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# Contents

## Foreword

In editing this fifth edition of English Scholarship Beyond Borders, I feel privileged to be able to present what I believe is a landmark issue for our journal. When I look back on the many issues I have edited for several journals, I cannot remember editing so many papers in one issue that not only claim to be breaking new ground. They actually do so, and each one in a very different way. These are not papers by authors playing the publish or perish game. They all contribute ideas, research and practices that can inspire beneficial change.

In our first paper, Adamson et al. adopt an approach that is both novel and insightful; "a collaborative autoethnography" that examines the publication experiences of a varied group of Japan-based scholars. I believe this approach could be translated easily to other contexts, but each author already has a different profile and unique, relatable and shareable experience. The study is ground-breaking in that it creates a collaborative and supportive environment that allows the co-authors to reveal real experience in a systematic and productive way. At the same time, by focusing on lived-experience, it presents real insights into publication practices that we can all both learn from and empathize with. This study reflects a long-term collaboration in a very diverse group of scholars.

A different type of long-term collaboration is reported in Unger and Olifer. When a linguist and a mathematician work so closely together, previous views of both language and learning are challenged. They point out that mathematics is also a 'language' and that maths, visual representation and word-based languages all contribute to our understanding of meaning creation. Unger and Olifer make excellent use of a theory that arguably has not received the recognition it deserves, Tomasello's usage-based theory of language acquisition. They also take us across theoretical borders in that they provide a kind of interpretive comparison between usage-based theory and other alternative theories. It may be the norm to stay within one school of thought. However, I have believed for some time that a holistic approach to research would require us to cross beyond one narrow theoretical area into another, based on the assumption that valid theories of acquisition can be expected to reach comparable conclusions through different means. Unger and Olifer help us move between and across theories. This paper is both detailed in its analysis of data and original in its approach to interpreting the data, data which is made available to the researcher interested in counter analysis.

Tanju Deveci, a specialist in both ESL and lifelong learning, considers literacy development from the angle of students' perceptions in our third contribution. Using his specialized knowledge of lifelong learning, he is able to present a persuasive argument in favour of home learning. As former students, fellow sufferers, do we not all tend to lend a negative connotation to 'homework'? When we became teachers, what did we do about this? On the other hand, 'home learning' is self-motivated and we can understand how the students in this sample view home learning as something positive. The key appears to be that it stands more chance of meeting real learning needs of students. Homework is a punishment for the innocent, home learning is life enhancing. A simple message perhaps, but potentially so powerful that it can transform the way we help students learn.

Msukisi Howard Kepe takes us across the border into yet another world in his study on translanguaging in a South African school. This study shows us again that any concept must take on a new shades of meaning whenever it is reapplied to a new context. English is characterized as an additional language, not as a foreign language, in this context. Kepe's study

shows us how translingualism is a reality that cannot be ignored. It should be exploited as a benefit rather than as a deficit. While this study has a very specific geographical location, the kind of impasse in language policy it describes is by no means unique in a world that is still having difficulty throwing off its colonial heritage. Kepe is an enthusiastic and energetic presenter and teacher and his proposed solutions to this impasse often refer to a passion for teaching in contexts that could easily demotivate. Overall a fascinating glimpse into the real world of South Africa. We can only admire the courage of the teacher-researchers who engage in the search for solutions to inherited problems.

 I hope by now you will have agreed that I did not exaggerate when claiming this was a very special journal issue for an organization that aims or even claims to cross borders of all types without losing track of specific local issues. We have not quite finished yet in this argument. In a final paper, Ahmet Acar, in the Turkish context, takes a critical look at the Common European Framework both in itself and in the way it is being applied in the Turkish education system. He proposes an action-oriented, project-based approach, contrasting this with a task-based or communicative approach. He adopts Puren's theories from a Francophone perspective in contrast to dominant Anglophone communicative paradigms.  In this way, as the host of our next 2020 conference, Acar takes us into a literature many of us never access. He announces a new gateway to research in his own context and paves the way for interesting cross border discussions, debates and challenges between and beyond anglophone and non-anglophone worlds.

All of these papers deserve a careful reading given the time and effort that went into their creation of truly new knowledge. The non-blind review I personally observed between three of the researchers, Adamson, Kepe and Deveci, generated many hundreds of exchanges on google-docs, regularly announced in my own inbox throughout the non-blind review process. As a long term end of career editor, I doubt if there has even been a more creative, thorough interactive review process. The interactive data between three researchers from very different worlds embodies what ESBB attempts to achieve. It is available for a follow up to ESBB study into non-blind review. Could it be not only more transparent and interactive but also more demanding and rigorous than blind review? A question for future investigation.

# Exploring the publication practices of Japan-based EFL scholars through Collaborative Autoethnography

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## Abstract

This study has investigated Japan-based English language scholars' experiences of and investment in academic publishing. Using a Collaborative Autoethnographic (CAE) approach (Chang, Ngunjiri & Hernandez, 2013), a diverse group of Japanese (n=2) and non-Japanese scholars (n=5) teaching and researching English explored and co-constructed their narratives about publishing practices. Analyzing the findings from our CAE through the lens of Darvin and Norton's (2015) work into identity, capital and ideology, a diversity of experiences was revealed in the process of writing for academic publication. A common narrative was that academic writing problems were shared by Japanese and non-Japanese scholars. Commonalities were also evident among experienced and less experienced scholars in dealing with journal editorial feedback, particularly the pressure exerted by editors on authors to cite works by the editors themselves, and also a lack of mediation by supervising editors when reviewers' feedback differed. One notable difference was that non-Anglophone scholars felt unable to challenge the rejection of the work, compared with Anglophone scholars who were often able to negotiate successfully with gatekeepers. Further to this, the CAE facilitated the sharing of views on how institutional and personal ideologies and working conditions shaped perceptions of the value of academic publication.
**Keywords:** capital, collaborative autoethnography, ideology, identity, Japan, publication

## Introduction

In this study, we explore issues surrounding English language academic publication among Japan-based scholars engaged in university English language teaching. Previous studies reveal publication-related problems among researchers of English as an Additional Language (EAL) from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds (Flowerdew, 2001, 2007, 2008; Lillis & Curry, 2010; Salager-Meyer, 2008, 2013). In order to explore this further, this study considers the experiences of a cross-section of Japan-based scholars (n = 7), both Japanese and non-Japanese, with a balance of genders and a variety of experiences in publication. To some extent, this diversity of participant backgrounds working in a non-centre academic location such as Japan responds to recent calls by Corcoran, Englander and Muresan (2019) to broaden research into academic publishing. The Collaborative Autoethnography (CAE) (Chang, Ngunjiri & Hernandez, 2013) methodology of

gathering data on publication experiences and perceptions has been adopted as it encourages participants to both write their own narratives whilst helping co-construct those of others on a closed Google Drive site similar to a conversation. With a large amount of intertwining narratives, we have chosen to analyze findings based on an adapted framework from the work of Darvin and Norton (2015), who explore identity, capital and ideology issues originally among learners. This framework has been superimposed upon our teacher - researcher experiences in publishing.

The study was conducted over 18 months from July 2017 to December 2018 and has a dual purpose of gaining insights into our own EFL publication issues working within Japanese academia and forming a community of publication practice in which participants can interact and support each other on publication endeavours in the long term.

## Literature Review

As our study addresses themes of publication practices and ideologies within Japanese academia at the tertiary level, our review of the literature firstly addresses issues pertinent to academic labour in Japanese academia in the tertiary sector. We then move on to issues related to our academic communities and networks, particularly how scholars are positioned and negotiate their positioning within and across them. Finally, the larger issues of academic publishing are explored from both authorial and editorial perspectives.

### *Japanese academia*

The literature surrounding Japanese academia at the tertiary level, particularly in terms of the positioning and status afforded to English language faculty, has shown elements of marginalization of non-language faculty (McVeigh, 2002). This mirrors broader trends worldwide (Turner, 2012) and is exacerbated, in part, by larger neo-liberal forces impacting tertiary education and the encroachment of managerialism (Hadley, 2015). One sign of this is illustrated by McCrostie (2010) who reported on the bias in mostly English language teaching recruitment against foreign faculty though predominantly Japanese language-only job adverts, signalling a preference for Japanese nationals for tenured positions. McCrostie and Spiri (2010) also noted the short-term thinking by Japanese administration who placed "expiry dates" (para 12) on the employment of foreign English faculty, preferring them to move to other universities or return to their home countries. This limited view on foreign faculty clearly inhibits long-term research planning. With many non-Japanese faculty securing only part-time or limited term contracts, McCrostie and Spiri (2008, para 1) termed the resulting annual employment search by non-Japanese as a frenetic "musical chairs," with Hall (1998) earlier noting a polarization between tenured Japanese faculty and adjunct, limited-term contract non-Japanese as a form of "academic apartheid" (p. 80). The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (known as MEXT, 2016) released data for 2015 showing that of 20, 756 foreign faculty employed in Japanese universities, 13, 021 (63%) were part-timers, compared to only 52% of Japanese employed on a part-time basis. The

proportion of foreigners attaining full-time status (37%) was then considerably lower than the 48% of Japanese in such employment status. Houghton, (in Houghton and Rivers, 2013), conducted a study of contract status EFL teachers at a large, unstated university in Japan and discovered that all Japanese nationals at the said university had tenured status while all non-Japanese teachers did not. Instead all were employed on a "limited, yet renewable five-year contract" (Houghton, 2013, p.70). However, despite this, Kubota's (2002) perspective on western, white male 'native' teachers in Japan (2002) alluded to their privilege in easily securing work in English language teaching based mainly on their gender and ethnicity, rather than teaching competence. The insecure employment of many part-time, contracted "contingent" faculty (Gaillet & Guglielmo, 2014), whether Japanese or non-Japanese, in Japan mirrors worldwide trends in higher education, with the consequence that the precariousness of their employment status places pressure to publish in order to attain the more secure tenured ("non-contingent") faculty status. Gaillet and Guglielmo (2014) advise that this move up to tenure can be achieved by collaborative research and active networking, as outlined in the Mexican case by Encinas-Prudencio, Sanchez-Hernandez, Thomas-Ruzic, Cuantlapantzi-Pichon and Aguilar-Gonzalez (2019). Encinas-Prudencio et al. (2019) do though highlight the complexities inherent in writing in English whilst studying in Spanish, presenting some students with challenges to engage in research bilingually. More importantly, however, larger issues of doing research whilst lacking the funds, resources and long-term presence at an institution are seen by Belcher (2007) as detrimental to the research profile of an institution; Swales (1987, p. 43) termed this disadvantaged status as "off-network[ed]" from the mainstream access to financial and material resources enjoyed by tenured faculty. In more recent ethnographic studies, Lillis and Curry (2010) explored the ways Eastern European scholars negotiated the journey into English-language publication by accessing personal networks beyond their local institutions. This process of compensating for a paucity of local resources, advice and opportunities to attend research conferences appears as key in overcoming the disadvantages of a geographically peripheral location and personal employment status.

Returning to the Japanese tertiary context, recent government initiatives to internationalize higher education by offering more content programs and courses through English Medium Instruction (EMI) and attracting more non-Japanese students is reported as being undirected in its spread across Japanese universities, with elite universities taking more leadership (Stigger, 2018). The expectation that the government initiative would lead to an influx of more foreign faculty and an improvement in employment opportunities for non-Japanese faculty is assessed by Burgess, Gibson, Klaphake and Selzer (2010, p. 470) as follows:

> ...the situation of foreign teachers in Japan as peripheral and expendable seems to have changed little and may even have got worse.

Burgess et. al. (2010) base this claim on analysis of employment adverts for foreign faculty by elite universities receiving government funding to become "global". Their findings reveal that the government funds were given on a limited 5-year basis and, as a consequence, job descriptions

stipulated an exact 5 year (non-renewable) limit on employment. This casts doubt on the intention of those universities to regard new foreign staff as long-term members of faculty. Tsuruta (2013) reports on Japanese university management and faculty resistance to this recent push towards internationalization as it appears to threaten the status quo by forcing Japanese faculty to teach in English, an unfair demand frequently beyond their linguistic capabilities. As a consequence, overall employment of non-Japanese faculty remains low at around 4% of the total faculty (Huang, 2009). Whitsed and Wright (2011, p. 29) summarize the dilemma for foreign teachers in Japanese higher education where they are "simultaneously positioned 'inside and outside' of the dominant culture as long-term residents."

### *Communities of practice and networks*

The problematic positioning of foreign faculty within Japanese academia then leads us to explore the nature of our academic communities. Lave and Wenger's (1991) research into corporate institutions is frequently used as an analogy for this exploration. The concept of a "community of practice" (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991) is used to investigate the internal system or mechanics of a community in which its members share a common purpose. The ways in which new members interact and progress in the community towards more a stable, accepted status is seen as the journey from the "periphery" towards more central positions of authority and agency, a process called "legitimate peripheral participation" (p. 29) where experienced members and newcomers are envisaged in an apprenticeship relationship.

Superimposing the CoP analogy on to educational institutions and even larger fields of study is a convenient and clarifying means to position academics; however, problems occur in this model of analysis when scholars work simultaneously in various institutions, as is the case for many contingent faculty out of economic necessity, or even for scholars working in one institution but affiliated with multiple faculties or committees, as is common practice for English language faculty allocated to teaching roles across the curricula. This affiliation to "overlapping communities of practice" (James, 2007, p. 133) tends to blur community boundaries and in the process leads to the formulation of scholars' hybrid academic identities as behaviour, loyalties and language use require "fluidity" (Clegg, 2008, p. 332). A possible alternative to CoP could be that of "networks of practice" (Brown & Duguid, 2001), or more recently "individual networks of practice" (INoP) (Zappa-Hollman & Duff, 2014, p. 2), which look at how people are connected within and across communities. Instead of, or as a supplement to, understanding the system and its culture and languages as a focus of attention as in CoP, the use of networks or networking places the person as the focus of attention and gives a wider, not exclusively institutionally-bound picture of a scholar's "social interactional landscape" (Zappa-Hollman & Duff, 2014, p. 7). Curry and Lillis (2010) have utilized this framework of analysis as a means to understand the diverse journeys into publication by European scholars, and they see key roles for emerging, multilingual scholars in the "brokers" (p. 283) they access to provide academic knowledge or connect them with those who do.

*Academic publishing*

For this final section of the literature review, we explore academic publishing from both the well-documented multilingual scholars' authorial experiences in negotiating peer review in English language journals and, importantly, from journal editorial and reviewer perspectives. As a caveat to this widened perspective, we also consider all scholars' journeys into publication, whether multilingual (non-native speaker) or native-speaker Anglophone, as all requiring representation in the discussion.

Much research into academic publishing has focused on the struggles of the multilingual scholar in negotiating the peer review process with editors and reviewers of center, Anglophone journals. Studies report inherent bias by Anglophone journal gatekeepers towards work by multilingual scholars labelled as less than native-like in language use or as dealing with content deemed as irrelevant to center readership (Canagarajah, 1996; Flowerdew, 2001, 2007, 2008). This normative pressure is termed as the exercise of "centering forces" (Lillis, 2013, p. 111), usually by journal editors and reviewers, but also by university and government bodies which evaluate scholarly work. More recently, research has shifted away from simply the recognition of this bias towards strategies to overcome these linguistic and geographical barriers (Lillis, 2013; Lillis & Curry, 2010). Notably, research by Lillis and Curry (2010) explores the networking that multilingual scholars engaged in to compensate for the lack of locally available academic resources needed to achieve publication. In a sense, this echoes Block's (2018) calls for language educators to proactively extend the empowerment of periphery students in educational contexts to the wider social sphere by making them aware of the value of their first language (L1) literacies in L2 academic writing production. One specific example of this wider role for journal editors and reviewers was put forward by Salager-Meyer (2008, 2013) and Paltridge (2013) who advocate a closer supportive/mentoring relationship between multilingual scholars and journal editors to bridge the linguistic shortfalls in multilingual scholars' writing and raise their profiles in the academic community. Corcoran, Englander and Muresan (2019) most recently explored the diverse local means such multilingual scholars embark upon to achieve publication, placing great emphasis on collaboration and networking.

The underlying issues stimulating this growth of research into the multilingual (non-native speaker) scholar's problems with publishing in English were identified by Fitzpatrick (2011) as the increasing pressure on academics, in general, to publish more in English from the institutional and governmental levels. Added to this pressure is the field-specific peer review process which often manifests itself in blind review circumstances of harsh "pit bull" reviewing (Walbot, 2009, p. 24) where fault-finding "takes precedence" (Martin, 2008, p. 302) over constructive feedback. For emerging scholars, this can be daunting if they seek to challenge mainstream beliefs about research and writing (Mignolo, 2011), so awareness of repercussions when doing so is essential (Harwood & Hadley, 2004). Bitchener (2018) and Hyland (2016) question whether this is a challenge solely for periphery, multilingual scholars and state that centre, Anglophone scholars also require academic writing guidance in language, structure and content. The fundamental argument that "periphery" (Canagarajah, 1996, p. 442) publication of research originating from

outside of the Anglophone center as representing "marked" (Lillis, Magyar, & Robinson-Pant, 2010, p. 783) academic knowledge production is then argued by Hyland as failing to recognize that academic writing and research should not be distinguished by a lack of 'native'-like publication competence but is a skill acquired by experience. To counter this imbalance in awareness of bias and polarization in the centre versus periphery academic labelling and therefore potential stigmatization, more development is required among journal staff to challenge their perceptions of what constitutes valid research and writing emanating from any geographical context. This is seen in Adamson and Muller (2012) in efforts at Asian-based journals to unpack such reviewer perceptions and Adamson (2012) in initiatives to actively sensitize reviewers - both Anglophone and multilingual - to these issues through mentoring.

## Methodology

### *Data-collection*

We have adopted a Collaborative Autoethnographic (CAE) approach (Chang, Ngunjiri & Hernandez, 2013; Allen-Collinson, 2013; Bochner & Ellis, 1995) for this study as it encapsulates the joint-narrativizing purpose intended for the purpose of gathering data on our beliefs towards publishing, and also, importantly, directly aids in the creation of a community, albeit online. Chang et al. (2013, p. 24) note that individual narratives cannot achieve the same "synergy and harmony" as a CAE, which more actively encourages the "collective exploration of researcher subjectivity" (p. 25). In the process of co-constructing our narratives, we have stressed the sharing of "critical incidents" (Butterfield, Borgen, Amundson, & Maglio, 2005, p. 480), the key experiences underlying our beliefs. In CAE research, collaborators question, support, and elicit more information about such incidents, creating a natural, dialogic process which builds a conversational flow through the CAE and also holds the potential to express "counter-narratives" (Andrews, 2004, p. 1) when participants feel they have been stigmatized.

Historically, the phrase Collaborative Autoethnography has developed over time from three main key concepts: Collaboration, together with *Ethnography*, the systematic study of people and cultures, and *autobiography,* which refers to the study of self. According to Chang et al. (2013), referencing these latter "two conceptual opposites" is "oxymoronic" as they are quite contradictory to each other, posing the question "How can a study of self be done collaboratively?" (2013, p. 17). As a group, we have approached this by committing ourselves to a process of frank and open self-disclosure and dialogue through a closed-source Google Doc that was only accessible to participants of this study. The subsequent analysis was also conducted by four members of the group, whose contributions are reflected in the order of listed authors of this article.

### *Participants*

There were initially nine participants involved in this study. Of these, one pulled out midway through the first year, while another pulled out several months later, leaving seven members who

provided further data through to the final stages. The group consisted of four females, two males, and one genderqueer, with ages ranging from 33 to 57 (mean age of 45) at the time of commencement in August 2017. At the early stages of this study, all members were asked to provide brief details on the highest degrees they had obtained and their personal experience of publishing and editing to date. All participants had obtained a Master's degree or higher, with two pursuing a doctorate and three have reached the Doctorate level. Likewise, all had indicated some degree of publication experience. However, academic paper editorial experience varied from none to experienced editor. All participants are currently employed as teachers at the tertiary level in Japan ranging in experience and are presently involved with academic writing projects. This information was acquired from a shared Google Drive file whereby participants gave brief self-introductions. Three members of the group are colleagues at the same institution, but the other three are spread out at further locations across Japan. See Table 1 below for basic details of the participants in this study.

**Table 1: Participant backgrounds**

| Pseudonym | Nationality | Gender or sexual identity/ preferred pronoun | Age * | Qualification | Authorial experience | Editorial experience |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Peter | British | male/he | 57 | MA/Ed.D. | Experienced | Experienced |
| Jennifer | British | female/she | 55 | MA/Ph.D. | Experienced | Experienced |
| Daniel | Filipino | genderqueer/ they | 37 | MA/taking Ph.D. | Novice | none |
| Susan | American | lesbian/she | 44 | MA | Novice | none |
| Megumi | Japanese | female/she | 49 | 2 MAs | Experienced | Experienced |
| David | British | male/he | 41 | MA/Ph.D. | Some experience | Some |
| Ayako | Japanese | female/she | 33 | MA/taking Ph.D. | Novice | none |

*Denotes age at the commencement of this project

Further to the information on our profiles in table 1, we also compiled individual bio profiles which were intended to cast light on our personal histories and core beliefs.

### *Bio profiles*

Peter's regional UK school was distinctly multicultural. Later, studying in Germany at the undergraduate level in German-medium content also brought him away from the Anglocentric world of academic communication in early adulthood. He has worked in Thailand, Japan, Germany and the UK in ELT.

Jennifer's secondary education in the UK was very white, middle-class, and monolingual, and as a reaction to this, she studied languages at university and spent a year studying in what was then the Soviet Union. During doctoral studies in London, she was comfortable in a very diverse community with a very strong left-wing faculty. She has in the past found it difficult to bring her political views into her research in Japan until a recent narrative study with Filipino teachers.

Daniel has an MA in English language and literature and is a candidate for a Ph.D. in Language Education at a university in the Philippines. Before moving to Japan, they taught in the Philippines and Indonesia. Currently, they is writing a dissertation about translingualism.

Susan grew up in a liberal but very white city in the US, although she spent her junior year of high school in Colombia. At university, she majored in Latin American Studies and studied in Brazil for one year. She also came out as a lesbian at that time. She taught in Japan for around 15 years before starting graduate school, at which point her identity shifted from "teacher" to include "researcher" and "author" as well.

Megumi teaches academic writing, test-taking skills, sociolinguistics and discourse analysis. She has taught from primary to tertiary. Initially, she worked in Japanese public junior high schools as an English teacher. She received her MA in ELT and Master of Education from UK universities.

David has been a teacher for almost 20 years in Japan and is from a predominantly monocultural rural location in the UK. He was surrounded by foreigners from a young age due to his family's business as a guest house proprietor. This influence led to him learning German and later studying on an erasmus programme during his undergraduate degree. After completing a Ph.D. in blended learning and the use of technology in education, he finds his identity has shifted somewhat from teacher to researcher, to facilitator and now guide.

Ayako has just completed a Ph.D. in a Japanese university. She received her BA, focusing on second/foreign language acquisition in Hawaii, and her MA in Japan. She has researched codeswitching in teacher talk and L1 use, including translation, in the foreign language classroom.

### *Autoethnographic Dialogue*

The fundamental beginnings of this project involved the lead researcher inviting others to comment on three main "frames" (Warwick & Maloch, 2003, p. 59), representing the main themes for our narratives, via a Google Drive file that was created in the spring of 2017. Barkhuizen and Wette (2008) state "narrative frames" (p. 373) are useful tools around which "storied experience"

(p. 374) can be conveyed, providing a loose structure for reflection. Our negotiated three frames were: 1. Authorial/researcher experience and perceptions, 2. Editorial/reviewer experience and perceptions and 3. Japan-based issues regarding publishing. After two months of acquiring suggestions from all contributors, a total of 14 more specific sub-themes related to the main frames were received. All members were encouraged to contribute to discussions that developed over six months on these sub-themes. After completion, a series of comprehensive comments and discussions was recorded amounting to 18 pages of written discourse on all frames and sub-themes. The breakdown of frames and subthemes can be seen in Table 2. below.

**Table 2. Main frames and sub-themes of the autoethnographic dialogue**

| Main frame | Sub-themes |
|---|---|
| 1.<br>Authorial/ researcher experience and perceptions | · Publishing difficulties/experiences with editors from authors' perspectives<br>· Language issues in academic writing for publication purposes<br>· Access to research & knowledge of suitable journals<br>· Researcher identity & gender issues in Japanese academia<br>· Voice & pluralizing academic writing<br>· Writing for publication singly or with others (Communities of writing practice in Japanese academia/language teachers).<br>· Support/training for academic writing for the publication process<br>· Creating manageable research projects<br>· Publishing personal narratives |
| 2.<br>Editorial/ reviewer experience and perceptions | · Academic publishing experiences/difficulties from reviewers' and editors' points of view<br>· Standards and expectations from the reviewer's point of view |
| 3.<br>Japan-based issues regarding publishing | · Academic publishing advice in teaching associations/personal networks and communities<br>· Views on academic publishing in Japan and beyond (indexing, prestige)<br>· Standards and expectations in Japanese academia |

In March 2018 three of us presented a report on the ongoing CAE. One of the key emergent themes was "Affirming agency/identity when publishing and dealing with/resisting power of centering organizations" (Adamson, Fujimoto-Adamson, & Martinez, 2018). Subsequently, we narrowed our research focus to our investment in academic publishing. A further Google Drive document was created to generate further data on our professional identities and contexts and on

our current and envisaged research activities. Participants were invited to contribute on the following five topics:

1. current position and type of institution, and how long we have worked there
2. career path to achieve this position
3. expected or desired future career path/ position
4. ways our positions have influenced our publishing practices
5. any research- or publishing-related differences noticed about our different positions

As the document was a collaborative Google Drive file, all contents were viewable to the group and members were free to comment on points raised or experiences from each individual. Everyone provided frank and honest opinions about their publishing experiences with internal and external factors that may have influenced their production. After two months, 6,400 words of written discourse were obtained. The next stage of data analysis was carried out on both these Google Drive files showcasing autoethnographic discourse from which key discussions and conclusions were drawn.

### *Investment as a Theoretical Framework*
As a theoretical framework, our study draws on the foundational work on identity and investment by Bonny Norton and others (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2019; Norton, 2001, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995). Norton adopts the poststructuralist view that "language constructs our sense of self, and that identity is multiple, changing and a site of struggle" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 36). Identity is also "how a person understands his or her relationship with the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2013, p. 45). Inspired by the social theory of Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1991), Norton proposes the concept of *investment* to explain the relationship between an individual's identity and their commitment to learning a second language (Norton, 2001, 2013; Norton Peirce, 1995). As a sociological construct, investment assumes that identity is complex and dynamic and that the conditions of power in different contexts can position learners in multiple and often unequal ways. More recently, the concept of investment has been re-envisaged by Darvin and Norton (2015) as the intersection of identity, capital and ideology (see Fig. 1).
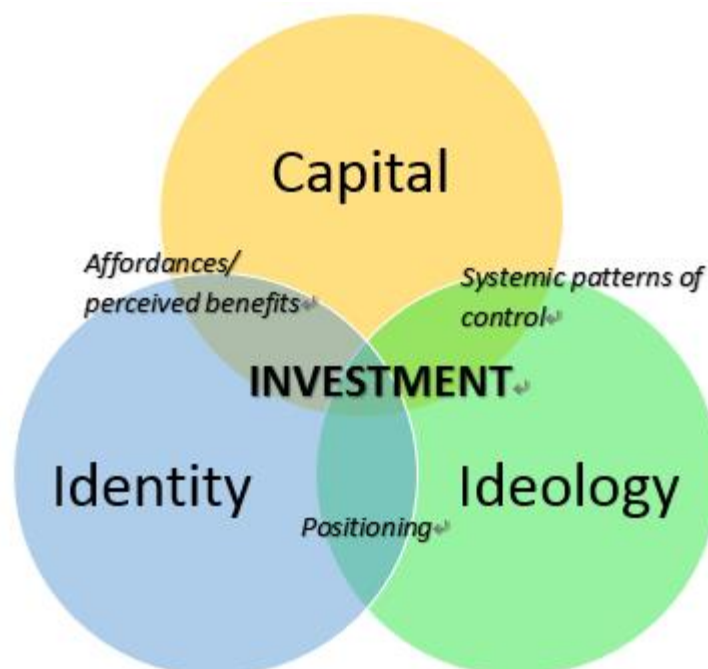
**Figure 1: Model of Investment (Darvin & Norton, 2015)**

*Identity* here refers to the latent variable of how people view themselves and how they are perceived by others through struggles in life, something that "continually changes over time and space" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 45). *Ideology* refers to the "sites of control", where "the management of resources and the legitimization of regulatory systems take place" (p. 42), in other words to the power structures that are inherent in public and private institutions, such as the universities where we work or the journals to which we submit our research. As Darvin and Norton observe, however, such sites of control constitute a "layered space where ideational, behavioural, and institutional aspects interact and sometimes contradict one another" (pp. 43-44). Finally, *capital* refers to the *economic capital* of wealth, property, or income; the *cultural capital* of knowledge and educational background; and the *social capital* of connecting to "networks of power" (p. 44). The location of investment at the intersection of each of the three dimensions highlights the fact that changes in one area, such as through developing one's identity as an academic researcher, is unavoidably affected by conditions of institutional power (ideology) and by access to resources (capital).

