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Supporting the Persuasive Writing Practices of English Language Learners Through Culturally Responsive Systemic Functional Pedagogy

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**SUPPORTING THE PERSUASIVE WRITING PRACTICES OF ENGLISH
LANGUAGE LEARNERS THROUGH CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE
SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTIC PEDAGOGY**

A Dissertation Presented

By

JOSHUA SCHULZE

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts

Amherst

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LANGUAGE, LITERACY, and CULTURE

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ABSTRACT

SUPPORTING THE PERSUASIVE WRITING PRACTICES OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS THROUGH CULTURALLY RELEVANT SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTIC PEDAGOGY

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The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the potential of Systemic Functional Linguistic (SFL) pedagogy to support English language learners (ELLs) in enhancing their meaning making potential as they engage in persuasive writing practices within academic contexts. The dissertation results from a teacher action research project in which the teacher researcher (the author) constructed qualitative case studies focusing on the teaching practices of a veteran ESL teacher (the researcher) and the persuasive writing practices of three middle school beginning level ELLs. Through data analysis methods of SFL linguistic analysis and intertextuality, the study illuminates connections between an SFL based teaching practice and the expanding linguistic repertoire of ELLs as they engage in the genre of persuasive argument in the context of producing persuasive music reviews.

Research methods are qualitative in nature and designed to attend to both the sociocultural context of teaching and learning as well as a linguistic analysis of written

texts. Through a qualitative case study approach focusing on the literacy practices of three emergent bilingual middle school students and the reflective teaching practices of their veteran ESL teacher, the teacher researcher highlights how SFL pedagogy created space for urban middle school ELLs to participate in high interest language learning activities designed to increase their control over the semiotic resources needed to construct persuasive texts. The subsequent SFL and genre analysis of students' texts analyzes changes in the schematic structure and register variables of student texts aims to explore the connections between these changes and the SFL pedagogical practices described in the study.

Data derive from multiple sources including student texts, videotaped interactions among classroom community members, field notes, lesson plans and instructional materials. The study offers important new directions in language teaching and learning as it demonstrates how SFL-based pedagogy can draw on the cultural and linguistic resources of ELLs to create a culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and permeable curriculum (Dyson, 2003) that both challenges the conceptualization of ELLs as students with a "deficit" and repositions them as skillful language users and text analysts.

Key Words: Systemic Functional Linguistics, Academic Literacy, Second Language Writing Instruction, and Teacher Action Research in Language Education

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

One learns to make texts by making texts, in much the same way as one learns to speak a language by speaking that language. Familiarity with different genres does not grow automatically with growing age, just as language does not simply happen because you are two or three or five years old. For both you need social experience.

Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p. 69

This dissertation explores the potential for Systemic Functional Linguistic Pedagogy to support beginning level English language learners (ELLs) in expanding their meaning potential by gaining greater control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct written persuasive arguments in school contexts. The purpose of the first chapter of this dissertation is to introduce the problem motivating the study; namely, the teaching and learning of academic writing in second language instructional contexts. To illustrate some of the challenges students in my ESL (English as a Second Language) classroom faced that motivated me to explore the problem through a dissertation study, throughout this chapter I provide details about their particular linguistic challenges, the ways that social and academic language differ, the academic writing demands of today's schools and the varying approaches to writing instruction found in US schools.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In the fall of 2010, I began my eleventh year teaching. As an experienced teacher of ESL, I had recently taken a position as a middle grades teacher of ESL teacher at

Fieldstone K-8 School¹ located in the large urban school district of Boston, Massachusetts. My class consisted of ten beginning-level ELLs enrolled in grades 6-8 with whom I met daily in a pull-out instructional setting in which they were removed from their mainstream Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) content area classes to receive additional instruction designed to support their English language development (ELD). As their ESL teacher, I was responsible for supporting their academic reading and writing development so that they would be prepared to enter mainstream classes with native English speakers within two years of their enrollment in the school district. Learning to write using academic language received particular emphasis in my class because, like all students in Massachusetts, my students were required to meet the demands of the recently adopted Common Core State Standards (CCSS). These standards require all students, regardless of their English language development level, to engage in a variety of literacy practices reflecting increasing levels of linguistic complexity across the content areas. Along with narrative and informational texts, the genre of persuasive argument receives particular emphasis in the Common Core State Standards and, therefore, comprised a central component of the middle years English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum in the urban school district in which I taught.

Writing effective persuasive arguments that accomplish the purpose of critiquing, reviewing or discussing various sides of an issue posed a difficulty for my students. It is necessary to point out that, as emergent bilinguals, my students were in the early stages of language development, simultaneously learning to use spoken and written language in both social and academic contexts. While my students could comprehend words and texts

¹ Pseudonyms replace the names of all specific locations and participants with the exception of the researcher in this study.

of limited linguistic complexity with my support as well as participate in some social conversations using limited complex sentence structure, vocabulary and some common English phrases, they found the construction of texts reflecting an academic written discourse to be particularly challenging.

To highlight my students' linguistic strengths and challenges and to illustrate the level of control over the elements of written discourse my students were displaying as they entered my class in the fall of 2010, I turn to a persuasive text composed by a beginning level ELL named Ernesto. At the time he composed this text, Ernesto had recently arrived from the Dominican Republic and was enrolled in a sixth grade SEI class at Fieldstone. Ernesto was representative of many of the students who were enrolled in my class. He had no prior instruction in English and had experienced some interruption in his schooling during his move from the Dominican Republic to the United States. As we began an instructional unit on persuasive writing, I asked students to write to their classmates with the intention of persuading them to buy the latest recording of his favorite singer. Having chosen to write about the musical artist Mozart La Para, Ernesto composed the following text independently as a first draft of the assignment. To facilitate the subsequent analysis and discussion that follows, I include Figure 1.1 that presents both the original draft of Ernesto's text and the same text divided into clauses and transcribed exactly as written by the student.

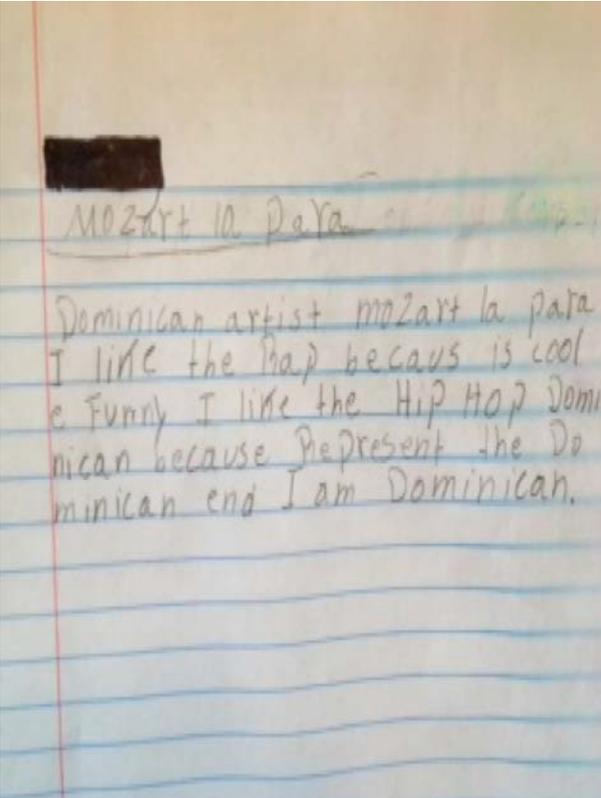
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mozart La Para 2. Dominican artist Mozart la para 3. I like the Rap because is cool e funny 4. I like the Hip Hop Dominican 5. because Represent the Dominican 6. end I am Dominican
---	--

Figure 1.1: Ernesto's First Draft of a Persuasive Text

At first glance, Ernesto's limited control of language conventions such as spelling, capitalization and punctuation remain most prominent and arguably contribute to the greatest impediment to meaning making. However, Ernesto's text reveals some of the linguistic challenges he faces when constructing written discourse that extend beyond the surface level issues of language conventions. Most notably, his text reflects a spoken discourse, constructed as if he were transcribing words onto paper exactly like he would speak them aloud.

A number of features of his initial text reflect elements of spoken discourse. First, Ernesto's text reflects a spoken discourse because it does not unfold using the organizational patterns or language features expected of a written persuasive argument

composed in school contexts. For instance, Ernesto assumes the existence of a shared knowledge of the topic between reader and writer. In other words, the text reflects the shared context of spoken discourse as Ernesto assumes his readers are familiar with the reggaeton artist, Mozart La Para. Because of this assumption, he does not provide any details about the personal or professional characteristics of the artist as he begins his text. The second way the text reflects spoken discourse in its use of lexical chaining. Essentially, Ernesto constructs his text as one long complex sentence in which he connects his clauses with the conjunction “and”, as one may expect in a typical spoken exchange. Ernesto’s text was representative of the typical level of control over linguistic resources such as grammar and organization displayed in my students’ writing at the time we began the unit of study explored in this dissertation.

The theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which I describe in detail within the theoretical framework of this study, helped me to better understand both Ernesto’s current level of written language development and the linguistic complexity of the written texts my students would encounter in school contexts. In particular, SFL provided me the metalanguage, or the language for discussing language, to deepen my analysis of Ernesto’s text and to identify his strengths and challenges in becoming an effective writer of persuasive texts (see Gebhard, Chen, Britton & Graham, 2013; Rose & Martin, 2012; Williams, 2004; for more on the role of metalanguage in the teaching and learning of academic writing in K-12 contexts). After reading and analyzing Ernesto’s initial persuasive text, I determined that he needed support in developing the linguistic resources necessary to construct persuasive arguments in school contexts. Specifically, he needed instructional apprenticeship to develop an awareness of how the

social process of persuasion is accomplished using written discourse in school contexts. Halliday (1993) has characterized learning as “expanding one’s meaning potential” (p. 2) as one learns to use language for a variety of purposes in a growing range of contexts. Two ways in which I, as an ESL teacher, could potentially contribute to supporting the expansion of Ernesto’s meaning potential were to focus on helping him, as well as all my students, develop greater control of the register variables and the schematic structure of typical persuasive arguments composed in school contexts.

In SFL terminology, register is concerned with the social context of language use and is composed of the variables of field, tenor and mode (Christie, 2012; Halliday & Hasan, 1989; Martin, 2009). The register variables of field, tenor and mode correspond respectively to what is being presented, who is involved and how it is being presented (Halliday, 1978; Martin & Rose, 2008; Ghadessy. 1993). My initial SFL analysis of Ernesto’s text clearly indicated that Ernesto needed instructional support in constructing written texts that use the register expected in written academic persuasive texts. Examining the field of discourse of Ernesto’s initial text or what Christie (2012) calls “the nature of the social activity” (p.8), I concluded that his present level of control of the linguistic resources of written discourse allowed him to construct clauses that relied on a narrow transitivity pattern. In systemic functional terms, transitivity relates to how the clause expresses action (Halliday, 1985). In other words, the clauses appearing in Ernesto’s initial text included only a limited number of participants (nouns) and processes (action words) related to the field of musical discourse. For instance, he described the subject (Mozart La Para) and elaborated a few details about the artist such as the kind of music he performs. In spite of the somewhat constrained transitivity patterns exemplified

in his initial text, Ernesto was able to express his positive feelings about Mozart La Para using the process “likes.” He also expressed his evaluation of the musical genre of rap with the descriptive adjective, “cool.” Additionally, in concluding his text, Ernesto conveyed his pride in the fact that Mozart La Para represented the same cultural and ethnic group with which he identified, [Mozart La Para] “represents the rap Dominican.” Overall, however, Ernesto’s text reflects his limited control of the linguistic resources that allowed him to express his positive judgment and evaluation of the artist, what are termed elements of appraisal in SFL (Christie, 2012; Martin & White, 2005; Hood & Martin, 2005; Hood, 2005, 2010; Rose & Martin, 2012).

Notwithstanding his use of lexical choices reflecting his evaluative stance towards his subject and his inclusion of details about the artist, Ernesto’s text did not successfully accomplish the socially recognized purpose of persuasive texts in that he did not attempt to persuade his readers to either change their opinions or to take action in response to his text. Ernesto’s text was further impeded in accomplishing its persuasive purpose because it did not unfold in meaning using the socially and culturally recognizable stages typical of persuasive texts composed in school contexts. Martin, Christie & Rothery (1987) and later, Martin (2009), working from a SFL theoretical framework, have argued that genres are typically constructed as “staged, goal oriented, social processes” (p. 59) that include typical language features that function to signal these expected stages and ultimately contribute to the social act of persuasion. Martin and Rose (2008) call these stages the “schematic structure” or the recognizable “recurrent local patterns within genres” (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 6) expected of a persuasive text composed in school contexts. While I detail the stages as identified by SFL theorists in the theoretical framework of the study,

it is important to note that as a teacher of linguistically diverse learners, I was challenged to make the expected stages and linguistic features of culturally valued texts visible to my learners in a way that did not reduce the complex genre of argumentation to a mere text form. Therefore, as I set forth in implementing the unit, I was mindful of the advice of Kress (1993) who warns:

Teaching of form as fixed, ridged givens rather than as the embodiment of cultural histories and of present meanings and needs will leave learners less well-equipped to deal with the facts of constant change, and without the ability to respond adequately in terms of their best interests (p. 208).

With Kress' warning in mind, I was motivated to explore the potential benefits and challenges of implementing an SFL based approach to writing pedagogy with the ELLs in my own classroom, particularly the teaching and learning cycle developed by Martin (1992b) and his colleagues. I was motivated primarily by the fact that writing process approaches had remained the dominant form of writing instruction encouraged by district administrators and embraced wholeheartedly by educators in my instructional context. In spite of the emphasis the writing process had received historically in the district in which this study takes place, ELLs in my school, class, and district continued to struggle in learning to write in academic ways (Gaston Report, 2009). In fact, district writing scores at Fieldstone School were among the lowest in the state (Department of Education Website, 2008). While I certainly recognize that a number of factors influenced my students writing scores, I was nevertheless motivated to attempt an alternative approach to supporting my students' academic writing practices. Therefore, I set out to augment the writing process with a pedagogy that brought an increased pedagogical emphasis to language, particularly the schematic structures, linguistic features and register of persuasive texts composed in school contexts.

In addition to the challenge of helping my students gain control of the semiotic and linguistic resources necessary to construct effective persuasive texts in school contexts, I was also confronted with having to implement a curriculum that did not offer a way to get students to think systematically about the differences between written and spoken discourse. In fact, the curriculum did not address writing in a way that supported students in gaining control of linguistically complex forms of academic writing. Adding to the challenge, the curriculum was not engaging my students. The curriculum, entitled High Point, had been developed by National Geographic and adopted by the school district several years prior to the beginning of this study. The curriculum was developed explicitly for students in grades 6-8, yet was written at a reading level of grades 1-3. As I mentioned, several aspects of the curriculum failed to engage or challenge my students, in spite of the program's website claiming the curriculum was designed to motivate struggling readers and English language learners through, "high interest multi-cultural selections, significant themes, real-world appeal, and engaging activities" (www.ngsp.com). First, the textbook seemed a bit disjointed without explicit connection or thematic thread between the activities. Furthermore, there seemed to be almost no attempt to make a connection to the lives of the Caribbean born ELLs in my class. In fact, many of the readings seemed Mexican-centric with human-interest stories about making tamales or historical informational readings about the life of the ancient Aztecs. The text was also dated having originally been published in 1990. Adding to my frustration, the teacher's guide and supplementary materials had long since been misplaced or discarded. Far from being engaged in the activities or invested in the curriculum, my students complained that the activities and readings were "boring." Students seemed uninterested

despite my efforts to motivate them to participate. In response, students became increasingly more restless and classroom management became progressively more difficult. I realized I needed to create an instructional context that promoted their purposeful participation and increased their investment in learning written academic discourse. As it turned out, the answer was right in front of me.

The students in my classroom were literally singing and dancing their way into a new language. Each day, before and between classes, and in sudden bursts of energy during class, my students, the majority of whom were born in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, would sing and dance the Caribbean-inspired rap music of reggaeton. Having never visited the islands of the Dominican Republic or Puerto Rico where reggaeton has its musical roots or listened extensively to local Latin music radio stations, I had little knowledge of the musical genre they were so eagerly performing. In spite of my ignorance of reggaeton music, I was interested in learning more about the cultural resources my students brought to the instructional context, and learning more about ways I could draw on these resources to provide a potential access point to language learning.

Literacy researchers working from a sociocultural perspective have recommended teachers draw on their students' cultures, identities and first languages to increase engagement and promote academic achievement (Bartlett & Garcia, 2011; Garcia & Bartlett, 2007; Gay, 2000; Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lee, 2001). Dyson (1993) has further advocated for what she calls a "permeable curriculum" (p. 1) embracing children's language and experiences to enact powerful instructional experiences in diverse classrooms. With the intention of apprenticing my students into writing academic persuasive texts through a permeable curriculum building on their

knowledge and interests, I designed a thematic instructional unit designed to support students in constructing persuasive arguments by exploring the cultural and historical roots and influences of the musical genre of reggaeton. It is important to note that I was not attempting to reduce the rich and complex cultures of Dominicans and Puerto Ricans to a singular musical genre, but rather was seeking to create an instructional access point to promote more systematic language study through our exploration of reggaeton. With that in mind, using English and Spanish to communicate, we explored the musical genre's relevant artists, its history, and influences, with our culminating project being a co-constructed persuasive musical review of a chosen artist's latest reggaeton recording.

With the intention of understanding more about how an SFL based pedagogy may potentially support ELLs in expanding their linguistic resources by increasing their control of the schematic structure and register features of persuasive texts, I designed and implemented a teacher action research project (Burns, 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Duff, 2008; Gaswami, Lewis, Rutherford, & Waff, 2009; Wallace, 1999) examining my implementation of an SFL based teaching and learning cycle (Martin, 2009; Gibbons, 2009). Throughout the study I assumed the role of teacher-researcher and participant observer. In these roles I focused on collecting data, reflecting on my practice, and designing lessons that embedded academic language teaching within culturally relevant, high interest topics representative of a permeable curriculum. Choosing reggaeton as a topic of teaching and learning resulted in a change in classroom dynamics as students and teacher made mutual contributions of related to their perceived expertise. Students displayed their "expertise" on the topic of reggaeton, and I contributed my "expertise" as a language teacher supporting their construction of persuasive texts in a new language.

As the instructional unit progressed, students became more engaged in the learning and increasingly invested in using written and spoken English, both social and academic, to share their knowledge of the musical genre of reggaeton. The following dissertation provides a descriptive analysis of the teaching and learning occurring in the instructional unit, and provides insights and analysis into the benefits and challenges of employing SFL pedagogy to support the teaching and learning of persuasive writing in academic contexts.

1.2 Research Questions

The ensuing teacher action research project resulted in a qualitative case study of the teaching practices and student-writing practices of ELLs engaged in SFL based unit of study. The qualitative case studies constructed as a result of the project intend to illuminate connections between process and product, so that teachers and teacher educators may learn more about the role of SFL based pedagogy in expanding the meaning potential of beginning-level ELLs tasked with learning to write in academic ways. To gain insight into the ways SFL based pedagogy may have contributed to an expansion of my students' meaning potential, I developed the following questions to guide my study:

- 1.) How can an SFL-based pedagogy support ELLs in expanding the linguistic resources necessary to construct written persuasive texts composed in school contexts? (or not?)
- 2.) What can SFL and genre analysis reveal about changes in the schematic structure and register variables of ELLs' written persuasive texts following SFL-based pedagogy (if any)?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this dissertation study is to examine the potential for SFL based pedagogy to support beginning level ELL students in an urban middle school in expanding their linguistic resources by developing increased control over the schematic structure and register of persuasive texts composed in school contexts. The study is intended to contribute to the broader academic conversation concerned with supporting the academic literacy practices of ELLs, particularly Latino youth, in an era of high stakes educational reform (Bartlett & Fernandez-Geara, 2011; Bartlett & Garcia, 2011; Garcia & Bartlett, 2007). More specifically, its intention is to contribute to the growing body of research focusing on ELLs' writing practices and the teaching practices designed to support their academic writing development. For the better part of two decades, SFL has played a significant role in the work of literacy researchers in Australia and the UK as they have explored ways to support the academic literacy development of linguistically diverse students in K-12 contexts (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Christie, 2012; Coffin, 2006; Derewianka, 1990, 2011; Hammond & Macken-Horarick, 1999; Macken-Horarick, Love, & Unsworth, 2011; Martin, 1993, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012; Rothery, 1994; Unsworth, 1997a, 1997b, 1999, 2000). More recently, applied linguists and educational researchers in North American contexts have joined their colleagues working in Australia and the UK in employing SFL to make academic writing practices and discipline specific language use more visible to linguistically diverse learners (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Fang, Schleppegrell, & Moore, 2012; O'Dowd, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004, 2011, 2012; Schleppegrell, Greer, & Taylor, 2008; Schleppegrell & O'Halloran, 2011).

The study draws particular inspiration from the work of researchers involved in the ACCELA Alliance [Access to Critical Content and English Language Acquisition] at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. This group of literacy researchers and urban educators has spent a decade exploring the potential for SFL based pedagogy to create spaces for high interest and purposeful language learning (Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Gebhard, Chen, Britton & Graham, In press; Gebhard, Shin & Seger, 2011; Harman, 2013; Schulze & Ramirez, 2007; Schulze, 2009; Shin, Gebhard, & Seger, 2010). It also seeks to add to the work examining the potential for SFL to support the academic writing of ELLs that has been done in collaboration with teachers and researchers (Brisk, 2012; Brisk, Hodgson-Drysdale & O'Connor, 2011; Brisk & Zisselberger, 2011; Gebhard, Willett, Caicedo-Jimenez & Piedra, 2010; Gebhard, Chen, Britton & Graham, In press; Gebhard, Chen, Graham, & Gunawan, In press; Paugh & Moran, 2013; Schulze & Ramirez, 2007). And last, as a teacher action research project, it contributes new insights into the challenges and potential benefits of implementing SFL pedagogy in urban ESL settings.

The result of my teacher action research is a case study examining the academic writing practices of three beginning level ELLs and the SFL based teaching practices I implemented with the intention of supporting the expansion of the linguistic resources available to my ELLs as they construct written persuasive arguments in school contexts. The study brings particular attention to the ways I drew on the cultural and linguistic resources of my students to support their engagement in text analysis and promote their genre awareness. To analyze my data, I draw on SFL as a tool for tracing how my students increased their control over the schematic structures and register features typical

of persuasive texts. The combination of teacher action research and case study methods and SFL linguistic analysis allowed me to both analyze the teaching and learning context and the meanings and features of the genre of persuasive argument.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The challenge of facilitating the academic writing development of ELLs is not met by writing instruction alone. In addition to writing instruction that attends to the register features and structures of school genres, students must also be given opportunities to apply their emerging linguistic skills in purposeful and engaging ways. Such opportunities should be culturally relevant and draw on cultural and linguistic resources of students (Bartlett & Garcia, 2011). Providing opportunities for ELLs to demonstrate their linguistic abilities is increasingly important in the current context of US educational reform in which ELLs are often labeled as “falling behind” and characterized as entering school with considerable cultural and linguistic deficits. The notion that ELLs are somehow culturally and linguistically incompetent is reified by common educational terminology that defines emergent bilinguals by their deficiencies such as “Limited English Proficient (LEP)”, emphasizing what ELLs cannot yet accomplish linguistically in their new language while ignoring the array of literacy practices and strengths demonstrated by students in their first language. With that in mind, whenever possible, I refer to the students in this study as emergent bilinguals or English language learners whenever possible (see Bartlett & Garcia, 2011 for a discussion of terminology related to English Language Learners in U.S. educational contexts).

In spite of the array of literacy practices students may demonstrate in their L1, not all literacy practices are considered equal in educational contexts. Instead, there are

recognizably valued literacy practices in school contexts that often overshadow home literacy practices and L1 competence (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Rose & Martin, 2012). Most notably, students are often expected to make meaning from linguistically complex texts within specialized disciplines.

In the following section of this study, I discuss some of the language demands faced by middle school students in U.S. educational contexts. Because this dissertation focuses on writing practices and pedagogy, I concentrate on the writing demands required by the Common Core and by the district where this study takes place. However, as writing remains just one element of the larger, holistic entity of literacy development, wherever possible, I additionally draw attention to the domains of reading, writing, and listening as they occurred in the unit of study.

1.5 Academic Writing Demands of Middle School

Before detailing precisely some of the literacy demands of today's urban US classrooms, it is important to take a look at the factors that have brought these demands about and discuss the potential impact they have on teachers and researchers in US educational contexts. As part of a larger context of ongoing educational reform in the US under the federal program of Race to the Top (R2T) and preceded by No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Common Core Readiness Standards (CCRS) were designed following a state-led effort coordinated by the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. These two associations solicited feedback from educational researchers, educators, elected officials, and business leaders to create common standards designed to prepare students for the future workforce

(www.corestandards.org/about-the-standards). As of this writing, 45 states and three U.S. territories have agreed to adopt the standards.²

The Common Core represents a series of standards for the content areas of English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics, science and history. Three key instructional shifts are represented in the ELA standards:

1. Building knowledge through content-rich non-fiction and informational texts.
2. Regular Practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary.
3. Reading and writing grounded in evidence from the text.

The shift towards increased engagement with informational texts is noteworthy as research indicates a predominance of narrative texts in elementary classrooms in spite of the fact that students are increasingly required to make meaning from informational texts as they progress through middle, high and post-secondary instructional contexts (Duke, 2000; Duke & Purcell, Gates, 2003; Duke & Tower, 2004; Kamberelis, 1999). To prepare students to make meaning from informational texts across the grade spans, CCSS recommend that school curricula provide opportunities for students to engage with informational texts across the content areas. As students move into the middle years (grades 6-8), the second significant shift requires content area teachers to ensure that students can independently build knowledge in the disciplines through reading and writing. As they read and write, students are expected to rely on the text to uphold their claims, analyze the content, and process information. This second shift promotes engagement with the text through text dependent questions that require careful reading of the text to formulate a response rather than an overreliance on background knowledge to

² It is worth noting that allocation of federally funded grant money from the Race to the Top (R2T) initiative was dependent on a state's adoption of Common Core Standards.

formulate responses. The third shift, towards regular engagement with linguistically complex texts in a variety of disciplines, brings attention to the developmental aspects of reading and writing as students are called upon to make meaning from texts of increasing linguistic complexity as they progress through school. Discipline specific vocabulary plays a central role in creating the complexity of these texts. However, as researchers in SFL demonstrate, linguistic complexity is not solely a matter of vocabulary and morphology. Rather, linguistic complexity is often determined by the inclusion of ever increasingly complex language patterns both at the genre and clause level (Christie, 2012; O’Dowd, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004; Rose & Martin, 2012).

In contrast to standards set forth by states in response to the requirements of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), academic writing plays a central role in teaching and learning throughout the Common Core State Standards. Because this study concentrates on instruction designed to support middle-grade ELLs in learning to write in academic ways, I first present a detailed overview of the writing demands of the CCSS for the grade span of 6-8. The presentation of the CCSS writing demands detailed in the following section is intended to clarify the connection between the standards and the instructional choices I made during the implementation of instruction examined within this study. As the chart below illustrates, the CCSS focus on promoting students’ abilities to engage with a variety of text types, produce clear and coherent writing, and build their knowledge of a topic through research. As I will discuss later on in the study, these instructional foci are often supported by SFL based pedagogy. To provide a deeper understanding of the academic writing demands of middle and secondary school as identified in the CCSS for language arts and writing, I also include a visual representation and analysis of the

writing practices expected in academic contexts as identified by systemic functional linguists who have been studying the academic literacy demands of school discourse for upwards of twenty years (Christie, 2012; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012).

The SFL illustration brings attention to the functions of the primary genres of schooling and attempts to clarify connections between school writing tasks and the standards. Following the presentation of this information, I analyze some of the academic writing tasks and particular language demands middle school students must engage in to fulfill these standards. The table below presents four aspects of the 6th grade Common Core ELA writing standards and includes the language related tasks associated with each element.

Table 1.1: Common Core State Standards for Writing: Grade 6

Aspect of Writing	Academic Writing Tasks
Text Types and Purposes	<p>Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. • Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. • Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. • Establish and maintain a formal style. • Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented. <p>W.6.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. • Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. • Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. • Establish and maintain a formal style. • Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.
Production and Distribution of Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.6.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.) • W.6.5. With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach. • W.6.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. • W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources. • W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.6.6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of three pages in a single sitting.W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. • W.6.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. • W.6.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources; assess the credibility of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and providing basic bibliographic information for sources. • W.6.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Range of Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.6.10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. • http://www.corestandards.org/

As these instructional standards demonstrate, middle school students are called upon to use increasingly complex language in a number of genres to accomplish two primary tasks: argue and explain. To accomplish these linguistic tasks successfully, they must demonstrate their knowledge of the topic, maintain an effective tone, and clearly organize ideas. The standards also emphasize the preparation for writing that occurs through research on the topic and the various time frames associated with writing as they engage in the routines of writing.

As I mentioned previously, SFL researchers have studied the writing demands of schooling for the last few decades. Rose and Martin (2012), who have spent a significant portion of their academic careers investigating the language demands of linguistically diverse Australian school contexts, identify three broad semantic tropes realizing discipline specific knowledge through a range of genres: engaging, informing, and evaluation. Figure 1.2 below, taken directly from Rose and Martin (2012), serves to map the writing practices all students are expected to engage in to be successful in middle and secondary school instructional contexts (not only in Australia, but in US contexts as well).

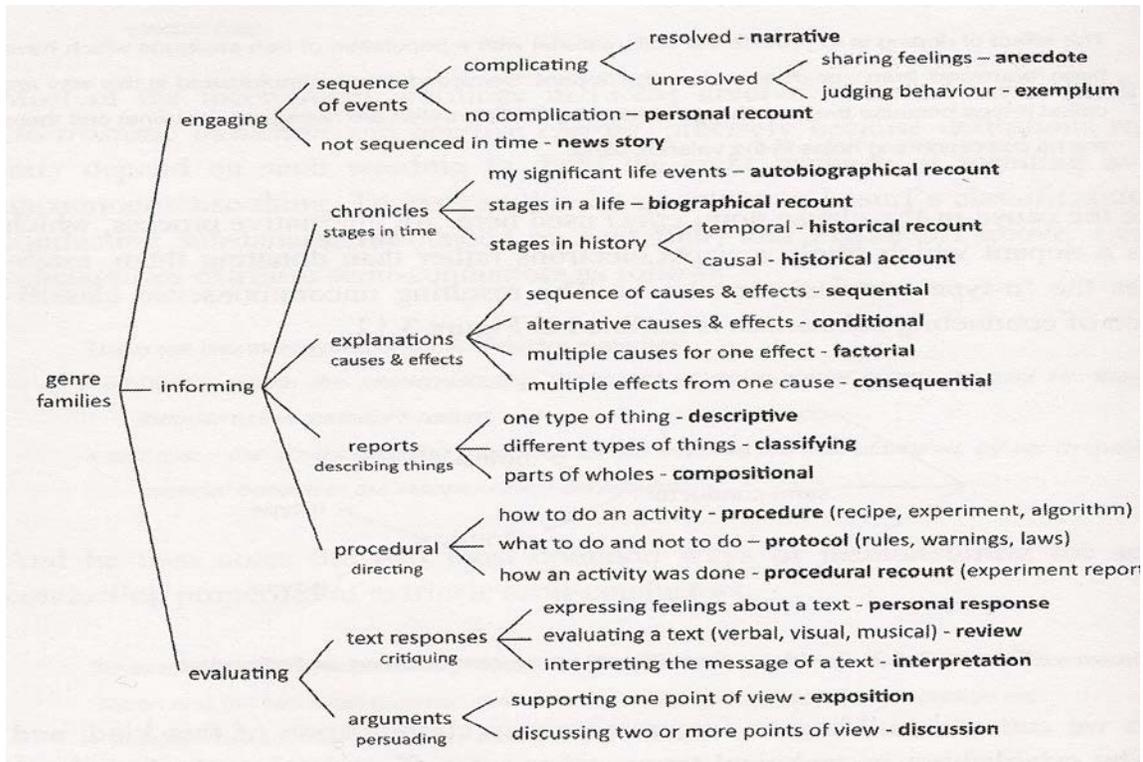


Figure 1.2 Rose and Martin’s Map of the Genres of Schooling

(Rose & Martin, 2012 p. 128)

In the map of school-related writing practices displayed above, Rose and Martin (2012) have created a taxonomy that categorizes writing practices by their principal purposes. In creating the taxonomy of writing practices, Rose and Martin (2012) point out the hybrid nature of school writing practices and acknowledge that oftentimes genres will be embedded within larger genres. They note: “Any text has multiple purposes; it is its primary purpose that shapes its staging and the family of genres it belongs to” (p. 128). The first taxonomical division is between texts whose central purpose is to engage, inform or evaluate which correspond respectively to the genres of narrative, informational text, and argument as set forth in the CCSS document above. Writers typically compose stories intended to engage readers. The story may be a recount of

events, an anecdote that shares an author's feelings about an unresolved complicating event, or an exemplum intended to judge people's behavior (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Martin & Rose, 2008). When writers plan to inform readers they typically compose chronicles, explanations, reports or procedures. When they wish to evaluate, they compose arguments and text responses. The map above shows the different factors that differentiate genres from each other. For instance a text response, situated in the genre family of evaluating texts, may be further divided into those texts that express feelings via a personal response or interpret a text via an interpretation.

To accomplish such linguistic tasks, students must use language in linguistically complex ways. The Common Core emphasizes the development of an organized and cohesive argument that uses a "formal style." Although establishing a "formal style" is included as a benchmark for learning, the anchor standards do not provide an exact definition of what constitutes formal style. Failure to define formal style adequately in linguistic terms may be considered problematic as research has shown that negotiation of formal style often proves challenging for ELLs learning to write academically, especially if the linguistic elements comprising a formal style of writing remain unaddressed by instruction (Christie, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004; Rose & Martin, 2012).

1. 6 School Discourse

Writing with a formal style is one of many significant challenges ELLs face when learning to write in academic contexts. The source of this difficulty lies in the fact that ELLs are still in the process of learning how to make meaning in academic contexts using the grammar, structure and vocabulary of the "language of schooling" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 1) or "school discourse" (Christie & Derewianka, 2008, p. 1). Adding to their

challenge are the differences between the “everyday” spoken discourse ELLs typically learn through social interactions with peers and the content specific academic language they need to complete discipline specific writing tasks (Cummins, 2001; Martin, 1984; Gibbons, 2002, 2009; Halliday, 1985; Hasan, 2012; Gebhard & Martin, 2011; Schleppegrell, 2004, 2006). While spoken language is not considered any less complex, it does differ in significant ways from academic language, which I detail in the following section (Halliday, 1985).

1.7 Academic Written Discourse vs. Everyday Spoken Discourse

To illustrate how the everyday social language of a middle school ELL contrasts with the more specialized academic language constructed by a language user with greater control of the linguistic resources typical of written discourse, I turn to data I collected as a teacher of 6th grade ELLs. In the fall of 2010, during an instructional unit exploring Reggaeton music, I asked students to write a persuasive text designed to persuade music fans to purchase the latest release of their favorite artist. Text A is the first draft of an early-intermediate ELL I will call Juan. As an early intermediate student, Juan was still learning to control aspects of written discourse, although he demonstrated oral fluency with social language. Text B comes from a text I constructed with students during an interactive writing lesson. The two texts are contrasted in Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2: Comparison of Everyday and Academic Language

Text A: Everyday Language of 6 th Grade ELL	Text B: Teacher's Text
<p>One of the reasons I think you should buy EL Salito. It is because the video is funny. The guys are creative and that song is cool and catchy. Is kind of a new song. Everyone thinks about it and talks about it. Reggaeton is cool and that song is about a frog. That he had a salito and they change frog a mako and that's- I finish my story.</p>	<p>An excellent new release from an up-and- coming, talented new artist has just arrived in stores. Lady Gaga's new album, "Fame Monster", is a fantastic new album filled with catchy, irresistible songs that she wrote. One of these songs is "Paparazzi" which criticizes the attention the media gives to celebrities. This socially conscious song made me think about how stars are treated. It is one example of the phenomenal songs on the album. I highly recommend that you download or purchase the album today. If you want to dance to exciting lyrics with urban beats and thoughtful lyrics, buy Fame Monster now.</p>

These two texts illustrate the significant differences between everyday spoken discourse and academic written discourse in particular ways. The model text I crafted attempts to demonstrate register features found in written persuasive texts composed in academic contexts, particularly music reviews. Specifically, it shows how writers use academic written discourse to present ideas, create a distance between writer and audience, and hold ideas together in cohesive and coherent ways throughout their text. The first significant difference between everyday and the academic written discourse exemplified through the contrast of these texts is the clarity of the social action the text performs. In this case, the social action is one of persuading readers to buy the latest Lady Gaga CD. The breadth and depth of the presentation of the topic under discussion in the teacher text helps to accomplish the social action and reflects an understanding of the topic as required by the standards of the Common Core. For instance, in the teacher text, I elaborate multiple reasons for buying Lady Gaga's new album. I discuss topics such as the lyrics of particular songs and include descriptions of the rhythm. In contrast, Juan

limits his argument to the description of only one song, which he does not name, and the general musical genre of reggaeton.

The second significant difference between everyday spoken discourse and academic written discourse illustrated by the contrast of these texts is the way the author's language choices contribute to the creation of a perceived distance between the reader and author. To create this distance through language, writers use linguistic resources that rely less on the immediate context for interpretation. To construct a text that relies less on its immediate context, academic writers typically employ fewer pronouns and include more discipline specific terminology. To illustrate this point, I point out that in the teacher text above I refer to the artist Lady Gaga by name repeatedly while the student writer relies primarily on both the pronoun "it" as well as informal terms such as "the guys" to refer to text participants. He also uses the adjective "kind of" to modify the adjective "new." Such linguistic choices reflect a more spoken, everyday discourse.

Additionally, the teacher version also utilizes particular linguistic choices that construct distance through the inclusion of an increased number of linguistic abstractions to present issues and introduce topics. One resource for realizing linguistic abstraction is through nominalization. Nominalization is a form of grammatical metaphor that occurs when a verb or adjective is expressed as a noun or noun phrase as in the word "release" as it appears in the first clause of the teacher text. SFL theorists and literacy researchers have studied the significance of nominalizations in academic discourse and noted how it plays an important role in constructing a formal tenor and style typical of written discourse (Christie, 2002; de Oliveira, 2010; Fang, Schleppegrell, & Cox, 2006; Martin,

1993; 2002; Schleppegrell, 2004; Unsworth, 1999; 2000). To demonstrate how a writer with control over the linguistic resource of nominalization uses this linguistic resource effectively, I analyze the use of nominalization within the teacher-constructed text. As I introduce the topic in the first clause, I state that “An excellent new release from an up-and-coming, talented artist has arrived.” In contrast, Juan expresses a similar notion without a nominalization by stating, “Reggaeton is cool.”

Fang, Schleppegrell and Cox (2006) and Unsworth (1999, 2000) have called attention to the ways nominalization increases the grammatical potential of processes in that it allows processes to be modified, classified, and qualified. Unsworth (1999) explains, “Once phenomena are ‘gramaticalised’ as noun groups they have the potential for greatly extended description, classification and qualification” (p. 516). For example, “to lead” is a verb, but it can be converted to a noun as “leadership”, enabling the nominalized form to be modified and expanded through the addition of adjectives or post-modifiers (eg. steady leadership, leadership in times of crisis). Such modifications allow authors to express “appraisal value” (Martin & White, 2005; Hood, 2010) or their judgment or evaluation of actions or events in ways verbal processes do not. I illustrate this point in my use of the nominalization “release” in the teacher text. This nominalization allows Lady Gaga’s album to be characterized as “new” and “excellent” and also allows me to emphasize my positive appraisal of the artist by expanding the nominalized form through the addition of the post-modifier, “From a an up-and-coming new artist.” Because nominalization reflect a more abstract use of language, combined with the fact nominalization occurs less frequently in the context of spoken discourse, it

can be characterized as one of the more useful linguistic resources for the creation of social distance between author and reader.

The third significant difference between everyday and academic written discourse demonstrated within the teacher constructed text is the increased use of linguistic elements that contribute to textual coherence and cohesion. Within the teacher text, ideas are carried over from one clause to another. Ideas are presented and then picked up in the next sentence, making the text easier to follow-what one might describe as “flow” and what the CCSS may characterize as demonstrative of clear and coherent writing. To demonstrate how writers with greater control of linguistic resources use these resources when constructing cohesive and coherent texts, I bring attention to an example from the teacher text: “Lady Gaga’s album *Fame Monster* is a fantastic new album filled with catchy, irresistible songs that she wrote.” To maintain cohesion the subsequent clause picks up the topic of the song and begins to elaborate the idea with “One of these songs is ‘Paparazzi’, which criticizes the attention the media gives to celebrities.” Contrasting the language choices made by an ELL and his teacher is not intended to show how much more I know, but rather to illustrate the numerable differences in the way language choices construct meaning in written contexts.

Teaching students to write academically using the discursive resources outlined above can be especially challenging for teachers responsible for the academic writing development of linguistically diverse learners. SFL literacy researchers concerned with the teaching of academic writing suggest that predominant orientations to the teaching of writing have not adequately aided students in understanding the differences between

everyday and academic written discourse (Gibbons, 2009; Rose & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004; Hyland, 2007).

Before delving deeper into SFL theory and its accompanying pedagogy, it is important to take a step back and examine the prevalent orientations to writing influencing instruction in the US and English-speaking instructional contexts today. To illuminate the differences in how writing is taught, and to clarify why I chose to implement an SFL based approach to writing instruction; I present a brief overview of two prevalent alternative approaches to writing pedagogy below.

1.8 Prevalent Orientations to Writing Instruction

Two orientations to the teaching of writing, both influenced by progressivist and social constructivist theories of learning, remain predominant in North American instructional contexts: expressivist and process. As its name suggests, the expressivist orientation emphasizes students' expressive abilities. Through activities such as journaling and free-writing students are encouraged to develop their ideas and make meaning with the limited intervention of teachers or peers. To promote expression of ideas they hope students will translate into their writing, expressivist oriented teachers typically engage students in discussion about their ideas, but as a rule offer little in the way of direct, explicit focus on grammar as resource for meaning making. The second prominent orientation to writing is that of the process approach (Calkins, 1994; Elbow, 1998; Graves, 1994). Like the expressivist orientation, the writing process is noted for promoting self-expression and creativity through student-centered writing activities. However, in contrast to the expressivist orientation, the writing process intends to develop cognitive skills by emphasizing the recursive procedures and routines good

writers follow. These procedures include drafting, receiving feedback from teachers and peers, refining, and revising. Hyland (2004) summarizes the central cognitive development aspect of process methods. He notes, “The numerous incarnations of this perspective are consistent in recognizing basic cognitive processes as central to writing activity and in stressing the need to develop students’ abilities to plan, define a rhetorical problem, and propose and evaluate solutions” (p.10). In planning, students are encouraged to attend to purpose and audience and continue to refine meaning through their successive drafts. As the process continues, students ideally construct an understanding of how effective writers make meaning.

Critics of both expressivist and process orientations voice concern that ELLs possess insufficient control of grammar³ and organizational structures to participate adequately in writing instruction using these methods (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Gebhard & Martin, 2011; Hyland, 2004, 2007; Rose & Martin, 2012). They point out that during the writing process, emphasis on language and grammar as a source for meaning making at the clause level is postponed until the editing and revision stages often leaving ELLs and those still developing their linguistic resources in English to struggle. Rose and Martin (2012) cite findings from research of literacy outcomes across Australia (Gray, Rose & Graetz, 1998; Martin, 1990; Rose, Gray & Cowey, 1999) to explain what they see as limitations in support for ELLs inherent in expressivist and process approaches:

³ Gebhard and Harman (2011) provide an overview of the varying conceptions of grammar taken up by literacy researchers. In the case of Systemic Functional Linguistics, grammar refers to resources for making meaning.

