



MORAVIAN COLLEGE

EDUC 702: Reflective Practice Seminar

Fall 2013

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Why Action Research?!

“Sustainable improvements in education cannot normally be achieved without teachers’ commitment to the intellectual and scientific task of researching their own practice, as a part of the wider process of improving the curriculum, the school, and the work of education for communities and whole societies” (p. 74).

- Kemmis, S. (1995). Some ambiguities in Stenhouse’s notion of ‘the teacher as researcher’: Towards a new resolution. In J. Rudduck (Ed.), *An education that empowers: A collection of lectures in memory of Lawrence Stenhouse* (pp. 73–114). Philadelphia, PA: Multilingual Matters.

“Teachers can and will invest heavily in reform when the problems they confront are recognized as legitimate and the outcomes promised or hoped for will make a positive difference in the quality of the educational experience had by children and enhance teachers’ learning” (p. 144).

- Bullough, R. V., Jr. (2000). Teacher education reform as a story of possibility: Lessons learned, lessons forgotten—The American Council on Education’s Commission on Teacher Education *Teaching and Teacher Education* 16, 131–145.

“Teachers need the opportunity to study their own practice in the context of the research findings from a variety of disciplines and from multiple theoretical perspectives. High academic standards within the professional development program must be linked clearly to student engagement, student achievement, and a commitment to social justice within specific classrooms, schools, and communities” (p. 271).

- Shosh, J.M., & Zales, C.R. (2007). Graduate teacher education as inquiry: A case study. *Teaching Education* 18 (3), 257-275.

“Only through the process of conducting research in the classroom do teachers not only change their practice but also generate important new understandings for themselves and the profession” (p. 116)

- Shosh, J.M. (2012). How teachers define and enact reflective practice: It’s all in the action.” *Action Researcher in Education* 3 (1), 104-119.

Essential Questions

1. How does systematic reflection on my teaching and my students’ learning lead to changes in practice, which promote greater student engagement and student achievement?
2. What do participant observation, student work, and student interview/survey data tell me about teaching and learning in my classroom context?

Objectives

1. To collect, code, analyze, and interpret data for the action research thesis.
2. To examine a philosophical base for reflective teaching and learning.
3. To analyze praxis through traditional, progressive, dialogical, feminist, social constructivist, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic lenses.

Required Texts

- Delpit, L. (2012). *"Multiplication is for white people:" Raising expectations for other people's children*. New York: The New Press.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- McNiff, J. (2013). *Action research: Principles and practice*. (3rd Ed.) New York: Routledge.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Selected Resources

- Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (5th Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Cazden, C.B. (2001). *Classroom discourse: The language of teaching and learning*. (2nd Ed.). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Clandinin, D. J. (Ed.). (2007). *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. (2009). *Inquiry as stance: practitioner research for the next generation*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Cole, A. L., & Knowles, G. K. (2000). *Researching teaching: Exploring teacher development through reflexive inquiry*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). (2011). *Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Elbow, P. (1998). *Writing without teachers* (2nd Ed.). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Ely, M., with Anzul, M., Friedman, T., Garner, D., & Steinmetz, A. M. (1991). *Doing qualitative research: Circles within circles*. London: Falmer Press.
- Ely, M., Vinz, R., Downing, M., & Anzul, M. (1997). *On writing qualitative research: Living by words*. London: Falmer Press.
- Fresch, M. J. (2008). *An essential history of current reading practices*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Gee, J.P. (2011). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*. (3rd Ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Gubrium, J., & Holstein, J. (Eds.) (2002). *Handbook of interview research: Context and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hendricks, C. (2009). *Improving schools through action research: A Comprehensive guide for educators*. (2nd Ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Holly, M. L., Arhar, J. M., & Kasten, W. C. (2009). *Action research for teachers: Traveling the yellow brick road*. (3rd Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Hubbard, R., & Power, B. (2003). *The art of classroom inquiry: A handbook for teacher-researchers*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

