taking away these social goods? Who benefits from or is harmed by this worldview?

• What view about gender is represented in the text? Does the text seem to reinforce or resist traditional gender views? What identities are offered based on gender?

• What view about culture, race, or ethnicity is represented in the text? Are the voices of many cultural and ethnic groups found within the text? What identity or status is offered to individuals based on these group memberships? Does this text reinforce or resist stereotypes?

• How does the text relate to power? Do the views shared in the text make any individuals, groups, or institutions more or less powerful?

• What voices or perspectives are missing from the text?
**Appendix E**

**Reader Response Selections and Prompts**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Watch Your Language! (Smith &amp; Morris, 2011, p. 303-306).</strong></td>
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</table>
| 1. Have you ever experienced a communication breakdown? What do you think contributed to this problem?  
2. What is a language barrier? Can it happen within the same country?  
3. How is language related to identity?  
4. The dictionary defines a culture as "the beliefs and traits of a religious, social, racial, or ethnic group" and many of us belong to multiple cultures. Have you ever felt like "outsiders" have a difficult time understanding one of your cultures? Why might that be? What mistakes have they made? How might they communicate more effectively with you? |

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<tr>
<td><strong>Unity in Diversity (Smith &amp; Morris, 2011, p. 125-128).</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Steroids (Smith &amp; Morris, 2011, p. 449-452).</strong></td>
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</table>
| 1. Why do you think that athletes are more likely to use steroids? Do you think that athletes are unaware of the health risks of taking steroids or willing to take their chances with these risks?  
2. Do professional athletes have responsibilities as role models to young people? Why or why not?  
3. Should coaches monitor steroid use? Should schools test athletes? Why or why not?  
4. What would be an effective steroid prevention program?  
5. Should steroids be legalized?  
6. Is this text balanced or biased? Explain your reasoning. |

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<td><strong>Mother Tongue (Tan, 1990, 2008).</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Police and the Community (Cole &amp; Smith, 2008 ).</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>On the Sidewalk Bleeding (Smith &amp; Morris, 2011, p. 200-206).</strong></td>
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</table>
| 1. Consider the difference between a group identity and an individual identity. Do the two ever clash? Is the price of a group identity ever too high?  
2. Take a moment to reflect on your identity as a college student. What people, events, etc. support this identity? Do you face any challenges in enacting this identity?  
3. Have you noticed a difference in your interest in or awareness of vocabulary or language this quarter?  
4. Why were so many onlookers unwilling to help Andy?  
5. How does Andy's story relate to current events?  
6. How is Andy removing his jacket symbolic? |

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<td><strong>The Importance of Being Beautiful (Smith &amp; Morris, 2011, p. 488-</strong></td>
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<td>Open-Ended</td>
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<td>Text</td>
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| *How Boys Become Men* (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 506-507) | 6. The author offers an unwritten "Boy Code" that boys must follow. What is your take on the "boy code"? Are there any benefits, and if so, for whom? Would you change anything about it?  
7. Is there a "girl code"? If so, how would you describe it? Are there any benefits to it? If so, for whom? Would you change anything about it?  
8. Where should society draw the line between teasing and bullying?  
9. Do you agree with the author's view that the "boy code" interferes with a male's ability to be sensitive? Why or why not?  
10. What conflicting demands do males and females face? Is there a solution for them? |
| *Fear the College Years* (Smith & Morris, 2011, p. 389-392) | 1. One quote from this selection is, "A literate person is not only an illiterate person who has learned to read and write; he is another person." Have you ever had an experience with a text that has transformed you?  
2. What lingering fears do you have about college? Who could support you with them?  
3. The author was underserved in our educational system. Why do you think some students slip through the cracks?  
4. What role does motivation play in the life of the author? Do you think internal motivation (student-driven goals) is more important for college students or external motivation (rewards, punishments, tests, grades, etc.)? What kind of learning motivates you the most in college?  
5. What viewpoint or perspective is missing from the text? Consider taking on different identities to view this text from a new lens. |
Appendix F

Reader Response Journal
DEV 065

What is a Reader Response Journal?: A reader response journal is a literacy tool that utilizes writing as a way to engage more deeply with texts. The best reader-response journals capture high student-text interaction. Reader response journals build on students' prior experiences and background knowledge (schemas) by inviting readers to make connections between texts and their lives, other texts, and the world at large. This assignment helps students to develop critical reading skills and supports the general education outcomes of written communication, values/citizenship, information literacy and critical thinking.

The Assignment: For this course, you will complete thirteen reader response entries based on the course reading selection. The dates and reading selections can be found on your syllabus. Time in class will be given for you to complete these entries. The journal is worth 10% of your final grade. Each entry should be at least one solid paragraph (at least five sentences) in length. The grading rubric can be found in ANGEL.

Prompts: The prompts for the reader response journal will vary based on the reading selection. For some entries, you will be given a choice of prompts and you may select the one that appeals to you the most. Other entries will have a standard prompt that all students will respond to. Finally, some entries will be open-ended. For these entries, you are free to react to or reflect on any part of the passage that you find interesting.

Suggestions for Open-Ended Prompts (Adapted from the Bard College Language and Thinking Program):

- Consider your initial reaction to the text. If you're intrigued by certain statements or if you're attracted certain issues or problems, write your response.

- Make connections with your own experience. What does the reading make you think of? Does it remind you of anything or anyone?

- Make connections with other texts or concepts, events. Do you see any similarities between this text (concepts, events) and other texts (concepts, events)? Does it bring to mind other related issues?