According to Darvin and Norton, the three dimensions of identity, ideology and capital are pivotal in the way learners perceive themselves and can influence the time and energy they have or are willing to invest in an activity, such as language learning, or, as in the present case, in academic publishing. We have adopted this model because it allows us to consider affordances and constraints to academic publishing in both specific and wider social and ideological contexts.

The three areas of identity, ideology and capital are the focus of a set of questions formulated by Darvin and Norton (2015, p. 47) to explore learners' language and literacy learning practices. We have adapted these questions to suit our purpose of better understanding our own

investments in academic publishing. Although initially conceived as a framework for understanding language learning rather than academic publishing, we see the categories of identity, ideology and capital as having considerable explanatory power in our own career histories and experiences. Darvin and Norton (2019) themselves use their model of investment to examine their own collaborative writing experiences, especially from the perspectives of the Anglophone supervisor (Norton) who mentored her student (Darvin from the Philippines) towards publication. Issues of identity, capital and ideology originally explored for learners are superimposed on this supervisory relationship to describe the challenges underpinning Darvin's own "academic socialization" (p. 186), some of which may resonate with our own.

**Findings & Discussion**

In this presentation of our findings, we also interweave key literature into the presentation. Darvin and Norton's (2015) framework is retained as the basic structure around which our findings are focused; however, some sub-questions have been merged or slightly adapted to suit our purposes.

### 1.    Identity (Professional Self)

*a)    How important is academic writing for our current professional identity and our future/imagined professional identity? (i.e., How strongly do we feel about it?)*

The participants identify mainly as educators, describing themselves as "tenured professor" or "contract lecturer" rather than "researcher." Many note that an advanced degree, or even networking, held the key to getting hired for their current position and that research and publications were secondary. Nevertheless, as also advocated by Gaillet and Guglielmo (2014), several participants seem motivated to publish in part because they believe publications will enable them to achieve tenured positions or otherwise advance their careers. Megumi and Daniel, on the other hand, are striving to finish their doctorates, which itself necessitates research and publishing.

Some participants wrote of the influence their colleagues have on their identities and efforts. Susan related that having colleagues actively working on research "propels me to focus more on research as well." On the other hand, David acknowledged the unhealthy competition that can develop at institutions when colleagues attempt to "outperform each other", a view indicative of an unhealthy CoP with an absence of apprenticeship relations (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The more seasoned authors in the group, meanwhile, have broadened their scope from getting published to editing and overseeing journals, and do not aspire to additional responsibilities. This may be because as full professors, they are already heavily involved in research and publishing.

*b)  How much time, effort, and money, have we invested in academic writing?*

All of the participants mentioned ongoing efforts at various levels: as researcher, writer, editor, and/or adviser. David, discussing not just academic writing but other areas as well, wrote about

how his participation affects his identity: "I have invested so much time and energy... that I feel almost obliged to stay and fulfil this role."

In several cases, lengthy efforts were needed to publish a single piece. Peter noted that during his postgraduate studies, his writing was rejected from top journals "time after time," which he called "very discouraging" as feedback frequently took the form of "falsification" (Martin, 2008, p. 302) where editors sought intentionally to find more fault in the content rather than see the overall value of the paper in terms of a balance of its merits and demerits. It seems that part of his professional identity rested on being published in a prestigious journal. David, meanwhile, noted that his persistence paid off when, 17 months after initial submission, a piece of his was finally published. Megumi also discussed persistence, but from another perspective: "As a non-Anglophone researcher, writing a research paper in English is not easy for me, but I can see lots of advantages." It is apparent from these narratives that initial publication was challenging for Anglophone and multilingual non-native speaker scholars alike (Hyland, 2016).

Participants all acknowledged the significant investment of time required to conduct and publish research. While some were quite active in research and publishing despite duties such as committee work and curriculum design, others found it difficult to secure sufficient time for research. The monetary costs of research and publishing, including the sometimes hefty prices of accessing journal articles, were also discussed. In comments resonant with the struggles of "off-network[ed]" scholars (Swales, 1987, p. 43), Ayako noted that she has often had to give up downloading articles because her university did not shoulder the costs. Participants who are full-time faculty members, however, all noted that they currently have access to a limited research budget. Ayako concluded that it can be difficult to balance the monetary demands of research with the time demands; as a part-time worker, she has time but lacks a research budget, while full-time faculty may have research budgets but lack time.

c) *How have we positioned ourselves and been positioned by others in the process of academic publishing (i.e., as novices/experts? as native/non-native speakers? as legitimate/non-legitimate? etc); and*

d) *How do we position other people in the process of academic publishing (i.e. as fair/unfair? Constructive/demoralizing?)*

Discussions of positioning took on a number of dimensions. The main themes include reviewer feedback; identity, language, and voice; publishing costs; and collaboration with other researchers.

In several sections of the CAE, participants discussed their reactions to editor feedback. One common thread was the potential that negative feedback has to demoralize authors and create undue barriers to publishing. Megumi detailed her experience of submitting to conference proceedings a paper based on her presentation and receiving what she felt was an "illogical" request to rewrite the paper, "including its research methods. In that case, I thought that it would have been [a] completely different study. Therefore, I decided to withdraw my submission", a decision which echoes Mignolo's (2011) calls for authors to challenge editorial dogma.

Another difficulty discussed at length was confusing or contradictory feedback. Several of us shared our frustration at receiving widely disparate comments from different readers, such as a highly critical review from one and a positive review from another. A shared opinion was that this may stem from reviewers trying to position themselves as superior, especially when the critical reviews contained few or no concrete suggestions. Peter argued that such feedback "shows poor reviewing practice," similar to the unnecessarily harsh feedback reported by Walbot (2009), and in response, Megumi shared examples of reviewer guidelines that could help ameliorate this issue. Several participants noted how their personal negative experiences in publishing have led them to cultivate empathy, both toward their research participants and, in their roles as reviewers and editors, toward other writers.

Negative feedback did not necessarily lead researchers to abandon their research. Jennifer related an incident in which she was initially "horrified and dismayed" by negative feedback, but later used the feedback to "think more critically and more purposefully about what I wanted to say." In other words, she deliberately positioned herself as legitimate and the reviewer as constructive.

In discussions of identity and voice, participants brought up a number of ways they struggled with positioning themselves and others. Susan argued that Japanese academia is very heteronormative, and she described having to defend her writing and her lesbian identity after an editor accused her of plagiarism because he felt her article was "clearly written from the point of view of a husband." She expressed her disappointment at being positioned as "non-legitimate," but seemed to take heart from the encouragement of the other participants. In one sense, this experience exhibits the negative "centering forces" (Lillis, 2013, p. 111) at play in the form of editorial power, yet, fortunately, is also indicative in its final outcome, of the benefits of belonging to a supportive CoP or network.

Another topic was the pushback participants encountered when they tried to stay true to themselves or carve out their own personal style. Jennifer related that she has "often had submissions rejected because a reviewer doesn't like my style of writing or my style of research." Daniel described another type of pushback, which was a direct request by an editor that the editor's own published works be cited. This showed, according to Daniel, "the power of an editor as a "centering' force" to which they later reflected, "As I struggle with the editor's wants, I also struggle with my own ethics with the neoliberal orientation of academic publishing." This incident resonates particularly with Paltridge (2013) who calls for the recognition of local voices and the exercise of authorial agency in the peer-review process but also reminds us of the potential backlash by editors towards non-conforming authors (Harwood & Hadley, 2004).

One thread focused on the choice of whether to work individually or collaboratively. Participants shared a number of benefits to collaborative research, such as that it improved their motivation, provided additional funding, and expanded their networking opportunities. On the other hand, Jennifer shared that in her experience "many universities privilege single-authored over co-authored publications." Peter also addressed the difficulties that can occur in research involving CoP (Lave & Wenger, 1991), when some members contribute more than others: "One

part of me thinks that all members of the CoP need to give as well as take, but I also realize that when we create a CoP, people have the right to participate as they wish."

## 2. Capital (Value)

### a) *What are the benefits to us of publishing our work?*

In this question, we included the value of collaborative research to the idea of "benefits" of publishing, as in this CAE. Notably, Susan saw the dialogic process of co-constructing our narratives in the CAE as "a helpful space to not only widen my sphere of knowledge about publishing in general, but also to get specific ideas, advice, and encouragement about ways that I can press forward", a clear sentiment which resonates with the advice of Encinas-Prudencio et al. (2019) who advocate engagement in support networks for emerging scholars in non-center contexts. Looking back at their research histories, both Peter and Megumi experienced frequent rejections in their early years of research, with Megumi labelling it as "a stigma" which influences how she reviews emerging scholars in her journal work with sympathy and diplomacy. In this sense, it appeared that negative publishing incidents for some of the CAE participants acted to shape reviewing and editorial behaviours in a positive manner, making us more reflective of the overall publishing process and our roles within it. It also illustrates that the "marked" (Lillis et al. 2010, p. 73) nature of peer review does not necessarily lead to authors assuming similar reviewing attitudes when becoming involved in providing peer review themselves.

### b) *What are the benefits and drawbacks of publishing our work in international (high-status) publications?*

The first point was by Megumi who saw great "potential" in writing in English because of the "accessibility to larger audience." Susan concurred this would mean "greater chances for publication in a widely-circulated, international journal." However, Daniel and Peter pointed out that writing in English does not necessarily provide access to a wider readership with Peter drawing attention to the demerits of high subscription fees for some high-status journals which limit the number of readers.

Secondly, Megumi thought that L1 (Japanese) publication would mean only Japanese scholars could read her work. Nevertheless, Daniel noted several non-Japanese academics also read Japanese articles "in strategic ways" and stressed the important point is "not just on the language itself" but their research skills. These arguments mirror the Mexican scholars' challenges with language priorities when researching multilingually (Encinas-Prudencio et al. 2019).

Thirdly, Jennifer and David identified issues related to the bilingual and multilingual publication. Jennifer recounted how the Japan Association for Language Teaching special interest group to which she belongs struggled to publish newsletters that were initially "fully bilingual" to be accessible to Japanese teachers, a process which put a heavy workload on editors and was ultimately abandoned. On the other hand, David recognized the merits of using multilingual references since they exhibit multicultural perspectives compared to articles written in English.

Finally, continuing the theme of accessibility and cost, Susan related the story of choosing a publisher for an edited book for which she wrote a chapter.

*There was a lot of discussion among the various authors and editors as to what to do; in the end, it was decided to take the book to Multilingual Matters instead, because although it carries less prestige than Springer, their books are more affordable and would likely reach a much greater audience.*

### c) *Is there pressure/encouragement from our institutions to publish? How do our institutions value our publications?*

Firstly, Peter bemoaned the conflicting stances in internal university committees regarding the publishing record of potential candidates for recruitment:

*... some colleagues see admin experience and Japanese language proficiency as possibly more important than publishing and research.*

He also referred to the "centering forces" (Lillis, 2013, p. 111) in publishing apart from such recruitment committees, represented by "the gatekeepers - journal editors, Ministries of Education, Indexing organizations and university promotion committees" - which exert an influence over where and how we publish. Echoing Daniel and Peter on the competition surrounding academic publishing, Jennifer commented:

*... we live in a "neoliberal culture", by which I meant that supportive work environments are giving way to a more competitive and pressured environment for individuals; this has a very negative impact on research, researcher development, and publishing.*

Peter illustrated this culture by noting that his university gives research funds commensurate with the amount of publications faculty members produce. Taking up this theme of neoliberalism, Daniel referred to Mignolo (2000, p. 308) who coined the expression "barbarian theorizing" meaning "a departure from models considered to be universally valid from western perspectives."

### d) *Do we use our experience in academic publishing to help others to publish?*

In views resonating with Salager-Meyer (2008, 2013) and Paltridge (2013), Ayako called for more support in academic writing where experienced researchers can provide help for those less experienced. Jennifer mentioned that such a network already exists within the JALT Learner Development SIG, a scheme that can "offer friendly and constructive advice."

Drawing upon her recent experiences, Ayako particularly was confused at the lack of mediation by an editor for one of her first publications. Peter and Megumi, as experienced editors, commented that this represented poor editorial practice. Susan noted the need for "specific advice"

for novice authors like herself and Jennifer, who has both authorial and editorial experiences, noted too that "thoughtful and critical" feedback from editors on her work was most appreciated.

## 3. Ideology

### a) *What systemic patterns of control (policies, codes, institutions) make it difficult (or easy) for us to do research and write for publication?*

Systemic patterns of control are seen when publishing academic research and at our own institutions. Firstly, our data shows mixed experiences in negotiating the publication process. In narratives which appear to confirm Hyland's (2016) view that both native-speaker Anglophone and non-Anglophone (multilingual) scholars struggle to publish, Peter and Jennifer reported frequent rejections by journals with Jennifer revealing that reviewers deemed her research approach or writing style as inappropriate. Megumi and Ayako expressed frustration with review feedback containing little indication of why their work was not satisfactory and how to improve it. However, when Peter and Susan challenged reviewers' initial rejections, they managed to receive positive outcomes from the editor, which suggests that in our experiences journal gatekeepers can be persuaded to change their decisions possibly more successfully by native than non-native English-speaking authors. Habibie (2019, p.42) notes the common assumption that "...native-speaker status of Angophone scholars privileges them in scholarly publication in English-medium international journals, as it makes them aware of generic expectations and discursive practices"; however, as Casanave (2019) and Hyland (2016) indicate, this represents a myth which is easily dispelled when looking at other studies in negotiating the review process. On the other hand, as Flowerdew and Wang (2016) found, successful publication, particularly for non-native speakers, requires significant investment and continuous negotiation between author, editor, and reviewer, to co-create meaning. If such direction is lacking, authors may lose the persistence necessary (Belcher, 2007) to reach final publication.

One problem raised was unclear expectations for authors and reviewers. This concurred with Peter's research on reviewer beliefs which found substantive disparities among reviewers about how to give feedback (Adamson & Muller, 2012). In response to such disparities, journals Megumi worked for introduced more transparent and developmental reviewing policies for new reviewers (see Adamson, 2012) to avoid harsh and arbitrary "pit bull" (Walbot, 2009, p. 24) feedback where "falsification" or deliberate and unbalanced fault-finding, "takes precedence" (Martin, 2008, p. 302).

Turning to university policies, publishing was generally reported as necessary for promotion and recruitment, which concurs with worldwide tertiary practice (Satlow, 2016). However, Peter recalled experiences on a hiring committee where research was "relegated" below administrative experience, raising questions regarding "managerialism in education, anti-academic sentiments, [and] neoliberalism in education."

As for the role of qualifications in careers, Susan, who hoped to reach tenure but had opted not to take a Ph.D., felt a need to compensate for this lack of a degree by publishing more. David

noted one requirement for his Ph.D. was publication, although this first experience negotiating peer review was problematic.

Participants reported diverse experiences with the role of their institutions in supporting academic publishing. One issue concerned practice-based research for students' benefit, where Susan complained that the small size of her university and assignment of different classes and proficiency levels made comparative research impossible. Peter suggested that rather than compare different classes during a single semester, she could compare classes from multiple semesters.

Another common issue was collegiality and support in research, a point which Ayako felt was lacking in her university as she progressed in her doctoral studies. As the only researcher in her field at her university, she expressed a desire for "mental support as well as academic writing support." Meyer and Evans (2003) note that such mentoring, whether institutional or informal, enhances publication output. Susan, on the other hand, felt supported; her institution designated time off for research and the fact that two colleagues are active in research incentivized her to follow suit and join them in a collaborative project. Although Jennifer is not engaged in research with her colleagues, like Susan, she is motivated by the fact that all are active in their fields. This meshes with Rodgers and Neri's (2007) finding that a faculty member's research productivity is increased by the productivity of departmental colleagues, in part through collaboration and academic discourse. However, they note that peer expectations and peer pressure also play a role in publishing success. David described a highly competitive, yet unsupportive environment at his previous university where research collaboration was unpopular. While such intense competition may lead to a higher number of publications (Hesli & Lee, 2011), for David it became a source of stress and discouragement.

Perhaps more important than institutional collegiality and support was the emphasis on time and money. As tenured faculty, Peter, Megumi and Jennifer have access to research budgets, yet internal committee work restricts their research time. Ayako, a graduate student, illustrated the dilemma of financial and time restraints succinctly, especially in her "off-networked" (Swales, 1987, p. 46; Belcher, 2007) university status (Gaillet & Guglielmo, 2014, p. 11):

> *I [have] been paying for the tuition and for membership fees to attend conferences, get articles published, and gain access to journals. My university pays fees for some journals, but I have given up downloading articles so many times because of the money.*

Susan, Jennifer, Peter and Megumi drew attention to the role of teaching associations such as JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching) in providing research grants and mentoring that can compensate for an absence of institutional research support, .

## b)  *What are the prevailing ideologies in Japan about research and publishing?*

Three distinct ideologies emerged in our CAE: neoliberal, Japanese nationalist, and diversity promotion. Neoliberalism was mentioned particularly by Daniel, Peter, and Jennifer, regarding the

monetisation of academic publishing. Peter observed the recent proliferation of new journals which charge authors for publishing but offer little quality peer review. At the same time, Peter wondered whether publishers should charge as colleagues in other fields regard paying to publish as normal practice:

> *Many major publishers are charging authors for Open Access (to make their work free to view for readers) or offering another choice of free publication but placing the paper behind subscription walls for readers.*

Jennifer responded that although she has been paid for publishing, she opposes the necessity for authors to pay or reviewers to receive remuneration. Daniel too, questioned whether authors and readers should pay. This depends on ethics and therefore "critical resistance" in the form of alternative routes towards publication.

One characteristic of neoliberal ideology mentioned was the self-branding, entrepreneurial self (Block, 2018). This resonates with Daniel's experience with an editor who demanded they cite his and Peter's reaction to the anecdote which resonates with Fitzpatrick's increasing pressure on faculty to publish (2011):

> (Daniel): *As I struggle with the editor's wants, I also struggle my own ethics with the neoliberal orientation of academic publishing.*
> (Peter): *It looks like the editor wants to increase his citation count. That indicates that he is under pressure at his institution to be cited.*
> (Daniel): *Yes, there are larger forces at play. How we respond to the structures around us is another thing. I resisted both his interests and the structures that shape his interests.*

Continuing this thread of discussion, Jennifer bemoaned the "creeping neoliberalism as [Japanese] universities see ways to cut costs at the expense of teachers and students" and the pressure on faculty to do funded research; Peter continued this thread by noting how the spread of neoliberalism impacted employment and teaching in Japanese universities (Hadley, 2015), particularly how the constant search for limited-term contracted positions among contingent faculty hindered long-term research (McCrostie, 2010; McCrostie & Spiri, 2008). Another ideology Jennifer raised was "Nihonjinron", the discourse of Japanese uniqueness and homogeneity, covered by Kubota (2002) in relation to ELT policy and McVeigh (2002) to nationalist ideologies in Japanese universities. As English teachers in this context, Jennifer argued we tend to be affiliated to language teaching centres rather than to faculties, so our publications may then be afforded lower status. Our struggles to be accepted in our academic communities due to a lack of acceptance of our diversity and identities (gender, sexual, intersectional) too, mean as Block (2018) also argues, that language education policies need to extend their influence beyond the language classroom and into the institution and society at large. Although Jennifer noted this

is changing, Susan alluded to an incident where her LGBT identity in a publication was not recognised and she was unfairly accused of plagiarism.

Of final note, Jennifer questioned where "Japan fits in the geopolitical scheme of academic writing" with Peter positing that it may fall into the "semi-periphery" category (Bennett, 2014, p. 2) which has both characteristics of the dominant Anglophone centre and the off-networked (Swales, 1987; Belcher, 2007) nature of the periphery. Jennifer observed that "many universities rate singly authored publications more highly than collaborative publications." In response, in an incident resonant of David's previous university, Peter noted that a colleague disapproved of collaborative research due to the institutional evaluation system favouring single authorship, a stance which runs counter to Gaillet and Guglielmo's (2014) advice in encouraging contingent faculty to research through collaboration.

***c)    What ideologies have influenced our "habitus" (ways of thinking and behaving) in relation to academic writing and publication? (i.e., if we were educated and/or have worked in other countries, our beliefs and expectations are likely to be different from those who were educated in Japan).***

Our ideologies impacting our "habitus" are represented in our short biographies following table 1 in the Methodology section and are discussed to some extent in the final round of data collection. We took it for granted that our ways of thinking and behaving would be shaped by our education and other formative influences we received in Japan (Megumi, Ayako), the U.S. (Susan), the Philippines (Daniel) and the UK (Peter, Jennifer, David). In addition, Peter, Jennifer and Susan commented on aspects of social class that have influenced their ways of thinking. Peter commented, for example, that coming from a strongly working class and multi-ethnic city in the UK gave him "a working class adversity to 'showing off' and creeping up to authority figures." Jennifer and Susan, for their part, confided that they had both attended predominantly white, private high schools in the UK and the US respectively (although Susan had a scholarship). All three, however, studied languages in their home countries and for extended periods abroad, giving them an international perspective and a desire to live in other countries. Jennifer and Peter both claimed to have strongly left-wing views, although Jennifer stated that she had felt it difficult to bring her political perspective to her research until a recent study with Filipino teachers.  David claimed that his family's international understanding from a young age may have influenced him to live abroad and continue on his current path.

The biographies and discussion on habitus give insights into our diverse views, work experiences, and research interests on issues about multiculturalism, ethnicity, and identity. From our diverse backgrounds, we see experiences across global contexts from the centre Anglophone sites of scholarship in study and work to the semi-periphery (Bennett, 2014) and periphery contexts in our pursuits of academic labour and research. We posit that these experiences have impacted our varied paths into academic publication in ways mirroring Encinas-Prudencio et al's findings among Mexican scholars' "not linear but complex enculturation processes" (2019, p. 51).

**Conclusions**

Conclusions to this study must first take into account its small-scale nature. Nevertheless, the autoethnographic means of gathering co-constructed narratives over time has allowed for a deeply reflective and dialogic account of publication practices. The diverse backgrounds of participants in terms of ethnicity, gender, and experience have aided this depth of views with the consequence that the process of CAE can be assessed as both developmental for us, the participants, and informative for the wider academic community.

The first conclusion is that CAE's interactive means to co-construct narratives has been a more rewarding process than typical self-written narrativization (Chang et al. 2013). By providing continuous space to challenge, affirm, and seek clarification of each other's beliefs, the online means of constructing the overall CAE has also afforded us time to reflect on our input and responses to our co-researchers. In echoes of Andrews (2004), there have been accounts of critical incidents where we have countered negative images and stereotypes of gender, ethnicity and methodological stance ascribed to us by offering collegial support for exercising our agency. We argue here that this support acts to re-legitimize our positioning in the wider community (Lave & Wenger, 1991), something which may have been more difficult without participation in the CAE.

The challenging of beliefs has also manifested itself in a healthy disagreement over key publication issues, for example in the use of Japanese or English to gain access to a wider (or narrower) readership. This diversity in stances can be reflected upon as presenting us with opportunities to re-think our views and consider other perspectives.

Our own varied experiences in publication from authorial and editorial angles have been a key component in developing the knowledge base regarding publication norms and practices. This was illustrated in exchanges regarding the issue of publication fees where some of us had paid and others not, narratives which elicited insightful ideological views and were helpful in de-mystifying practical pathways into academic publication.

Of some note were the difficulties encountered by both Anglophone and multilingual (non-native speaker) members of the CAE in publishing, even for those most experienced in research. Reports of difficulties for Anglophones regarding language issues, perhaps most commonly associated with multilingual scholars, resonated with Hyland (2016) and Bitchener (2018) in that academic writing is to be learned and crafted and cannot be assumed to be a given competence among Anglophone speakers. The negotiation of peer review with journal editors and reviewers was revealed as key here and, although we encouraged each other to exercise agency, caution about the possible repercussions of non-compliance was also evident (Harwood & Hadley, 2004).

The normative, "centering" influences (Lillis & Curry, 2010) were revealed as a fertile area of discussion in the CAE and how those dominant powers intersected with our own ideological stances on English, gender, ethnicity and personal writing style was, as mentioned previously, clearly revealed. The means by which those forces can be countered apart from the collegial support within the CAE group, though, was thrown open to some discussion. Our membership includes editorial staff who are aware of these issues and shared their experiences with journal initiatives to sensitize reviewers against biased peer review practice. Indeed, some journals for

which we work operate schemes to guide emerging scholars in their writing and develop and mentor new reviewers. What transpired was that the CAE itself became such a scheme, affecting participants' perception of research by allowing them a safe space to develop their research knowledge, experience, and confidence. As Susan, a novice researcher, later wrote, "I feel like I have a more accurate perception of the whole process now and am much better prepared to go it alone in the future without getting discouraged and giving up."

Perhaps of final note is the benefit of using Darvin and Norton's (2014) framework as a lens through which the myriad of issues we have faced, and are currently encountering, can be unpacked and analyzed. As Jennifer commented:

> *Unfortunately, the neoliberal culture that shapes our lives leads us to see value in purely monetary terms: Time is money.*

The ideological insights that emerged from our exchanges in the CAE regarding the spread of neoliberalism that is apparent in the growth of monetization of academic publication as well as in increasing managerialism in academia in Japan were particularly valuable to us. Seen from this perspective, and adding to the effects of individual habitus, the affordances and constraints of our gender and ethnic identities, and our experiences in academia (Gaillet & Guglielmo, 2014) and in academic publishing (Belcher, 2007; Swales, 1997; Lillis & Curry, 2010), these wider issues of ideology point to avenues for further exploration. In particular, we see future possibilities for research into identity in academic publishing based on more diverse identity ascriptions and with greater awareness of the shaping influences of ideology and capital. These are at times alluded to in our CAE, for example, gender and sexuality identification, experiences in journal editing, and our fundamental stances towards challenging standard ways of writing and researching. Related to these, the sense of risk or tension between our personal academic (publication) literacy competences and the expectations of journal editors represents a site for studies which examine our past experiences and future possibilities and limitations.

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# Analyzing Math Word Problems with Digital Video:
# A Usage-Based Approach

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## Abstract

Math word problems cross semiotic boundaries and create challenging translations from spoken or written language to the language of mathematics (Lemke, 2003; Radford, 2003). The theoretical approach to the data for this paper is derived from Michael Tomasello's (2003) usage-based theory of language acquisition, along with ideas about learning and language acquisition related to the work of Russian Psychologist Lev Vygotsky (Scribner, 1997; van Lier, 2004; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch,1998). This is a descriptive, interpretive case study that presents digital video data, visuals, and transcriptions of three cases of college-level students solving the same problem. The main objective is to understand *semiosis* as students create meaning during different steps leading up to the creation of the video, including a close analysis of the video with speech, visuals, and acts of pointing as the units of analysis. The findings include a multi-modal presentation of how students comprehend the word problem and work toward a solution. Overall, this paper provides an option to improve students' metacognition and self-regulation, specifically in the process of moving from one semiotic system to another. The theoretical framework and procedures can also be applied to word problems in other STEM disciplines.