- Kvale, S., & Brinkman, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh: The embodied mind and its challenge to western thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- MacLean, M., & Mohr, M. (1999). *Teacher-researchers at work*. Berkeley, CA: The National Writing Project.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Newman, J. (1998). *Tensions of teaching: Beyond tips to critical reflection*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Reason, P. & Bradbury, H. (2008). *The Sage handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice* (2nd Ed.). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Ridley, D. (2008). *The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Saban, A. (2006). Functions of metaphor in teaching and teacher education: A review essay. *Teaching Education*, 17 (4), 299-315.
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Shosh, J.M., & Zales, C.R. (2007). Graduate teacher education as inquiry: A case study. *Teaching Education* 18 (3), 257-275.
- Shosh, J.M. (2012). How teachers define and enact reflective practice: It's all in the action." *Action Researcher in Education* 3 (1), 104-119.
- Shosh, J.M. (2013). Re-articulating the values and virtues of Moravian action research. In J. McNiff, *Value and virtue in practice-based research* (pp. 107-123). Dorset: September.
- Solomon, M. (1999). *The diagnostic teacher: Constructing new approaches to professional development*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Witherell, C., & Noddings, N. (1991). *Stories lives tell: Narrative and dialogue in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Zeni, J. (Ed.). (2001). *Ethical issues in practitioner research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Assignments and Grading

Each assignment must be included as part of the field log and will constitute 10% of the final course grade. Assignments are due as indicated. Please note that unless a mutually agreeable revised due date is negotiated with the instructor, any late assignment will lose five percentage points for each day it is late, and any assignment not submitted within two weeks of the due date will receive a "0." A student may request in writing to revise and re-submit a single reflective memo or "draft" assignment if the original was completed fully and submitted on time. A mutually agreeable resubmission date must be negotiated with no revised assignments accepted after the final class session. It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for a course. Comenius Center students who wish to disclose a disability and request accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for this course must contact the Dean of the Comenius Center as soon as possible.

1. Researcher Stance & Trustworthiness Statement Draft (September 9)
2. Reflective Memo: John Dewey and My Study (September 23)

3. Literature Review Draft (September 30)
4. Reflective Memo: Paulo Freire and My Study (October 21)
5. Methodological Memo: Mid-Study Data Assessment (October 28)
 - Observational Data
 - Interview/ Survey Data
 - Student Work
6. Reflective Memo: Lisa Delpit and My Study (November 4)
7. Analytic Memo: Coding Index & Coding Graphic Organizer (November 11)
8. Reflective Memo: Lev Vygotsky and My Study (November 18)
9. Analytic Memo: Figurative Language Analysis (December 2)
10. Analytic Memo: Preliminary Theme Statements (December 9)

Attendance

Due to the nature and structure of the seminar, attendance at each meeting is crucial. If you must miss a session, please call the instructor to explain. More than two class absences or a pattern of late arrivals to class may, at the discretion of the instructor, result in a failing grade for the seminar.

Academic Honesty

Collaboration with peers can be valuable in enabling your understanding of various aspects of your work. However, the work you submit must be the result of your individual effort, apart from the collaborative process. You are encouraged, and in some instances, required to use conventional and on-line secondary sources as well. Here, too, the work you submit must be your own. In all cases, cite the sources that you used, and take care to avoid plagiarism. Consult the *Handbook of the American Psychological Association* and the Comenius Center's *Graduate Studies Handbook*. Note that academic dishonesty will result in a zero for the assignment and notification of the Academic Dean, in accordance with Moravian College policy.

Mon., Aug. 26:	Renewing a Collaborative Community of Teacher Researchers
In-Class:	Course Overview Completing the H.S.I.R.B. Process Brainstorming the Researcher Stance & Trustworthiness Statement Transitioning from Annotated Bibliography to Literature Review Discussing the Formation of Teacher Research Support Groups Planning for a Meaningful Semester of Teaching, Learning, and Living
Mon., Sept. 2:	NO CLASS: LABOR DAY
Mon., Sept. 9:	John Dewey: Traditional vs. Progressive Education
Due:	Dewey, Chapters 1-2 McNiff, "Introduction" McNiff, Chapter 1, "What do we know?" Dischley (2012 M.Ed. Thesis), Researcher stance (p. 1-5) Doklan (2011 M.Ed. Thesis), Trustworthiness statement (p. 50-52) Researcher Stance & Trustworthiness Statement Draft (via email)
In-Class:	Discussion of Readings Teacher Research Support Group Formation
Mon., Sept. 16:	John Dewey: Experience and Social Control
Due:	Dewey, Chapters 3-5 McNiff, Chapter 2, "How do we come to know? Linking theory & practice" Literature Review Outline
In-Class:	Discussion of Readings Teacher Research Support Groups
Mon., Sept. 23:	John Dewey: Freedom and Purpose in Progressive Education
Due:	Dewey, Chapters 6-8 McNiff, Chapter 3, "Who has influenced our thinking? Key theorists in action research"

McNiff, Chapter 4, “What do we need to know? Exercising educational influence”
Reflective Memo: John Dewey and My Study (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Initial Coding of Field Log
Teacher Research Support Groups