Teachers of immigrant and working-class children in the Australian cities, and Indigenous children in the outback were finding that “whole language reading, ‘process writing, from personal experience and ‘invented spelling’ did not give their students sufficient support to . . . write more than a few lines of simple recounts or observations.

(Rose & Martin, 2012, p. 3)

Critics also note that writing instruction in expressivist and process orientations does not typically emphasize the differences between spoken and written discourse nor attend to how writers make meaning using language in specialized ways according to their discipline. Nor does it address the ways writers simultaneously respond to and construct context through their linguistic choices. Hyland (2007) warns that the focus on process over product attends inadequately to context and leaves students without the necessary scaffolding they need to learn to write academically in specific content areas or disciplines. He expresses his criticism of the approach by stating: “Providing students with the ‘freedom’ to write may encourage fluency, but it does not liberate them from the constraints of grammar in constructing social meaning in public contexts” (p. 150).

Alternatively, SFL researchers argue that ELLs benefit from instructional scaffolding that gives significant attention to the linguistic features, genre structures and language use within particular disciplines (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Feez, 2002; Hasan, 1996; Hyland, 2003; Rose & Martin, 2012; Rothery & Stenglin, 2001). However, researchers embracing alternative perspectives of literacy and language warn that within instructional contexts SFL-based genre pedagogy may manifest itself in ways that over-attend to genre structure and language through reductive and prescriptive teaching. Herrington and Moran (2005) warn, “The risk is that this visible curriculum can too easily be reduced to a focus on form, where what is taught is a reduction of the complex social interactions that constitute the situations for writing” (p. 11). While focus on

structure may assist students in organizing their thoughts and meeting the basic criteria for responses on standardized tests, hyper-focus on form pays insufficient attention to the complex social processes involved in writing, especially in the construction of discipline specific language. This misapplication of SFL pedagogy may result in students filling in templates or checking boxes without thinking deeply about the ways social intentions, social interactions, and audience influence language choice and construct meaning in particular contexts. Within this study, I intend to show how teachers can support students in constructing effective persuasive arguments by bringing attention to form, clause level language use, and register without over-simplifying the complex process involved in the construction of persuasive text in academic contexts. That being said, I do not intend to make any grand claims about SFL pedagogy, and it remains my intention to illuminate the gaps, the instructional breakdowns, and the challenges as well as the possibilities inherent in any form of instruction.

CHAPTER 2

A SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL VIEW OF ACADEMIC LITERACY

2.1 Academic Literacy in the Content Areas

Literacy researchers have turned to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) with the intention of gaining a deeper understanding of the academic literacy development of ELLs and discovering ways of supporting students in learning to read and write linguistically complex texts found in the content areas. Within the theoretical framework of this study, I offer a more comprehensive and detailed description of SFL pedagogy including its theoretical basis and relevant terminology. However, before delving deeper into concepts and terms, I provide an overview of the relevant literature to date both to inform readers about what SFL research has uncovered about how writers construct academic discourse in the content areas, particularly in the disciplines of history, science, and mathematics, and to situate my own research among these investigations.

For the better part of two decades, SFL has played a significant role in the work of literacy researchers in Australia, the UK and the U.S. as researchers have explored ways to support the academic literacy development of linguistically diverse students in K-12 contexts (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Christie, 2012; Coffin, 2006; Derewianka, 1990, 2011; Eggins, 2004; Hammond & Macken-Horarick, 1999; Martin, 1993, 2000; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012; Rothery, 1996; Rothery & Stenglin, 2001; Unsworth, 1997a, 1997b, 1999, 2000). The discipline of history has received particular emphasis in SFL research and because the writing practice of argument is often found within this discipline it receives particular emphasis within this literature review (Achugar, 2009; Achugar, Schleppegrell & Oteiza, 2007; de Oliveira, 2010, 2011; Oteiza,

2010; Schall-Lekrone & McQuillan, 2012; Schleppegrell, Achugar & Otieza (2004), Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006; Schleppegrell, Greer, & Taylor, 2008).

In Australia, Christie and Derewianka (2008) and later Christie (2012) have analyzed the writing demands of students in K-12 Australian and world history from a developmental perspective, chronicling the expectations for student writing through the years of schooling. Christie and Derewianka (2008) provide an in-depth SFL analysis of the schematic structures-the stages texts go through as they unfold- and accompanying linguistic features of a variety of texts composed in school history. They join other SFL researchers in identifying the personal recount as a student's first opportunity to engage in the chronological ordering of events. They further characterize learning to write a recount as an important step toward composing more linguistically complex narratives (Christie, 1998; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Christie, 2012; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012).

In educational settings, personal recounts typically begin with young students recording immediate events in which they have directly participated, such as a field trip to the aquarium, for an audience of family or peers. Martin (2002) clarifies that the events students are asked to write about typically have occurred over a short time frame. To recount these experiences effectively to their audience, developing writers rely on temporal sequences, words or phrases that mark time order, to signal readers to the chronological ordering of events in a story (Christie & Derewianka, 2008, Christie, 2012; Derewianka, 1990; Martin, 2002; Martin & Rose, 2008). To illustrate how a student may use temporal markers or circumstances of time, I provide the follow example based on an example found in Martin (2002). A student may begin a recount by stating:

Yesterday, during school the entire first grade class went to the aquarium. When we got there we all went to see the penguins.

The preceding example contains three temporal markers that function to signal chronology in text. First, the student begins his sentence with the circumstance of time, “Yesterday”, which functions to orient his readers to the moment in time when the story takes place. Second, the author follows the circumstance of time with the temporal marker “during school” which further specifies the time frame of the event. Third, the student places a dependent clause representing a circumstance of time, “When we got there” in the initial or Theme⁴ position. Theme is a systemic functional term for “the first constituent in a clause” (Thompson, 2004, p. 143) and generally represents information that has already been presented in the text. Locating the circumstance of time in the Theme position emphasizes that the event is the first event in a series of multiple events. As the text unfolds, function to advance the events through time. Effective writers of history learn to employ temporal markers such as circumstances of time to construct a chronological timeline that brings textual coherence and cohesion to their writing.

The research of Christie and Derewianka (2008) indicates that with teacher support, students typically move from writing personal recounts to autobiographical recounts. They point out that the genre of autobiographical recount may take the form of an empathetic autobiography in which children are expected to put themselves in the place of historical figures and recount events from the perspective of that person. For instance, students may be asked to write a letter home assuming the persona of immigrant to the U.S. colonies. However, in most cases, autobiographies (often in the text type of a

⁴ SFL typically uses capitals to differentiate its terminology from traditional grammatical terms.

memoir) narrate episodes in a student's life and evaluate the significance of those events in relation to their current situations. In their SFL analysis of student writing in history, Martin and Rose (2008) note that the autobiographical genre differs with respect to "both time and evaluation" and therefore, may "hop from one phase to another" instead of describing events in serial or linear fashion (p. 103). Rather than relying on temporal conjunctions like "first," "next, and "then," students composing autobiographical recounts use temporal circumstances such as "after my dad got the job" or "before my parents decided to move to Chicago" to mark events in time and situate a particular event among a variety of episodes being recounted.

Christie and Derewinaka (2008) and Christie (2012) observe that, given sufficient teacher support, students eventually move from writing about the events of their own lives to writing biographical recounts of the lives of historic figures. Like autobiographies and recounts, biographical recounts rely on temporal circumstances in the forms of dates or temporal clauses that function to locate the reader in time (i.e. After moving to Chicago). Coffin (2006) reports that students typically include the "framing device of time" evident in such temporal clauses such as "In 1985" or "One year later" to organize events (p. 426). For instance students may begin a biography of President Obama with a clause such as: "In 2008, Barack Obama was elected President of the United States." The temporal markers function to order the text and often highlight the significance of the events in the person's life.

After autobiographical and biographical recounts, students in upper-elementary and middle school usually move onto writing historical accounts (Coffin, 2006; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Christie, 2012; Martin & Rose, 2008; Martin, 2009). The social

purpose of historical accounts is to chronicle a past event, analyze its causes and effects and ultimately explain its significance in historic context. Coffin (1997) describes the significance of this shift from writing recounts to writing accounts in terms of students' writing development:

The introduction of causal elements into a retelling of the past marks an important ideological shift from viewing the past as a natural and arbitrary unfolding of events to viewing a sequence of events as underpinned and determined by causal patterns. By superimposing a causal paradigm on to a temporal one we would argue that the historical account plays a pivotal apprenticing role. Without losing the iconic form of a time line as a scaffold for text construction the genre serves to induct students into the role of history in explaining rather than simply recording the past (p. 212).

Coffin (1997, 2004, 2006), Christie and Derewianka (2008) and Christie (2012) apply SFL to demonstrate the change in language functions that accompany the shift from personal recount to historical account. For instance, as students' writing development advances, they begin to write texts that provide more detailed background, reflect sequential order of events through the use of temporal markers and link causes and effects of events through conjunctive textual links such as "therefore" and "thus." Historical texts continue to unfold through an author's inclusion of detailed descriptions of causes and effects with explanations of factors and consequences (Christie, 2012; Halliday, 1994; Martin, 1992; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012).

Shifting the focus to the role of language in meaning making within discipline specific contexts such as history has illuminated the ways historians use language as a tool to construct the discourse of history. The focus on language also brings attention to the particular challenges such discipline specific language use poses for students and teachers. Linguistic features further reflecting a student's developing mastery of historic discourse include a decreased reliance on the personal pronoun "I" and a correlating

increase in the number of general participants. In middle and secondary school contexts, the teacher is challenged to make the role of these linguistic features in constructing text visible to students. Martin, Maton and Matruglio (2010) articulate the challenges history teachers face when both make meaning from history texts themselves and apprenticing their students in making meaning from historical discourse:

The challenge for history teachers is making students see that history is not simply about telling stories, but rather about interpreting the past in un-commonsense ways which involve packaging up sequences of actions by individuals into episodes, explaining these packages causally in side the clause and valuing them appropriately. This puts tremendous pressure on being able to read and write grammatical metaphors, making the discourse relatively abstract (p. 441).

The abstractions that Martin and his colleagues point out pose particular difficulty for ELLs who are simultaneously tasked with *learning through* and *about* language (Halliday, 1985; Gibbons, 2009). General participants in abstract forms generally represent groups of people (voters, US citizens, royal subjects), periods of time (The Civil War, Colonial Times) or concepts (Repression, Injustice, Social Order). Such general participants are constructed through grammatical metaphor (Halliday & Martin, 1993). Rose & Martin (2012) describe grammatical metaphor as the incongruence between the meaning making resources of discourse semantics and the wording of lexico- grammar (Christie, 2012; Halliday, 1993; Rose & Martin, 2012). The incongruence occurs when an author chooses to convey an action or process as a participant in a nominal form, such as in “an increase” rather than using the expected verbal form of “to increase.” SFL researchers have reported on the ways that authors of history texts employ grammatical metaphor in the form of complex nominal groups to collectivize participants and thereby deemphasize individual roles and responsibilities assumed by historic

participants (Egins, Wignell, & Martin, 1993; de Oliveira, 2010; Martin, Maton, & Matruglio, 2010; Schleppegrell & Achugar, 2006). To illustrate how authors employ nominalization to deemphasize agency, Christie (2012) provides the following excerpt from a text written by a 17 year old writer in Australia: “Domestic events in Germany and other global events aided Hitler in his quest for power” (p. 113). In this instance, the nominalization “domestic events” elides textual agency. Christie (2012) explains that, “Such abstractions can often prove elusive for students to understand, especially if they are reluctant readers and writer or learners of English as a second language or both. The packaging will often need to be unpacked, and the potentially mysterious ways, in which abstract entities can achieve agency, or capacity to act in this world, will often need to be explored (p. 113).

The writing practices in which all students are expected to engage within the instructional context of upper middle school (6-8) and secondary school (9-12) typically move away from the chronological, sequence-driven descriptions of the primary years, towards what SFL researchers term the “rhetorical genres” (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Coffin, 2006; Martin & Rose, 2008; Schleppegrell, 2004). These genres include historical exposition in which students must explain, interpret and evaluate the significance of historical events, figures or movements. In contrast to the chronological genres, rhetorical genres require students to construct meaning using language in more complex ways. To accomplish these linguistic tasks successfully Christie and Derewianka (2008) explain that students must demonstrate: “the careful textual management of the factors and how they unfold, the expansion of resources for expressing causality, and the use of Appraisal to evaluate the relative significance of the

causal factors” (p. 126). Christie and Derewianka (2008) present the following example to explain these developments:

The victory of the Greeks over the Persians in the Second Persian War during 480-479 came about due to many factors. Three vital factors were leadership, naval strength and unity.

(Christie & Derewianka, 2008 p. 127)

The upper middle school-aged author of the above text maintains textual cohesion and coherence through the use of nominalizations such as leadership, strength and unity. As noted previously, nominal forms facilitate textual cohesion and coherence by allowing authors to pack more information into fewer words (Eggins, 2004). Halliday (1985) calls this packaging of words “lexical density” which he defines as “the number of lexical items as proportion of the number of running words” (p. 64). The author of the above text is able to package the concepts of leadership and unity, two rather complex concepts, into two words. As his text expands, the author can develop these complex concepts by adding supporting details illustrating his point. Schleppegrell, Taylor and Greer (2008) explore this very idea in their analysis of texts created by secondary school aged students. They show how the nominal forms hold the authors ideas together allowing authors to create topics for paragraphs, which they, in the SFL tradition, term “hypo-themes.” The nominal forms hold the author’s ideas together so that she may preview her explanation and present the topics of each of her supporting paragraphs (Achugar & Schleppegrell, 2005; Schleppegrell, Taylor & Greer, 2008; de Oliveira, 2010).

Constructing written discourse in the instructional context of history class not only requires students to express ideas cohesively, but also to link the causes and consequences of events. For instance, students may be asked to explicate the impact of the Second World War on women’s lives (as shown in Christie & Derewianka, 2008) or

the impact of greater educational opportunities on the lives of those in developing countries (as shown in Martin & Rose, 2008). Whatever the topic, students must use language in particular ways to show the complex links between actions. Coffin (2004) identifies causative processes, circumstances of reason and abstract participants as the main linguistic resources for expressing causality.

In addition to the skillful use of language to manage text and link causes and consequences, history writing requires students to use language to evaluate the consequences and surrounding contexts of historical events. To express this evaluation, students again must rely on elements of appraisal. In SFL terms, appraisal represents “the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned” (Martin & Rose, 2003). In other words, appraisal is a resource for authors to indicate their judgment and evaluation of behavior and events (Hood, 2010; Martin, 1997, 2000; Martin & White, 2005; Rothery & Stenglin, 2001; Veel & Coffin, 1996). Learning to make linguistic choices reflecting particular appraisal values allows authors to express their attitudes and amplify descriptions, as the author of the text cited described the factor as “vital”, rather than an adjective such as “necessary” or “important”.

While a major function of rhetorical genres is to explain and evaluate historical events, they also include arguments in which students seek to persuade others to support their point of view (Derewianka, 1990; Coffin, 1997, 2000, 2006). Arguments may take the form of expositions in which the author attempts to get the reader to accept his proposition or a discussion in which two or more sides of an issue are debated. Coffin (2006) identifies the schematic structures of expositions as: presentation of the

background, thesis, arguments, and reinforcement of the thesis (p. 68-70). The functions of these stages are outlined in detail in the work of several SFL researchers (Coffin, 1997; Coffin, North & Martin, 2008; Martin, 1992; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2008). The language features used to accomplish the purpose of each of these stages are highlighted in the work of other researchers (Coffin, 1997; 2004, 2006; de Oliveira, 2010; Fang, Schleppegrell, & Cox, 2006).

Once again, nominal forms play an important role in the construction of arguments in particular in helping the author to maintain cohesion and coherence. Christie and Derewianka (2008) comment on the significance of nominalizations: “Successful history writing displays such a capacity to deal with extended stretches of history using dense nominal groups, while also revealing the significance attaching to the event involved” (p. 135). To do so, history writers use dense nominal groups to refer to extended periods of history and important events in the past (such as the Battle of Gettysburg or The Holocaust). Deft handling of elements of appraisal also reflects development at this stage. Successful writers of history skillfully manipulate appraisal elements to express their judgment or attitude towards historical events or the participants involved. For instance, a much different attitude is conveyed when soldiers are described as brave or courageous than if they are described as bloodthirsty or vengeful. Depending on the intention of the author’s argument, the writer of history draws on these aspects of appraisal to add cohesion to her argument.

While the point of arguments is to persuade the reader to one point of view, discussions function to present multiple perspectives and points of view on one subject. These discussions require students to present divergent perspectives on historical issues

and “evaluate the soundness of historian’s interpretations” (Christie & Derewianka, 2008). They typically take the schematic structure of background, issue, perspectives, and position (Coffin, 2006). The background orients the reader to the historic event under discussion by situating it in time and in context to other events. The author typically defines the event by using what systemic functional linguists call relational processes to link the issue with its defining clause. Christie and Derewianka (2008) give the example in which the relational process “was” links the concept of appeasement, itself a nominalization, with the definition of the term: “Appeasement was a foreign policy employed by the British government” (p.140). Whether the rhetorical genre takes the form of an argument or discussion, SFL plays an important role in highlighting the structure and language features of this genre.

In school contexts, students often encounter history texts such as arguments and discussions within textbooks. To illustrate how historians construct the discourse of history within textbooks, literacy researchers have also employed SFL as an analytical tool to discover more about how language is used to construct reality in what Martin (2006) calls a “macro-genre” such as those appearing in an academic textbook (Martin, 2006, p. 29). While there is not a large corpus of SFL analysis of textbooks, findings indicate some interesting language use. Cullip (2007), a literacy researcher in Malaysia who studies academic language in higher educational contexts examines the way Malaysian textbook writers present what he considers a rather unproblematic view of Malaysian history. He notes that Malaysian textbook writers rely on abstractions to deemphasize individual agency that he argues contributes to the construction of a “grand narrative” that reinforces a strong nationalist ideology (p. 207). Goom (2004) analyzes

how writers use language to construct a similar unproblematic view of history in her analysis of Spanish history textbooks. To demonstrate how language contributes to the creation of ideological viewpoints within history texts, Goom (2004) provides an in-depth SFL analysis of a children's history text, showing the ways authors deemphasize the roles and responsibilities of nations and their peoples in historic conflicts through skillful deployment of grammatical metaphors and nominalizations. Both Cullip (2007) and Goom (2004) recommend critical pedagogical approaches when teaching historical texts, so that students do not uncritically accept information presented within these texts as incontrovertible truth (See Alford, 2001; Alford & Jentnikoff, 2011 or Comber, 2001 for work on critical pedagogy with English language learners).

Similarly, in the discipline of science, researchers such as Fang (2005, 2006, 2012) Fang, Lamme, and Pringle (2010), Fang and Schleppegrell (2008, 2010), Honig (2010) and Lemke (1990) join their Australian-based colleagues: Christie (2012), Gibbons (2003); Halliday (1993; 2004), Halliday and Martin (1993), Macken-Horarick (2002), Martin (2005); Rose (1998); Veel (1992, 1997) and Unsworth (1997a, 1997b, 1999, 2000, 2001) in employing SFL and genre analysis to highlight the ways grammatical elements, such as passive clause construction and technical vocabulary, help shape the reality of science and assist participants in enacting institutional practices within the discipline. Halliday (2004) and Lemke (1990) have both brought attention to how grammatical metaphor and technical lexicon are used within science and other discipline based forms of knowledge, to bring a level of what Halliday (2004) terms "semiotic complexity" to discourse. More recently, Maton (2011) and Martin (2011) have turned to SFL to explore the concepts of semantic gravity and semantic density of

language found in disciplines such as science and history. Maton (2011) defines semantic gravity as “the degree to which meaning relates to its context” (p. 65) and semantic density as “the extent to which meaning is condensed within symbols” (p. 66). I construct the following clauses to illustrate these concepts:

The group’s appearance on national television spurred a rapid increase in record sales. Before they had appeared, the group was relatively unknown outside of its country.

The nominalized forms in the first clause, “appearance” and “increase” serve to enhance the semantic density and semiotic complexity of the text by packing information into a single word. Both concepts relate to discipline specific ways of knowing and are realized in discipline specific writing and pose challenges for learners as they attempt to make meaning from the uncommon sense discourse they encounter in school contexts.

Meanwhile, in North America educational linguists concerned with school writing practices and English language learning in K-12 contexts have drawn attention to how teachers apprentice their students into the language of science through SFL and genre analysis of classroom texts (Honig, 2010; Paugh & Moran, 2013; Schulze & Ramirez, 2007; Stevens, Jeffries, Brisk, & Kaczmarek, 2008). Honig (2010) presents a case study of 2nd grade science writing practices. Drawing on Hasan’s (1985, 1994) theory of generic structural potential (GSP), which Honig describes as “the description of the range and order of possible lexico-grammatical structures that exist in a particular genre” (p. 92) she identifies four types of writing students are required to produce. She categorizes these genres as: Scientific Method Sheet, WILS (What I Learned Sheet), EOYR (End of Year Report) and GO (Graphic Organizer). While her study classifies the function, purpose and audience of these texts, she does not delve deeply into using SFL to identify

the linguistic features present in the genres or discuss the metalanguage necessary to discuss the impact of particular language choices on the construction of the genre.

However, the language features of academic writing in the context of elementary science served as the subject of a previous study I conducted with a research colleague (Schulze & Ramirez, 2007). Our study analyzed the findings of a genre and register analysis of websites designed for elementary science students to learn about weather disasters. Our research draws on SFL to delineate the differences between the scientific register employed on weather websites designed for children and the everyday language children used when writing their own science reports. Results indicated how, with the guidance of a teacher, ELLs drew on model texts as intertextual linguistic resources, which ultimately facilitated students' construction of texts using the register and language features of science discourse such as nominalizations and technical discourse. In a related study, I conducted an SFL analysis of science texts appearing within the context of high-stakes test preparation to discover how language features contributed to the construction a scientific register (Schulze, 2009). My SFL textual analysis uncovered the potential challenges students face when negotiating meaning from texts employing a scientific register. Once again the densely packed nominal forms appearing within the text proved to a potential challenge. The use of nominalizations in the text resulted in a deemphasized agency that contributed to the construction of an authoritative scientific register, posing potentially significant comprehension challenges for ELLs trying to make meaning from the text. Analysis of the field of the scientific reading passages in the test preparation materials provided additional insight into scientific language use as it demonstrated how the various authors relied on thinking verbs, or what systemic functional linguists call

mental processes, to construct an authoritative identity of a scientist. Findings from the study suggest that SFL based pedagogy may focusing on register may help ELLs meet some of the linguistic challenges as it potentially promotes development of “generic awareness that allows ELLs to become skilled at engaging with the genres prevalent in academic literacy” (Schulze, 2011, p. 89).

In the discipline of mathematics, O’Halloran (1999, 2008) examined the aspect of mode to analyze how authors incorporate visual images such as signs and symbols in mathematical discourse and the role that this aspect of register plays in helping students make meaning from mathematical texts. Shreyer, Zolkower, & Perez (2010) draw on SFL to analyze classroom discourse in a mathematics classroom in Argentina. Among their conclusions, they found that the teachers’ varying use of grammatical subject choices such as I, you and we, helped to construct a community of learners that worked together to solve complex mathematical equations. De Oliveira & Cheng (2011), Gebhard, Hafner and Wright (2004), and Schleppegrell (2007, 2010) have also looked closely at the language of math and concluded that the field of mathematical discourse with its dense noun phrases used to present mathematical concepts posed challenges for ELLs.

The work of SFL is not limited to text analysis alone. Rather, a small but growing body of research has begun to detail the collaboration between educational linguists and teachers. The work of these researchers remains particularly noteworthy for its rich descriptions of the teaching and learning contexts as well as SFL analysis of students’ texts. For instance in North America, the work of the ACCELA (Accessing Critical Content for English Language Acquisition) Alliance, headed by Jerri Willett and Meg Gebhard, is a federally funded collaborative partnership between the University of

Massachusetts Amherst and a racially, culturally, linguistically and socio-economically diverse local urban school district. The research conducted by Willett and Gebhard and a team of researchers has been detailed in recent articles (Gebhard, Chen, Graham, & Gunawan, In Press; Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Gebhard & Harman, 2011; Gebhard, Shin, & Seger, 2011; Gebhard, Willett, Jimenez-Caicedo & Peidra, 2010; Shin, Gebhard, & Seger, 2010; Schulze & Ramirez, 2007; Schulze, 2009). Through ethnographic and qualitative methods, ACCELA researchers have explored the ways teachers use SFL based pedagogy to support ELLs in learning to participate in a variety of academic genres such as the construction of blogs in elementary classrooms (Gebhard, Shin, & Seger, 2010; Shin, Gebhard, & Seger, 2010) and the composition of persuasive texts (Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Schulze, 2011).

In addition to ACCELA, Massachusetts is also the location of the work of Maria Brisk and her team of literacy researchers from Boston College. The collaboration between researchers from Boston College and teachers of the Boston Public Schools has produced a growing number of research articles detailing the collaborative teacher/district/university partnership and examining the potential of SFL to support ELLs' academic writing (Brisk, 2012a; Brisk, 2012b; Brisk, Hodgson-Drysdale, & O'Connor, 2011; Brisk & Zisselberger, 2011). Brisk, Hodgson-Drysdale, and O'Connor (2011) and Brisk and Zisselberger (2011) provide comprehensive studies of an SFL pedagogical approach to the teaching of report writing. Their work found that professional development focusing on the teaching of academic genres, text organization and language features resulted in students producing texts that demonstrated increased organization, audience awareness, and coherence. Brisk (2012) found that with SFL

pedagogy students gained a deeper understanding of genre purpose and tenor that resulted in their increased control over use of person within a variety of genres.

In addition to the research collaborations in Massachusetts, the California Social Sciences and History Project (CSSHP), lead by Mary Schleppegrell, represents a productive collaboration between educational linguists and teachers. The numerous studies resulting from the collaboration highlight the role of SFL in uncovering the ways language works in the discipline of history and how such knowledge of language helps teachers make discipline specific language use visible to their linguistically diverse students (Achugar, 2009; Achugar, Schleppegrell, & Oteiza, 2007; Schleppegrell & Achugar, 2003; Schleppegrell, Achugar, & Oteiza, 2004; Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006; Schleppegrell, Greer, & Taylor, 2008).

These studies have responded to and arguably influenced the shift towards focusing on language use in the content areas as put forth by the Common Core. While these collaborative studies stand out for their detailed attention to both instructional context and textual analysis, additional empirical research is needed that investigates how SFL supports ELLs in developing control over discipline specific language and genres found in school contexts. Such empirical research should present a deep description of the context of teaching with regard to how SFL is incorporated into the SFL/genre based approach as well as how SFL analysis can support teachers in better understanding the academic writing development of their ELLs. Martin (2009) has called for further exploration of SFL models of genre. He states, “The practical power of a model of this kind has yet to be fully explored for L2 learning contexts. If these explorations prove as theoretically productive as those in L1 contexts, then we have a great deal to look

forward to as a new region of theory/practice unfolds” (p. 19). With the intention of responding to Martin’s call to expand upon and corroborate the aforementioned studies and motivated to conduct research on pedagogy that foregrounds language and grammar in literacy learning, I designed a teacher action research project resulting in qualitative case study that explored how an SFL based approach to writing instruction, incorporating both SFL genre based pedagogy and systemic functional grammar analysis, supported ELLs in learning to write in academic ways. It is my intention to contribute to the academic conversation focusing on how to support the literacy practices of ELLs in urban school contexts. Given that SFL pedagogy remains a relatively new form of literacy instruction for ELLs within the U.S. I believe that this study makes an important contribution to the scarce number of studies focusing on how SFL is put into practice to support ELLs in expanding their linguistic resources in purposeful ways while drawing on culturally relevant themes.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Within this chapter I provide a comprehensive overview of the theoretical frameworks informing my teaching, instructional design, and data analysis. I begin with an overview of the conceptual framework of learning and language development that influences my teaching and research. To elucidate the conceptual framework from which I approach this research, I explain principles related to the sociocultural perspective on learning including concepts of language development and instructional scaffolding. Following my explanation of the conceptual framework, I introduce the theory of systemic functional linguistics that informs both my data analysis and pedagogy. In doing so, I provide a brief overview of the historical foundation of the theory of SFL emphasizing its principal elements and tenets that set it apart from other theories of language. Specifically, I explain how the theory of SFL brings attention to language use in context and serves to make visible not only the ways context influences language and the construction of meaning according to purpose and audience, but also how context is correspondingly constructed by language (Halliday, 1985, 1989).

3.1 Language Learning and Development

My research and teaching is undertaken from a sociological perspective on learning and language development. The sociological perspective on learning has its roots in the work of Lev Vygotsky (1986). Vygotsky conceived of language as a semiotic tool that functions to mediate activity by serving as a bridge between the inner and outer worlds of the learner. In other words, language is the medium through which learners make meaning of their world, organize their thoughts, and eventually learn to express the

inner workings of their mind. The learner, however, does not develop this semiotic tool in isolation. Rather, learners develop language as a semiotic tool through repeated, meaningful interactions with more knowledgeable others in which they exchange ideas, construct meaning, and communicate in significant ways (Lantoff, 2000; Lantoff & Thorne, 2006; Rogoff, Tourkanis, & Bartlett, 2002; Vygotsky, 1986).

For most children, the earliest meaningful experiences are constructed through interactions with parents who support their children's language development by building a shared, mutual construction of meaning with their child (Halliday, 1975; Painter, 2005). Through interactions with more knowledgeable others, children are apprenticed into using language in meaningful ways in an expanding number of contexts (Halliday, 1975; Painter, 1994, 2005). For Vygotsky, both a child's interactions with parents and his entrance into the context of schooling have a significant impact on the language development of a child. However, it is typically within the context of schooling that children are socialized into thinking in new ways and in turn using language to conceptualize these new ways of thinking. Vygotsky characterizes this transformation in thinking as moving from "everyday" to "scientific" conceptualizations of knowledge. By "scientific" Vygotsky did not mean concepts related to the field of science, but rather those concepts that are systematic and typically encountered in educational contexts such as the disciplines of math, science, and history (Wells, 1994).

Halliday (1994) presents a complimentary perspective on language development or what he calls a "language-based interpretation of learning" (1994, p. 93). Building upon Vygotsky's characterization of child development as movement from the everyday to the scientific influenced by the child's entrance into formal schooling, Halliday

characterizes a child's development through a linguistic lens as a shift from "common sense" to "educational" knowledge (1994, p. 93). Halliday contends that the contextual shift from home to school promotes language development as children learn to expand their meaning potential as they are tasked simultaneously with learning language and learning through language in instructional contexts. Halliday (1994) outlined 21 characteristic features indicative of children's language development. Halliday (1994) describes these indicators in terms of "semogenic strategies" or the systematic way of using language to make every more delicate interpretations and constructions of meaning (p. 101). He points out that as children engage in an increasing variety of contexts they typically learn to manipulate aspects of lexicogrammar, which Halliday characterizes as a semiotic resource, to perform multiple functions related to giving and demanding information. As evidence of their increasing control over the semiotic resource of grammar and hence their expanding meaning potential, children learn to use language in more abstract ways to annotate, generalize, and classify objects. Correspondingly, as their language develops, children are able to recognize, participate in, and respond to an increasing number of novel contexts. Wells (1994) explains:

All instances of language use occur-or putting it more dynamically, all texts are created-in particular social contexts. Of courses each event is unique in its details, but for the participants to be able to co-construct the text they have to interpret the contexts as an instance of a recognizable "situation-type" and to make their interpretation recognizable to their co-participants (p. 48).

Wells (1994) points out the "mutually constituting role of language and context" inherent in Halliday's theory of language development (p. 48). In other words, with their increased control of language, children are subsequently able to determine and construct an increasing number of social contexts as they engage with peers and teachers.

In the context of schooling, children typically have an increased opportunity to interact with teachers and more knowledgeable peers in ways that apprentice them in making meaning in new contexts. Vygotsky (1978) calls the difference between what the learner can do alone and what he can do with the guidance and assistance of adults or more knowledgeable peers, “the zone of proximal development” (p. 86). What separates this concept of learning from other instructional approaches that lead children through a series of instructional steps designed to teach them new concepts is the context of learning. Children are tested to determine what they can do alone and what they can do immediately with the assistance of the more knowledgeable other (Trudge, 1990; Wells, 1994). This assistance typically takes the form of instructional scaffolding. The theory of scaffolding, first developed by the cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner, builds on Vygotsky’s concept of the expert supporting the novice learner. The second criterion of learning within a Vygotskian sociocultural perspective exists in the meaningful and purposeful nature of the learning activity. Wells (1994) exemplifies the necessity of a meaningful context for learning in terms of writing. He notes, “Taking the example of children learning to write, he (Vygotsky) argued that if the teaching is to be effective, the activity to which it is addressed should be perceived as meaningful, satisfying an intrinsic need in the learner” (p. 63). Therefore, from a sociocultural perspective, the teacher should seek to create meaningful and purposeful contexts for learning that allow students to interact with more knowledgeable others, such as the teacher and more knowledgeable peers in the student’s class.

Through interactions with more knowledgeable others, students are apprenticed into using language in academic ways. In the context of the language-learning classroom,

the “most knowledgeable other” is typically the teacher who scaffolds instruction to build student comprehension. Although the teacher has more linguistic knowledge, it remains important to recognize that students in an ESL classroom possess a variety of cultural and linguistic resources that contribute to an environment of mutual learning. By the time ELLs enter school they have had meaningful interactions with many such “knowledgeable others” including members of their families and communities (Moll, et. al, 1992). That is to say that although ELLs do not yet have control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct academic texts, they do not enter school as a blank slate. On the contrary, like all students, they enter school with a variety of language abilities that they have gained through interactions with parents, siblings and peers. Through this interaction, they have learned to use language to accomplish many purposeful tasks and communicate a variety of ideas and thoughts, albeit perhaps not in the dominant language of the school context.

In spite of entering academic contexts without knowing the language of instruction, ELLs are able to draw on what they do know and the skills they have developed, such as their ability to interpret paralinguistic cues like gestures and facial expressions or contextual cues related to a situation. Additionally, they know how and when to request clarification from peers and adults who share their L1, all with the intention of facilitating the communication of ideas and negotiating meaning.

As ELLs enter the context of the ESL classroom, the teacher becomes the primary mediator of many of the interactions that contribute to students’ language development. However, the academic language development of ELLs does not take place in a neat, linear fashion, contrary to the many “bottom up” approaches prevalent in ESL education

today (Gibbons, 2009). Such “bottom up” approaches imply that learning occurs through the memorization and application of elements of language such as those occurring in the strata of morphology and phonology, what some might characterize as decoding skills (Fairclough, 1992; Gibbons, 2009). In an effort to reinforce what they view as the building blocks or fundamentals of literacy, teachers utilizing a “bottom up” approach may rely on simplified texts to present content material to ELLs, placing emphasis on phonics and morphology rather than meaning making at the whole text level (Rose & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, Greer, & Taylor, 2008). Schleppegrell, Greer and Taylor (2008) contend that the presentation of simplified texts remains potentially detrimental to the learning of both language and content. Referring to the use of simplified texts in the content area of history they warn, “This practice does not engage students with complex concepts or recognize their levels of cognitive development; nor does it develop in the students the advanced knowledge about history they need for further advancement in secondary school” (p. 176). Without sufficient engagement with complex texts, representing a variety of genres, such as those expected from the CCSS, ELLs are essentially left at a disadvantage compared to native English speakers who are given more opportunities to engage with academic genres and the more linguistically complex texts necessary to meet such standards (Gibbons, 2009; Hyland, 2003, 2004; Kamberelis, 1999; Martin & Rose, 2008; O’Dowd, 2012; Schleppegrell, Greer & Taylor, 2008).

Martin and Rose (2008) assert that language learning remains a complex process and requires more support from teachers and engagement with linguistically complex texts than most bottom up approaches espouse. Clarifying their opposition to bottom up approaches which provide an instructional focus on the phonological and morphological

strata of language they state, “Although this approach enables many students to develop skills in academic English, successful students are actually learning to do far more than remembering these components: more importantly, they are practicing skills in recognizing, interpreting and using written language patterns in texts” (p. 3). Martin and Rose (2008) argue for a broader instructional focus that extends beyond “bottom up” approaches to an explicit instruction designed to make language patterns at the whole text and clause level visible to students. They frame this visible teaching and its engagement with linguistically complex texts not only as an effective way of promoting language development, but also as an issue of social justice. They explain:

These skills are less often taught explicitly in language programs, but are acquired tacitly by successful students in the process of doing exercises on selected language components, and later applying them intuitively to actual academic reading and writing. Those students who are most experienced at reading and writing academic texts will be most able to tacitly develop these skills; those who are less experienced will be less successful (p. 3).

For those working from an SFL perspective, making language use visible to students requires teachers to take a substantive role in the learning process as they interact with students through each step of the process (the emphasis being on teaching rather than learning). The tasks that undergird academic literacy development may include substantial amounts of talk; particularly talk about texts that research suggests builds students’ metalanguage or language to talk about language (Gibbons, 2003, 2009). Within a “top down” approach to instruction, teachers support ELLs’ academic language development by providing scaffolds such as “recasts” of student language with attention to form or translations from students’ L1. The support continues as the teacher makes curricular decisions that create instructional contexts that allow for students to practice

language in meaningful ways (see Rose & Acevedo, 2006 for “top down” approaches in practice).

The talk about texts facilitated by the introduction of metalanguage expands students’ opportunities to draw on the available resources, the language choices that they can use to accomplish social and political purposes within a multitude of contexts. Students begin to see texts that they have been provided in instructional contexts as intertextual resources to exploit to make meaning with specific audiences and purposes.

Discourse analysts have explored the concept of intertextuality and its role in language learning (see Fairclough, 1992; 2003 for CDA; and Lemke, 1995 for social semiotics; and my earlier research with Andres Ramirez centering of ELLs’ employment of intertextuality as resource for developing generic competence Schulze and Ramirez, 2007). Kristeva (1986) first used the term “intertextuality” to articulate the notions of Russian linguist Bahktin who theorized that language, both oral and written, is composed of responses to previous texts and anticipations of future ones (Bahktin, 1981,1986). Fairclough further noted, “All utterances (or what he called texts) are populated, and indeed constituted by snatches of other’s utterances, more or less explicit or complete” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 102). ELLs in the process of learning a new language engage with teachers, peers and texts, and often reword or borrow ideas to make their own purposeful meanings. These linguistic borrowings or intertexts echo the ideas and words of others and are woven into new texts for new audiences and new meanings (Harman, 2008; 2013). In other words, intertextuality re-voices or recontextualizes that which has been said or written over and over again creating what Fairclough viewed as a “chain” of

linked utterances, which may be conceptualized as horizontal or vertical discourses (Fairclough, 1992, p. 130).

Horizontal intertextuality occurs when an utterance is made in direct response to another as in turn taking in a conversation or response to a note or as in an instructor's comments made on an academic paper. Fairclough characterizes vertical intertextuality as "historically linked with in various time-scales and along various parameters, including texts which are more or less contemporary with it" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 103). Thus, the concept is one of texts or utterances building one upon the other, as when ELLs appropriate texts-either written or spoken-and make them their own. In the process of making the appropriated intertexts their own students may rely on "manifest intertextuality" (1992, p. 104), which may take two forms. In the first form, the directly borrowed words are placed in quotation marks (or not) and may be evident in the writer or speaker's wording of his response to an utterance or text. The other form of manifest intertextuality Fairclough mentions is "constitutive intertextuality" (ibid, 104) which he defines as "the configuration of discourse conventions that go into text production" (ibid, 104). Teachers typically instruct students in how to indicate the borrowing of discourse conventions through quotations, without which the text is considered plagiarized. Though the concept of plagiarism has been attributed to Western thought its association with criminal activity separates it from other errors ELLs may make (Chandrosoma, Thompson & Pennycook, 2004; Pennycook, 1996). However, as students construct their texts with the help of teachers and peers, it is perhaps expected that their texts be populated by other snatches of sentences and utterances reflecting the voices of others who co-constructed the texts with students.

3.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics

This study explores the implementation of an SFL-based approach to academic writing instruction for ELLs. The SFL based approach draws on genre theory and Hallidain linguistics to bring attention to the way linguistic features and text structures contribute to meaning making and the fulfillment of a genre's purpose. To fully understand SFL based pedagogy it is important to look at its theoretical basis, including its historical roots, the different ways it is taken up by literacy researchers, and what it looks like in practice. In this section of the paper, I will address each of these issues as well as define key terminology prevalent in SFL using examples from the texts appearing within the course of the instructional unit whenever possible.

The concept of genre and its accompanying instructional branch of genre-based pedagogy is taken up in significantly different ways by researchers working in English for Specific Purposes (Bazerman, 1988; Bhatia, 2004; Paltridge, 2001; Swales, 1990, 2000), Rhetoric and Composition (Bawarshi & Reif, 2010; Devitt, 2004; 2011; Herrington & Moran, 2005; Johns, 2002; Miller, 1984), New Literacy Studies (New London Group, 1996) and SFL (Martin, 1992; Rothery, 1986).⁵ Genre theorists working in the field of ESP traditionally focus on the ways discourse communities construct knowledge through language. They describe genres as related constellations or families of texts designed for similar purposes and adhering to similar structures (Bhatia, 2004; Swales, 1990). Genre theorists working in ESP are particularly concerned with the writing occurring in higher education contexts and professional discourse communities. To find out more about how language users learn to negotiate the linguistic resources of

⁵ See Hyon (1996), Martin (2009) and Gebhard & Harman (2010) for comprehensive reviews of the varying ways genre has been taken up by literacy researchers.

particular discourse communities, ESP researchers devote much of their research to analyzing the linguistic moves or schematic structures language users employ to accomplish particular purposes in particular disciplines (Johns & Swales, 2002; Swales, 1990, 2000; Swales & Feak, 2009; Thibault, 1989; Van Bonn & Swales, 2007). They translate this knowledge into practice through a genre-based pedagogy designed to apprentice students into discourse communities by making these moves and schematic structures visible to learners (Swales, 1990).

Like ESP researchers, genre theorists working within the field of Rhetoric and Composition also focus on the social purposes of texts. What often sets researchers in the field of Rhetoric and Composition apart from ESP researchers, however, is their concentration on the ways texts are constructed by language users in authentic contexts occurring beyond classroom borders. Through ethnographic research, they seek to uncover the ways language is used in authentic contexts within a variety of disciplines (Coe, 2007; Herrington, 1985; Schryer, Lingard, & Spafford, 2007). Like literacy theorists in Rhetoric and Composition, researchers working from the framework of New Literacies also apply ethnographic research methods to uncover more about the role of literacy in the social practices in which people participate. Like their counterparts in Rhetoric and Composition, New Literacy theorists tend to conceptualize genres as the language practices associated with particular social practices. As their name suggests, New Literacy researchers are particularly interested in learning more about how language users interact via new forms of literacy made possible by digital textual formats including multimodal formats such as blogs, websites, and social media. Their research highlights

the collaborative nature of literacy that these formats purport to promote (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Kalantzis & Cope, 2011; Gee & Hayes, 2012).

