Ubiquity: The Journal of Literature, Literacy, and the Arts, Research Strand, Vol.2 No.1, Spring 2015, pp. 90-124
Ubiquity: http://ed-ubiquity.gsu.edu/wordpress/
ISSN: 2379-3007

Arts in Turkey and the Need for Multimodally - Oriented Curriculum Based on Lived Experiences

©Tuba Angay-Crowder

Georgia State University

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Ms. Tuba Angay-Crowder, 361 17th Street, NW, Unit 1409; Atlanta, GA, 30363

Contact: tangay1@student.gsu.edu

Abstract

This paper aims to present strategies of incorporating art into a curriculum that is shaped by life stories and multimodal pedagogies. I will demonstrate how my life story shaped my own multimodally-oriented curriculum, in which art provided opportunities for transformative learning. In doing so, I explain how my life experiences changed my understanding and definition of art, as well as my perception of the role of art in education. Referring to the work being done in my home country, Turkey, to bring art into school and community, I propose ideas about designing curricula in other educational settings, the U.S. in particular, in which I theorize that art brings transformative and transnational perspectives into democratic and multicultural education.

Keywords: Arts, Turkey, multimodal pedagogies, curriculum, lived experiences, self-sponsored composing

Ubiquity: The Journal of Literature, Literacy, and the Arts, Research Strand, Vol. 2 No.1, Spring 2015

Arts in Turkey and the Need for Multimodally - Oriented Curriculum Based on Lived Experiences

This paper describes how my life story shaped my own curriculum, allowing my appreciation of art and multimodal practices to provide my students with opportunities for "transformative learning" (Barton, 2013, p. 4). Drawing from my Turkish and American cultural background in this self-study, I propose strategies for incorporating art into a multimodally-oriented curriculum, in which art has transformative purposes for democratic education. Specifically, I describe how teachers can implement the pedagogy of multiliteracies (New London Group, 1996) into a digital storytelling project to promote multicultural education.

I was encouraged to bring Turkish arts into the curriculum when I read the invitation of *Ubiquity: The Journal of Literature, Literacy, and the Arts* with their issue theme called "The Arts in Spaces and Places." I was enthusiastic about the idea, but I also faced a dilemma of whether my experience in the practices of art or art-based education was sufficient for offering effective strategies. Despite these reservations, I accepted the challenge. Although I am not an artist or an expert in art-based education, learning from the reflective beauty of art is part of my life and is my aim in education. Therefore, I believe that I should bring art into my teaching as I view "curriculum as metaphor for the lives we wish to live and the people we wish to be" (Leland & Harste, 1994, p. 334). As an advocate of critical literacy, my aim and wish in education is to bring tools of language, such as art, into the classroom, as I believe that they can be transformative not only in the educational context, but also contribute to greater social justice.

Through my reflections on Turkish art in public spaces, in this work, I describe "how the everyday unfolds and becomes a living curriculum, or a set of guidelines or knowledge that is pursued, participated in, and/or constructed" (Albers, 2014, p. 1). First, I will depict the

milestones that molded me as an advocate of art, as well as my perception of the role of art in education. Second, making references to traditional Turkish art, I will propose ideas about designing curricula in other educational settings, U.S. in particular, in which art has a transformative purpose, with the ultimate goal of democratic education.

Arts in Spaces and My Changing Literate Identity

The first milestone on my journey towards becoming a scholar in critical literacy and recognizing art as a transformative power in education was marked by my arrival to the U.S. for my graduate degree, as that was when I changed my views about literacy and me as a literate person.

Although I was born in Turkey, I have been living in Atlanta since 2011, and every time I look out from my balcony, I see a mosque, which is not a usual sight if you live in the United States. Coming from an Islamic culture, I find the architecture of these places of worship fascinating, as their exterior is exquisite and the aesthetics of the interior thought-provoking. The beauty of the mosque I have the privilege to admire every day sparks my imagination and brings wonder into my life. The style of the building conflicts with its surroundings, and the motifs inside make a striking contrast with other pieces of art that I can see around here in Atlanta. My mind wanders around the Hagia Sophia[1] Mosque (now a museum, See Figure 1) that I visited last summer in Turkey and prompts me to consider the reasons behind such a strong response. I start to wonder what it is about the piece of art that affects my emotional state so powerfully, and

[1] Hagia Sophia is a former Greek church, later an imperial mosque, and now a museum (Ayasofya Müzesi) in Istanbul, Turkey. It was constructed between 532 and 537 AD. The building was a mosque from 29 May 1453 until 1931. It was then secularized and opened as a museum in 1935.

activates my inquiring and interrogating mind as an educator, prompting me to look for the commonalities and differences in arts of different cultures.

Reflecting on the beauty of the mosque within the discussions of art and art-based education is one example of how I functioned and performed in specific new discourses in the U.S. (as opposed to the contexts in which I used my native language). As a part of this personal journey, I constantly compared my literacy practices in these two cultures, the value people attached to these practices, and the ideologies that surround them. Accordingly, I affiliated myself with critical literacy scholars (e.g., New London Group [NLG], 1996), understanding that literacy is not limited to learning print-based literacy, but is rather a multifaceted concept. I have come to appreciate that teachers develop students' language repertoire and literacy practices that prepare them to take a critical stance in examining the world and related assumptions about learning. According to NLG (1996), for example, New Literacy Studies aim to change, or transform, what schools produce. Operating from these critical perspectives, I decided to help teachers incorporate art into a curriculum with multimodal pedagogies for the purpose of interrogating language and power dynamics, promoting social justice, and advocating social change.