Mon., Sept. 30: Paulo Freire: A Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Due: Freire, Chapter 1
McNiff, Chapter 5, “How do we do action research? Planning and managing a project”
Field Log
Literature Review Draft (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Teacher Research Support Groups

Mon., Oct. 7: Paulo Freire: The Banking Concept of Education

Due: Freire, Chapter 2
McNiff, Chapter 6, “Monitoring practice, gathering data, generating evidence, and ethics”
Field Log

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Teacher Research Support Groups

Mon., Oct. 14: NO CLASS: FALL BREAK

Mon., Oct. 21: Paulo Freire: Dialogics

Due: Freire, Chapter 3
McNiff, Chapter 7, “Practical issues”
Reflective Memo: Paulo Freire and My Study (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Coding of Field Log Round II
Teacher Research Support Groups

Mon., Oct. 28: Lisa Delpit: Inherent Ability and Achievement Gaps

Due: Delpit, et al., Chapters 1 & 2
McNiff Chapter 8, “Testing the validity of knowledge claims”
Field Log
Methodological Memo: Mid-Study Data Assessment (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Teacher Research Support Groups

Note: November 1 is the last day for Withdrawal with W

Mon., Nov. 4: Lisa Delpit: Educating the Youngest and/or Teaching Adolescents

Due: Delpit, et al., Chapters 3-6 and/or 7-9
McNiff, Chapter 9, “Writing and presenting action research reports”
Field Log
Reflective Memo: Lisa Delpit and My Study (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Coding of Field Log Round III
Teacher Research Support Groups

Mon., Nov. 11: Lev Vygotsky: Learning, Development & Play

Due: Vygotsky, Chapter 6 & 7
McNiff, Chapter 10, “Judging quality and demonstrating impact: The significance of Your action research”
Field Log
Analytic Memo: Coding Index & Coding Graphic Organizer (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Teacher Research Support Groups

Mon., Nov. 18: Lev Vygotsky: Written Language

Due: Vygotsky, Chapter 8
McNiff, Chapter 11, "Action research for personal, social, and institutional transformation"
Reflective Memo: Lev Vygotsky & My Study (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Teacher Research Support Groups

Mon., Nov. 25: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

Mon., Dec. 2: Conducting Post-Study Data Analysis

Due: McNiff, Chapter 12, "Action research for good order"
McNiff, Chapter 13, "Whither action research?"
Shosh (2013), "Re-articulating the values and virtues of Moravian action research"
Analytic Memo: Figurative Language Analysis (as attachment via email)

In-Class: Discussion of Readings
Teacher Research Support Groups

6:00 p.m. Moravian Graduate Education Alumni Advisory Association Wine & Cheese Reception for Thesis Candidates

EDUC 702: Reflective Practice Seminar

**Graded Assignment #1
Researcher Stance & Trustworthiness Statement Draft**

Assignment: After reading Ely's (1997) commentary on stance, McNiff's (2013) reflections on how we come to know, and researcher stance statements from published Moravian graduate education thesis documents, outline and then draft your own stance as a researcher. Be certain to explain what led you to your research question. What are your own epistemological and ontological beliefs? After re-reading the trustworthiness statement from the pilot study you completed in *Teacher as Researcher* and reviewing both Holly, Arhar, and Kasten's (2009) "Ethical Guidelines for Teacher Action Researchers" (p. 171) and Hendricks' (2013) "Determining Ways to Increase Validity" (p. 125-129), draft a trustworthiness statement that explains how you are and will continue to be an ethical teacher action researcher as you conduct your study.

Suggested Response Length: 5-7 page Researcher Stance & 3-5 page Trustworthiness Statement

Criteria for Evaluation: Researcher Stance and Trustworthiness statement drafts will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below.

1. Researcher Stance thoroughly and logically explains how you came to pursue your thesis line of inquiry.
2. Researcher Stance summarizes your personal epistemological and ontological belief system.
3. Trustworthiness Statement explains how you will follow ethical guidelines for teacher action researchers as you conduct your study.
4. Trustworthiness Statement explains how you will remain open to unexpected research findings and how you will be certain to consider multiple points of view as you gather and analyze data.
5. Researcher Stance and Trustworthiness Statements incorporate APA documentation style to credit published authors whose work has influenced your thinking (i.e., Ely; Holly, Arhar, & Kasten; Hendricks; Bogdan & Biklen, McNiff, etc.) and follows the conventions of standard written English.