- Ask yourself questions about the text: What perplexes you about a particular passage? Try beginning, "I wonder why..." or "I'm having trouble understanding how..." or "It perplexes me that..." or "I was surprised when ...."

- Try agreeing with the writer. Write down the supporting ideas. Try arguing with the writer. On what points, or about what issues, do you disagree? Think of your journal as a place to carry on a dialogue with the writer or with the text.

- Write down striking quotes, words, images, phrases, or details. Speculate about them. Why did the author choose them? What do they add to the story? Why did you notice them? Divide your notebook page in half and copy words from the text onto the left side; write your responses on the right. On a first reading you might put checks in the margin where the passages intrigue you; on the second reading, choose the most interesting ideas, then write about them.

- Describe the author's point of view. How does the author's attitude shape the way the writer presents the material?
Appendix G

SFL Introduction: Attitudinal Language (Tone and Connotation)

Name____________________________________________________

Step 1: Select an advertisement to analyze.

What product is being advertised?________________________________

Who is the intended audience or customer? (Hint: Which magazine did you find the ad in?)

______________________________________________________________________________

Consider how language is being used in this ad. Make a list of words that seem to have either a positive or negative connotation.

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<th>Positive</th>
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Think about what the ad suggests is "good" or "bad." Explore how this relates to one of the questions under "Tools for Conducting a Macro Analysis of a Text." How does your ad relate to issues like social goods, gender, culture, or power?

______________________________________________________________________________

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Appendix H

SFL Lesson 2: Identify Key Participants and their Roles

In academic texts, it is not uncommon for authors to group subjects and participants rather than discussing individual participants. For instance, words like "Allieds" or "Confederates" might be used.

What might be potential advantages and disadvantages of grouping participants together?

Find one example of a participant group from the passage WWII. ___________________________

In academic texts, verbs/processes can become participants through a process called "nominalization." For instance, if an author first talks about how a "robber killed a store owner" and then says "this killing resulted in the closing of the store", "killing" is a nominalization of "killed." Notice that the person who did the action of killing (or the agent) has been separated from the action or process of killing.

What might be potential advantages and disadvantages of nominalization?

Find one example of a nominalization from the passage WWII. ___________________________

In this passage, Hitler, the Allieds, the Nazis or the German army are the participants until midway through the passage. Then, the participants stop being agents and become recipients or beneficiaries—people who receive things or actions.

Consider the following sentences:
Prisoners arrived by forced marches and cattle trains. Those who were not worked or starved to death were herded into gas chambers and then incinerated in huge crematoriums.

Who forced the prisoners to march, put them on cattle trains, and herded them into gas chambers? ____________________________________________________________________

Why do you think that the author left the agent out of these sentences? ___________________________
SFL Lesson 2, Continued

Consider the following sentence:

The world has wondered ever since whether the United States might have defeated Japan without resorting to atomic bombs, but recent research shows that the bombs were the shock that allowed the emperor and peace advocates to overcome military leaders who wanted to fight to the death.

In this sentence "the world" is pit against "research." Are the beliefs of "the world" and "research" given equal treatment by the author? What seems to be the author's stance?

Who benefits from or is harmed by the author's perspective?

Does this stance disrupt or maintain systems of power?

Consider how the United States is described in the last two paragraphs. What words are paired with the subject "the United States"?

Having suffered almost no direct destruction, the United States was able to dictate a postwar economic trading system that favored its interests.

Did the United States suffer from any "direct destruction"? For instance, why didn't the author mention Pearl Harbor?

Take a moment to evaluate this passage overall and to compare it to your own perspective on World War II:
The Holocaust.

The defeat of Germany revealed appalling evidence of the evil at the heart of the Nazi ideology of racial superiority. After occupying Poland in 1939, the Nazis had transformed concentration camps into forced-labor camps, where overwork, starvation, and disease killed hundreds of thousands of Jews, Gypsies, Poles, Russians, and others the Nazis classed as subhuman. As many as 7 million labor conscripts from eastern and western Europe provided forced labor in fields, factories, mines, and repair crews, often dying on the job from overwork and starvation. The “final solution” to what Hitler thought of as the “Jewish problem” went far beyond slave labor. The German army in 1941 had gained practice with death by slaughtering hundreds of thousands of Jews and other civilians as it swept across Russia. In the fall of that year, Hitler decided on the total elimination of Europe’s Jews. The elite SS, Hitler’s personal army within the Nazi Party, in 1942 set out to do his bidding. At Auschwitz, Treblinka, and several other death camps, the SS organized the efficient extermination of up to 6 million Jews and 1 million Poles, Gypsies, and others who failed to fit the Nazi vision of the German master race. Prisoners arrived by forced marches and cattle trains. Those who were not worked or starved to death were herded into gas chambers and then incinerated in huge crematoriums. The evidence of genocide—systematic racial murder—is irrefutable. Allied officials had begun to hear reports of mass murder midway through the war, but memories of the inaccurate propaganda about German atrocities in World War I made many skeptical. Moreover, the camps were located in the heart of German-controlled territory, areas that Allied armies did not reach until 1945. At Dachau in southwestern Germany, American forces found 10,000 bodies and 32,000 prisoners near death through starvation. Soviet troops who overran the camps in Poland found even more appalling sights—gas chambers as big as barns, huge ovens, the dead stacked like firewood. For more than half a century, the genocide that we now call the Holocaust has given the world its most vivid images of inhumanity.

The Atomic Bomb.