Changing My Understanding of Art and its Role in Education

Arts are usually recognized as a unique area of investigative inquiry. John Dewey's *Art as Experience* (1934) documents the benefits gained when experiencing arts. In describing real-life events, Dewey established connections to artistic experiences. According to Dewey, "art denotes a process of doing or making" (p. 48) and aesthetics is about appreciating, perceiving, and enjoying art. He believed that these characteristics sustain each other through time and space. Albers and Harste (2007) stated that engagement with arts could provide transformative

Figure 1. Hagia Sophia. (miriam.mollerus, 2009, February 6). [Photograph]. Retrieved from https://flic.kr/p/5YQ3X4[2]

experiences and thus change the way we perceive the world. For example, the mosque that I see from my balcony, with its historical design and aesthetics, is a work of art. Although others may consider it only as a place where religion is practiced, for me, its image evokes imagination and memories of my past and urges me to make connections between cultures by viewing the building through a critical lens.

In this paper, I engage in a self-study the purpose of which is to use art in a curriculum that emerges by unfolding the memory of, and reflecting on the critical milestones in my life (Albers, 2014). According to the National Education and the Arts Statement (n.d.), "the arts are integral to our sense of identity—as individuals, as communities and as a nation. Through the arts and creative cultural expression we learn about ourselves: who we are, where we have come from and what we feel, value and believe" (p. 4). Likewise, new literacies consider literacy

practices as a matter of "Design" that allows teachers to understand identity construction since learners are in the process of "ongoing design and redesign of identities across the social and cultural practices of meaning making" (Jewitt, 2008, p. 260). I realize that the image of the mosque was meaningful to me because by observing its design and architecture, I could revisit my sense of self and reconstruct my subjectivity towards life. Before I came to the U.S. for my education, I was primarily exposed to, and thus influenced by, Turkish culture. Here in Atlanta, I have acquired an American identity as well, as I have learned the English language and have come to appreciate the American culture and share the experiences. I enjoy this exchange.

When exchanging cultural experiences, I realize that these stories are much more powerful when juxtaposed with images of art, poetry, and music that allowed my audience a glimpse into my emotional state. In this process, I communicate with those around me multimodally, as I can convey messages through songs, or both full motion and static images of art and culture. Barton (2013) noted that "the arts are naturally multimodal" (p. 2), and we communicate through this language of creative application and combination of conventions. Literacies, in this view, place an emphasis on "the multiplicity of communications channels and media, and the increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity" (NLG, 1996, p. 63). Thus, art education, together with new literacies, has the capacity of challenging the traditional views in education, and transforming learners through "social and culturally responsive curriculum" (Jewitt, 2008, p. 245).

In this paper, by bringing art into multimodal pedagogies in a curriculum design, I "can enable learners to notice the unnoticeable, become appreciative and reflective, and understand the role of the arts in making life meaningful" (Albers & Harste, 2007, p. 9). My aim as an educator is to provide designs that can position our students to draw and select from many

resources, to reconstruct, interpret, and regenerate meanings in art.

Searching for Appreciative, Reflective, and Transformative Purposes with Respect to the Use of Art in Turkey

As I continue to reflect on my experiences with art in Turkey, my mental image of the mosque takes my imagination to the wonders of art in my home country. Turkish tiles have an important place in the history of Islamic art (Bakir, n.d.), and mosques are lavishly decorated with exquisite tiles (see Figure 2). Glazed brick is used to produce a variety of patterns, mostly on the facades of buildings, with turquoise, and sometimes cobalt blue, eggplant violet, and black. This bricolage reminds me of other traditional Turkish artifacts, such as jewelry, ceramics, metal artwork, glass art, lamps, book covers, miniature figurines, wood artwork, and stone carvings, many of which are no longer produced in Turkey today. On the other hand, tiles, miniatures, carpet weaving, and woodwork with floral motifs are still popular in both architecture and products in everyday use. This is explored by Duymaz (1998), who noted that universities and institutions initiate projects to reproduce tiles with traditional features in order to revitalize their artistic essence. Similarly, according to Beyazit (2013), Iznik tiles are the subject of intense research, owing to their glossy glazes, figures, and motifs. Historically, they were used and exhibited in caravanserais, palaces, and Turkish baths in Istanbul, where they can still be admired today. In Kutahya, art tile productions are exhibited in the city, allowing young generations to learn about this art form, and participate in the workshops. As Beyazit (2013) remarked, local and international organizations play a vital role in bringing this type of art to the public spaces. Local and foreign artists, designers, industry professionals, and academics interested in ceramics, art tiles, glass, glazes, and enamels come together in workshops, helping keep this wonderful tradition alive. This effort of bringing art to public and educational places is

encouraging. However, critical elements in multimodal compositions, such as tiles, can easily be overlooked unless specific attention is paid to them by an expert (Ryana, Scotta, & Walsh, 2010). Thus, the question remains: How do we make use of art for transformative purposes in schools and curriculum?

Figure 2. Iznik tiles. (Jarvis, 2013, June 15). [Photograph]. Retrieved from https://flic.kr/p/ieF2MQ[3]

Redefining Art as a Self-Sponsored Composing Activity, and Bringing it to the Curriculum

Before moving on with the discussion, I revisit the definition of art and argue that practicing art is a self-sponsored composing activity. Emig (1971) explained that "self-sponsored" activities are voluntary, public in nature, and occur across time and space. In everyday life, people rely on their independence and self-motivation as starting points for their activities. Yi and Hirvela (2010) considered such practices as self-sponsored writing, as individuals initiate this type of learning and are in control of its direction. Practicing art shares the same characteristics, as it is a self-generated, multimodal practice. Thus, in the terminology I adopted in this work, it is referred to as a self-sponsored composing activity. When students use multiple modes of representation, they engage in "aesthetic, self-originated, and self-sponsored" literacy activities (National Council of Teachers of English, n.d., para. 40).

Yi and Hirvela (2010) suggested that students' self-sponsored and school-based practices are not incompatible with each other. In their view, "they might overlap, with self-sponsored writing perhaps serving…[a] kind of 'bridging' role" (p. 106). Therefore, integrating art into multimodal pedagogies and making connections to the self-sponsored activities of learners are effective ways to motivate students to take ownership in their learning. It also encourages them to view literacy as more than mere writing or reading in print, thereby helping them challenge and disrupt dominant norms in society. Dyson (1993) used the term *permeable curriculum* to describe the space in which individuals' "unofficial" worlds come into play. I imagine experiences of writing songs, making movies, drawing cartoons, creating comics, or painting as practices of art that can be penetrable in a multimodally oriented curriculum (Alvermann & Moore, 2011).