Due: September 9, 2013

EDUC 702: Reflective Practice Seminar

Graded Assignments 2, 4, 6, and 8
Reflective Memoranda Analyzing Teacher Action Research Data
From a Multiplicity of Perspectives
(Dewey, Freire, Delpit, Vygotsky)

Assignment: Analysis of data within the qualitative research paradigm is most frequently performed as the data are gathered rather than after they have been collected (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). In fact, when conducting teacher action research, changes in practice regularly occur as a result of the ongoing analysis of data (Shosh & Zales, 2005, 2007; Holly, Arhar, & Kasten, 2009; Hendricks, 2013). To examine your data through traditional, progressive, dialogical, feminist, social constructivist, linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic lenses, it will be useful to engage in reflective dialogue with John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Lisa Delpit, Lev Vygotsky, et al. For each reflective memo in this series, identify the five key quotations from *Experience and Education*, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, *Multiplication is for White People...*, or *Mind in Society*, respectively, that are most salient to your teacher action research study. Include these quotations directly in your reflective memo, citing each according to APA or MLA parenthetical documentation style. Then explicate the quotation and its relationship to your study. Be certain to share specific data from your research log in support of your explication. Of course, this may include reference to your thesis proposal, HSIRB proposal, researcher stance, trustworthiness statement, participant observation log entries, salient student work, analytic memoranda, etc.) Explication may be presented in either bulleted or narrative form and will form a crucial part of the analysis of data you will include in your thesis.

Suggested Response Length: 5 double-spaced typed pages

Criteria for Evaluation: Reflective Memoranda will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below.

1. Each reflective memorandum shares a minimum of five salient quotations that are arguably among the most important to the teacher action researcher's study.
2. Each quotation is clearly, concisely, and accurately explicated.
3. Each quotation is clearly connected to the teacher action researcher's study.
4. Specific field log data are analyzed in the context of each quotation.
5. Reflective memoranda follow the conventions of standard written English and appropriate documentation style.

Due: Assignment #2 (Dewey and My Study): September 23, 2013
Assignment #4 (Freire and My Study): October 21, 2013
Assignment #6 (Delpit and My Study): November 4, 2013
Assignment #8 (Vygotsky and My Study): November 18, 2013

EDUC 702: Reflective Practice Seminar

**Graded Assignment #3
Literature Review Draft**

Assignment: Returning to your annotated bibliography from EDUC 700 as a starting point, draft a paper that thoroughly explores your teacher action research topic, building a synthesis of key definitions, research studies, and other salient secondary source material. Note that some selections in your annotated bibliography may no longer be directly relevant to your topic and should not be included in this document. You may also realize that some facets of your topic require further study within the literature. The literature review should not be a string of study summaries, but rather a well-written, well-organized paper that explains your topic thoroughly to an outside audience of professional educators.

Suggested Response Length: 10 - 15 double-spaced typed pages.

Criteria for Evaluation: Literature reviews will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below.

1. Literature review demonstrates an appropriate analysis of existing research pertaining to key themes that are salient to the teacher action research study.
2. Literature review shares only appropriately synthesized content that is clearly relevant to the teacher action research study.
3. Literature review is well organized within and between topics.
4. All statements requiring reference have appropriate citations and page numbers, where applicable.
5. Literature review follows the conventions of standard written English.

Due: September 30, 2013

EDUC 702: Reflective Practice Seminar
Graded Assignment 5
Methodological Memo: Mid-Study Data Assessment

Assignment: At this mid-point in your teacher action research study, you have gathered and conducted preliminary analysis on a considerable amount of data. As you have begun to answer facets of your research question, other questions have arisen. Hence, it may be useful to compose a methodological memorandum to itemize the data you have gathered, to summarize your current insights, and to determine the future direction of your data collection efforts. Hubbard and Power (2003) define methodological notes as “observations involving the research methods you are using.” This memorandum is intended to help you determine how the methods used to date have helped you to answer your research question and to identify what data are missing and how you may best procure those data in a timely fashion. What is your current research question? What sub-questions have emerged? What observational data have you gathered and what have you begun to learn from them? What interview/survey data have you gathered, and what have you begun to learn from them? What student work have you examined, and what have you begun to learn from this work? What data do you still intend to gather in November? Why?

Suggested Response Format: 5 - 7 double-spaced typed pages, organized as follows:

Research Question

Research Sub-Questions

Observational Data

Chronological Roster of Observational Field Log Entries to Date: Topic

- Insight(s) gleaned

Roster of Planned Observations in November

- Rationale for each observation

Interview/Survey Data

Chronological Roster of Surveys/Interviews to Date

- Insight(s) gleaned

Roster of Planned Surveys/Interviews in November

- Rationale for each Survey/Interview

Student Work

Chronological Roster of Student Work examined to Date

- Insight(s) gleaned

Roster of Planned Student Work in November

- Rationale for including planned student work

Criteria for Evaluation: Methodological memorandum will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below.