## Introduction

One of the well-known challenges in teaching adults to read and write academic English is how to prompt some deep level of engagement with language, content, and critical thinking. In other words, how to teach students to use writing as a way of thinking, in addition to reading for ideas and solutions for different situations and problems. These same kinds of broad literacy and critical thinking issues exist in developmental math courses, and in one way or another, these broad issues of learning to read and write critically exist across all academic disciplines and applied technologies (Fang & Shleppegrell, 2010).

Math word problems often cause difficulties for students even when the mathematical techniques involved in solving these problems are well known. The first apparent reason for this is that students do not understand what the problem is about. Specifically, they cannot determine what is known and what has to be found (Korpershoek, Kuyper, & van der Werf, 2015; Lemke, 2003). The next difficulty is in translating the problem, formulated in English, into the language of mathematics, along with understanding what meaning is interpreted by participants into the variables, constants, equations, inequalities, and their solutions from the original problem. According to Lemke (2003), there is a growing understanding that "natural language, mathematics, and visual representations form a single unified system of meaning-making" (p. 215). (It should be noted here that by using the term "natural language," Lemke is using "natural" as a term to distinguish any standard language as different from the language of math). Thus, practice solving math word problems can help students to attain a deeper understanding of the English language, the language of mathematics, and develop metacognitive abilities. (Goos, Galbraith, & Renshaw, 2002; Koepershoek et al, 2015; Sáenz-Ludlow, 2006).

The main purpose of this paper is to inform instruction and share this process and data with other teachers to adapt as needed. The main question we are working with at this stage of the research is *what do the differences in the visuals and the discourse illustrate about the participants' interpretations of math word problems and their metacognition?*

We first begin with the overall synthesis of different approaches to set up and analyze the digital video activities. This will be followed by a review of relevant literature and methods. The results and conclusions will be followed by limitations of the study, implications for the classroom, and avenues for further research

## Theoretical Approach
### Signs, Semiotics, Signification, and Mediation

A sign is something that stands for "something else" (Eco, 1976, p. 16); the sign gains meaning through social interaction (Eco, 1976; Peirce, 1991; see also van Leeuwen, 2005). Signification is the process of creating a sign; that is, assigning meaning to an object, the self, and the world (Vygotsky, 1978; van Lier, 2004). What is signified simultaneously begins to *mediate* meaning, most often goal-oriented and intentional.

Mediation refers to the way humans use concrete and abstract tools, including sign systems (e.g. language), to interpret, plan, regulate, and generally make meaning. A well-known example

includes tying a knot to remember something or count something. Moreover, the examples from Tomasello (2003), which are presented below, illustrate how interlocutors use the surrounding context and language to signify and mediate meaning.

A related term is *semiosis,* which is the development of signs into other signs and into systems; the constant recreation and interpretation of a sign (van Lier, 2004, p. 113). An example of the contextual, social, and local nature of signification and semiosis is the intended meaning and contextual interpretation of a yellow light. A green light officially signifies go; a red, stop, and a yellow light's intended legal meaning is to slow down and stop if it is safe to do so. However, it is very different to slow down and try to stop at a yellow light in a big city where densely packed rush-hour traffic is zooming along at forty-five miles per hour, rather than in a small town where a few cars are traveling at thirty-five miles per hour. The point is that the lights mediate the movement of traffic, and the lights' meaning is embedded in a specific social context.

**Tomasello's Usage-Based Approach**

There are many conflicting and complementary theories and approaches to the teaching and researching of reading, writing, cognition, and first and second language acquisition, including theories related to Vygotsky (Holme, 2010; Thorn, 2005; see also Wilson, 2006).  The first author has been working to adapt Tomasello's (2003) *usage-based* approach to EAP courses and Freshmen composition courses for several years (Unger, 2018). Tomasello's theory of language acquisition is contrary to Noam Chomsky's Universal Grammar. Tomasello's work also stands out among other approaches to cognition and language (Atkinson, 2014; Langacker, 2005; Wilson 2006). Moreover, the current paper is an effort to cross academic borders and bring a theory of language acquisition into STEM courses; for this paper, mathematics.

Overall, Tomasello argues that language acquisition is grounded in the unique cognitive characteristics of humans and the way they socially interact (Ibbotson & Tomasello, 2016; Tomasello, 2003). Specifically, the ability to read the intentions of others is prominent, as well as recognizing others as having intentions they can direct toward objects, the intentional states of others, and the world around them.

To paraphrase this idea of the wide-ranging nature of intentions, suppose I wanted to have you meet with Bob at the car mechanics tomorrow and pick up my wife's Toyota, and check the invoice for any price over a certain amount. In this way, my intentional meaning causes a number of other events to occur.

An author of a math word problem usually has a specific outcome in mind, or even if the answer is more open to interpretation, understanding the author's intention is crucial when trying to translate a word problem into a mathematical equation. The same types of students' understandings of author intentions for math word problems also apply to physics problems, chemistry problems or any number of different problem-solving situations (Korpershoek et al., 2015). All of these examples of intention-reading, along with shared attention and shared understanding between two or more participants, create a communicative/socio-cognitive event, which Tomasello (2003) calls a *joint attentional frame.*

Three examples, paraphrased from Tomasello (2003), illustrate the main features of Tomasello's joint attentional frame. The examples also demonstrate the applicability of Tomasello's ideas for second language acquisition (SLA) contexts, as well as a broad number of academic disciplines and applied technologies, including math. Tomasello proposes that a natural part of human interaction is shared attention through context and some manner of directing the attention of one or more *others*.

One example is an adult with a diaper in her hand walking into a room with a baby. The adult looks at the diaper; the baby follows the adult's gaze to the diaper, and the baby understands the adult's intentions and the sequence of events that will follow. Perhaps later the adult will return to the room with a stuffed rabbit and the same triadic kind of situation will occur: the baby will look at the stuffed rabbit as the adult might say "Are you ready to play with your rabbit?" Through this triadic arrangement, similar to when the adult came into the room before with a diaper, the baby and the adult both know the intended sequence of events that will follow, which involve playing with the stuffed rabbit. Most important, the baby is engaged in language learning.

A third example applies to more common social interactions. To paraphrase Tomasello's (2003, p. 25) example of how a joint attentional frame might occur in a more typical communicative context, suppose a traveler who only speaks English stands in the middle of a bus station in Yemen. A man walks up to the traveler and begins speaking Arabic. Suppose the man is asking about directions for the next bus to another town. The traveler will not understand what the Yemeni man is asking. Now suppose the interaction happened next to the ticket booth where there was a clock and a schedule of all arriving and departing busses, and perhaps a map was on the wall with bus routes. The Yemeni man can point at the clock, the map, and the schedule on the wall and ask the questions again (this pointing does not have to be a hand; can be the eyes, a minor gesture, or other means to draw attention to the related object or topic). This time, although the Yemeni man will still not be completely understood by the traveler, his intended-meaning becomes stronger. By speaking, pointing, and using the visuals available in the context, the Yemeni man has created a joint attentional frame similar to the earlier examples of the baby and the adult, though using more complex signs.

**A Shared Attentional Frame**

From classroom applications of Tomasello's work, the first author has developed a model of a *Shared Attentional Frame* (Unger, 2018), with speech, a visual, the act of pointing, and a *third* space of intended and interpreted meaning (See Figure 1). This model has evolved from Tomasello's (2003) rendering of the "Structure of linguistic symbol" (p. 29) and a "Joint Attentional Frame" (p. 28), in addition to ideas about interaction, second language acquisition, and learning and development from McCafferty (2002), Wertsch (1998) and Vygotsky (1978). In one way or another, each of these authors highlight the importance of recognizing the embodied nature of language and the dynamic nature of sign creation and use.

The model in Figure 1 suggests how speech, visuals, and acts of pointing create a dynamic third space of meaning where intended meaning is created and interpreted (the term is not related

to Gutiérrez's 2008, conceptualizing of a "third space." The concept of a third space in this research was derived differently and independently). The interpretation of speaker/author intentions is signified by variance in the black arrows pointing in both directions.  Although the model unavoidably appears static, the activity depicted in the model is dynamic, fluid, and dialogic (Bakhtin, 1986, 1981; Clark & Holquist, 1984).
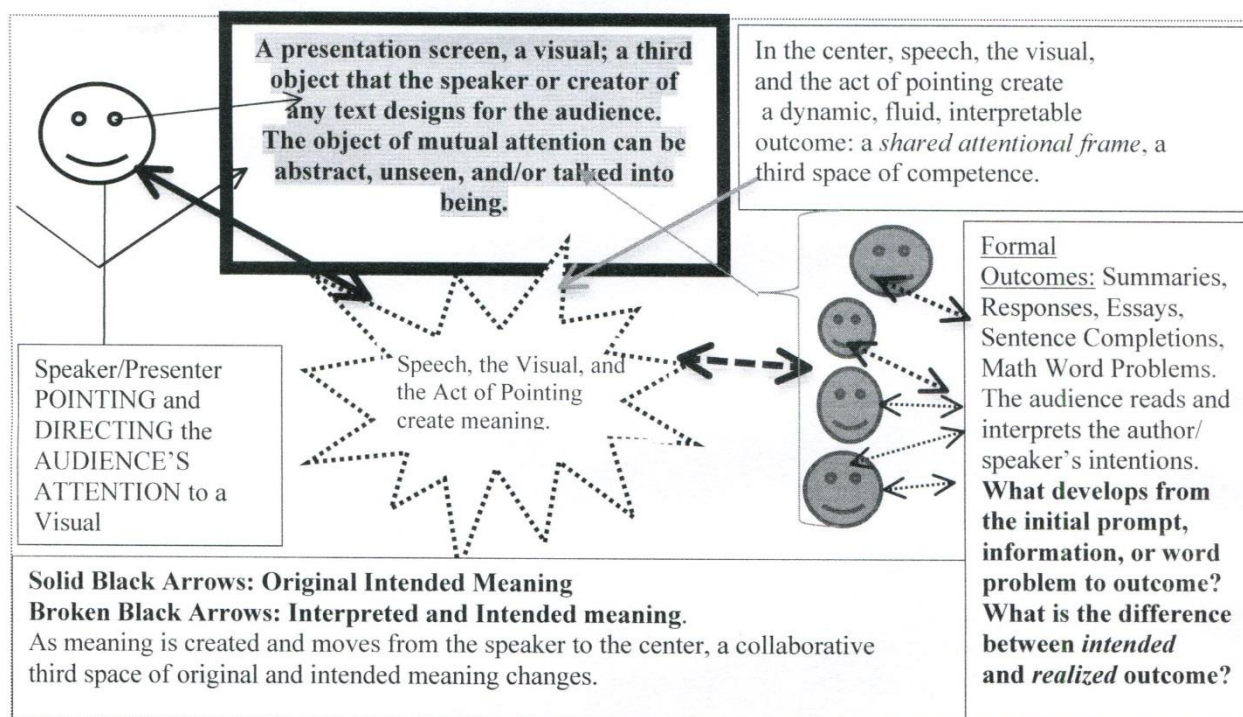


Figure 1. Model of a Shared Attentional Frame (not to be read as a static display).

To summarize the overall theoretical perspective, signification, mediation, and the constant development of sign reading, using, and producing abilities is central to human activity. These sign-making and sign-using abilities are related to higher level abstract reasoning (Scribner, 1997). An important part of this process of semiotic mediation is the way humans read each other's intentions (Tomasello, 2003).

**Related Literature**

One major challenge with doing a literature review with this type of an interdisciplinary study is the range of research on metacognition, self-regulation, math word problems, and the complex relationship of metacognition and self-regulation (Bene, 2014; Goos, Galbraith, and Renshaw, 2002; Schraw, 2007; Ziegler, 2014).  Various perspectives on self-regulated learning and metacognition are often epistemologically contrary to Vygotskian and semiotic approaches to learning and development. Approaches associated with cognitive science and educational psychology (e.g., Hsu et al., 2016; Shraw, 2007; Sperling et al., 2004) tend to categorize different

features of cognition with more defined boundaries and parameters.  In contrast, the Tomasello, semiotic, and Vygotskian based approaches used in this paper focus on social interaction with signs, most importantly, language.

### Metacognition

A tangential objective of this paper is to unpack the concept of *metacognition* in the context of solving math word problems. Metacognition is generally understood as thinking about one's own thinking (Hsu, Iannone, She, Hadwin, & Yore, 2016; see also Schraw, 2007). Metacognition is also considered a part of *self-regulation* (Sperling, Howard, Staley, & Dubois, 2004; Ziegler, 2014); however, from our perspective, the fine line between metacognition and self-regulation disappears due to the semiotic nature of the overall approach to the data.  From the literature on metacognition and self-regulation (Sperling et al., 2004; Hsu, et al., 2016; Schraw, 2007), [1] metacognition is generally understood as "knowledge of cognition" and "regulation of cognition" (Sperling et al., p. 118).

Goos et al. (2002) described metacognition as "students' awareness of their own cognitive processes and the regulation of these processes in order to achieve a particular goal" (p. 193). Goos et al. used Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and discourse analysis as a foundation for their research with high school seniors who collaboratively solved word problems. Regulation is described as "planning an overall course of action, selecting specific strategies, monitoring progress, assessing results, and revising plans and strategies if necessary" (p. 193). In addition, Goos et al. describes *metacognitive acts* as, "where new information was recognized or an assessment of particular aspects of a solution was made" (p. 199).

Metacognitive acts described in Goos et al. were made explicit during group collaboration and conversation. We are borrowing the construct of metacognitive acts as a way to identify contrasting moments in the data where participants are adjusting their path from problem to solution.

### Reciprocal Teaching

Participants were first provided with the math word problem on a regular 8.5 by 11inch sheet of paper. They were told to first make a visual sketch of the problem and any calculation they needed; then told they would be putting this information on a larger sheet of poster paper and video-record an explanation of their solution as if they were teaching an imagined audience how to solve the problem. Participants were told that teaching how to solve the problem was related to the concept of *reciprocal teaching* (Palinscar & Brown, 1984).  Although the concept was broadly applied to the participants as having a student take on the role of teacher, the original construct is more specific. For reading comprehension, Palinscar and Brown (1984) focused on "*summarizing*

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[1] It should be noted here that we acknowledge that for this study we are bringing together several distinct frameworks in an effort to build an interdisciplinary approach to word problems in general and math word problems specifically.

(self-review), *questioning, clarifying,* and *predicting"* (p. 120, italics in original). Reciprocal teaching has also been used with some success with math word problems and for math peer-tutoring (Meyer, 2014; Dufrene et al., 2009)

### Math Word Problems, Reading, Videos, and Visual Displays

In a review of the literature on reading and math word problems, along with physics and chemistry problems, Korpershoek et al. (2015), found that most studies focused on the younger, elementary school students, and on students with some kind of learning disability (see also Zhang & Xin, 2012). In our own review of the literature, we found the same. We also did not find any case study research and discourse analysis on adult students' math word-problem strategies that used Tomasello, Vygotskian, and semiotic perspectives, along with multi-modal steps in creating the visuals leading to a video explanation. The closest perspective to ours was from Goos et al. (2002), whose research became important for our understanding of metacognition. Furthermore, Korpershoek et al (2015) and Sáenz-Ludlow (2006) are relevant for their semiotic approaches to word problems. Additionally, we did not find any math word-problem research that used speech, visuals, and acts of pointing as units of analysis.  However, what we did find were perspectives on word problems that consistently and unavoidably brought up general literacy and semiotics. Also, the use of visual representations, including multimedia representations of math word problems, seemed prominent in the research (Casey, 2003; Oldknow, 2009).

One of the more relevant studies for our research was a study of 1,446 Dutch students at the secondary education level, with a large percentage of immigrants included in the study (Kopershoek et al.2015). The authors emphasized the semiotic nature of word problems in math, chemistry, and physics, and how reading comprehension was also related to success with word problems. However, they did not find any relationship between ethnicity, gender, and success with word problems. They also found that math ability translated to better scores on examinations in physics and chemistry. Kopershoek et al. suggested that reading comprehension should be taught along with word problems in math, as well as teaching reading in chemistry and physics classes.

Sáenz-Ludlow (2006) also took a semiotic perspective on math word problems (see also Sáenz-Ludlow & Presmeg, 2006). Participants in this study were elementary-aged students. Sáenz-Ludlow (2006) stated that "the learning of mathematics entails both the interpretation of mathematical signs and the construction of mathematical meanings through communication with others" (p. 183). Following Wittgenstein (1991) and Freires' (1970/2001) positions on language play (as cited in Sáenz-Ludlow), Sáenz-Ludlow (2006), studied *language games* and *interpreting games* in the math classroom. As stated in her paper "In general, *language games* can be considered as essential tools for communicating while *interpreting games* can be considered essential tools for *teaching and learning*" (200).

The interpretation game emphasized interaction between students and teachers as they went through a "dialogical interaction" (p. 203) about a specific interpretation (see also Bakhtin, 1986; Wertsch, 1998). For example, the students and teacher would have collaborative conversations about the meanings of mathematical signs in simple equations, like the equal sign (=). The data

presented and analyzed as interpreting games were transcribed recordings of the teacher and students negotiating the meaning of what the signs meant in equations. Sáenz-Ludlow (2006) exposed the power of communication and interpretation for these students to better understand the way they were reading and interpreting signs. Video transcriptions and a semiotic approach were essential to her findings.

Recall that Goos et al., which informed our understanding of metacognition, used classroom observation and audio and video data of small groups of secondary students solving math word problems. Goos et al., emphasized Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and social interaction in their study. The ZPD is understood broadly as collaboration with others, particularly more capable others, and increases the chance of working on problems at a higher level of proficiency than one can do alone (Vygotsky, 1978; see also Gutiérrez, 2008, for an informative discussion of the ZPD).

The word problems in Goos et al. included compound interest, projectile motion, and Hooke's Law. Collaboration was positioned as mediating metacognition.  A major finding was that students' willingness to actively discuss and engage in each other's interpretation was related to improved metacognition.

Video or other types of digital tools are also prominent in studies on the math meaning-making process and the improvement of outcomes (Casey, 2003; Green & Maushak, 2014; Lantz-Andersson, Linderoth, Säljö, 2009; Oldknow, 2009). Most important for our current study is how any type of digital tool transforms the meaning making process (Lantz-Andersson, Linderoth, Säljö, 2009; see also Wertsch,1998). Also prominent in the literature on math word problems, including other STEM fields, is the transformative nature of tool-use and the power of visual representations. (Múñez, Orrantia, &Rosales, 2013; Shanahan, Shanahan, & Misischia, 2011).

All of the studies reviewed, in one way or another, point toward the positive influence of contextualizing math word problems. The trend in the research is to discover and enhance students' ways of thinking about word problems. Another common thread is the positive relationship between literacy and math word problems, and the need to support literacy as a normal part of teaching and learning about math word problems (Greeberg, Ginzburg, & Wrigley, 2017; Kong & Orosco, 2016).

**Method**
**The General Research Design**

At this initial stage of the data analysis, the emphasis is on the English language; not on mathematics. We are using a multiple case design (Yin, 2003) with three units of analysis for each case: speech, the visual, and the act of pointing, triangulated to identify *metacognitive acts* and other moments of discourse that reveal how participants are interpreting and solving the word problem.  A precise transcription of the act of pointing is beyond the scope of our emphasis on metacognitive acts found in the data. The act of pointing, as it is synchronized or not with speech, is broadly defined. The act of pointing is an important issue to be taken up in further research. The data analysis procedures involve contrasting the descriptions of the cases with one another.

**The Participants as Cases and the Context for the Study**

The data were collected at a four-year regional college in the southern U.S. The general population could be described as a diverse four-year college population, and the standards for admissions were appropriately open-access to provide opportunity to many students who otherwise might not attend college. From this population and for the first data collection period (other data with variations from these procedures are still undergoing analysis), we recruited a small set of participants for three different math problems. In order to maintain anonymity, we are only providing a minimal amount of background data on the participants.

The data from the three cases were collected outside of the classroom and were part of an initial nine cases from the Spring semester of 2015. These were randomly recruited, paid cases; that is, the first author distributed flyers around the campus. The flyers offered students twenty-dollars for spending an hour of their time to make a video explaining their process for solving the word problem, and answering questions about their videos, along with a few background questions. This protocol has since been adjusted through several semesters of data collection from developmental math classes. These three cases have served as reference data for deciding on different strategies to apply to other groups, which will be discussed in forthcoming papers.

**Microgenesis**

Because we are using digital video, which captures the cycle of *signification* and *mediation* as a semiotic system of *speech,* the *visual*, and the *act of pointing*, the Vygotskian socio-historical concept of how development takes place as a *semiosis* over short periods of time, a *microgenesis,* is important for identifying *metacognitive acts* in the data. According to Vygotsky (1978), "to study something historically means to study it in the process of change" (p. 65). Furthermore, he proposed "it is only in movement that a body shows what it is" (p. 65).

Microgenesis frames development as unfolding before one's eyes over short periods of time; as short as seconds or minutes, or longer periods (Wells, 1999). Lantolf (2000) described the microgenetic domain as follows: "Where interest is in the reorganization and development of mediation over a relatively short span of time (for example, being trained to criteria at the outset of a lab experiment; learning a word, sound, or grammatical feature of a language)" (p. 3). Wertsch (1985) provided definitions for two types of microgenesis:

> The first type of microgenesis identified by Vygotsky concerns the short-term formation of a psychological process. The study of this domain requires observations of subjects repeated trials in a task setting. . . The second type of microgenesis is the unfolding of an individual perceptual or conceptual act, often for the course of milliseconds (p.55).

The data from the three cases display unique microgenesis across different steps and modalities, from the initial problem to final solution, as participants are prompted into a shared attentional frame to explain their answers.

**Results**

To provide context for the results, the research question is restated: *what do the differences in the visuals and the discourse illustrate about the participants' interpretations of math word problems and their metacognition?*

**The Three Cases**

To provide a clear description and interpretation of the data, we will juxtapose the different steps in the process from the initial calculations on the eight-and-a-half inch by eleven-inch typing paper to the depictions on the poster paper, including transcribed discourse and comments made by participants about their videos and history with mathematics.

Recall that we are looking for where and when metacognitive acts occur in the participant's problem-solving process, with an emphasis on the video. Also recall that a metacognitive act is "where new information was recognized or an assessment of particular aspects of a solution were made" (Goo et al. p. 199).  Also recall that these metacognitive acts developed as a shared attentional frame, and we are using speech and the visual as our main units of analysis, with the act of pointing providing a background unit of analysis for triangulation (Yin, 2003).

As mentioned earlier, all participants were given the same general directions to assume the role of teacher; that is, act as if they were teaching the solution to someone else (i.e. a kind of reciprocal-teaching task). They were shown an example of the first author bungling a simple gas-mileage calculation (see 2015 Digital Model of a Word Problem password rabbit15), and it was emphasized that the visual and pointing at the visual, along with their explanation, would be the three most important features of their recorded explanation.

With the overall nine cases, generally, participants took about fifteen minutes doing the initial calculation, approximately another fifteen minutes making the poster, and about two or three minutes of actual recording. Very brief pre- and post-interviews also took place, which sometimes extended to include general topics about school. These usually took another fifteen minutes, including the time for introductions, small talk, and time to watch the videos. Altogether, it seemed to take just under an hour to complete the data collection for each participant.

**The Three Participants: General Background**

**Case Margo**

At the time of the data collection, Margo was about to graduate with a B.S. in Environmental Policy; she was a guest student from another state taking courses at the College, and she was heading to graduate school, though we did not discuss where. She expected that math would be a challenge in her future studies. Margo said that she had been intimidated by math most of her life, but she thought she had made progress lately. She had previously failed pre-calculus and waited until the very end of her B.S. degree program to take pre-calculus and passed the second time.

### Case Sandra

At the time of the data collection, Sandra was a freshman in a developmental math course. When she came in to make her video, she was with two other friends who also made videos on different word problems. In the post-video interview, Sandra said she wanted to major in business. She said she has always had trouble with math and had particular difficulty taking tests: "I'm not good at it." Sandra said she misunderstood one kind of problem for another (e.g. "I take a linear equation as something else"). After another participant in this group was talking about "basic math," Sandra said, "basic math, we can understand it, but when we come to college, the math is like different." When the first author asked about specifics, all three talked at once, and it was hard to hear. Sandra can be heard saying "the variables moving in and that's confusing."  The first author asked if they were referring to Algebra and Calculus, and all can be heard mumbling affirmatively to this leading question. The specifics of Sandra's perceptions of what is different from high school and college math are still unknown and might be a productive path of further inquiry with other students.

### Case Isabella

Isabella was the most advanced of the three, which is understandable because at the time of the data collection, she was a math tutor. She was also in her junior year and was majoring in Cell Biology and Biotechnology. She said "I love math," and she reported positive experiences in her K-12 schooling with math. In the post-video interview, she described the question as "straight up."

### Three Initial Responses to the Brick Problem

As mentioned previously, participants were given a sheet of paper with the question and asked to do an initial sketch underneath the problem. They were reminded to sketch out the problem as if they were teaching how to solve the problem for someone else (see also The Brick Problem; password otter17).

### Interpretations of the Initial Calculations

Case Margo's initial response on the letter-sized paper showed darker numbers that were added with one of the marker pens used to make the poster (see Figure 2 below). The second author interpreted this as guessing numbers, which he said was a "legitimate approach when nothing better comes to mind." Setting the brick on the left side of the representation and assigning one pound to the brick was described by the second author as a "wrong choice, a guess." When she moves to the poster (Table 1), she strips away the guesses and equations in black. Another noticeable feature of the initial calculation is the conceptualization of a scale, with two sides that need to be balanced.

**Case Sandra's Initial Calculation of the Word Problem**

Case Sandra' initial diagram and response (See Figure 3 below) emphasizes the brick rather than conceptualizing a scale or balance between two sides. She also provides directions in words and sentences on both the initial calculation and poster for the video. The second author pointed out that Sandra's first mistake was deciding that one brick is one pound. Additionally, Sandra should have been multiplying instead of adding. Overall, the way she conceptualized the problem as the brick alone, without a scale, along with assigning the one brick to be one pound, suggests that Sandra is misunderstanding the basic premise of the problem.

**Case Isabella's Initial Response to the Word Problem**

On her initial calculation (See Figure 4 below), Isabella knew exactly how to set up the equation with a variable. She presents the conceptualization of the scale with the formula embedded inside the scale, transforming the wording of the problem and the necessary variables into one image, a balanced scale. Nothing seems to be erased at all. The poster for her video expanded on the initial calculations and becomes more oriented toward instruction (see Table One).
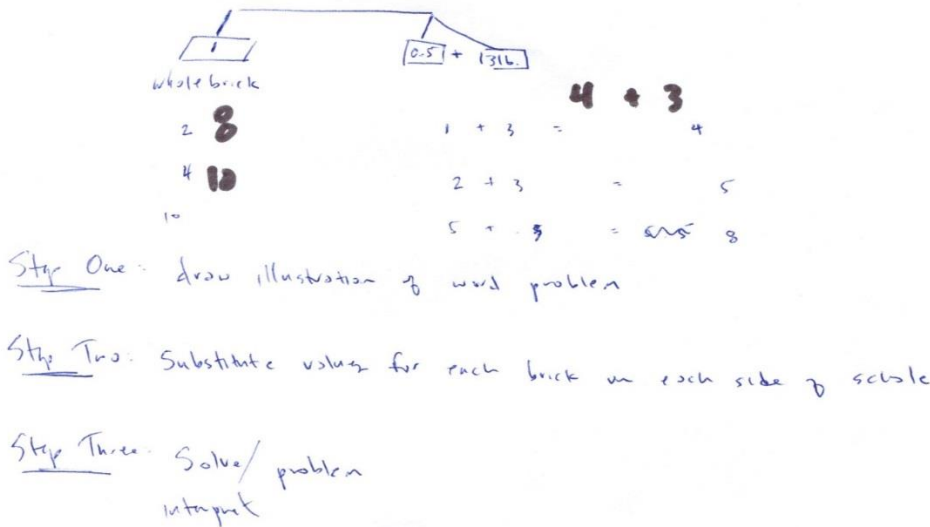


Figure 2. Case Margo's Initial Calculation

Question Two

Scales are balanced with a whole brick on one side and an exact half of exactly the same brick, plus a 3-pound weight on the other.