Making Connections to Multimodal Pedagogies

"Multimodal pedagogies" (e.g., Stein, 2007) or "multimodal practices" (e.g., Pahl & Rowsell, 2006; Wohlwend & Medina, 2012) have also been used to refer to multimodally-oriented curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment practices that focus on mode as a defining feature of communication in learning environments. In other words, they reflect the recognition that all acts of communication in classrooms are multimodal. Therefore, incorporating multimodal pedagogies that draw upon multiple representational resources (e.g., visuals, written and spoken linguistic codes, sounds, gestures, gaze, and spatial concepts) is an effective teaching strategy in the classroom.

Multimodal pedagogies engage learners as active agents and creators of meaning as they communicate through multiple resources, including their own bodies and environment, to make connections with the world around them. In such pedagogies, there is a conscious awareness of the relationship among modes, learning, and identity (Stein, 2007). What is important in this pedagogy is ensuring that students recognize that all forms of communication—including spoken and written words, images, actions, sounds, etc.—are related to particular designs of meaning, and derive from diverse cultures, contexts, and historical periods and related arts.

According to the extant research, multimodal practices can provide learners with rich opportunities, as they expand their literacy repertoires and means of expression (Hull & Nelson, 2005). In the classroom, students can engage in in-depth exploration of the cultural content of their content-based courses (Hagood, Skinner, Venters, & Yelm, 2009; Vinogradova, Linville, & Bickel, 2011) and enhance their capacity for critical thinking (Ajayi, 2011). Similarly, the educators can foster students' academic achievement by improving their disciplinary knowledge and academic language (Danzak, 2011; Yang & Wu, 2012), and by reducing cognitive load on

the working memory of the students (Chen, Wang, Chen, & Chen, 2014). In collaborative projects, such as digital storytelling or video composing, students build communities (Black, 2009; Thorne, Black, & Sykes, 2009) and engage in a participatory culture, both of which strengthen their social connections and lower the barriers of artistic expression (Alverman, 2008; Li, 2012). They also develop leadership skills (Guajardo et al., 2011; Angay, Choi, & Yi, 2013), design their artistic self and reconstruct their multilingual/plurilingual identities (Lam, 2000; Yi, 2009), foster transnational understanding (Stille & Cummins, 2013; Skerrett, 2012), and feel empowered as they challenge social and racial injustice and power structures (Gachago, Cronje, Ivala, Condy, & Chigona, 2014).

While the studies briefly reviewed above address the importance of multimodal communication in the classroom, there is an evident paucity of research on the way art can be integrated into multimodal, literate practices. Thus, there is little empirical evidence that would urge teachers to create a flexible curricular framework that supports multimodal perspectives through art in K-12 education (Albers & Harste, 2007; Albers & Sanders, 2010). More specifically, art has not been an essential component in realizing the purpose of multimodal pedagogy, which is to stimulate agentive and transformative learning (Barton, 2013). Among the few studies that integrated art in the curriculum, the work conducted by Albers (2006) is particularly noteworthy, as the author posited that pre-service teachers and their students could engage in reflexive learning and purposefully apply their learning in new contexts. In a more recent work, Ayan (2014) discovered printmaking art as a multimodal pedagogy and considered it necessary for interdisciplinary interaction and improved creativity in art education.

Infusing Turkish Arts into the Four Components of Multiliteracies Pedagogy

Responding to the aforementioned gap in literature on art education through multimodal pedagogies, I propose curricular strategies based on NLG's (1996) pedagogy of multiliteracies to allow expression of art with a critical perspective in the classroom. More precisely, I am interested in how I can use Turkish arts in the multimodally-oriented curriculum, as I believe that this approach would contribute to transnational understanding through literacy (Stille & Cummins, 2013; Skerrett, 2012). Barton (2013) supported that, similar to New Literacy Studies (NLG, 1996), art education considers the important dimensions of the social, economic, cultural, political, and environmental influences on arts practice. Attending to practices of art through collective communicative modes will provide rich perspectives for policy and curriculum that are negotiated through classroom practices and language.

My suggestions are based on my experience in teaching digital storytelling as a multimodal pedagogy. At the Latin American Association, in a city in the southeastern United States, in collaboration with two professors, I implemented the theoretical concept of multiliteracies in a classroom attended by a number of students who were multilingual learners (see Angay-Crowder, Choi, & Yi, 2013). As part of this multimedia composing project, I taught students how to use semiotic modes and resources (e.g., visuals, sounds, gestures, gaze, and spatial concepts) in conveying their lived experiences, exploring multiple literacies and identities, or discussing social issues, such as environmental pollution or immigration. Re-examining this teaching experience under the guidelines of art education will open new possibilities of infusing art into curriculum with the aim of fostering transnational understanding and multicultural awareness.

NLG (1996) advocates the theory of pedagogy that integrates four components: (a) situated practice, (b) overt instruction, (c) critical framing, and (d) transformed practice. In *situated practice*, students are immersed in "meaningful practices within a community of learners who are capable of playing multiple and different roles based on their background and experiences" (NLG, 1996, p. 85). Because socially engaged art is closely linked to the issues of community, situated practices can provide means of discussion and agency for the "masters of practice" (p. 87) in the arts. *Overt instruction*, which refers to scaffolding by experts such as teachers or students in class, employs explicit information to help students develop consciousness about what is being learned. *Critical framing* enables learners to extend their own agency and work towards countering hierarchies in community. Finally, *transformed practice* redesigns existing texts, whereby meaning in one context is reformulated in another, which is well aligned with the purpose of art education because "artistic practice . . . is powerfully transformational" (Barton, 2013, p. 17). I apply the same components of the pedagogy of multiliteracies in this article. Finding inspiration in the stages of the lesson plan that I carried out for digital storytelling production with multilingual adolescents at the Latin American Association in 2013, I propose new strategies that bring Turkish arts into the classroom. The strategies that are proposed in the following four stages encompass four components of the pedagogy of multiliteracies in a complex way. They are used as guidelines for teachers, who should use them creatively for their own purpose.