1. Memo shares research question and sub-questions that have emerged while conducting the teacher action research study.
2. Memo itemizes observational field log entries according to observation date and offers at least one insight gleaned from each entry. Memo shares rationale for gathering specific additional observational data.
3. Memo itemizes interview/survey data according to acquisition date and offers at least one insight gleaned from each interview/survey. Memo shares rationale for gathering specific additional interview/survey data.
4. Memo itemizes student work examined for the study and offers at least one insight gleaned from each work sample. Memo shares rationale for gathering specific additional student work.
5. Methodological memorandum follows the conventions of standard written English.

Due: October 28, 2013

EDUC 702: Reflective Practice Seminar

**Graded Assignment #7 (& #10)
Coding Index, Coding Graphic Organizer, & Preliminary Theme Statements**

Assignment: In the fifth edition of *Qualitative Research for Education*, Bogdan & Biklen (2007) state that, “Developing a coding system involves several steps: You search through your data for regularities and patterns as well as for topics your data cover, and then you write down words and phrases to represent these topics and patterns. These words and phrases are coding categories” (p. 161). Throughout the data collection period, you have read and re-read your field log to assign preliminary codes. As your data collection nears its end, continue to code your field log, including participant observation entries, salient student work, surveys, interviews, and questionnaires. Then prepare an alphabetized index of your codes, indicating log page numbers and codes that are closely related. Then prepare a graphic organizer that visually displays your codes in titled “bins.” Finally, make a single-sentence preliminary theme statement to correspond to each bin. (See Dischley, 2012, p. 107-108). Be certain that the statement you make may be supported by the data within your field log. Ely, Anzul, Friedman, Garner, & Steinmetz (1991) remind us, “There is no escape. Making categories means reading, thinking, trying out tentative categories, changing them when others do a better job, checking them until the very last piece of meaningful information is categorized and, even at that point, being open to revising the categories” (p. 145).

Suggested Response Length: One alphabetized coding index; one graphic organizer; one roster of theme statements

Criteria for Evaluation: This single analytic memo, which includes coding index, graphic organizer, and preliminary theme statement roster will constitute 20% of the final course grade for EDUC 702. This memorandum will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below.

1. Alphabetized index of codes corresponds to paginated field log data and links codes that are similar to one another.
2. Graphic organizer places related codes into titled “bins.”
3. Memorandum presents meaningful theme statements that the researcher certifies are supported by field log data.
4. Theme statements offer preliminary answers to research question and/or sub-questions.
5. Analytic memorandum follows the conventions of standard written English.

Due: On or before December 9, 2013

EDUC 702: Reflective Practice Seminar

Graded Assignment #9
Analytic Memo: Figurative Language Analysis

Assignment: In their *Philosophy in the Flesh*, Lakoff and Johnson (1999) remark that, “The fact that abstract thought is mostly metaphorical means that answers to philosophical questions have always been, and always will be mostly metaphorical” (p. 7). In his text *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method*, Gee (1999) cites Lakoff (1987) and Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to remind those conducting discourse analysis that metaphors often shed insight into speakers’ operative cultural models, adding, “Very often people are unaware of the full significance of these metaphors, which usually have come to be taken for granted” (p. 69). As you re-read your field log, locate the ten most salient examples of figurative language that appear in your data. Pay particular attention to your observer comments and interview transcripts when initially looking for these examples. For each example be certain to:

1. Identify the speaker.
2. Indicate the field log page and line number(s).
3. Explain the speaker’s likely intended meaning.
4. Explicate the literal meaning of the figurative language.
5. Explore the significance of the speaker’s use of this particular figurative language to make a comparison of one thing to another. What, if anything, does this indicate about the speaker’s operative cultural model?

Suggested Response Length: 5 double-spaced typed pages in log format

Criteria for Evaluation: Figurative language analytic memos will be evaluated on the criteria listed below.

1. Analytic memorandum shares ten or more salient examples of figurative language that appear in the field log. Each example is cross-referenced to specific page and line number(s) within the field log.
2. Researcher shares a plausible explanation of the speaker’s intended meaning for each example.
3. Researcher shares the literal meaning of the speaker’s words for each example.
4. Researcher analyzes the significance of the speaker’s use of figurative language.
5. Analytic memorandum follows the conventions of standard written English.

Due: December 2, 2013