What is the weight of the whole brick?  .125

$1/2 \times 8$
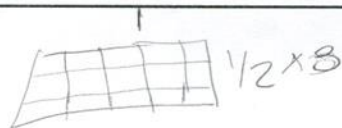
$1/2 \times 3 = 3/6 \div 1 = 3/6$

1 brick $= 3/6$
half brick $= .25$

$3/6 \div 1/2 = .25$
$3/6 \times .25 = .125$

Step 1: I drew a picture out to look like a brick then I read the word problem & match the numbers on the sides of the brick.
Step 2: then I multiplied 1/2 X 3 and it gave me 3/6 so I divided 3/6 by 1 and it gave me 3/6.
Step 3: I did 3/6 ÷ 1/2 and it gave me .25 so I took 3/6 from what I got from earlier in the problem & I multiplied it by .25 and I got .125 and I think the total of the whole brick is .125.

Figure 3. Case Sandra's Initial Calculation

Question Two

Scales are balanced with a whole brick on one side and an exact half of exactly the same brick, plus a 3-pound weight on the other.
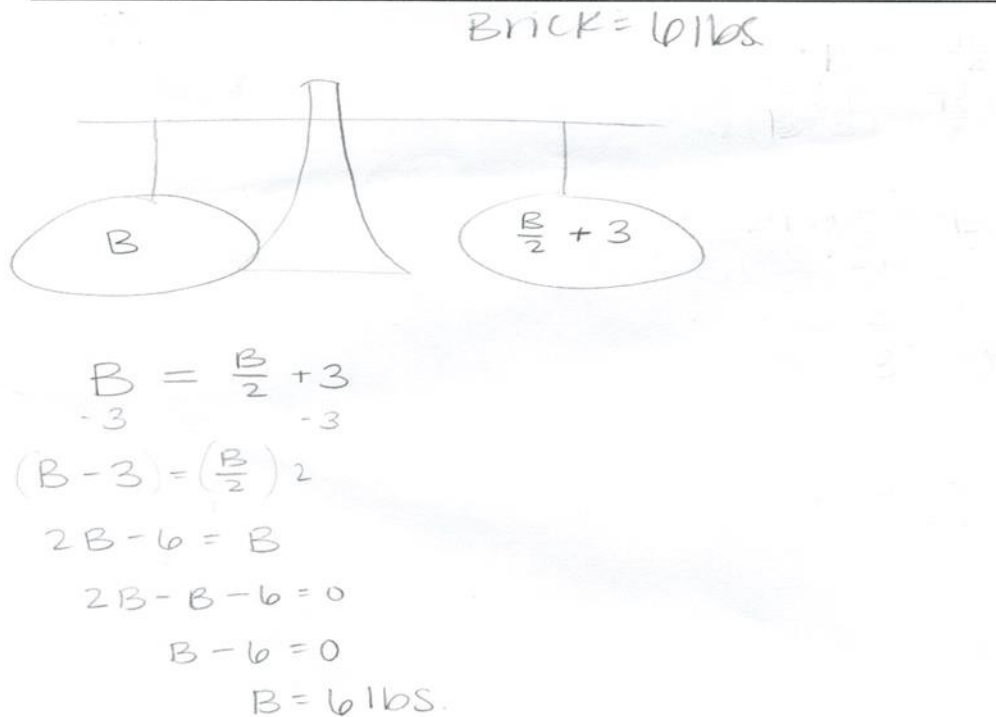
What is the weight of the whole brick?

Brick = 6 lbs

$$B = \frac{B}{2} + 3$$
$$-3 \qquad\qquad -3$$
$$2\left(B - 3\right) = \left(\frac{B}{2}\right) 2$$
$$2B - 6 = B$$
$$2B - B - 6 = 0$$
$$B - 6 = 0$$
$$B = 6\, lbs.$$

Figure 4. Case Isabella's Initial Calculation

**The Visuals**

As with the initial calculations, the speech and visuals are presented close together for comparison; as mentioned previously, the visuals are displayed on a webpage at The Brick Problem, password otter17. Each visual represents how participants conceptualized the problem with the goal of teaching the solution to others, in addition to any changes they made from the initial calculations. As with the initial calculations, the visuals are a rich source of data to understand how the participants are thinking about the problem.

Table 1. The Three Visuals for the Video (For larger pictures go to The Brick Problem, password otter17)

Case Margo's Poster



Case Sandra's Poster



Case Isabella's Poster

Similar to the initial calculations, the portrayal of a scale is the most prominent feature of the visuals. Though limited, the visuals provide insight into the participants' reading comprehension. The question implies that the "scales are balanced," with two sides having the exact same measurements. Margo and Isabella rightly sketch scales with bricks on each side. Sandra does not conceptualize a scale: she draws a brick. Moreover, she writes her explanation more explicitly than Margo and Isabella, and the writing sweeps upwards. Overall, as far as her path from the original problem to solution, Case Sandra does not seem to be conceptualizing two bricks or any kind of balance.

Margo and Isabella both conceptualize a scale, but Isabella is very detailed about each step in the process, in addition to conceptualizing the scale. The way she thinks about the problem and her path from the problem to a solution is clearly presented on her visual. Isabella expands on her initial calculations on the original sheet of paper to the poster paper in a comprehensive manner, presenting each step needed to solve the problem. In contrast to Isabella, Margo does not present much detail on her visual, and Margo excludes much of the initial calculations from the poster she uses to explain the problem.

**Speech and the Video Presentation**

The speech, transcribed below in Table 2, is *inseparable* from the visual and pointing that occur on the video. As with the initial calculations and visual, we are juxtaposing the speech from each participant. During the video, the researcher asked Sandra to reflect on her presentation  to emphasize metacognition. This part of Sandra's speech is presented separately.

Table 2. Transcribed Speech from the Videos (see also  The Brick Problem,  password otter17) Bolded words for Case Margo mark an explicit metacognitive act. Also, "So" is bolded to highlight a prominent pattern in two of the participants' transcripts.

Case Margo
Step one says interpret the word problem visually This is my scale that I've drawn. On the left side I've drawn a whole brick. And, uh, on the other side of the scale, which is supposed to be balanced. I've drawn—I brought to scale on half of the brick on the left side plus the three-pound weight on the right side, and this illustration is supposed to show that balance on both sides **so** we have a picture. Step two is to substitute the values for each brick on the left side and the right side of the scale **so** it will be balanced. And I chose simple numbers, one for my whole brick on my left side, **but I made a mistake because half of one is point five plus three is three point five, And one does not equal three-point five.** But that's the idea and once you figure out what number is on the left equal half of the number on the left plus three Then that is the value--Then you're solving um the weight of the whole brick.

Case Sandra

**So** first I did step one I drew a picture to look like a brick; then I read the word problem and matched the numbers on the side of the brick. Well with then the brick what I do actually, I put one up here, and one down right here cause this I want to be two whole sides **So** I put the one there cause this side is by one half and when I read the words on this side, it said add three But I times three—no, uh, but it said two. Then I multiplied one half times three, and it gave me three-sixths **so** I divided. **So** here you go, one half times three Equals three-sixths, **so** I did three sixths divided by one half which shows right—(stick) three sixths divided by one half, and that gave me point twenty-five**. So** I took three-sixths from what I got earlier, which is one half—no I got point two five, that's it (I mean), **so** (I did) three-sixths times point two five, it gave me one twenty-five. **So**, um, basically, I did the weight of the whole brick was point one twenty-five and that's what I wrote the weight of the brick.

Case Isabella:

**So** the first thing I did was draw a picture of a scale that showed each side We knew that there was one brick on one side, and the other had half the same—pound of brick on the other side plus three. I put B because B equals a brick in pounds. **So,** the first step was to draw a picture and identify variables or variable. Step two was to make an equation, **so** I put B equals half B plus three. **So** then I have to solve for B. Remember what you do to one side you have to do to the other side, and *to* bring all like or the same variables to the same and solve it. **So,** what I did was subtract three on both sides **so** I got B minus three equals one-half B; multiply that by two Uh—on both sides to get B by itself over here. **So,** I have two B minus six equals B. Then I subtracted B on both sides: ended up with zero. **So,** you can solve with B. So you have two minus B minus six equals zero, which simplifies out to B minus six equals zero. So then I solve for B add six to both sides and B equals six. **So,** the Brick equals six pounds **So** then I plug the answer back into the initial equation; this one for verification. **So** right here I have B equals one-half B plus three; six equals six over two plus three. six equals six Ta Da.

### Case Margo

At the beginning of her video presentation, Margo emphasizes the scale, with both sides "balanced." As mentioned previously, she demonstrating some reading comprehension by conceptualizing "scales." She also concludes her explanation with this: "once you figure out what number is on the left plus three; then that is the value. Then you're solving um, the weight of the whole brick" (see The Brick Problem; password otter17).

During the interview and after she watched the video, Margo mentioned how she noticed an error when she moved from the initial calculation to the poster paper:

"I realized I caught my mistake while I was drawing from, um that paper and not this paper (she is pointing to the poster on the wall). All of a sudden I realized I had done it correctly here, but then really looked at it on there (she is pointing back and forth between the initial calculation and the poster)".

This is an important metacognitive act, though in this example, the metacognitive act is comprised of what she found earlier, moving from the initial calculation sheet to the poster. During her video explanation, she illustrates a new metacognitive act, a new path from problem and solution.

To summarize Case Margo's metacognitive acts, these occurred at each step in the process and can be seen in the data at several points. On her initial video, she is making guesses after noting that some of her numbers are not working out. As she moves from her initial calculations to the poster paper, the stripping down of her original calculations suggests that she has found more problems in her representation of a solution; perhaps she has lost confidence too (i.e., low self-efficacy). Then on the video, she supplies some specific numbers that should have been different, which are still not accurate. The diagram and her explanation on the video suggest the main problem in her solution was assigning the number "one" to the brick on the left side of the balance. Although she mentions this, Margo does not seem to realize that this was not the right choice, but as the second author pointed out, this was a logical choice.

**Case Sandra**

On the video there is one section where her awareness that she did not make a correct choice indicates metacognition, though not directly. Her confusion about addition and subtraction is indicated by the following in the video data: "I read the words on this side, it said add three, but I times three—no, uh, but it said two. Then I multiplied one-half times three, and it gave me three-sixths, so I divided." When she says that "times three", she does so with a rising tone as if "three times" is a question." She also wiggled the pointer back and forth, which could be interpreted as related to the gesture category called a *beat*. This suggests she might be searching for the right word or concept (see McCafferty, 2002; McNeil, 1992), although the gestures are linked to the visual and the pointer: this is a variance of McCafferty(2002), and McNeil's (1992) perspectives on *spontaneous gesture*. Sandra also mentions the addition and multiplication confusion during the recorded conversations after watching her video.

While still on video after she had completed her presentation, it was evident that she was not confident with her answer, and it seemed sensible at that moment to try to prompt metacognition. This is the conversation that began on the video as soon as Sandra ended her explanation.

Interviewer: Do you see anything now that might be a weak point? What do you think is a weak point? Anything?

Sandra: Yeah, I feel like right there when I multiplied three, when it said add three, in the word problem, I multiplied.

Interviewer: It should have been addition there?

Sandra: Yeah it should have been

Interviewer: I wonder what caused the confusion. Do you think it's the shape of that? (the interviewer is referring to the brick shape on the visual).

Sandra: No I feel like cause I'm not used to multiplying again so I added. So this one gonna be worse cause I'm used to the word problem when you multiply, and they say add. So um—

Interviewer: that's where the error might be

Sandra: Yeah

Several metacognitive acts occur during this end-of-the conversation section on the video. She has thoroughly assessed a calculation error and repeats it on the video; then returns to this theme of multiplying when she should have been adding. After watching the video and being asked what she would do differently, she replied, "Really it was the problem, because like, I started off wrong because of a new thing, and I multiplied, so this is what threw me off." When asked about improving the whole process, she said that "Reading the question over until you can figure it out, like what you're doing."

To summarize Case Sandra's metacognitive acts, she is aware of her error in multiplying instead of adding on the video and during the post-video conversations. She also noted that reading the question carefully is important, so she is indicating some awareness that she missed the premise of the problem. Sandra also does not conceptualize a balanced scale, and instead conceptualizes one brick into pieces. Around these bad choices and errors in her equations and guesses, she is exhibiting metacognitive acts, but these metacognitive acts were not made explicit until she was asked. Some metacognitive acts appear more indirectly, as when she waves her pointer around while mentioning "multiplied three times." This occurs around other false starts and pauses in the discourse.

### Case Isabella

For Isabella the three major modes of speech, the visual, and the act of pointing are coordinated and precise (see [The Brick Problem](#) password: otter17). Her speech is smooth and uninterrupted. She integrates the variable B into the concept of balance, packaging the variable and the metaphor of balance together into a vivid image both orally and on the visual. She explicitly reminds the audience of balancing the equation, mentioning the necessary metacognitive act of verifying: "Remember what you do to one side you have to do to the other…So then I plug the answer back into the initial equation; this one for verification." For Isabella, the data suggests that her metacognitive acts are internalized and only mentioned as a way to make it clear to the audience. During the post-video conversation, when Isabella was asked what the hardest part was, she mentioned "the initial set up of the problem, like putting it in terms of like, transferring words into an equation."

### Discussion

Our purpose in this ongoing research has been to explore the power and potential of digital video for unpacking students' abilities to solve math word problems; the emphasis is on metacognition, specifically, metacognitive acts. This first paper also presented a theoretical framework with the emphasis on analyzing the synthesis of speech, visuals, and acts of pointing. The paper is also intended to demonstrate how digital video, with speech, visuals, and acts of pointing as units of analysis can be adapted for instruction and assessment. Finally, our study aligns with the trend in the literature for a semiotic approach to the study of math word problems, in addition to calls for a closer examination of the relationship between reading, visuals, interaction,

and an emphasis on the negotiation of meaning (Greenberg, Ginzburg, & Wrigley, 2017; Goos et al., 2002; Kong & Orosco, 2016).

### Metacognitive Acts

By using speech, visual, and the act of pointing as units of analysis, metacognitive acts can be identified and tracked as a multi-modal *genesis* of negotiated meaning by teachers and students. For example, the data provided insight into how participants were thinking about the problem in a way that can inform their efforts to "edit" their solutions of word problems.

Prominent examples of metacognitive acts from the present study occur across modalities from the initial calculation to the poster, and then finally to the video; this includes short background interviews and participant comments on their problem-solving steps and strategies. One prominent metacognitive act that can be found in the data is when Margo excludes some of her initial calculations from her video-presentation poster (i.e., the visual), which is stark in appearance. With regard to Margo engaging in "…an assessment of a particular aspect of a solution" (Goos et al. p. 199), this is similar to students condensing and/or editing content from one draft to the next in academic writing (see Unger, 2018).

The genesis of another metacognitive act occurs during Margo's video presentation when she points to the scale on her visual and says, "I chose simple numbers, one for my whole brick on my left side, but I made a mistake because half of one is point five plus three is three point five, and one does not equal three-point five." Margo's metacognitive act was primarily self-regulated and was prompted through the process of explaining by using her visual.

In a different manner, Sandra had to be prompted into a metacognitive act by the first author asking her a question about a "weak point" in her calculations. She replied with "yeah, I feel like right there when I multiplied three when it said to add three in the word problem, I multiplied." Asked by the first author if the shape of the brick was a problem, Sandra returned to the problem of multiplying when she should have adding. Overall, Sandra's data suggests that reading comprehension is an issue moving from the two different semiotic systems of the English language and the Math Language.

The pace and content of the speech on video, with the visual and pointing as inseparable cognitive resources, displays a comprehensive view of the participants' understanding of the problem and their belief that they are on the right path from the initial calculation to conclusion. The metacognitive acts already identified in the transcripts include Margo's reflection during her presentation about her calculation. Sandra's difficulty in moving between the semiotic systems of math and English is also salient in the occasional false starts, along with her noticeable rising tone and beats with the pointer around parts of her explanation that were not clear to her. Isabella, in contrast to both Margo and Sandra, was quite clear and confident in her presentation, with her visual coinciding clearly with the steps needed to reach the correct outcome. Most striking about her transcripts was the consistent use of the coordinator "so" to signal a next step. "So" also appears in Sandra's transcript, but not as often and not with the consistency as with Isabella. Sandra does

not use "so" only once, and other transitions were not prominent. The precise use of transitions as indicators of metacognitive acts needs more investigation.

**Math Word Problems, Reading, Videos, and Visual Displays**

In the process of analyzing the data for metacognitive acts, important questions emerged about the relevance of the participants' reading abilities and how much the videos and visuals added to the participants understanding of the math word problem. Although the reading abilities of the participants were not a main objective of the study, as with other studies in our review, we found that reading comprehension and semiotic mediation (i.e., a cycle of interpretation, signification and mediation) are inseparable from the participants success with word problems.

Recall Sandra's striking difference in leaving out the concept of "balance" and "scale": her focus was on the brick and not the balance of both sides of a scale, as compared to Margo and Isabella. Also, she focused on dividing the brick and multiplied instead of adding. She revealed her confusion about the problem in response to the questions from the first author and after reflecting on her video (see Table 1 and the transcripts). As mentioned earlier, Sandra's problem seems to be a reading comprehension issue. Reading comprehension was suggested in Margo's interpretation, though making any direct cause and effect statement is beyond the scope of this study.

Sandra, Margo, and Isabella, through the entire problem-solving process, are interacting in a way that Sáenz-Ludlow's (2006) called "dialogic interaction" (p. 203), a term she used in describing interpretation games. She also states that "Social interactions between teacher and students and among students themselves are *acts of communication* constituted at two levels: acts of communication with *oneself* and acts of communication with *others*" (p. 196). This aligns with the views of Wertsch (1998) and Bakhtin (1986; see also Clark & Holquist, 1984), which also take the view of a dialogic construction of the *self* as other. (Wertsch, 1998, and Baktin, 1986, are also cited by Sáienz-Ludlow, 2006). All three participants are enacting a *self-as-other* view as they place language and image in front of them to create language and image for an imagined audience. Through this process, each participant discovers something about their understanding of the Brick Problem's author-intention.

This self-as-other perspective is important in terms of understanding the power of multi-modal representations of the problem-solving process. For the participants in our study, they were prompted to have an imagined audience (i.e., the emphasis on reciprocal teaching), in addition to having the researcher to interact with, or with some of the participants, they showed up together to work on different problems so they had another participant who was in the vicinity.

Also important to our study is Sáenz-Ludlow's (2006) findings that the interpreting games and language games mediated the students' comprehension of simple math word problems. For our participants, each step in the process, specifically when they were preparing the visual representations and presenting their explanations on video, prompted a self-as-other perspective.

With regards to using visuals and multimedia, our approach, though different, followed along with the suggestions of Casey (2003) and others (Kong & Orosco, 2016; Sáenz-Ludlow,

2006). Each of these authors also used variations of Vygotskian-related ideas that align with our intentions for the visuals, the explanations, and the videos to act as a kind of "instructional scaffolding" (Kong & Orosco, 2016, p. 171), which can support students' comprehension of the word problems. Other scholars who align with our Vygotskian notion of tool use and the powers of visuals and digital tools include Lantz-Andersson, Linderoth. and Säljö (2009). These researchers also used discourse analysis of students collaborating and discussing problems appearing on a computer monitor. As with our participants, the participants in Lanz-Andersson et al. used a digital tool to mediate their responses.

A semiotic-Vygotskian approach to mathematics, along with Tomasello's (2003) understanding of the collaborative and social nature of language acquisition, can provide a productive avenue for understanding how students move back and forth between natural language and the language of mathematics (Lemke, 2003).

## Conclusion

Our direction with creating a multi-modal process of mediational means follows along with many other scholars we reviewed. To better involve the reader in judging our descriptions and interpretations, we offer the raw video data at [The Brick Problem](#) (password: otter17). In closing, it is worthwhile to quote Sáenz-Ludlow and Presmeg, (2006), "…the teaching and learning of mathematics is essentially a collaborative semiotic activity mediated by the simultaneous use, re-creation, interpretation, and appropriation of a variety of semiotic systems" (p. 2).

### Limitations

As with all research, this study has limitations. Because three cases are presented, it is difficult to generalize beyond the immediate contexts. However, this research can be used as a reference to create a variety of classroom-based video activities with speech, a visual, and the act of pointing as accessible units of analysis. With regards to objectivity, because of our deep involvement in positioning the word problem, the students, and the interaction in a specific manner, in addition to the interpretive descriptions, the findings are interwoven with the researchers' perspectives.

### Avenues for Further Research

Many avenues for further research can follow along these same general steps and the theoretical approach presented by the current study. Moving the procedures into more of a mixed-methods design with control and experimental groups is an important avenue to find any cause and effect or correlational relationships between the digital video (perhaps the whole set of activities described above) and learning outcomes. Another option is to create a class specifically on word problems from a variety of disciplines and teach students how to study their responses. The options for adjusting these basic steps and overall approach to language teaching are many.

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**Homework vs. Home-learning: A Lifelong Learning Perspective and Student Perceptions**

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**Abstract**

There appears to be no consensus among educators and students alike about the value of homework. Although some argue that it is essential for reinforcing learning, others say that it is irrelevant in most cases and detrimental to one's desire for overall learning. Geared towards the latter, this paper advocates a shift away from *homework* to *home-learning* based on the principles of lifelong learning. I will argue that this approach prepares students better for engaging in meaningful learning experiences not only during their college studies but also across their lifespan. In this paper, I also present the results of a small-scale study into 90 first-year English Department students' perceptions of homework vs. home-learning in the context of Abu Dhabi, the UAE. Analysis of data collected through a self-developed survey revealed that student attitudes were negative towards the former and positive towards the latter. Results also showed that student needs were not usually reflected in homework tasks. Yet students' weaknesses and strengths were taken into consideration at times. The students were also found to have a significant deficit in their skills for engagement in home-learning tasks as informed by the four lifelong learning skills on which the study focused. I discuss the results and make recommendations to foster students' awareness and use of home-learning skills so that their chances of engagement in effective and meaningful learning experiences throughout life are enhanced.

**Keywords:** homework, home-learning, lifelong learning, motivation, university students

**1.0 Introduction**

No discussion about the importance of engagement in learning activities outside the classroom can ignore the debate on "the necessity" of homework for supporting learning. On the one hand, there is the argument that homework increases academic performance by having "students review, practice, and drill material … learned at school", "provid[ing] students with the opportunity to amplify, elaborate, and enrich previously learned information", and "prepar[ing], in advance, material to be learned in the following classes" (Hong & Milgram, 2000, p. 5). On the other hand, some argue that the default arrangement should be "no homework" since most homework cannot

be justified (Kohn, 2016). Similarly, others go so far as to argue that homework reinforces "a corporate-style, competitive … culture that overvalues work to the detriment of personal and familial well-being" (Karlovec & Bueel cited in Marzano & Pickering, 2007, p. 74), with a toll on children's health and precious family time taken away (Bennett & Kalish, 2006).

All these distinct attitudes towards effectiveness of homework do have their own merits; however, it seems that in recent times the concept of homework has become a little tarnished, thus losing its original sense of purpose. It also seems that the above-mentioned conflicting arguments stem from the perception of the very concept of *homework* – a term that could indeed be ascribed a negative connotation. Just as a working adult would not be particularly happy to bring home "work" unless obliged to, neither, too, would a student like to be burdened with additional "work" from school upon arriving home. This interpretation of "work" reinstates challenges with which students' lives are beset, often stripping them of the desire to immerse in life-wide learning opportunities. To circumvent potential current and future consequences of this, an unconventional approach ought to be taken towards learning with a shift from "home*work*" to "home-*learning*." This shift in perception from "work" to "learning" implies a greater recognition that not all learning takes place in the physical boundaries of the classroom, and that our learning experiences in different contexts are not only complementary to each other but they also trigger related and/or completely new learning experiences. In this regard, home-learning adopts a holistic approach to learning. It underscores the role of immersion in meaningful learning experiences that are not restricted to the content covered at school. This resonates with the notion of lifelong learning which "potentially encompasses all forms of learning" (Singh, 2015, p. 18) in any given context. In this paper, influenced by earlier research into lifelong learning (e.g. Coşkun & Demirel, 2012; Deveci, 2018a; Deveci, 2018b), I will describe four overarching, symbiotic lifelong learning skills, and maintain that a shift in our attitude from home*work* to home-*learning* serves to develop students' lifelong learning aptitude and skills. I will also argue that this approach supports the learning of everyone involved in the process including peers and parents. Home-*learning,* therefore, is a comprehensive approach complementing formal education through its emphasis on meaningful and serendipitous learning with a view towards the constructivist approach. This will be followed by a section that presents the results of a study I conducted into students' homework experiences in an English course at an Abu Dhabi-based university. For this purpose, answers will be sought to the following questions:

1- How many hours a day do students engage in homework tasks? Do their responses differ according to gender?

2- What are student perceptions on whether their experiences of doing homework prepare them for learning after graduation? Do their responses differ according to gender?

2- To what extent do they think their instructors consider individual student characteristics when assigning homework tasks? Do their responses differ according to gender?

3- What are student thoughts about homework vs. home-learning? Do their responses differ according to gender?

4- How skilled are students in coping with homework tasks? Do their responses differ according to gender?

## 2.0 Lifelong learning skills and home-learning

In this section, I will explain four lifelong learning skills that have a direct link with the attitude adopted in this paper towards home-learning. These four skills should not be viewed as distinct from each other. Rather, there is a symbiotic relationship between them.

### 2.1. Motivation

Carefully planned home-learning opportunities provided by teachers and supported by parents reinforce a variety of lifelong learning skills. One of the most important of these is "motivation." It is essential that home-learning tasks create intrinsic motivation for learning. That is, students should see genuine value in doing the tasks. For this to happen, a one-type-fits-all approach must be avoided. Tasks ought to be differentiated according to individual student needs as well as interests. The former is only possible if teachers keep a vigilant eye on the difficulties students may be facing. The learning tasks set for the home should be carefully designed to take students through steps necessary to tackle these difficulties. It is, however, also important that home-learning tasks not focus solely on student challenges, but also areas in which students are strong. This will support the belief in students that "homework" is not to remedy weaknesses only, but it also reinforces their strengths. In setting home-learning tasks that would allow this to happen, students' interest areas should also be considered. Identifying each student's likes and dislikes early in the term and correlate tasks to these will create greater motivation for learning.

To ensure that students have intrinsic motivation for engagement in learning at home, teachers should also be mindful of students' learning styles. Just as they need to consider learning styles in planning and executing their lessons, they also need to design home-learning tasks compatible with different learning styles. This is not to suggest that every single task has to address all different learning styles. This is practically impossible. However, varying task types every now and then would help address students with different learning styles. This would also serve to familiarize students with different ways of learning. Their awareness of the similarities and differences between the ways in which their peers learn will help develop a greater understanding among students, which is critical when students are asked to perform learning tasks with others both in and outside of the classroom. To this end, students could be provided with a choice of tasks designed to serve the same learning outcome. They may as well opt for tasks not completely compatible with their learning styles. Considering the malleability of learning styles (Brown, 2003; Deveci, 2013), they may be expected to pursue these if they see any value in them. Collectively, these will make home-learning more meaningful and therefore create more motivation for learning.

Engagement in learning can also be supported through carefully designed tasks. Learning becomes meaningful and therefore engaging only if it relates to the real tasks learners perform in their own lives. In their writing on foreign language learning, Platt and Brooks (2002) propose the notion of

"task engagement," which occurs "when learners display through either private or social speech their own structuring of the task, say, to establish goals as they feel necessary to move from mere compliance with the task itself to actual engagement with it" (p. 373). In an attempt to successfully perform the task, learners engage in language as well. However, their primary focus is not on linguistic forms, but on the successful completion of the task, which undeniably requires them to use linguistic and paralinguistic forms at both conscious and subconscious levels. By engaging in learning tasks, learners, in fact, take control of tasks assigned by the teacher. The feeling of ownership creates greater motivation for tackling challenging tasks through the use of learners' "emergent yet still imperfect linguistic system and other mediational tools" (p. 393). Although Platt and Brooks (2002) report on how certain classroom activities allow for task engagement, learning tasks set for the home should too consider task engagement for greater engagement in meaningful learning.