Secretary of State James Byrnes now urged Truman to use the new atomic bomb, tested just weeks earlier. Japan’s ferocious defense of Okinawa had confirmed American fears that the Japanese would fight to the death. Thousands of suicide missions by kamikaze pilots who tried to crash their planes into U.S. warships seemed additional proof of Japanese fanaticism. Prominent Americans were wondering if unconditional surrender was worth another six or nine months of bitter fighting. In contrast, using the bomb to end the conflict quickly would ensure that the United States could occupy Japan without Soviet participation, and the bomb might intimidate Stalin. In short, a decision not to use atomic weapons was never a serious alternative in the summer of 1945. In early August, the United States dropped two of the three available nuclear bombs on Japan. On August 6, at Hiroshima, the first bomb killed at least 80,000 people and poisoned thousands more with radiation. A second bomb, three days later at Nagasaki, took another 40,000 lives. Japan ceased hostilities on August 14 and surrendered formally on September 2. The world has wondered ever since whether the United States might have defeated Japan without resorting to atomic bombs, but recent research shows that the bombs were the
shock that allowed the emperor and peace advocates to overcome military leaders who wanted to fight to the death.

How the Allies Won.

The Allies won with economic capacity, technology, and military skill. The ability to outproduce the enemy made victory certain in 1944 and 1945, but it was the ability to outthink and outmaneuver the Axis powers that staved off defeat in 1942 and 1943. In the spring of 1942, an unbroken series of conquests had given the Axis powers control of roughly one-third of the world’s production of industrial raw materials, up from only 5 percent in 1939. But while Germany and Japan struggled to turn these resources into military strength, the Soviet Union accomplished wonders in relocating and rebuilding its manufacturing capacity after the disasters of 1941. The United was outproducing all of its enemies combined; over the course of the war, it manufactured two-thirds of all the war materials used by the Allies.

Conclusion.

The United States ended the war as the world’s overwhelming economic power. It had put only 12 percent of its population in uniform, less than any other major combatant. For every American who died, 20 Germans and dozens of Soviets perished. Having suffered almost no direct destruction, the United States was able to dictate a postwar economic trading system that favored its interests.
Appendix I

SFL Lesson 3: Writer/Reader Relationships
Part 1

Name____________________________________

In this lesson, we will be looking at how authors position readers in terms of power, distance, and familiarity. In doing so, we will be looking at sentence type (interrogative, declarative, imperative) and pronouns.

Part 1: Who are they?

First, we will be watching a clip of the television show Scrubs (Season 7, episode 1). You will want to notice the following:

1) When JD and Elliot choose a pronoun to talk about their feelings, do they choose "I" or "we"? Which one do they mean? How does this affect meaning?

2) How is the attending physician greeted or addressed? What other words could have been used? How does this affect meaning?

3) Use one of the macro lenses on the page "Tools for Conducting a Macro Analysis of a Text" to consider the video clip. For instance, you might look at gender or culture. What do you notice? Do you agree or disagree with what you see?
Part 2: Who are "we"?

Next, we will be looking at a portion of a sociology textbook called "Differential Association Theory."

1) How does the author position himself or herself in terms of familiarity? How can you tell?

2) What assumptions does the author make about the reader? What do you see in the text that helped you to answer this question?

3) Do the author's assumptions account for differences such as age, gender, class, and culture?

4) Use the space below to evaluate the text.
Differential Association Theory

If someone offered you some heroin, what would determine whether you took it? First, would you define sticking a needle in your arm and injecting heroin as a good way to spend your afternoon? Second, do you typically hang around with others who engage in this type of behavior and define it as "the thing to do"? Third, would you know the routine—how to cook the heroin to extract the liquid—if you had never seen it done? You likely would not know the proper technique for how to prepare the drug or how to inject it. Why? Being a drug user depends on whether you have associated with drug users and whether your family and friends define drug use as acceptable or deviant.

Differential association theory refers to two processes that can result in individuals learning to engage in crime. First, association with others who share criminal values and commit crimes results in learning how to carry out a criminal act (Sutherland, Cressey, and Luckenbill 1992); second, learning in a particular social context—socialization into a counterculture—results in reinforcement of criminal behavior (Akers 1992, 1998, Lee, Akers, and Borg 2004). Differential association theory, then, is based on the idea of socialization, and since it involves accepting the definition of reality of one's friends or associates, it is sometimes seen as a specific application of symbolic interactionism.

Differential association theory focuses on the process of learning deviance from family, peers, fellow employees, political organizations, neighborhood groups such as gangs, and other groups in one's surroundings (Akers 1992; Akers et al. 1979; Sutherland et al. 1992). Helena, for example, came to be surrounded by people who made dropping out of school and other delinquent acts seem normal. If her close friends and siblings were sexually active as teens, her teen pregnancy might not be remarkable and might even be a source of some prestige with her group of peers.

According to differential association theory, the possibility of becoming deviant depends on four factors related to associating with a deviant group: the duration of time spent with the group, the intensity of interaction, the frequency of interaction, and the priority of the group in one's friendship networks (Sutherland et al. 1992). If deviant behavior exists in people's social circles and if they are exposed to deviance regularly and frequently (duration and intensity), especially if they are in close association with a group that accepts criminal behavior, they are more likely to learn deviant ways. Furthermore, individuals learn motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes, and they develop techniques that influence behavior and cause them to commit deviant acts.

Some theorists contend that lower-class life constitutes a distinctive subculture in which delinquent behavior patterns are transmitted through socialization. The values, beliefs, norms, and practices that have evolved in lower-class communities over time can often lead to violation of laws. These values and norms have been developed by those in power as deviant. Just as upper-class youth seem to be expected and destined to succeed, lower-class youth may learn other behaviors that those with privilege have defined as delinquent and criminal (Bettie 2003; Chamblas 1973). For instance, in a recent study, Bettie (2003) found that race, class, and gender intersect in important ways to increase the labeling of (discussed next) and decrease the opportunities for lower-class and minority high school girls. For some inner-city youth, the local norms are to be tough and disrespectful of authority, to live for today, to seek excitement, and to be "cool"—these are survival techniques. With time, these attitudes and behaviors become valued in and of themselves by their peer groups.