SFL conceptions of genre share several similarities with the orientations to genre described above especially in its concern with purpose, audience and writing in academic contexts. However, three primary differences set SFL definitions of genre apart from the others. First, SFL conceptualizes language as a social semiotic or a system for contextually based meaning making. Within SFL context remains paramount to meaning making (Halliday, 1985). Because the linguistic choices language users make inherently shape and are shaped by context, the social contexts in which genres emerge remain essential to linguistic study in an SFL model (Halliday & Hasan 1985; Hasan, 2009). The second definitive feature of the SFL concept of genre and language has to do with the role of grammar. In contrast to a traditional theory of grammar with its routes in the study of classical rhetoric or the theories of universal grammatical structure espoused by Chomsky (1966), SFL theorists view grammar as a resource for making meaning in particular contexts rather than as a set of rules or as an underlying set of structures that emerge in the course of language development (see Gebhard & Martin, 2011 for a comprehensive review of varying conceptions of grammar). Third, and perhaps most importantly, SFL genre theorists demonstrate an expressed concern with issues of social justice as they seek to make visible the way language works in socially and culturally valued genres (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Christie, 2012; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004). That is not to say alternative conceptions of genre and language are not concerned with social justice, but rather that SFL explicitly

emphasizes the social justice aspects of its theory especially as it is realized in its pedagogy (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012).

A good starting point for developing an understanding of SFL conceptions of genre is to turn to one of the more frequently cited definitions of genre in an SFL orientation. Martin, Christie, and Rothery (1987) call genre “a staged-goal oriented, social process with structural forms that cultures use in certain contexts to achieve various purposes” (p. 59). Genres are considered to have stages because they typically require a number of steps to achieve their goal. Stages of genres are signaled by the inclusion of distinct clause level elements such as processes, participants and circumstances, which I define and exemplify further on within this theoretical framework. As a text unfolds in meaning through its various stages or “schematic structures” (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 9), the linguistic, syntactical, and textual features typical of genre work together to realize a text’s intended purpose; thus, making genres “goal oriented.” Finally, genres are considered to be a social process for a number of reasons. First, genres are considered a social process because participants generally interact in accomplishing the goals. The interaction may take the form of participants making meaning in a face-to-face context or readers and writers making a shared attempt to negotiate meaning. Second, the social processes are culturally recognized, valued, and constructed by language users. Third, and perhaps most importantly, the genres do not remain fixed and do not exist in a stagnant, decontextualized vacuum, but rather change to suite the purposes and needs of language users engaged in certain social process (Kress, 1993).

The theory of SFL, introduced above, serves three fundamental purposes in this study. First, it serves as the theoretical basis of language informing this study. Second, it

serves as the primary form of linguistic analysis of my data. Third, it forms the basis of the pedagogy described in this study. Given the multiple roles it plays within this study, it is necessary to provide a comprehensive rendering of SFL's theoretical and historical foundations to understand how SFL differs from alternative approaches to language.

British linguist Michael Halliday is credited with creating the theory of SFL (1978, 1985, 1989, 1996, 2004). Throughout the 1950's and 1960's Halliday worked in conjunction with linguists in Australia and the UK who later contributed to refining genre theory in educational contexts (Halliday, 1993; Wells, 1994). When Halliday first proposed the theory of SFL, dominant linguistic theories conceived of language as branch of cognitive psychology. Chomsky (1966) had developed a structuralist theory of a universal, generative grammar which proposed that syntax and meaning were distinct entities. In contrast to the cognitive conceptualization of language, Halliday conceptualized language as a social semiotic or meaning making resource in which meaning and grammar are viewed as inseparable and which context is most influential.

To shed light on how language constructs meaning in social contexts, Halliday turned his focus to studying contextual instances of language in use (Halliday, 1977). Drawing on the work of cultural anthropologists Malinowski (1935) and Firth (1957), Halliday theorized that context serves as the essential influence on the construction of meaning. Halliday further contended that language users comprehend linguistic interactions according to the context of culture and the context of situation in which meanings are enacted. Context of culture represents all the potential linguistic interactions considered socially recognizable within a society that may be instantiated within a context of situation (Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Hasan, 2009; Lukin, 2012). Hasan (2009) explains the

differences between the two contextual views of culture by stating “context of culture is the potential, i.e. the system, while context of situation is an instance of that potential (p. 169). Such linguistic potentialities represented by the context of culture are shaped by the cultural history, ideology, and value systems of a society. The context of situation, on the other hand, is the more immediate “environment of the text” (Halliday, 1989, p.6) and is instantiated by what Halliday and Hasan termed the register of a text. Halliday (1985) contends that context exists within text and notes that the “context of situation...is encapsulated in the text, not in a kind of piecemeal fashion, nor at the other extreme in any mechanical way, but through a systematic relationship between the social environment on the one hand, and the functional organization of language on the other” (Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p. 11). To be clear, context of culture and context of situation are not two different things, but as Halliday (2008) notes, “the same thing viewed from different time depths” (p. 57). In other words, context of culture represent the possible meanings while the context of situation is the instance in which the meaning is experienced or instantiated. Guided by these contextual factors, language users draw on a range of possible choices to construct meaning, rather than simply adhere to grammatical rules (Eggins, 2004; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004)

3.3 Metafunctions, Register, and Genre

Systemic functional linguists view language fundamentally as a semiotic system in which meaning is constructed by language users based on choices regulated by ideological assumptions (the values language users hold, the biases they adopt), the genre or context of culture (the staged, purposeful way in which people achieve purposes using language in a culture), and the register or context of situation. The following diagram

provides a visual representation of the SFL conception of language as a semiotic system regulated by ideology, genre and register features (Martin and Rose, 2003, p. 254).

Following the diagram in Figure 3.1 below I discuss how each of these concepts works relate in a semiotic system of meaning making.

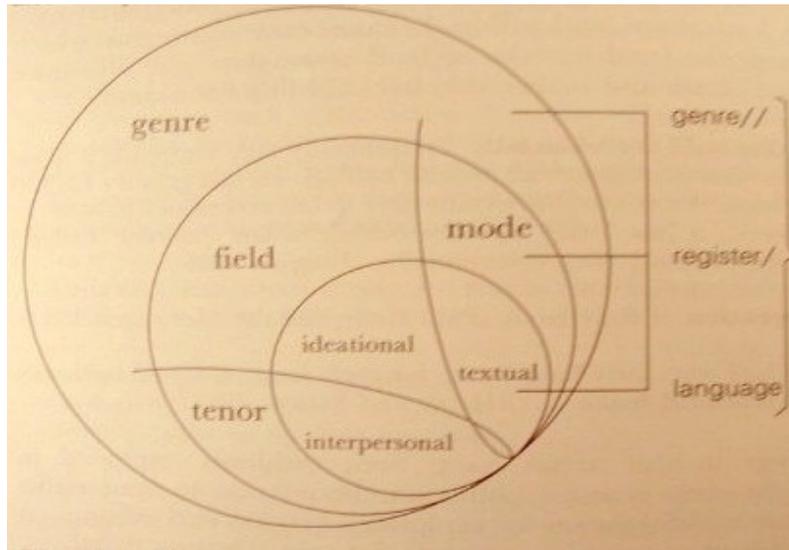


Figure 3.1: Relations of Metafunctions, Register, and Genre

(Martin & Rose, 2008)

Halliday further contends that language has three essential metafunctions that work together to instantiate meaning within text: the ideational, interpersonal, and the textual (Halliday, 1989). The ideational metafunction concerns itself with content, namely the linguistic representation of the world and construal of the “theory of human experience” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pg. 29). Kress and Leeuwen (2001) distinguish the ideational metafunction as “what is going on in the world” and “who does what, with or to whom, and where” (pg.13). The interpersonal meta-function refers to the interactive nature of language and the conveyance of judgment and attitudes within utterances. Thompson (2004) explains the interpersonal metafunction in terms of the

purpose-driven interactions in which language users participate: “We tell other people things for a purpose: we may want to influence their attitudes or behavior or to provide information that we know they do not have, or explain our own attitudes or behavior, or to get them to provide us with information and so on” (p. 45). The textual metafunction facilitates the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions by organizing messages in unified and coherent ways that as Thompson (2004) explains, “makes them fit smoothly into the unfolding language event” (p.141). Different people call these three aspects of meaning making different names with slight differences in interpretation. Lemke, for instance, uses the terms Presentational, Orientational and Organizational (Lemke, 1995). Fairclough characterizes them as ways of acting, representing and being (Fairclough, 2001). Regardless of the differences in nomenclature, the important point is that language simultaneously constructs all three forms of meaning. In other words, the simultaneous presence of each of these meanings in any text is necessary if anyone is to make sense of each other and the world around them.

3.4 Register: Field, Tenor, and Mode

As noted above, the context of culture encompassing the system of linguistic potentiality is instantiated within texts. Texts realize the three metafunctions of language within specific social situations and contexts. When texts share similar contexts of situation, they also share similar experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings which means they belong to the same register. Halliday and Hasan (1985) define register as “language according to use” (p.41). Composed of field, tenor, and mode, register corresponds broadly to what is being presented, who is involved, and how it is being

presented (Eggins, 2004; Halliday, 1978; Martin, 2002a; Martin & Rose, 2008; Ghadessy, 1993).

The work of many SFL analysts focuses on examining the register of texts to uncover how language features reflect and construct the social situations and contexts in which meaning is being made (Halliday & Hasan, 1985; Hasan, 2009; Martin, 1992; 2009; Ghadessy, 1993). In the field of educational linguistics, for instance, SFL linguists have examined the registers of particular content areas such as history (Coffin, 2006; DeOliviera, 2010; Martin, 2002; Martin, Maton, & Matruglio, 2010; Matruglio, Maton, & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004; Schleppegrell, Greer & Taylor, 2008), science (Fang, 2005; Schleppegrell, 2004, Unsworth, 1997) and mathematics (O'Halloran, 2008; Schleppegrell, 2007, Schleppegrell & O'Halloran, 2011; Veel, 1997, 1999).

Field of discourse is the first element of register. Halliday (1985) provides the following definition of field, “The field of discourse refers to what is happening, to the nature of the social action that is taking place: What is it that the participants are engaged in, in which the language figures as some essential component? (p. 12). Christie (2012) has called field of discourse the “nature of the social activity” (p. 8). Processes, participants, and circumstances constitute the register variable of field. The field of discourse has to do with what happens in a text (the processes), who or what is involved in these happenings (the participants) and the linguistic markers that indicate where, how or when events take place (the circumstances).⁶

There are a variety of fields of discourse, including the class lecture, a game, or a discussion about favorite songs and musical artists. In written discourse the topic of the

⁶ These systemic functional grammatical terms correspond broadly to the terms verb, noun and adverb found in traditional grammar.

writing typically constitutes the field. To exemplify how varying elements of field contribute to the construction of the clause or a unit of meaning, I turn to a text about reggaeton music, excerpts of which I read with students during the course of the instructional unit. Within the table I transcribe the clause, provide the SFL term for the particular constituent of the clause, and describe the constituent’s function in regard to the construction of meaning within the clause.

Table 3.1: Elements of Field

Clause	The first sounds resembling modern reggaeton	appeared	in Puerto Rico	in the “Noise” Disco	between 1993 and 1994
SFL Term	Participants	Processes	Circumstances	Circumstances	Circumstances
Function	Names who or what is involved.	Specifies participant actions.	Describes the location of the action	Describes the location of the action	Situates the action in time

From an SFL perspective, processes form the principal foundation of a clause given that the clause is mainly about the action or the state in which the participants are involved. Therefore, SFL analysis of the field focuses on transitivity, or the type of processes in which participants and circumstances are involved. Halliday (1994) explains that the transitivity system of English grammar construes experience into a manageable set of process types. The central categories of processes composing the transitivity system are divided into those that represent internal and external experience (the material and mental processes) and those that function to classify and identify (relational processes).

In the image presented in Figure 3.2 below, Halliday (1994) provides a visual representation of the varying processes of the transitivity system of English grammar and their functions in construing experience. The outer circle shows the varying processes that express external and internal actions and the inner circle demonstrates their function. To exemplify a number of the varying categories of processes identified by systemic functional linguists, I also provide examples of the varying forms of processes as they appeared in clauses from a model text I read with students during the course of the instruction unit. It should be noted that because context contributes to the construction of meaning that each of the examples provided do not serve as “pure” process forms and could be interpreted in various ways depending upon context, but nevertheless provide a comprehensive overview of the variety of processes appearing in the English language (see Christie, 2012; Fawcett, 2010 or O’Donnell, Zapavinga, & Whitelaw, 2009 for explanations of the various ways processes are interpreted by SFL linguists).

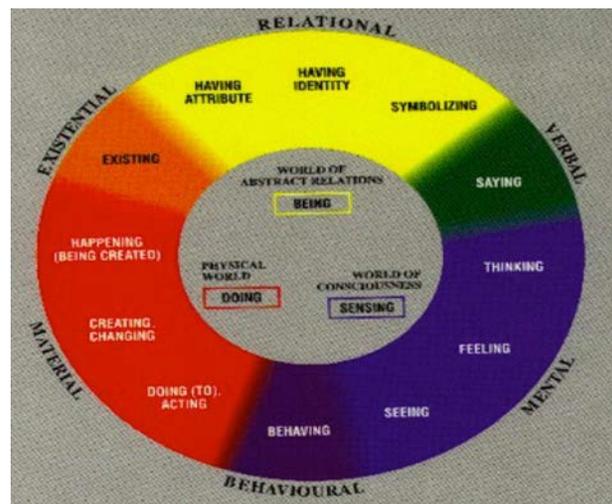


Figure 3.2 Halliday’s Visual Representation of Processes

(Halliday, 1994, p.274)

Table 3.2: Examples of Process Types Appearing in Unit Instructional Materials

Process Type	Function	Examples
Material	Construct visible experience in the world	Chino and Nacho <i>performed</i> songs from their new album.
Relational	Establish relationships between two concepts	Chino and Nacho <i>seem to be</i> Venezuela's hottest new group. Puerto Rico <i>is</i> an island in the Caribbean.
Mental	Represent inner workings of the mind such as feelings and beliefs.	Reggaeton fans <i>felt overwhelmed</i> with excitement upon seeing the group live.
Verbal	Express what participants are saying.	Critics <i>say</i> that Chino and Nacho <i>are</i> the best new band in ages.
Behavioral	Between mental and material; express intentional mental behavior.	Fans of Chino and Nacho <i>watched</i> the concert intently.
Existential	Represents existence	There <i>are</i> a great number of phenomenal reggaeton artists working today.

The second element of register is tenor of discourse. Halliday (1985) explains the varying elements that construct the tenor of discourse. He notes:

Tenor of discourse refers to who is taking part, to the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles: what kinds of role relationship obtained among the participants, including permanent and temporary relationships of one kind or another, both the types of speech roles that they are taking on in the dialogue and the whole cluster of socially significant relationships in which they are involved (p.12).

Such issues as the level of familiarity between or among participants and their attitudes towards each other determine this aspect. The status of participants can be considered equal or unequal. The visit between a doctor and his patient remains one of the more recognizable encounters in Western culture in which status differences remain most pronounced. Acknowledgement of the status variation between doctor and patient is most apparent in terms of the way patients typically address doctors, who are considered to

have “higher” social status and are thus referred to by patients by their title and last names. In contrast, doctors typically address patients by their first names.⁷ Status differences are also manifest in conversational turn-taking patterns. Interlocutors who are perceived by language users to be of “higher status” typically control turns-at-talk and direct the topic of conversation. For example, in the context of a medical consultation a doctor typically asks her patient a series of questions designed to elicit information to which the patient typically is obliged to respond (Eggins & Slade, 2005). The second aspect of tenor, solidarity, is concerned with social distance between interlocutors. For instance, best friends typically consider themselves of equal status. Because of this perceived social equality they frequently have many topics of conversation on which to draw. SFL linguists refer to this concept of broad potential meaning exchanges as *Proliferation*. Conversely, *contraction* refers to the limited explicitness of conversational topics available to those of unequal status such as the doctor and her patient (Poyton, 1984,1990). Illustrating the notion of contraction, Martin and Rose (2008) point out that when people meet for the first time, conversation might be short in duration and represent a constrained field of discourse as potential topics of conversation remain limited, but as solidarity is developed over time, interlocutors who are familiar with each other typically have many topics available to occupy the field of discourse during the exchange.

Although the examples illustrate tenor in spoken language, language users also utilize linguistic resources to construct relationships within written discourse. To analyze the tenor of written texts, SFL linguists explore several elements of language to uncover the role language plays in establishing interpersonal relationships within a text (for an in-

⁷ For an in-depth look at tenor within doctor/patient discourse see Poyton (1985) or the more recent work of SFL linguists such as David Butt and Allison Moore among others.

depth look at tenor networks see the work of Butt, 2003 or Hasan, 2009, 2012). For the purpose of my analysis, I focus on two of the major linguistic elements contributing to the construction of tenor within a text: modality and appraisal. These elements are described and exemplified below and play an important part in the subsequent data analysis of student texts that follow.

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) describe the role of modality in the following way: “What the modality system does is construe the region of uncertainty that lies between ‘yes’ and ‘no’ (p. 147). In other words, modality signals the degree of probability or obligation put forth in a clause. Modality is further divided into two subcategories referring to the elements of probability and obligation respectively: modalization and modulation (Halliday, 1994; Halliday & Mathiessen, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2003, 2008; Thompson, 2004). Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) have established a way of formalizing these modality values. To do so, they place modals of probability and obligation on a scale ranging from High, Median and Low. The table below, adapted from Thompson (2004) demonstrates the modal value scale using a text taken from the instructional unit examined in this study.

Table 3.3: Modal Values in Text

Degree	Modalization (Probability)	Modulation (Obligation)
High	Chino and Nacho will sing many hit songs.	You must listen to this song.
Median	They might have many hit songs in the future.	You ought to listen to their latest CD.
Low	The group may record again.	You could download their latest album now.

The first element, modalization, refers to the scale of probability set forth in the clause or in simpler terms, the likelihood a proposition is to occur. For instance, in the

last example above, “The group *may* record again”, the writer expresses a relatively low level of probability through the use of the modal auxiliary “may.” In contrast, the author expresses increased probability by choosing the modal auxiliary *will* as exemplified in the clause:

Chino and Nacho will sing many hit songs.

The second element of Modality, modulation, is defined as “the scales of obligation and inclination” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pg. 147). The two statements of modulation offered in the table above exemplify the potential significant contrasts in meaning modulation choices can realize. For instance, the author’s choice of the modal auxiliary “must” in the clause, “You must listen to this song” signals urgency and high level of obligation, whereas the inclusion of the modal “could” in the clause “you could download their latest album now” presents an option indicating a significantly lower level of obligation.

Analysis of the tenor of a text also involves examining an author’s use of appraisal or, “the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways values are sourced and reader’s aligned” (Martin & Rose, 2008, p.25). Oftentimes such value systems are not made explicit, but are revealed only through close examination of the varying aspects of the system of appraisal upon which authors draw to express their values. Martin proposes a tripartite system of appraisal involving engagement, graduation and attitude. For the limitations of this study, my analysis will focus on the three main components of attitude: affect, judgment, and appreciation (Martin & White, 2005; Hood & Martin, 2005; Hood, 2005, 2011). Within the context of writing a music review, authors are expected to draw on appraisal

resources to illustrate their opinions of various artists and their music. In the student text I included in the introduction to the study, Ernesto utilized appraisal resources to a limited extent to express his positive evaluation of rap music when he states, “I like the rap because it’s cool and funny.” To further exemplify what these appraisal resources may look like in the context of a music review, I present below three components of appraisal relating to the linguistic construction of attitude in a text along with an example of how the element may appear in the context of a persuasive music review.

- 1.) Affect: Expresses attitude about an object or thing.
Example: The music was boring and uninspiring.
- 2.) Appreciation: Expresses thought regarding a phenomenon or action.
Example: The audience found the rhythm captivating.
- 3.) Judgment: Expresses thoughts on justice.
Example: Banning iPods from school was unfair.

Persuasive writers may call on these resources to clarify their attitudes towards a subject or to construct what is typically perceived as a voice of authority in their text. Hao & Humphrey call the inclusion of appraisal resources to construct authority within an argument, “burnishing and tarnishing” (Hao & Humphrey, 2012, p. 15). Arguably, knowing how to use these aspects effectively leads to more powerful and effective argumentative writing, yet style and voice remain two of the most difficult aspects of writing for language educators to teach and for ELLs to develop (Hood, 2010).

The third aspect of register analyzed within this study is mode. Mode is defined as “the role language plays in a situation” (Christie, 2012, p. 9). For instance, information in a text may be communicated in spoken or written form or what Halliday characterizes as

the “channel” in the definition provided above. However, written and spoken texts rely on different linguistic features to make meaning. To differentiate the language of written and spoken texts, systemic functional linguists locate texts along a mode continuum with written and spoken discourse positioned as polar opposites. Therefore, texts displaying a high level of lexical density as represented by increased presence of nominalizations, grammatical metaphor and specialized lexis would be situated towards the written end of the spectrum of the mode continuum.

Language plays varying roles in texts. Language users organize texts in varying ways to achieve rhetorical purposes. The language may be part of the action as in a game or constitute action as in a written text. The mode directly relates to how the text is held together to convey a cohesive and coherent message. When analyzing the mode of written text, linguists consider such elements as Theme/Rheme, repetition, and conjunction (Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Martin, 1992; Thompson, 2004).

One of the primary modal elements contributing to the construction of textual coherence and cohesion is Theme⁸. In systemic functional terms, Theme refers to the “first constituent of the clause” (Thompson, 2004, p. 143) or “the point of departure of the message” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p.64). Rheme is described as the residue or what remains in the sentence after the Theme. Though the Theme is frequently found in the subject position, it does not always take this role. Rather, various clause constituents can serve as the Theme, thus creating a marked or unexpected Theme depending upon what the writer wishes to emphasize. To exemplify how even a slight change in Theme

⁸ In the conventions of Systemic Functional Linguistics many key terms are capitalized to differentiate them from terms used in traditional grammar or linguistic analysis.

alters the meaning of a text, I present a series of clauses taken from a radio marketing report discussing reggaeton (Klassen, 2006). The theme is indicated by italics.

1. *In 2004*, Reggaeton drove Latin record sales, making Latin the only music category to register growth, according to Nielsen Soundscan and the Recording Industry Association of America.

2. *According to Nielsen Soundscan and the Recording Industry of America*, Reggaeton drove Latin record sales, making Latin the only music category to register growth in 2004.

3. *Reggaeton drove Latin record sales*, making Latin the only music category to register growth in 2004, according to Nielsen Soundscan and the Recording Industry Association of America.

The first example above illustrates how an author uses circumstance of time in Theme position. Placement of a circumstance of time in the Theme position functions to locate the event in time among other events. In the second example the author introduces an authority in the Theme position to support the author's claim with a circumstantial adjunct. In the third example, the author places "reggaeton" in the Theme position presumably to emphasize the role of the musical genre in spurring increased record sales. Each example of Theme choice demonstrates how authors manipulate thematic elements and make systematic choices to achieve varying purposes within the clause.

As writers begin to develop control of written language, they also typically use thematic elements to sustain and advance ideas throughout a text. Writers make these thematic advancements through the careful clause level manipulation of "given" and "new" information (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 93). In a text, new information is

usually introduced towards the end of a clause and as the text unfolds this new information may then be situated in the Theme position of the subsequent clause (Christie, 2012). The skillful manipulation of Theme and Rheme is a fairly common way to bring what writers call “flow” to lengthy passages of texts. As young writers develop control over Theme/Rheme they are able to create texts that flow, or in other words, can more effectively present and develop ideas coherently and cohesively throughout a text through the careful and thoughtful manipulation of linguistic elements.

The text below, appearing on a website designed to teach fans about the history of reggaeton (www.reggaeton-in-cuba.com/en/history) and used as a reading in the instructional unit, illustrates the concept of thematic advancement as the author makes the claim towards the end of the first clause that Puerto Rico is the location of the origin of reggaeton. In the next clause, the referent “this” functions to “pick up” the idea of reggaeton’s Puerto Rican origins and textually advance this idea through the remaining part of the second clause.

There are two existing versions of the origins of reggaeton; some say it originated in Panamá, others argue that this music direction comes from Puerto Rico. *This* is actually where a majority of the singers come from.
(www.reggaeton-in-cuba.com/en/history)

Hasan (2009) describes the chains of referents illustrated within this text as co-referential. In co-referencing, different lexical terms for the same concept appear throughout the text as anaphoric (referring to something within the text) and exophoric (outside of the text) referents.

In addition to referents, developing writers also begin to rely with greater frequency on repetition as a resource to hold their texts together. Writers may repeat

certain lexical terminology or they may repeat entire chunks of phrases. The resources of repetition may be especially useful in texts that deal with complex or technical topics. Through clause repetition writers build an argument that keeps “lexical strings relatively simple, while complex lexical relations are constructed around them” (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 81).

Effective writers also begin to develop control of conjunctive elements to relate ideas to other ideas in a passage. Conjunctions help to establish logical connections between processes in a text. The logical relations may include contrast as exemplified by the conjunctions “but” or “however” or equal relations held together by the conjunctions “and” or “or.” Although not all writers use elements of mode consistently, developing control of these elements typically indicates writing development. The elements of register outlined above play an important role in constructing meaning within a text. In the next section, I describe the role register plays in the construction of genres.

Within cultures, registers combine to enact socially recognizable meanings and to accomplish tasks. Such “global patterns” (Martin & Rose, 2008) of register configurations are referred to in SFL as “genres.” As noted previously, Martin, Christie and Rothery (1987) describe genre as a “staged, goal-oriented social process” with “structural forms that cultures use in certain contexts to achieve various purposes” (pg. 59). Genres are considered to have stages because they typically take a number of steps to achieve their goal. Stages are signaled by the inclusion of distinct clause level elements such as processes, participants, and circumstances (Eggins, 2004). As a text moves through its stages or “schematic structures” (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 9), the linguistic, syntactical and textual features typical of the genre work together to realize a text’s

intended purpose; thus, making genres “goal oriented.” Genres are considered to be a social process because participants generally interact when accomplishing the goals within a social context and the social processes are recognized as purposeful by participants who are members of the culture. The social processes typically associated with academic writing in school contexts often involve: describing, narrating, synthesizing, analyzing, defining, explaining, evaluating, and persuading (Derewianka, 1990; Knapp and Watkins, 2005; Martin & Rose, 2012). The corresponding genres used to accomplish these processes include: recounts, narratives, explanations, informational reports, and arguments.

This study examines the social process of persuasion, which in the context of the school setting is accomplished by the genre of argument (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Derewianka, 1990; Knapp & Watkins, 2005). In the instructional context examined in this study, the purpose of the argument was for students to convince fellow adolescent fans of reggaeton to purchase and download the latest musical work of their favorite reggaeton artist. To accomplish this purpose, writers composed a musical review (the text type) with the support of their teachers in which they took a position and justified it by following an organized textual structure that allowed the text to unfold through stages and accompanying phases signaled by the inclusion of particular language features.

SFL literacy researchers have described the stages and accompanying linguistic features typically encountered in academic arguments (Derewianka, 1990; Schelpppegrell, 2003; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Rose & Acevedo, 2007). The first stage typically consists of the presentation of the issue in which the author orients the reader to the context of the argument and provides relevant background information about the topic or

field of discourse. Typical linguistic features that contribute to the fulfillment of the purpose of this stage include the introduction of participants related to the field of discourse and circumstances of time and place used to describe these participants. In the second stage, the author typically takes a position and justifies it. In upper level instructional contexts, students are expected to use detailed evidence such as quotes and statistics to support claims. The quotes and statistics are usually explicated using the timeless present tense. The position stage is typically distinguished by the author's inclusion of logical connectives such as transitions and conjunctions both at the clause and paragraph level that function to bring structure and cohesiveness to the author's presentation of his position (Derewianka, 1990; Rose & Martin, 2012). During the third stage, the author may include some form of resolution. Last, the author typically sums up the position and recommends action. Throughout the argument, the following language features help writers realize the genre's purpose: generalized participants, timeless present tense of processes, variety of processes, connectives structuring the argument, high use of emotive words, nominalizations, and connectives associated with reasoning (Derewianka, 1990; Schleppegrell, 2004). The table below identifies recognizable stages, their functions and associated linguistic features that help support each stage of typical persuasive arguments composed in school contexts as identified by SFL linguists.

Table 3.4: Stages of Persuasive Arguments As Identified by SFL Linguists

Stage	Function	Typical Linguistic Features
Issue Presentation	Orients the reader to the subject being discussed.	Circumstantial words and clauses that indicate location or time E.g. <i>In Puerto Rico in the mid-1990's</i>
Argument	The writer states argument and justifies opinion by presenting support and evidence.	Generalized participants Eg. <i>Reggaeton artists</i> Declaratives Eg. <i>Reggaeton is a type of music from Puerto Rico.</i> Processes in timeless present Eg. <i>Reggaeton makes a syncopating rhythm.</i>
Recommendation	Author proposes how the problem can be resolved.	Declaratives <i>Morza La Para composes reggaeton music.</i> Variety of processes and modals
Summary	Author sums up her main points and ideas.	Use of logical connectors

(Adapted from Derewianka, 1990; Martin and Rose, 2003; 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012, Schleppegrell, 2004)

It is worth noting, however, that in spite of their recognizable characteristics, genres do not always exist in pure forms. Martin (2002) notes the existence of embedded

genres in which a genre appears within the stage of larger genre. For instance, to enact the social processes of persuading peers to buy the latest recording of their favorite reggaeton artists, my students also must evaluate, describe and define as their text unfolds. However, as I mentioned before, but worth noting again, genres are defined by their primary, overall purposes, which in this case is to persuade.

Genre analysts also recognize that writers may create hybrid genres employing atypical genre features, often with the purpose of satirizing or parodying a genre, or breaking generic boundaries for creative purposes. Genres may also exist in the form of what Martin (1997) calls contextual metaphor in which one genre takes the place of another, as in the case of children's stories functioning to explain scientific concepts (Martin & Rose, 2008). Martin & Rose (2008) argue that when writers construct hybrid genres they are in fact demonstrating their genre awareness and their facility in managing genres and in fact, such facility in manipulating genre features serves as a sign of having had those genre features made explicit and visible to them in the course of their schooling. They explain that:

. . . anyone writing contextual metaphors of this order had already learned what recounts, report and arguments were like and had the literacy facility to compose a text in which one symbolized the other. The working class, migrant and Indigenous kids we were working with were operating far from middle class currency of this order (p. 250).

Recognition of these hybrid genre forms, however, does not detract from the fact that in certain contexts, such as the text types found in schools, genres and their accompanying linguistic and textual features tend to remain relatively stable over time (Shryer, 2005)

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN

Throughout this chapter, I present a detailed description of the research design of this study to demonstrate the alignment between the research questions I composed and the data I collected and analyzed in the course of the study. First, I present an overview of the research design and its rationale. Second, I provide a broad portrait of the socio-historical context in which the immigrant students in this study were learning to write. Last, I offer a thorough overview of the methodology including phases of data collection and a description of the process of data analysis.

4.1 Research Design

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the findings of a teacher action research study exploring the implementation of an SFL based approach to teaching persuasive writing to middle school ELLs. The qualitative case studies resulting from the teacher action research examine the SFL based teaching practices of a veteran ESL teacher and the persuasive writing practices of three urban middle school ELLs as they construct persuasive music reviews during a unit exploring the musical genre of reggaeton. Specifically, the study aims to complete two purposes. First, the study analyzes changes in ELLs persuasive writing practices following the implementation of an SFL based approach to persuasive writing instruction. Second, the study intends to illuminate connections between changes in my students' persuasive writing practices and my teaching practices as I implemented SFL pedagogy to support my students in constructing persuasive music reviews. Furthermore, while not a primary focus, an additional purpose of the study is to examine how the cultural and linguistic resources of

my students were incorporated into SFL based pedagogy in ways that promote culturally relevant and academically rigorous teaching and learning.

To analyze my data, I draw on SFL as a tool for tracing changes in students' persuasive writing practices, namely the changing ways they exploit recognizable schematic structure and register variables to construct persuasive texts in academic contexts. The combination of teacher action research, case study methods and systemic functional linguistics allows me to paint a broad and detailed portrait of the teaching and learning context and the meanings created through the stages and linguistic features of the genre of persuasive argument.

I developed a teacher action research project to gain a better understanding of the teaching practices involved in SFL pedagogy and to examine potential connections between those teaching practices and the expansion of the linguistic resources available to my students as they constructed written persuasive texts in school contexts. The general purpose of teacher action research is to reflect on critical questions related to one's teaching and students' learning through a systematic collection and analysis of data. Through focused data collection and analysis, teachers are able to make informed decisions about their practice and influence future practice (Burns, 2009; Dyson & Geneshi, 2005; Duff, 2008; Goswami, et al., 2009; Wallace, 2007). I chose to conduct teacher action research over a number of other available research methodologies for a number of reasons. As a teacher committed to providing access to academic literacy for all students, I wanted to know more about how my students were learning to write in academic ways and what connections data analysis would illuminate between their changing writing practices and my teaching. Specifically, I was looking to see how they

were learning to write persuasively (or not) during my first implementation of SFL based teaching and learning cycle. Therefore, the focus of my research remained both the product and the process of learning. To illuminate my understandings of the teaching and learning process related to SFL pedagogy and the teaching and learning of persuasive argument, I was most interested in learning more about the connections between my teaching and the changes occurring in students' texts during the course of instruction. To gain a deeper understanding of the connections between my teaching and my students' learning, I focused on analyzing moments of interaction and classroom discourse during instruction as well as the supporting materials and instructional feedback I supplied them during the course of the unit.

I was motivated to explore potential benefits and challenges of SFL based pedagogy in my own classroom for a number of reasons. First, as I mentioned in the introductory chapter, process approaches had been the dominant form of writing instruction historically encouraged by district administrators and had remained the most prevalent form of writing instruction within the school I was teaching. In spite of the widespread focus on process writing, the ELLs in my school, class, and district had historically struggled in learning to write in academic ways. In fact, district writing scores at Fieldstone were among the lowest in the state. That is not to say that process-writing approaches were a contributing factor to students' lack of progress in academic writing. Numerous complex factors, among them the extent to which teachers faithfully implemented the writing process approach, remain beyond the scope of this study, but undoubtedly contributed to the challenges my ESL students faced when constructing persuasive texts in academic contexts. Nevertheless, it brings attention to my second

motivation for exploring SFL pedagogy through teacher action research. Namely, that in spite of the historical dominance of writing process methods in the district, SFL based pedagogy was slowly being introduced in small pockets of professional development throughout the district through a research/teaching partnership with a local university and the district ELL office. Therefore, I was motivated to remain informed on the latest instructional practices occurring in the district.

In spite of the growing prevalence of SFL informed genre in the district, however, I was not interested in conducting what Calkins (1985) calls a “field test” of the latest pedagogy in which teachers research instructional practices they already consider exemplary (p. 143). Rather, I was driven to understand more about how the theory could inform my practice and how research could equally illuminate the challenges and potential benefits of SFL pedagogy upon the academic literacy development of ELLs. Simply put, I wanted to know more about how an SFL based pedagogy with its explicit attention to language and grammar as a meaning making resource may or may not support my learners. The study drew inspiration from the action research projects developed by ACCELA that have explored the ways the cultural and linguistic resources of ELLs can be embedded into instructional activities in a way that supports ELLs in gaining greater control over the linguistic resources necessary to construct effective persuasive arguments in school contexts. Many of these studies have demonstrated how ELLs’ cultural and linguistic resources can be embedded in an SFL approach to literacy instruction in a way that enhances the linguistic resources available to ELLs (Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Gebhard, Shin & Seger, 2011; Gebhard, Willett, Caicedo-Jimenez & Piedra, 2010; Gebhard & Willett, 2008; Schulze & Ramirez, 2007; Schulze,

2011; Shin, Gebhard, & Seger, 2010). With the intention of potentially corroborating and expanding on the findings of these studies, this teacher action research study draws on the theoretical framework of SFL to construct a qualitative case study of teaching practices and ELLs' writing practices to illuminate the potential connections between SFL pedagogy and the potential expansion of student's meaning potential when constructing persuasive texts in school contexts.

Third, and perhaps most importantly to me personally, I had spent the greater part of the previous 4 years of full-time doctoral studies reading and writing about SFL based pedagogy. Having initially been introduced to the theory in an ESL methods course taught by Dr. Fatima Pirbhai-Ilich, I had learned more about SFL through conversations and coursework with my academic advisors at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, particularly Professors Meg Gebhard, Jerri Willett and Ruth Harman. Although I had supported teachers in urban settings in implementing SFL pedagogy (Schulze & Ramirez, 2007) through my fellowship as a graduate researcher in the ACCELA Alliance (Accessing Critical Content and English Language Acquisition), I had yet been afforded an opportunity to put SFL into practice within my own classroom. The fact that I also intended to enter the field of teacher education and wanted first hand experience putting SFL into practice also remained important.

Motivated by the concerns outlined above, I began the step-by-step process of designing the teacher action research study. According to Wallace (2007) teacher action research for language educators follows a series of steps. Teacher action research typically begins with teachers considering the problems existing in their classrooms. The problems may be related to a teacher's practice or student learning. Before developing

my teacher action research project, I had identified the challenges my students faced when constructing persuasive texts as I outlined in my introduction through the analysis of Ernesto's initial, un-coached, persuasive text. To be precise, the ELLs in my class were challenged to use academic language to participate in a variety of genres across the content areas. However, ELLs had limited support in their L1 and, as I explained, were participating in a writing curriculum that did not bring attention to purposeful language use, students' linguistic and cultural resources, or grammar as a meaning making resource. The second step in teacher action research involves developing an inquiry question related to the problem. As stated previously, my research questions focused on examining the role of SFL based pedagogy in supporting ELLs in writing persuasive texts and discovering how SFL could inform my understanding of the changes in my ELLs' persuasive writing practices. The third step of teacher action research involves data collection and analysis. The last step involves applying findings from the data collection to one's ongoing practice as a form of professional development (Burns, 2009; Goswami, et al., 2009).

As I stated previously, the culminating product of my teacher action research is a qualitative case study that examines connections between my teaching practice and implementation of SFL pedagogy and the changing writing practices of the ELLs in my class. Qualitative research design proved beneficial to informing my understanding of my teaching and my students' literacy practices for two primary reasons. First, qualitative research in educational contexts allows for a comprehensive study of teaching and learning. Merriam (1998) explains why qualitative research is particularly informative when investigating a learning context. Merriam notes:

Since qualitative research focuses on process, meaning and understanding the product of qualitative study is richly descriptive. Words and pictures rather than numbers are used to convey what the researcher has learned about a phenomenon. There are likely to be rich descriptions of the context, the players involved, and the activities of interest (p. 8).

The comprehensive nature of qualitative research was important to me because I wanted as much information as possible to inform my teaching practice given that I was implementing SFL pedagogy for the first time. Additionally, I believed qualitative research focusing on my own practices would inform my future work as a teacher educator and language researcher in the vein that I would have had practical experience in implementing qualitative research as well as the SFL pedagogical practices I would be teaching to classes of future teachers.

The second reason I chose a qualitative approach to research design was that teacher action research and the resulting case study allowed me to investigate both the context of teaching and learning, as well as the texts that students were using and creating throughout the course of the unit. Given that context plays such an important role in a SFL view of language and meaning making, I felt that the approach would best allow me to describe deeply the contextual factors influencing my students learning and my teaching. For instance, my study attends to the context of culture found in the context of teaching and examines how and why I was able to make the curricular choices I made and how those choices were influenced by the greater context of language teaching and learning happening in the nation, district and school.

Furthermore, mindful of Merriam's explanation of the advantages of qualitative research, I chose to present my work as a case study because such an approach allows for a deep exploration of what Genesha and Dyson (2005) call the "local particulars" of a

social phenomenon (p. 3). In this case, the social phenomenon being studied was the teaching and learning of persuasive academic writing within a community of ELLs. The local particulars included the interests and linguistic needs of my students, their current level of first language development, and the specifics of the teaching and learning context, namely, middle schools ELLs learning English with limited L1 support. The construction of a case study allowed me to concentrate on the behaviors, the interactions, and the perspectives of participants and observers to provide me an in-depth perspective on both my own teaching practices as well as my students learning and the context in which both were occurring (Duff, 2009; Geneshi & Dyson, 2005). Therefore, in the next section of the study, I describe the socio-historical context in which my students were being asked to write.

4.2 Research Context:

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the setting for this study was my middle school ESL classroom. For two years I worked as a full-time ESL teacher at Fieldstone K-8 School. In this capacity, I was able to collect a comprehensive data set related to the teaching and learning of English, particularly in grades 5-8. As a doctoral student and Nationally Board Certified teacher, I was committed to creating a space in which I could deepen my knowledge of language pedagogy and reflect on my professional practice. Specifically, as I previously mentioned, I was eager to implement the SFL based pedagogy that I had studied extensively during graduate school, but had never put into practice in my own classroom during my previous ten years of teaching. Returning to the classroom after three years of graduate studies, afforded me the opportunity to research SFL in practice and reflect critically on my own teaching practices. During the spring of 2010, a full-time

pre-service teacher began her teacher internship in my classroom. Karen Day, who had a like-minded desire to explore her own practice and use of SFL to promote the academic writing development of ELLs, joined me full-time at Fieldstone. Karen had studied SFL extensively through a graduate program in applied linguistics at a local university and in a corresponding role as a graduate researcher. Although I was her mentor teacher, Karen had extensive experience teaching English in higher education settings in the US, the Middle East and Japan. Our similar levels of experience as well as our shared interest in SFL and sociocultural approaches to teaching and learning made us well suited to collaborate. For four months, we collaborated on instructional design with the purpose of integrating SFL into our daily lesson planning.

4. 3 Researcher Profile

I am European-American male in my late thirties who has taught ESL at both the elementary and secondary levels in the US and abroad for over ten years. I have also been a language learner, having studied Spanish to advanced levels in Argentina and Venezuela. Following the completion of my dissertation course work, in which I had read extensively about the theories of SFL and genre pedagogy, I re-entered the field of English language teaching motivated to further explore SFL theory in practice. As a teacher researcher, I designed lessons, chose curricular materials, determined the order of implementation of those materials, located supplemental curricular materials, and assessed my students' progress while collecting data related to my students' language development. My role as a teacher researcher working with his own students afforded me extensive access to data related to my students' language learning. To provide a comprehensive understanding of my students' language learning experiences, I obtained

cumulative folders containing English Language Development (ELD) assessments, teacher observations, report cards, class work samples, home language surveys and entrance placement exams. As the instructional unit began, I started to collect data on a daily basis. To inform my questions, I collected the following types of data: audio and video recordings of classroom interactions and interviews, students' texts, scanned instructional materials, copies of internet sites, class readings, my field notes, and school and state policy documents.

Additionally, in my role as teacher researcher, I was able to collaborate with students' homeroom teachers who readily provided me with information about students' family histories and allowed me to observe my students' interactions with their classmates outside of my classroom. As I mentioned in the introduction to the study, I was motivated to build on the interests and passions of my students. To better know whom those students are I provide an overview of demographic data related to the "typical" students enrolled in schools in the US and my school district, including the context in which they are learning English, followed by a profile of my focal students.

4.4 The World of Adolescent ELLs Learning to Write

The students highlighted in this study represent the many newcomers who have arrived in the US in significantly greater numbers during the last two decades (August & Shanahan, 2006; US Census Data, 2000, 2010). Data indicate that the enrollment of ELLs in US public schools has increased by 51% between 1998 and 2007 (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2011). The majority of these newcomers speak a language other than English at home with Spanish speakers representing the largest number of ELLs (Bartlett & Garcia, 2011; Migration Policy

Institute, 2010). In the field of education, educators use a variety of labels to refer to students learning English. They are often called English language learners (ELLs), ESL (English as a Second Language) students, EBs (Emergent Bilinguals), ELD (English language development) students, or LEP (Limited English proficient). Within this study, I have referred to my students as ELLs or emergent bilinguals interchangeably as these terms emphasize my students' language learning potential rather than any perceived linguistic deficits (see Bartlett & Garcia (2011) for an overview of the terminology and the ideological assumptions embedded in those terms in US educational contexts).