The motivation for engagement in learning outside of the classroom is also enhanced by ensuring that tasks demonstrate authenticity. To this end, tasks, Barbour (2012) argues, should engage learners in experiences connected to the real world as they know it. Tasks compatible with real-world experiences contribute to learners' holistic development. They help learners "build, connect, and apply concepts and skills in ways that make the most sense to them" (p. 23). Among the variety of ways in which authenticity can be achieved is allowing learners to organize information and consider alternative, encouraging them to do the work that real people do, and asking them to address a problem related to the real world beyond the physical boundaries of the school (Newmann & Wehlage, 1993 cited in Alleman et al., 2014).

## 2.2 Self-regulation

In comparison to the traditional view that the purpose of education is to produce knowledgeable people and provide them with "the concepts, values, and skills required to function reasonably well in the world," the modern view is that the purpose of education is "to produce autonomous *lifelong* learner" (Knowles, 1988, p. 4). Towards this end, Knowles (1988) posits, teachers can facilitate learning only if they follow learners' flow of natural learning process rather than impose their teacher-made sequence on them. Only in this way can we refrain from interfering with learning. All in all, to Knowles (1988), "the purpose of learning [ought to be] *learning*" (p. 5). Autonomy in learning requires that learners should be able to "make decisions for themselves about what they should be learning and how they should be learning it: teachers cannot, and do not wish to, guide every aspect of the learning process" (Boud, 1988, p. 17). This necessitates learners' acquisition and use of self-regulation skills, which is complementary to the above-mentioned role of motivation. For home-learning tasks to support students' lifelong learning, they ought to provide opportunities for self-regulated learning, which can be defined as

> a form of acquiring knowledge and skills in which the learners are independent and self-motivated. Learners independently choose their own goals and learning strategies that will lead to achieving those goals. It is through evaluation the

> effectiveness of one's learning strategies – comparing one's current state with the target state – that learning can be modified and optimized (Goetz, Nett, & Hall, 2013, p. 126).

A deeply ingrained notion in its definition is "independence," which underscores the role of lifelong learning. In relation to home-learning, this suggests that students ought to be able to correlate their learning goals and home-learning tasks. It is important to acknowledge the strong possibility that young and inexperienced students may not be able to set their own learning goals, at least *not* at the beginning of the year. This may be particularly true, if they come from an authoritarian, teacher/parent-dependent learning background. Yet, with adequate mentoring and guidance, they may be helped to gain the confidence and skills in determining learning goals. The same is true for home-learning tasks. This is not to suggest that students should always create their own tasks. They should be able to choose from the tasks that they consider to be the most appropriate in achieving their goals. It is also true that with sufficient training and feedback they can learn to create their own home-learning tasks. This requires an open-mind from their teachers. Likewise, students need to have their awareness raised regarding a variety of learning strategies at their disposal to carry out home-learning tasks successfully.

The ability to set learning goals and strive for them is a significant indicator of self-regulation. However, learners should also be able to adjust their plans devised to help achieve their goals. Too strict adherence to pre-made plans may, in fact, be harmful when flexibility with plans and goals may be essential. On the other hand, the inability to stick to self-made plans (especially when faced with challenges) may be equally detrimental, if not more. In order to avoid this, learners may require some teacher advice and redirection to help them keep to their plans. Sharing this sentiment, Candas (2011) uses the term "loose piloting," which points to the role of teacher support in "trigger[ing] reflective thinking in learners and enable[ing] them to make more personal choices" (p. 201). She underscores the importance of teacher support in enabling learners to make informed decisions regarding any inflection in their learning path and modes as they progress.

Self-regulated home-learning also requires self-discipline. From the perspective of schools, home*work* is argued to have "symbolic importance in emphasizing the school's concern for academic progress, and its expectation that pupils have the ability and self-discipline needed to work without direct supervision" (Etzioni, 1984, p. 30). From the standpoint of home-*learning*, however, the emphasis put on learning endeavors at home is not because of "the school's concern for academic progress", but rather "the student's holistic development," academic progress being only an aspect of it. It is true, though, that students ought to be able to engage in learning at home of their own accord without direct supervision. However, supervision does not necessarily mean the presence of authority when they are engaged in learning tasks. Students may also feel supervised when they know their work will be evaluated or assessed by their teacher at a later stage. Such external supervision and evaluation are harmful to self-regulation necessary for lifelong learning. Students need self-discipline to enhance their repertoires of knowledge and skills *without* supervision, but *with* support and guidance from significant others so that they can

successfully deploy self-regulation skills in initiating new learning activities necessary for solving problems throughout their lives. Towards this end, it may be a good idea for teachers, Jha (2016) argues, to refrain from grading tasks assigned for home. Only in this way will students be more encouraged to try their best on their own. Jha also notes that encouraging students to be more disciplined at a younger age develops their self-confidence, and this will help them in their future studies in higher education which puts a heavy emphasis on progress through self-development.

## 2.3 Perseverance

Defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary (n. d.) as "continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition," the skill of perseverance is of particular importance for lifelong learning. Life is beset with challenges often impacting people's desire for continuous learning. One such challenge stems from the rapidly changing and protean nature of technology and its effects on the amount and diversity of knowledge available to us. Unless equipped with perseverance skills, we will be impoverished in our attempt to meet the exigencies and opportunities of our lives as self-fulling individuals.

Home-learning tasks can be an asset to instilling perseverance skills in students, thus preparing them for lifelong learning. For this, tasks need to be carefully designed to stimulate critical thinking through reflection on how best to solve questions, respond to prompts, and exhibit a deeper understanding of content matter in relation to its everyday applications. Light (2017) maintains that challenging and stimulating tasks assigned for home increase students' appetite for learning. She warns, however, that students' initial reaction to challenging tasks may be rejection, but their recognition that hard work is acknowledged and celebrated by their teachers likely results in their desire to engage in more learning activities outside class. There is, in fact, empirical evidence showing that students tend to derive enjoyment from accomplishing challenging tasks (Wasserstein in Blackburn, 2013). Also, the realization that strength grows out of struggle will motivate them to persevere in the face of challenges when they have to bring their knowledge and skills up to date in the future. Collectively, these clearly indicate that motivation and perseverance are inextricably linked to self-directedness which is a must for learning to continue throughout an individual's lifespan.

## 2.4 Interpersonal communication

Lifelong learning puts the individual learner at the center of learning so much so that it has become almost an unwritten rule for a lifelong learner to make the decision, make the effort and benefit from the learning process (Longworth & Davies, 2013). However, this seemingly learner-centered approach cannot, and should not, overlook "communication dynamics playing a significant role in the manifestation of learning needs and how these needs are addressed through interaction with others" (Deveci, 2018a, p. 79). Otherwise, learners who lose sight of interpersonal aspects of the learning process will be alienated from other learners. This likely results in "the reproduction of the alienated relationships within the wider social formation" (Edwards, 2001, p. 43).

The educational psychologist Vygotsky (1978) posits that our interaction with others and mental processes are inextricably linked to each other. According to him, children's interaction with other people, particularly adults and more experienced peers, help them develop quicker and acquire a more advanced understanding (Jarvis, 2005). Placing a significant emphasis on the role of language in children's cognitive development, he stated that children's language abilities develop as a result of social interaction with others. At the egocentric speech stage, the child uses language to regulate others' actions. However, the child also learns to be regulated by others (Jarvis, 2005).

Vygotsky's theory, together with other similar ones, gave way to the development of the social constructivist theory, according to which we construct our knowledge through our daily interactions with people in the course of our social lives (Burr, 2015). Applied to educational settings, this points to the role of a well-developed class community with adequate social and emotional support in "enabling learners to take risks and develop ownership of their learning" (Beck & Kosnik, 2006, p. 12).

This pivotal and determinative role interpersonal communication described above plays in lifelong learning ought to be considered in planning home-learning tasks. Mirroring the fact that much learning in the workplace takes place through informal learning among colleagues (Head, 2016), home-learning tasks need to engage students in a dialogue with others on learning related matters. This, however, should not encourage formal peer or parent-tutoring. Often-times busy parents recruit tutors to help their children with their "home-work" after school. This denies the purpose of home-learning by transferring formal education to the home context. For students to acquire interpersonal skills essential for lifelong learning, it is best for teachers to devise home-learning experiences involving students in a variety of "intentional or tacit learning in which [they] engage either individually or collectively without direct reliance on a [tutor]" (Livingstone, 2006, p. 204). These experiences need to provide students with the opportunity to immerse themselves in contexts where the target knowledge and skills are put in practice for a particular purpose, serving their individual needs (Hoofman, 2005). In doing so, students' needs and desires for communication with others should always be kept in mind. To this end, home-learning tasks should provide students with adequate guidance and support to engage themselves in social contexts where they know and trust each other's skills and knowledge, which is an essential element of informal, and therefore, lifelong learning (Hoofman, 2005).

The European Commission (2005) also highlights interpersonal communication competence among the eight key lifelong learning competences they have identified. This, according to the commission, requires individuals to "share what they have learnt … and to seek advice, information, and support when appropriate" (p. 15). Home-learning tasks, therefore, should be designed in a way they teach and encourage the use of interpersonal communication skills for learning purposes. This enhances the self-regulation, perseverance and collaborative skills discussed above. To this end, students can be assigned tasks that need to be completed with their peers. They should also be encouraged to give feedback on each other's work. This helps advance their lifelong learning skills at the meta-cognitive level in that they become more able to evaluate,

monitor and improve their own work when they analyze their peers' work (Ambrose et. al., 2010). This enables them to draw on their personal life-experiences and skills as a valuable learning source for both themselves and their peers. Not only does this enhance the social cohesion among students, but it also promotes positive interdependence between students. Undoubtedly, this will translate into higher motivation for learning in and outside of the classroom.

A variety of outside classroom/home learning tasks can be assigned to support the above-mentioned skills. To illustrate, a home-learning task in the form of collaborative writing can teach students cooperation and negotiation skills (Dale in Speck, 2002), which are now key to success in the workplace. When students do their writing tasks together, they also receive access to immediate and instant feedback (Porto in Grief, 2007). Students' engagement in collaborative writing has also been found to increase their skills in using technology for learning purposes when they were required to use online platforms such as Google Docs and Dropbox (Deveci, 2018c). The use of these platforms outside the class can also facilitate the student-teacher interaction, bridging formal and informal learning experiences. In a recent study, we, for instance, found that similar platforms – in addition to email correspondence – were used as useful didactic resources enabling students to reach immediate teacher feedback and increase the speed at which they could make corrections to their written work (Deveci et al., 2018).

It is also important that home-learning tasks be designed in a way that they encourage parental involvement. This has a variety of advantages. First, parents will be in a better position to know about their children's learning journey at school. The dialogue created between the school and the parents will allow each party to identify students' strengths and areas in which they need further improvement, and how they –individually as well as through partnership– support the students' personal, social as well as academic development. Previous research (Van Voorhis in Hindman, Grant & Stronge, 2013) has indeed shown that home tasks that required student and parent interaction resulted in not only in more accurate work but also higher rates of completion with a positive effect on student grades. In fact, it was also found that the increased dialogue between the school and parents about school improved the design of homework assignments. Second, engagement in learning together with their children will allow parents to update themselves as well. Given the protean nature of technology and its impacts on the skills and knowledge required for one to remain contemporary, parents, too, should engage in learning. The skills and knowledge they acquired during their school years likely differ significantly from those required of their children now. Supported by their children's home-learning tasks, parents may as well be encouraged to have a constant commitment to learning again and anew.

**3.0 Homework at University**

The argument that "[c]hange has become so much a part of the fabric of our lives that learning must be as continuous as change itself and inevitably lifelong in character" (McClusky, 1971, p. 1) points to the fact knowledge and skills acquired while at university likely need updating soon after graduation. We live in a time when our prospects for the future depend, to a greater or lesser extent, on our skills in relearning and applying our new learning across our lifespan. Unless

equipped with the requisite aptitude for and skills in lifelong learning, we are unlikely to prosper in our professional and personal lives. University education plays a critical role in providing students with opportunities for learning and applying lifelong learning skills. So much so that without adequate support from university administrations and the professors, students may cling to conventional approaches to learning and remain apprehensive about 'homework' resulting in a lack of educational adroitness. This reduces their chances of having a fulfilling life. Along with its effects on the individual students, it also has an impact on the larger society. To circumvent this, university education – just like school education – ought to be geared towards instilling lifelong learning skills in students.

Self-directed learning is the common core of lifelong learning skills proven to be the key ingredient in students' success both at and beyond college. It would be wrong to consider self-directed learning as students assuming the responsibility to learn the content matter *per se*. It also includes, but is not limited to, their conscious decisions about how to learn the content matter, assessing their learning and to critically reflect on the learning process. This approach to learning does not downplay the role of the instructor. Assuming a facilitator's role, the instructor works with students; in diagnosing educational needs, deciding on objectives as informed by these needs, designing learning experiences supported by appropriate techniques and materials, and evaluating learning outcomes (Knowles, 1973).

Homework, as a learning experience, is still considered by many to be necessary so that students develop self-directed learning skills (Daniela & Vasecko, 2018). Yet the term 'homework' is rarely used in university settings. 'Assignment' is an alternative term. It is also not uncommon to see both words used together: homework assignments. Homework tasks (or assignments) ought to mirror the principles of self-directed learning. To this end, they ought to avoid reinforcing rote-learning. For it to be "a learning activity in which students [are] responsible for directing their own learning" Hine and Pine (2000, p. 90) identify four types of activities: a) practicing the application of principles in new situations, b) undertaking research or preparation activities for future lessons, c) completing exercises to test their understanding of work undertaken in class, and using homework tasks for the 'distance learning' of new concepts. Coates and Morrison (2015) observe that high school teachers' and college professors' attitudes towards checking homework likely differ in that the former usually check students' completed homework while the latter may not do so assuming that students can perform the same tasks on tests. However, the instructor's engagement in student homework through feedback has been shown to improve students' reflection skills and enhance their confidence in working independently (Meyer, Haywood, Sachdev & Faraday, 2008). Guidance and support may be useful for first-year students in particular who have not adequately adapted to college life yet.

Equally important to note is that a significant number of individuals, adults in particular, are choosing to do distance education. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2018), in the U.S.A. alone, there were 5,954,121 students enrolled in a distance education course at the college level in fall 2015. Prompted by the need for making more profits, an increasing number of

universities are now offering students the full-time distance education option. So much so that there are several Open Universities around the Globe that are exclusively distance education institutions. Undeniably, individuals opting for such programs gain access to a variety of opportunities for engagement in lifelong learning. However, learners with a lack of requisite skills for autonomous learning will definitely face challenges. The support provided by distance education institutions per se will not suffice for these learners. They need to make concentrated efforts to take care of their own learning. They, too, should be able to create opportunities for engagement in learning endeavors with other learners in similar situations.

### 3.0 Methodology

### 3.1 Participants and the context

A total of 90 students from Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi participated in this study. Of this number, 48 (53%) were male and 42 (47%) were female. The students' ages varied from 18 to 23 with an average of 20.

The students were registered in ENGL112 offered by the English Department. ENGL112 is an English course based on the principles of Project-based learning. It is designed to furnish students with academic literacy skills in addition to soft-skills they require as future engineers. To this end, students work in teams conducting a term-long research project on a topic relevant to their studies and lives as university students. The heavy emphasis on team assignments together with academic literacy skills is essential for effective communication requiring students to engage in extensive work outside work. Instructors teaching the course often suggest that students wishing to achieve excellent grades need to engage in at least four hours of extra study outside class hours. In addition to quantity, the quality of such work is highlighted.

### 3.2 Data-collection and analysis

I collected the data using a survey I developed myself. The survey was comprised of three sections. The first section included questions related to demographics (e.g. gender & age) and the average number of hours students spent doing homework a day. The second section asked for student opinions on whether their experiences of doing homework were preparing them for learning after college. This section also aimed to identify what students thought about home*work* vs. home-*learning*. For this purpose, they were asked to write the first three words/phrases that came to their minds related to each. The second section also asked students to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a number of statements about the attention their instructors paid to individual student characteristics in assigning homework tasks. The third section included the Home-learning Aptitude Scale (HAS) comprised of four sub-sections based on the four lifelong learning skills discussed in the literature review. These were namely i.e. motivation, self-regulation, perseverance, and interpersonal communication. The first three of these were inspired by Çoşkun and Demirel's (2012) research aiming to identify lifelong learning skills while the last one was informed by my own previous research (Deveci, 2018a).

HAS uses a 5-point Likert-type scale with responses to items ranging from 5, "completely agree," to 1, "completely disagree." Some statements are negatively worded, requiring reverse scoring. The highest, the lowest, and the average scores that can be obtained for the whole scale as well as the subscales can be seen in Table 1. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated to be .7324.

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Table 1. HAS score range

|  | N | Min | Max | $\overline{\text{x}}$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Motivation | 3 | 3 | 15 | 7.5 |
| Self-regulation | 3 | 3 | 15 | 7.5 |
| Perseverance | 3 | 3 | 15 | 7.5 |
| Interpersonal communication | 3 | 3 | 15 | 7.5 |
| Scale as a whole | 12 | 12 | 60 | 30 |

I analyzed the data using SPSS (Version 25). I used descriptive statistics to describe the quantitative data such as frequencies, means, minimum and maximum scores. Student's t-test was used in comparing the data sets to reveal statistically significant differences. A p value of less than .05 was considered as a difference at a statistically significant level. On the other hand, I analyzed the qualitative data considering the emerging themes in student responses. I identified these myself first. Later, I consulted an independent researcher for inter-coder reliability. We achieved an overall 87% agreement. We discussed the divergences until we reached agreements.

## 4.0 Results

The students were asked to indicate the average number of hours they spend doing homework for ENGL112. Their responses are shown in Figure 1 below.
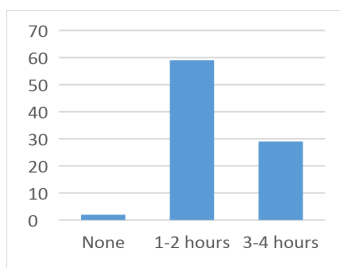


Fig. 1 Number of hours spent doing homework

Figure 1 shows that 59 of the students (66%) stated they spent 1-2 hours a day for their ENGL112 homework while 29 students (32%) stated that they spent 3-4 hours. On the other hand, two students said they never did homework for ENGL112.

The students were also asked if they thought their experiences of doing homework were preparing them for learning after graduation. Their responses are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Homework preparing students for learning after graduation

| Whole Population (n=90) | | | | Males (n=42) | | | | Females (n=48) | | | | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | | No | | Yes | | No | | Yes | | No | | | |
| f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % | f | % | | |
| 55 | 61 | 35 | 39 | 24 | 57 | 18 | 43 | 31 | 65 | 17 | 35 | .7163 | .2378 |

p < .05

Table 2 shows that only 61% of the student responses were affirmative. Mentioned by 33% of these students, time-management was the most frequent reason for the affirmative response. The students indicated that doing homework set by different instructors helped them learn to juggle tasks. This, they believed, would be a good skill when they start working. Enhanced time-management skills were believed to help reduce stress. Related to this was learning to be responsible and self-reliant. One student said, "Facing the hardness of the homeworks will help me to stay strong when I face hard duties in the future." Other positive responses included preparation for work life (10%). Some students referred to the academic knowledge they acquired through homework being useful for work-life after university. One student remarked, "Homework prepares me to the exams. This will [make] me well-prepared for exams necessary for finding a job after university." Only three students made the remark that homework teaches them how to learn.

On the other hand, a significant number of students (39%) thought their experiences of doing homework did not prepare them for learning after graduating from university. When asked to give a reason for their responses, 14 of these students (40%) stated there was no direct link between homework at university and life after university. Sample student responses include "What you are studying [when doing homework] is not connected to your work," "I just want a job," and "Student life and life after university will be so different from each other." Another reason for students' negative response was the lack of care taken when doing homework, which was mentioned by five students (14%). One student said, "I am doing homework just because it is something I need to do to have full grades, not to learn." Other students remarked, "Homeworks are useless because we just copy from each other," and "… it is something I need to do to have full grades, *not* to learn." Among other reasons cited was inability to transfer the knowledge (e.g. "I will forget most of the things I learn from my homework."), irrelevance of homework to college education (e.g "Homework should be for school students only to teach them how to manage their time and to always be up to date of what they are studying at school," and weariness (e.g. "Sick of homework now. Do not want to do homework after graduation."

The analysis of student responses considering the gender variable showed that fewer number of the male students gave a positive response than the female students (57% vs. 65%). However, Student's t-test conducted revealed no difference at a statistically significant level (t=.7163, p=.2378>.05).

This research also aimed to find the extent to which the students' individual attributes were considered by their instructors when setting homework tasks. Table 3 describes the findings related to this.

Table 3. Homework addressing individual students

| | Whole Population (n=90) | | | Males (n=42) | | | Females (n=48) | | | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Min | Max | $\overline{x}$ | Min | Max | $\overline{x}$ | Min | Max | $\overline{x}$ | | |
| My ENGL112 instructor considers my likes and dislikes when designing homework tasks. | 1 | 5 | 2.1 | 1 | 5 | 2.3 | 1 | 5 | 2 | -1.1081 | .1354 |
| My ENGL112 instructor gives me the opportunity to choose the kind of homework I like to do. | 1 | 5 | 2.1 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2.2 | -0.4323 | .3332 |
| My ENGL112 instructor assigns homework to us according to our individual needs rather than one type of homework for everyone. | 1 | 5 | 2.4 | 1 | 5 | 2.4 | 1 | 4 | 2.4 | .0362 | .4855 |
| My ENGL112 instructor varies homework according to different students' learning styles. | 1 | 4 | 2.4 | 1 | 4 | 2.3 | 1 | 4 | 2.4 | -0.575 | .2833 |
| My homework from ENGL112 focuses on areas in which I need to improve myself. | 1 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 2.9 | 1 | 5 | 3.2 | 1.1528 | .126 |
| My homework from ENGL112 focuses on my strengths. | 1 | 5 | 3.5 | 1 | 5 | 3.5 | 1 | 5 | 3.4 | .1003 | .4601 |
| *Overall average* | | | *2.6* | | | *2.6* | | | *2.6* | *.1775* | *.4375* |

p < .05

Table 3 shows that the students disagreed that their instructors considered their likes and dislikes ($\overline{x}$=2.1), and they were not given the opportunity to choose the kind of homework they liked to do ($\overline{x}$=2.1). Their responses for these two items did not change according to gender (t=-1.1081, p=.1354>.05 & t=-0.4323, p=>.3332>.05 respectively). Neither did they think that their instructors varied homework tasks according to individual student needs ($\overline{x}$=2.4) or learning styles ($\overline{x}$=2.4).

There were no differences between the male and female students' responses at statistically significant levels (t=.0362, p=.4855>.05 & t=-0.575, p=.2833>.05 respectively). However, they were neutral about homework focusing on areas in which they needed to improve themselves ($\bar{x}$=3) and on their strengths ($\bar{x}$=3.5). Again there were no statistically significant differences between the male and female students' responses for these items (t=1.1528, p=.126>.05 & t=.1003, p=.4601>.05 respectively). The average rating for this subsection was 2.6, pointing to the students' overall discontentment that their individual characteristics were considered by their instructors when setting homework assignments.

The third research question asked what the students' thoughts were relative to homework vs. home-learning. Neutral and positive opinions were merged for ease of data analysis. A summary of the results is given in Table 4.

Table 4. Student thoughts on homework vs. home-learning.

|  |  |  | Neutral & Positive | Negative | Total | Males vs. Females | | Homework vs. Home-learning | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  | t | p | t | p |
| Homework | Males | f | 31 | 72 | 103 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | % | 70 | 30 | 100 | -1.5143 |  |  |  |
|  | Females | f | 22 | 83 | 105 |  | .0657 |  |  |
|  |  | % | 80 | 20 | 100 |  |  |  |  |
|  | Whole population | f | 53 | 155 | 208 |  |  | 23.0993 | .0000 |
|  |  | % | 25 | 75 | 100 |  |  |  |  |
| Home-learning | Males | f | 90 | 5 | 95 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | % | 95 | 5 | 100 | 0.2218 | .4123 |  |  |
|  | Females | f | 94 | 6 | 100 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | % | 94 | 6 | 100 |  |  |  |  |
|  | Whole population | f | 184 | 11 | 195 |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | % | 94 | 6 | 100 |  |  |  |  |

p < .05

According to Table 4, 75% of the student responses were negatively worded. The students often referred to 'amount of work' imposed on them due to homework. They often felt inundated by the sheer amount of homework leaving little or no time for personal pursuits. It also affected some students' sleep quality. 'Stress' was mentioned as an impact 54 times. Some stated they did homework for 'the sake of grades'. They wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible since it was 'boring' (f=13) and a 'burden' (f=1). This, in some cases, led students to 'copy homework from their peers' (f=5). On the other hand, positive words included 'thinking' (f=6), useful (f=3), 'learning' (f=3), 'effort' (f=1), 'focus' (f=1). Among the neutral words were 'study' (f=8), 'revise' (f=7), and 'solving questions' (f=2), 'improvement' (f=1). The male and female students' opinions were similar to each other with a lack of difference at a statistically significant level (t=-1.5143, p=.0657>.05).

Table 4 also shows that almost all of the student responses (94%) relative to home-learning were positively worded and/or neutral. There were only eleven negative statements (6%). An important number of student responses were related to it being 'time-convenient' (f=17). Related to this was 'the comfort' attached to home-learning (f=15). The students also referred to 'individual accountability' as being an important aspect of home-learning (f=11). As a result, the students often mentioned it was 'useful' (f=14) with some students indicating it is 'better than schools' (f=4). Among other words/phrases used to describe it were 'interesting and fun' (f=8), 'important' (f=9), 'increased knowledge and skills' (f=9). Comparatively infrequent as they were, other words with positive connotations were used. These included stress 'free', 'experiential', 'creative', 'critical thinking', 'challenging oneself', 'dedication', and 'freedom'. 'Use of technology', the Internet, in particular, was also referred to in relation to home-learning (f=16). 'Communication with friends and family members' was also mentioned ten times. On the other hand, some students used some negative words in their description of home-learning. They used words and phrases such as 'confusion', 'difficult', 'too much time' and 'boring'.

As in the case of homework, the male and female students' responses relative home-learning were similar to each other without a statistically significant difference between them (t=0.2218, p=.4123>.05). On the other hand, the statistical analysis conducted to compare the homework and home-learning data sets revealed a significant difference between the two to the benefit of the latter (t=23.0993, p=.0000<.05). This finding points to the students' thinking that home-learning confers a major advantage over homework.

The last research question aimed to identify the students' level of home-learning skills. For this purpose, the students were administered the Home-learning Aptitude Scale (HAS) comprised of four sub-scales. Student scores for the whole scale together with the subscales can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Home-learning skills

| | Whole Population (n=90) | | | Males (n=42) | | | Females (n=48) | | | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | | |
| Sub-scale 1: Motivation | 3 | 14 | 9.8 | 3 | 14 | 9.6 | 4 | 14 | 9.9 | -0.6562 | .2566 |
| Sub-scale 2: Self-regulation | 4 | 15 | 9.2 | 5 | 15 | 9 | 1 | 15 | 9.4 | -0.9064 | .1835 |
| Sub-scale 3: Perseverance | 3 | 14 | 8.6 | 3 | 14 | 8.3 | 3 | 14 | 8.8 | -0.9108 | .1824 |
| Sub-scale 4: Interpersonal communication | 4 | 14 | 10.4 | 5 | 13 | 10.7 | 4 | 14 | 10.1 | 1.4018 | .0822 |
| Scale as a whole | 23 | 55 | 38 | 24 | 52 | 37 | 23 | 55 | 38.4 | -0.5458 | .2932 |

p < .05

Table 5 shows that the student scores ranged between 23 and 55 with an average of 38, which is slightly higher than the average score of 30 calculated for the scale. This indicates that the student had a moderate level of aptitude for home-learning. Their scores did not differ at a statistically significant level according to gender (t=-0.5458, p=.2932>.05). When the subscales were considered, it was seen that the highest average score belonged to interpersonal communication (x̄=10.4). This was followed by motivation (x̄=9.8) and self-regulation (x̄=9.2), both of which were above the average scores (7.5). The lowest score belonged to perseverance (x̄==8.6). No statistically significant differences were found between the male and female data sets for any of the subscales (t=1.4018, p=.0822>.05; t=-0.6562, p=.2566.>.05; t=-0.9064, p=.1835>.05 & t=-0.9108, p=.1824>.05 respectively). This was despite the fact that the average scores of the latter tended to be higher than that of the former. Results for the four sub-scales are described in greater detail below.