Labeling Theory

Labeling theory is related to both the symbolic interaction perspective and the conflict theory perspective. Labels (e.g., "juvenile delinquent") are symbols that have meanings that affect an individual's self-concept. Those who are labeled are often the "have-nots" of society according to
Authors use signal words to link together or show the relationship between ideas. In this lesson, you will explore signal words or connectors such as those that show cause and effect relationships (because, consequently, as a result).

Example: The children were yelling. Then, I spilled my coffee.
               The children were yelling. As a result, I spilled my coffee.

➤ Consider this: How does the meaning created in these two sentences differ?

Take a moment to read the poem "The Rose that Grew From Concrete" by Tupac Shakur. Consider the way that cause and effect relationships are communicated.

Did you hear about the rose that grew from a crack in the concrete?
Proving nature's law is wrong it learned to walk without having feet.
Funny it seems, but by keeping its dreams, it learned to breathe fresh air.
Long live the rose that grew from concrete when no one else ever cared.

Think for a moment about the word "concrete." How would you describe it? What does it remind you of? Why do you think it is used in this poem?

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

What did the rose prove?________________________________________________________

How did it learn to breathe fresh air?_______________________________________________

How does Tupac link together these ideas? How might these same relationships be communicated in a textbook?______________________________________________________

________________________________________
________________________________________
Carefully read the psychology textbook selection "From Stereotypes to Prejudice: In-Groups and Out-Groups.” As you read, highlight any signal (transition) words that you notice. You may also want to annotate as you read. Use your highlights and annotations to answer the questions below.

1) The authors say that stereotypes serve a positive purpose (see paragraph 3). What is this purpose?

2) The authors call stereotypes "natural cognitive processes" and an "inescapable fact of social reality.” Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?

3) What are some of the negative consequences of stereotypes?

4) What do the authors say would probably happen if you had an experience that went against a stereotype? Do you agree or disagree? Explain your reasoning.

5) Use one of the tools for conducting a macro analysis of a text to make an observation about this passage.

6) Reflect on or react to something that you read in this article.
read this discussion, it's important for you to keep two well-established points in mind. First, racial and ethnic groups are far more alike than they are different (Jones, 1991; Mallett & others, 2008). And second, any differences that may exist between members of different racial and ethnic groups are far smaller than differences among various members of the same group.

From Stereotypes to Prejudice: In-Groups and Out-Groups

As we noted earlier, using social categories to organize information about other people seems to be a natural cognitive tendency. Many social categories can be defined by relatively objective characteristics, such as age, language, religion, and skin color. A specific kind of social category is a stereotype—a cluster of characteristics that are attributed to members of a specific social group or category (Fiske, 1998; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996; Tajfel, 2001). In other words, stereotypes are based on the assumption that people have certain characteristics because of their memberships in a particular group.

Stereotypes typically include qualities that are unrelated to the objective criteria that define a given category (see Rosette & others, 2008; Taylor & Porter, 1994). For example, we can objectively sort people into different categories by age. But our stereotypes for different age groups may include many qualities that have little to do with “number of years since birth.” Associations of “reckless and irresponsible” with teenagers, “forgetful and incompetent” with elderly people, and “boring and stodgy” with middle-aged adults are examples of associating unrelated qualities with age groups—that is, stereotyping.

Like other social categories, stereotypes simplify social information so that we can sort out, process, and remember information about other people more easily (Macrae & others, 1994). And like our use of other social categories, our tendency to stereotype social groups seems to be a natural cognitive process. Some social psychologists believe that the use of stereotypes is an inescapable fact of social cognition (Lee & others, 1995; Taylor & Porter, 1994). However, relying on stereotypes can cause numerous problems (Pittinsky & others, 2006; Stanger, 1995). Attributes of a stereotypic cause for an outcome or event can blind us to the true causes of the event (Sanbonmatsu & others, 1994). For example, a parent who assumes that a girl's poor computer skills are due to her gender rather than a lack of instruction might never encourage her to overcome her problem.

Research by psychologist Claude Steele (1997, 2003) has demonstrated an even more insidious effect of stereotypes, particularly derogatory stereotypes, called stereotype threat. As we discussed in Chapter 7, simply being aware that your social group is associated with a particular stereotype can negatively impact your performance on tests or tasks that measure abilities that are thought to be associated with that stereotype. For example, even mathematically gifted women scored lower on a difficult math test when told that the test tended to produce gender differences than when told that the test did not produce gender differences (Spencer & others, 1999; also see Cadieu & others, 2005; Smith & others, 2007).

Once they are formed, stereotypes are hard to shake. One reason for this is that stereotypes are not always completely false (Ottati & Lee, 1995). Sometimes they have a kernel of truth, making them easy to confirm, especially when you see only what you expect to see (Judd & Park, 1993; Swim, 1994). However, there's a vast difference between a kernel and the cornfield. When stereotypic beliefs become expectations
that are applied to all members of a given group, stereotypes can be both misleading and damaging (Stangor & Lange, 1994).

Consider the stereotype that men are more assertive than women and that women are more nurturant than men. This stereotype does have some truth to it, but only in terms of the average difference between men and women (see Eagly, 1995b; Hyde, 2005). Thus, it would be inappropriate to automatically apply this stereotype to every individual man and woman. Doing so would be an example of prejudice.