It is important to recognize that many ELLs enter school prior to attaining full literacy development in their first language because of interruptions in schooling that occurred prior to their transition to the United States. To provide ELLs access to the academic language necessary to negotiate meaning from texts encountered in school, a variety of educational programs have been implemented in US public schools including but not limited to: Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE), English as Second language (ESL), and Sheltered English Immersion (SEI). Underlying the implementation of these programs is the idea that ELLs are at a disadvantage when compared to native English speaking students who may also be more knowledgeable about the academic practices and language necessary to participate in the genres of schooling (Genishi & Dyson, 2009; Heath, 1983; Schleppegrell, 2004; Brisk, 2011, 2012). For many students, English remains the singular medium of instruction with little or no clarification offered in a student's first language. Without first language support, access to content area instruction remains severely limited. Such limitation implies that a child's first language is not a resource for language learning and, conversely, is something that needs to be

replaced or removed rather than developed. In other words, such an approach represents a subtractive bilingual pedagogy in contrast to an approach designed to promote additive bilingualism by providing educational opportunities that foster the development of students' dual languages (Bartlett & Garcia, 2011).

In addition to the varying program options for teaching emergent bilinguals available in US public schools, ESL programs typically rely on curricula that attempt simultaneously to teach students the English language (both social and academic) while introducing them to dominant cultural practices. Nonetheless, teaching language and culture simultaneously can be problematic. Remaining foremost in consideration is the idea of exactly whose culture is being taught and what exactly is being presented to students as culturally and socially valued or whether something so multivariate and complex as the concept of culture can actually be taught at all in a classroom context (Gonzalez, Moll & Amanti, 2005; Bartlett & Garcia, 2011; Delpit, 1995; Geneshi & Dyson, 2009).

Though a number of program options exist for educating emergent bilinguals, several macro-contextual factors have influenced programming choices and educational opportunities available to ELLs. In US educational contexts, ELLs are learning to read and write in academic ways amid a national reform movement that has brought unprecedented federal intervention in the nation's public schools. Since 2002, the federal mandate of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), has required public school districts to use standardized measures to assess the progress of all students enrolled in their school system to receive federal funding (US Department of Education website, 2007). These assessments are "high-stakes" in nature (Lipman, 2004) because the results can affect

whether students meet the requirements for promotion and whether their school demonstrates adequate yearly progress (AYP). School systems unable to make AYP because of a significant number of students not demonstrating increased test scores face punitive measures such as decreased federal funding and/or the threat of loss of institutional control (Kohn, 2000). Massachusetts assesses students through the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) in grades 3-12 on a yearly basis in English language arts, math, and science. ELLs that have been enrolled in US schools for longer than one year are required to take the tests regardless of their ELD level. In addition, ELLs are often encouraged to participate in math and science assessments during their first year of enrollment because of the widely held misconception expressed to me by a district administrator that “math and science are universal” (Personal Communication, 2009), as if the language used to convey mathematical and scientific concepts played little or no part in a student’s comprehension of these core subject areas.

In addition to the requirements of NCLB, states remain in competition for federal funding available through the Race to the Top (R2T) initiative. This initiative puts states in competition with one another for federal education funding by requiring that they satisfy certain educational policies such as adopting national standards, conducting annual standardized testing, increasing the number of charter schools, and incorporating more technology. When this study began in the fall of 2009, Massachusetts had applied for and was awaiting a decision regarding whether or not they would receive R2T funding. To make their request for R2T more attractive among competitors, Massachusetts had adopted Common Core Readiness Standards (CCRS). As I mentioned

in the introduction to this study, CCRS provide specific standards in the content areas of English Language Arts and Mathematics for grades K-12 and Literacy in the areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, history/social studies, science and technical subjects in grades 6-12. The English language arts component is divided into domains including listening, speaking, reading and writing. In the language domain of writing, the standards require students to “produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task purpose and audience” (p. 21, Common Core State Standards, 2011). The increasing number of ELLs enrolled in Boston’s public school system during the last decade has added to the performance pressure felt by the district. Although a multilingual student body represents nothing new in urban US schools, especially the city in which this study takes place, the increased emphasis placed on the results of standardized tests presents particular challenges for school districts serving linguistically diverse students.

4.5 City and District

As a major port with a historically strong manufacturing base, Boston has attracted newcomers for many generations. For the greater part of the 18th, 19th and early 20th century, large numbers of Irish, Italian, French-Canadian, and Cape Verdean immigrants immigrated to the city. Historically, these immigrants typically found employment in the manufacturing sector that required little formal education or knowledge of the English language. In the latter part of the 20th century, fewer European immigrants from Italy and Ireland have come to Boston. Rather, the immigration population represents much larger numbers from Haiti, China, Vietnam, and Central America. Large numbers of Cape Verdeans also continue to make Boston home. Parallel

to the demographic shift occurring in Boston, the professional demands on newcomers reflect the national shift away from manufacturing jobs towards occupations in finance, service, technology and education. Because of the complex linguistic demands of these new professions in contrast to the difficult physical labor of prior work experiences, immigrants have significantly decreased opportunities to support their family financially without demonstrating fluency in English.

To meet the educational needs of the linguistically diverse population, Massachusetts was one of the first places in the country to implement Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE). The 1971 law required school districts with more than 20 ELLs to identify ELLs, provide them with courses in English and their native language, and courses on geography and culture of the United States. In spite of its longstanding history in Massachusetts's public schools, TBE was eliminated by a ballot measure in 2002. The measure, called Question 2, was sponsored by Ron Unz, a well-known politically conservative member of the "English Only" movement, who had sponsored similar successful ballot measures resulting in the elimination of bilingual education in California and Arizona. As mandated by the vote, TBE was replaced with Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) model, which relies on English as the primary language of instruction and permits limited use of a student's first language (L1) solely for clarification purposes. Although the law limits first language instruction, it does not present an outright ban on the speaking of a student's first language as some teachers and administrators believe is the case. Many times I observed the law being misinterpreted by teachers and administrators in that teachers who were fluent in the first language would only use the students L1 to discipline students or to communicate with non-English

speaking parents. When I inquired as to why they were not using the students' L1 to improve instruction, they often replied that thought using a student's first language was against the law.

The privileging of English evident in teachers' choice of language contributed to resentment expressed by students. Students articulated their resentment to me on more than one occasion. During one class discussion, students brought up the issue of language and asked me why teachers who spoke their language would not use Spanish to instruct them in learning core content areas or to help them learn English. I explained the complex issue of Question 2 to them as best I could, but we never resolved how to clarify the law for teachers.

Following adoption of Question 2, schools were required to replace bilingual education with a model of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction. According to state law, ELLs must receive two hours and thirty minutes of intensive English language instruction from certified ESL teacher. For their remaining academic subjects, such as social studies and science, students receive sheltered English immersion instruction (SEI)⁹ either from a certified ESL teacher or a teacher who has completed what was commonly referred to by teachers as "four categories", a state-wide, four-part training addressing second language reading and writing pedagogy.

By 2010, in spite of the detailed requirements of the state law, results of an investigation by the Department of Justice found that more than half of the districts 8,300 students were not receiving adequate instruction from qualified ESL teachers (Boston

⁹ Within an SEI setting, students who share a common language are placed in one classroom at each grade level and are given instruction that is designed to scaffold their language learning through the teacher's use of ESL and sheltered English instruction approaches.

Globe, Gaston Institute, 2009). The DOJ found that a number of students had not been adequately tested for language fluency and an even greater number were not receiving the services the law required.¹⁰

4.6 School

The setting for this study is a large urban K-8 public pilot school in Boston, Massachusetts. Fieldstone Pilot School was founded in 1997 by members of the surrounding community who advocated for a new neighborhood school after the closing of two nearby elementary and middle schools. Fieldstone Elementary was founded with the expressed purpose of it serving as an exemplary community school. The school adopted a theme centered on community building with multiple partnerships formed between the school and community members such as businesses and institutes of higher education. To further their mission as a community school with increased teacher and community member involvement, the school was founded as a pilot school. Pilot schools are the product of a collaborative effort among the city, the school department and the teachers' union that provide a network of urban public schools that are granted autonomy over budget, staffing, curriculum and assessment and the school calendar. However, in 2008, due to a history of poor performance on statewide-standardized tests and a large percentage of annual staff turnover, the district placed limited the autonomy of Fieldstone and placed it on probation in regard to its pilot status.¹¹

Part of the struggle of meeting statewide testing requirements has been attributed to the high poverty rate and large number of English language learners (ELLs) enrolled at

¹⁰ In 2012 an initiative called Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) required teachers with significant numbers of ELLs enrolled in their class to receive an SEI endorsement or an ESL certification to renew their teaching license.

¹¹ The year after data for this study was collected the school was designated as a "Turn Around" school and experienced a nearly total replacement of faculty, staff, and administration.

Fieldstone. At the time of this study, 73.8 % of the students at Fieldstone were identified as being of low-income economic status and 51.1% report having a first language other than English. Of those reporting English as a new language, 43.3% are labeled as “Limited English Proficient” which represents a significantly larger number of students than the district average (28%) and the state of Massachusetts as a whole (7.1%). Located in an area of Boston that experiences high rates of crime and poverty, Fieldstone Elementary¹² enrolls students from different geographic zones within the city, as the school is an SEI (Sheltered English Immersion) center for Spanish speaking students. The majority of Latino students come from Central American and Caribbean countries such as El Salvador, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. Several of these students have experienced interruptions in their education because of limited access to full-time schooling in their country of birth. Students also frequently have missed large amounts of instructional time during the transition from one country to another. To meet the needs of these students, the district provides a separate program for Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) in grades 4-12. To qualify for the program students must be identified as SIFE students within the first 3 months of school. As teachers are often not aware of the educational history of their students because of lack of access to records and limited contact with parents, students often do not have access to the SIFE program. The table below provides an overview of the racial composition of the school, district and state.

Table 4.1: Racial Composition of School, District and State

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity			
Race	% of School	% of District	% of State
African American	33.2	35.5	8.2
Asian	0.7	8.4	5.5
Hispanic	62.8	40.9	15.4
Native American	0.4	0.4	0.2
White	1.4	12.9	68.0
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.0	0.1	0.1
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	1.4	1.8	2.4

Table 4.2: Indicators including English Language Learner Status and Income

Title	% of School	% of District	% of State
First Language not English	51.1	43.4	16.3
Limited English Proficient	43.3	28.0	7.1
Low-income	73.8	74.4	34.2
Special Education	20.3	19.4	17.0
Free Lunch	72.6	67.7	29.1
Reduced Lunch	1.1	6.8	5.1

4.7 Project Site and Participants

4.7.1 The Classroom

This research takes place at Fieldstone Pilot School within my English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom. During the course of the 2009-2010 school year I met with my class of 14 middle school students for daily intensive instruction lasting approximately two hours and 30 minutes each session. The class was composed of 14 students ages 12-15 whose English language development (ELD) level was determined to be performance level 1 on a scale from 1-4. Teachers and district officials determine the English language development (ELD) level was determined by a combination of standardized assessments, teacher observations and evaluations of oral and written

English language performance. Performance Level 1 students are evaluated as having limited control of academic language and are generally in their first year of English language learning. The beginning level students in my class were all newcomers to the US mainland and had not studied English in a formal setting prior to enrolling at Fieldstone. My students were all native Spanish speakers from countries such as the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico or El Salvador. Although English was the primary language of instruction in my class, I clarified concepts in Spanish and student responses were made in either Spanish or English. Although I taught and collected data on all my students, because of the scope of the dissertation study, I selected three focal students who I judged were representative of the larger group. My focal student group consisted of two girls and one boy-Laura, Alex, and Yessica, who were all beginning level ELLs who demonstrated literacy in their first language of Spanish. The demonstration of literacy was determined by short writing samples, reading passages, and speaking about academic topics in Spanish.

4.8 Study Participants:

The focal students in the study were Laura, Alex, and Yessica, three members of the class described above; Ms. Day, a student teacher who was assigned to the classroom for the spring semester; and me, the instructor, lesson designer, and researcher. The focal students for the case study were selected because they were representative of the students in the class and of the school district. Each focal student had entered the United States within the last year and was identified as a beginning or level 1 English language learner. In addition, their completion of all assignments in the unit and their prompt return of permission to participate in the study also influenced my decision to choose these

students as the focal students of the study. To learn more about the social and academic profiles of my students, I collected data using Brisk and Harrington’s Protocol for gathering data on ELLs (2009), a copy of which is provided in Appendix A.

Table 4.3: Study Participants

Name	Age	Race	First Language	Time in US	English Language Development Level
Laura	13	Dominican	Spanish	3 months	Novice/Level 1
Alex	12	Dominican	Spanish	10 months	Emergent/ Level 1
Yessica	12	Dominican	Spanish	2 months	Novice/ Level 1

4.8.1 Laura

Laura was born in the capital city of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic. She was one of only two students in the class enrolled in the 8th grade. The summer prior to enrolling at Fieldstone, she had moved to the US with her parents and 12-year-old sister, a 6th grader who was also enrolled in the class, and her younger brother who was enrolled in first grade. The family shared an apartment with her grandmother and her grandmother’s second husband, who had arrived in the US a decade before and was an established mechanic who owned and operated a local garage. Laura’s father spoke some social English, as did her grandmother and step-grandfather. Laura was literate in Spanish and frequently borrowed the Spanish language books and magazines I had made available in the classroom library. I also noticed she liked to listen and dance to Reggaeton music on her iPod during sanctioned classroom breaks. Although I had limited access to her report cards from the Dominican Republic, school records indicated that she completed 7th grade in Santo Domingo, but had never taken any English classes. According to her parents, who I met at parent-teacher conferences, she had always received high grades in her classes in Santo Domingo and enjoyed school. Laura also seemed highly motivated to

learn English quickly. As evidence of her motivation to learn English, she frequently asked me how to say different words in English and recorded these new words in her own personal dictionary. Additionally, within the first few weeks of school, she inquired about the requirements necessary to exit the ESL program. Specifically, she wanted to know the exact score she had to achieve to be re-classified as FLEP (Formerly Limited English Proficient) and the typical duration of the ESL program.

4.8.2 Alex

Alex was a 7th grader born in the Dominican Republic in a rural area outside of the capital of Santo Domingo. He turned 13 years old at the beginning of the study. He had moved to the US six months prior to the study with both his parents. Alex's father was considered active in son's education and was well known to all of Alex's teachers because he was able to attend several parent conferences and school community events such as "Parent Night" and "Game Night." Alex's father also was enrolled in English language classes at a local night school and modeled study habits he wanted his son to emulate (personal communication). When I met Alex's father during parent night conferences, he expressed clear expectations regarding his son's behavior as well an expectation that his son would excel in his studies. Although Alex had not studied English before he had enrolled at Fieldstone in the spring semester prior to this study, he had completed 2 months of 6th grade at the end of the previous school year. However, in spite of having enrolled in school for two months during the previous academic year, he had had not received small group instruction in ESL because the ESL teacher had resigned and left the school.

4.9.3 Yessica

Yessica had moved from the Dominican Republic with her father and younger brother the summer prior to enrolling at Fieldstone. She was 13 years old at the time of this study. Although her parents were married, they were forced to live separately because her mother did not receive a visa to come to the US. According to Yessica, her parents were both well-educated professionals. Her father operated a home security company and was involved in web-site design. He also was the host of local cable show that focused on helping the large Dominican community to obtain work in the city. According to Yessica, her mother worked as a paralegal in a law firm in Santo Domingo.

Yessica had previously studied English for the equivalent of one semester in the 6th grade, prior to having to re-enroll in the 6th grade in the US. Her re-assignment to the 6th grade was the cause of much frustration and embarrassment for Yessica. At the beginning of the semester I observed that she appeared frustrated by the fact that she had to repeat the 6th grade. She requested my intervention in helping her transfer to 7th grade. I sympathized with her frustration and asked her to provide evidence of completing the sixth grade to me so that I may advocate on her behalf to school administrators. However, in spite of my request, she never brought any paperwork, perhaps because she did not have access to it, which made it very difficult for me to intervene effectively on her behalf. Perhaps feeling stressed from her adjustment to a new home, culture and educational context and the absence of her mother, she announced prior to the holiday break in December that she intended to return to the Dominican Republic to live with her mother. The class was disappointed with her intention to leave. To our collective surprise,

when school reconvened following the winter holiday, Yessica returned and offered no further explanation of her reason for remaining in the US and at Fieldstone.

In spite of her evident disappointment about repeating the 6th grade, Yessica displayed characteristics of a highly motivated student. For instance, she completed all her class work and homework and asked many clarifying questions so that she was clear about what to do to meet the requirements of class assignments. She also frequently participated in class discussions and did not appear shy or hesitant to speak in English.

4.8.4 Ms. Day

Karen Day is a woman in her late twenties who was raised in the Southern US and identifies ethnically and racially as a Pacific Islander. Karen spent the greater part of a university semester, the equivalent of two middle school marking terms, as a full-time pre-service teacher in my ESL classroom. At the time we began our professional collaboration, Karen had recently completed a M.A. degree in Applied Linguistics from the University of Massachusetts Boston. She had extensive teaching experience in post-secondary instructional contexts in the US and abroad in such countries as the United Arab Emirates, Oman and Japan, but did not have the K-6 teaching experience she needed to fulfill ESL licensure requirements. Our professional collaboration began as Karen had been working as a graduate assistant to a professor who had formerly been my academic advisor (Dr. Patricia Paugh) at The University of Massachusetts Amherst and who knew of our mutual interest in SFL. Therefore, Pat suggested that Karen request to complete her practicum requirements under my direction. To do so, she started working with me collaborating, teaching and reflecting full-time, four days a week for 16 weeks.

As I mentioned previously, Karen was a life-long language learner, having been raised by a French speaking step-mother from the age of two and having spent a great deal of time abroad with her French speaking grandparents. She was also in the process of learning Spanish and had recently completed two undergraduate courses in Spanish. In addition to her interest and knowledge of language learning and teaching, she also began her pre-service experience with a substantial understanding of SFL theory. Karen had studied SFL extensively in her graduate program and had attended the International Systemic Functional Linguistic Conference in Vancouver. Like me, she shared an interest in SFL and a particular interest in putting SFL into practice within an SFL-genre based teaching and learning cycle to support the academic language development of ELLs.

As part of our collaboration and her practicum experience, Karen spent the first few weeks of her practicum observing my teaching practices. During her observation, she corroborated my initial impression that the High Point curriculum was disjointed and not building on either the interests or academic needs of the students. Like me, Karen felt the established ESL writing curriculum at Fieldstone did not adequately prepare students to write with a purpose in a variety of genres as demanded by Common Core Stand Standards. After a few weeks of observation, Karen began to co-teach part of the two-and-a-half hour instructional block with me. Our co-teaching took a number of collaborative formations. Depending on the activity, Karen would either take independent control of the class while I provided observational feedback or we would co-teach equal portions of the lesson together. Occasionally, Karen would work independently one-on-one with students' who required extra support or who had missed a day of in-class

instruction due to absence. Karen and I also co-planned and created all lessons, unit learning and language objectives, product assessments, and instructional materials.

4.9 The Physical Space and Its Effect on Student Investment in Instruction

Fieldstone Pilot School is divided into three separate academies by grade level. The physical space of the school provides for the three academies to be housed on three separate floors with the lower grades on the first floor, the upper elementary grades on the second, and the middle school on the third. The instructional configuration did not apply to this class, however. The first year I taught at Fieldstone, I had taught ESL in grades 1-5 in a classroom located on the second floor of the building. The following year, my teaching context changed. To meet the regulations of the compliance agreement negotiated between the Department of Justice and the school district, Fieldstone had quickly reorganized their ESL program to service a greater number of ELLs. As the only ESL teacher without a designated homeroom, I was assigned to work with beginning and emergent level ELLs in grades K-8. As a result of the change and the fact that Fieldstone had limited classroom space, my students were required to attend class on the second floor of the building, which traditionally houses grades 3-5. The fact that students had to be removed from their regular education setting and separated from their peers and then made to move downstairs, produced a negative reaction from students who expressed their discomfort and humiliation to me on several occasions. Students also expressed their frustration non-verbally by arriving late to class after the class had been picked up upstairs by Ms. Day. In an attempt to diminish their perceived embarrassment, Ms. Day and I also agreed to follow an alternative, circuitous route to my classroom that allowed students to exit the middle school area and covertly enter our classroom below.

4.10 Data Analysis Overview

Throughout the study, I was able to investigate both the context of teaching and learning, as well as the texts that students were using and creating throughout the course of the unit. For instance, my study attends to the context of culture found in the context of teaching, and examines how and why I was able to make the curricular choices I did and how those choices were influenced by the greater context of language teaching and learning happening in the nation, district and school. In the table below I provide a visual of the data I collected throughout the unit, the point in instruction in which they were collected, and the rationale underlying the collection of the particular data.

Table 4.4: Data Collection Table

What Was Collected	When Collected	Why Collected	Quantity Collected
Student Text Composed Prior to SFL pedagogy.	At beginning of the unit.	To serve as baseline data of analysis. To assess prior genre knowledge and independent writing ability.	10 student texts
Video of each class session	During each class meeting	To analyze student teacher interaction, student and student interaction, and to confirm teaching methods and approaches	Approximately 50 hours
Field Notes	Written after each class meeting	To reflect upon both the teaching and researching process.	25 separate entries detailing participants involved, significant interactions, materials used, and length of lesson
Curricular Materials, notes, and worksheets	During and after initial teaching and learning cycle	To analyze student progress and determine what aspects of the genre needed re-teaching.	Worksheets to support genre and register analysis. 10 register analysis worksheets/10 schematic structure worksheets

			3 notebooks 11 curricular unit materials
Student Text 2 Post SFL Intervention Text	Upon completion of unit	To analyze changes in students' academic writing practices.	10 texts (one from each student)
Supporting Materials	After use	To determine potential connections between instructional materials and changes in student texts.	4 model texts created by the teacher Two music reviews 2 excerpts printed from websites about the history of reggaeton
Teacher Materials	After using the lesson.	To determine connections between planned activities and changes in student writing.	Unit Plan Lesson Plans Objectives Daily Agenda

4.11 Data Collection

The study is qualitative in nature constructing case studies of three English language learners learning to write music reviews in an ESL class. As a teacher researcher, I served as a participant researcher. In this role, I collected the data over the period of five weeks during an instructional unit designed to explore the history and cultural significance of the musical genre of reggaeton and the construction of persuasive arguments in school contexts. The following question guided my data collection: How does SFL-based pedagogy support the expansion of the linguistic resources of ELLs to support their construction of persuasive arguments (if at all)? To explore this question, I relied on three primary methods of data collection: participant observation, video/audio recording and semi-structured interviews. During the course of the unit, my middle school aged class of beginning level ELLs met daily for approximately two hours each

session. Immediately following each class, I collected all materials used in the class such as worksheets and sample persuasive texts as well as materials I had gathered for student reference such as letters to the editor or news articles. I collected graphic organizers, notebooks, and short responses. I also collected the chart paper on which I wrote the lesson's agenda and language objectives. Frequently, I also photographed the white board to note what I had written; however because I shared the room with a colleague, I was often unable to preserve the data from the board before it was erased.

The data collection consisted of several phases. During the first phase, I focused on my teaching. Following each lesson, I took reflective field notes of my observations (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). As part of my field notes, I recorded the materials used, students' comments and questions. I evaluated what I thought was working from an instructional standpoint and content I thought needed further clarification and instruction. In addition to my participant observation and the field notes constructed from my observations, I used a digital video camera to video and audio record each of our classes. The video camera was supported by a tripod and situated alternately on a table located towards the front of the room where the majority of teacher-led instruction took place as well as on my desk at the back of the room. I used the digital video camera to record whole group instruction, teacher and student interactions and student and student interaction. I also videotaped students as they worked alone revising or taking notes. Within two days of the lesson, I watched the videos to make additional notes regarding my instruction and record difficulties students were experiencing. I transcribed short portions of student and teacher interactions to allow me to focus on analyzing teacher-led instructional discourse and students' responses.

The second phase of data collection focused on student produced texts. During this phase of data collection, I collected two instantiations of student texts composed during the course of the instructional unit. The first text was a “first draft” representing an “un-coached” version of a persuasive text created prior to the implementation of any SFL based pedagogical intervention. After collecting the initial texts, I typed each of the texts as written by the students (See examples provided in next chapter). I then divided each of the typed texts into clause complexes each containing a process (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The texts served as essential informative components of my teaching. As I typed and divided the texts at the clause level, I focused directly on how my students were expanding the linguistic resources available to them to participate in the social process of persuading in school contexts. Namely I identified and analyzed the changes in the ways students used the schematic structure and register of their texts to accomplish the purpose of persuading (see Data Analysis next section). After transcription and analysis, I designed SFL-based lessons to scaffold the expansion of students’ linguistic resources. For example, after collecting students’ first drafts, I noticed that students were not incorporating many transitions in their texts. To support their development of textual cohesion, I designed a lesson focusing on the use of transitions. I followed this cycle after each collection and transcription of student drafts.

4.12 Methods of Data Analysis:

Upon collecting two drafts of student writing, I conducted an SFL linguistic analysis of students’ texts to evaluate their academic writing development following SFL-based pedagogy. As I mentioned previously, the broad purpose of my instruction was to help students become better persuasive writers in school contexts. I wanted them

to develop a deepened understanding of the social purpose of persuasion, promote their audience awareness, and bring their attention to the role of language in accomplishing the task of persuading. As the unit was completed, I turned to the students' texts to evaluate the extent to which progress had been made towards these goals. As an entry point of evaluation, I focused on changes occurring in two primary areas of the students' texts as my units of analysis: schematic structure and register. The close linguistic examination of changes in schematic structure of student texts highlighted the changes in the ways their texts unfolded. The intention of the analysis was to discover if the texts, particularly those composed following SFL based pedagogy, reflected an increased control over the linguistic resources necessary to persuade in a way that was socially recognizable and culturally valued in the context of school. Primarily, I evaluated the extent to which their texts unfolded using recognizable stages expected of persuasive texts composed in school contexts. To illustrate the extent to which my students were relying on the recognizable the schematic structure expected of persuasive texts designed to accomplish the social purpose of persuasion, I first transcribed the texts, then divided and labeled them according to the stages and phases identified by SFL genre theorists (see Table 3.4) (Derewianka, 1990; Martin & Rose, 2003,2008; Rose & Martin, 2012). After transcribing the texts, I identified and labeled the linguistic features indicative of the stage and identified language that indicated their understanding of the audience and social purpose of persuasive texts as described in the theoretical framework of this study.

Second, I turned my attention to analyzing the language features of students' texts to evaluate whether the language features serves to construct the register expected of the context of written academic discourse. To begin the analysis of register, I identified the

register variables of field, tenor, and mode. To further facilitate the analysis of the register variables of field, tenor and mode, I created a typed transcription of each student's text and divided the texts into clauses containing processes (Ghadessy, 1993; Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004; Thompson, 2004). First, aspects of the field were examined through a transitivity analysis. To analyze the transitivity patterns of the field, processes, participants and circumstances were labeled as they occurred in each clause. The processes were then further divided into the subcategories of mental, material, and relational. Second, I analyzed the tenor of student texts through the identification of the Mood and speech role of each clause. To identify the Mood, clauses were labeled as indicative (declarative or interrogative) or imperative. Following the identification of all elements of Mood and speech role, all modal elements present in the clause were identified and labeled (e.g. might, may, could, should). Next, to develop a better understanding of the appraisal value of students' lexical choices, a chart was created that listed all words and phrases with the exclusion of articles and prepositions that occurred more than twice in student texts. The words and phrases were subsequently placed on a chart with an "+" and "-" intending to represent an appraisal continuum of word choices that indicated positive evaluations or judgments. Words that I interpreted as having a positive connotation or reflecting a positive judgment or evaluation were placed closer to the plus sign. Last, I analyzed the mode of student text by indentifying and labeling cohesive elements such as repetition and conjunctions as well as identifying the Theme and Rheme of each clause. The final stage of my SFL linguistic analysis of students' texts brought my attention to the significance of these changes.

To gain a deeper understanding of the how the changes connected to my teaching, I began to revisit the field notes and videos I had collected during the unit to identify potential intertextual connections between my instruction and student performance. As I reviewed source data, such as field notes and video transcriptions, I used open coding to identify instructional practices such as “recasting” (Gibbons, 2003) or moments of instructional elaboration intended to support my students’ understanding of persuasive writing practices. I also began to meet regularly with Ms. Day, the pre-service teacher who had co-taught several of the lessons with me, to reflect constructively on my instructional practices. During our reflections, we sought to identify which instructional activities may have the most significant impact on expanding the available the linguistic resources of ELLs.

4.13 Limitations of the Study

This study is subject to the limitations frequently ascribed to qualitative research. First, as a teacher researcher analyzing data related to my own teaching practices, there is an inherent bias in interpretation. By definition, a teacher researcher remains close to the subjects under study. In other words, examining my own teaching objectively through a critical lens remains a challenging aspect of this research. I attempted to verify data as I reviewed field notes of lessons with the student teacher with whom I was constructing lessons supported my deeper understanding and analysis of SFL based pedagogy and evaluating the extent to which the pedagogy was contributing to the expansion of linguistic resources available to my ELL students. However, given that the responsibility for students’ language development was shared between my colleagues, my student teacher, and me, a truly objective, critical look at our pedagogical practices remains

complicated. Second, this study is limited to the classroom experiences of one classroom in an urban school district. Therefore, as mentioned in my introduction, I do not wish to reduce the complex process of learning to write persuasively to the activities of a five-week instructional unit and, therefore, make no claims related to changes in my students' language development. Additionally, it is worth reiterating that although reggaeton served as central theme of study in this instructional unit, it was by no means my intention to reduce the rich cultural and linguistic resources of my Caribbean-born students to a musical genre. Furthermore, I did not examine how SFL could be put into practice in private schools or with students whose first language was English. Had my research been conducted in different educational contexts, the research would potentially produce different findings. Furthermore, as my intention was to conduct a thorough, in-depth systemic functional analysis of student texts, limiting the number of texts chose for analysis created an additional limitation.

Furthermore, my analysis of these texts relies on my interpretation using systemic functional linguistics. Because SFL is concerned with the connection of context and meaning, other SFL linguists may have alternative readings of the texts and different interpretations of the context. Alternative analysis of the texts appearing within this study may be subject of future debate. However, as Fang & Schleppegrell (2008) note:

. . .when doing functional analysis, it is less important to get the analysis right than to have a conversation about the analysis with students. whether, for example, a process is doing or being is less important than a conversation about how it may be on the borderline between these two meanings and providing an opportunity for students in the classroom to express their views about the meaning they see in the language (p.110).

Last, it remains important to note that given that the study examines the changes in schematic structure and register of my students' texts occurring following the

implementation of a singular instructional unit over a short duration of time, I am making no grand claims related to the long-term effects of the academic language development of my students nor the effectiveness of SFL pedagogy. I wish to explore the pedagogy in practice and discover more about how it can inform my teaching and my knowledge of my students expanding linguistic resources. The dissertation is ultimately intended to inform my future work as a language researcher and teacher educator, in that I intend to gain a greater understanding of the theory in practice so that I may share any knowledge derived from the study with future ESL teachers and language educators.

CHAPTER 5

SFL PEDAGOGY IN PRACTICE

In this chapter, I ground the theoretical aspects of SFL in a detailed description of the pedagogical practices utilized to support ELLs in expanding the linguistic resources necessary to construct effective persuasive arguments in school contexts. I begin the chapter with an overview of two prominent applications of the SFL based genre teaching and learning cycle. Following this overview, I provide a comprehensive descriptive analysis of the pedagogy as it was enacted in the context of my own ESL classroom. To illustrate the potential connections between my teaching practice and my students writing practices, I include both thorough descriptions of my instructional choices including visual depictions of the materials I designed when putting SFL into practice and descriptive analysis of interactions that occurred during these points of instruction. Furthermore, with the intention of modeling the reflective practice expected of quality teacher action research, I make every effort to pinpoint, describe and analyze the challenges and benefits I encountered during the implementation of the teaching and learning cycle.

5.1 SFL Approach to Genre Based Pedagogy

Motivated by a desire to provide literacy instruction that made the purposes, stages, and linguistic features of texts found in schools accessible and visible to ELLs, SFL genre theorists, working primarily in Australia, drew on the work of Michael Halliday outlined in Chapter 2 of this dissertation to develop their own version of a genre based approach to writing instruction (Christie, 2012; Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Martin,

2009; Rose & Martin, 2012; Rothery, 1986). To inform their design of the genre based teaching and learning cycle, SFL theorists conducted a large-scale linguistic analysis of the genres students encountered with frequency in K-12 academic settings (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993; Rothery, 1986, 1994; Rothery & Callaghan, 1988).¹³ Next, they conducted an SFL analysis of the sample texts they collected in an effort to make visible the language demands of those writing practices visible to language teachers and educators. With the intention of making the knowledge of language they gained from their analysis visible to all educators and in turn all learners in Australian schools, they developed a systematic teaching and learning cycle designed to instruct students in gaining greater control of the stages and linguistic features effective writers typically employ to accomplish the work of a variety of genres (Christie, 1990, 1992, 1999; Feez, 1998; Martin, 1992b, 1993; Rothery, 1986). To provide a corresponding visual representation of the teaching and learning cycle, Martin (1992) developed what literacy researchers widely refer to as the “genre wheel” presented in Figure 5.1 below.

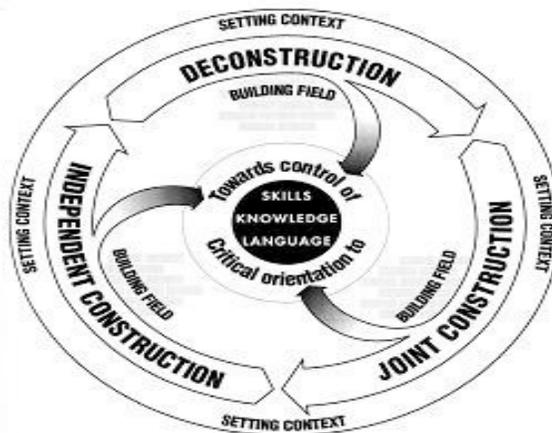


Figure 5.1 Martin’s Conception of the Teaching and Learning Cycle

¹³ For a comprehensive chronology of the creation of the SFL teaching and learning cycle and its varying inceptions in school contexts over time see Chapter 2 of Rose & Martin (2012).

The initial stage of instruction in the teaching and learning cycle begins with the process of deconstruction in which teachers lead students in an analysis of model texts created to bring attention to the typical stages writers follow as they attempt to make meaning and the linguistic features they typically employ within each of the stages to help accomplish the genre's purpose. As part of the initial text deconstruction, teachers make explicit the text's social purpose, its audience and its typical schematic structure, the aforementioned stages through which a text typically progresses as meaning unfolds within the text. This explicit instruction typically occurs through the following instructional moves: text analysis, joint reading of texts designed to exemplify the schematic structure and linguistic features typical of the target genre, and modeled writing (Gibbons, 2009; Martin, 2009; Rose & Martin, 2012). Following the textual deconstruction stage, the teaching and learning cycle continues with teachers and students jointly constructing a text using the schematic structure and linguistic features to accomplish the text's purpose. In the last phase of the apprenticeship cycle, teachers reduce the amount of direct scaffolding and afford students opportunities to write independently. The teaching and learning cycle is intended to be recursive and allows for teachers to reenter the cycle according to the level of support students need to ultimately develop independent control and a critical orientation to the socially valued genres found in school contexts (Martin, 2009; Rose & Martin, 2012).

In this section of the dissertation, I provide an overview of the version of the teaching and learning cycle that I used to guide my instruction, which varies slightly from the version developed by Martin (1992) that is depicted above. Within my description of the teaching and learning I employed, I include commentary explaining how I adapted the

cycle to meet the needs of ELLs and provide details of the instructional activities and materials I employed to support my learners.

To support my students in learning to write effective persuasive texts, I implemented an SFL based genre teaching and learning cycle created by Rothery (1994), modified by Feez (1998) and outlined in the work of English language educator Pauline Gibbons (2002, 2009).¹⁴ Gibbons' work expands the earlier designs of Martin (1992) and his colleagues, outlined previously, who created a three-level model of SFL-based genre pedagogy that followed a sequence of deconstruction, joint construction and independent construction (Macken, et al. 1989; Martin, 1992; Rose & Martin, 2012). In Figure 5.2 below, I provide a visual of the four-part genre teaching and learning cycle adapted from Gibbons (2009), which formed the basis of my instruction.

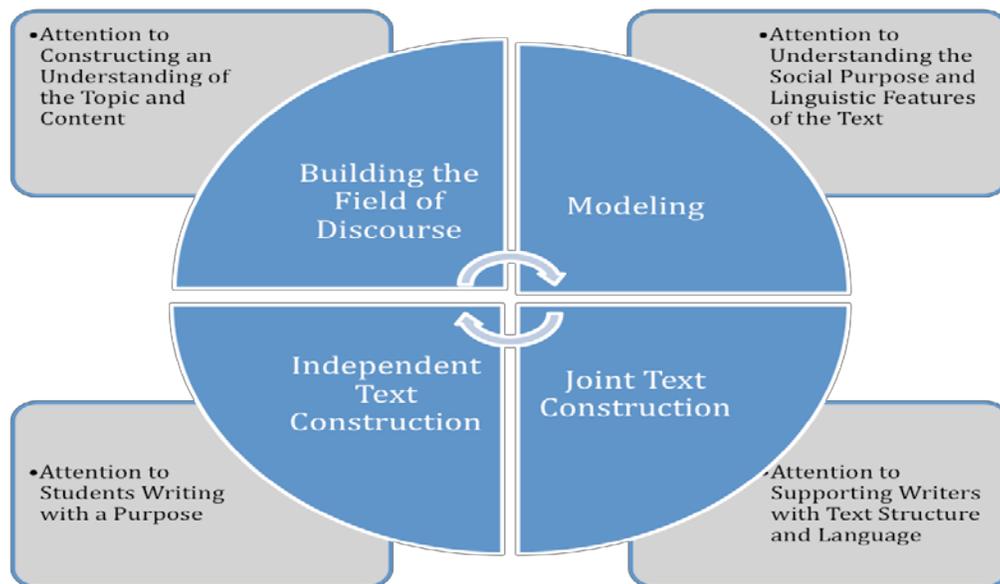


Figure 5.2 Gibbons' Adaption of the Teaching and Learning Cycle

¹⁴ The teaching and learning cycle above is adapted from Feez (1998). See Hammond, et. al (1992) for a visual representation of the cycle, Feez (1998), Martin (2009) or Schulze (2011) for texts that describe how the cycle is put into practice in varying instructional contexts.

While sharing many similarities with Martin's three level instructional wheel, Gibbons' version emphasizes the integration of content and language by providing a instructional focus designed to begin building students knowledge of the field of discourse of the topic under discussion prior to writing. As a teacher of ELLs, this aspect of Gibbon's version of the teaching and learning remained the primary factor influencing my decision to implement Gibbon's version of the teaching and learning cycle. Oftentimes, students are asked to write about topics with which they have limited familiarity and are then criticized for not writing extensively about the topic. Bearing that in mind, I chose a version of the cycle emphasized the importance of students having substantial time to research a topic and thereby build a richer knowledge about the topic under discussion before beginning to write.

As in Martin's version above, teachers may begin instruction with any stage of the cycle depending upon the needs of their learners. Throughout the cycle, the teacher provides instructional scaffolding through a series of activities designed to support students' learning. First, the teacher designs activities to enhance students' knowledge of the field of discourse and to develop a shared understanding of the field. In the context of my instruction, the building of the field of discourse took various forms. First, although I had heard many of my students conversing about reggaeton before and after class, I needed a formal way of assessing their prior knowledge of the topic of reggaeton before continuing instruction. With this goal in mind, I facilitated a guided discussion in which I asked students to tell me what they already knew about reggaeton. To direct the discussion, I asked them to share which artists were most popular and provided language frames written on the white board such as "*One artist I know is . . .*" to promote the

participation of all students in the discussion. I then transcribed the artists they had identified in the class discussion on chart paper which I displayed in the front of the room. The artists they named during the discussion were all new to me and included: Vakero, Black Point, Wisen and Yandel, and Chino y Nacho, among others. After completing the transcription of the list, I next prompted students to tell me what they knew about the origins of reggaeton. To facilitate student responses, I defined the word “origin” in Spanish. I pointed out that the word is a direct cognate of the Spanish word (*Origin*) thereby helping them using their linguistic resources to understand the word’s meaning and the meaning of the question.

It is important to note that one of the challenges I faced in facilitating this discussion and assessing my students’ knowledge of the field of discourse was that I possessed limited knowledge of the topic of reggaeton. The teacher having limited knowledge of the topic of writing is not a typical scenario of instruction. However, in reflection, I believe my decision to choose a topic of which my students had a greater knowledge demonstrated both the high level of expectations I had in my students’ abilities and the respect for the linguistic and cultural resources they brought to the context of instruction. Ultimately, this trust allowed me to be positioned as content learner and my students as the content experts who possessed a far more comprehensive knowledge of the topic of reggaeton than I.

As we continued our whole-group discussion designed to build a shared understanding of the topic, my students had much to contribute. For instance, Yessica contributed to the discussion by sharing that a substitute teacher had told her that reggaeton had African roots. Yessica confidently and rather proudly informed the class

that “Reggaeton came from Puerto Rico.” On the other hand, Alex equated reggaeton with hip-hop. As students shared their responses in the group discussion, I transcribed their responses on a KWL chart presented below. KWL serves as an acronym for What We Know, What We Want to Know and What We Learned. It is a useful tool that appears frequently in ESL instructional contexts (Gibbons, 2009). In this case, KWL helped guide my students’ thinking, as I recorded their understandings of the topic before and after we began a deeper exploration of the topic of reggaeton. In recording their understandings of the topic, I assumed the instructional role of facilitator of the discussion. However, I took a central instructional role in supporting students in communicating their contributions. For instance, I helped students translate several of their contributions and when a breakdown in communication occurred, I attempted to recast students’ contributions in a way that allowed them to state their meaning more clearly. The KWL chart that we constructed in class is presented in Figure 5. 3 below.

What We Know	What We Want to Know	What We Learned
There are many kinds of artists such as Aventura. Latins like it. There is a lot of dancing. It has a wide-audience.	Is it true that Aventura is breaking up? How did the major artists of today become famous? Who produces the songs? How do they make remixes? How does an artist obtain a manager?	Jamaicans influenced reggaeton music, too.

Figure 5.3 KWL Chart about Reggaeton

Following the co-construction of the KWL chart, I distributed a shared reading about the history of reggaeton intended to answer the questions we constructed regarding the origin of the musical genre of reggaeton. The reading, the text of which I have

transcribed below, was entitled *Reggaeton in Cuba*. The source of this text was a site designed to inform readers of the origins, history, and most influential artists of the genre (<http://www.reggaeton-in-cuba.com/en/index.htm>). I chose to incorporate this particular text into class instruction for two reasons. First, it provides a comprehensive overview of the history and musical routes of reggaeton that I thought my students would find both informative and interesting. Second, the text exemplifies several linguistic features that contributed to the construction of the register expected of written persuasive arguments that I wanted to highlight for students. For instance, the text contains a number of participants related to the field of discourse of music such as “reggaeton”, “music” singers” and “rhythm” among others. Furthermore, the author of the text draws extensively on appraisal resources to convey attitude and evaluation. For instance, in the opening paragraph, reggaeton is described as “most catching and successful music style to have emerged in years.” The author also uses modality to intensify points such as “Reggaeton actually developed from Jamaican reggae.” Moreover, the text demonstrates how effective persuasive writers rely on modal resources to construct written discourse. Last, the text contains a number of referents that function to bring cohesion to clauses.