The first sub-scale was related to motivation. A summary of their responses related to this can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Motivation skills

|  | Whole Population (n=90) | | | Males (n=42) | | | Females (n=48) | | | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Min | Max | x̄ | Min | Max | x̄ | Min | Max | x̄ | | |
| I like doing homework. | 1 | 5 | 2.8 | 1 | 5 | 2.7 | 1 | 5 | 2.9 | .994 | .1614 |
| I see a genuine value in doing homework. | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | .1374 | .4455 |
| I do my best when doing my homework. | 1 | 5 | 3.7 | 1 | 5 | 3.7 | 1 | 5 | 3.7 | -0.3474 | .3645 |

p < .05

The average score for interest in doing homework was 2.8, which indicates that the students did not like doing homework much. Conversely, though, the overall average score of 3.3 indicates that they were slightly more positive about the value of doing homework. They also stated that they did their best to do their homework (x̄=3.7). Gender did not appear to be a determining factor in their beliefs (t=.994, p=.1614>.05; t=.1374, p=.4455>.05 & t=-0.7042, p=.2145>.05 respectively). The overall average score for the motivation subsection indicates that the students were moderately motivated to engage in homework tasks.

The second sub-scale was related to self-regulation skills. Results for this section are summarized in Table 7 below.

Table 7. Self-regulation skills

| | Whole Population (n=90) | | | Males (n=42) | | | Females (n=48) | | | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | | |
| I create my own homework tasks. | 1 | 5 | 2.8 | 1 | 5 | 2.7 | 1 | 5 | 2.9 | .865 | .1946 |
| I arrange my time effectively regarding when I should do my homework. | 1 | 5 | 3.1 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | -1.2678 | .104 |
| I do my homework without any supervision. | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | .3737 | .3547 |

p < .05

Table 7 shows that the students' average score for creating their own homework task was 2.8, which indicates relatively less aptitude for this self-regulation skill. They were generally neutral in their responses regarding time-management ($\bar{x}$=3.1) and working without supervision ($\bar{x}$=3.3). These, too, indicate limited self-regulation skills. The male and female student responses did not differ from each other (t=.865, p=.1946>.05; t=-1.2678, p=.104>.05 & t=.3737, p=.3547>.05 respectively).

The third sub-scale was comprised of statements relative to perseverance skills. The student responses are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8. Perseverance skills

| | Whole Population (n=90) | | | Males (n=42) | | | Females (n=48) | | | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | Min | Max | $\bar{x}$ | | |
| I easily lose my motivation when my homework is difficult. | 1 | 5 | 2.6 | 1 | 5 | 2.5 | 1 | 5 | 2.7 | -0.7885 | .225 |
| If I do not understand a task in my homework, I give up doing it. | 1 | 5 | 2.7 | 1 | 5 | 2.6 | 1 | 5 | 2.8 | .9315 | .177 |
| Even if I have a lot of homework, I try to all of it. | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | 1 | 5 | 3.2 | 1 | 5 | 3.3 | .4354 | .3321 |

p < .05

Table 8 indicates that the students received low scores for maintaining motivation ($\bar{x}$=2.6) and persevering ($\bar{x}$=2.7) in the face of challenges posed by homework tasks. Albeit comparatively higher, their score for completing all their homework, even if too much, was 3.3. There were no statistically significant differences between the male and female data sets. (t=-023.7885, p=.225 >.05; t=.9315, p=.177 >.05; t=.4354, p=.3321 >.05 respectively).

The fourth sub-scale was related to interpersonal communication skills. A summary of the results is given in Table 9.

Table 9. Interpersonal communication skills

| | Whole Population (n=90) | | | Males (n=42) | | | Females (n=48) | | | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Min | Max | $\overline{x}$ | Min | Max | $\overline{x}$ | Min | Max | $\overline{x}$ | | |
| I do homework tasks with my peers in addition to those I do individually. | 1 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3.1 | 1 | 5 | 2.8 | 1.5055 | .0678 |
| My peers and I give feedback on each other's homework. | 1 | 5 | 3.8 | 1 | 5 | 3.7 | 1 | 5 | 3.8 | -0.4774 | .3171 |
| My peers can help me learn new knowledge and skills when we do homework together. | 2 | 5 | 3.7 | 2 | 5 | 3.9 | 2 | 5 | 3.5 | 2.0925 | .0196 |

$p < .05$

Table 9 shows that the lowest average score belonged to doing homework tasks with peers ($\overline{x}$=3), which indicates a neutral stance. Their scores for giving feedback on each other's homework and belief that doing so improves their own knowledge and skills were slightly higher ($\overline{x}$=3.8 & $\overline{x}$=3.7 respectively). When their responses were compared considering the gender variable, it was seen that there was a statistically significant difference in the last item only (t=2.0925, p=.0196<.05). This difference stems from the male students' higher score than that of the female students($\overline{x}$=3.9 vs. ($\overline{x}$=3.5).

**5.0 Discussion and Implications**

Results of the current study revealed that on average students spent 1-2 hours a day doing homework for ENGL112. This appears to be below the expected number of extra 'learning activities' students are instructed to engage in outside class hours. The course information sheet provided to students at the beginning of the course instructs that for each contact hour students are expected to spend a minimum of one hour of 'independent study' a day. ENGL112 being a four-credit course, then, means at least four hours of extra study for students. Only 32% of the students, the majority of whom were female, indicated that they spend 3-4 hours for ENGL homework. The discrepancy with student responses and the expectation of them likely stemmed from the students' perception of 'homework' and 'independent study'. As is indicated by the other data collected in this study, homework is not necessarily equated with independent study. It, indeed, is argued that '[h]omework has become an institutionalized aspect of schooling … The reasons given to defend assigning … homework almost exclusively refer to academic achievement as opposed to encouraging student autonomy…" (Spiri, 2009, p. 1). This points to the need for ENGL112 students' and instructors' agreement on the meaning of homework and independent study.

A significant number of students (39%) thought their homework experiences did not prepare them for learning after graduation. The main reason given for this was the disconnect between homework and what happens in real life after university, leading students to do homework for the

sake of grades. This finding indicates that a significant number of students lacked a clear understanding of the purpose of homework. It may also be the case that homework tasks they are assigned failed to support meaningful learning experiences. Other data from the survey also showed that the students thought homework was demanding and took too much time leaving them little to no time for other recreational activities. This seems to support the argument that homework might have a negative impact on personal and familial well-being (Karlovec & Bueel cited in Marzano & Pickering, 2007; Bennett & Kalish, 2006). Together, these are very likely to cause students to disdain homework. This sentiment might cause negative feelings in students regarding engagement in lifelong learning experiences. Therefore, it is essential that homework tasks be aligned with real-life experiences and individual student needs. Only in this way can a genuine interest in learning be created.

Results of the current study relative to homework assignments addressing individual student profiles were not very encouraging with an overall agreement rate of 2.6 out of 5. It was found that the assigned homework did not consider student likes and dislikes, and the students were rarely given an opportunity to choose the kind of homework which they liked to do. Neither were students' learning styles considered to a good degree. Despite this, the students were slightly more positive about homework tasks focusing on their weaknesses as well as strengths. Collectively, these results raise a certain amount of concern regarding possible *unintended* impacts of homework assigned to ENGL112 students. Instructors who pay limited attention to individual characteristics do so to their students' detriment. The consequent lack in motivation for homework likely reduces what is potentially a good preparation for learning throughout their lives.

I also asked the students to compare homework and home-learning by indicating the first three words/phrases they thought of relative to the concepts. Results clearly showed that the former was mainly attributed negative associations. The latter, on the other hand, was predominantly regarded positive. This shows that the students were still in favor of engagement in learning outside class hours. However, they made a clear distinction between the two terms with a heavy bias against homework. This finding resonates with the position held in this paper regarding the recommended shift from 'homework' to 'home-learning'. First and foremost, word choices affect our audience. Considering the fact that "As human beings, we are some emotional creatures that exist and react totally by feelings (Rogers, 2011, p. 4), it makes sense to avoid lexis with negative connotations - words that would create a negative feeling in students. We cannot be oblivious to the emotional effects words have on students. If, then, the very term 'homework' is generally perceived to have a negative connotation, it is common sense to refrain from its expansion. Second, a natural alignment between real-life situations/tasks (those that are specific to individual students) and learning assignments set for the home will help students recognize the value of engagement in learning outside of class. In order for students to avoid thinking that homework has only academic value, Bowman (2018) suggests communicating with students the multiple purposes of 'homework' tasks. To this end, students need to be shown both their short-term and long-term benefits such as goal setting and time management, which are significant lifelong learning skills.

It is also important to note the students' reference to technology in relation to home-learning. Today's youth are considered 'digital natives'. Palfrey and Gasser (2008) say that digital natives spend a considerable amount of time online. They often do not distinguish between online and offline contexts. They multitask and relate to each other in ways mediated by digital technologies which they frequently use to access, use, and create new knowledge. Clearly then designing home-learning tasks incorporating these technologies will encourage students to engage in learning with more motivation and confidence. Greater flexibility and freedom to initiate learning when and at where they prefer contributes to their engagement in independent learning and communication with others for information exchange and mutual support (Clarke, 2011). This may be a challenge to instructors who are 'digital immigrants'. However, their open attitude about this and willingness to learn from their students will be important in convincing their students that their role is to facilitate the process in which they can be co-learners, not the sole holder of knowledge and skills. This does not devalue the role of the teacher. Rather, it will increase students' confidence in making a difference in significant others' lives. This attitude will translate into mutual trust and growth.

I also aimed to identify the participants' home-learning skills based on the four domains of lifelong learning on which this paper is based. The students' overall level of aptitude was slightly above the average, indicating a promising level of preparedness for the skills necessary for engagement in home-learning as a way towards lifelong learning. The above-mentioned qualitative data on student thoughts about home-learning bespeak their willingness to use the requisite lifelong learning skills at home. Together these data show that, with quality support and guidance, students can acquire academic and social adroitness to increase their HAS scores. That the students' highest score belonged to the sub-scale of interpersonal communication is important to note. This resonates with the social constructivist theory of education stating knowledge and skills are acquired through interaction with others (Vygotsky, 1978). According to this theory, learning occurs when students share, discuss, critically review and interact with each other. Leveraging interpersonal communication skills, then, helps students engage in informal and therefore lifelong learning (Hoofman, 2005). Towards this end, the teacher should help students create suitable contexts encouraging them to carry out home-learning tasks in pairs or groups. Bearing in mind some students' tendency to copy answers from peers, the assigned tasks should address individual student needs.

Data from HAS also showed that the students received the lowest score for the perseverance sub-scale albeit slightly above the calculated average. This result indicates that the students require support to succeed in home-learning when faced with challenges. Perseverance is considered "a product of students' motivation to learn" (Slavin, 1989, p. 5), perseverance skills can be argued to carry much more weight than the other three sub-skills. This is because the absence of perseverance implies almost certain failure. Yet, in order to avoid students' not experiencing failure, home-learning tasks should not be simplified. Nor should the teacher's expectations be lowered. Doing so would limit students' opportunities to challenge themselves. This, in turn, would decrease their appetite for learning often derived from challenging and stimulating tasks (Light, 2017;

Wasserstein in Blackburn, 2013). Considering their comparatively stronger interpersonal communication skills, students ought to be helped to identify the ways in which they can interpersonally access the support they need. Perseverance also requires students to be mindful of the ways in which they give feedback to their peers (Deveci, 2018b).  They ought to avoid disturbing relationships with others, which - otherwise - would prevent collaboration. Effective collaboration appears to be a common core of social skills indispensable for lifelong learning.

## 6.0 Conclusion

In this paper, I maintained that homework is often ascribed a negative connotation with impacts on students' engagement in effective and meaningful learning experiences in and outside of schools as well as upon graduation. I suggested that a different approach ought to be taken to *learning* activities students are asked to engage in outside class hours. This, I argued, requires a holistic approach to learning with an orientation towards *lifelong learning*. To help achieve this, four inextricably linked domains of lifelong learning skills were described. Following this, the results of a small-scale study investigating university students' homework experiences in a project-based course in their local context of Khalifa University (Abu Dhabi) were presented. Results reiterated the position held in this paper regarding students' apprehension about homework at the expense of their overall enthusiasm for learning. On the other, they reported more positive thoughts about the concept of home-learning, which could, in fact, embed 'homework tasks/assignments' so long as they are adjusted to the student needs, interests, and learning styles. The attitude towards learning during university years will come into play in learning experiences throughout their lives. It is, therefore, essential that students be provided every opportunity to acquire the requisite qualities and skills for this. The renowned scientist Albert Einstein once said, "I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn," and a shift away from *homework* to *home-learning,* as is described in this paper, may be an important way in which we can also achieve this.

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# Translanguaging in the Culturally Diverse Classrooms of a South African School: Towards Improving Academic Success and Literacy Competencies, a Paradigm Shift to Translingualism?

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## Abstract

In this study, I have argued that language structure should be adapted and shaped by the task of producing talk and meaning for others in human interaction in ways that give shape to a particular social world. This premise was seen in the context for this study - the multi-racial school of De Vos Malan High School in King Williams Town, in the Province of the Eastern Cape in South Africa. The total number of learners who took part in the study was 18 (9 females and 9 males). Their ages ranged from 13 to 17 with a mean age of 15.8. They were selected according to their academic performance in English First Additional Language (EFAL) and English Home Language. The study was informed by Gutiérrez's (1995) Third Space as a theoretical framework. The central question asked how EFAL learners could be taught through translanguaging pedagogy in the culturally diverse classrooms of a South African school. The methodology for the study was interpretive and qualitative in nature. The context underpinned the conclusions of the study which were drawn from key findings from journaling, observation and Gibbon's curriculum cycle. Results revealed a need to attend to contradictions and rethink a strict temporal analysis of classrooms - that is, a diachronic view of talk and interaction in classroom activity - to a view of classrooms as having multiple, layered, and conflicting activity systems with various interconnections. Based on these findings, I have proposed an unorthodox approach to pre-writing structure and language use, and a cognizance of the importance of affording students agency.

**Key Words**: Affordances, Anxiety reduction, Reading and Writing, Reflexive competence, Semiotic budget & Translanguaging

## Introduction

To be able to understand the language and education situation in South Africa (S. A.) today, it is necessary to look at the historical background of languages in schools and tertiary institutions in this country. Cuvelier (2003) states that most written evidence of language in education in S.A. comes from the arrival of Europeans in the Cape, in particular the Dutch settlement in 1652. Mainly Dutch (Afrikaans after 1925) and English were used in schools which implied ongoing mother-tongue education for white and some of the so-called 'coloured' people. African languages only received a degree of recognition in policies during the apartheid era in S.A. where mother-tongue education was proposed for at least the first couple of years. This adduce Gutig and Butler (1999), who observed that the Bantu Education Act (1953) coerced the black learners to receive mother-tongue instruction in lower and higher primary grades with a transition to English and Afrikaans thereafter. In view of this, language in South Africa became a political issue. Consequently, the learners whose mother-tongue was not English failed to achieve the same level of academic success as their native English peers. As well, their literacy competence debilitated as most past educational approaches to support English First Additional Language (EFAL) have been biased in favour of the native English language learners (McLeod, 2018).

## Background to the study

This study represents one aspect from my Doctoral thesis on translanguaging (Kepe, 2017). Stathopoulou (2013a) delineates translanguaging as a mediation-communicative undertaking which entails purposeful relaying of information from one language to another, with the intention of bridging communication gaps between interlocutors. This is in line with the South African policy of education known as the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS, 2012) which stipulates that at the foundation phase i.e., Grades 2 and 3 the focus should be on developing learners' ability to understand and speak the language - basic interpersonal communication skills. Here, they are expected to apply the literacy skills they have already learned in their Home Language. That being so, the academic achievement gap between English native learners and EFAL learners still is evident.

This is visible today, and may have been exacerbated by the significant number of EFAL learners with limited vocabulary who often suffer from communication breakdown when using English as a medium of learning.

Invoked by this situation, this study presupposes and presents unorthodox approach for translanguaging. Williams (2002), states that translanguaging is a bilingual pedagogy that interchanges language modes where teachers as mediators of knowledge attempt to create bilingual and multilingual opportunities for the learners in the classroom, taking into consideration their identity, cultural background and a learning environment. Adamson, Coulson and Fujimoto-

Adamson (2019) concur that this provides the learners with the agency to negotiate disciplinary norms.

Canagarajah (2011), likewise, posits that the promotion of one form of language - standard written English - as the register for academic writing could alienate multilingual learners and restrict their options for voice. To this end, translanguaging in the context of this study espoused a teaching and learning environment which stripped learners of fear and anxiety, with the teacher playing the role of the facilitator as exhibited in De Vos Malan High School. As said earlier, this study is a result of longitudinal ethnographic case study research conducted at De Vos Malan High School in King Williams Town in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The thesis took three academic years (Kepe, 2017). It comprised of 36 learners in which they were followed from Grade 10 -12 from 2014 to 2016 for continuity and to mark their progression within the period. I will return to this under the methodology.

De Vos Malan is a comprehensive multi-racial school beginning from grade R to 12. It is situated at the hub of King William's town District in the Province of the Eastern Cape. It is diverse, composed of isiXhosa speaking learners some of whom used English/Afrikaans as their Home language (HL), Coloured Afrikaans native speakers, some of whom chose English as their home language, Indian learners (Hindi native speakers) who utilised English as a HL, and white Afrikaans natives some of whom chose English as their HL in school. De Vos Malan High School used English and Afrikaans as the medium of instruction where learners would either utilise one of the two languages from grade 1, right up to grade 12. The streams seemed to run parallel in this school.

However, the instruction in grades 10 to 12 started to blend languages for further clarity of the subject matter/content given the diverse classes, in which the Afrikaans natives then were introduced to English terminology as well as English natives introduced to Afrikaans as their first additional language to aid content comprehension. The problem with this policy is that it appeared quite bias as the simplification of concepts was conducted mainly in English or Afrikaans whereas in both classes the majority of learners were of African origin (isiXhosa learners appeared alienated).This policy therefore appeared antithetical with Stathopoulou (2013a) who extrapolates that the development of multilingual societies (like South Africa) due to the socio-economic changes because of globalisation, prioritize people's strong need to communicate effectively in various intercultural contact situations. Hence and invariably, the central question asked how EFAL learners could be taught through translanguaging pedagogy in the culturally diverse classrooms of a South African school.

This study was informed by Gutiérrez's Third Space (1995) as a theoretical framework in line with sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), underpinned by a constructivist epistemology. To achieve this, I explored eight Multimodal pedagogies (Thesen, 2014) to teach the English First Additional Language learners through translanguaging: affordances, anxiety reduction, journal writing,

observation, poetry, semiotic resources, reflexive competence an translanguaging. However, as these approaches appear to be interthreaded and inextricably linked, they are not discussed here in isolation. Further, much research has been conducted into how to teach EFAL to help learners; however, this study extrapolates translanguaging as the one unorthodox approach that may bring a lasting solution to the unending dilemma of a negative cycle of failed language acquisition outcomes and academic underperformance in South African schools. Shohamy (2013) concurs that "translanguaging is one such example of moving freely within, between and among languages" (p. 229). Since the context of this study was not a neutral domain, and that teachers themselves were culturally located beings, it was worthy to value adornments/heritage days as it used to be a common practice.

However, this study promulgates that such a practice should not degenerate as a traditional symbol to edify diversity although that was important, but symbols of that nature could be used to support and promote the language and literacy learning across the cultures. As a consequence, I argue that the meaning of the words that people use are personally interpreted. Therefore, words are not pictures of the world but the representation of social practices; hence, a person's actions and behaviors are socially constructed to allow a community of human beings to interact with each other (Sivasubramaniam, 2011).

To this end, learners needed to perceive their writing as a space for constructing their own attitudes and be able to produce talk (Gutiérrez, 1995), what Beach in Lawson, Ryan & Winterowd (1989) referred to as an "elaborative processing" (p. 187). Besides, this could support a metaphorical conceptualization (semiotic resource) of learning a foreign language as an "open dialogue" (Kohonen, Jaatinen, Kaikkonen, and Lehtovaar, 2001), through talk as an important mode in improving writing. Invoked by this stance, the greatest challenge of the learners (participants) in this study did not appear to stem from the use of EFAL language or the first language, but rather from how it was taught in the classrooms as that seemed to have a negative impact on academic performance and overall literacy skills competences. This was confirmed by previous research indicating that both teachers and learners in South Africa were still struggling with literacy in the African Languages as well as English (Foncha, 2013). This is oppugnant to the purpose of this study which emphasises on language and content acquisition to help both English First Additional Learners and native speakers to conceptualize, and attain, a level of completion beyond their current capability (Adamson et. al., 2019).

As a confirmation to the above, Nunn (2016) explains that there is no central community in which we can define norms or standards of English competence for all communities. He says that competence in academic language use is a holistic construct that needs to be pluralized to reflect the broad diversity of international settings in which it is used. However, Taglialatela (2012) cautions that the interchange of language during the teaching and learning of the English language might compromise the identity of the English language. Whereas, Hymes (1972) took exception

with the traditional view of 'speech community' as the natural home of English competence, especially if the construct implies that you need to be born into a homogenous community to be a competent member.

He argues that competence by birth right is untenable as an academic construct; hence, the notion of 'appropriation' can be applied to all academic users of English regardless of origin. Nunn (2016), concurs that a competent user can establish an agency, and demonstrate competence by making a new contribution to knowledge in the subject area of an academic community in what the author terms translatability.

Canagarajah (2004), likewise, extrapolates that while all national varieties may be local, speakers may develop new norms for international communication where forms of hybridity, creolization, and code-meshing become important modes of representing local identities since what is local to a whole nation may not be local to the diverse groups within the nation-state. For the sake of clarity and in brevity, I will define the following terms: variety, hybridity, creolization and code-meshing.

Nordquist, in his article Definition and Examples of Language (July 22, 2018) states that language variety - also called lect in sociolinguistics - refers to any distinctive form of a language or linguistic expression where linguists commonly use it as a cover term for any of the overlapping subcategories of a language, including dialect, register, jargon, and idiolect. For Bakhtin (1981), hybridity is a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the arena of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor to undermine the notion of a monological authoritative discourse. On the other hand, the concept of creolization was first formulated through the study of languages in colonial situations - especially in the Americas - where people who met speaking mutually unintelligible tongues began to communicate in vernacular dialects eventually creating new creole languages. On the other hand, "code-meshing" as proposed by Young (2011) is an approach to writing and interpreting texts that advocate for blending language codes in the classroom, rather than switching from one set of linguistic codes to another, depending on the "appropriate" social and discursive contexts.

Along the same lines, Rueda (2004) observed a need to examine school curriculum, assuming that we need to rethink about what is being presented as the valued knowledge/culture of the school, and whether that knowledge/culture that the learners are coming with is being represented in the valued curriculum as culture appears to be embedded in language, which therefore suggests, language enunciates culture. This appears to auger well with the central theme of this study- that teachers may need to add to that knowledge/culture rather than replacing it. Against this backdrop, it could be presumed that when learners see their family backgrounds and narrative valued at school, they engage more positively with their schooling, as exhibited in Kepe (2017). Therefore, even schools that are monocultural need to recognise that we live in a linguistic and culturally

diverse world and so even if the local community might be feeling monocultural the digital world in which we live is not hence, a language should not be a deficit.

## Statement of the problem

This study affirms that though teachers may not always feel confident or understand the learners' native languages used to correct some errors/mistakes about their choices, their dialogical engagement with the texts through questions, feedback and reviews (in addition to peer review) may help learners' writing develop their translanguaging proficiency further (Canagarajah, 2011). This invokes the Third Space phenomenon (1995) , hence, this study promulgates that it is not the use of a language that is problematic, but that the obstacle toward language acquisition appears to resonate from how it is taught in the classroom. Thus, the constant use of the grammar-translation method which obstructs learners from constructing their own knowledge may engender a negative impact toward academic performance and overall literacy competence. Similarly, issues of incapacity to teach cooperatively and to give student constructive feedback seem to coerce learners toward rote learning. This is worrisome as it may lead to a failure to channel the learners linguistic resources in appropriate directions. In addition, a failure to affirm learners choices may consequently, preclude their attempt to write with a sense of voice and agency. By the same token, this study, laments the past educational approaches that perspicuously discriminated against the second language learners ushering an incontrovertible inequality in academic success compared to their native peers. To this end, this study affirms its faith in teachers that in many ways they could assume the role of critically interrogating academic discourse and practices that may lead to changes in norms and standards in favour of translanguaging pedagogy- an opportunity where social, intellectual and personal boundaries are viewed "not as prisons, or stereotypes, but as tension points condensing the past and opening possible futures" (Bernstein, 2000 in Thesen & Cooper, 2014, p. 1-24).

## Central question

❖ How can the English First Additional Language learners be taught through translanguaging pedagogy in a culturally diverse classroom in a South African school?

### *Sub research questions*

1. What measures could be put in place to reduce anxiety during teaching and learning?

2. How could multimodal/affordances be utilised to benefit culturally diverse learners in a South African school?
3. How could journal writing contribute to improving language acquisition and proficient writing?

4. How can poetry be utilised to acquire diction, figurative language, 1st person voice, parts of speech, vivid words, and even the necessity of punctuation and proper grammar?

5. How can the Department of Education expedite and promote the notion of translanguaging in culturally diverse South African schools as anticipated by CAPS (2012)?

## Review of the Literature

In what follows in this section, I shall try to elucidate what I believe the problems to be and attempt to suggest alternative approaches through locating this study within the context of existing literature. In the course of discussion, I shall also explain briefly these terms: affordances, anxiety reduction, reflexive competence, reading and writing, semiotic resources and journaling, indicating their relevance to the topic.

Theoretically, this study is underpinned by Gutiérrez's theoretical framework of Third Space (1995), in line with Social Constructivism theory (Vygotsky, 1978). In view of this, Social Constructionism can be described as part of the movement in postmodernism in that it attempts to "replace the objectivist ideal with a broad tradition of on-going criticism in which all productions of the human mind are concerned" (Hoffman, 1990, p. 1). It is inextricably linked to postmodernism as a set of lenses that enforces an awareness of the way in which we perceive and experience the world (Hoffman, 1990). In essence, social constructionism is the viewpoint that says the content of our consciousness, and the mode of relating we have to other, is taught by our culture and society; all the metaphysical quantities we take for granted are learned from others around us (Owen, 1992, p. 386). To this end, the research into Third Space in the context of this study culminated out of observing closely the differences in involvement, participation, and learning of learners in the diverse classrooms of De Vos Malan denoting instructional activity and noting multiple social spaces with distinctive participation structures and power relations (Gutiérrez, 1995).

This invoked a need for a method that encourages teachers to examine interacting contexts or activities i.e., "Script, counterscript, and underlife in the classroom" (Gutiérrez, pp. 445–471) in order to produce more complicated understandings of how the social organization of people's everyday practices like De Vos Malan High School supports and constrains people's cognitive and social development. In Gutiérrez's (1995) terms this view included attending to contradictions and to rethink a strict temporal analysis of classrooms—that is, a diachronic view (i.e., development and evolvement of a language through time) of talk and interaction in classroom activity—to a view of classrooms as having multiple, layered, and conflicting activity systems with various interconnections.

Importantly, Third Space as a concept was born out of the spaces in which the teacher and student scripts—the formal and informal, the official and unofficial settings of the learning environment—intersect, creating the potential for authentic interaction and a shift in the social organization of learning in what counts as knowledge (Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, & Tejeda, 1999). To this end, the developmental trajectories of EFAL learners in South African schools must be understood in

relation to the boundaries imposed by the past educational approaches through the policy of segregation culminating into inferior schools for the black schools. As a consequence, language (the use of words and signs) became an affirmative issue in South Africa.

Whereas the opponents of translanguaging believe that translanguaging is a threat to heritage languages; however, this study holds that it is a means for voice to the voiceless. It is a relevant approach for culturally diverse learners to interact in any (formal/informal) learning setting.