Equally important, when confronted by evidence that contradicts a stereotype, people tend to discount that information in a variety of ways (Seta & others, 2003; Seta & Seta, 1993; Weisz & Jones, 1993). For example, suppose you are firmly convinced that all “Zeegs” are dishonest, sly, and untrustworthy. One day you absent-mindedly leave your wallet on a store’s checkout counter. As you walk into the parking lot, you hear a voice calling, “Hey, you forgot your wallet!” It’s a Zeeg running after you and waving your wallet in the air. “I was behind you in line and thought you might need this,” the Zeeg smiles, handing you your wallet.

Will this experience change your stereotype of Zeegs as dishonest, sly, and untrustworthy? Probably not. It’s more likely that you’ll conclude that this individual Zeeg is an exception to the stereotype. If you run into more than one honest Zeeg, you may create a mental subgroup for individuals who belong to the larger group but depart from the stereotype in some way (Stangor & Lange, 1994). By creating a subcategory of “honest, hardworking Zeegs,” you can still maintain your more general stereotype of Zeegs as dishonest, sly, and untrustworthy.

Creating special cases, or exceptions, allows people to maintain stereotypes in the face of contradictory evidence. Typical of this exception that proves the rule approach is the person who says, “Hey, I’m not prejudiced! Why, some of my best friends are Zeegs.”

Stereotypes are closely related to another tendency in person perception. People have a strong tendency to perceive others in terms of two very basic social categories: “us” and “them.” More precisely, the in-group (“us”) refers to the group or groups to which we belong, and out-groups (“them”) refer to groups of which we are not a member. As you’ll see, we’re more likely to resort to negatively biased stereotypes to describe members of out-groups than to describe fellow members of our in-group (Crisp & Hewstone, 2005; Hewstone & others, 2005).

In-groups and out-groups aren’t necessarily limited to racial, ethnic, or religious boundaries. Sometimes, it seems, virtually any characteristic can be used to make in-group and out-group distinctions: Cubs versus White Sox fans, Northsiders versus Southsiders, math majors versus English majors, and so forth.

The Out-Group Homogeneity Effect
They’re All the Same to Me

Two important patterns characterize our views of in-groups versus out-groups. First, when we describe the members of our in-group, we typically see them as being quite varied, despite having enough features in common to belong to the same group. In other words, we notice the diversity within our own group.

Second, we tend to see members of the out-group as much more similar to one another, even in areas that have little to do with the criteria for group membership (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996; Stangor & Lange, 1994; Xu & Fang, 2006). This tendency is called the out-group homogeneity effect. (The word homogeneity means “similarity” or “uniformity.”)

For example, what qualities do you associate with the category of “engineering major”? If you’re not an engineering major, you’re likely to see engineering majors as being all alike. This tendency to apply a single label to a diverse group of individuals is called stereotyping.
Appendix K

SFL Lesson 5: Theme/Rheme, Processes and Circumstances

Name________________________________

One tool from SFL is to look for who or what (subject) does what (processes/verbs) under what circumstances (cause, place, time, reason, etc.). As part of this lesson, you will be looking at two different texts on the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, one from a newspaper and one from a history textbook.

In SFL the *psychological subject* is the first subject discussed in a sentence. For instance:

Example 1: American anger at Japanese Americans fueled the calls for internment.

Example 2: The internment of the Japanese Americans was caused by American anger.

In example 1, "American anger" is the psychological subject whereas in example 2, "the internment of the Japanese Americans" was caused by American anger.

The psychological subject gives the reader information about who or what is the focus of the sentence.

Try It!: Your task is to cut apart sentence strips to separate the sentences into subjects, processes and circumstances from the Midland Daily News article "Locals Recall Painful WWII Internment Camp Memories."

1. All residents of Japanese descent along the Pacific Coast were forcibly removed to what were euphemistically referred to as “War Relocation Camps.”

2. The attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, plunged the United States into war and escalated already-existing hostilities and discriminatory practices against the Japanese.

3. Tosh Konya of Troy was only five months old when his family was sent to the internment camp in Gila River, Ariz.

4. The propaganda newsreels showed people getting off these buses like they were going to summer camp.”

5. Some local residents lost family members during the course of the internment.
Next, you will be looking at cause and effect relationships that are built through the use of processes (or verbs). Cause and effect relationships are an especially important part of any text because they help the author to create an interpretation of events.

Take a moment to read the sentence below. Underline or highlight any process or verb that seems to help build a cause and effect relationship.

American anger at Japan's "sneak attack" on Pearl Harbor fueled the calls for internment, as did fears that West Coast cities might yet come under enemy attack.

Now, try paraphrasing this sentence:

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Finally, look for the two other reasons why some Americans supported the internment of Japanese Americans:

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think the reasons were shared in this order?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

What overall message is the author sharing in "The Limits of American Ideals"? Evaluate this message in the space below using one of the tools for conducting a macro analysis of a text.
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
In many ways, the war reinforced traditional gender roles that had been weakened during the depression, when many men lost the role of breadwinner. Now men defended their nation while women "kept the home fires burning." Some women took "men's jobs," but most understood that they were "for the duration"—the home-front equivalent to men's wartime military service. Even so, women who worked were frequently blamed for neglecting their children and creating an "epidemic" of juvenile delinquency—evidenced by the "victory girl." Nonetheless, millions of women took on new responsibilities in wartime, whether on the factory floor or within their family. Many husbands returned to find that the lives of their wives and children seemed complete without them, and some women realized how much they had enjoyed their greater freedom and independence.