Opening up spaces for arts. As Barton (2013) claimed, "literate practice in the arts is as much a 'socially and culturally situated practice' as it is a personal endeavor" (p. 17). In other words, as self-sponsored composing activities, arts practices create discussions and conversations around literacy and its practices in the classroom. Accordingly, in the first week of a digital

storytelling project, students partake in situated practices by introducing themselves, explaining their academic goals, choosing genuine topics of interest based on self-sponsored art practices, and by storyboarding their personal or cultural stories of interests. Challenging students' choices or arguments in support of their topic selection—what has been termed *needs analysis*—is an integral part of critical framing in this stage. Overt instruction through PowerPoint presentations, for example, is also an important part of helping students develop better understanding of how the digital storytelling process (see Bull & Kajder, 2004; Robin, 2008), and related tools (e.g., Flowcabulary, n.d.; Poets &Writers, n.d.; Remix-T, n.d.; ThingLink, n.d.) can be used to convey an artistic message. Transformative practices are exemplified in this process, whereby the students are first engaged in free writing about their chosen topics, before learning how to adopt different perspectives when filling out a *storyboard* template for their storylines. While working on their free writing and storyboards, drama can be a powerful artistic tool that assists students in creating "identity texts" (Ntelioglou, 2011, p. 598) and understanding the elements of the story. The multimodal nature of drama "can provoke creative and critical forms of literacy" (Gallagher & Ntelioglou, 2011, p. 322) and provide valuable opportunities for bringing lived experiences of art into transformative perspectives.

My cultural identity is influenced by memories of Turkish art practices as a self-sponsored composing activity. In Turkish history, coffee, for example, has played an important role in lifestyle and culture. Coffee-making and serving is considered an art form and a ritual. First brought to Istanbul in 1555 by two Syrian traders, coffee became known as the milk of chess players and thinkers (Sansal, n.d.). Turkish coffee houses have retained their role in society as a meeting place for both cultured citizens and inquisitive travelers. While much is known about coffee, the following anecdote might be less familiar. Traditionally, when a man and a

woman are engaged, the families gather for coffee made by the woman, who will add detergent, salt, or some other contaminant to her future husband's coffee. If he drinks it without a complaint and is gracious, it is a sign that he will be a good and patient husband (Steehler, 2011). Dramatizing such fun, art-related stories opens spaces in situated practice and motivates students to brainstorm, find interesting topics for digital stories, engage in free writing and narrations, and present their work before a diverse audience, which creates multilevel, literate, and situated communities within a classroom.

Writing poems for digital storytelling. Narrative prosodic writing is the traditional approach to preparing storylines for a digital storytelling project. However, prosodic writing—poetry—is an oft-overlooked self-sponsored writing activity that can easily be introduced into the classroom. It should be incorporated in the curriculum, as students need exposure to diverse text resources (Fetters, 2014). Also, students can use poetry to produce counternarratives and critically examine their own lived experiences together with social issues, such as race, class, gender, and history (see Curwood & Gibbons, 2010). In this way, students can frame their understanding and creation of self-sponsored text as a socially meaningful genre that becomes a frame for social action or transformative practices. Further, in a workshop-based approach to writing poetry, students will have an opportunity for sharing poems with a wide and diverse audience, which gives them a purpose for creating poems. Obviously, in doing this, students need to be mindful of the importance of purpose, audience, and genre (Beach, Anson, Breuch, & Reynolds, 2014).

While Turkish poetry is a multidimensional phenomenon, it does not have a wide audience in foreign countries. Thus, introducing Turkish poetry to different nations will bring interesting transnational perspectives about cultures. For example, repeated references to

everyday life are common in Turkish poetry "with references to the tea man (çaycı) and to food (yiyecek), noise (gürültü), and smell (koklamak)" and are meaningful to Turkish audiences (Stone, 2010, p. 239). Turkish poet Talat Sait Halman (1989) is among the few individuals who have promoted Turkish poetry in the U.S. Thus, his book *Living Poets of Turkey: An Anthology of Modern Poems* is a valuable resource for teachers wishing to initiate discussions and contribute to the transnational understanding of literacy practices through poetry.

Storyboards, as I use the term, are multimodal compositions that are created by the selection of different communication channels, such as images of art, music, and written text. For those who create a multimodal composition, it is not sufficient to merely acknowledge the existence of the different modes within a composition; students need to develop conceptual understandings of the intermodal relations that result from semiotic choices (Shanahan, 2013). In other words, they need to have metatextual awareness of composing arts with different sign systems. Such explicit learning and scaffolding is vital in order to benefit from the new developments in communications media, which are experiencing a rapid change via collective intelligence, networking, and negotiation (Jenkins, 2006). While a student is engaged in poetry writing and improving his or her storyboard creations, the teacher should support their work with an individual writing conference. This is an overt instruction that provides students with an opportunity to elaborate on topics for digital stories and make suggestions about word choice or use of code-switching in their work.

Collaborative networked spaces can provide means of both overt instruction and situated practices. In Wikispaces (n.d.), or a Wiggio site (n.d.), which are createable by teachers, students can share resources and make recommendations via links or useful websites in their digital storytelling. In addition, teachers may create online virtual networks (e.g., blogs) as transnational

platforms for socialization of students in order to support "diasporic identity" as "collective identification connected to homelands and cultural origins" (McLean, 2010, p. 14), where these experiences and identities are made manifest. Through participating in these online communities, students not only share information about their digital stories, but also gain diverse perspectives about the use of multiple communication channels as well as presentation of content for their stories.

