[THE RESEARCHER & THE RESEARCH]

For three years, I was a recipient of J. Harste Alternative Literacies Fellowship that supports literacy scholars who engage in innovative, cutting-edge studies, expanding the traditional boundaries of educational research. This study was additionally funded by Institute for Advanced Study. And as always, I am thankful to the family of Sergio Anselmi for their hospitality during my stay in Buenos Aires and for helping me to grow organically as a scholar.

¡GRACIAS POR TODO!

Suriati Abas | suriati.abas@oneonta.edu
Department of Elementary Education & Reading
State University of New York College at Oneonta


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According to MacGillivray & Brenner (2009), there are six features for describing a crisis:

- Scale or effect on an individual, a family, a community and/or the world
- Visibility
- Frequency of occurrence
- Impact
- Expectedness or level of predictability
- Public perception and attitude towards the crisis
A PERSPECTIVE

Literacy is a social practice or, something people do to bring justice to the forefront (Abas, 2021).
What are the methods used by literacy scholars?

What are the methods used by linguistic landscape scholars?

WHERE IS THE GAP?
RELEVANT STUDIES ON LITERACY IN TIMES OF CRISIS

• Pahl, et.al (2020) - living literacies, co-production and articulating researchers’ experiences
• Young (2020) - BLM movement and academic literacies, investigating online
• Abas (2019) - critical literacy, a fragment of a large study
• Bedford & Brenner (2010) - new literacy practices, small sampling dependent on participants' memory

THE GAP:
[1] Not many literacy studies attend to out-of-school contexts in times of crisis. [2] Understanding of literacy in times of crisis are limited to secondhand experiences.
RELEVANT STUDIES IN LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPES

- **Abas & Damico (2018)** - critical consciousness and literacy artefacts in a public university space
- **Waksman & Shohamy (2016)** - contestations against centennial decor
- **Seals (2015)** - socially silenced immigrant community
- **Shiri (2015)** - language use
- **Hanauer (2013, 2015)** - typologies of protest signs

THE GAP:

[1] Data collection mostly involves categorizing, quantifying and analyzing signs.
[2] Photographic data were taken without a systematic approach
I argue for a systematic approach by inviting researchers to think about the subjectivities of managing huge photographic data in dual-layered crises.
BRIEF CONTEXT

• A study done in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 2016 to 2019
• The 40th commemoration of "The Day of Memory, Truth and Justice" - a historical moment to honor the 30 000 people who disappeared during the final military dictatorship (1976-1983)
• Dual-layered crises: a national commemoration and a public protest
• Ethnographic methods – photographic data, interview data, multimodal fieldnotes
• Participants – college students, student activists, volunteer artists, people on the streets who are engaged in the works of literacy
Suriati Abas, the researcher-photographer

I adapted Lee's (2003) model of "information surrounding a user"
ETHICAL DILEMMAS

• How did my positionality influence the construction of photographic data and the stories that I tell in my study?
• What should/should not be included?
• How did access to capture photos in open, public spaces affect the study?
## FILTERING PHOTOGRAPHIC DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedures</th>
<th>Number of photos</th>
<th>Duration of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$(n1=322, n2=158)$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[4] Select three photos from each theme</td>
<td>$n3 = 9$</td>
<td>Jan–Feb 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[6] Select photos for interviews</td>
<td>$n4 = 6$</td>
<td>May 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$€$ stands for the total numbers of photos (inclusive of duplicates),
n1 stands for photos taken at and, within Plaza de Mayo,
n2 stands for photos taken at the public institution
n3 stands for the total number of photos used for further analysis
n4 stands for the total number of photos used for photo elicitation interviews
“The social meanings of the material placement of signs” (Scollon & Scollon, 2003, p. 211).
GEOSEMIOTICS AS A THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK
LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT RESEARCHING IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

• Before fieldwork – "Plan and think of some contingency plans"

• During fieldwork – "Go with the flow...."

• After fieldwork. Ask yourself:
  - "What is the data saying?"
  - "What is in the news?"
  - "How do I make connections between what I saw, heard, discovered and read?"


