

Digital multimodal composing to learn: Practices and possibilities

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Multimodal composing holds rich possibilities for bilingual students to leverage multiple resources in ways that engage and develop aspects of their identities. Along with these possibilities, recent work shows how multimodal composition offers opportunities to learn about language, content, and composing. This presentation examines these learning opportunities within one bilingual adolescent's digital multimodal composing practices. It explores how Addison, a seventh-grade student proficient in both Spanish and English, created three digital multimodal texts over the course of 10 home composing sessions. We explore opportunities for learning within multimodal composing, asking how digital multimodal composing encouraged her to recognize and capitalize on distinct learning opportunities.

More specifically, we use activity theory to attend to disjunctures within composing processes. We view these disjunctures as productive tensions between components within an activity. Through an analysis of Addison's composing using multimodal timescapes, three types of disjunctures were observed. Design disjunctures occurred between the subject and tools, and the subject and community, specifically the audience of peers and family members. Content disjunctures occurred between the subject and object, and the subject and tools. Lastly, external disjunctures occurred between the subject and community.

Addison most commonly used a strategy of exploring and adapting digital tools, such as using an online search engine to gather content information. Content disjunctures were addressed by Addison looking outward, to search engines and the participant-observer researcher. Addison also addressed design disjunctures by looking inward, or relying upon her own skills and familiarity with composing options.

This study offers insight into mechanisms that make multimodal composing both possible and productive for emergent bilingual students. Addison learned about what it means to be a veterinarian through this project, she also developed digital literacies, learned to compose for varied audiences, and engage in multimodal code-meshing.