Critical framing for analyzing their own selections. This third stage commences once the students have finished their poetry writing. To create the most effective and meaningful messages for storytelling, students need to revisit their initial decisions and assess them objectively and critically. This allows students to present alternative reading and writing positions about the texts that they examine.

At this stage, overt instruction is useful in teaching purposeful and meaningful use of non-linguistic tools such as visuals and images. In this context, software programs, such as Animoto (n.d.), FluxTime Studio (n.d.), Marquee (n.d.), Umajin (n.d.), and Storymash (n.d.) have been found particularly valuable (Beach, Anson, Breuch, & Reynolds, 2014). To accomplish the aforementioned goals, and use these powerful tools, students need to feel comfortable with uploading files, and inserting text into digital panels. Through an overt PowerPoint instruction, teachers should emphasize the differences and similarities between poetry and narratives. They should also explain how skills acquired in analyzing one genre may be transferred to another genre.

Art as a self-sponsored activity is also a starting point for analyzing and critiquing academic text, which may include examining and questioning pieces of art and their affiliated social formations and cultural assumptions. For example, the ceramic tiles produced in Iznik

during the 16th century represent the artistic zenith of the Ottoman Empire (Venice Mosaic Art, n.d.). For a number of reasons, the technical knowledge and documentation utilized in creating these tiles were unfortunately lost to humanity in the 17th century. After four centuries, and many years of research and countless experiments, Kutahya, a city located a hundred or so kilometers southeast of Iznik, has been revived as an important center of tile and ceramics making. In addition, efforts are also being made in private workshops and educational institutions in Iznik, Istanbul, and Bursa to keep the art of traditional Turkish tile and ceramics production alive. The aim is to develop these traditional practices so that they can address the demands of modern-day life (Bakir, n.d.). In the context of classroom instruction, it might be useful to discuss how the modern-day artisans have used similar and/or same techniques in reproducing the Iznik and Kutahya tiles of the high quality their predecessors achieved using the ancient traditional methods of the 16th century.

The rich colors and motifs on tiles remind me of the variety in the rhythms, movements, and costumes of Turkish folk dance, which is generally performed in open and sometimes closed public places. This form of artistic expression allows the participants to demonstrate their skills and is common during important events, such as weddings, engagement ceremonies, when sending young men off to perform their military service, at national and religious festivals, and after victories. Turkish dance as one of the performing arts is an important part of social life, and can be another point of entry for *critical framing* in class. By deconstructing the performances of folk dancers, students can deepen their understanding of art. This, in turn, as Darts (2011) argued, “increases their awareness of the varied roles artists can do and play in society, including that of social critic, researcher, inventor, teacher, poet, provocateur, philosopher, visionary, and activist” (p. 50).

Skills in critiquing kinetic text, which encompass body movements, can be transferred to another context as well. After discussing the meanings created in the motifs of Iznik tiles or patterns of dance, students may be encouraged for guided-writing about the techniques that artists of graphic novels use to convey meaning in the graphic novels they produce (Schwartz & Rubinstein-Ávila, 2006). According to Alvermann and Heron (2001) and Frey and Fisher (2004), reading or writing graphic novels is another common self-sponsored activity that involves appreciation of art among youth. This kind of critical framing will help students reflect on their own choice of modalities within their art-based stories. Students can learn how to raise questions on how visual, audio, kinetic, and written texts for their art production can be successfully orchestrated.

Transformed practices occur when students change and improve their initial views about text that is subject to analysis. Art production, which involves multiple modalities, can serve as "counterhegemonic practices" (Sholle & Denski, 1993, p. 309), and foster transformative learning (Mantas, & Schwind, 2014; Vettraino, Linds, & Goulet, 2013). In a study conducted by Turner, Way, and Gray (2012), students produced counternarratives through fluency in arts, and finally developed critical multimodal literacies. Similarly, students who took part in Angay, Choi, and Yi's (2013) research "transformed their initial drafts into embellished revisions of their narratives" (p. 41) through stories. In a multimodal project, such as digital storytelling, students can engage in transformed practices using arts as a tool to reflect on their own subjectivities. In Turkish art, a variety of forms of ceramics—including jars of various sizes, jugs, pitchers, ewers, dishes, vases, writing-sets, braziers, candy-dishes in the shape of human or animal figures, gas lamps shaped like ships, and animal-shaped jugs—is found in most Turkish homes. Teachers can bring these decorative artifacts into the classroom to help students find commonalities across

local and global texts with traditional and conventional characteristics (Lam & Rosario-Ramos, 2009). This activity will promote Johns' (1997) idea of learners as ethnographers in their own communities.

Sharing and celebrating students' new creations. After critical framing and transformed practices pertaining to the digital storytelling project, this final stage can commence. When a teacher includes art practices as self-sponsored writing activities into a digital storytelling project, students will have a clear sense of purpose in this goal-driven activity. Most importantly, this will generate a feeling of accomplishment, as they will not only meet their goals, but their productions will also tap into their cultural capital and build on their personal interests. During celebrations, students should be able to describe their creation's potential to the audience, and should do so by adopting the perspective of an impartial observer. They also need to share their writing with an authentic audience. Uploading stories to virtual communities, such as ePals at http://www.epals.com/#!/main[4], Center for Digital Storytelling at http://storycenter.org[5], or YouTube can provide a public audience for students. As students present their final projects, they learn from each other, make suggestions, and provide strong support for each other. As a way of fostering self-sponsored writing infused by art practices, teachers should create similar opportunities for collaborative and communal learning that draws on both curricular (academic, classroom) and extra-curricular (social, personal, professional) writing practices.