It is worth noting that the text is not a linguistically simplified text, nor one designed specifically for ELLs. My instructional motivation for choosing this reading was to provide an authentic written text reflecting a similar level of lexical complexity to the texts my learners would encounter as they conducted their own independent research about Reggaeton artists. I wanted to provide my learners a text that would require them to utilize strategies for making meaning from lexically complex texts that they would need to employ when they eventually exited the ESL program. I wanted them to practice

thinking about what was happening in the text, who was involved, and make a prediction about what might happen next as the text advances in meaning. To promote these meaning making strategies, I provided instructional scaffolding to students to improve meaning making rather than providing them with a simplified version of a text that would not give them an opportunity to employ reading strategies. The text we used in class and the strategies I employed to support my students meaning making are presented in Figure 5.4 below.

5.2 Building the Field of Discourse: Reading about Reggaeton

Reggaeton is the most catching and successful music style to have emerged in recent years. Like any lively and flexible musical direction, it developed year after year, merging with other underground styles in the discos of the Caribbean to finally make a vigorous breakthrough in Puerto Rico and Cuba. Reggaeton has sounds of many other “in the street” developed musical directions, like Hip Hop, rap, Jamaican reggae and, of course, plena, salsa and bomba.

There are two existing versions of the origins of Reggaeton: some say it originated in Panama, others argue that this music direction comes from Puerto Rico. This is actually where a majority of the singers come from. Reggaeton actually developed from Jamaican Reggae, but was certainly influenced by various other musical directions., like for example North American Hip Hop and Puerto Rican rhythms. But lets’ first take a look at the Spanish speaking rap and reggae that have made an essential contribution to the development of reggaeton.

Spanish reggae and Rap: origins and development

Reggae developed in the 70’s in Jamaica and has gone through numerous changes since then, having been combined with other sounds and rhythms. Panama was the first place reggae was performed (by Chicho Man) in Spanish, while the first Spanish rap (performed by Vico C) appeared in Puerto Rico. It all happened in 1985 and in the years to come this movement arrived in other Latin American countries as well as in the United States.

Figure 5.4: Text Used to Build Background Knowledge about Reggaeton

As I had predicted, my students experienced some difficulty with the reading as we read it aloud. To support their comprehension, I paused frequently to define vocabulary and to allow them to process what they had read through strategies such as a guided “turn and talk” in which triads of students were directed to use a series of language phrases such as “I think the author is saying” to paraphrase excerpts of the text¹⁵ (Gibbons, 2009; Rose & Acevedo, 2011; Rose & Martin, 2012). The scaffolding also included translating lexical terms into their first language, expanding and elaborating on ideas encountered in the text as we read, asking text dependent questions designed to bring their attention to language in the text, and pausing instruction to allow students to ask questions of me (See Acevedo and Rose, 2007; Rose & Acevedo, 2006; or Rose & Martin, 2012 for Reading to Learn (R2L) strategies that use SFL and language based pedagogy to help ELLs and struggling readers in comprehending grade level texts).

After concluding the reading, I redirected students’ attention to the co-constructed KWL chart listing the possible origins of reggaeton to see if any of their original notions were challenged. Most students were surprised to hear about the Jamaican influence on Reggaeton. Yessica, on the other hand, expressed justification that her earlier contribution to the class discussion regarding the Puerto Rican origin of reggaeton had been affirmed by the reading.

Following the introduction of the topic of reggaeton, I asked students to write a first draft of the music review genre. My instructional motivation for assigning them the first draft was to assess the extent to which they could control the resources for meaning making, namely the schematic structures and linguistic features typically associated with

¹⁵ See Rose & Acevedo (2011) or Rose & Martin (2012) for a detailed synopsis of the Reading to Learn (R2L) pedagogical practices designed to support the reading comprehension of ELLs.

persuasive arguments, so that I could design instruction intended to expand their meaning making potential and negotiation of the linguistic resources necessary to construct persuasive arguments in school contexts.

To gauge the necessary starting point of instruction, I provided students a scenario that called for them to write to an audience of fellow middle school aged students who were contemplating downloading some reggaeton music, but, with limited financial resources, had to choose carefully which artist's music they would choose to purchase. Therefore, the stated purpose of their first text was to persuade fellow students to purchase a particular artist's recording. Students were given the remaining 25 minutes of the class period to write. It is very important to note that giving students an assignment to write with limited support contradicts the instructional protocol of the SFL teaching and learning cycle (Martin, 2009; Rose & Acevedo, 2007; Rose & Martin, 2012). It is also important to note that philosophically, as an ESL teacher who has devoted his professional career to providing access to academic language to linguistically diverse students, I have little interest in highlighting what my students do not know. Rather, when working with linguistically diverse students I focus on the things they can do with language and try to build upon that existing base of knowledge. However, in this particular instance, as a doctoral student conducting a study related to changes in ELLs' literacy practices, I chose to have students participate in this initial writing event because I determined that SFL analysis of their initial texts would prove essential to informing my instruction and provide me a potential baseline of analysis of pre-SFL intervention data regarding my students' writing.

In the following section of the study, I present my analysis of the “un-coached” first drafts of my focal students’ persuasive texts using the methods of analysis detailed in the theoretical framework of this study. In analyzing the texts, I identified and labeled the principal stages or schematic structures my students employed to accomplish the persuasive purpose of the text. In addition to analysis of the schematic structure, I also evaluated the extent to which my focal students employed particular linguistic features that contributed to the construction of the expected register of persuasive texts constructed in school contexts. The analysis supported my evaluation and assessment of the extent that my students could employ the linguistic resources necessary to accomplish the text’s purpose of persuading without teacher support. To evaluate their level of control of these resources I looked specifically for evidence that they understood the purpose, intended audience, and the role the genre plays in helping them participate in the social process of persuading. Following the transcription of Laura’s text in Figure 5.5, I provide an analysis of the schematic structure of my focal students’ texts beginning with Figure 5.6. Following the presentation and transcription of the text, I have labeled the elements of the schematic structure and subsequently provided an SFL analysis of evaluating the each students current, unassisted level of control of the schematic structure and linguistic features typical of persuasive texts.

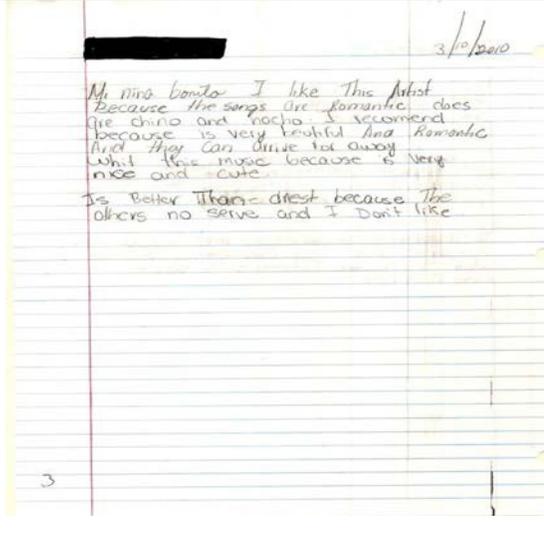
Laura's First Draft of Persuasive Text	Transcription of Laura's First Draft
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mi Nina Bonita 2. I like the Artist 3. Because the songs are romantic does are chino and nacho. 4. I recommend because is very beautiful and romantic 5. and they can arrive far way with the music 6. because is very nice and cute. 7. Is better than d'rest because the others no serve and I don't like.

Figure 5.5. First Draft of Laura's Persuasive Arguments

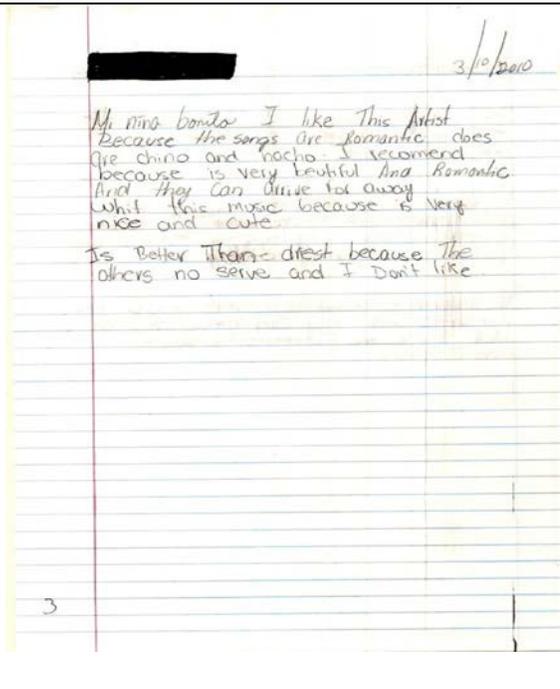
Laura's First Draft of Persuasive Argument	Text Organization/Schematic Structure
	<p>Issue Presentation: Names the artist, "Mi Nina Bonita."</p> <p>Argument: Tells why she likes the artist, "I like this artist because."</p> <p>Recommendation: No action recommended.</p> <p>Summary: Brings reader back to the main idea and reiterates her fondness for the artist, "Is better than the rest . . ."</p>

Figure 5.6 Schematic Structure Analysis of Laura's First Draft

5.3 SFL Analysis of Laura's First Text

When constructing the first instantiation of her persuasive text, Laura demonstrates multiple strengths and challenges in her development as an emergent bilingual writer of persuasive texts. Analysis of the schematic structure of her initial text reveals that she has begun to employ some of the recognizable stages associated with the organization of persuasive arguments (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Derewianka, 1990). For example, beginning with the presentation of the issue, she identifies the title of the album she writes about, "Mi Nina Bonita." Although she identifies the album title and artist (Mi Nina Bonita by Chino and Nacho) for her reader, the first stage of her text does not effectively accomplish its purpose because of the limited information she provides. For instance, she does not provide any identifying background information about the artist that would help orient her reader to the topic. Additionally, she does not inform her readers about who the artists are, where they are from, or what type of music they perform. Instead, Laura simply provides the album title and in doing so makes an assumption that her readers already share the background knowledge about the performers. Given the context of situation in which she is being asked to write among a community of fellow Dominican adolescents, her assumption that the audience shares her knowledge of the artists may, in fact, demonstrate a heightened level of audience awareness. Furthermore, her assumption of the shared knowledge of the topic also could arguably reflect her understanding that texts composed in school contexts, whether in her first or her new language, typically remain limited to an immediate audience of teachers or peers. I do not know for certain whether or not she intentionally chose not to include any factual details and background knowledge for her reader. However, effective

persuasive writing in school contexts typically requires students to assume less shared knowledge about the topic under discussion. In fact, the assumption of shared knowledge of the immediate context demonstrated in her first text is more typical of spoken discourse in contrast to the decontextualized language often found in the written discourse of academic settings (Halliday & Hasan, 1985).

As her text unfolds in meaning, Laura utilizes recognizable schematic structure to a limited extent to further accomplish her persuasive purpose. For example, she presents an argument statement in the second clause:

I like this Artist because his songs are romantic does the
Chino and Nacho.

Although her argument statement expresses her attitude about the artists using a mental process in the Theme position of the clause (I like the artist), she ultimately provides limited support of her argument in the Rheme (because the songs are romantic). Analysis of the text at the lexical grammatical level further reveals she has not yet developed control over the syntax necessary to express her opinion clearly as evidenced by her inclusion of a phrase which reflects significant influence from her L1 (does are Chino and Nacho)¹⁶ nonetheless she employs generalized participants (the artist and the songs) and expresses action in the timeless present verb tense (does), both of which represent linguistic features typical of persuasive arguments (Derewianka, 1990; Schleppegrell, 2004).

¹⁶ Her syntax demonstrates some first language interference as the Spanish verb “hacer” may be translated as “to do” or “to make” in English. She most likely means to write, “The songs made by Chino and Nacho are romantic.”

Following her argument statement, she makes a recommendation in the following clause and supports her recommendation by using appraisal to evaluate the music:

I recommend because it is very beautiful and romantic.

Through her skillful control of elements of mood, namely her use of the declarative present tense, Laura constructs a statement that is clear in its intention. Although the intention is clear, her grammar slightly distracts from the clarity of the statement as she employs “it” with the copula “is” which is a direct translation from her first language of Spanish. In spite of the clarity of this clause, the recommendation statement does not accomplish the typical purpose of the recommendation stage of a persuasive music review as it does not call for the reader to perform the expected action of purchasing the album. Laura concludes her text with a brief summary statement (Is better than the rest) that restates her opinion but neither adequately summarizes what she wants her readers to do nor elaborates why she wants them to perform the action.

Analysis of the language patterns appearing in Laura’s first text speak to the challenges she faced when constructing meaning effectively in a written persuasive argument. Her most significant challenges are reflected in the patterns of transitivity (processes, participants and circumstances), appraisal, and thematization appearing in the text. A close look at transitivity patterns reveals that Laura construes experiential meanings using various process types, including material, relational, and mental processes. In spite of the varying process types she employs, she does not yet construct grammatical clauses expected in the mode of written discourse. The following clause exemplifies the transitivity patterns of her first text and highlights some of the struggles she has with using grammar to make meaning effectively in her first text.

Table 5.1: Transitivity Patterns of Laura’s First Text

I	like	this artist	because	the songs	are romantic	Does Chino and Nacho
Participants	Mental Process	Participant	Conjunctive Adjunct	Participant	Attributive Processes	Material Process and Part.

The clause analyzed above reflects influence of her first language, particularly in the concluding section, “does Chino and Nacho.” Nevertheless, SFL analysis reveals her current control of linguistic resources at this stage in language development. For instance, she demonstrates effective control of linguistic features that contribute to the construction of the expected tenor of persuasive written discourse. Namely, she utilizes appraisal resources to evaluate and describe reggaeton music. To illustrate her current control of appraisal resources I point out that throughout the text she uses the relational attributive process “is” to link the participant “songs” and their descriptive values: “romantic”, “very beautiful” and “nice.” To express her inner feelings that reflect her attitude and judgment, Laura relies on mental processes such as “like” and “recommend.” Laura also makes linguistic choices that construct an identity of an expert evaluator of music by making lexical-grammatical choices reflecting a strong appraisal value to express her evaluation of the music. For example, she confidently declares that the music is “beautiful” and “romantic” and “nice” and “cute.” These descriptive word choices are elements of appraisal that clearly express a positive judgment and evaluation of objects, what systemic functional linguists define as *affect* (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Hood, 2011; Martin & White, 2005).

Analysis of the mode of Laura's first text reveals that she relies on linguistic features that construct a mode more typical of spoken discourse. For instance, several clauses are constructed using conjunctive elements such as "and" and "because" to both elaborate and connect her ideas at the clause level. Although she uses these conjunctions to elaborate ideas, overreliance on linking clauses through a chain of conjunctions reflects a register more typical of spoken discourse (Halliday, 1985). Another indication that her text is constructed in the mode of spoken discourse is her use of pronouns. Within her first text, she includes a number of pronouns that do not clearly specify the referent. Thematically, her text ultimately lacks cohesion and coherence, in that she does not demonstrate control of linguistic resources such as connectors, conjunctions, repetition or nominal forms to advance ideas in her text or to connect ideas at the clause or paragraph level.

In the next section of the study, I conduct an SFL analysis of Alex's initial text, and find similar patterns in his use of stages of schematic structure and linguistic features to accomplish his persuasive purpose. To begin the analysis, I include a transcription of Alex's initial text in Figure 5.7 and label evident elements of schematic structure in Figure 5.8.

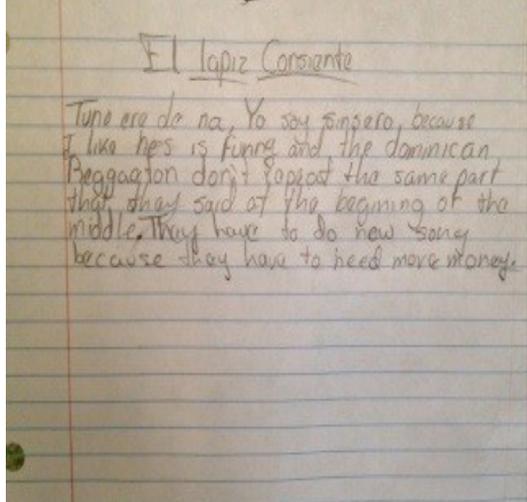
Alex's First Draft of His Persuasive Argument	Transcription of Alex's Text
	<p>El Lapiz Consciente</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tu no eres de na 2. Yo soy sincero 2. because I like he's is funny 4. and the Dominican Reggaeton don't repeat the same part that they said at the beginning or the middle. 5. They have to do new song 6. because they have to need more money.

Figure 5.7 Alex's First Argument

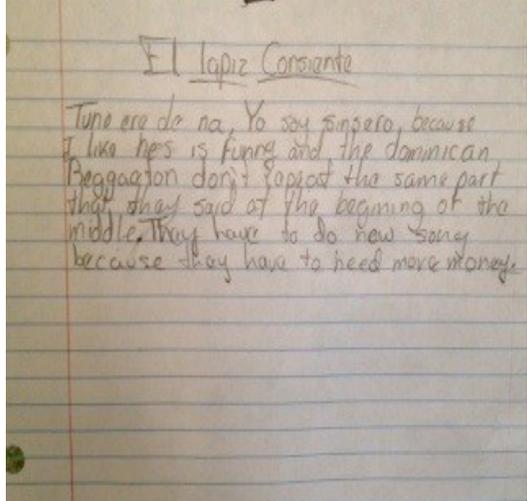
Alex's First Draft of His Persuasive Argument	Schematic Structure/Organization
	<p>Issue Presentation: Alex provides a preview for is reader of the artist and song that he will review, "Tu no eres de 'na."</p> <p>Argument The writer provides a positive evaluation of the artist and the art of rap describing it as both "funny" and non-repetitive.</p> <p>Recommendation The writer does not make a recommendation for action.</p> <p>Summary The writer does not provide a conclusion or summarize his ideas for his reader.</p>

Figure 5.8: SFL Analysis of the Schematic Structure of Alex's Initial Draft

5.4 SFL Analysis of Alex's First Text

SFL analysis of the schematic structure of Alex's first draft reveals the strengths and challenges Alex faces when constructing his initial persuasive text. Organizationally, Alex begins his text by identifying the artist and the song, not through the expected stage of an issue statement providing background information to his readers about the artist nor, for that matter, in the form of a clause. Rather, he identifies the artist in the title of his text and names the song in the first sentence of his opening paragraph. However, he supplies no further details to inform the reader about his artist. As I mentioned in my analysis of Laura's initial text, this assumption of shared contextual knowledge is more emblematic of spoken discourse when interlocutors typically possess a mutually constructed understanding of the topic under discussion and do not require further details to orient themselves to the argument.

As the meaning of his text unfolds, Alex employs the declarative mood to make a claim to his audience in the form of a declarative argument statement (Reggaeton don't repeat the same part) in which he expresses his opinion about the skillfulness and originality of the artist's song writing. Inclusion of an evaluative claim such as this example, demonstrates Alex's understanding of the purpose of the persuasive argument, namely that when constructing a persuasive argument effective persuasive writers use appraisal resources to express enthusiasm and positive feelings towards the subject of their reviews. Throughout his initial text, Alex employs a moderate level of appraisal when introducing the artist to underscore the importance of the musical genre, describing the artist as "funny" and identifying the artist as "Dominican." In spite of expressing his opinion about the song through skillful use of appraisal elements, Alex does not mention

the name of the song's performer. Because he does not name the song's performer, Alex may potentially confuse or distract his reader from the overall purpose of the argument, which is to get the reader to buy the music of a particular performer, not just evaluate a single song. Further analysis of the schematic structure of Alex's text further reveals that the text unfolds in meaning without the inclusion of a recognizable recommendation statement. Although includes an evaluation of the non-repetitive nature of the structure of the artist's music, he makes no explicit recommendation to his readers to buy the album or download the song.

SFL analysis of the register of Alex's text indicates his limited control of the linguistic and semantic resources necessary to construct the expected register of persuasive texts composed in school contexts. Analysis of the field, tenor and mode of his text indicates the extent of his control of these resources. The field of discourse of Alex's texts reflects his prior knowledge of the topic and his ability to express this prior knowledge by including a number of lexical grammatical choices associated with the field of discourse of the musical genre of reggaeton. For instance, Alex includes a number of participants related to the field of music (reggaeton, part, song). Alex also discusses the music using a variety of processes including material (repeat), mental (I like), verbal (they said) and relational (is). To illustrate the control over processes prior to SFL based instruction, I include the opening clause of his text below. In the opening clause of his text, he includes identifying and attributive relational processes that function to define and evaluate rap.

I like. He's funny and the Dominican reggaeton don't repeat
the same part that they said at the beginning or the middle.

In the first clause transcribed above, Alex uses the attributive relational process “is” to describe the artist as “funny.” In regard to tenor, or the construction of a relationship with his reader, like his classmate Laura, Alex relies on the inclusion of appraisal resources to construct an identity as an expert evaluator of music. For instance, he evaluates the structure of reggaeton as being non-repetitive (Reggaeton don’t repeat the same part they said at the beginning or the middle) and judges the artist to be financially motivated to create new songs (They have to do the new song because they have to need more money).

Analysis of the modal resources employed within his initial text reveals his control of modal elements to present ideas coherently and cohesively in a manner expected of written discourse. For instance, Alex uses pronouns such as “they” and “he” to avoid repetition of the participants of “reggaeton” and “El Lapiz.” In spite of his somewhat skillful management of pronouns, like Laura, Alex frequently fails to identify the referent of the pronoun, particularly in the case of “he”, thereby potentially confusing his reader by leaving them unaware of the specific composer of the song. Last, analysis of the text indicates that Alex is able to connect ideas at the clause level using the conjunction “because” which he repeats three times within his initial text. In spite of his use of conjunctions, analysis of Alex’s initial text reveals that he is not yet able to demonstrate control over the repertoire of linguistic resources necessary for constructing coherent and cohesive persuasive texts in school contexts and therefore, needs additional support in using these resources to construct the register of written discourse. In the next section of the study, I analyze Yessica’s first draft as presented in Figure 5.9 below.

Yessica's First Draft of Persuasive Argument	Transcription of Yessica's First Text
<p data-bbox="331 373 824 441"><u>Music</u> Recommendation 3/10/2016</p> <p data-bbox="331 457 828 745">The reggaeton I like to recommend because when the people hear the reggaeton you relax you sing and you can dancing and for example one music is "Mi nina bonita" the Chino y nacho that music is so beautiful and when I hear I relax and if I sad that music can make me happy and that good.</p> <p data-bbox="331 787 828 1081">My recommendation of that music I can say that music is so interesting because that people who not speak Spanish want to know but I recommendation first because I like and second because that music help the people who not speak Spanish. And when I search I go to www.music.com and there I put the name and I download.</p> <p data-bbox="331 1102 828 1333">I like that music because I like the rhythm is so fast and that words is so beautiful. And if I compare with other music this more better because that music not criticize the something the people don't like. Like criticize a others people in other raze.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The reggaeton I like to recommend 2. because the people hear reggaeton you relax 3. you sing 4. and you can dancing 5. g and for one music is "mi nina bonita" 6. and chino y nacho that music is so beautiful 7. and when I hear relax 8. and if I said that music can make me happy and that good. 9. My recommendation of that music. 10. I can say that music is so interesting 11. because that people who not speak Spanish want to know 12. but I recommendation first 13. because I like 14. and second because that music hear the people who not speak Spanish 15. and when I search I go www.music.com 16. and there I put the name 17. and I download. 18. I like that music 19. because like the rhythme (sic) is so fast that words is so beautiful. 20. And if I compare with other this more better 21. because that not criticize that something that I like. 22. Like criticize a others people in other raze.

Figure 5.9 Yessica's First Persuasive Arguments

Yessica's First Persuasive Argument	Text Organization/Schematic Structure
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Music Recommendation</u> 3/10/2016</p> <p>The reggaeton I like to recommend because when the people hear the reggaeton you relax you sing and you can dancing and for example one music is "Mi vida contigo" the Chino y Nacho that music is so beautiful and when I hear I relax and if I sad that music can make me happy and that good.</p> <p>My recommendation of that music is I can say that music is so interesting because that people who not speak Spanish want to know but I recommendation first because I like and second because that music help the people who not speak Spanish. And when I search I go to www.MUSIC.com and there I put the name and I download.</p> <p>I like that music because I like the rhythm is so fast and that words is so beautiful. And if I compare with other music this more better because that music not criticize the something the people don't like. Like criticize a others people in other raze.</p> <p>(4)</p>	<p>Issue Presentation: The writer makes her recommendation in the first clause, "I like to recommend reggaeton because . . ."</p> <p>Argument Recommendation: The writer describes her emotional reaction to music.</p> <p>Summary The writer reiterates her emotional reaction to reggaeton music.</p>

Figure 5.10: Schematic Structure of Yessica's Initial Text

5.5 SFL Analysis of Yessica's First Text

SFL analysis of Yessica's initial text demonstrates her strengths and challenges in becoming a persuasive writer. Analysis of the schematic structure of her initial text reveals the extent to which her text unfolds using recognizable stages and phases to accomplish the social process of persuasion. Organizationally, Yessica begins her text with an issue statement that accomplishes two explicit functions. First, it serves to preview her argument as it informs the reader about the topic that she will be writing about in the text, namely reggaeton. Second, as she constructs the issue statement in the first few clauses, it serves to express her positive judgment and attitude towards the topic of discussion and functions to emphasize the emotional and physical reaction both she and her classmates experience when listening to the reggaeton.

When I hear I relax. And if I sad, that music can make me

happy and that is good.

In the example above, the writer's opening statement may indicate her understanding that effective persuasive writers often share strong emotional feelings about their subject and attempt to convey those feelings to readers in order to build enthusiasm and emotional connections with the subject of the argument. For instance, as her text begins to unfold in meaning within her first paragraph, Yessica constructs a clause that attempts to "hook" her audience by appealing to their emotions. To provide an emotional emphasis, Yessica positions her reader in the semiotic role of "feeler" rather than "actor" as she relies on material and mental process types that emphasize the influence of reggaeton on the emotional state of its listeners (Schleppegrell, 2004; Schleppegrell & Go, 2007). To illustrate how she uses mental processes to emphasize the emotional and physical influence of reggaeton on its listeners, I analyze the opening paragraph of her first text. In the excerpt from Yessica's text presented in Figure 5.11 below, material processes appear in italics while mental processes are underlined.

The reggaeton I like to recommend because when the people hear the reggaeton you *relax*, you *sing* and you *can dancing* and for ex. one music *is* "Mi Nina Bonita" the Chino y Nacho that music *is* so beautiful and when I hear the (music) I relax and if I sad that music can make me happy and that good.

Figure 5.11: Material and Mental Processes in the Issue Statement

Appealing to the emotions of her readers is an effective rhetorical strategy in persuasive writing and one that Yessica relies upon to connect with her audience and set the ground for her continued persuasion. To make an emotional connection with her readers, she begins her text by describing the emotional and physical reaction reggaeton

provokes in its listeners through the inclusion of mental and material processes (relax, sing, dance). Her detailed description of this physical reaction demonstrates her audience awareness. Namely, her text reflects that she was cognizant of her peers who sang and danced reggaeton during free moments in class on a daily basis (Fieldnotes, Oct 14). In other words, Yessica had observed firsthand reggaeton's potential to provoke both physical and emotional responses in its listeners and demonstrated that understanding in her description.

As her text unfolds in meaning, Yessica introduces her readers to the song and artists that she is going to write about (Mi Nina Bonita by Chino and Nacho) within the issue statement of her first paragraph. However, like the texts composed by her peers, Laura and Alex, her text reflects an assumed shared contextual awareness typical of spoken discourse that requires little specificity when developing the field of discourse in the text. In other words, she assumes her audience knows the artists she writes about and therefore, does not provide any biographical information or background knowledge for her readers.

As her text unfolds in meaning, she presents a recommendation statement beginning with (My recommendation of that music) and followed by an elaboration of a number of reasons advocating the musical genre of reggaeton. Providing several specific reasons to listen to the artist demonstrates her understanding that to persuade effectively writers must provide detailed support of their claims and recommendations. Yessica provides just such an interesting claim within her recommendation statement. She argues that reggaeton can serve as a tool for learning the Spanish language:

I can say that music is interesting because that people
who not speak Spanish want to know.

As her text ends, she concludes her argument with a summary statement restating her enthusiastic embrace of reggaeton. While she employs appraisal resources as she restates her claim that reggaeton is “beautiful”, she also introduces a new argument that she does not elaborate in detail. Specifically, she claims that, compared to other forms of music, reggaeton has an overall positive social message for its listeners because it does not criticize other people:

And if I compere (sic) with other music this more better
because that music not criticize the something the people don't like.
Like criticize a others people in other race.

Turning to the register of Yessica's initial text, SFL analysis highlights the ways her argument approximates spoken discourse in terms of patterns of transitivity, appraisal and thematization. Yessica constructs the field of her text in terms of her personal emotional reaction to the music. As I mentioned, she positions herself in the semiotic role of feeler throughout the text. She constructs this role through frequent use of the personal pronoun “I” which she uses a total of 11 times in a text numbering 142 words. Her semiotic role of feeler is also reflected in the relationships she constructs with her reader through the linguistic choices contributing to the construction of the tenor of her text. She presents her supporting evidence negotiating mood by using a high degree of modalization (probability) in relation to the effects the music will have on the reader (you relax, you sing). She also uses language effectively to establish connections with her readers through her inclusion of a number of linguistic resources reflecting a high

appraisal value. For instance, she underscores her enthusiasm for the music by employing intensifiers such as “so” to describe the music and its rhythm as in her use of “so interesting” and “so beautiful.” In terms of mode and thematic elements, Yessica carries her argument forward through a variety of strategies. At the macro-text level she begins with the topic of reggaeton and moves into a description of its characteristics, namely the lyrics and rhythm. At the clause level she primarily connects her ideas through coordinating conjunctions, most frequently the conjunction “and.” She also uses subordinate conjunctions such as “because” to elaborate the reasons she enjoys reggaeton.

As in the case of her fellow focal students, Yessica’s text reflects the mode of spoken discourse. For instance, her frequent use of “and” as a connector is more typical of the lexical chaining found in spoken discourse and suggests strongly that she needs further instruction about how to connect ideas by thematic organizational elements such as nominal forms, repetition, pronouns or connectors.

5.6 Conclusions from Instructional Starting Point Analysis

Conducting an SFL analysis of my focal students’ initial texts afforded me insight into their unassisted, existing control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct effective persuasive arguments in school contexts. Knowing the current level of control my students had over the linguistic resources necessary to construct effective persuasive texts better prepared me as their ESL teacher to plan effective, targeted instruction designed to expand their meaning potential, particularly the grammatical and meaning making resources needed to support their persuasive writing development.

The analysis of students' initial texts afforded me three significant insights. First, it was evident from my analysis that students needed additional support in understanding how they could construct texts that unfold in meaning through particular stages to accomplish their textual goals. My analysis showed me that students would potentially benefit from additional instructional support designed to bring attention to how effective persuasive writers construct texts using these recognized schematic structures and additional linguistic and semantic resources to introduce ideas and develop their arguments in convincing ways. Initial linguistic analysis suggests ELLS would potentially benefit from explicit instruction designed to bring attention to the ways effective persuasive writers not only introduce ideas, but also elaborate and develop those ideas throughout their texts through the use of thematic and organizational resources like repetition, connectors and skillful management of patterns of Theme and Rheme.

Second, results of my SFL analysis indicated that my students also needed to develop the field of discourse related to the construction of persuasive reggaeton music reviews. Their lexical grammatical choices reflected limited control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct the field of discourse associated with the musical genre of reggaeton. While they include some lexical elements related to the field of discourse, particularly the lexical choices of "music" and "the artist", it remained evident that they needed further instruction designed to support their purchase of vocabulary, phrases and transitional elements related to the musical genre and music reviews to clarify, elaborate, and enrich the ideas in their texts. Last, and perhaps not surprising given that they were first year emergent bilinguals, it was evident that my students needed additional support in developing control of grammar as a meaning making resource. As I mentioned, SFL

does not turn to the prescription of grammatical “rules” as educational treatment. Instead, my analysis informed the subsequent instructional steps I would take. Namely, my analysis of their texts motivated me to collaborate with students to explore how language contributes to the meaning making within the context of the text type of persuasive music reviews. As I mentioned, we would begin this collaborative linguistic exploration through analysis and detailed reading of target texts as well as joint writing activities. As SFL based pedagogy and its accompanying teaching and learning cycle is recursive, we could return to the genre teaching and learning cycle to explore the language of model texts, write together and share our work and our developing understandings of the language of persuasive arguments. Supplied with the knowledge of the current level of control of linguistic and semantic resources necessary to construct persuasive texts in school contexts, we returned to our study of the persuasive argument genre and our exploration of reggaeton.

5.7 Instructional Next Steps

In this section of the study, I provide a detailed description and analysis of the instructional support I offered my students in class that was informed by the SFL analysis of their initial persuasive texts detailed above. The following section details the instructional choices I made, presents and analyzes the instructional materials I created and employed in my class, and attempts to illuminate connections between my instruction and the potential expansion of the meaning making resources available to my ELLs through SFL pedagogy. As I mentioned in the theoretical framework of the study, the register variables of field, tenor and mode work together simultaneously to construct meaning in all texts. While I recognize register variables work together simultaneously to

bring meaning to text, I believe that it is essential to bring ELLs' attention to the way register variables and the linguistic features contributing to the construction of those register variables contribute to how meaning unfolds in a text. That being said, this section of the study provides additional detail related to how I explicitly taught aspects of register and schematic structure to my beginning level ELLs with the expressed purpose of enhancing their available linguistic resources and potentially expanding their meaning potential as they construct persuasive texts in school contexts.

We began our instruction by focusing on the field of discourse of persuasive music reviews and the topic of reggaeton. To continue building the field of discourse related to the topic of reggaeton and the genre of persuasive argument, I first directed students to choose and research a reggaeton artist of their choice. The subsequent assignment called for students to create a visual representation of facts about their chosen artist. They could choose to make a poster, a book, or collage as long as it met the established criteria of providing specific information about their artist. Before starting, we discussed what we wanted to know about the artist, providing students guidance and limitations as to what information they were seeking. Referencing the KWL chart we had previously co-constructed, we made a list of factual information we wanted to know about the artist such as his name, birthplace, age, most famous songs or albums, and any particular musical influences the artist experienced. In triads, my students gathered information from the Internet using a set of guiding questions we had developed from the KWL chart section focusing on "what we want to know." Though they worked in triads, each student was responsible for recording his/her answers on the guiding question sheet they were provided that is presented in Figure 5.12 below.

Objective: Students will gather information in English from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information obtained, and use it to answer their own and other's questions.

Activity 1: Research the biography and professional work of a Reggaeton artist either on the web or in print.

1. What artist are you researching? *Jadrey Drake Graham*
2. Where was the artist born? Where are they from? *He was born in October 24 1986 (Age 23) He from Toronto, Ontario, Canada*
3. What are their most famous songs? What are the most famous works of the artist (songs, albums, videos)? *Best I ever had*
4. What is an interesting fact about them? *His most famous song is still fly*
5. Who are their influences? Who have they influenced in their music?

Activity 2: Present the information you gathered above in a visual format.

Activity 3: Practice presenting this information orally:

The artist we researched was

I like this artist because....

I chose this artist because.....

The artist was born in xxxxxx on the island of Dominican Republic/Cuba/Puerto Rico

Their most famous song/video/album is....

One interesting fact about the artist is....

(3) He is influenced by Jerry Lee Lewis He is the nephew of musicians.

Figure 5.12: Building the Field of Discourse through Research

After researching background information about their artists on the Internet for a class period of approximately two hours, students created informational posters about their chosen artist and made a brief oral presentation to their classmates. Prior to making their posters, Ms. Day lead instruction designed to support the students in creating effective posters that fulfilled the function of communicating details about the artist's life and providing a visual of the artist that was appealing to potential readers of the poster. In the section below, I highlight the in-class instruction that was co-planned with Ms. Day. The instruction provides an illustration of the instructional moves made by Ms. Day (who lead this particular class) and analyzes how the particular instructional moves supported the potential expansion of meaning making resources of our students. Particularly it

shows how Ms. Day, through instructional scaffolding in the form of questions and explicit instruction, drew on the existing linguistic resources of our ELLs to bring their attention to how language choices contribute to the overall construction of meaning.

To begin instruction, Ms. Day asked student to identify the artists they had researched. She then transcribed the artists' names on the white board. The list included "El Lapid" and "Vakero" among others. The list of artists served as an instructional starting point for Ms. Day to begin discussing how to describe the physical and personal attributes of reggaeton artists. Once the list was complete and each student had contributed an artist to the list, Ms. Day prompted students to share examples of words that would describe the artists because it would be important to, as she told them, "Be as detailed in your description as possible" (Fieldnotes, Oct. 18). The transcript below highlights interaction during a whole-class discussion and shows how Ms. Day pushed students to stretch their language to focus on personal as well as physical attributes of their artists with the intention of the positive descriptive elements being used in their final texts.¹⁷

1. Ms. Day: Let's start with El Lapid. How do we describe him?
2. Student 1: White.
3. Ms. Day: White? Do you mean skin color? Like I am white?
4. Student 1: No, like the "estilo."
5. Ms. Day: Estilo-like the "style"? The style of music?
6. Student 2: Yah - like he is not white. He is Dominican. So his style is

¹⁷ Transcription Conventions: The names of focal students and teachers are included. Other students are labeled numerically according to order they participated in the interaction as transcribed. Researchers comments are included in parentheses. An unattached dash (-) indicates a short pause.

Dominican.

7. Ms. Day: So he performs in a Dominican style?
8. Student 1: Yes.
9. Ms. Day: (Teacher transcribes. El Lapid performs in a Dominican style).

Ok. Good. You are talking about the music you know and what it is like. That's important for your reader to know.

Now, give me another word that describes EL Lapid.
10. Student 3: Beautiful.
11. Ms. Day: Ok. (Writes the word "beautiful" on the board.)

Another? (Prompting students for further descriptive words).
12. Student 4: Bacan.
13. Ms. Day: What's that mean? (Rising intonation)
14. Student 5: Cool.
15. Ms. Day: Okay. He is cool. (She transcribes "cool" on the board.)

What else?
16. Student 6: Sexy. Sexy boy.
17. Ms. Day: Sexy boy? (Transcribing "sexy boy" on the board.)

But now let's move beyond physical characteristics/ More about who they are not what they look like-
18. Student 3: Amoroso. He looks "I love you."
19. Ms. Day: Again. Not what he looks like, but what is he like

personally? (Emphasis on the word “personally”). If you want to be an artist what do you have to be like personally?

20. Yessica: Trabajadora. (Hard-working).

21. Ms. Day: Hard working? (Translating). Yes. (Transcribes “hard working” on the board.). This is a personal characteristic. He has to be hard-working to succeed in reggaeton.

The interaction transcribed above demonstrates three important aspects of our approach to instruction. First, the interaction shows how Ms. Day attempted to expand the students’ descriptions of their artists beyond physical characteristics to more personal characteristics so we can develop a sense of who the artist was as a person. When students offer physical descriptions such as “sexy boy” and “beautiful” she prompts students to “move beyond physical characteristics.” Students took her up on her challenge, offering descriptive words from their L1 that describe personal characteristics such as “amoroso” (passionate) and “trabajadora” (hard-working). Second, this interaction shows how Ms. Day can draw on the existing linguistic resources of ELLs, namely their L1, to expand their lexical grammatical resources for description in their L2. However, reflective analysis of the interaction highlights what for me represents a lost opportunity to discuss both the connotations of some of their words choices and the contribution these word choices would make to the construction of tenor within their music reviews. In retrospect, instruction could have been potentially strengthened had we subsequently lead students in categorizing the words into personal and physical characteristics. Once the words were categorized, we could talk about the difference between words such as “sexy” and “beautiful” and how choosing one of these words over

the other would contribute to the tenor and overall register of the text. For instance, we could have discussed how describing an artist (or work of art) as “beautiful” is expected in the context of a written review, but calling the artist “sexy” would be more typical of spoken discourse or conversation among friends. Third, the interaction also highlights how Ms. Day explicitly encouraged students to draw on their own linguistic and cultural resources to elaborate their descriptions of their artist. For instance, she makes her instructional intent visible when she overtly points out to a student, “Good you are talking about the music you know and what it is like. That is important for your reader to know.”

To continue to build students’ field of knowledge, Ms. Day guided students through a joint construction of the visual and linguistic text of the research poster. To begin the co-construction of the research poster, Ms. Day requested that students write about Lady Gaga, a popular music artist who generally performs rock-and-roll and pop music. She shared with students that she wanted to write about Lady Gaga because Lady Gaga was different from other artists because she played the piano and composed the lyrics to her own songs. In sharing this information, Ms. Day was explicitly modeling her response to the guiding questions we had developed that are displayed above. Next, she displayed a photocopied picture of the artist (Lady Gaga) and asked students where she should place it on the chart paper poster. They agreed that it should be at the top left and that she should write the title next to photo. Ms. Day told students that it was important to locate the title at the top with the picture so that readers would know whom she was writing about.

1. Ms. Day: You need to put it here (Placing the picture at the top).

so that people can see and they can know whom you are going to write about. Then we start our first sentence.

As the lesson continued, Ms. Day employed a variety of pedagogical strategies to encourage students to participate in the joint construction of the poster text. Most prominently, she employed the strategy of using students' shared L1 as a resource as she translated vocabulary and asked questions. It is worth noting that Ms. Day was not a fluent speaker of Spanish. Nor was Ms. Day using simultaneous translation that potentially would leave students focusing on their native language of Spanish rather than the dominant language of instruction, English. However, Ms. Day had shared her language learning experiences with students throughout the semester. They knew she was learning Spanish and that she had previously learned French over several years having grown up with her French speaking step-grandparents. By using the students L1, Ms. Day positioned herself as a language learner and demonstrated that the language learning was potentially a life-long learning process as well as a mutual learning process, albeit in her case not one with such high-stakes consequences. Using her developing Spanish skills also demonstrated that making errors while learning to use a language was a routine part of the language learning process. Additionally, by using the students' first language, the cognitive load required of the students was potentially lessened. In other words, without having to focus intensely on comprehending the teacher, students could instead focus on the language analysis and the language choices the teacher was making rather than having to translate lengthy oral text into their L1.

Through a mixture of Spanish and English, Ms. Day guided students through the construction of the first section of the poster. This section was effectively functioning as

the issue statement stage, but we had not yet introduced students to metalanguage related to the stages of persuasive texts. To bring students attention to the function of the issue stage, Ms. Day referenced the guiding questions we had constructed as we began the lesson. Her interaction with Laura demonstrates how she supported students in transforming the list of facts they had compiled in their research to build the field of discourse into an effective issue statement.

1. Ms. Day: (To students) What's the first thing I should write?
Do I start with // Puedo decir (Can I say)// "I am researching about Lady Gaga?" No es muy interesante (It is not interesting).
2. Laura: You could say, maybe, "She was born on . . . (trails off).
3. Ms. Day: Ok. I could say when and where she was born. Facts about her life. Maybe I could write "She was born in New York." And then I could start writing about what kind of music she performs. What's her most famous song?
4. Student 2: Just Dance (the title of a Lady Gaga song).
5. Ms. Day: Ok. Just dance. What language do I need to say that?
6. Student 5: (Jokingly) English.
7. Ms. Day: (laughs): Right. English. But I could say (transcribing as she speaks) Lady Gaga's most famous song is Let's Dance. What's another way I could say that?
Could you say, I think her best song is Just Dance? See that's a way to change it up.

