

Framing & Reflection

Short Assignment 4

Cracking Codes

“Cracking codes.”

Because I believe that creative and critical writing are inextricable from one another, I’ve been trying to find a way to incorporate a genre translation into ENGL 131. I’ve sequenced this in between a short traditional (creative topic) argumentative piece intended to address discourse communities (Swales) and an annotated bibliography that will lead into Major Project 2.

Short Assignment 4 further emphasizes the idea that language varieties are a “code” and not any more legitimate than another. By this point, students have already “deconstructed” a scholarly article for a hands-on analysis of rhetorical moves. This SA’s week looks at prescriptive and descriptive grammar, and how that plays into genre and specific genre rhetoric.

Here students need to pay careful attention to how and why they revise rhetorical situations--writer, subject, audience--in a “genre translation.” By allowing creative and multimodal genres, it gives students the room to be individual and expressive, but also requires higher critical thought about the choices they’re making and why. So, in a way, one could even consider it a rhetorical analysis.