Here the learners are able to represent their values and identities more effectively through translanguaging. In view of this, this study promulgates for an unorthodox approach (i.e., translanguaging) for multilingual speakers in which they utilize their languages as an integrated communication system. This is in line with (Thesen, 2014) who extrapolates that multimodal pedagogies acknowledge that the use of varieties in classrooms is always the effect of the work of culture, history and power in shaping materials into resources for meaning-making. Modes in this study imply semiotically articulated means of representation and communication, such as language, image or music (Kress, 2000) and intelligibility. According to Smith and Nelson (1985) intelligibility is a word/utterance recognition, comprehensibility, "the meaning of a word or an utterance", and interpretability, "the meaning behind the word or utterance (p. 334). In a global sense, this inter compliment translanguaging as it is embedded in the culture of the country in which it is used and enables speakers to share ideas and cultures. Hence, from the onset of this study, I have been advocating for translanguaging pedagogy. This takes us to the notion of the role of poetry in this study, which I explain below.

### The role of Poetry in acquiring diction, figurative language, 1st person voice, parts of speech, vivid words, and even the necessity of punctuation and proper grammar.

As literacy teachers, perhaps we need to remember that we have two goals, thats is, the first is to teach our learners to read. But the second more challenging task is to create an environment that motivates them to read. Since many teachers appeared not to be certain about how to make their learners' needs a focus of instruction, poetry in this study has proved to be one answer.

This invokes Atwell, (2006a) who pointed out that poetry has become the workhorse of the curriculum for its brevity and generosity. As shown in Kepe (2017), there appears to be no other genre seem to match poetry in terms of teaching about diction, precise vivid words, importance of first person voice, the value of all parts of speech, the beauty of figurative language, and even the necessity of punctuation and proper grammar. Bearing this in mind, poetry appeared appealing to learners in this study as they could either find or write a poem about any interesting subject from comic book heroes to prejudice (Kepe, 2017). To ascertain this, when learners wrote their own poems in this study, they fictitiously and vicariously travelled even farther into the genre utilising multimodals including the use of a poster as an interpretive mechanism. This meant to say that a literature teacher such as myself too often deals with the experiences of human beings as (s) he

observes learners making life connections to text. In essence, in teaching literature, teachers are basically helping their learners to learn to respond to a text. Rosenblatt (1978), concurs that the reader finds the meanings in the text.

## *The role of affordances*

I use the term 'affordances' here to suggest an aspect or quality of an ecology (environment) which can facilitate action but not necessarily cause it to happen but requires the teacher as a facilitator/mediator of knowledge. In this sense, affordance affords action depending on what an organism (learner) does with its environment and what it wants from its environment (van Lier in Lantolf, 2000, p. 246). According to Thesen (2014), here learners engage with different modes in varying ways: they have different relationships, histories and competences in relation to modes, including the use of digital technologies. Thesen (2014) observed that multimodal pedagogies involve 'recognition' of students' brought-along resources, including those resources not necessarily valued in higher education, such as multilingual, experiential, and embodied resources. Thesen (2014) states that this recognition of students' resources is key to a transformative agenda in higher education, an approach which is congruent with activity theories such as translanguaging and socio-constructivism. this takes us to reflexive competences which I will explain below,

## *Reflexive competence*

As a way of organizing the learners' thoughts, embedding their understanding and re-assessing their actions, 20 minutes was set aside for the learners to reflect in their journals. This invokes Calderhead & Gates, (1993), that learners had to answer three questions: a) What they have learnt, b) How they felt about whatever activity they might have participated in, and c) here they are afforded an opportunity to improve or advance. This process is called reflection and is widely recognized as crucial element in the professional growth of both learners and teachers (Schon, 1983). In view of this, research indicates that professionals, when they are faced with a problem, tend to refer not only to a body of knowledge they had acquired in their training, but also to certain practical experiences as well. This invokes, Carr and Kemmis (1986) who wrote about the importance of increasing teachers' awareness of the causes and consequences of their actions in the classroom. To this end, and Central to the idea of action research like this one is reflection in - and- on practice (Schon, 1983), so that teachers are able to analyse, discuss, evaluate and if necessary, improve their own practice but doing so in an integrated manner taking into account the learning the script, counter script and a learner setting. This brings us to the use of semiotic resources in relation to language as I explain below,

## *Semiotic budget in language*

This is in line with a problem-solving model of education as envisaged by (Freire & Macedo, 1978), where language is understood as representational and therefore, figurative (McRae, 1991, Gibson, 1994); dialogical and therefore, expansive (Bakhtin, 1981); immanent and therefore,

semiotic (Peirce in Buchler, 1955) where linguistic signs like facial expressions, gestures, exclamations and remarks mediate social activities. There was evidence of this in this study as various semiotic resources were utilised. This takes us to how the usefulness of such instructional activities could be impeded by a failure to create a learner setting free of anxiety as I explain below.

### *Anxiety reduction*

My thesis and many other studies conducted by various researchers showed that anxiety among other major aspects has emerged as one factor that leads to the cycle of failed reading and writing outcomes we are faced with today in South Africa. Hence, this study is invariably advocating for a learner-centred environment free of anxiety. Considering this, there appears to be a disjuncture between language anxiety and reading anxiety, consequently impeding the reading potential as a composer to writing proficiency. Krashen (1982) states that foreign language anxiety is evoked by an individual's low self-esteem. This invokes Huang (2012), who observed that individuals with low self-esteem appear to worry a lot, because they want to 'please' others. She says that when people learn to use a second language to communicate, it is normal for them to compare themselves with others or with their idealized self-image which may be hard to realize. To this end, competitiveness arise, which can also lead to language anxiety (Bailey, 1983). Huang (2012), flags the teacher-learner interactions as having a potential to provoke anxiety in a language class with the teachers' harsh and belittling erratic correction in front of a class. With regards to controlling anxiety, this study affirms this that from a social-cultural perspective, language acquisition may be thwarted without the introduction of the culture of the target language group. In contrast, the culture shock may engender learners' anxiety (Clement, 1980) due to the fear of losing their own language and ethnic identity in cross-cultural circumstances.

Such feelings might lead to loss of concentration, and memory in class. On the other hand, when learners are exposed to various reading practices and the ground for reading is well prepared , the opposite could be said. Krashen (1982), says that language acquirers with favorable and desirable attitudes are assumed to have "low" affective filters, adversely, to "high" affective filters. Affective Filter Hypothesis was first proposed by Dulay and Burt (1977), and latter by Krashen. In Affective Filter Hypothesis, affective factors such as anxiety, self-doubt etc. are like a filter which filters language input to make the amount of language input increase or decrease. People with high affective filter will decrease their input whereas people with low affective filter will increase their intake. The high affective filter (negative emotions) are regarded as a "mental block" that block efficient processing of the language input. In attempting to reduce anxiety Kress and Bezemer (2009) observed that people choose how to represent meaning from a range of possibilities which are shaped in a particular context. They say that this recognition of students' resources is key to a transformative agenda especially in higher education in South Africa.

The learners' interests are observed through creating a positive, relaxed and low anxiety atmosphere, which may mean that the intended pedagogical outcomes should comprise of a

comprehensible input, and a positive learning environment to lower the filter. Lastly, Horwitz (2001) posits that when teachers are designing classroom practices or preparing lessons they need to be conscious of their diverse student body's resources. this augurs well with the following theme of reading and writing which I will explain below,

### *Reading and writing*

Anderson (1999), states that reading is an essential skill for students so that they can have a good command of a second or foreign language. In view of this, this study affirms that the reading process ends when the readers have interpreted as much of the writers' intended meaning as is relevant to them (Huang, 2012). Based on this, the writers put their meaning into language and the readers reconvert the language into meanings. In other words, the writer's intended meaning is under the printed materials and the reader should read between the lines to get it. Huang (2012) advances three main elements involved in reading process: reader, text and interaction between the reader and the text. She says that during reading process the readers should make use of their background and linguistic knowledge to reconstruct the writer's intended meaning.

### *Writing*

Adamson et. al. (2019), extrapolate scaffolding of pre-writing structure and language use, and a cognizance of the importance of affording students agency. They say that this is fundamentally a negotiated process, punctuated by the use of translanguaged planning and modelling. Along the same lines, Thesen (2014) illustrated a multimodal approach which examines writing as part of a multimodal representational and communication landscape, and looks at the way in which writing is embedded within a wider semiotic frame in a social context. He states that writing centres need to be equipped to assist with multimodal composition and argumentation. In view of this, schools need to be furnished with various modes of support like multimodal communication using visual media such as videos, comics and MS Powerpoint, medical pamphlets, posters and storyboards, and information graphics. Reading and writing pedagogy were central to this study.

Mainly, the intention to present reading and writing pedagogy as one of the key approaches in this study was invoked by the academic gap between the English First Additional Language learners and the native speakers concocted by the Bantu Education Act (1953), effectuated by the Apartheid regime. As I pointed out elsewhere, the issues of language in South Africa became a political issue, in view of this, this study became highly convenient specifically through encouraging reading and writing practices by means of journaling as a data collection tool. As a premise, this study besought to close the academic gap and level the playing fields between the English First Additional Language learners and the native speakers. As I will explain in greater detail later under the methodology section journaling as one of the data collection instruments in this study became a practice ground for composing writing.

## Methodology

The theoretical underpinnings examined in the literature review section suggest that teaching the EFAL through translanguaging pedagogy in culturally diverse classrooms of a South African school, where reading and writing are viewed as pivotal can best be understood qualitatively because teaching by way of translanguaging is context based and can only be understood from a participant's perspective. To this end, the study affirmed its faith in the constructivist view of language learning where language teaching is seen as an, "educational process capable of fostering educational outcomes in terms of student's learning" (Elliot, 1991, p. 50).

### *Data collection tools*

Through the metaphorical categorization of the data collected, and with the help of the theoretical underpinning from the literature review, the study made use of the following interwoven 7 themes: principal tools for data collection: affordances, anxiety reduction, journal writing, observation, reflexive competence, semiotic resources, translanguaging. However, based on the large volume of data collected and limited space in this study, it was impossible for me to utilise all of it. As the tools were interthreaded and inextricably linked from the listed above I selected the following: translanguaging paired with the observation method, reading and writing paired with journaling. since the focus of the study was on translanguaging in the diverse classrooms of a South African school. Based on this, I propose shaping a chain of narratives and interpretations in this section. This presupposes a construction of a story of their story where my narrative is seen as an interpretation of their interpretations. To this end, I will now explain the aforementioned tools in the context of the central theme/question which asked *how EFAL learners could be taught through translanguaging pedagogy in the culturally diverse classrooms of a South African school*.

### *Journal*

In my thesis, (Kepe, 2017) I noted that journal writing was a place to record daily happenings and shared some qualities with things like logs and diaries—it records experiences and events over a period of time. However, its use in the context of my thesis was quite far more than that in that it entailed a conscious reflection and commentary. It helped the learners to remember something later; it was a record to look back on. Keeping a note in a journal helped the participants to recapture the moment later so that they might look at it more deeply. Secondly, the act of putting pen to paper (or finger to keyboard) engaged their brains as it were. So, through journaling the learners were able to think, write and argue and to capture their stories while the action was still fresh. This as it used to be in this study, often provoked them to wonder 'Why did this happen' (Kepe, 2017, p. 152)?' I also observed that through journaling I was able to monitor my practice. Importantly as a reflexive practitioner myself the act of writing something down in this study often crystallized a particular problem or issue or enabled me to see where a particular piece of work has not achieved its objective (…) through this process, I could identify my strengths and weakness and areas in which I could benefit from further training; as mentioned elsewhere, reflecting in and on practice. Journal writing in many context encouraged engagement and reflection. It stimulated

thoughts and allowed the participant to look at themselves, their feelings, and actions in a different way. By writing ideas down in a journal, the words were then 'outside' of them. They were there in black and white on the paper or on the screen. They could almost come to look at them as strangers – 'Did I really think that?' How does this fit with that?' in other words, words became more concrete – and in that way they could play with them, look at them in another light. From my thesis journal writing appeared to be the one place where they could find their voice and write freely in English and took advantage of it. In respect of this, I reflected on two types of journal mechanisms that were fruitful during the course of this investigation with learners (participants).

### *Media journal*

*Guidelines for completing media journal:*

The participants were instructed to make notes while listening / watching / reading, take notes in their journal. After making notes, learners wrote a summary of what they have read / listened to / watched. Thirdly, they wrote a personal reaction to it (what they think or felt about what they have read/listened to or watched). They were required to include the exact source(s) of the information as (the example) can be seen under appendices 1 & 2. They wrote by hand in the notebook given to them. Each of the three parts should be at least a page long. They were required to hand in their media journal every Fridays. Usually before the submission, at least five participants would be asked to voluntarily share on whatever they found interesting/topical in their journal. Voluntarily as the journals were supposed to be personal and therefore a private book.That was vital and served not only as an indication that learners were reading but also tortuously projected to practice writing skills which appeared to be the problem with EFAL learners in school. Generally and perhaps most importantly, the sharing part/moment used to spark a heated discussion among the participants. It was at this point where I would observe traces of translanguaging. Notably, was the flow of ideas, less stammering and a code meshing of the various modes of communication was evident. In this situation where learners were allowed to freely express themselves and engage without restricting the language eloquence and fluency usually emerged.

## *Dialogue journal*

The dialogue journals were used as a written conversation between myself and the participants (learners). In this regard, the learners and I had a conversation between ourselves in which they would send their written work to me through emails. Learners had complete control over the topic and I would respond to them, reflecting the length and depth as well as modelling good writing. This was noteworthy, because then there was productive interaction between myself (the researcher/class teacher) and the learners. Also, this had a potential to build their confidence (self-esteem) with regards to writing.

Thus, this section is concerned with the tools for data collection and their impact on role-players like i.e. learners and teachers in De Vos Malan High School. In view of this, the rationale and objectives of this study have guided my choice of methodology.

## *Participants*

The sample composed of 18 learners and 10 teachers. Out of ten, three teachers were teaching English home language from grade 10 to 12. Seven teachers were teaching content subjects from grade 10 to 12. Amongst the 7 were the principal and his deputy. The principal taught Mathematics in grade 9 and 11. The deputy taught accounting from grade 10 to 12. There were also two HODs, one for physical science and the other for Mathematics. One teacher was teaching History and the other one taught Afrikaans Home Language. The last one taught Life Orientation.

## *Educational Intervention*

At the centre of this study is an opportunity needed to channel the learners' linguistic resources in appropriate directions, affirming their choices and consequently giving them a voice and agency. Therefore, this project sought to shed light on some of the educational interventions that I carried out in De Vos Malan which may hopefully be applicable to other cases similar to this one. However, I will later in the results section provide detailed information about some of the educational activities/experiences I undertook. First, I prorated the learners according to their academic performance and coded them as High, Medium and Low. I followed them from grade 10 to 12 for continuity and to mark their progression. The key methods I utilised in this process was the journal writing and observation. The journal writing were mainly categorised as follows: first phase, second phase and third phase. In the first phase, learners submitted their first attempt to the journal either physically or via emails, and I would read them, made relevant comments before returning the journals to them for corrections. Sometimes I would not comment on minor grammatical errors as can be seen under appendices (appendix 1 & 2) to promote free writing. When the learners have done their corrections if there were any, they were then required to submit again as the second phase. The inspiration behind this was to create a written conversation between me and the learners.

This method paid dividend as the learners and I had a conversation among ourselves throughout the written work. Learners had a complete control over the topic and I would respond to them, reflecting the length and depth as well as modelling good writing for them when necessary in order to assist them to improve their understanding in whatever they may have misunderstood during their reading sessions/watched activity or listened to according to the instruction given. This practice improved the learners' reading and response towards any text they attempted to read and interpret orally and in writing.

In the second phase, some of the learners with corrections would submit the corrected work following my positive comments (scaffolding). During this process some would also share their

life challenges they experienced daily. This kept the learners in touch with me as I had to read and occasionally comment before returning the journals for corrections to the them. At this phase, most learners showed improvement in writing in the EFAL and seemed to enjoy journaling more because of their experience which made them to share their stories with me.

The third phase was the final stage in which I would use some of the journal writings in favour of the learners who were at the low level just so I could boost their marks even though I was under no obligation to do so. Sometimes this intervention would become convenient for the ones who might have missed a test or other assessments as a result of being unwell or for whatever valid reason which may have led to the lack of marks since I would use their journals to supplement the gap. This was crucial as it motivated them as they then could see that this project was useful and did add value to their academic performance which was one of the main purposes for the existence of this study.

Even though this project was not aiming at grading or testing or gaining marks at all. Instead the journal writing were utilised as a practice ground for composing writing hence the marked ticks as can be seen in the appendices did not by any means implied how much a learner scored. Towards the third phase of their journal entries, I could see that most of the learners had in fact learnt immensely from this method as they were at this juncture in control and could handle their grammatical errors since they were then very few. I also noticed a positive change in the way the usually low academic performers were performing. What was even appealing was the transformation from the traditional grammatical use of language structures to a more of a functional approach where the focus was in the main on utilising grammar to make meaning as opposed to the memorisation of rules. This was enhanced by the engagement/interaction during the oral reflections in which the participants would abruptly spark a dialogue/a discourse on topical issues that they may have read and wrote about in their journals. In such cases I would intervene in intervals subtly tilting the dialogue to a more scientific one through metalanguage and translanguaging. In all the discussions among the participants the blending of language resources was welcome which is the rationale of this study. This for me illustrated an immense improvement.

The improvement across the academic levels was evident. This was confirmed by the learners' overall ideas which showed coherence when writing. At this stage, they chose to write about different topics such as politics, sports, celebrities, movies, education news stories etc. Thus far, I attempted to tell and constructed the stories of the learners concerning reading and writing leading to the their journals as evolving accounts of literary engagement and response in English as their First Additional language. This was further exhibited by the learners' self-absorption in the reading zone, participation, commitment and enjoyment deriving from the reading and writing practices building towards translanguaging. Translingualism was illustrated in this study through reading comic books, magazines, newspapers, contemporary fiction and non-fiction that were written

mainly not only in the English and Afrikaans languages but also included a variety in the reading box of the indigenous language stories (isiXhosa, isiZulu and Sesotho).

### *Presentation and analysis of data*

While the study generated massive immense data which might have seized my beliefs and value system, it was virtually impossible for me to present all the data in the limited space of this study. For that reason I was bound to make a very laborious selection. As outlined in my thesis (Kepe, 2017) the rigorous selection was based on the argument on qualitative study that ―there are no rules in qualitative research for determining how many instances are necessary to support a conclusion or interpretation.This is always a judgement call (Taylor and Bogdan, 1998). This seems to shed some light on the point that a single incident or instant can be sufficient to build a conceptual category. In light of this, the best insights might have come from quite a small amount of data. As mentioned earlier the data metaphorically appears to suggest two categories of participants which were the learners and teachers.

The analysis that follows shortly, in the study uses a representative sampling for each of the above categories to bring out their perspective on translanguaging pedagogy. The categorizations of the themes were done discreetly for the purpose of analysis and interpretation. The reason for the two groupings was informed by the view that focusing on the individual participant as the principal unit of analysis would have produced an incomplete and an unrepresentative story (Willet, 1995). However, I would like to remind the reader that the tools used to collect data may not have been analysed and interpreted in isolation as they appear to be inextricably linked. Of the seven tools, I considered journal writing and observation as the key tools. In the representation of the data to follow shortly, the key tools were depicted as segments.

I used three strands of data for both (Segment 1) journal writing and (Segment 2) observation just to make sure that the presentation was salient. I illustrated all the data stretches in the analysis by using italics. As mentioned elsewhere, the participants were grouped into two: learners & teachers as I believed focusing on the individual participant as the principal unit of analysis might have produced an incomplete and an unrepresentative story (Willet, 1995). For the purposes of reference and harmony the learners would be labelled as (L) and the teachers as (T) I have also attached 2 appendices. Appendix 1 is a newspaper article which served as a stimulus for the journal writing and Appendix 2 is a learner script which served as the evidence of the journal writing. As mentioned it was essential to recognise the data collection tools in contrast with the themes. Below are the key tools followed by the 5 themes.

1) Observation
2) Journal writing

As mentioned earlier, a choice was made on the data as it was unlikely for me to use all of it as composed in the study. Similarly, the themes were categorized and that was done discreetly for

the purpose of analysis and interpretation. Based on this, instead of five themes I propose only two: translanguaging paired with the observation method, reading and writing paired with journaling method.

Given the immensity of the data provided by the participants in respect of the theme of Journal writing I am inclined to begin with the theme of observation since it emerges as the strongest for the purposes of data analysis. Earlier, I indicated a need to recognise the data collection tools in contrast with the themes as will be seen below.

## Findings

First, in this section I propose to relate the findings of the study to the research questions as I believe that that can serve as a recapitulatory function as shown in the previous section in which the principal parts of the study were briefly explained, that is, what the study did and what ensued as a result. I will do this by fusing the research questions with the two selected themes in italics being contrasted with the key methods i.e. *translanguaging* paired with the observation method, *reading and writing* paired with journaling. These included the main research question which appears to cut across this investigation.

The interrogations stated above were in many contexts in this study realised as a lived through experience of the participants. Most importantly, the investigation set out to demonstrate the educational and social values of the participants in as far as translanguaging was concerned in the diverse classrooms of a school. The subjectivist/constructivist epistemology of the study and the attitudes and beliefs underlying it, required a search for ideas and views that were consistent with such an epistemology through the above mentioned themes. As a result, the literature review identified theoretical and practical issues that were to support a constructivist approach to this investigation. To this end, the questions fused with the themes in this study were used to facilitate a research design that allowed for a fruitful use of data collection procedures as shown below,

### *Translanguaging observations from the learners' informal conversation*

My role as an observer and the other themes to path were besought because I wished to maintain the tenor of conceptualization in the hope that it might serve as a pathfinder in my analysis.

Below are some of the data (labelled L1, 2 & 3) observations extracted from the learners' informal conversation in the hall of De Vos Malan in which the participants and I held a Reading Club launch. At this launch the programme director was a learner/participant. On the day of the launch various activities such as narration, book discussions, book reviews, poster presentations including musical items by some gifted participants were conducted. Mainly extract 1 shows 3 learners' (L)/participants conversing about the proceedings.

**Data segment 1 (through observation of learners' informal conversation)**

**Extract 1:**

> L1 *Thank you … thank you … ladies and gents, guys and dolls, let's give a big hand to our special 'Vossies' artists (programme director who was also a learner in musical revue/ extravaganza for learners in De Vos Malan High School) here today …*
>
> L2 *Nee, die eene is funny … uthi guys and dolls. He thinks he comes from the states, but he speaks like a tsotsi …*
>
> L3 *There is old people that has been standing please provide them with seats.*

The above data segment which relates to the main question on how can the EFAL be taught through translanguaging in the culturally diverse classrooms in a South African school was solicited from the participants' informal conversation on. Translanguaging in this sense refers to people's strong need to communicate effectively in various intercultural contact situations including moving freely within, between and among languages.The above conversation appears to unwittingly correspond with my instinct that translanguaging among learners' spaces is happening. This view is exhibited in the above private conversation among the participants in question which entailed inadvertently relaying of information from one language to another, bridging communication gaps between themselves.This again appears to speak to a need for an appealing and non-threatening environment in the form of a classroom in schools where learners engage freely in any meaningful learning of a language.

### *Observations in the Home Language class*

Second, in the Home Language (HL) class, where most learners were isiXhosa speaking natives, a few Indians, Coloureds, and EL1s I witnessed a communication breakdown in teaching and learning environment, in which the teacher, who was a native English speaker, did not seem to understand isiXhosa whereas in this class most of the learners were isiXhosa natives but doing English as HL. Seemingly, the content taught was based on the rules of sentence construction, (grammar translation approach) and not based on contextual language in my view. Consequently, learners appeared bored and were conversing in isiXhosa bemoaning their complete confusion and frustration with regards to what was taught. Extract 2 shows the learners' feelings in this class.

**Extract 2**

> L1 *Hayi, hayi! Akuzange usifundise ke leyo uyithethayo. [i.e. Oh! No, no, you never taught us what you are saying.]*
>
> L2 *Andinaxesha la le mfitshi mfitshi ka (…) makhe ndibali i-Maths yam [I do not have time for this nonsense, let me do my Maths]*

L3 *Hoe! Jere, Hier die skool is n' tronk! [Oh! Gosh, this school is a prison] Jadit is waar my broer, sisetrongweni apha. [Yes. That is true my brother we are in prison here].Waar bly jy? [Where do you live?] Ek bly daar by Komga. [I live there in Qumrha].*

From the above comments, the learners are venting their frustrations with regards to the lesson that was being conducted by the teacher in question but along the same lines as in extract 1. What I can ascertain from this conversation was that meaning in this case, appeared to come from the context of communication and it has become a common practice within the environment of De Vos Malan to hear the diverse participants (coloured learners, indians, Afrikaans speaking learners and a few native English speaking learners) speaking that way. IsiXhosa native learners were not an exception since when they spoke English there appeared to be a lot of translation from their mother tongue into English FAL which seems to be challenging both in terms of syntax. To the extent that we see others busy writing tasks in other subjects that had nothing to do with what was happening in class.

### *Translanguaging observations from the teachers' experiences*

### **Extract 3**

Teacher 1 *Yes, we know that English isn't actually really their home language, and so we*

*have to explain word meanings to them, they don't often understand idiomatic phrases and that they have difficulty with spelling and yes, when you look at their language papers, they don't always understand figurative language and some of the new answers of the language.*

Teacher 2 *English or Afrikaans, learners either converse with me in English or Afrikaans. Sometimes with IsiXhosa kids I will use a mix of IsiXhosa and English.*

Teacher 3 *It's either English or IsiXhosa depending on the child. The child or parent can sometimes understand the situation better when they are addressed and understand the situation in their own language. It meets them at their point of need, shows respect and recognition for them as a person.*

The comments above appear to concur with my belief for translingualism in a South African school. However, one participant's explanation appeared to be one sided i.e., in Afrikaans. This again appeared unfair as I could see that in fact, the other learners in this diverse class especially those that were not of Afrikaans origin were battling to comprehend concepts.

### *Reading and Writing: Journaling*

In this section I propose to begin by showing how the reading practices including poetry cultivated a fertile ground for writing through journaling. In Kepe (2017), journaling became a practice ground for writing. A place to generate and capture ideas and a safety valve for the emotions. To do this the participants had to read quite a number of contemporary attractive books, newspaper

articles, magazines, watching news, sports, listening to the radio etc. Whatever knew knowledge gained had to be reflected upon by the participants to promote reading culture. They too often expressed their own feelings in the journals through poetry, identified life experiences /shared/related stories based on poetry/ various reading sources.

One of the exciting moments for them (participants) was when they were interpreting a poem through a poster design. The massive energy displayed during the preparations was amazing. The gathering of magazines, ruler, crayons with different colours for the background and colouring, pair of scissors (to cut pictures that may give meaning/interpretation to the poem) versus tearing, any prose, phrase or figure of speech (metaphors & similes), prestik (i.e. a rubber-like temporary adhesive) for pasting the poem poster on the wall. The rules of the poster were always applied i.e. the header which in this case usually used to be the title of the poem under discussion. While others were cutting or tearing pictures imagining the characters, others were busy discussing and thinking about the captions that sought to interpret either semiotic resources or the theme of the poem. When this happened the act of reading became a composing process, which is writing, translating into all forms of expression through dialogues, discussions, debates/poster presentations about the learners' own stories/from their sources of choice they read/watched or listened to. Below are some of the learners' responses in relation to reading.

**Extract 4**

L1 *Firstly, reading broadens my vocabulary. Personally, if I had used a vernacular language I would have a lot of difficulty with my studies. English helps a lot because even if I wanted to study overseas, I know it would be possible because I speak English. English is a vast language so, every day I learn something new.*

L2 *We have been speaking and learning in English since grade 7 therefore it has made it quite easier for us to study well. I understand my work very well whereas if I would have to study in my own home language it wouldn't be much easier.*

L3 *reading helps me a lot because when I have to do research based assignment almost all information is in English.*

Based on the above comments, it appeared that at least we had participants who loved reading and acknowledged its benefits in their studies. Of interest to me even though not surprising was the purportedly unanimous endorsement of the use of English as the only medium of instruction by the majority of the participants (learners). As such, this endorsement to me was not surprising as it epitomised the English hegemony that has evolved overtime. Over and above that, this approval appeared to edify language in South Africa as an affirmative issue. My last point in respect of English and Afrikaans as the only mediums of instruction in De Vos Malan would stem from my belief that if translanguaging might not officially be considered as an option across subjects then the overall literacy and language acquisition might be compromised. Consequently, the cycle of failed academic reading and writing outcomes might continue to thwart learners from excelling in

their academic performance. To make matters worse this as it appeared might enhance the already visible traces of acculturation leading to complete loss of learners identity.