The particular instructional move highlighted in the interaction above in which Ms. Day shows students how “to change it up” is designed to exemplify to students that the construction of meaning in texts consists of a series of linguistic choices made by the writer. By posing questions that bring attention to the choices language users make when constructing texts, such as “What is another way I could say that?” Ms. Day exemplifies the potential of the English language meaning making system or the multiple ways to communicate similar ideas in English. Recognizably, however, each of the varying ways of constructing text brings a different shade of meaning to the text. Those different shades of meaning are influenced by the context in which the text is constructed. To illustrate this point with students, Ms. Day presented two contrasting examples of clauses that discussed the reasons she appreciates Lady Gaga’s musical talent. As she apprenticed students into constructing the recommendation stage in which writers elaborate the claims they are making in support of their point, in Ms. Day’s case why she likes Lady Gaga, Ms. Day contrasted the linguistic choices she would make when expressing the reasons she likes Lady Gaga in the context of a research paper as opposed to how she would state the same idea in the context of spoken discourse.

1. Ms. Day: So if I am speaking, I say, I like Lady Gaga and her song “Just Dance.” It’s great. She plays instruments and her music is fast. Its makes me want to dance. If I am saying the same thing in a research paper, it’s different. I make different choices for the paper. Do you know the questions you have to ask yourself? If I were writing I would say something like, I like

Lady Gaga because of her vivacious personality. I enjoy the way she mixes her experiences in her songs and the fast rhythms of these songs.

In retrospect, I cannot identify definitively which aspects of written and spoken discourse Ms. Day was attempting to highlight for students through this particular instructional move. Besides her inclusion of the term “vivacious” in her example of written text, there does not seem to be a significant difference between the way she crafts the same message about Lady Gaga in spoken or written form. While she does state that there are linguistic choices in play in each of the texts, and perhaps prepares students to think about language at a deeper level by introducing this concept of linguistic choice, she never specifies exactly what the choices are. Therefore, the instruction once again represents a missed instructional opportunity to introduce the metalanguage necessary to support students in analyzing differences among spoken and written text. Through a metalinguistically informed discussion, the potential linguistic choices and the linguistic differences that contribute to the construction of spoken and written discourse could have been made explicit to ELLs and could have potentially contributed to the enhancement of their existing control of the written mode of discourse.

After the discussion of the posters and the co-construction of the model poster, students chose to work individually or in pairs to create their posters. They worked the better part of two days using the information they had researched and transforming it into a visually appealing and informative poster. Before displaying the posters outside of the classroom, students were asked to share their poster and the information they learned about their artist in a presentation to the class. The following language frames presented

in Figure 5.13 were provided to students to as they constructed their posters and as they made their oral presentations to group.

The artist we researched was . . . I like this artist because . . . I chose this artist because . . . The artist was born in . . . Their/His/Her most famous song/video/album is . . . One interesting fact I learned about the artist is . . .
--

Figure 5.13: Language Frames to Support Student Participation

Researching and presenting the information about their chosen artist to the class resulted in students in having a broader and deeper understanding of the topic they would be writing about in their persuasive texts. They knew details about the artist’s life, such as country of origin, musical influences and latest hit songs and were therefore were ready for the next instructional step.

The next stage of the teaching and learning cycle incorporates the reading and analysis-or “deconstruction” of expert or model texts that are designed to demonstrate the way writers make linguistic choices that help fulfill the social purpose and function of the genre (Gibbons, 2009; Martin, 2009; Rose & Martin, 2012). However, it is important to clarify that I was not following the teaching and learning cycle just to follow the cycle. Rather, I was very mindful that my students were continuing to struggle to organize their ideas in a way that reflected written discourse and expand those ideas using lexical terms related to the field of discourse. I wanted to provide them a clearer understanding of the social purpose of persuasive music reviews because I knew that they had not had previous experience in constructing persuasive reviews. It had been my observation that although they were still in the process of gaining control of the linguistic resources of

spoken discourse, students nevertheless were more readily able to draw on spoken discourse to share opinions in an oral mode and channel (and seemed to have no hesitancy in sharing their thoughts regarding every aspect of instruction and school life). When required to communicate those same opinions using conventions of written discourse, however, students did not yet demonstrate control of the linguistic resources in their new language to construct these opinions effectively. Therefore, my next instructional move was to provide my students with examples of persuasive text so that we could begin to highlight the linguistic resources evident in these model persuasive texts. Specifically, the models I provided would serve as the focal point for our shared textual analysis. By analyzing the texts together I hoped to promote in my students a deeper understanding of the purpose of persuasive texts, the typical organizational structure employed to accomplish the purpose of persuading in the context of a music review, and how certain linguistic features contributed to the overall accomplishment of the text's stated persuasive purpose.

To promote this deeper understanding, at this stage of the teaching and learning cycle, I collected model texts from various sources. The sources included music reviews from several Internet sites including, Barrio305¹⁸ and About.com: Latin Music. I also created texts designed to model the schematic structure and linguistic features expected of persuasive texts constructed in school contexts. My instruction at this stage included leading activities designed to make the context and purpose of the texts visible. As a starting point in our shared contextual analysis, the students and I completed multiple

¹⁸ Barrio 305, a web-based resource covering Latin American entertainment and pop-culture originates out of Miami (the area code 305). However, as of this writing, the website www.barrio305.com was not in service.

shared readings of a variety of music reviews retrieved from the aforementioned sites. I then led a whole-group class discussion in which I asked students to evaluate the extent to which the texts fulfilled the purpose of persuasive music reviews. Following the discussion, Ms. Day and I lead students in a guided contextual analysis of second shared model text, specifically a review of Daddy Yankee’s latest album retrieved from the site above. We chose this text because it exemplified several of the linguistic and schematic features we wanted to make explicit to our students. Namely, the text illustrates how the biographical details of the artist are shared at the beginning of the text to inform readers about his life and origins. The author (who is not identified by the writer) uses several circumstances of time and place to expand on these details. As the text unfolds in meaning, the author shares details of the musical genre of reggaeton. He then expounds on how Daddy Yankee’s latest album serves as a high quality example of reggaeton.

Table 5.2 Analysis of Text Used To Exemplify Features of Persuasive Text

Text	Schematic Structure and Linguistic Features Comprising Instructional Focus
<p>Growing Up: Raymond Ayala grew up in the Villa Kennedy housing projects in San Juan, Puerto Rico. He was the son of a salsa drummer and manicurist, but he dreamed of being a baseball star. In addition to baseball, Ayala grew up interested in American hip hop even though he didn't speak much English. He began experimenting with Spanish rhymes and working with local music hero DJ Playero.</p> <p>Development of Reggaeton: Ayala, now known as Daddy Yankee, and Playero worked to help popularize a new sound growing out of the Puerto Rican music scene known as reggaeton. It was a blend of sounds popular in urban neighborhoods including hip hop, rap, and reggae. Daddy Yankee had his first music chart success when the song "Segurosqui" hit Latin Tropical radio in 2003. Daddy Yankee's popularity in the Latin music world</p>	<p>Issue Statement In this stage, the author introduces his text participants, namely the artist Daddy Yankee (Raymond Ayala). Her orients his reader to the issue by supplying biographical facts using circumstances of place (in San Juan, Puerto Rico). He also connects ideas and advances his text at the clause level using transitions such as “in addition to” that help him connect ideas.</p> <p>Position Statement In this stage, the author presents a series of claims supporting and exemplifying the overall argument that Daddy Yankee is talented and successful musician. The author uses appraisal resources such as words with positive connotations such as “popularity” to express his attitude about the artist.</p> <p>Recommendation While there is no explicit recommendation in this text,</p>

<p>continued to build into 2004. His album <i>Barrio Fino</i> became the first reggaeton album to debut at #1 on the <i>Billboard</i> Latin albums chart. "Gasolina," the primary hit single from the album, crossed over into pop markets and became Daddy Yankee's first top 40 pop single. Daddy Yankee continued the momentum by releasing the album <i>Barrio Fino en Directo</i> in 2005. It is a mostly live set, but it also includes new recordings with rappers Snoop Dogg and Paul Wall. <i>Barrio Fino en Directo</i> became Daddy Yankee's first album to make it inside the top 25 of the pop albums chart and the single "Rompe" reached the top 40. The next studio album by Daddy Yankee will meet strong anticipation from fans crossing multiple genres from Latin to hip hop to pop.</p>	<p>there is a statement that the next work of this artist will be met with enthusiasm (anticipation).</p>
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To facilitate our co-constructed analysis of the persuasive music of Daddy Yankee's album, we responded to a set of questions on the guided contextual analysis sheet that I include below. To support students in making their analysis of the texts, Ms. Day and I read the guided analysis tool together, explained each question, translated difficult words, recast student responses, and transcribed them on a copy of the guiding worksheet that we projected on our classroom white board. Students recorded the class version of the analysis on the guiding analysis worksheet as we worked together. Laura's completed version of the worksheet is presented in Figure 5.14 below.

Name: [REDACTED] Date: 3/25/10

Investigating the Context: Reggaeton Reviews

Directions: To find out more about the context (the how and why) in which music reviews are posted on the net, let's look at some real life examples (like blogs, or internet sites). Think about and Answer the following questions for our discussion.

Text:

1	What is this text about?	The text is about Daddy Yankee music album.
2	What do you think its purpose is?	To describe Daddy Yankee's music, and to share informative with the reader.
3	What is the setting of the text? Where did you get it?	From an internet site www.barrio305.com/music/reviews/daddy_yankee.htm
4	Is the tone formal or informal? Why do you think so?	The writer writes in a formal tone.
5	Who is the author of the text? How old is he/she? Where do you think the author is from (does it say)? Is he rich or poor?	We don't know because the author is not named the author is anonymous.
6	Who is the audience for the text?	The people who are Daddy Yankee fans or interting in music.
7	What rules does the author have to follow when writing? What rules does he break?	no bad words They have to give their opinions. Don't make argument Personal.

Figure 5.14: Investigating the Context and Purpose of Music Reviews

The guided contextual analysis worksheet I used in my instruction was adapted from the work of Brian Paltridge (2001) in his book, Genre and the Language Learning Classroom. This book served as my introduction to genre-based pedagogy and, in retrospect, was initially quite influential on my second language writing instruction. However, as I will argue, my Paltridge-inspired adaption of the tool to conduct a contextual analysis of a persuasive music review did not ultimately meet the full range of my students' language needs. Paltridge recommends that teachers use contextual analysis with their students to obtain an "ethnographic view of second language writing" that

examines the audience, purpose and other contextual factors that influence the genre (p. 45). Paltridge (2001) also promotes the tool as a way of helping students know more about “the many factors that influence a genre such as the sociocultural context of production and interpretation of the text, the audience of the text, expectations of the particular discourse community, and its relationship with other similar texts” (p. 45). With these instructional goals in mind, I adapted Paltridge’s tool for my students to use as we conducted a shared reading of a review of Daddy Yankee’s latest album.

As I mentioned, the questions were intended to bring attention to contextual factors that influence language choices such as the purpose, audience, gender and age of the writer, and possible discipline or subject area in which the text would likely be found. To get students to think about discipline specific ways of using language and how language varies by context, I added a specific question (the first question on page 2 of the worksheet) that prompted students to think about how the text would be different if it were written for the science teacher (Mrs. S) or the history teacher (Ms. S). Ultimately, while the questions did help students think about larger contextual issues related to the cultural or social purpose of the text, the questions did not bring sufficient attention to the way particular language features that function to create a social purpose at the situational level. In other words, the contextual analysis worksheet essentially functioned more as comprehension worksheet than a linguistic examination of the context because the questions prompted students to concentrate more on the content of the text rather than how the author makes linguistic choices that construct discipline specific knowledge.

An excerpt from an interaction with Yessica during class illustrates how students focused more on the content than context and the linguistic contributions to the

formulation of context (Oct 26. Fieldnotes). As the class and I were addressing the question, “How would the text be different if it were in the classroom of Ms. S #1 (Science) or Ms. S # 2 (Humanities), Yessica and I had the following exchange:

1. Mr. Schulze: Think for a minute. How would they be different if you were reading this text in Mrs. S class (Science) or in Ms. S (Humanities)?
2. Yessica: If it were in Mrs. S class, its about animal and plants. In Ms. S it’s about people-old people.
3. Mr. Schulze: Ancient civilization?
4. Yessica: Yes.
5. Mr. Schulze: So the text would be about something else?

This exchange illustrates how the questions on the contextual analysis sheet as well as my subsequent questions failed to support my instructional intention of helping students recognize the discipline specific linguistic differences that the varying instructional contexts would require. Having not yet introduced a sufficient amount of metalanguage to facilitate talk about the language of the text, I was not able to bring the focus to how language choices in this instance are both constructing and being constrained by the context. However, my next question in the guided analysis was slightly more successful in supporting my students’ understanding of contextual influence on language choices, but still did not sufficiently support my students’ understanding of their potential language choices in that context and the role of these choices in the

subsequent construction of context. I asked, “What do you think the people reading this text know or understand?” Yessica’s response revealed that she could articulate some of the things readers might know to successfully make meaning from the text.

1. Mr. Schulze: What do the people have to get if they are reading this?
What do they have to know?
2. Yessica: They have to know about reggaeton. They have to know about his life. That’s important.
3. Mr. Schulze: So you have to tell your audience about your artist’s life here.
4. Yessica.: Yah... They have to know about music.
5. Mr. Schulze: Right. They have to know about reggaeton. That would help? What else? What if they read a paper or on the Internet? What’s the difference?
6. Yessica: They need to know how to ...haz un clic (Click on text).
7. Mr. Schulze: Si. Ellos necesitan saber como hacer un clic para seguir un enlace. (They need to know how to click to follow a link).

The interaction transcribed above exemplifies how I was attempting to prompt my student to think more deeply about what the text would have to be about, but ultimately not sufficiently clarifying how an author’s choice of specific participants and processes would convey an author’s expertise in the field of music. However, from the standpoint of reflecting on my SFL based instruction, I do not believe the Paltridge-based questions

were the only pedagogical obstruction to enhancing students' control of the elements of language contributing to the construction of register. I believe the difficulty resulted from my attempting to reduce the highly complex issue of the differences between the linguistic construction of knowledge in the disciplines of science and history to something that could be analyzed by students through one response. In retrospect, the question only touched on the surface of students' understanding to see what they were noticing at this point, but my expectations were that their analysis should go much deeper. Rather than facilitating my students' analysis of the linguistic differences between discipline specific texts, students were instead confused by the vague nature of the question.

Ultimately, my adaptation of Paltridge's approach did not meet the needs of my beginning level ELLs. While the contextual analysis worksheet displayed above arguably facilitated an analysis of the context of culture, and perhaps highlighted the social purpose of the text and its intended audience, it did not go deep enough into an linguistic exploration of the role of language in accomplishing the purpose, or at all for at least in the case of my adaptation, to address issues of register or how particular language choices shape and/or are shaped by the context of situation. Had I taken the opportunity to introduce additional SFL metalanguage I could have potentially lead students through a more focused analysis of the text. For instance, we could have examined the participants and processes in the text to bring a linguistic focus to the first question on the worksheet, "What is the text about?"

Nevertheless, at this point of instruction, it was evident to me that students needed additional support focusing on how to construct the register typical of the mode of written

discourse. Following the instructional focus on context and purpose, as well as the intentional focus on building students' field of knowledge about reggaeton, persuasive arguments, and music reviews, we turned our attention to analyzing the way linguistic choices contribute to the construction of the register expected of persuasive music reviews constructed in school contexts. To facilitate our discussion I first introduced the metalanguage required for us to have a whole class discussion about the text's register. In doing so, I was challenged by ways to introduce metalanguage about the complex elements of register without oversimplifying them. Essentially, I was challenged to find the right balance of terminology that would allow my students to participate in discussions about language use. I questioned to what extent I should introduce the metalanguage necessary to discuss elements of the system of language given both the constraints of my students' current language development level as well as the constraints of my own essentially limited knowledge of my students' L1. In other words, I would be challenged to offer sound explanations or illustrations of the delicate shades of meaning existing between and among words choices. However, after much thought, I defined the register elements of field, tenor, and mode respectively as what the text was about, what level of expertise the author demonstrated and how much the text reflected a spoken or written discourse and whether the text was meant to be read aloud or silently.

One of the more challenging aspects of introducing the metalanguage related to register was the issue of how to teach students about the linguistic construction of tenor. I felt it was important to bring students' attention to how writers use elements of tenor to convey authority within the context of a written argument. In particular, I wanted to emphasize how language choices help writers construct an expert identity. Therefore, I

began by explaining to students that authors of written arguments must make connections with their audience without employing the linguistic features typical of spoken discourse in social interactions. To illustrate this point, we discussed the linguistic choices language users make in terms of levels of formality. I chose the concept of formality as an access point to begin our whole class discussion of tenor for two reasons. First, students knew the meaning of the Spanish/English cognates “formal” and “informal” and could readily give examples of the differences in formal and informal language. An excerpt from a whole class discussion (Field Notes October 12, 2010) exemplifies how I guided our class discussion to support students in developing a shared understanding of both the definition of tenor and its role in constructing relationships between language users.

1. Mr. Schulze: So, if something is formal it is-
2. Student 2: Like a rich-
3. Mr. Schulze: Ok, something may be formal like a dance or party.
But think about how you
You would talk if you were at the rich, fancy party.
4. Student 2: All fancy . . . like . . . rich.
5. Mr. Schulze: Ok, think about that...you would make choices
about what to say that were different than if you
were with your friends hanging out.
6. Alex: I would not be like, “Yo...What’s up? Que lo que?”
(What’s up?) I’d be- (Inaudible)
7. Mr. Schulze: Right, you would be like, “Hello. Good evening.”
(Continued next page)

Well, it is the same with writing. When you want to sound like you know what you are talking about when you write reviews you use formal language.

As the excerpt from our class discussion transcribed above illustrates, when I first introduced the concept of tenor, my students equated this element of register with formality. In particular, they conceived of formal language choices as a reflection of socio-economic class as evidenced by association of formality with being “rich” or “fancy.” While this assumption was perhaps a vast oversimplification, it did help to demonstrate how students perceived language choices as constructing and being constructed by context. However, while this concept of formality opened up a discussion about language, the interaction represented yet another lost pedagogical opportunity to introduce metalanguage to support our analysis of the linguistic choices contributing to the construction of what the students identified as “fancy” talk. I further realized additional concrete examples of tenor at work, especially in regard to the differences between spoken and written discourse, were necessary to support my students in developing a greater understanding of how to construct an effective tenor as expected in written persuasive texts composed in academic contexts. Therefore, to illustrate the differences between written and spoken discourse and the potential linguistic choices authors make when constructing the tenor of persuasive texts, I designed the following exercise presented in Figure 5.15 below.

Evaluate Tenor

Which sounds right for a music review?

better

Academic A I recommend that you download this album soon.
 Social B Like, it'd be cool to download this stuff.

2. A Reggaeton music has its origins in Puerto Rico.
 B. Reggaeton comes from cool places like P.R. + D.R.

3. A Of all the tracks contained in the album, "Dembow" has the catchiest beat.
 B. Yo! Dembow is a cool song.

Which sounds right for a music review?

1. A. I recommend that you download the album.
 B. Like, it's cool to download this stuff.
2. A. Reggaeton has its origins in Puerto Rico.
 B. Reggaeton comes from cool places like P.R. and D.R.
3. A. Of all the tracks contained in the album, "Dembow" has the catchiest beat.
 B. Yo! Dembow is a cool song.

Figure 5.15 Contrastive Analysis of Tenor

The exercise consisted of a series of clauses contrasting linguistic choices that contribute to the construction of the tenor expected of persuasive music reviews constructed in school contexts with those typical of a spoken discourse among peers. Students were assigned to work in pairs to identify which sentence they felt constructed a more “academic” discourse one would expect to find in the context of a written persuasive music review and which contained language more typical of spoken discourse more appropriate for social interaction among peers. To make these identifications,

students worked in pairs for ten minutes and then shared out their responses in small groups. Students noticed almost immediately that in all the examples choice “A” contained language choices that contributed to the construction of a tenor that more closely approximated the tenor expected in the context of a formal persuasive music review. They pointed out that “Yo” (albeit a somewhat obvious example intended to exaggerate the instructional point) reflected informal spoken discourse.

As we continued analyzing the language differences in the clauses that contributed to the construction of alternative tenors, I brought students’ attention to certain spoken discourse markers in the clauses. For instance, I pointed out that word “like” in this context functions as conversational placeholder and sentence starter typical of spoken social discourse.

1. Laura: What is this “like”? I like something?
2. Mr. Schulze: No: Its likethere. That’s an example. It’s a filler.
When you are talking and you don’t know what to say.
A way of waiting if you need time.
3. Laura: Its when I say . . .
4. Mr.Schulze: (Interrupting student) Maybe you say “Este....”
(Drawn Out)
5. Laura: Oh or like, Dale pues.
6. Mr. Schulze: Exactly.

The interaction detailed above demonstrates how I drew on the resource of my students' L1 to build a shared understanding of the linguistic concept of filler and elaborated the concept to co-construct an understanding of one difference between spoken and written discourse, namely the use of fillers and spoken discourse markers. As our analysis and evaluation of the texts with contrasting tenor continued, I also pointed out how the writer in Example B used abbreviations such as DR and PR instead of the fully written out names of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. I explained that using abbreviations does not reflect spoken discourse, but rather a shared contextual understanding, namely what the abbreviations stood for and that using abbreviations would be less effective in they wanted to reach a wider audience as the one they would intend to reach in the written persuasive music reviews they would be expected to write. Because my students' initial texts had by and large reflected the mode of spoken discourse, my next instructional step was to bring students' attention to the ways authors use language in particular ways to construct the mode of written discourse. To bring my students' attention to the language features of a text that contribute to a mode that reflects written discourse, I next introduced the concepts of Theme and Rheme. By introducing the concept of Theme and Rheme, I could show students how authors developed an idea and carried that idea through their texts in a way that maintained cohesion and coherence.

To illustrate the concept of Theme and Rheme, I listed a series of clauses in two columns. I told students we would construct sentences by matching clauses in the first column with those in the second column. Students simply had to match a sentence starter with the remaining text to construct a cohesive and coherent sentence. The sentence starters included, "I believe" and "I recommend" among others. The choices they were

provided to make the sentence complete included: “that Lady Gaga is an excellent artist” and “you should buy the new album from Aventura.” The activity of sentence completion is frequently utilized in ESL instruction. However, in this instance the instructional move created space for my students and I to address lexical issues. In particular, I introduced the metalanguage related to the register variable of mode. I defined the sentence starters using the SFL term “Theme”-what Halliday (1985) conceptualizes as the point of departure of the sentence- and “Rheme” what is considered the remaining portions of the clause that function to expand the Theme. I emphasized to students that when constructing a persuasive text, such as a persuasive music review, writers will use clauses such as “I believe” in the Theme position to emphasize that they are going to share an opinion and to signal to their readers that the opinion will most likely follow in the Rheme position.

Aventura - Review of The Last by Aventura - About.com Page 2 of 2

Unlike many bachateros that vocally strong-arm their way through a song, Romeo Santos is a sweet-voiced crooner, equally comfortable singing in Spanish or English. About half of the album consists of bachatas sung solo by Romeo while the rest of the group provides instrumental back-up begging the questions: isn't this already a solo career? Some of Santos' lyrics deal with the traditional romantic view of love and loss while there's an edge to others: "Su Vida" is a song about a prostitute accompanied by more of a rock style while "Peligro" rants about a woman who cares about nothing but money.

There's a change of pace with "Mi Casita.", done as a salsa and the final "Gracias" which adopts a merengue style with Dominican Giovanni Polanco on accordion.

The two tracks that move into a more urban territory are an effective R&B/rap version of "Spanish Fly" featuring Wyclef Jean and Ludacris, sung in Spanglish, and the break-out single "All Up 2 U" with reggaeton's Akon & Wisin y Yandel.

If you love bachata, this is an album you will treasure not just as 'The Last' but as 'The Best' of Aventura.

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<http://latinmusic.about.com/od/cdmusicreviews/gr/REV01AVENTURA.htm> 3/3/2010

Figure 5.16 Model Music Review

To continue building students' register awareness, I next guided students through a joint analysis of an authentic music review. The text, a review of the latest album by the popular Miami-based reggaeton group Aventura contained several of the register features typical of the mode of written persuasive texts that I wished to point out explicitly to my students. While the model was not meant to serve as an "exemplar text" it did allow students to engage with an authentic text that illustrated the lexical grammatical features related to the field of discourse of music reviews as well as elements of appraisal designed to convey the author's positive assessment of the music. Furthermore, the text contained several of the schematic structures typical of persuasive arguments such as a

strong claim related to lead singer of the band, “Romeo Santos is a sweet-voiced crooner equally comfortable singing in Spanish or English.” My instructional intention was to bring these elements to students’ attention during our joint analysis of the text. To guide the joint analysis I constructed the questions on the worksheet displayed below. To begin our joint analysis, I provide the authentic music review displayed above which I retrieved from the website www.about.com. The topic of the review is the album entitled “The Last” by the group Aventura. With a printed text in hand, students and I read the review together. After our joint reading of the text, students were provided with the guiding questions designed to bring their attention to how writers introduced topic knowledge, in this case what they knew about reggaeton (the field), how they were displaying their expertise (tenor) and how they were conveying a message for readers rather than someone they were conversing with in person. Ms. Day and I developed each question in the exercise with the intention of illuminating aspects of the context. Students completed the exercise with a partner while Ms. Day and I circulated throughout the class providing students with linguistic support and clarification of directions. The guiding reading sheet with focal student responses is presented below. Following the presentation of student work in Figure 5.17, I present an analysis of their responses and discuss what those responses reveal about students’ level of register awareness.

Name: [redacted] Date: 4/7/10

Investigating Reggaeton: Developing Awareness of the Register of Music Reviews

Language Objectives: Students will be able to identify how writers of music reviews use certain textual elements to accomplish their purpose.

Directions: Read the following questions and respond in two ways: orally as a participant in our discussion and in written form by recording your answers.

Field

1. What is this review about? This review is about How do you can purchase music and Also talk about the contents the album the last and with which people ^{singer}

2. What is the purpose of this review? How do you know?
The purpose is about So you learn at buy music for Internet.

3. Why do you think the author wrote this review?
The author wrote this review for the people want to learn at buy music and the author think this important because the people learn

Tenor

1. What do you think the relationship is between the author and his audience?
The Relationship is between customer and seller.

2. Do you think the author is an expert on music? Why or why not?
I think the author is expert because I see a programs about Aventura and she search about him

3. Do you think the writing is formal or informal? What parts of the text make you think so? I think that is formal because Aventura don't say don't likes to the people talk to his group and I think that because I see more review about him

Contents

Laura's Register Analysis Tool Page 2

Mode: [redacted] [redacted]

1. Is this review meant to be read aloud or read silently? Where would you typically find this review?

no that is not a speech because that in internet and in internet is to much page there you can find a speech but not that is a review.

2. How would the review be different if the author were telling you about the music in person?

The different about that is that in a page you can put your information and your number but in a show is so different because there a people listen to you but in the page you need to public the page and then the people go to there. But in the show is more important because there you say the information like the page and there is more relationship between customer and seller.

Figure 5.17 Laura's Register Analysis Tool

Alex's Register Analysis Page 1

Name: [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] Date: 4-1-2010

Investigating Reggaeton: Developing Awareness of the Register of Music Reviews

Language Objectives: Students will be able to identify how writers of music reviews use certain textual elements to accomplish their purpose.

Directions: Read the following questions and respond in two ways: orally as a participant in our discussion and in written form by recording your answers.

Field

1. What is this review about?
This review is about Aventura and their New album.
2. What is the purpose of this review? How do you know?
Share information about their New album.
3. Why do you think the author wrote this review?
He want to tell people about the New album

Tenor

1. What do you think the relationship is between the author and his audience?
The relationship between the author and the audience is formal and relation the evidence is the they use one expretion infrommat.
2. Do you think the author is an expert on music? Why or why not?
I think the author is an expert on music because he need to know the artist he talk and the music he is taking about.
3. Do you think the writing is formal or informal? What parts of the text make you think so?
I think the writing is formal because is writing with respect.

Alex's Register Analysis Page 2

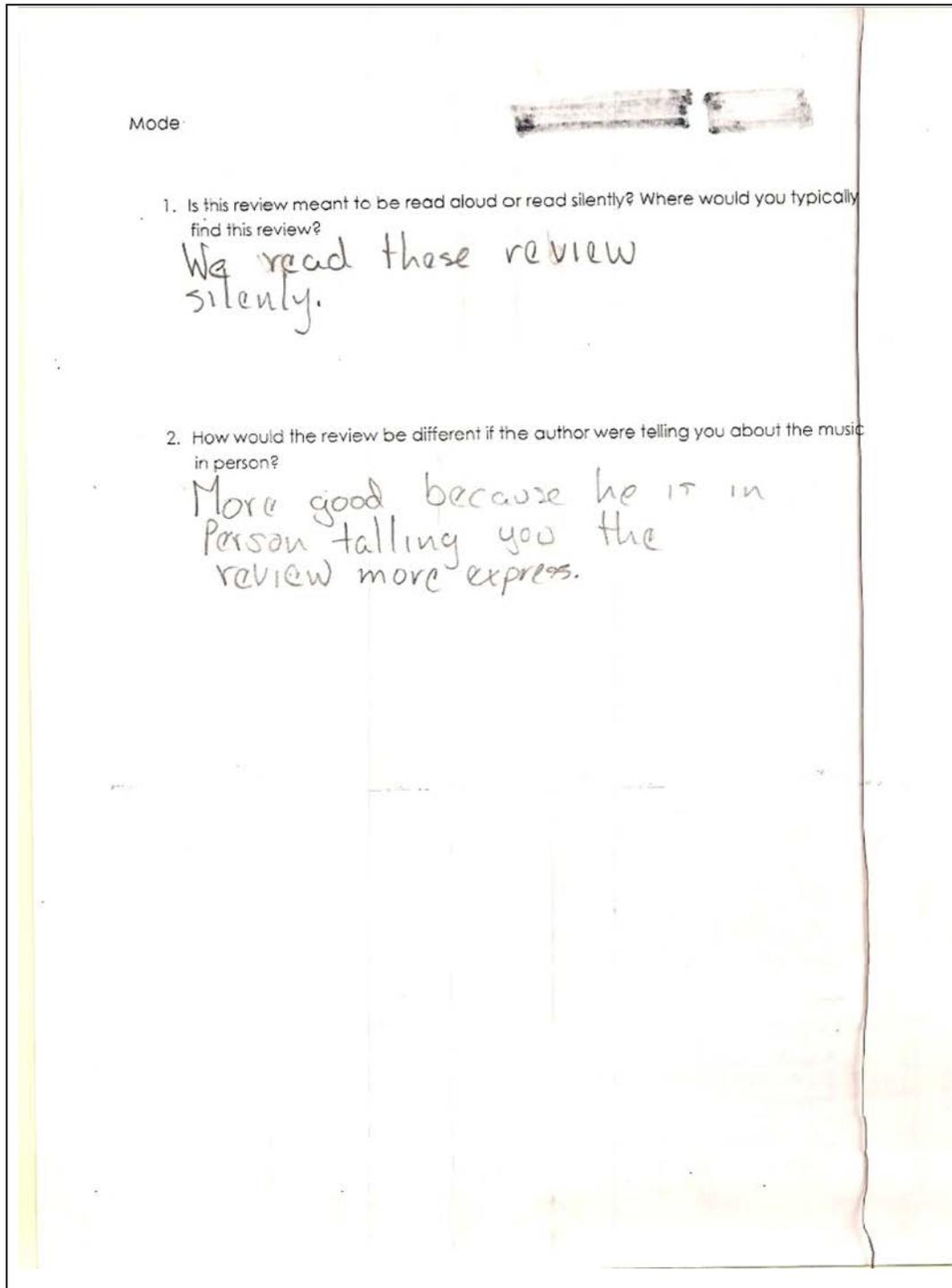


Figure 5.18: Alex's Register Analysis

Yessica's Register Analysis First Page

Name: [redacted] Date: 4/1/2010

Investigating Reggaeton: Developing Awareness of the Register of Music Reviews

Language Objectives: Students will be able to identify how writers of music reviews use certain textual elements to accomplish their purpose.

Directions: Read the following questions and respond in two ways: orally as a participant in our discussion and in written form by recording your answers.

Field

1. What is this review about?
That is talking about buy a music and why you can buy like a recommendation

2. What is the purpose of this review? How do you know?
The purpose about the author is why that is good that you can buy. I know because I read the text and I see this purpose.

3. Why do you think the author wrote this review?
I think that author wrote that because

Tenor

1. What do you think the relationship is between the author and his audience?
He wants people buy the music that why he put the reviews.
The relationship is between customer and seller.

2. Do you think the author is an expert on music? Why or why not?
I think the author is expert because I see a programs about Aventura and she searche about him.

3. Do you think the writing is formal or informal? What parts of the text make you think so?
I think that is formal because Aventura dont say dont likes to the that people talk to his group and I thinks because I see more reviews about him

Speech

Mode

1. Is this review meant to be read aloud or read silently? Where would you typically find this review?

No that is not a speech because that in internet and in internet is to much page there you can find a speech but not that is a review.

2. How would the review be different if the author were telling you about the music in person?

The different about that is that in a page you can put your information and your number but in a show is so different because there a people listen to you but in the page you need to public the page and then the people can go there. But in the show is more important because there you say the information like the page and there is more relationship to the customer and seller.

The “investigating reggaeton” guided text analysis worksheet displayed above provided concrete examples of the ways ELLs were developing an understanding of how language constructs and is constructed by context. Their responses demonstrate growing genre awareness in regard to how writers make specific linguistic choices to construct a particular register. Because Laura and Yessica worked together their responses were almost identical; therefore, I present their responses and subsequent analysis together. In terms of the field, both recognized the intended purpose of the text was to convince potential buyers to purchase Aventura’s latest recording as indicated by their response to question 1:

Laura’s response: The review is about how do you purchase music and also talk about the contents of the album the last [the latest].

Yessica’s response: That is talking about buy a music and why you can buy, like a recommendation.

Like his classmates Laura and Yessica, Alex also interpreted the intended purpose of the text as one of persuading readers to purchase the artist’s latest album.

Alex’s Response: For the people want to learn to buy music.

The guiding questions related to tenor were designed to encourage students to focus on the ways the author constructed a relationship between reader and author, by drawing on linguistic resources to construct an expert identity that supports the purpose of promoting album sales. Laura and Yessica identified the relationship between author and reader as one of “customer and seller” and characterized the author as an “expert.” In making these characterizations, they drew on their own knowledge of the field acquired through

viewing “programs” about Aventura to verify the author’s expertise. Although ELLs assigned authorial expertise based on their own knowledge, they did not cite specific language from the text to support their characterization. Rather, they simply assigned authorial expertise because “the author needs to know the artist they are talking about.” Alex, in contrast, interpreted the tenor in relation to levels of formality. To demonstrate his growing understanding of the role of language in constructing tenor, Alex notes, “The relationship between the author and the audience is formal and the evidence is they use one expression informal.” I can speculate that Alex makes this claim drawing on our previous discussion focusing on formal and informal language choices. While his response does indicate that he is thinking more deeply about some of the differences between written and spoken text, namely that written text may seem more “formal” than spoken discourse, Alex does not name any specific language features that contribute to this perceived formality of written language. Instead, his response showed that he perceived the language of the text as formal and that the formality of the language in turn contributed to the construction of formal tenor. He further interpreted this formality as “writing with respect.” I found his response interesting. I understood Alex’s response to mean that he perceived that respect is conveyed through formal language choices and those respectful formal language choices contributed to the creation of social distance and neutrality typically demonstrated by effective persuasive writers.¹⁹

The final two questions of the worksheet were designed specifically to bring students’ attention to the mode of the exemplar text. Analysis of the responses of focal students on this section indicate that they were able to articulate the differences in

¹⁹ At best, my interpretation of Alex’s response represents conjecture and speaks to the need for researchers to interview students to learn more their thoughts and motivations through the composition process.

language choices that would exist if a music review were delivered in person using spoken discourse rather than if it appeared in written form on a website. They concluded that face-to-face communication would, as Alex pointed out, be more expressive, allowing for the creation of a stronger relationship between author and reader. Laura and Alex responded that people would have to listen to the person who was persuading trying to persuade them if the persuader were in close proximity to the listener, rather than if the information were delivered in written form.

5.8 Instructional Insights from Register Analysis

Analysis of students' responses to the questions I designed to bring attention to register provided me insight into both my students' emergent understanding of the anticipated register of persuasive arguments constructed in school contexts as well as the gaps in my own instruction that failed to promote their understanding of the role of language in the construction of register. Students' responses indicate that they primarily interpreted tenor in terms of levels of formality. In other words, students equated formality with respect and concluded that the language choices in a formal written music review should demonstrate respect for the reader in two ways: by not using "bad words" and by demonstrating a thorough understanding of content and the topic one writes about in the review. While students identified formality as a general concept, they were not able to pinpoint the linguistic features that contributed to their perception of formality in the text because I had not introduced the metalanguage (such as elements of appraisal) that would have been conducive to supporting substantive conversations and joint analysis of model texts. Without access to metalanguage, students were ultimately limited in developing a deeper understanding of the role of language in creating social

distance between a writer and his reader. The only way they were able to interpret the linguistic construction of social distance was in terms of levels of formality. Upon reflection, I have determined that instruction was less than effective and essentially broke down at this moment and instruction would have been potentially much more effective had I provided the students the metalanguage necessary to talk about lexical-grammatical issues such as vocabulary choice and effective pronoun usage to create writer and reader relationships and how certain language choices that are perceived as formal support a writer in conveying a sense of expertise, an essential element of persuasive text.

However, the questions did support some aspects of students register awareness. For instance, students identified face-to-face communication as being more advantageous to written communication when trying to persuade. For instance, Yessica was quite adamant in her belief that during spoken discourse of persuasion, “people listen to you.” Her response further signaled that she understood the immediacy of personal contact might be more effective when persuading. She was very clear that she thought removing the writer from the physical location of the listener alters “the relationship between customer and seller.” Her response further indicated the need for me to apprentice my students into using varying linguistic resources writers to persuade effectively beyond the immediate context of face-to-face encounters.

5. 9 Teaching and Learning the Schematic Structure of Persuasive Texts

After completing instruction designed to scaffold my students’ developing awareness of register, we turned to analysis of the schematic structure of persuasive music reviews. As I demonstrated previously, analysis of my students’ initial texts indicated that they required further support in using recognizable schematic structures

typical of persuasive argument to construct texts that unfolded in meaning in coherent and cohesive ways. Therefore, the subsequent focus of my instruction centered on teaching students ways to recognize and employ familiar stages or schematic structures typical of persuasive arguments. As I was introducing my students to the elements of the schematic structure of persuasive texts, I made sure to emphasize to them that that stages were not considered arbitrary rules to follow or a template to be completed. Rather, I presented the stages as elements of a text that help the text achieve its overall purpose. To help students gain a deeper understanding of how the stages were contributing to the accomplishment of the text's overall purpose, I designed several activities. First, I presented a chart outlining the four typical identifiable stages of the schematic structure of persuasive arguments to be used as a guide for students as they were writing. To make the chart more interactive and less like a template I added a series of questions to the chart underneath each of the stages. The questions were designed to promote students' critical thinking about the ways that each stage contributed to the purpose of the text. The chart is presented below in Figure 5.20 followed by excerpt from a classroom interaction that demonstrates how I brought students attention to the purpose of each stage and its overall function in supporting meaning making at the text level.

	<p>Stages of A Music Review</p> <p>Issue</p> <p>What albums are you reviewing?</p> <p>Who is the artist?</p> <p>What general statement can you make about the music or artist?</p> <p>Position Argument</p> <p>What do you like or dislike about the album?</p> <p>Evidence:</p> <p>Include Song Titles</p> <p>Include Descriptions of Music</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Should the music be downloaded?</p> <p>Summary:</p> <p>Restate your case</p>
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Figure 5.20: Stages of Persuasive Music Reviews

The excerpt from my instruction designed to introduce students to the stages typically found in a persuasive argument such as the persuasive music review transcribed below illustrates how I introduced these stages to students. It also shows the ways I instructed students to use the questions to promote their thinking about how they were

making meaning in their texts. I started by introducing the issue stage and then progressed through each of the three subsequent stages.

1. Mr. Schulze: These are the questions you have to think about when you're writing your review. What are you reviewing? You don't want your reader to read the whole text and not know what you are writing about. You have to tell us. Tell the reader who it is that you are writing about. Who are you going to write about?
2. Alex: El Lapid.
3. Mr. Schulze: Ok. El Lapid again. Well... at the beginning you need to tell readers you are writing about El Lapid and who he is. And for the persuasion argument you are going to tell your readers what you like or dislike. What is that you are going to want your readers to like or dislike?
4. Laura: Dislike? What means "dislike?"
5. Mr. Schulze: What you don't like. In this part remember you are getting your readers to think about the good things about the artist you are writing about. So, here you might talk about things you don't like about other artists or other types of music.

6. Laura: Like I don't like soft music. I like music to dance.
7. Mr. Schulze: Right. What you like. Your opinion- it goes here.
- But then in the recommendation statement you tell your readers what to do. What do you want them to do? Should they purchase the album? Should they download it? Why or why not?

As I introduced the stages, I tried to emphasize the stage's purpose. In other words, my instructional emphasis was on supporting students in using the stages to construct a text that unfolds in meaning or builds upon ideas and thoughts in a way that ultimately results in readers being convinced to do something. Throughout the instruction, I intended to model the questions so that students would use the questions when they were conducting the next instructional activity focusing on analysis of the staging structure of model texts. Ultimately, however, I wanted students to incorporate those into their own practice of independent textual analysis. In other words, I wanted students to have a strategy at their disposal that would allow them to attend to the purpose of each stage when they were constructing their own texts independently.

Upon reflecting on my instruction, one particular challenge, or missed instructional opportunity stood out. It occurred towards the end of my introduction of the stages. I did not present the summary as a way of concluding the text. My failure to present the summary in terms of its function and its role in the accomplishment of the persuasive purpose of the text resulted in students being unclear about the purpose of the summary stage and ultimately in their failure to include strong summaries in their second

instantiation of their persuasive texts. The interaction below illustrates the breakdown in instruction.

1. Laura: And the summary? What is that? Is everything?
(Pointing to the text on the chart paper).
2. Mr. Schulze: What? I am not sure.
3. Laura: It's everything its about?
4. Mr. Schulze: Yes.

To provide students with an illustration of a text that employed the recognizable stages of persuasive arguments, I constructed the following text to share with students in class. I present the text below with notes in the adjoining column explaining how the stage contributed to the overall construction of the argument.