Coming to a Conclusion and Opening Up to a New Phase with New Challenges

My lived experiences in relation to arts and education in general have influenced the design of my curriculum, shaped today by critical literacy perspectives. I believe that a socially and multimodally oriented approach to learning, blended with arts and art practices, will enable

composers to critically draw from prior knowledge within their own lived experience related to art-making in collaborative classrooms. Students can share their families' local art practices and related history through multimodal representations, such as a photographic collage, a series of panels telling a story, a painting, a video, a musical composition, a sculpture, or an artist's journal (e.g., van Sluys, Fink, & Fisher, 2008). They will benefit from configuring the interconnectedness of their past and present worlds and texts as broadly as possible.

The use of self-sponsored composing activities as part of the curriculum will also meet the requirements of the Common Core State Standards and engage diverse learners in tasks aimed at improving their academic success. The International Reading Association President, Maureen McLaughlin (2013) explained how the standards support the use of multimodal text, which is an essential element in self-sponsored composing activities of learners in the 21st century. In the discussion, McLaughlin (2013) referred to the following standard that teachers can use to enrich their instruction for grade six: "RI.6.7 Integrate information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually and quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue" (p. 21). Furthermore, using multimodal text in teaching and learning will prepare students in K-12 education for college and career readiness in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills as College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards support that:

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

> Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the creditability and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

> Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally (McLaughlin, 2013, p. 21).

When schoolwork is relevant to a student's voluntary activity it becomes the "curriculum of the everyday self" (Albers, 2014, p. 1), and literacy instruction is both possible and enjoyable. Classrooms may become communities of practice where artistic tools are used to pursue common objectives, such as the development of academic literacy and the construction of new identities. Understanding the multiplicity of text through multimodally-oriented curricula can help teachers scaffold identity construction (Jewitt, 2008). Thus, students will engage in the process of ongoing design and redesign of identities across the social and cultural practices of meaning-making in arts. Accordingly, I support the suggestions of several renowned scholars (e.g., Hagood, Provost, Skinner, & Egelson, 2008; Hagood et al., 2009), in strongly believing that teachers should (1) learn about students' out-of-school new literacies and art practices, and place value on their related social identities; (2) connect students' out-of-school literacy and interests in arts and competencies to content area standards and subject matter; and (3) build on students' new literacies and art practices to improve students' academic literacies.

In this paper, I have described a curriculum that I designed by unfolding and reflecting on the critical milestones in my life. I believe that self-reflection brings transformative changes in pedagogy and research (Zeichner, 1999). In doing this, I have recalled the memories and experiences that shaped my present identity. I have also realized the importance of everyday experiences, and have identified the critical moments in my life that marked the changes in my view of literacy, understanding of art, and the definition of art. Finally, by re-examining my teaching experience under the guidelines of art education, I imagined new possibilities for teachers (including myself) about how to infuse art into a multimodally-oriented curriculum with

the aim of fostering transnational understanding and multicultural awareness. The reader will note that I deliberately chose not to provide a detailed lesson plan, as I believe that it is more beneficial for the teachers to select from the many available strategies, guided by their own imagination. This unique approach will be translated into a design that best suits their educational objectives. Hopefully, my curriculum based on lived experiences will help other teachers reflect on their own practices and find resonance with my story. In doing so, they may uncover something that they might not have been aware of before. Alternatively, they may choose to revisit what worked best for them in the past and introduce it with a more creative understanding into their current and future curricula. Such practice is highly beneficial, as it reaffirms and helps to reconstruct identities as teachers or scholars.

The study has implications for further research in first (L1) and second (L2) language learning curricula. Teachers in K-12 settings can use similar self-study methodologies to create self-sponsored literacy practices that use art as an effective way of engaging students in the identity construction of reading and writing. Further research should investigate how educators in higher education can re-evaluate their own teaching strategies in order to incorporate voluntary, art-related practices of college-level students in their curriculum. Many multilingual learners in college are voluntarily involved in art-related practices in their first language for the purpose of keeping their heritage language alive; however, these practices remain invisible to the educators and researchers mostly because they do not take place in classrooms. Similarly, more research should take place regarding how professors draw upon voluntary literacy practices of L2 students in "university environments [where] literacy is seen as an independent variable detached from its social consequences" (Hyland, 2000, p. 146).

References

Ajayi, L. (2011). A multiliteracies pedagogy: Exploring semiotic possibilities of a Disney video in a third grade diverse classroom. *The Urban Review, 43*(3), 396-413.

Albers, P. (2006). Imagining the possibilities in multimodal curriculum design. *English Education, 38*(2), 75-101.

Albers, P., & Harste, J. C. (2007). The arts, new literacies, and multimodality. *English Education, 40*(1), 6-20.

Albers, P., & Sanders, J. (Eds.). (2010). *Literacies, the arts & multimodality*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Albers, P. (2014). Lived experiences: Insights into culture(s), journeys, and the unfolding of oneself. In. G. Tinker Sachs & G. Verma (Eds.), *Critical mass in the teacher education academy: Symbiosis and diversity* (pp. 1-18). Campaign, IL: Common Ground Publishing.

Alvermann, D. E. (2008). Why bother theorizing adolescents' online literacies for classroom practice and research. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 52*(1), 8-19.

Alvermann, D. E., & Moore, D. W. (2011). Questioning the separation of in-school from out-of-school contexts for literacy learning: An interview with Donna E. Alvermann. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 55*(2), 156-158.

Angay-Crowder, T., Choi, J., & Yi, Y. (2013). Putting multiliteracies into practice: Digital storytelling for multilingual adolescents in a summer program. *TESL Canada Journal, 30*(2), 36-45.

Animoto. (n.d.). *Make great videos easily*. Retrieved from https://animoto.com/home[6]

Ayan, H. M. (2014). Interdisciplinary place and importance of printmaking education in Turkish universities that give art education. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Education*, *4*(4), 764-771.

Bakir, S. T. (n.d.). The art of Turkish tiles and ceramic. *Turkish Cultural Foundation*. Retrieved from http://www.turkishculture.org/ceramic-arts/tiles-and-ceramics-582.htm[7]

Barton, G. (2013). The arts and literacy: What does it mean to be arts literate? *International Journal of Education & The Arts*, *14*(18/19), 1-21.