The Limits of American Ideals

During the war, the U.S. government worked hard to explain to its citizens the reasons for their sacrifices. In 1941, Roosevelt had pledged America to defend "four essential human freedoms"—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear—and government-sponsored films contrasted democracy and totalitarianism, freedom and fascism, equality and oppression.

Despite such confident proclamations, as America fought the totalitarian regimes of the Axis powers, the nation confronted questions with no easy answers: What limits on civil liberties were justified in the interest of national security? How freely could information flow to the nation's citizens without revealing military secrets to the enemy and costing American lives? How could the United States protect itself against the threat of spies or saboteurs, especially from German, Italian, or Japanese citizens living in the United States? And what about America's ongoing domestic problems—particularly the problem of race? Could the nation address its own citizens' demands for reform as it fought the war against the Axis? The answers to these questions often revealed tensions between the nation's democratic claims and its wartime practices.

For the most part, America handled the issue of civil liberties well. American leaders embraced a "strategy of truth," declaring that citizens of a democratic nation required a truthful accounting of the war's progress. However, the government closely controlled information about military matters. Censorship was serious business, as even seemingly unimportant details might tip off enemies about troop movements or invasion plans: radio stations were forbidden to broadcast weather reports—or even to mention weather conditions—leaving residents without warning of impending storms and sportscasters with no way to explain why play had been suspended or games had been called. During the war, government-created
propaganda sometimes dehumanized the enemy, most especially the Japanese. Nonetheless, the American government resorted to hate mongering much less frequently than during the First World War.

More complex was the question of how to handle dissent and how to guard against the possibility that enemy agents were operating within the nation's borders. The Alien Registration (Smith) Act, passed in 1940, made it unlawful to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government by force or violence, or to join any organization that did so. After Pearl Harbor, the government used this authority to take thousands of Germans, Italians, and other Europeans into custody as suspected spies and potential traitors. During the war, the government interned 14,426 Europeans in Enemy Alien Camps. Fearing subversion, the government also prohibited ten thousand Italian Americans from living or working in restricted zones along the California coast, including San Francisco and Monterey Bay.

In March 1942, Roosevelt ordered that all 112,000 foreign-born Japanese and Japanese Americans living in California, Oregon, and the state of Washington (the vast majority of the mainland population) be removed from the West Coast to “relocation centers” for the duration of the war. Each of the Italian and German nationals interned by the U.S. government faced specific, individual charges. That was not the case for Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans. They were imprisoned as a group, under suspicion solely because they were of Japanese descent.

American anger at Japan’s “sneak attack” on Pearl Harbor fueled the calls for internment, as did fears that West Coast cities might yet come under enemy attack. Long-standing racism was evident, as the chief of the Western Defense Command warned, “The Japanese race is an enemy race.” Finally, people in economic competition with Japanese Americans strongly supported internment. Although Japanese nationals were forbidden to gain U.S. citizenship or own property, American-born Nisei (second generation) and Sansei (third generation), all U.S. citizens, were increasingly successful in business and agriculture. The eviction order forced Japanese Americans to sell property valued at $500 million for a fraction of its worth. West Coast Japanese Americans also lost their positions in the truck-garden, floral, and fishing industries.

The internees were sent to camps carved out of tax-delinquent land in Arkansas’s Mississippi River floodplain, to the intermountain terrain of Wyoming and the desert of western Arizona, and to other arid and desolate spots in the West. The camps were bleak and demoralizing. Behind barbed wire and concertina wire topped with razor wire, entire families lived in single rooms or quarters furnished only with cots, blankets, and a single bare light bulb. Most had no running water. Toilets and dining and bathing facilities were communal; privacy was almost nonexistent. In such difficult circumstances, people nonetheless attempted to sustain community life, setting up consumer cooperatives and sports leagues (one Arkansas baseball team called itself the Biggers), and for many, maintaining Buddhist worship in the face of pressure to adopt Christian beliefs.

Betrayed by their government, many internees were profoundly ambivalent about their loyalty to the United States. Some sought legal remedies, but the Supreme Court upheld the government’s action in Korematsu v. U.S. (1944). Almost one-quarter of all adults in one Arkansas camp, when asked if they would “spear unqualified allegiance to the United States,” answered “no” or expressed some reservation.

* * *

*In February 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered that all Japanese resident aliens and Japanese Americans living on the West Coast—about 110,000 people—be confined in remote “relocation camps.” Residents were not allowed to take photographs, but many tried to illustrate their experiences. This watercolor, “First Impressions of Manzanar,” shows internees' constant struggle against the harsh desert climate, with its high winds, swirling dust, and extreme temperatures. Manzanar War Relocation Camp was located in California, at the foot of the Sierra Nevada. The eight guard towers that surrounded the camp were manned by military police with submachine guns.*
And almost 6,000 of the 120,000 internees renounced U.S. citizenship and demanded to be sent to Japan. Others sought to demonstrate their loyalty. The all-Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team, drawn heavily from young men in internment camps, was the most decorated unit of its size. Suffering heavy casualties in Italy and France, members of the 442nd were awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor, 47 Distinguished Service Crosses, 350 Silver Stars, and more than 3,600 Purple Hearts. In 1988, Congress issued a public apology and largely symbolic payment of $20,000 to each of the 60,000 surviving Japanese American internees.