Table 5.3: Teacher Created Text Designed to Exemplify Linguistic Features of Effective Persuasive Texts

Teacher Created Text Designed to Demonstrate Effective Schematic Structure	Structural Features and Emphasized Linguistic Features of Text
<p>Recently I downloaded the latest CD of Wislin and Yandel. I was pleasantly surprised at how cool the music of this album was to me.</p> <p>There are many reasons the CD is phenomenal. I was pleasantly surprised at how cool this album was to me. The album entitled "La Pelicula" (the movie) should be on everyone's I-Pod, if they love reggaeton music. Every reggaeton fan should download it now.</p> <p>First, each of the 13 tracks available on this soundtrack are (sic) phenomenal. They each have catchy lyrics and syncopating rhythm. The beat of each song makes me want to dance. Second, the beat is clear and the undertones are relaxed. My favorite track on the album is entitled "Dembow." I find this track supreme</p>	<p>Issue statement (Provides background and context for the argument)</p> <p>Argument (Sets forth reasons for completing recommended action)</p> <p>Evidence (Specific details supporting the argument)</p>

<p>because of the catchy lyrics and rhythm. I was singing along the whole time. This album is one of the best I have listened to in a long time. You should buy this album if you want to listen to cool music and enjoy with your friends.</p>	<p>Recommendation (Specific action writer calls on reader to perform)</p>
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Working in teams of three, students were given a card containing one of the stages or phases typically encountered in a persuasive argument. Students were given five minutes to discuss the purpose of the stage and how it contributed to the fulfillment of the text’s purpose. Next, we read the teacher-constructed text and a member of each team was asked to come forward and identify the stage by placing the label next to the stage [See Figure 5.21 below]. As they completed the activity, I asked them to justify their response by telling me how they had come to their answer. The rest of the class labeled the stages on their own copy of the text. During this activity, we also included an instructional focus on elements of appraisal as we identified several “strong words” that the author used to demonstrate how much he liked the artist and the music. In Figure 5.21 below I include the co-constructed texts with the labels students attached to each the identified stages composing the schematic structure of this model persuasive music review.

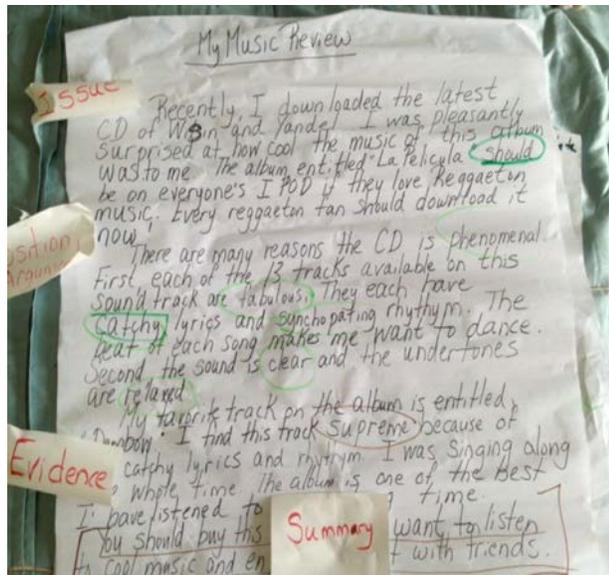


Figure 5.21 Student Identification of Schematic Structure of Persuasive Texts

The next stage of the teaching and learning cycle involves the joint construction of persuasive texts. In this section of the study, I provide excerpts from classroom interactions to illustrate the instructional moves I employed to enhance the potential of the system of linguistic resources available to students. As I mentioned in the theoretical framework, the purpose of joint construction involves drawing on the knowledge students have gained during the first stage of the teaching and learning cycle (Building the field) and the second stage of modeling. During this stage my students began the work of getting their words on paper, however, were not yet expected to write without teacher support. As I mentioned, up until this point of instruction, students had worked with both Ms. Day and me to build an understanding of the social purpose, language features and typical schematic structure of persuasive texts. We had addressed each of the elements of persuasive writing in separate instructional activities. At this point, all of those elements of persuasive texts came together. My students needed an opportunity to construct a text

of substantial length that both unfolded in meaning through recognizable stages and employed the linguistic features and elements of register typical of effective persuasive arguments. The joint construction gave students an opportunity to draw on all the concepts about language they had learned to construct a text while still providing an element of teacher support.

To begin the joint construction, I set the purpose for our work. I informed students that we were going to write a persuasive music review together, and let them know that as we were writing, I would be giving them as much guidance and support as possible so that we could organize our thoughts and use persuasive language. The intention was to guide them through the construction of a whole text so they would have a clear model of the process I went through as a writer and a clear illustration of how writers attend to the available structural and linguistic choices when constructing texts. To begin instruction, and to promote students in thinking about the sequential organizational structure of the genre, I opened instruction with a question designed to get students thinking about the purpose of the first stage of persuasive text.

1. Mr. Schulze: Okay. We need to start. I am going to show you the thoughts in my head as we are doing this.
We need to start-not with a question, please.
We need an exciting opener. Look at the chart (pointing to the chart at the front of the room). What is the first stage?
2. Choral Response: (Looking at the chart) The issue.

3. Mr. Schulze: Right. The issue. What's goes in the issue statement? What do I have tell my reader?
4. Student 1: Who and what?
5. Mr. Schulze: Ok. Who and what? I have to tell my reader who and what I am writing about.
6. Student 2: What about a title?
7. Mr. Schulze: No. We wait for the title until after we are done writing. We want to know what we are writing about first and then think of something that will make our reader want to read our work.

The excerpt of instruction transcribed above illustrates the ways I initiated instruction with students and brought students' attention to the first recognizable stage of the persuasive text, the issue statement. To do so, I encouraged students to use the classroom resources such as the chart poster that described each stage of persuasive argument and its purpose. Students were able to identify the components of the issue statement, namely "who" and "what." At this moment in instruction, however, I could have drawn students attention to the purpose of the issue statement and built on their response of "who" and "what" to clarify that the purpose of the issue stage is to introduce the participants that will take part in the text and to provide a preview of what the author will write about in the rest of the text. However, once again our discussion was

constrained by the limited amount of SFL metalanguage available to students. Therefore, the stages remained the focus on this exchange.

As I illustrated in my SFL analysis of my students current ability to construct effective issue statements within Chapter 5, my students needed additional support in creating issue statements that effectively oriented their readers to the topic under discussion. Namely, they needed ways to elaborate details about the artist they would be discussing in their text. Therefore, as I continued constructing the text with my students, my instructional intention focused on providing students linguistic resources to elaborate the issue and position statements by including discourse related to the field of music. The following excerpt shows how I embedded instruction designed to bring attention to a number of lexical-grammatical choices I was making related to the field of discourse, namely music related vocabulary. To clarify definitions of words and provide students an opportunity to elaborate on their responses, I employed three instructional moves. First, I surveyed students to see if they could provide a definition of the term and/or relate the word to other words in their lexicon. Next, I asked questions about the definition of the words to get students to elaborate and relate the word to other words they knew. Third, I showed them exactly how the word could be used in the context of the argument we were constructing. The following excerpt of classroom instruction illustrates these instructional moves.

1. Mr. Schulze: (Beginning to write on chart paper). An excellent new release-What's release? (Calls on student 3).
2. Student 1: The music?

3. Mr. Schulze: Yes. Release is a word that refers to the album. It's the album of the artist. (Continuing to write) So, I can write-an excellent new release from an up-and-coming artist that's just arrived in stores-or the I can say the Internet. Depends on where the music is.

As the joint construction advanced, I continued to bring my students' attention to the purpose of each stage. The questions I asked were designed specifically to promote students thinking about how they were to introduce the artist, give further details about his life, and then make a recommendation to their reader. The excerpt below illustrates how I attempted to keep constructing texts that fulfilled the purpose of each stage.

1. Mr. Schulze: What do we know so far?
2. Student 2: We know he's going to be writing about a new artist.
3. Mr. Schulze: Ok. But have I named the artist? I know I need to name the artist.
4. Choral Response: No.
5. Mr. Schulze: Ok. So I name the artist in my next sentence. Lady Gaga's --
6. Students 3 & 4: (Groans. General unenthusiastic reaction to choice of Lady Gaga).
7. Mr. Schulze: Ok. I get it. You can choose whomever you want to

write about when you do this on your own
tomorrow. But anyway . . . (Inaudible).

How can we describe the new album? We need
some words to tell our readers why we like the new
record. Any ideas?

8. Laura: We could say Lady Gaga new album is really good.

9. Mr. Schulze: Just good? Lots of things are good. Can we think of
a word that is more specific? Remember we want to
get our readers to buy the album, not just think its
“ok” or “good.”

10. Laura: Then, maybe fantastic?

11. Mr. Schulze: Put it in a sentence.

12. Laura: Lady Gaga make an album that is fantastic.

13. Mr. Schulze: Sounds good. Is it just fantastic? Lady Gaga’s
album is fantastic? Look at the chart. We had lots of
words that describe things. Lots of words to say
music is good. Catchy? Irresistible? Syncopating?

14. Laura: Catchy.

15. Mr. Schulze: Ok. Put it in a sentence.

16. Laura: Lady Gaga’s album is catchy and fantastic.

17. Mr. Schulze: Ok. You are getting there. It sounds better and more
likely to convince our reader than before.

At this point, I was pleased that my student was using the resources available to her, namely the chart we had constructed with words to describe the music, however my instructional intention was for my student to have the opportunity to stretch her language- or enhance her control of the choices available to her to construct a clause that drew on appraisal resources to convey her positive evaluation of the album and in turn create an sense of enthusiasm in her readers. However, her responses indicated that she was working at the outside domain of her linguistic potential at this point, and needed instructional support to scaffold her language use. Therefore, I employed what Gibbons (2009) calls “recasting” to build on my student’s linguistic contribution to the text, but contributed slight changes in her text to enhance the meaning of the text. I illustrate the instructional move of recasting in the exchange below.

1. Mr. Schulze: (Transcribes student oral text on the chart and reads aloud). So we could say-Lady Gaga-(writing) Lady Gaga’s album-What is it called?
2. Student 3: Fame monster!
3. Mr. Schulze: Ok. Lady Gaga’s album Fame Monster is a fantastic new album. (Pause) But what about the song? What can we say? How can we describe it?
4. Laura: It is catchy-like she said (referring to Student 4).
5. Mr. Schulze: Right. It’s catchy. So (continuing to write) Lady Gaga’s album is a fantastic new album filled with catchy- and what else? (Pointing to the chart of

descriptive words).

6. Alex: Irresistible?
7. Mr. Schulze: Ok (continuing to write)-irresistible songs that she wrote. Sound good?

The process of jointly constructing persuasive music reviews with my students illustrated in the excerpts from instruction above allowed me to bring attention to the large number of lexical grammatical resources related to the field of music. As we were jointly constructing our texts, we referred to the charts of music-related vocabulary and phrases we had compiled during the unit. The music-related vocabulary and phrases had come from numerous sources including authentic music reviews we had read and deconstructed in class, from websites students had used in conducting their research about their reggaeton artists, and teacher created texts I had shared with students. As we encountered new words and phrases during our readings, we had added those words to charts labeled “Music Words” which were displayed in class. On the first chart, we placed words into the following categories: people, things, description of music, and verbs/actions. As our list of lexical grammatical resources grew, and the chart began to expand, we created a second chart labeled, “Music Review Vocabulary.” On the second chart, presented below, we used similarly categories as the first chart. However, on this chart employed SFL metalanguage to create categories. The categories included: participants, processes, circumstances, and description words.

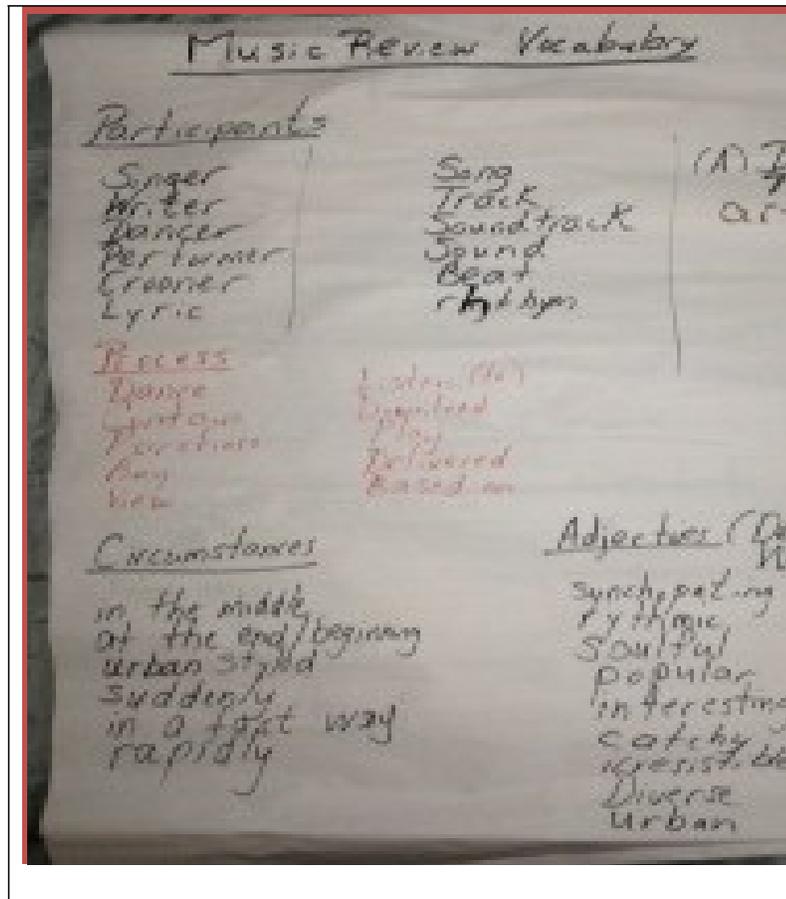


Figure 5.22: Field of Discourse

During the joint text construction I employed several instructional strategies typical of the teaching and learning cycle. For instance, a typical instructional move involves the teacher who is leading the joint construction to attempt to make elements of the thought process effective writers engage in as they construct texts visible to all learners. To make these cognitive strategies visible to my learners, I employed a number of instructional moves such as “think aloud.” By using think aloud I brought attention to the systematic choices in language effective persuasive writers make to fulfill the purpose of the text. Additionally, as we jointly constructed the text, we simultaneously focused on the language at the clause level as we reviewed ways to approximate a more academic

register. Specifically, through “think aloud” strategies, I make visible the ways effective writers build the field of discourse of persuasive music reviews. The jointly constructed text we composed in class is provided below.

<p><u>Lady Gaga's Hit Album</u></p> <p>An excellent new release from an up and coming artist has just arrived in stores (or internet). Lady Gaga's album, Fame Monster, is a fantastic new album filled with catchy, irresistible songs that do. One of these songs is Paparazzi, which criticizes the attention the media gives to celebrities. This socially conscious song makes me think about how stars were treated. It is one example of phenomenal songs on the album.</p> <p>I highly recommend that you download or purchase the album today.</p> <p>If you want to dance to exciting lyrics with urban beats and thoughtful lyrics, buy Fame Monster now.</p>	<p>LADY GAGA'S HIT ALBUM</p> <p>An excellent new release from an up and coming artist has just arrived in stores (or the Internet).</p> <p>Lady Gaga's album Fame Monster is a fantastic new album filled with catchy, irresistible songs that she wrote. One of these songs is Paparazzi which criticizes the attention the media give to celebrities. This socially conscious song makes me think about how stars were treated. It is one example of phenomenal songs on the album. I highly recommend that you download or purchase the album today. If you want to dance to the exciting lyrics with urban beats and thoughtful lyrics, buy Fame Monster now.</p>
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Figure 5.23: Co-Constructed Model Texts

The teaching and learning cycle concludes with students participating in the independent construction of their own persuasive music reviews. During this part of the cycle, my students were given the choice to work either with peers or independently, and, as the teaching and learning cycle dictates, I reduced my direct involvement in the

writing. Instead of being directly involved in supporting students with their writing, I encouraged students to use all available resources that we had collected and utilized thus far in the unit such as: teacher constructed texts, student reggaeton posters, authentic texts from the internet, their first texts with teacher feedback, their schematic structure, genre analysis, and register analysis worksheets, and the charts of music related lexical-grammatical resources. Students had a full class period of nearly two hours to work.

The last instructional activity designed to support my students in developing a deeper understanding of schematic structure and lexical choices involved in constructing persuasive music reviews was a tool I designed for students to evaluate the extent to which their texts fulfilled the genre’s stated purpose of persuading readers to perform an action. Specifically, the tool promoted their self-assessment of how their text unfolded in meaning through recognized stages of issue, argument, recommendation and summary. I include Laura’s self-assessment of her work below.

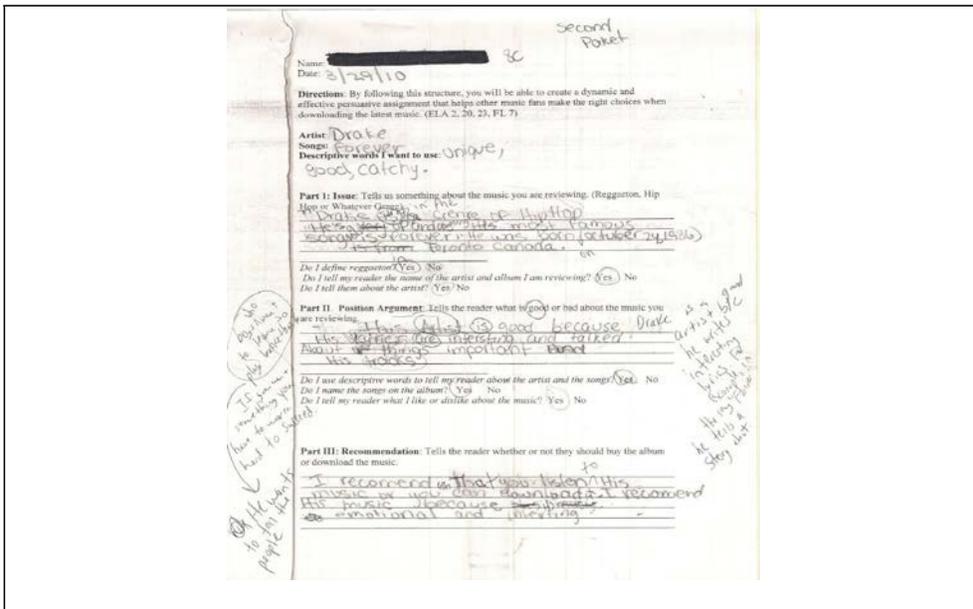


Figure 5.24 Laura’s Self-Assessment and Text Analysis

After students finished their second drafts, I arranged for them to read their texts aloud to 5th grade ESL class that had expressed interest in the class's posters that made that were displayed outside our classroom. My intention was to provide an authentic audience of peers whom they could be motivated to persuade through their texts. Students were not completely finished, however, for the last activity required that they complete a self-assessment of their work in which they evaluated the extent to which their texts negotiated identifiable stages and employed linguistic features to support their goal of persuading their audience. In the next chapter, I present a detailed SFL analysis of the texts my students completed following the language-based intervention of SFL pedagogy and discuss specifically what SFL reveals about changes in their literacy practices that may indicate increased control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct effective persuasive music reviews in school contexts.

CHAPTER 6

SFL ANALYSIS OF STUDENT WRITING PRACTICES

This chapter presents an analysis in the changes in literacy practices of my three focal students following SFL based pedagogy. To highlight changes in their literacy practices and the ways their meaning potential expanded following SFL based pedagogy, I conducted an SFL analysis of the linguistic resources my students used in constructing their texts. I looked particularly at the changing ways they applied both schematic structure and register variables to make meaning in their texts following the implementation of SFL based pedagogy.

6.1 SFL Analysis of ELLs' Persuasive Arguments

As the culmination of the reggaeton unit, I asked my students to revisit their initial writing assignment and compose a persuasive argument in which they convinced their peers to purchase the latest recording of a popular reggaeton artist. Students had revised their texts following two individual writing conferences either with Ms. Day or me. To prepare for the writing conference, I requested that students complete a self- assessment of the schematic structure of their texts to see if their texts unfolded in meaning using the recognizable stages of persuasive argument we had identified in class (See Figure 3.4). During the conferences, students received critical feedback and support regarding their use of grammar, schematic structure, and language conventions such as spelling and punctuation. Our critical feedback focused on evaluating the extent to which students effectively made meaning and accomplished their intended persuasive purpose. For example, if I had determined that their texts were not demonstrating effective control of the meaning making resources we had examined during the unit, then I provided

further instruction through a mini-lesson concentrating on the grammar or structural aspect of which they needed to gain greater control. Following the second conference, students revised their texts and subsequently posted their reviews on a blog created by my student teacher, Ms. Day.

To evaluate the extent to which my students were gaining control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct an effective persuasive argument in school contexts following SFL pedagogy, I conducted an SFL genre analysis of their texts. Conducting an SFL analysis of the genre served two purposes in the study. First SFL analysis helped to highlight indicators of increased control of the linguistic resources of register, schematic structure, and lexico-grammatical features. Second, SFL analysis helped me as a teacher to make connections between these indicators of increasing control and the instruction and pedagogical decisions I had made during the unit.

My initial analysis focused on the schematic structure of students' texts following SFL pedagogy. Specifically, I evaluated the extent to which students changed the organization of their texts in ways that allowed them to more effectively participate in the social action of persuading. Evidence of changes in their use of schematic structure provided me insight into the ways students were developing control of their ability to operate the system network for getting things done in the context of a persuasive music review. Additionally, SFL analysis of the structure helped me in identifying the observable differences in the ways their texts reflected a deeper understanding of the purpose, audience and context of persuasive arguments.

Following my analysis of the schematic structure, I turned my attention to the examining changes in the register of students' texts following SFL based pedagogy. The

purpose of analyzing register changes was to evaluate the extent to which, through their texts, they were demonstrating greater control over the ability to configure the semantic patterns of field, tenor and mode to make meaning within the context of the music review following SFL based pedagogy. When examining the field of discourse of the final texts, I analyzed the transitivity patterns of students' texts to gain understanding of the ways my students had learned to construe reality through the presentation of topics and ideas. As I analyzed the register elements and schematic structure of the text composed following SFL pedagogy, I gained insight into whether or not they were demonstrating increased control over their ability to negotiate meaning using linguistic features typical of a persuasive music review. In other words, were they able to present their topics in ways that persuaded others to perform an action, in this case, to download an artist's latest album? When examining changes in the tenor, I evaluated the extent to which their texts demonstrated their increased control of using language to construct relationships with readers. Specifically, given that the purpose of their text was to make readers buy a certain album, were they better able to use elements of appraisal and utilize speech roles and mode effectively when persuading? Last, when examining changes in the mode of the texts following SFL pedagogy, I investigated changes in the way they presented their argument. In other words, did their language choices following SFL instruction reflect those typical of a written persuasive text or did the linguistic patterns more closely approximate spoken discourse? When investigating the mode, I used SFL to analyze students' use of conjunctions and thematic elements to see if they were better equipped to create texts that sustained and advanced ideas and themes using language to maintain

textual cohesion and coherence such as nominalization, conjunctions, repetition and thematization.

In the next section of the dissertation, I present the texts students composed following SFL based pedagogy. Subsequent to the presentation of the texts, I present my analysis and integrate an evaluation of the effectiveness of the changes with specific references to the texts. In keeping with the vein of reflective teacher action research, I also comment on the relevant connections between the evidence of students' academic development and the pedagogy implemented in this study. I will start with Laura's persuasive text composed following the completion of the teaching and learning cycle.

Laura's Persuasive Argument Composed After SFL Pedagogy	Transcription of Laura's Text
<p style="text-align: right;">sc 9/7/10</p> <p>Drake Sings in the Genre of Hip Hop He's a up and coming Artist His most Famous Song now is "Forever" He was born on October 24, 1986 in Toronto, Canada.</p> <p>Drake is a good Artist because he writer interesting lyrics for example in the Song "Forever" he tell a Story About a boy who want to learn to play basketball. He wants to tell the people if you want something you have to work hard to succeed.</p> <p>I Recommend That you listen to His music and download it. I recomend His music because its emotional and interesting.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Summary</p> <p>I recomend Drake because His Songs are popular and Soulful He Sings in the Hip Hop Genre and Download His most famous Song Now, It is "Forever" and Also His famous Song because it talk about important Things.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Drake sings in the genre of Hip Hop 2. He's a up and coming artist 3. His most famous song now is "forever" 4. He was born on October 24, 1986 in Toronto, Canada 5. Drake is a good artist 6. Because he writer interesting lyrics 7. For example in the song "Forever" he tell a story about a boy who want to learn to play basketball. 8. He wants to tell the people if you want something you have to work hard to succeed. 9. I recommend that you listen to his music and download it. 10. I recommend his music because its emotional and interesting. 11. I recommend Drake because his songs are popular and soulful. 12. He sings in the hip-hop genre. 13. and download his most famous song now. 14. It is "Forever" 15. and also his famous song because it talk about important things.

Figure 6.1 Laura's Text Composed Following SFL Based Pedagogy

6.2. Genre Analysis of Laura's Second Text

Laura's final draft indicates a marked increase in her control of the organization of schematic structures to realize meaning within her argument. As the meaning of her text unfolds, she supports this meaning making by presenting a sequenced system of

structures beginning with an issue statement. Within the issue stage, she efficiently orients her reader to her topic. Within the first two clauses, she introduces the artist in the form of the participant “Drake” and identifies the type of music he composes.

Drake sings in the genre of Hip Hop. He’s an up and coming artist. Whereas in the first rendition of her argument, she began her text with a fragment identifying the title of a song (Mi Nina Bonita), in her second version she presents what I would evaluate as a more carefully constructed introduction for her reader that, in turn, more effectively functions to orient her reader to the topic being discussed in the text. For example, she immediately introduces the artist whom she will be writing about as the first participant in the text (Drake).

In reflecting upon my instructional practice, I traced improvement in Laura’s development of an issue statement directly to two elements of SFL instruction. First, during the construction of the model texts we analyzed in class, I emphasized that effective persuasive writers introduce readers to the topic through a general issue statement. I explicitly taught students how issue statements function to orient the reader to topic under discussion by introducing the participants that will take part in the text. To exemplify this function directly, I provided students a text that exemplified these stages and linguistic features. The teacher-constructed model text about Lady Gaga, that is presented and described in Chapter 5, included the following clause:

An excellent new release from an up-and-coming artist has just arrived in stores. Noticeably, the clause from the model text above includes two linguistic features that help to construct a more elaborate and detailed opening issue statement. First, the model text includes a modified nominalization (an excellent new release) in the subject position.

An excellent	New release	From an up and coming artist
Modifier	Nominalization	Post-modifier

The modified nominalization in the subject position also includes a post-modifier that adds further description (from an up-and coming artist). Second, during instruction I had reinforced the important function of the issue of statement as we completed a guided structure worksheet (See Chapter 5). Within the guided worksheet, I defined the purpose of the issue statement in terms of its function as I asked students to complete the following task in writing: Tell us something about music you are reviewing. I also pointed out the function of the issue stage during instruction preparing students for analysis of the model text. All three of the focal students in this study improved their issue statements in ways that I should highlight.

Looking at changes in Laura’s text indicates how she was drawing on varying linguistic resources to accomplish the purpose of the issue statement stage. As Laura subsequently develops the first paragraph of her final text, she demonstrates her increased understanding of the function of issue statements. Within her issue statement, she shares important information about her artist with her reader. Namely, she informs her readers about what kind of music Drake sings (Hip Hop), the title of his most well known song (Forever), and his birthplace (Toronto). She accomplishes this information sharing by using circumstances to enhance her issue statement. While I did not conduct any indirect instruction regarding how to elaborate clauses with circumstances of place and manner, Ms. Day did provide examples of how to use circumstances when she was guiding the class through the composition of their research posters. A second indication of Laura’s enhanced control over the linguistic resources necessary to construct an effective issue

statement is evident as she also immediately clarifies her stance and expresses her opinion about the artist she is writing about through the use of appraisal elements. For example, Laura describes Drake as an “up-and-coming” artist, which represents intertextuality in the form of a direct lexical appropriation from the model text about Lady Gaga presented in Chapter 5, and further evaluates Drake’s new song, *Forever*, as being “famous.” Laura continues to utilize appraisal resources as she advances her text to the argument stage. Within this stage the author is expected to state the argument and justify it by presenting supporting details. Within the second paragraph Laura accomplishes the goals of the argument stage as she states “Drake is a good artist” and supports her assertion by describing the song and interpreting its underlying social message. Her interpretation of his music contrasts greatly with her first text that only gave general opinions about the music being “beautiful” and “romantic” without providing supporting details about why she liked the music.

The most noticeable evidence indicating Laura’s increased control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct an effective persuasive text in school contexts occurs in the recommendation stage. During this stage the author typically proposes a course of action for readers to follow. In the first text, Laura made no recommendation. However, following SFL based pedagogy, she includes a clear recommendation for action. She states that she wants readers “to listen to his music and download it” and supports this call for action by appealing to the sensibilities of her readers by using appraisal resources to describe the music as “emotional” and “interesting.” As Laura concludes her final text, she includes a clear summary statement that, through skillful use of participant repetition, re-orientes her readers to the artist under discussion (Drake), the

type of music he sings (Hip Hop) and his most famous song (Forever). Additionally, she repeats her call for action (download his most famous song now) and reiterates her evaluation of the social relevance of the song:

It is “Forever” and also his famous song because it talks about important things. Her inclusion of strong summary statement was surprising to me in light of my assessment of my teaching focusing on creating summary statements. As I indicated in Chapter 5, in reflection, I felt that I had not provided a sufficient number of clear examples of summary statements for students to draw on when constructing their own texts. Furthermore, I evaluated my interactions with Laura as not having sufficiently supported her understanding of the function of summary statements. However, given her inclusion of an effective summary statement in her post-SFL text, I ultimately can include that perhaps her difficulty existed in her lack of metalanguage to adequately explain the purpose of the stage rather than essential misunderstanding of the stage’s function. Overall, the evidence from Laura’s final text analyzed above demonstrates a marked increase in control of the linguistic resources necessary to utilize organizational patterns and structures to communicate her message more effectively and connect with her readers following SFL pedagogy.

6.3 Register Analysis of Laura’s Second Text

Analysis of the register of Laura’s final text reveals substantial enhancement in her control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct persuasive music reviews appropriate for school contexts. Examining elements of the field of discourse highlights this development. Most notably her second text demonstrates an increased number of music themed processes and participants. For example, while in her initial text she writes

about the artists and songs in very general ways, in fact never actually naming the artist she is discussing, in her final text she specifically names the artist, describes the music as “the genre of hip hop” and evaluates the “interesting lyrics” of his song, Forever.

Additionally, she demonstrates greater expertise in using processes related to the field of music discourse. For instance, in the following clause she uses three processes related to persuasive music reviews:

I recommend that you listen to his music and download it.

This particular clause exemplifies Laura’s writing progress in two specific ways. First, her choice of the mental process “recommend” functions as a linguistic signpost signaling to readers that a specific call to action will follow. Second, the expected, specific actions follow in the second half of the clause, as she instructs her readers to “listen” and “download” Drake’s latest recording. The material process “download” represents a particularly interesting process choice that appears frequently in the context of electronic music transfers, the way music is obtained by the current generation of music fans. It is also notably a process that appeared twice in our model texts which most likely serves as the source of this example of manifest intertextuality, a lexical appropriation borrowed directly from the model text constructed in class (see Model Text Table 5.2). Also worth noting are two circumstances appearing in the first paragraph. Both circumstances function to broaden the depth of the field by providing the reader with personal background information about the artist. The temporal circumstance “on October 24, 1986” pinpoints when Drake was born and the circumstance of location, “in Toronto Canada”, specifies where he was born (see Drefus and Jones, 2008 for an in-depth discussion of circumstance of location).

Analysis of the register of Laura’s second text also reveals increased control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct a relationship with her readers that ultimately allows her to persuade readers more effectively. A number of linguistic features contribute to this change in tenor. For instance, and perhaps most effectively, she draws on elements of appraisal more readily in her second text to express her judgment and evaluation of her artist and his music. A noticeable example of her use of appraisal elements occurs when she defines her subject, Drake, using the lexical appropriation from the model text, “an up and coming artist” who writes “interesting lyrics.” Contrasting clauses from the first text and the text composed following SFL pedagogic intervention provide several concrete examples indicating her increased control of elements of tenor. Specifically they demonstrate the ways Laura uses elements of appraisal to evaluate her artist’ work.

Table 6.1 Comparison of Laura’s Use of Appraisal Elements

First Draft	I like the artists because the songs are <i>romantic</i> . I recommend because is very <i>beautiful</i> and <i>romantic</i> .
Final Draft	I recommend his music because it’s <i>emotional and interesting</i> . I recommend Drake because his songs are <i>popular and soulful</i> . He sings in the hip-hop genre and download his <i>most famous</i> song now. It is “Forever” and also his <i>famous song</i> because it talks about <i>important things</i> .

The clauses from Laura’s final text show how Laura more readily draws on resources of appraisal to express affect, judgment and appreciation following SFL based pedagogy. For example, as indicated by the italicized appraisal elements in the text above, Laura evaluates the lyrics of Drake’s songs using lexical choices that have high positive appraisal values such as “interesting” and categorizes the songs as “popular” and “soulful” and the music as “emotional” and “interesting.” She also expresses her judgment of Drake as person by describing him as “an up-and-coming” and a “good”

artist, using the attributive relational process “is” to link the participant Drake and the characteristics she ascribes to him. She also extends her appreciation of the lyrics of the song as she evaluates them as being “important” separating them perhaps from other lyrics of other artists, these of which deems as having social relevance.

In addition to increased control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct the expected tenor of a persuasive music review constructed in school contexts, Laura’s final text demonstrates more skillful management of the modal register variables that function in the construction of a coherent and cohesive persuasive argument. To maintain this coherence she utilizes conjunction, repetition, and thematization. At the clause level, she includes conjunctions such as “for example” and “because” to elaborate, illustrate, and advance her ideas through the text. Inclusion of these conjunctions may be linked to their inclusion in model texts and indicate that Laura was using the model texts and the charts containing these conjunctions as a resource. The following clause exemplifies how she has used these resources to links ideas and elaborates her point using conjunctive elements.

Drake is a good artist *because* he writer [sic] interesting lyrics. For example in the song “Forever” he tell a story about a boy who wants to learn to play basketball.

The conjunction “because” connects her evaluative claim (Drake is good) with the detail supporting her claim (he writes interesting lyrics). Additionally, Laura maintains cohesion through repetition. For instance, she includes an explicit repetition of the name of the artist (Drake) in each paragraph as well as repetition of the title of his most famous song (Forever). In her final summary paragraph, Laura also employs repetition

effectively to reorient her readers to the main ideas expressed in her review. Through repetition of the key terms of “genre” and “hip hop” as well as the key process “download” readers are provided explicit direction as to what action they are expected to perform after reading the text. The last indication of her developing control of modal elements is evident in the noticeable change in Laura’s negotiation of the thematic elements of Theme and Rheme to advance ideas within her text. An example from the first paragraph illustrates this change:

Drake is a good artist because he writes interesting lyrics.
For example, in the song, Forever, he tells a story about a boy who
wants to play basketball.

By picking up the Theme “lyrics” from the first clause and then elaborating in detail why the lyrics are interesting in her subsequent clause she demonstrates increased control in her ability to advance key concepts and supporting claims in her text. Before moving on to the analysis of Alex’s final text, I provide the table below as a visual summary of the register elements present in Laura’s final text and discussed in the previous section.

Table 6.2: Post SFL Pedagogy Register Elements of Laura’s Final Text

Field	Tenor	Mode
Participants Drake Hip Hop Genre Song Artist Lyrics Music	Appraisal Up and coming Famous good Interesting Emotional Popular Soulful	Conjunction For example Because
Processes Download Sings Listen	Speech Roles I recommend that Subjunctive (recommend) Download (Imperative)	Repetition Drake Artists Genre/hip hop
Circumstances: On October 24, 1986 in Toronto, Canada		Theme/Rheme Lyrics/Forever

Alex’s Persuasive Argument Composed After SFL Pedagogy	Transcription of Alex’s Text
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rap is an interesting type of music. 2. It’s the world famous 3. and a lot of people listen to the rap. 4. Tu no eres de na is a good song 5. because it is cool and thought provoking and represents the Dominican rap. 6. I recommend this artist because he expresses what he thinks 7. and he gives good advice. 8. For example, he feels young people if you want money work hard, don’t steal. 9. The most important thing is about the song and the artist that I’m talking about is that he represents the DR rap.

Figure 6.2 Alex’s Text Composed Following SFL Pedagogy

6.4 Genre Analysis of Alex's Second Text

Analysis of the schematic structure of Alex's second text indicates an increase in his control over the linguistic resources needed to accomplish the text's persuasive purpose. Therefore, it is noteworthy that within Alex's final text, he begins his review with an issue statement that serves two purposes typically attributed to issue statements: orienting the reader to the topic and stating a topic's importance for the reader. To do so, he initially provides a general introduction to the topic in the form of a declarative opening sentence.

Rap is an interesting type of music. Its world famous and a lot of people listen to the rap.

His issue statement functions to communicate his positive stance or attitude towards the musical genre of rap. As the issue statement unfolds further, Alex manipulates particular linguistic resources to elaborate his ideas about rap by including the song title, "Tu no eres de 'na" in an evaluative declarative statement "Tu no eres de 'na is a good song" and further supporting his claim with the elaboration "because it is cool and thought provoking and represents Dominican rap." It is worth noting that Alex's description of rap as "thought-provoking" represents another instance of manifest intertextuality in the form of lexical appropriation. The inclusion of the adjective "thought provoking" stems directly from interaction we had as he composed his text. He was struggling in both English and Spanish for ways to express the effect of the music on readers. He explained to me, "The music, it change how I think. It makes me think things different . . . things about life" (Field notes, March 13, 2010). I suggested that the adjective "thought

provoking” might best describe the effect he was explaining. He promptly incorporated the phrase into his review.

The next stage of Alex’s text does not contribute well to the overall meaning making or accomplishment of the text’s purpose. His recommendation stage begins with a recommendation of the artist, but he does not include any call to action or explanation of what he would like readers to do, except share his positive evaluation of the artist. Additionally, he only provides limited support as to why readers should like the artist. As does Laura, he evaluates the song as having a positive message about not stealing. I would argue that Alex’s characterization of the music in moral terms, as having a positive moral message for listeners, may also be an instance of intertextuality. In this case, both Laura and Alex echo the moral overtones present in the co-constructed model text about Lady Gaga, in particular the part where I had explained how the song “Paparazzi” provided a morally commentary on the treatment of celebrities.

As Alex’s text unfolds, his writing strengthens. His summary statement is far more effective as he encapsulates his argument. Specifically, he states that the most important aspect of the song and the artist is that it represents Dominican rap, which he identifies as a source of pride.

The most important thing about the song and the artist than I talking about is that he represents the D.R. rap.

6.5 Register Analysis of Alex’s Second Text

Analysis of the register of Alex’s final text indicates subtle increases in his ability to persuade effectively within the context of a persuasive music review. Close inspection of the register variables of field, tenor and mode highlight specific aspects of Alex’s

increased control over the linguistic resources necessary to construct an effective persuasive argument in school contexts. Analysis of the field of discourse constructed within Alex’s second text indicates a noticeable increase in the number of music related participants. In his first text he used a limited number of participants such as “reggaeton” and “song” while relying on strategies such code-switching from English to Spanish to express himself fully. In contrast, in his second text he uses a variety of music related participants such as “music”, “artist” and “rap.” Alex’s use of these music related lexical terms suggests a direct intertextual borrowing from model texts appearing in class.

Table 6.3: Alex’s Lexical Appropriations

Model Text	Music, song, rap, artist
Alex’s 2 nd Text	Music, song, artist

Alex’s appropriation of these terms and their subsequent integration into his own text facilitates the accuracy and precision in which he is able to express his thoughts to his reader and communicate exactly what aspects of the artists music he to which he enjoys listening. The effects of lexical appropriation are evident when contrasting clauses from his first text with those of his final text.

Text 1: Yo soy sincero because I like he’s is funny and the Dominican Reggaeton.

Text 2: Tu no eres de na’ is a good song because it is cool and thought provoking and represents Dominican rap.

Alex’s text not only demonstrates more skillful participant management, but also shows marked change in his choice of processes and participant pairing. His skillful use of material and relational processes helps Alex to describe his artist and the music with increased accuracy and precision allowing for more effective persuasion. By pairing

participants related to the field of discourse of reggaeton music such as “rap” with the attributive process “is” he expresses his evaluation and judgment of the musical genre more clearly and effectively. Contrasting the opening clauses found in his first and final texts illustrates this progress.

Text 1: Yo soy sincero because I like he’s is funny and the Dominican Reggaeton.

Text 2: Rap is an interesting type of music. Its world famous and a lot of people listen to rap.

In his second clause, Alex employs the attributive relational process “is” to evaluate rap as interesting source of music and in the second clause to define it as “world famous.” He further elaborates and emphasizes the importance of rap by using the material process “listen” in the clause “a lot of people listen to rap.” His increased control of accuracy and precision in his use of language to describe the music and the artist is facilitated by his use of processes.

Alex’s use of processes also facilitates the construction of a tenor in which Alex positions himself as an expert evaluator of musical genres. Most notably he draws on the resources of appraisal to convey intensity as demonstrated by his increased use of lexical grammatical choices that reflect a positive appraisal value. For instance, a survey of his post-SFL text reveals that he communicates his positive feelings about the musical genre through the inclusion of adjectives with a high positive appraisal value such as “cool”, “thought provoking”, “interesting” and “good.” He also characterizes rap as a world phenomenon, something that is “world famous.” However, he adds additional intensity to his positive evaluation of the musical genre of reggaeton within his recommendation statement. He comments on the positive message that rap and rap artists can convey with

their music, in contrast to the popular assumption that rap contains only negative messages for young adults. In fact, Alex interprets reggaeton in a social context as having a positive message that advocates hard work and discourages stealing.

If you want money, work hard. Don't steal.

Analysis of the mode of Alex's second text reveals that he has gained greater control of his ability to bring texture to his writing by managing cohesive devices. Among those resources are his use of conjunction, repetition and thematization. Alex's initial text proves difficult to follow because he does not use linguistic resources effectively to maintain cohesion and coherence among ideas as they appear in clauses or paragraphs. In his second text, however, Alex manages his information flow with more linguistic dexterity. Use of conjunction resources begin to appear both within and between clauses. For instance, Alex is able to elaborate why he is recommending the artist by adding a supporting clause following the conjunction "because." He makes a cohesive connection to the additional support provided in the next sentence using the compound conjunction "for example" to introduce the subsequent supporting clause.

I recommend this artist because he expresses what he thinks and
he gives good advice. For example, he feels young people if you want
money work hard. Don't steal.

These particular clauses also exemplify Alex's enhanced control of the linguistic resources necessary to manage information flow through thematization. For instance, in the first clause of his second text Alex informs his readers that the artist gives good advice. Next, Alex picks up the concept of giving good advice located in the Rheme position of the first clause, and then carries it over to the Theme position of the

subsequent clause. Once in the Theme position, he then exemplifies the good advice his artist gives. Management of information flow through thematization is characteristic of effective persuasive writers, and while Alex is not using the technique regularly this example nevertheless indicates a quantifiable enhancement of his control of a linguistic resource for developing cohesion in his text.

The last noteworthy textual resource Alex employs is his use of repetition. The most significant occurrences of repetition are lexical and represent repetitions of participants from the field of music. Alex begins his second text by sharing his personal critique of rap. To maintain this idea throughout his entire text, Alex repeats the lexical term “rap” three additional times before his text closes. Without lexical repetition, as in Alex’s first text, too many new ideas are often introduced without being fully developed. By including the modal resource of repetition, one central idea, in this case rap and its significance, is developed in greater depth, as is the topic of rap in Alex’s second text. Before continuing to the analysis of Yessica’s texts, I include a table presenting a visual summary of the register elements of Alex’s final text composed SFL pedagogy.