Bayazit, M. (2013). Technological approaches in ceramic tradition and privilege of Turkish tile art. *Suranaree Journal of Science & Technology*, *20*(3), 249-256.

Beach, R., Anson, C. M., Breuch, L. K., & Reynolds, T. (2014). *Understanding and creating digital texts*. London, UK: Rowman & Littlefield.

Black, R. W. (2009). English-language learners, fan communities, and 21st-century skills. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *52*(8), 688-697.

Bull, G., & Kajder, S. (2004). Digital storytelling in the language arts classroom. *Learning and Leading with Technology*, *32*(4), 46-49.

Chen, M., Wang, L., Chen, H., & Chen, Y. (2014). Effects of type of multimedia strategy on learning of Chinese characters for non-native novices. *Computers & Education*, *70*, 41-52.

Curwood, J. S., & Gibbons, D. (2009). "Just like I have felt": Multimodal counternarratives in youth-produced digital media. *The International Journal of Learning and Media*, *1*(4), 59-77.

Danzak, R. L. (2011). Defining identities through multiliteracies: EL teens narrate their immigration experiences as graphic stories. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 55*(3), 187-196.

Darts, D. (2011). Invisible culture-taking art education to the streets. *Art Education, 64*(5), 49-53.

Dewey, J. (1934) *Art as experience.* New York, NY: Perigee Books.

Duymaz, A. S. (1998). Kutahya wares from Ottoman to now. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Symposium on Traditional Kutahya Ware of Turkey* (pp. 35-51). Kutahya, Turkey.

Dyson, A. H. (1993). *The social worlds of children learning to write in an urban primary school*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Edelsky, C. (2006). *With literacy and justice for all: Rethinking the social in language and education* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Emig, J. (1971). *The composing processes of twelfth graders.* Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Fetters, C. (2014). Integrating expository writing with technology. In R. Ferdig, T. Rasinski, & K. Pytash (Eds.), *Technology to enhance writing*: *Innovative approaches to literacy, instruction* (pp. 28-36). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Flowcabulary. (n.d.). *Flowcabulary is the educational hip-hop*. Retrieved from http://www.flocabulary.com[8]

FluxTime Studio. (n.d.). *Follow your inspiration*. Retrieved from http://www.fluxtime.com/index.php[9]

Frey, N., & Fisher, D. (2004). Using graphic novels, anime, and the Internet in an urban high school. *English Journal, 93*(3), 19-25.

Gachago, D., Cronje, F., Ivala, E., Condy, J., & Chigona, A. (2014). Using digital counterstories as multimodal pedagogy among South African pre-service student educators to produce stories of resistance. *Electronic Journal of E-Learning*, *12*(1), 29-42.

Gallagher, K., & Ntelioglou, B. Y. (2011). Which new literacies? Dialogue and performance in youth writing. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *54*(5), 322-330.

Guajardo, M., Oliver, J. A., Rodriguez, G., Valadez, M. M., Cantu, Y., & Guajardo, F. (2011). Reframing the praxis of school leadership preparation through digital storytelling. *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*, *6*(5), 145-161.

Hagood, M. C., Provost, M. C., Skinner, E. N., & Egelson, P. E. (2008). Teachers' & students' literacy performance in & Engagement with new literacies strategies in underperforming middle schools. *Middle Grades Research Journal*, *3*(3), 57-95.

Hagood, M. C., Skinner, E. N., Venters, M., & Yelm, B. (2009). New Literacies and assessments in middle school social studies content area instruction: Issues for classroom practices. In A. Burke & R. F. Hammett (Eds.), *Assessing new literacies: Perspectives from the classroom* (pp. 75-91). New York: Peter Lang.

Halman, T. S. (1989). *Living poets of Turkey: An anthology of modern poems.* Istanbul, Turkey: Dost Publication.

Hull, G. A., & Nelson, M. E. (2005). Locating the semiotic power of multimodality. *Written communication*, *22*(2), 224-261.

Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social actions in academic writing*. Harlow, UK: Longman.

Jarvis, D. (2013, June 15). Iznik tiles. [Photograph]. Retrieved from https://flic.kr/p/ieFb99[10]

Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture: Where old and new media collide*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Jewitt, C. (2008). Multimodality and literacy in school classrooms: Review of research in Education. *Review of Research in Education, 32*(1), 241-267.

Johns, A. M. (1997). *Text, role, and context: Developing academic literacies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Lam, W. S. E. (2000). L2 literacy and the design of self: A case study of a teenager writing on the internet. *TESOL Quarterly, 34*(3), 457-482.

Lam, W. S. E., & Rosario-Ramos, E. (2009). Multilingual literacies in transnational digitally mediated contexts: An exploratory study of immigrant teens in the United States. *Language and Education, 23*(2), 171-190.

Leland, C. H., & Harste, J. C. (1994). Multiple ways of knowing: Curriculum in a new key. *Language Arts*, *71*(5), 337-345.

Li, G. (2012). Literacy engagement through online and offline communities outside school: English language learners' development as readers and writers. *Theory into Practice*, *51*(4), 312-318.

Mantas, K., & Schwind, J. K. (2014). Fostering transformative learning through cocreative artmaking processes and emerging artful forms: Two educators reflect on and dialogue about a shared arts-based workshop experience. *Journal of Transformative Education*, *12*(1), 74-94.

Marquee. (n.d.). *We overthink publishing systems so you don't have to.* Retrieved from http://marquee.by[11]

McLaughlin, M. (2013). Hoping the engage students in common core? Try using multimodal text. *International Reading Association: Reading Today*, *31*(2), 20-21.

McLean, C. A. (2010). Space called home: An immigrant adolescent's digital literacy rractices. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 54*(1), 13-22.

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. (2005). *National Education and the Arts Statement*. Retrieved from http://www.scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/Reports%20and%20publications/Publications/Miscellaneous/National_Education_Arts_Statement.pdf[12]

miriam.mollerus. (2009, February 6). Hagia Sophia. [Photograph]. Retrieved from https://flic.kr/p/5YQ3X4[13]

Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory into Practice, 31*(2), 132-141.