As America mobilized for war, some African American leaders attempted to force the nation to confront the uncomfortable parallels between the racist doctrines of the Nazis and the persistence of Jim Crow segregation in the United States. Proclaiming a “Double V” campaign (victory at home and abroad), groups such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) hoped to “persuade, embarrass, compel and shame our government and our nation . . . into a more enlightened attitude toward a tenth of its people.” Membership in civil rights organizations soared. The NAACP, 50,000 strong in 1940, had 450,000 members by 1946. And in 1942 civil rights activists, influenced by the philosophy of India’s Mohandas Gandhi, founded the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), which stressed “nonviolent direct action” and staged sit-ins to desegregate restaurants and movie theaters in Chicago and Washington, D.C.

Military service was a key issue for African Americans, who understood the traditional link between the duty to defend one’s country and the rights of full citizenship. But the U.S. military remained segregated by race and strongly resisted efforts to use black units as combat troops. As late as 1943, less than 6 percent of the armed forces were African American, compared with more than 10 percent of the population. The marines at first refused to accept African Americans at all, and the navy approximated segregation by assigning black men to service positions in which they would rarely interact with nonblacks as equals or superiors.

Why did the United States fight a war for democracy with a segregated military? The U.S. military understood that its sole priority was to stop the Axis and win the war, and the federal government and War Department decided that the midst of world war was no time to try to integrate the armed forces. The majority of Americans (approximately 89 percent of Americans were white) opposed integration, many of them vehemently. As a sign of how deeply racist beliefs penetrated the United States, the Red Cross segregated blood plasma during the war. In most southern states, racial segregation was not simply custom; it was the law. Integration of military installations and training camps, the majority of which were in the South, would provoke a crisis as federal power contradicted state law. Pointing to outbreaks of racial violence in southern training camps as evidence, government and military officials argued that wartime integration would almost certainly provoke even more racial violence, create disorder within the military, and hinder America’s war effort. Such resistance might have been short-term, but the War Department did not take that chance. Justifying its decision, the War Department argued that it could not “act outside the law, nor contrary to the will of the majority of the citizens of the Nation.” General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of
Appendix L

SFL Feedback Form

Name______________________________

This quarter, you were part of five lessons on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). During each lesson, you looked at an everyday text (Facebook, television, advertisements, music, newspaper). You also looked at five college textbook readings from general education courses (history, sociology and psychology). For each lesson, you also learned a tool for analyzing the language of texts (tone/attitudinal language, author positioning, subjects (agents and beneficiaries), nominalization, signal words, processes/circumstances, theme/rheme and the psychological subject. Finally, for each lesson you connected the texts to macro issues like gender, race, class, and culture.

1. How did you experience these lessons?

2. Which part of the lessons did you find the most helpful? Why?

3. Which part of the lessons did you find the least helpful? Why?

4. Has your identity overall, as a student, or as a reader changed this quarter? If so, why do you think that is?

5. Has your interest in or awareness of language changed? If so, why do you think that is?

6. Has your awareness of how language relates to issues like power, gender, or culture changed? If so, why do you think that is?
Appendix M

Heather Neal, M.Ed. Recruitment v. 11-17-11
Institutional Review Board
IRB # 11-10-17-01
APPROVED 11-17-11

Dear Students,

I am writing to you because as one of my current DEV 065 students at Midland Community College you are eligible to participate in a research study that I will conduct at the college this year. You are under no obligation to participate in this study and do not have to respond to this email. The study, called **Say What?: A Study of SFL as a Literacy Tool for Promoting Word Consciousness and Agency**, will gather data about student perceptions about a new literacy tool. This literacy tool is called Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and will be introduced as a part of your reading class. The data collected during this survey will help researchers to understand your experience with this tool. In particular, it will explore the impact of SFL on your awareness of words and your sense of "agency" or the ability to make and remake your identity to meet the needs of new environments. If you are interested in participating in this study, please respond to this email by January 18, 2012. I will then forward an Informed Consent Form for you to review and we can set up a convenient time for you to sign the form. Any student over 18 who is enrolled in my DEV 065 course is eligible to participate in this study. If you participate, you will take two 15 minute surveys, allow the researcher to video and audio tape your participation and your work from the five, in-class pilot lessons on SFL and allow copies of your Reader Response Journal to be made when I collect them to grade. If you are willing to serve as a focal participant and are randomly selected from subgroups using an Excel program, you will also complete two fifteen minute interviews at a time and place of your choice on Midland campus. I am always happy to answer any of your questions about this study. Please feel free to contact me by email (heather.neal@my.midland.edu) or phone (512-2468) at any time.

Sincerely,

Heather Neal
ACF, Academic Foundations, Midland Community College
Literacy Doctoral Student, University of Cincinnati
Appendix O

Heather Neal, M.Ed. Consent v. 11-17-11
Institutional Review Board
IRB # 11-10-17-01
APPROVED 11-17-11

Adult Consent Form for Research
University of Cincinnati
Department: Literacy and Second Language Studies
Principal Investigator: Heather Neal, M.Ed.
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Susan Watts-Taffe, Ph.D.

Title of Study: Say What?: A Study of SFL as a Literacy Tool for Promoting Word
Consciousness and Agency in Postsecondary Literacy Students

Introduction:
You are being asked to take part in a research study. Please read this paper carefully and ask
questions about anything that you do not understand.

Who is doing this research study?
The person in charge of this research study is Heather Neal, M.Ed., a doctoral student in the
University of Cincinnati’s (UC) Department of Literacy and Second Language Studies. She is
also an Annually Contracted Faculty Member in the Academic Foundations Department at
Midland Community College. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Susan Watts-Taffe,
Ph.D. of the University of Cincinnati.

What is the purpose of this research study?
The purpose of this research study is to consider a new approach to vocabulary and textbook
reading. This approach is called Systemic Functional Linguistics. This study will look at the
impact of this approach on students' word knowledge and their sense of agency.