Table 6.4: Post SFL Pedagogy Register Elements of Alex’s Final Text

Field	Tenor	Mode
Participants: Rap Music Song Artist	Appraisal: Evaluation: Interesting World-famous Good Cool Thought-provoking Judgment: represents DR rap gives good advice	Conjunction: Because For example
Processes: Listen Represents	Speech Roles: All declarative	Repetition: DR rap rap

Expresses		
Circumstances: Of music		Theme/Rheme Carries the idea of "DR Rap" throughout the text

Yessica's Persuasive Text Composed After SFL Pedagogy	Transcription of Yessica's Text
<p style="text-align: right;">YI 4/6/2010</p> <p>The music of my artist Morza la Para is so cool, has made more than 6(six) albums.</p> <p>Morza la Para sings with other artists like Neto Flow and Villano Sam that are friends but these three artists Morza la Para, Neto Flow and Villano Sam are reggaeton singers.</p> <p>His music is so emotional but specifically an example is "El Sapito" of Morza la Para that song is from the album "Sensato". The rhythm is emotional.</p> <p>My recommendation is that you buy his new album because I'm sure that it is so good for you. If I were you I'd buy it right now, but if you can not buy it I'd download it to listen.</p> <p>Morza la Para is a such a good singer. He sings emotional music. For example "El Sapito", he made that song when he made the album "El Sensato". I like this album and the songs from that album and that's why I recommend it because it is so cool.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The music of my artist Morza la Para is so cool 2. (he) has made more than 6 albums 3. Morza la Para sings with other artists like Neto Flow and Villano Sam that are friends 4. but these three artists Morza la Para, Neto Flow and Villano Sam are reggaeton singers 5. His music is so emotional but specifically an example is El Capillo of Morza la Para 6. [T]hat song is from the album "Sensato." 7. the rhythm is emotional. 8. My recommendation is that you buy his new album 9. because I'm sure that it is so good for you. 10. If I were you I'd buy it right now 11. but if you cannot buy it I download it to listen. 12. Morza la Para is such a good singer. 13. He sings emotional music for example "El Sapito." 14. He made that song when he made the album "El Sensato." 15. I like this album and the songs from the album and that's why I recommend .

Figure 6.3: Yessica's Final Text Composed Following SFL Based Pedagogy

6.6 Genre Analysis of Yessica's Second Text

Analysis of Yessica's final text reveals increased control of schematic structures to realize meaning in her persuasive music review. Like Laura, Yessica had opened her initial text with a title that identified topic she was writing about in her text (Reggaeton) without providing elaborate details or orienting the reader by providing adequate background information. Yessica and Laura may have been attempting to appropriate the technique of using headings to introduce main ideas that we had encountered in several model texts. However, headings are a semiotic resource more prevalent in the context of newspaper article or in visual such as a poster. While this technique was prevalent in the model texts we jointly deconstructed, they did not effectively appropriate the technique as exemplified in the model text. In the model texts, headings served as guideposts for readers with ideas more fully developed beneath the headings. Instead, within their texts they chose to use the headings to communicate the name of the artist and song that would constitute the field of discourse of their text, but did not develop the ideas in depth. It may be argued that use of undeveloped headings or "floating titles" assumes a shared contextual knowledge of the field of discourse that reflects a restricted coding orientation (Bernstein, 1999; Hasan, 2005). In other words, providing headings without supplying additional information may work when readers are familiar with the musical genre of reggaeton and its prominent artists, but fails to work well in the context of a written argument intended for an audience that may have limited knowledge of the topic under discussion.

A second indication of Yessica's increased control of the schematic structure is exemplified by contrasting the issue statements set forth in the opening sentences of the first and final instantiations of her text.

Text 1: The reggaeton I like to recommend because when the people hear the reggaeton, you relax you sing and you dancing.

Text 2: The music of my artist Morza la Para is so cool he has made more than six albums.

Whereas her initial issue statement may be described as encompassing a very broad focus, bringing her reader's attention to the entire musical genre of reggaeton, the issue statement in her final text names her artist (Morza la Para), evaluates him as "cool" and provides readers some specific details about his career. As her text advances, she makes a position statement supplying specific support about why she likes this particular artist. As in her first text, she emphasizes her emotional connection to the artist as she writes in two separate clauses occurring in the third paragraph (the recommendation stage).

His music is so emotional.

The rhythm is so emotional.

The rendition of her text composed following SFL pedagogy provides increased specificity in detail, specifically naming the artist's songs and the album. I would also point out that her continued focus on the emotional impact of the music serves as evidence that SFL pedagogy does not promote a normative reproduction of model texts. Instead, Yessica's language use in her post-SFL text shows how she maintains meaning from her first rendition, in this case a focus on her emotional connection to the artist and his songs, but following SFL pedagogy has now enhanced her control of the linguistic

resources necessary to express her emotional connection coherently. In spite of her increased management of tools to construct linguistic coherence, however, she does not yet satisfactorily explain the reason for her emotional connection with the artist. Rather than providing the explanation, she instead chooses to make the statement without including elaboration or further supporting details, with the exception of naming the song that evokes her emotional reaction (El Sapito).

Further indication of her increased control of schematic structures to make meaning is evident in her recommendation statement. In particular, her recommendation reflects increased specificity. While her first text contains a rather general recommendation statement that outlines the potential benefits to listening to reggaeton, explicitly the possibility to learn more about Latin culture and the Spanish language, the recommendation statement within her final text clearly specifies the action she would like readers to perform. She makes the following declarative statement to specify the recommended action:

My recommendation is that you buy his new album because I am sure it is good for you.

As her text unfolds into its final stage, the summary brings focus and closure to her text. Within the summary, she once again emphasizes her emotional connection to the artist and re-states her recommendation statement, altering the rather unskillful ending of her first text, “That is my summary”, to the following clause:

I like the songs from that album and that’s why I am recommend (sic) it because it is so cool.

6.7 Register Analysis of Yessica’s Second Text

Yessica presents a more focused argument in her final text. She no longer discusses reggaeton in general terms, but rather focuses on one artist and the impact of his work on the art of reggaeton. Analysis of the register variables of Yessica’s final text indicates increased ability to manipulate linguistic features when negotiating meaning within the context of persuasive music review. The most notable evidence of this enhanced control of linguistic resources is her increased use of a variety of participants related to the field of music that is evident when I contrast the field of her pre- and post SFL intervention texts. In her first text, Yessica relies heavily on the participant “music” including it a total of eleven times throughout her text, indicating her confidence in using the word, but revealing potential constraints and limitations in lexical-grammatical resources related to the field of music discourse. When she composes her second text, however, she demonstrates an increased control of music related vocabulary. The increased number of participants included in her second text represent a large number of instances of intertextuality, namely in the large number of lexical appropriations from the model texts introduced in class. The table below demonstrates intertextuality in the form of direct lexical appropriation from model texts utilized during instruction. The chart provides evidence that the focus on language in the class, particularly the sharing of a large number of model texts in both the deconstruction and joint construction stage contributed to the expansion of linguistic resources for Yessica to call upon when constructing the field of discourse of her persuasive music review.

Table 6.5. Lexical Appropriations from Model Texts

Model Text	Music, artist, download, recommend, buy, right now, album
Yessica’s Text	Music, artist, download, recommend, buy, right now, album

Yessica's expanding control of meaning potential is not only reflected in management of participants related to the field of music discourse, but also in her management of lexical-grammatical resources reflecting her understanding of the purpose of a persuasive music review. Comparison of her two texts reveals this development. In her first text, she discusses the musical genre of reggaeton in general, describing its emotional impact on her and its listeners (*You can relax, you can dance*). Because she was making such a general argument the first time, it is logical that she used a limited number of participants (and those participants were the ones she had available to her in her new language). When she writes her final review she writes with an increased focus on her artist and limits her discussion to his work and the impact of his music rather than reggaeton in general. This increased focus is reflected in her choice of participants. Looking closely at her text, her subject, Morza La Para appears more than five times throughout her text. In addition she mentions his songs (El Capito) and album (El Sensato) by name as well as his contemporary fellow artists (Neto Flow and Villano Sam) who have collaborated musically with Morza. She pairs several of these participants with many new musical related processes, such a "sings", "listen", "hear", and "download." Her use of circumstances contributes both to the conveyance of enthusiasm for her work and a sense of urgency for her readers to buy or download Morza's latest album. She exemplifies this sense of urgency through circumstances in the following clause:

If I were you, I would buy it right now, but if you cannot buy- download his music.

Analysis of the linguistic elements contributing to the tenor of Yessica's final text reveals ways she uses language to more effectively construct a relationship with her readers that ultimately supports her goal of persuading them to buy Morza's new album. Particularly, her negotiation of the linguistic resources of modality, intonation and appraisal help to accomplish the persuasive task. For instance she utilizes modal resources to stress a sense of obligation on the parts of readers. Her skillful negotiation of resources of modality is exemplified in the following clause:

If I were you I would buy it right now, but if you cannot buy, download it to listen.

Yessica further uses linguistic resources to establish her identity as a confident evaluator of music. To do so, she includes a number of declarative statements such as "I am sure that it (the album) is good for you" and "I recommend that you buy it" throughout her text. . In these examples, she constructs clauses relying on a high level of modality that contributes to the construction of an authoritative tenor typical of a effective persuasive argument.

Yessica's ability to persuade effectively is additionally strengthened by her skillful use of appraisal resources. Throughout the text, she uses language to express her evaluation of and attitude towards her subject. Her attitude towards her subject is evident from the beginning lines of her text as she uses the resource of affect (evaluation of an object) in the issue stage of her text:

The music of my artist Morza La Para is so cool.

Linguistic evidence of her positive evaluation and attitude appears repeatedly throughout her text as she uses terms of positive affect, such as "emotional", "good for

you”, and “funny” to describe her artist’s music. Many of these positive descriptors are modified with the adverb “so” which she uses to increase intensity and intonation and underscore her enthusiasm for her artist’s work.

Analysis of the mode of Yessica’s text indicates emergent control of textual devices to construct a coherent and cohesive argument. For instance, in her initial text, Yessica relies primarily on the conjunction “and” connect her clauses together. More experienced writers typically employ a variety of conjunctive resources to link ideas in a text leading to the creation of text that reflects less of a spoken discourse (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Schleppegrell, 2004). Within her final text, Yessica continues to use “and” throughout her text, but more resourcefully incorporates conjunctions such as “but” to indicate contrast. She also signals supporting aspects of her claim through conjunctions like “for example” and “specifically.” The following clause exemplifies her increased control of conjunctive use:

His music is so emotional, but specifically an example is
is: el capito of Morza La Para.

While the examples illustrated above speak to the need for Yessica to continue to receive continued support focusing on gaining control of syntactical and grammatical elements to increase coherence and cohesion, the examples nevertheless illustrate her capacity to move beyond the simple connector “and” and use conjunctions to emphasize her points and introduce support for her claims.

Last, it is worth noting that Yessica begins to demonstrate evidence of increasing control of linguistic resources related to thematization in her final text. An example of her increased control of thematic elements to advance her text occurs in the following clause

as she picks up the participant “album” which is in the Rheme position and advances the topic of album to the Theme position in the subsequent clause.

He do (made) that song when he made the album, “El Sensato.”

I like this album and that album.

A second indication of her increased control of thematization occurs in her summary paragraph. Within this stage, she alters the nominalization “singer” and unpacks the nominalization in the clause that immediately follows.

Morza la Para is such a good singer. He sings emotional music.

The table below presents a visual summary of the register elements appearing in Yessica’s final text.

Table 6.6. Post SFL Pedagogy Register Elements of Yessica’s Final Text:

Field	Tenor	Mode
Participants: Music Artist Morza La Para Albums Singers Rhythm Recommendation	Appraisal: so cool, so emotional Evaluative: So emotional, funny Judgment: I am sure it is good for you Speech Roles: Declarative Intensifiers: So, Such	Conjunction: For example But specifically an example is But
Processes: Made Is Buy Listen Sings Recommend	Speech Roles: All declarative	Repetition: Conjunctive elements such as “for example” Participants such as music, artist and album and Morza la Para
Circumstances: Right now With other artists		Theme/Rheme Carrying over the album El Sensato to subsequent clause.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

This dissertation presented a teacher action research study resulting in the construction of qualitative case studies of the teaching practices of a veteran ESL teacher and the emerging persuasive writing practices of three emergent bilinguals in an urban middle school. The purpose of the study was to illuminate connections between the implementation of an SFL based approach to persuasive writing instruction and the potential expansion of meaning making resources made available to beginning level ELLs as they enact the genre of persuasive argument in the context of persuasive music reviews. To illuminate these connections, I analyzed the following: teacher-designed tools used during the unit, student texts created before and after SFL pedagogical intervention, and classroom discourse of teacher and student interaction during instruction. The SFL analysis of the persuasive writing practices of the three focal students indicated that, with the support of their ESL teacher, ELLs were better equipped to construct persuasive texts in school contexts following an implementation of the SFL based genre based teaching and learning cycle.

Through a descriptive case study, I have demonstrated reflective practice in action as I described the problems of practice, in this case the challenge of ELLs learning to write academically, and the SFL-based intervention I implemented to support the persuasive writing practices of the ELLs in my class. In this section of the study, I summarize the study and its key findings. Following the summary, I discuss the study's potential impact on language teacher education and the prospect for embedding literacy teaching in educational practice.

The study has accomplished two broad purposes. First, the study was intended to broaden the understanding of the changing persuasive writing practices of ELLs during and after the implementation of an SFL-based teaching and learning cycle. The case studies constructed in this dissertation provided insight into how SFL based pedagogy may create space for literacy to be imbedded into teaching practice in a way that potentially supports ELLs in expanding their meaning potential as they gain an increased control over the linguistic resources necessary to construct persuasive arguments in school contexts. Second, as a teacher action research project, the study contributed insights that highlight the potential challenges, struggles, and benefits of implementing SFL pedagogy with middle school ELLs in North American urban instructional contexts.

While the study examined SFL pedagogy and provided an-depth descriptive analysis of my effort to translate SFL theory into practice, it was not intended to demonstrate the superiority of one language teaching practice over all others. In reporting the findings of this research, I fully recognized the limitations inherent in a study that included a restricted data set, a short period of implementation, and limited number of participants. Therefore, as I stated previously, I made no grand claims about the impact of the study. However, given that ELLs are challenged to learn to write academically amid a context of urban school reform and that the implementation of SFL pedagogy in middle grades ESL classrooms in North American educational contexts remains a newer phenomenon, the descriptive analysis of my language teaching practice, instructional materials, and student texts afforded a valuable contribution to the small but growing number of studies highlighting SFL in practice (Brisk & Zisselberger, 2010; Brisk, Drysdale & O'Connor,

2011; Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007; Gebhard, Shin & Seger, 2011; Shin, Gebhard & Seger, 2010; Schleppegrell & Go, 2007; Schulze, 2011).

Furthermore, this study adds to the limited number of studies that aim to investigate the potential of SFL pedagogy to draw on the cultural and linguistic resources of beginning level, emergent bilingual ELLs to create purposeful instructional contexts to support their expanding academic writing practices (Gebhard, Harman, & Sege, 2007; Gebhard, Shin & Seger, 2011; Shin, Gebhard, & Seger, 2010; Paugh & Moran, 2013; Schulze, 2011). Drawing on systemic functional linguistics as a tool for pedagogy and linguistic analysis, I investigated how ELLs developed a deeper understanding of the rhetorical tools of persuasive writing. The apprenticeship I detailed within the study focused on the instructional practices I implemented and the instructional materials I designed that were intended to support ELLs in recognizing and using the contextually influenced language features and socially recognizable structures typically found in persuasive texts (Derewianka, 1990; Martin & Rose, 2008; Schleppegrell, 2004). Through illustrations of my practice, explanations of the instructional tools I used, discourse analysis of student and teacher interaction and SFL analysis of student texts, the study showed how I drew on all domains of language and on the linguistic and cultural resources of my students, namely their L1 and their love of reggaeton, to enhance their control of the meaning making system necessary to construct effective persuasive arguments in school contexts.

Notably, the study also illuminated the challenges I faced as a teacher during my initial implementation of the SFL teaching and learning cycle. No teaching practice exists without pitfalls and challenges. Therefore, through evaluation of my teaching practices

and descriptive analysis of the struggles experienced during implementation of the unit, including the moments that teaching and learning broke down and caused frustration for both teacher and student, I sought to understand the contextual factors and reasons behind these struggles so that language writing educators may learn from these challenges and potentially improve educational practice.

7. 1 Summary of Dissertation

I began this dissertation by describing the macro-context in which students are expected to learn to write in today's urban schools. Amid a context of urban school reform and decreased access to bilingual education, urban middle school ESL teachers are charged with increasing the academic literacy development of ELLs in less time with fewer resources such as first language support or high interest teaching materials. To further illustrate the challenges faced by ELLs and ESL educators, I provided a detailed explanation of the expectations for student writing performance as set forth by the Common Core States Standards. To exemplify these writing demands, I categorized the three primary genres in which all middle school students are expected to participate in school contexts: narrative, informational (exposition), and argument. To complement the presentation of the writing standards, I included a thorough analysis of the linguistic demands of these genres as they appear in the content areas as identified by SFL researchers who have spent the greater part of the last two decades studying SFL in practice in Australia (Christie 2012; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012). To show why the academic language demands of school poses challenges for linguistically diverse learners, I contrasted the differences between the social language reflected in everyday discourse and the academic language prevalent in the written genres

encountered in school contexts as delineated by SFL researchers (Brisk, 2012; Christie, 2012; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Gebhard & Martin, 2011; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2012).

In Chapter 2, I introduced the theory of language composing the theoretical framework of the study: systemic functional linguistics. SFL formulated the basis for both the pedagogy I employed to support my ELLs' academic writing practices and the linguistic analysis I used to trace the evidence of the expansion of the linguistic resources available to my students. SFL served as a key tool in helping me as a language teacher and researcher in understanding the academic language demands of the literacy practices in which my students were expected to participate across the content areas and academic disciplines.

As I discussed within the theoretical framework of the study, SFL conceptualizes language as a social semiotic or a resource for making meaning within particular contexts (Halliday, 1985). The context explored here is the construction of persuasive musical reviews in school contexts. As I mentioned in the introduction, since beginning my teaching career over 15 years ago, I have espoused a teaching philosophy that centers on finding ways of fostering the strengths of students rather than emphasizing their perceived linguistic deficits. The ways I attempted to draw on the linguistic and cultural resources of my students reflects my belief that ELLs enter school with a rich set of skills that require nurturing through strong teaching. Throughout this dissertation, I attempted to demonstrate comprehensively how the linguistic and cultural resources of my students can be integrated into systemic functional pedagogy to promote culturally relevant academic language learning. By beginning with what they know, in this case the musical

genre of reggaeton, I was able to increase my students' investment in instructional activities and encourage my students to succeed in understanding how to more skillfully negotiate written persuasive discourse.

Tapping into the knowledge base of my students to encourage their investment in expanding their academic writing practices presented its own set of challenges. My students had been isolated from their peers, and, in many cases, had experienced great socio-emotional strain as they left their countries of birth, moved to the US, and faced the challenges of learning to live and communicate in a new language and a new country.

Furthermore, available records and parent input I had elicited during the study suggested that the three students I profiled in this study met grade level expectations as students in the Dominican Republic. They could read and write Spanish, but had entered a school system that denied them access to education in their first language, one of the primary resources they had available to support them in making meaning. I observed their growing frustration with teachers who could not understand them and their decreasing investment in instructional activities. While this study did not provide all the answers to the challenges facing ELLs in today's urban classrooms, and made no claim to do so, it did show that teachers can design instruction that supports the expansion of students' meaning making potential by making a concerted effort to draw on the cultural and linguistic resources of their students when designing instruction. The knowledge teachers can gain from their students may provide the entry points good teachers need to begin rigorous academic language instruction.

Given that SFL emphasizes the central role of context in making meaning and that SFL based pedagogy emphasizes the central role of the teacher in scaffolding the learning

of students, Chapter 4 provided a rich description of the context for teaching and learning and the research design of this study. In describing the multifaceted social practices influencing the teaching and learning of ELLs, the chapter highlighted the complex contextual factors influencing my instructional choices and my students' learning. In an attempt to illustrate the macro-contextual influences influencing the teaching and learning of immigrant students enacted within the study, I also presented an overview of both the history of immigration in the district and the language policies affecting the education of immigrant youth as they have changed over time. Following the description of the macro-context, I turned my focus to the participants in the study. In introducing the participants, I provided a comprehensive portrait of their language learning histories, current language and literacy development levels, known personal histories and current interests.

To illustrate how I applied the theory of SFL in a purposeful way to support my emergent bilingual students in expanding the linguistic resources necessary to construct persuasive arguments in school contexts, Chapter 5 provided a detailed overview of the classroom practices and pedagogical interactions involved in my implementation of the SFL teaching and learning cycle. To provide baseline data for my instruction that demonstrated the level of control my students had over the linguistic resources necessary to construct persuasive texts in school contexts, I presented an SFL analysis of the schematic structure and register of my students' texts composed prior to the implementation of the SFL pedagogical intervention described and analyzed in this study. Bearing in mind that SFL pedagogy is a relatively new form of language instruction within North American K-12 instructional contexts, I included detailed descriptions of both my teaching and the teacher-created materials I designed with the intent of

providing teacher researchers and educators a clearer understanding of the instructional motivation undergirding their design and the potential impact on student learning. The descriptive of analysis of teaching practices served to make visible the successes and challenges I faced as I implemented SFL for the first time. To illustrate these potential challenges and successes, I demonstrated how I constructed texts to model structural and register features that serve as resources and models for students to draw upon when constructing their own texts. As I noted previously, the study emphasized the central role of the teacher in implementing the pedagogy, in addition to the analysis of student produced texts. In this vein, I elaborated upon the interactions that occurred among study participants. Analysis of the interactions between students and between teacher (s) and student served to illustrate how I attempted to open instructional space for students to draw on their linguistic and cultural resources, in this case their existing knowledge of reggaeton music, and work with their teacher(s) to reconceptualize that knowledge, transforming and redesigning it in for an academic context.

To highlight the ways my students were transforming their knowledge to construct persuasive texts for academic contexts, Chapter 6 presented an SFL analysis of my focal student texts composed following SFL based pedagogical intervention. Drawing on SFL and genre analysis, my analysis brought attention to how SFL pedagogy supported students in drawing on the socially recognizable and valued schematic structures they could use to organize their writing and help their texts unfold in meaning following the expectations of written academic discourse. It further identified how they appropriated both the linguistic features and organizational stages I had explicitly taught in our work with jointly constructed and model texts. The chapter brought attention to the

ways their linguistic and structural appropriations supported them in accomplishing their persuasive purpose in their independently constructed texts. Through the analysis of classroom discourse, student texts and teaching materials, I sought to make visible the potential intertextual links between the implementation of SFL pedagogy and the enhancement of the system of meaning making resources available to my ELLs.

Following the schematic structure analysis, I conducted a register analysis of the texts my students composed following SFL based intervention. The purpose of the clause level SFL analysis was to evaluate the extent to which my students were expanding their control of the linguistic features that contribute to the construction of the expected register of persuasive texts constructed in school contexts. To further understand the ways SFL was potentially enhancing the meaning making resources available to ELLs, I looked for observable changes in the register variables of field, tenor and mode within the texts composed by my three focal students. In the following section, I summarize the significant findings of this study, in particular the changes in student texts following SFL pedagogy, as well as my insights into how the pedagogy supported their increased control of the linguistic resources needed to construct effective persuasive texts in academic contexts.

7. 2 Findings

In this section of the dissertation, I summarize key findings intended to demonstrate the potential of SFL pedagogy to support ELLs in expanding their control of the linguistic resources necessary to participate in the construction of persuasive texts in academic contexts. While many of the findings have been addressed within Chapter 6, I provide a summary of the major findings within this chapter. As I summarize, synthesize

and analyze the findings, I illuminate connections between my teaching practices and changes in my students' writing practices as detailed in this study. In the subsequent section, I outline the observable changes in the way students employed recognizable schematic structures to promote the unfolding of meaning within their persuasive texts. Next, I report the findings of an SFL linguistic analysis of changes of the register of student texts. Following analysis of these changes, I discuss the implications of these findings on language teaching and learning and discuss the potential role of SFL in teacher education. I broaden my focus to comment on implications of this research and SFL in general on the work of teachers of linguistically diverse students. Before presenting my findings, I return to the key questions guiding this study:

7.3 Research Questions Revisited:

- 1.) How can an SFL-based pedagogy support ELLs in expanding the linguistic resources necessary to construct written persuasive texts composed in school contexts? (or not?)
- 2.) What can SFL and genre analysis reveal about changes in the schematic structure and register variables of ELLs' written persuasive texts following SFL-based pedagogy (if any)?

7.4. Findings Regarding Changes in Schematic Structure

SFL analysis of changes in my focal student's texts reveals that SFL-based pedagogy potentially supported my students in utilizing recognizable schematic structure of a persuasive argument to accomplish the social purpose of persuading. Analysis of the schematic structure of students' texts highlighted how following SFL based pedagogy students organized and presented their ideas using socially recognizable and culturally

valued schematic structures and linguistic features that contribute to the stage’s purpose. One of the most significant changes relating to ELLs use of schematic structure occurred in their construction of the issue statement. As I mentioned within the theoretical framework, issue statements function to orient the readers to the topic of discussion (Christie, 2012; Christie & Derewianka 2008; Derewianka, 1990; Martin & Rose, 2008).

As I illustrated by the presentation and SFL analysis of students’ texts in Chapter 5, prior to the SFL pedagogical intervention both Laura and Yessica struggled to construct issue statements that oriented their readers to the topic. However, analysis of their texts constructed following SFL pedagogy revealed that both Laura and Yessica employed issue statements to orient their readers to the topic of discussion much more effectively following SFL pedagogy. Following SFL based pedagogy they used issue statements to orient their reader to the topic of discussion, in this case current popular reggaeton artists by introducing biographical facts about their artist or title of popular songs that the artists performed. The following table displays the changes in the issue statements of focal students analyzed in Chapter 6 of the dissertation that indicate a enhanced understanding of the function of the issue stage as well as an increased control of the linguistic resources necessary to construct the issue stage effectively.

Table 7.1: Issue Statements of Focal Students Following SFL Based Pedagogy

Student	Pre-SFL Issue Statement	Post SFL Issue Statement
Laura	I like this artist because the songs are romantic does the chino and nacho.	Drake sings in the genre of Hip Hop. He’s an up-and-coming artist. His most famous song now is “Forever.” He was born on October 24, 1986 in Toronto, Canada.
Alex	Rap is a type of music interesting. It’s the world famous and a lot of people hear to the rap.	Rap is an interesting type of music and a lot of people listen to rap
Yessica	The reggaeton I like to recommend because when the people hear the reggaeton you relax you sing and your can dancing.	The music of my artist Morza la Para is so cool. [He] has made more than six albums.

The visual above illustrates how following SFL pedagogy both Laura and Yessica constructed increasingly more linguistically complex issue statements. The issue statements functioned to accomplish the issue stage's purpose by orienting the reader to the topic. In this case, they accomplished the stage's purpose by naming the artist they would write about and including details about the artist's personal life such as date of birth and professional career highlights like the number of albums he has recorded to date. Analysis indicated that not all students improved their issue statements following SFL pedagogy, however. For example, Alex's issue statement remains virtually unchanged as he provides his readers with a broad statement which functions to inform his readers of his topic and his positive evaluation of rap, but provides his readers few details about the artist he is going to write about in his text. Nevertheless, all three texts illustrated my focal students' increased control over lexical-grammatical resources. In his second text, for instance, Alex repositions the adjective "interesting" in front of the noun phrase "type of music" while Laura abandons the clause "does the chino and nacho" both of which reflect influences of the grammatical structure of students L1 (Spanish).

As I mentioned in Chapter 6 of this dissertation, I attribute both their increased control of lexical-grammatical resources necessary to construct the stages of persuasive text to instruction occurring in various pedagogic modalities throughout the unit. At two distinct instructional points I provided guiding questions designed to support students in fulfilling the purpose of the issue statement. First, as I presented the stages of the music review (See Figure 5.20) I had provided a chart that included the guiding questions, "What album are you reviewing?" and "What is the name of your artist?" Students were directed to use these questions to guide their writing. Second, during our analysis of the

schematic structure of music reviews, students used a tool I had designed to scaffold their step-by-step construction of the argument. The worksheet included a section that explicitly states the purpose of each stage and is followed by a series of questions in which students evaluated the issue statement they have just constructed (Figure 5.23). I attribute the increased control of grammatical resources to these tools and to both the model and jointly constructed texts that were incorporated into the instructional unit. In the process of modeling persuasive writing I made sure to attend to grammatical structures such as subject and verb agreement and syntactical structures with which students were struggling. Also, during the joint construction of texts, I used the strategy of recasting my students' contributions to reflect the expected grammatical structure (Gibbons, 2002). Analysis indicates that both of these instructional moves supported students in constructing more effective issue statements.

7.5 Findings Regarding Changes in Register

SFL analysis of the register of students' texts revealed subtle but significant control of the linguistic features that contribute to the construction of the academic register expected of persuasive arguments in school contexts. Most significantly, the field of students' text expanded as they investigated the history and key figures involved in reggaeton. Their in-class research, readings, discussions and investigations about the reggaeton supported their ability to incorporate what they were learning about the musical genre of reggaeton into their argument.

Analysis of changes in the register of students' texts suggests an increased control of the use of modal elements to construct cohesive and coherent texts. As I brought instructional focus to the development of the mode of their texts, ELLs transformed

seemingly jumbled and directionless arguments, developing modal elements such as repetition, Theme and Rheme, and conjunctions in more academically sophisticated ways to construct a more cohesive and coherent argument.

From this analysis, it is evident that SFL-based pedagogy brought ELLs closer to the intended goal of writing effective persuasive texts by providing scaffolding not only in how to structure an argument by emphasizing its form and purpose, but also by supporting their ability to control academic language at the clause level. To continue their academic writing development, ELLs will require continued and focused instructional support in learning how to build on the ideas they present at the sentence level and connect and expand those ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner throughout their entire texts. One instructional practice I could implement to support their control of cohesive elements is the presentation of a mini-lessons focused on teaching students how to create nominalizations and use those nominalizations effectively to bundle ideas that can extend throughout a text and thereby develop textual coherence and cohesion. At the clause level, my students may also need continued support to enhance their control of lexical-grammatical resources, such as the use of the past participle, so that their ideas can be conveyed with fewer markers of non-native English language writing. However, as good writers and writing instructors know, writing is a recursive event with room for revising, developing, and improving one's argument. This study shows just a small sample of how ELLs can benefit from SFL-based pedagogy to move towards developing greater control of an academic register through instruction that focuses on academic writing both at the genre structure and clause level.

7.6 Changes in ELLs' Engagement and Investment in Writing

In addition to changes in students' writing practices, there was also an observable change in the level of students' engagement and investment in learning after I began to draw on the linguistic and cultural resources of my students. Most noticeably, students remained highly engaged in the textual analysis leading up to their writing. By drawing on their background knowledge and life experiences students took on the role of experts, contributing and participating fully in conversations and analysis about language use. Noticeably absent were the feelings of alienation and confusion that traditional approaches to grammar teaching may provoke in students still in the process of developing control of academic language (Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin, 2009; Rose & Martin, 2012).

I attribute such high levels of engagement equally to the social and interactive nature of SFL-based pedagogy as well between the differences between systemic and traditional grammar. It is worth noting that a key aspect of SFL-based pedagogy is the social interaction occurring either between a student and her teacher or between students. During these interactions, the class community constructs an understanding of language use in the content area together. For instance, as we progressed through the instructional unit together, we summarized and discussed what we were reading and what we were noticing about the text. On a daily basis, students also shared what they had learned about the topic from other classmates, family members and television. Without that discussion our shared understanding of what made a strong argument and what topics should be included in that argument may not have materialized. Furthermore, without my asking them their opinions and thoughts, whether during joint construction of a model text or a

whole-class discussion of a class reading intended to build the field, or without student input and teacher-student interaction, the students would potentially have remained less engaged, less interested, and less likely to use academic language first in conversations and then in their writing.

Systemic functional grammar proved an essential tool for maintaining this student engagement. In contrast to systemic functional grammar, traditional grammar often names and categorizes words and clauses without providing reference to how such words and clauses contribute to meaning making in specific contexts. Therefore, students are often left struggling to categorize words in decontextualized sentences.

In contrast, SFL-based pedagogy provided my students with a tool kit they could use to analyze how language works to get things done at certain times, in certain places, with certain people. Not only is such a tool kit a valuable for ELLs entering middle school and trying to make sense of the specialized language used in the content areas, but also a highly effective way of helping students “see how content experts use language in discipline specific ways” (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010, p. 596). The linguistic tool kit demystified academic language and helped my ELLs make language work for them rather than making them feel they were conforming to my set standards. With knowledge of language use according to context, they could recognize what register they had to use depending on the audience and the topic.

In the following section, I discuss some of the broader implications of this study and elaborate some of the ways that the findings of this study and the insight that I have gained as teacher researcher may potentially support the academic language development of ELLs. I also comment on the potential of my study to contribute to the academic

conversation surrounding teacher education in particular how to support teachers in number of instructional context in embedding literacy into their teaching practice to support the academic writing development of linguistically diverse students

7.7 Discussion

The students in the middle school ESL class profiled in this study were on the cusp of a major change in their academic lives. As they prepared to exit middle school, they were about to leave the sheltered context of an ESL classroom to enter the compartmentalized instructional contexts of high school. As they prepared to make the transition to high school and ultimately expand the contexts in which they would be making meaning through language, they were increasingly challenged to construct knowledge from discipline specific texts that relied on abstract, technical, information-laden and hierarchically organized language. They were also expected to use that new knowledge to write increasingly specialized, lexically dense and grammatically complex texts (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2008, 2010; Halliday, 1985; O'Dowd, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004, 2006; Schleppegrell & O'Halloran, 2011).

In US educational contexts, a growing number of ELLs have increasingly limited access to bilingual education and less time before they are required to engage in academic literacy practices in mainstream English-only classrooms or on high-stakes assessments (August & Shanahan, 2006; Willett, et. al, 2008). While such a shift represents a challenge for all learners, it remains particularly daunting for ELLs who are still learning the language of instruction. Given these academic challenges ahead, it is essential to find ways to support the academic writing development of ELLs making such transitions. Without access to pedagogical practices that focus on academic language, there is a

danger that the achievement gap between ELLs and native English speakers will grow (Gaston Report, 2009).

SFL-based pedagogy, as implemented and examined in this study, demonstrated one instructional practice that supports ELLs as they simultaneously learn through and about their new language (Halliday, 1985; Gibbons, 2009). Specifically, the study demonstrated an approach to writing instruction that illustrated instruction that may enhance ELLs' control of the mode of written discourse through instruction designed to bolster control of the schematic structure and clause level language use. I argued and attempted to demonstrate within this dissertation that the instruction may have ultimately supported ELLs in learning to negotiate academic language, particularly the academic language necessary for effective persuasive writing demanded by the Common Core and typically enacted in classes such as Civics, Humanities and Social Studies. The approach allowed an instructional balance that created space for an instructional focus on content through a systematic study of persuasive language, a true redefinition of the balanced approach to literacy instruction encouraged in many US instructional contexts.

From a pedagogical perspective, the SFL-based approach to writing instruction and the SFL analysis of student texts I demonstrated in this study may prove potentially valuable for ELL teachers. From my observation working with teachers in urban schools, many well-intentioned writing teachers provide students templates such as the ubiquitous "hamburger" or rubrics that serve as templates or check-off lists to ascertain that students are conforming to set standards of achievement. While such templates may serve as an informative tool for self-assessment for ELLs faced with the challenge of structuring culturally unfamiliar texts, templates remain insufficient for helping ELLs understand

how language works at the clause level to accomplish tasks in certain contexts. In contrast, language educators can implement SFL-based pedagogy in a way that facilitates ELL's understanding of academic register as the culmination of a series of linguistic choices gathered from a reservoir of linguistic resources determined by the purpose and function of texts, rather than by arbitrary rules to be memorized.

From the perspective of a teacher researcher, SFL-based pedagogy and the subsequent SFL linguistic analysis of student texts presented in this study proves beneficial for several reasons. As Unsworth (1999) notes, "Functional descriptions of language provide a metalanguage capable of describing the characteristic features of the language common to all content areas, but different areas deploy the linguistic resources of English in distinctive ways" (p. 514). Given that even expert users of a genre may not be able to pinpoint the exact linguistic features that contribute to fulfilling the recognizable purpose of the genres used in their field, functional analysis gives teacher researchers a tool to analyze how language is used in the content specific genres they are teaching. In other words, SFL analysis contributed to my knowledge about language and gave me insight into how academic language works to accomplish tasks in persuasive genres and also left me better able to design instruction that built on the linguistic resources they brought to class so I would have additional insight into what pedagogical support I could provide to advance their academic writing development.

As a teacher supporting students in the content areas and teaching students to write academically in a variety of genres to prepare them for entrance into mainstream academic classrooms, having SFL as a tool for linguistic analysis proved particularly helpful. As Fang and Schleppegrell (2008) point out, "While every teacher can use

functional analysis to explore a text, it is the content area teacher who is uniquely positioned to help students interpret the meanings that are revealed through the analysis and relate them to the larger goals and the conceptual frameworks of the discipline” (110). Through the unit and the accompanying linguistic analysis of student texts, I gained a deeper understanding of how language works to construct meaning within the genres my students will be expected to enact in school contexts. Such linguistic knowledge influenced my instruction so that I could incorporate lessons designed to make language use less abstract and more accessible to my students.

An additional advantage of SFL-based pedagogy was the attention it brought to contextual language use. Throughout the unit, as we analyzed authentic and teacher created model texts designed to illustrate linguistic features of persuasive texts, SFL provided ELLs with the analytic tools they could use to understand how language works to get things done at certain times, in certain places, with certain people. Not only was such a tool-kit valuable for ELLs trying to make sense of the specialized language used in the persuasive academic writing, but it also served as a highly effective way of helping students “see how content experts use language in discipline specific ways” (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010, p. 596). The linguistic tool kit demystified academic language in ways that process approaches typically fail to do and helped my ELLs make language work for them rather than making them feel they were conforming to arbitrarily set standards. Our discussions about language use centered not on what the rules were but rather what the rules of the game were, in other words, how writers effectively used language to persuade their readers to act. With knowledge of language use according to context, they recognized that register of their persuasive music reviews had to be

appropriate for the audience of native English-speaking peers in the context of school. The idea of varying language according to context is not new to most students. From my decade long experience teaching ELLs, it is my informed observation that students have an awareness of the different registers they employ when writing to their friends and peers versus when writing to their teachers or a family doctor. However, they do not often have a solid understanding of the differences between spoken and written discourse. The traditional grammar they typically encounter during the revision and editing stages of process approaches does not adequately focus on building students metalanguage in a way that promotes effective discussion about contextually based language use and the differences between spoken and written discourse. Nor do traditional approaches to writing instruction provide ways to negotiate relatively new linguistic terrain as ELLs begin to formulate ideas in an academic register while performing school genres. SFL-based pedagogy, in contrast, supports ELLs in developing an awareness of the contextual and situational differences that affect their linguistic choices, so when they write they can draw on the resources the teacher has provided in model texts in class as well as their own existing understandings of how language is used in certain contexts.

Such observations about the impact of the SFL based pedagogy detailed in this study underscore the need for teacher education programs to emphasize the role of language in the construction of knowledge. The expectation for teacher education programs should be to build teachers' knowledge about language and support their development of teaching practices that facilitate ELLs' academic language development. Adoption of the CCSS has motivated a shift in teacher education in the US that is increasingly bringing language to the forefront. The prominent role the CCSS has placed

on students' engagement with texts of ever-increasing linguistic complexity necessitates models of teacher education that seek to develop tools for teachers to analyze the language demands of the texts from which their students must make meaning. Development of such tools in the context of teacher education programs allows teachers to design instruction that makes those language demands visible to their students. To develop teachers' knowledge about language (KAL) and language-based pedagogical practices, teacher education programs in the US are beginning to integrate KAL and course work about the language development of ELLs into their teacher education programs. In Massachusetts, for example, the Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) initiative, represents a statewide plan to increase K-12 teachers ability to make rigorous content accessible to English language learners. Similar initiatives have occurred in Florida (Rule 6A-6) and other states and have long been the focus of work in Australia (Disadvantaged Schools Program, Write it Right). An essential component of these US language-focused teacher education programs remains building teacher's knowledge of language used to construct knowledge in the content areas they teach and the instructional practices that will help to make this academic language use visible to all learners including ELLs.

SFL and SFL pedagogy, while recognizably not the only tool for linguistic analysis or way of knowing about language, nevertheless provides a valuable tool for teachers to analyze the way language works in their content area. Rose & Martin (2012) who have written extensively about practices to support ELLs with academic language, particularly genre based pedagogy and R2L (reading to learn) strategies, propose the inclusion of four essential parts in any teacher professional learning program:

1. Knowledge about language.
2. Lesson planning.
3. Classroom implementation.
4. Assessment of student growth.

Incorporating Rose & Martin's proposed model of teacher education in US context would allow for teachers to conduct a systematic study of the role of language in constructing knowledge of their discipline/content area. Building on Rose & Martin's model, I envision teacher education programs introducing SFL in literacy programs from the first instructional sequence onwards. Pre-service teachers could begin to study the theory of SFL, not divorced from actual context or classroom practice, but as integral component of their internships and pre-practicum experiences. Through this model of teacher education, in-service and pre-service teachers could potentially develop their knowledge of language, and incorporate what they have learned about language into their preparation for teaching. As students enter their field during pre-practicum and internship experiences, they would be expected to draw on SFL to support their continued analysis of the language demands of the texts their students encounter in class. However, it is at this point that teachers should be encouraged to introduce the metalanguage, or language for talking about language, with their students to support their students writing practices. As I found this study, without the tool of metalanguage, students' substantive conversations are more difficult and in-depth, joint construction of texts remains less effective. As teachers gain practice in teaching, and collect students' work, they could learn to SFL to assess the students' writing development through systematic SFL analysis of the changes in the texts similar to the analysis I demonstrated in this study. In doing

so, teachers could utilize the concrete assessment tools developed by Rose & Martin (2012) and Gibbons (2009) to assess changes in their students' writing practices following SFL based pedagogy.

7.8 Concluding Thoughts

From this study I also see that there is much room to continue and add to the recent research regarding the use of SFL and genre-based pedagogies that was informing my teaching (Aguirre-Munoz, Park, Amabisca & Boscardin, 2008; Brisk & Zisselberger, 2011; Gebhard, et. al. 2011; Gebhard, Harman, & Seeger, 2007, Fang & Schleppegrell, 2010; Schleppegrell, Achugar, & Oteiza, 2004; Schleppegrell & Go, 2007; Schleppegrell & Oliveira, 2006). SFL analysis provided me ways of supporting my ELLs in learning to use language within written persuasive discourse. Knowing how language worked and what language choices approximated that of the expert users in the field helped me as an educator to articulate this discipline specific language use in the context of SFL-based pedagogy to support students in using language within those structures to accomplish their purpose of persuading readers to espouse certain viewpoints. A deeper understanding of linguistic elements gives teachers, and in turn their students, the key to unlocking and making visible the ways language is used in a variety of powerful academic genres.

APPENDIX

BRISK & HARRINGTON'S PROTOCOL FOR GATHERING INFORMATION ON LEARNERS

NAME:
External and family characteristics
Country or place of origin
Reasons for coming to the US (Learner or Family)
Date of arrival/Born in the U.S.
Intended length of stay in USA
Parents' Occupation
Parents' education
Parents' language and literacy ability
Uses of literacy at home (specify language)
Family attitudes towards native language and culture
Family attitudes towards English and American Culture
Languages used at home for speaking
Languages used at home for reading/writing

RESOURCES

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