National Council of Teachers of English. (n.d.). *NCTE position statement on multimodal literacies.* Retrieved from http://ncte.org/positions/statements/multimodalliteracies[14]

New London Group. (1996). A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Designing social futures. *Harvard Educational Review, 66*(1), 60-92.

Ntelioglou, B. (2011). 'But why do I have to take this class?' The mandatory drama-ESL class and multiliteracies pedagogy. *Research in Drama Education, 16*(4), 595-615.

Pahl, K., & Rowsell, J. (Eds.). (2006). *Travel notes from the new literacy studies: Instances of practice.* Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters.

Poets &Writers. (n.d.). *Tools for writers*. Retrieved from http://www.pw.org/toolsforwriters[15]

Remix-T. (n.d.). *Cultivating media-rich learning experiences.* Retrieved from http://learning.nd.edu/remix/[16]

Robin, B. R. (2008). Digital storytelling: A powerful technology tool for the 21st-century classroom. *Theory into Practice, 47*(3), 220-228.

Ryana, J., Scotta, A., & Walsh M. (2010). Pedagogy in the multimodal classroom: an analysis of the challenges and opportunities for teachers. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 16*(4), 477-489.

Sansal, B. (n.d.). Turkish coffee. *All About Turkey*. Retrieved from http://www.allaboutturkey.com/kahve.htm[17]

Schwartz, A., & Rubinstein-Ávila, E. (2006). Understanding the manga hype: Uncovering the multimodality of comic-book literacies. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 50*(1), 40-49.

Shanahan, L. E. (2013). Composing "kid-friendly" multimodal text: When conversations, instruction, and signs come together. *Written Communication*, *30*(2), 194-227.

Sholle, D., & Denski, S. (1993). Reading and writing the media: Critical media literacy and postmodernism. In C. Lankshear & P. McLaren (Eds.), *Critical literacy: Politics, praxis, and the postmodern* (pp. 297-321). New York: State University of New York Press.

Skerrett, A. (2012). Languages and literacies in translocation: Experiences and perspectives of a transnational youth. *Journal of Literacy Research*, *44*(4), 364-395.

Steehler, B. (2011, October 15). *The art of Turkish coffee*. Retrieved from http://www.peacecoffee.com/blog/the-art-of-turkish-coffee[18]

Stein, P. (2007). *Multimodal pedagogies in diverse classrooms: Representation, rights and resources.* New York, NY: Routledge.

Stille, S., & Cummins, J. (2013). Foundation for learning: Engaging plurilingual students' linguistic repertoires in the elementary classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, *47*(3), 630-638.

Stone, L. (2010). Inside Turkish literature: Concerns, references, and themes. *Turkish Studies*, *11*(2), 235-250.

Storymash. (n.d.). *The future of collaborative fiction.* Retrieved from http://storymash.com[19]

ThingLink. (n.d.). *Add links to images and videos*. Retrieved from http://www.thinglink.com[20]

Thorne, S. L., Black, R. W., & Sykes, J. M. (2009). Second language use, socialization, and learning in Internet interest communities and online gaming. *The Modern Language Journal*, *93*(1), 802-821.

Turner, K. C. N., Way, K., & Gray, R. R. R. (2012). The transformative power of youth action coalition's multimodal arts-for-change programming. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education* [Online], *9*(1), 40-53. Available at http://jolle.coe.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/The-Transformative-Power.pdf[21]

Umajin. (n.d.). *Design, develop, and delight!* Retrieved from http://www.umajin.com[22]

van Sluys, K., Fink, L. S., & Fisher, D. (2008). Engaging as ethnographers: Insights into the collaborative study of a literacy learning community. *Voices from the Middle*, *16*(1), 15-22.

Venice Mosaic Art: Custom Luxury Mosaic Art Factory. (n.d.). *About Iznik tiles: The story of Iznik Chini Tiles and their revival.* Retrieved from http://venicemosaicart.com/marble-

mosaic-manufacturer/info/about-iznik-tiles/[23]

Vettraino, E., Linds, W., & Goulet, L. (2013). Click, clack, move: Facilitation of the arts as transformative pedagogy. *Journal of Transformative Education, 11*(3), 190-208.

Vinogradova, P., Linville, H. A., & Bickel, B. (2011). "Listen to my story and you will know me": Digital stories as student-centered collaborative projects. *TESOL Journal*, *2*(2), 173-202.

Wiggio. (n.d.). *Wiggio is the easiest way to work in groups.* Retrieved from https://wiggio.com/#tpl=home_0[24]

Wikispaces. (n.d.). *The world's best Wiki platform*. Retrieved from https://www.wikispaces.com[25]

Wohlwend, K. E., & Medina, C. L. (2012). Media as nexus of practice: remaking identities in what not to wear. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *33*(4), 545-560.

Yang, Y. T. C., & Wu, W. C. I. (2012). Digital storytelling for enhancing student academic achievement, critical thinking, and learning motivation: A year-long experimental study. *Computers & Education*, *59*(2), 339-352.

Yi, Y. (2009). Adolescent literacy and identity construction among 1.5 generation students: From a transnational perspective. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, 19*(1), 100-129.

Yi, Y., & Hirvela, A. (2010). Technology and "self-sponsored" writing: A case study of a Korean-American adolescent. *Computers and Composition*, *27*(2), 94-111.

Zeichner, K. M. (1999). The new scholarship in teacher education. *Educational Researcher, 28*(9), 4-15.

Author Bio: Tuba Angay-Crowder is a full-time doctoral student in the Language and Literacy unit at Georgia State University. She taught English in various grade levels in her home country Turkey and in the US. She has worked with ESL teachers in England and the US and has also volunteered as a teacher of English to refugees at the International Rescue Committee. Her research interests are second language writing, multiliteracies, and genre analysis.