Who will be in this research study?
About 5-25 people will take part in this study. Of these participants, 4-6 students will be
randomly selected by an Excel program to serve as focal students. You may be in this study if
you are:
• A student in Heather Neal's winter 2012 course Developmental Reading 065.
• Over the age of 18.

What will you be asked to do in this research study, and how long will it take?
This study will take place in your developmental reading classroom during winter quarter of
2012. If you are selected as a focal student, you will have two additional interviews on Midland
campus at a location of your choice at a time that is convenient for you. These interviews will
last approximately 15 minutes each.
The activities related to this study are as follows:
• You will complete two surveys lasting approximately 15 minutes each through the
ANGEL course management system.
• The five in-class lessons on Systemic Functional Linguistics will be video recorded and
audio recorded and classroom work will be gathered. These recordings will be transcribed.
• Copies of your Reader Response Journal from your developmental reading class will be made.
• If you are selected as a focal student, you will also have two interviews on campus, one at the beginning of the quarter and one at the end of the quarter. You will choose the time and place on campus.

Are there any risks to being in this research study?
It is not expected that you will be exposed to any risk by being a part of this study.

Are there any benefits from being in this research study?
You will probably not get any benefit from participating in this study. However, the tools used in this study have helped other students (Schleppegrell & deOliviera, 2006) to feel more engaged when reading textbooks and to understand their course content better. While all students enrolled in your class will get exposed to these tools, the participants will help educators learn whether they are effective for developmental reading students.

What will you get because of being in this research study?
You will not be paid to take part of this study.

Do you have choices about taking part in this research study?
If you do not want to take part in this research study you do not have to participate.

How will your research information be kept confidential?
Information about you will be kept private by the investigator. Your name will not appear in any of the research data. All data related to this study will be kept in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office or in password-protected computer files. All audio recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet until they are turned into password-protected digital files. The audio files will be deleted from the audio recorder after they are turned into digital files. All video recordings will be deleted from the video camera after they have been turned into password-protected digital files. Consent forms will be kept in a separate locked cabinet from the consent form. Your information will be kept for three years. After this time period, all hard copies will be shredded in a paper shredder by the researcher and all computer files will be deleted. The results of this study may be published but your name will not be used. A pseudonym will be used in place of your name on all research documents except for the consent form. Agents of the University of Cincinnati may inspect study records for audit or quality assurance purposes.

What are your legal rights in this research study?
Nothing in this consent form waives any legal rights you may have. This consent form also does not release the investigator, Heather Neal, the institution, or its agents from liability for negligence.
What if you have questions about this research study?
If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, you should contact Heather Neal at heather.neal@midland.edu or XXX-XXX-XXXX.

The UC Institutional Review Board reviews all research projects that involve human participants to be sure the rights and welfare of participants are protected. If you have questions about your rights as a participant or complaints about the study, you may contact the UC IRB at (513) 558-5259. Or, you may call the UC Research Compliance Hotline at (800) 889-1547, or write to the IRB, 300 University Hall, ML 0567, 51 Goodman Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0567, or email the IRB office at irb@ucmail.uc.edu.

Do you HAVE to take part in this research study?
No one has to be in this research study. Refusing to take part will NOT cause any penalty or loss of benefits that you would otherwise have. You may start and then change your mind and stop at any time. To stop being in the study, you should tell Heather Neal.

Agreement:
I have read this information and have received answers to any questions I asked. I give my consent to participate in this research study and to be audio and video recorded. I will receive a copy of this signed and dated consent form to keep.

Participant Name (please print) ____________________________________________
Participant Signature ____________________________ Date __________
I agree to be a focal participant. Yes No
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent ____________________________ Date ______
TO: Heather Neal, M.Ed.
Department of Literacy and Second Language Studies

FROM: Michael Linke, PhD, Chair
University of Cincinnati
Institutional Review Board #1 and #2

DATE: November 17, 2011

RE: IRB # 11-10-17-01 — Say What?: A Study of SFL as a Literacy Tool for Promoting Word Consciousness and Agency in Postsecondary Literacy Students

Please be advised that I have reviewed the study referenced above as outlined in your IRB submission, and have determined this activity to be exempt from IRB review and surveillance according to the definition of a human subject outlined at 45 CFR 46.101(b). The full Board will be notified of the exempt status of your study at its next convened meeting.

You must report to the IRB any changes affecting the exempt status of this study. No changes may be made without prior approval by the Board except those necessary to eliminate immediate hazards.

Thank you for your continued compliance with the Board’s requirements with regard to your research activities.

Please note: This approval is through the U.C. IRB only. You may be responsible for reporting to other regulatory officials (e.g., VA Research and Development Office, UC Health- University Hospital). Please check with your Institution and Department to ensure you have met all reporting requirements.
Appendix Q

January 10, 2012

Heather Neal
Academic Foundations
Midland Community College

RE: Say What?: A Study of Systemic Functional Linguistics as a Literacy Tool for Promoting Word Consciousness and Agency in Postsecondary Literary Students

Dear Heather:

As chair of the Midland Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB XXXX), I have reviewed the proposal noted and have approved this protocol as it meets the criteria for expedited review established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, category 6. As such, this proposal has been determined to be exempt from the full IRB review under Section 101, subsection b.1 and compliant with Midland protocols.

Any serious adverse events or issues relating from this study should be reported immediately to the IRB. Additionally, any changes to protocols or informed consent documents must have IRB approval before implementation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Good luck with your venture.

Sincerely,

[Name removed to protect privacy.]
Director, Research, Analytics and Reporting
Chair, Midland Institutional Review Board

3 Identifying data have been removed in order to protect confidentiality.