### *Teachers' perspectives of translanguaging through reading: Journaling*

Since the purpose of my thesis in the main was to promote a reading culture not only in English but across subjects, it was then important for me to hear the perspectives of the teachers in relation to reading at this site. Below are some of the teacher responses:

**Extract 5**

> Teacher 1 *I do know that the Department feels that we had to bring in IsiXhosa as the third language and are busy working with INCREMENTAL INTRODUCTION OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES (IIAL) situation where they trying to phase it in from grade R or grade 1 up and we started phasing it in with grade 1, 2, and 3. Now I don't think we adopted a policy to that situation yet in our policy but we are exposing our grade 1, 2, 3 to IsiXhosa. I do not think it is effective for children who intend to go to the university or study further. They prefer to have Afrikaans or English instead of IsiXhosa even if their background is IsiXhosa; they still want to stick in Afrikaans and English. It betters their chances, you know some go to Port Elizabeth and Cape Town and those kinds of places got a lot of Afrikaans and Bloemfontein, whereas East London and Johannesburg very much focus on English but a child that wants to go further I think it's better to have Afrikaans or English than IsiXhosa. I also think that learners who do not speak IsiXhosa, it's also important to develop love for that language through reading. It is eventually a very big value to expose the children to IsiXhosa literature, to at least grasp the language.*

> Teacher 2 *Oh! Yes, reading is the Alpha and the Omega. Is the A, B, C, is the 1, 2, 3. And what's important in my subject where we use numbers, before numbers we start with language even if we do calculations, calculate percentages or ratios we first need the language. What do I need to do? What do I need to calculate? So the language is the foundation. I think when a child is born his/her parents should buy him/her a book, that is how strong I feel about it; I don't think we must buy any other gift other than a book, from a very, very young age. And then also in the language that you want them to be brought up, say for an example my child is Afrikaans, we are Afrikaans at home, but my plan for the future is to put that child in English school where the medium of instruction is English I should lay the foundation but also introduce that other language, otherwise the child is going to struggle. So I feel that especially with IsiXhosa Home language learners, they should be introduced to English earlier. For these children (IsiXhosa speaking learners) English is almost a 3rd language for them. It is not their home language; it is as if English is another subject. It is not that they are making their own language since the small age.*

Teacher 3 *It is a big factor in my subject because they get a lot of comprehension and scenarios that they have to read. So, if they don't read the scenario, they won't be able to answer it correctly. You know, to be able to express themselves in a medicinal sort of way they need to read a lot. In my subject, even though I am not a language teacher I can pick up that they battle with language when they are asked to write essays. They battle to express themselves. They are looking for these big words but they can't use them properly.*

From the above responses it seems some schools' language policies in use are not necessarily user-friendly and do not seem to accommodate diversity. Likewise, the language policy of De Vos Malan appeared quite bias in favour of Afrikaans from grade 1, 2, and 3 as the only medium of instruction. This is shown by teacher 1 who is also the principal of school in this study. He had mixed fixed feelings in relation to introducing isixhosa (i.e. mother tongue to some of the English Home language class). From grade 4 to 9 two streams seem to emerge where English runs on its lane (for English Home language learners) but parallel with Afrikaans on the other lane (for Afrikaans Home Language learners). The problem with this kind of policy is that not all learners in English Home Language class were from English speaking background and same applies with Afrikaans class. Notably, as well was the participants' response who appeared to think that Afrikaans and English were the only medium of instruction for the learners to become globally competent. This confirms my assumption that language in South Africa is a political issue. Certainly, this could be seen as one of the pitfalls of the Bantu Education system purported by Apartheid whose mission really was to marginalise the indigenous languages in favour of English and Afrikaans.

### Pre-writing through journaling toward proficient writing in translanguaging: Journaling

As indicated elsewhere, the journal entries showed a development in both learners' writing and reading.
One learner reflected on her journal that she did not believe after reading her third draft that it was her work. She pointed out that she was then able to write how she felt unlike before when she used to be scared of what the teacher and friends would say about her writing. She said with confidence that she knew after a few times of writing, she would be able to write well. In one pair work activity I asked the participants to interview one another based on one question which was to ask the interviewee (peer) to list at least 10 items (s) he liked. Out of the ten items mentioned by his/her peer (s) he was asked to utilised those likes to create a poem about his/her peer in the journals. The poem was going to be composed of 10 lines. I stated that out of 10 at least 2/3/4 lines should rhyme. Also, I asked the participants to try and use similes and metaphors in their lines in describing each other through poetry. I observed that even though the instructions were clear some of the participants were repeatedly asking for clarity which in such instances I did explain further. While other appeared to be challenged by the activity others were at home. Overall, towards the

end of the period I could hear and noticed a lot of interaction among themselves. It became more fun when the final instruction asked each one to stand and recite aloud what( s) he has written about the other.  The following are the reflections as observed by the learners:

**Extract 6**

> L1 *I did not believe after reading my third draft that it was my work. Now I write any how I feel but I know that after a few times of writing, I will be able to write well. This is unlike before when I use to be scared of what the teacher and my friends  will say about my writing.*
>
> L2 *Even though I prefer English than my own mother tongue for school I find reflecting not so easy. We are asked to read on various readings, class  discussions, react and try to interpret to what we have read or watched or listened to. In my case I don't do it correctly though I always try  as I am not confident  enough with my English.*
>
> L3 *I thought asking my peer to list her ten things was easy nut when it was my turn to write a poem out of the ten things it was a bit difficult but as I started working on it thoughts started coming and I wrote a nice poem about my peer.*

Most of the learners' writing showed signs of improvement as they reach phase 3 of their final drafts. This was important as it enhanced a further need for the journal writing as a practice ground for writing. Poetry, book reviews and media journals i.e. email dialogues, newspaper articles, magazines, films/ movies, sport news, political and current affairs programmes on tv and on the radio etc.) served as a stimulus for learners to organize their ideas, embed their thinking and reassess their actions.This, and through group discussions developed their reading skills and improved their language competence since they managed to understand and respond properly in their writings from the teacher's comments towards the different stories they have read, listened to and watched. All the learners from the tree grouping of high, medium, and slow showed improvement in their writing and a boost of self-esteem which validates a call for translanguaging. In correlation with journaling learners were reading and then reflect in writing in most cases. However, in some instances learners also engage each other through discussions/dialogues showing their reflexive competences.

***Reading as a stimulus for translanguaging: Journaling***

The data I presented below in extract 7 show the learners' responses based on their interaction, theme of proficiency in reading fluency and in writing proficiently the EFAL.

**Extract 7**

> L1. *The story I like is the story portrayed in the novel titled,  '**To Kill a Mockingbird',** by Harper Lee. The story portrays a black male's criminal trial after he is accused of assaulting a white female. This story also tracks the oppression experienced by black natives in America in the early 1940's. I could definitely relate with the story given South*

*Africa's high rate of gender violence and given atrocities of the past during the apartheid era.*

L2 *The title of the book that I read is:* **"Stronger than the Storm"**. *The book touched my heart. It tells a story about a young girl who lived a below average life with her mom, siblings and grandmother. She was raped and got infected with HIV. She almost lost her life.*

L3 *I have read a story from the magazine article,* titled, **'Size Doesn't Matter',** *being a plus- size in their own skinned doesn't mean you can't wear certain things. Every women should feel beautiful, confident and comfortable. This article gave me and every young women confidence to know that we are perfect just the way we are.*

From the above comments, it is evident that the journal entries became a stimuli not only through improving the learners' writing but made quite a crucial attempt to regulate their higher mental processes such as belief, creative/critical thinking and emotional involvement. The journals in a way regulated their behaviour and stimulated their zeal towards EFAL. To attest to this I have copied below three images labelled photo A, B & CA which might illuminate the above comments in relation to the learners' reading fluency and writing proficiency. The event as mentioned elsewhere was a 'Reading Club Launch'. In attendance at the function below were school learners, teachers, and the School management team. As the host and a coordinator of the event I invited the EFAL neighbouring school teachers, the English subject advisor, the District librarian, and two King William's town District officials representing the Department of Education. Of importance with this event was the display or a showcase of the participants' diverse skills i.e. from discussion, narration, poem reciting, poster presentation to roleplaying and debating/dialoguing. The following pictures in many context attest to the significance of reading and journaling as the conspicuous optional strategies toward translanguaging. This was evident in the learners' performances as the medium was not only restricted to English. The interaction was also blended with their mother tongue languages e.g. isiXhosa and Afrikaans novels and poems were read aloud competitively and recited. The images in photos A to C as follows are illustrative of the key discourse and events pertinent to this study.

**Photo A: Student reading**

Photo A displays a learner who was avidly reading a page in isiXhosa from the published book titled, ***Zemk'inkomo magwalandini*** (meaning, 'the cattle are being captured cowards') by W. B Rubusana & B.B Mdledle (London: Butler & Tanner, 1911). She walked away with a prize in this event as she mesmerised the audience with fascinating spelling, pronunciation, varying tone and isiXhosa clicking proverbs such as, 'qabunoqolomba efile nje' 'ooxam bayaphaxulana, iqaqa'lizivakunuka etc. This was a learner exhibiting the strength of her own identity through reading. This is precisely what this study has been advocating blending of mother tongue as a resource toward second language acquisition.

**Photo B: Student mediation**



Photo B exhibits a paradigmatic relationship between a set of linguistic items that form mutually exclusive choices in particular syntactic role. This augurs well with the rationale of this study that

language structure should be adapted and shaped by the task of producing talk and meaning for others in human interaction in ways that give shape to a particular social world. Standing in the image above is an intelligent, inquisitive, jovial and eloquent young learner mediating a dialogue among themselves based on what should be done to the policy of schools with regard to the language of Teaching and learning (LoTL). I crafted this dialogue in my thesis in an attempt to imbued and sensitise the participants with the school policy. As I believed that it was as well crucial to hear their view in a subtle way on my part as they were not supposed to know my intention. The process was as follows:

1. The learners were given a selection of readings to assist them with preparation for the dialogue. This what Gibbons in the first step of her Curriculum cycle (2002) referred to as the building of knowledge. Of course learners here were also given a leverage to tap into their existing knowledge i.e. personal experiences and insights. I made it clear to the learners that the wider they read, the better equipped they will be. I divided the participants randomly via the selection of "animal tickets" into two groupings:

   Group 1: English as LoTL from the start (LIONS)

   Group 2: Mother tongue as LoTL from the start (English as a subject) (RHINOS).

The participants were given some time to work in their different interest groups to plan their dialoguing strategies, both in terms of of the things they will want to say to support their position and also the things that can counter the arguments which will be raised by their opponents. Each group was expected to appoint a speaker to represent them in the dialogue and others in the group were to assist them in their preparation and also be prepared to contribute during the 'open' dialogue/period. That meant everyone was going to speak at least once during the dialogue. At the conclusion of the dialogue the groups would vote by secret ballot for the LoTL position which they believe best served the interest of South African learners, both from an educational and a practical perspective. They were not expected to vote automatically for their groups' positions. This activity was worthwhile in that it honestly revealed the participants' views with regards to the erratic language policy of the school as the majority of them voted in favour of translingualism in school which is in line with the rationale of this study.

*Photo C. An epitome of translanguaging through poster presentation*

Photo C below exhibits a book review presented in the form of a poster. In essence, two genres were tackled here at once: a) the book review, and b) the poster. This was shown by the participants in their preparations and engagement where for the poster they needed to have a flip chart sheet, magazines, pair of scissors and a prestik (i.e., rubber-like, adhesive & can be used for pasting papers on walls).While others were using a pair of scissors/ their fingers to cut pictures others were discussing their captions to be written under those pictures. The pictures were used to depict the book characters from the stories they read. The poster rules were followed i.e. frame, use of colour,

the background the header and the pattern to be followed in arranging those pictures symbolising characters. On the other hand, the structure of a book review was exhibited: title, main character, characters, sequence of events, a brief summary, at least 5 new words, rating the story and a moral if any. Usually, during this process there is a lot of agreements and disagreements among themselves. And it must be mentioned that during this preparation there is a lot of inadvertent translanguaging among the participants. Sometimes the engagement would reach climax and required my intervention. My intervention was very strategically and conducted in a balanced manner in an attempt to reach consensus. The social practice was evident. The traces of who they were in terms of culture & identity during the heated moments were exhibited. I could see the easiness and eloquence in speaking when they were relaying information to each other blending their language repertoires with english. During the presentation, they appoint one amongst themselves to present but giving support when there is a need or when a question asked from the floor appear to be abstract for the presenter.

*Photo C Translanguaging through poster presentation*



The journals were written in three phases. In phase I, the learners submitted their first attempt at the journal to the teacher who read and made relevant comments before returning them for correction. After corrections, they were then required to submit again as the second phase to create a written dialogue between the researcher and the students and among themselves. The journal entries showed development in both learners' writing and reading. In this activity, learners had complete control over the topic. However, I would respond to them – emulating the length and depth as well as modelling good writing of whatever they read, and was mindful that while support

and giving feedback was crucial, it could not have been used to discourage nor act as a punishment. This was realized by scaffolding of pre-writing structure and language use, and being cognizance of the importance of affording students' agency. In Phase II, the learners submitted their revised work and shared their daily experiences. This kept the learners in touch with me since I had read and commented before returning the journal for corrections. Most learners improved their writing and seemed to enjoy journaling more – because of their experience which made them share their stories with me. At this juncture, this was where the learners found their voice. They were in control and managed to take care of the grammar mistakes – as there were very few of these. They presented issues in a logical manner. I gave feedback but doing so with caution not to use the red pen as punishment, instead modelled good writing when there was a need to doso. At this juncture, learners wrote about different topics such as current affairs, politics both locally and globally, sport, celebrities, movies and education news stories. As mentioned elsewhere, the example of a stimulus and a selected journal extract can be seen under the appendices.

## Discussion of findings

The previous section presented the story of my understanding of translanguaging which influences the acquisition of EFAL competence in a South African school as seen through the understanding of my participants' interpretations. Considering this, the data and research instruments attempted to describe the dynamics and fall-outs of participants' engagement with the EFAL environment, thereby attempting to come to terms with competence through translanguaging. On the same wavelength, through the metaphorical categorization of the data collected, and with the help of the theoretical underpinning from the literature review, the study made use of the following interwoven themes: Affordances, Anxiety reduction, Reading and Writing, Reflexive competence, Semiotic budget & Translanguaging: However, based on the large volume of data collected and limited space in this study, it was impossible to utilise all of it. The selected themes were translanguaging paired with the observation method, reading and writing paired with journaling. The study focused on translanguaging in diverse classrooms of a South African school. Based on this, I propose shaping a chain of narratives and interpretations in this section. This presupposes a construction of a story of their story where my narrative is seen as an interpretation of their interpretations.

To achieve this, I needed to reinforce my beliefs which triggered this study and interpret the findings in terms of lived through experiences. As a consequence to my introduction, background, the review of the literature and the data analysis of this study, I focused on the role of interpreting the interpretations of participants which implied a view of discontent and underscored my attempts to raise my thinking and practice to a higher level of understanding through interpretation. In view of this discontent, I now understand how my stance appeared to position itself against a positivist view based on my acceptance of the context of this study as a means of constructing and

interpreting knowledge. Thus, instead of framing my research themes independent of context, I used my research methods to contextualize and re-contextualize them (Sivasubramaniam, 2011).

Generally, the data revealed a need for the multimodals/approaches (Thesen, 2014) to teaching and learning which stressed the importance of learning English by a lived through experience. However, the paradox in this study lied on the contradictions that appeared to have emerged between its rationale and the South African language policy. The findings under the theme of translanguaging revealed that at the moment we have two major proposals concerning the use of dual language (Afrikaans & Language) as the current South African language policy each with its own fan base. The South African language policy on the one hand purports that learners need to learn in their mother tongue from grade R up to grade 4 and henceforth in English or Afrikaans. On the other hand, this study presented an unorthodox option for translanguaging supported by the literature. The study revealed that even though the participants (i.e. the teachers under the theme of translanguaging) were not so overt in alienating different languages other than English and Afrikaans, however, they appeared to be in favour of dual medium of instruction. Beside, the isiXhosa (their mother tongue) undertones by the learners during the English Home Language period in which learners bemoaned a complete confusion concerning the subject matter imparted to them conveyed a need for transformative approach to teaching and learning. This means to say that while teachers are under no obligation to know all the different languages of learners however they need to open up a dialogue and opportunities for translingualism. One way of doing this is by listening to the learners' family stories. This invoked Gutiérrez's (1995) script, counterscript, and *underlife* in the classroom. The underlife was inadvertently and further exposed by the participants (learners) in the dialogue activity. Generally, the study revealed a need for the teachers to be aware of the consequences of their actions and the hidden curriculum in class. In view of this, the two opposing ends concerning the language of teaching and learning (i.e. dual medium of instruction) were subtly at play. This augurs well with the Third Space because the Third Space sought to observe closely the differences in involvement, participation, and learning of students in classroom instructional activity and noting multiple social spaces with distinctive participation structures and power relations (Gutiérrez, 1995). In Gutiérrez's terms this is where the teacher and student scripts—the formal and informal, the official and unofficial settings of the learning environment—intersect, creating the potential for authentic interaction and a shift in the social organization of learning in what counts as knowledge.

Furthermore, under the theme of reading and writing this study provided an educational inquiry which posed fundamental questions about the nature of human experience which humans share during interaction with characters in a 'reading zone' finding a voice/expression in their journals. The study revealed an attempt to learn new languages and discourses as the processes that contribute to language, education and human conditions. This study virtually revealed that the participants were congruent on the idea of reading as having a composing effect toward proficient writing as exhibited by the participants in photos A, B & C where they were showcasing various

activities evoked through reading. This means to say that we learn writing by writing and we do that by reading the role of a writer. The journal writing as in Kepe (2017), attested to this as the participants were reading various reading materials across languages and were given time to reflect on their readings. In essence, here the learners were able to organise their thoughts, embedding their thinking and reassessing their actions. As mentioned elsewhere, the stories were discussed and a whole range of genres that were written were evoked through reading.

However, it is my view that the application of translanguaging might need transformative teachers who are able to create affordances in their learner settings which leads to a healthy engagement as proven by this study. The study advocated for an environment free of fear and anxiety. This invoked Krashen (1982), who posits that foreign language anxiety is evoked by an individual's low-self-esteem. In view of this, individuals with low self-esteem appear to worry a lot, because they want to 'please' others, when this happens they might think it is normal for them to compare themselves with others or with their idealized self-image which may be hard to realize (Huang, 2012). In this case their idealized image might have serious repercussions of ending up forgetting who they are putting their identity at risk. Considering this, this study has illuminated a number of implications for further investigation, one being that all humans have that natural ability of passing on culturally acquired characteristics and qualities of education using language as a weapon. However, this study revealed that such a natural ability to pass on and accommodate each other's cultures can be resisted by some. Under the theme of reading and writing a participant who happened to be the principal of this natural setting flagged sharply the question of Incremental Introduction of African Languages (IIAL) by the South African government to redress the language impasse. The IIAL as I understand it sought to incrementally introduce the African languages from grade 7 to 12. The participant felt strongly that that was not necessary as the learners were in content with the dual medium of instruction. This is a sentiment also shared by the admirers of Afrikaans and English (as dual medium of instruction). They argue that it is better to have English as the medium of instruction in South African schools as this may give learners the necessary English proficiency to be able to get educated at tertiary level and to go even further in academia at international level. In artless terms, as in Kepe (2017) this means that anyone that is not English will be disadvantaged if they do not receive education in the form of a language in their home language because concepts would be much harder for them to grasp than for a person whose home language is English. This also might imply that there is less need to train teachers to be efficient in any of the country's other official languages (11 official languages in South Africa) as well there might be a less need for new translated textbooks. Even though I am not a proponent of the textbook only approach I view this as worrying especially in light of the fact that both teachers and learners in South Africa are still struggling with literacy in the African Languages as well as English. The study revealed a need by the South African Department of Education to expedite the integration of African languages into the school Curriculum to pave some ground for translanguaging towards translingualism in schools.

Overall, the results in this study revealed a need to attend to contradictions and rethink a strict temporal analysis of classrooms - that is, a diachronic view of talk and interaction in classroom activity - to a view of classrooms as having multiple, layered, and conflicting activity systems with various interconnections (Gutiérrez, 1995). Based on these findings, the study revealed an unorthodox approach to pre-writing structure and language use, and a cognizance of the importance of affording students' agency (Adamson et. al., 2019). To this end, there is a need to expedite translanguaging in schools. I believe that the synopsis discussed above can serve as a pathfinder as it appeared to have cracked the crux and the principal parts of the study, explaining briefly what the study did and what ensued as a result.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study I recommend:

a) The study recommended an unorthodox approach to pre-writing structure and language use, and a cognizance of the importance of affording students a voice through translanguaging.

b) The study recommended an interactive model in classroom activity - to a view of classrooms as having multiple, layered, and conflicting activity systems with various interconnections

c) The study recommended a need for the South African Department of Education to expedite the integration of African languages into the school Curriculum to pave some ground for translanguaging towards translingualism in schools.

d) The study revealed a need to expose and capacitate both teachers and learners with literacy in the African Languages as well as English.

e) The study recommended a need for learners to be afforded an opportunity to reflect in their journals where they might be able to organise their thoughts, embed their thinking and reassess their actions in class.

f) The study recommended a need for transformative teachers who are able to provide multimodals/affordances in their learner settings which leads to a healthy engagement and an environment free of fear and anxiety.

g) The study recommended a need for the teachers to create the potential for authentic interaction by opening up a dialogue and opportunities for translingualism in the learner setting.

h) The study recommended a need for the teachers to be aware of the consequences of their actions and the hidden curriculum in the teaching and learning situation.

i) The study revealed a need for teachers to teach critical thinking through reading using poetry and a book of choice as a tool to improve writing, critical reading,

j) This study implicated that as long as teachers model passion and zeal for what they are doing then learners may have persons to look up to and the kind of world they hope to inhabit.

## Implications of the study

The study implied that all humans have the natural ability of passing on culturally acquired characteristics and qualities of education using language as a weapon. Invariable, the study implicated that teachers should rethink about the valued curriculum/culture in their schools whether it takes into consideration the learners' background with their diverse family stories.The implication of the study hinges around creating an interactive approach with multimodals including semiotic resources in the teaching and learning situation. It further implied giving learners a voice/generating talk through open dialogue, allowing them time to utilise their reflexive competences by means of journaling. The study implied a kind of teaching and learning that is transformative and reflexive leading to translanguage pedagogy. This study implicated that teachers should remember that they have at least three goals a) to teach our learners to read and write b) to create an environment that motivates them to read and write c) to passionately consider the learners' needs as a focus of instruction.

## Limitations of the Study

Time was a huge factor, especially given that I was an insider, because I had to balance his teaching time and his research study. For instance, with regards to (teacher) participants I had to target the break times and the free periods to hold interviews and also to remind, or galvanize the participants for the purposes of data collect data. Also, in some instances I would utilise holidays or even the weekends by arranging for appointments depending on the participant's availability, especially with (teacher) participants or at the least even call the participant just as a reminder and persuade him/ her to feel in a questionnaire /for the purposes of data collection. There has been some degree of procrastination by some participants (teachers) on the part of data completion and delaying tactics i.e. to convene interviews sighting busy schedules, however, my polite communication skill, and patience with them ultimately prevailed. For example, I kept on politely reminding each participant to return the questionnaire. Kept on pleading for convenient time to meet for an interview session. Sometimes we would agree on a specific date but for some reason/ unforeseen emergence the participant would suddenly excuse her/ himself, and propose another date. In that case. I had no choice but to succumb and practice patience. One of the participants (teacher) had to leave to work overseas, however, the communication via internet (email/Skype) seemed to have worked even though initially I had to keep on pleading and reminding her, as she was still settling.

But then, as she settled we started communicating even on Skype and she really cooperated. Most of the teachers confessed that they were challenged by the questions hence, responses were taking so long. They mentioned especially questions pertaining to the issues of language policy. In their

view, that was caused by the fact that the questions were a revelation to them and had to delve (think) deeper since they were not conversant with school language policy. Yet, out of all the pleading and sometimes frustration, I am ultimately pleased to say that at the end I managed to obtain the good and valuable data.

## Ideas for future research

a) As partly shown by this study I believe that one of the best tools to engage learners on many fronts is poetry so, for future research authors could interrogate further whether as language practitioners teachers are doing enough or whether they have necessary skills themselves to teach poetry.

b) Perhaps one mind boggling area within South African Curriculum development context can be explored in the form of a question as to: Whom does the Curriculum serve?

c) For further investigation it may be of utmost importance for authors to consider interrogating whether the Department of Education (DoE) in South Africa is doing enough to monitor the implementation of its policies as a number of the participants (teachers) testified that they were neither informed nor sensitized about incremental integration of the indigenous languages in schools. Only the principal (who was also the participant) in the natural setting of this study was acquainted with such integration intentions by the DoE and yet this is documented in the DoE South African Schools Act 1996.

d) Another area is whether the South African DoE is doing enough to train, develop and support teachers on how to teach reading and writing given the evidence that at Grade 4, 78% of South African children could not read for meaning in any language as they are expected to, with the majority of South African teachers lacking in content knowledge, poor time on task with lacking pedagogical skills necessary to teach English.

e) Whether teachers support for learners' autonomy other than spoon-feeding is explored enough through translanguaging (as partly revealed by this study that when you give learners agency eg. expression of opinions, providing choice for learning tasks, and inviting them to participate in decision making, they increase their commitment to classroom activities)

f) In my thesis learners' long term interest in reading was enhanced when I asked them their opinions about what they were reading. I believe this could be an area of exploration for further investigation i.e. Learners as choosers of literacy, and teachers' empowerment to choose their own context.

g) To investigate whether enough is being done to provide learners some level of ownership in their literacy (reading & writing) and whether do teachers play their part to help them make literary connections to real-life situations translanguaging.

h) Whether we still have role models (teachers) whom learners look up to emulate.

i) Whether poetry could become the workhorse of the curriculum for its brevity and generosity. As this study partly hinted poetry appeared to ace the acquisition of diction, precise vivid words, importance of first person voice, the value of all parts of speech, the beauty of figurative language, and even the necessity of punctuation and proper grammar.

## Conclusions

Nunn (2016) argues that the investigation such as this one needed to be seen as a confirmation that supports the relevance of context to human behaviour, and the centrality of the subjective belief systems of those involved in research to the process and outcomes of research. In view of this, the conclusions should not be seen as a temporal affirmation of objective knowledge that has accrued from traditional/scientific and rationalistic explorations (Sivasubramaniam, 2011). This means that, the conclusions should be seen as context-based, context dependent confirmation of a constructivist knowledge suggested through the subjective perspectives of the participants in the study through their lived through experiences in De Vos Malan (Freire 1972, Lantolf 2000, Kohonen et al 2001). Therefore, my own suggestion at this point of the study is the reinforcement, not generalizations of what I perceived as the "context bound characteristics" (Nunn 1996 p. 2) of perspectival/speculative knowledge evidenced from the data analysis. T this end, the process of investigation through fusing the two themes i.e. translanguaging and reading & writing thus far was in keeping with my qualitative study initiated in De Vos Malan. The investigation was mainly intended to examine whether the English First Additional Language learners could be taught through translanguaging pedagogy in the culturally diverse classrooms of De Vos Malan.

Generally, findings gathered from my study have persuaded me to believe that one needed both cognitive and social interactive encompassed within the Third Space, affective skills, strategies and behaviours to become competent in EFAL. Over and above that, the findings of this study tilted toward advancing translanguaging as the unorthodox option if not the only way for the acquisition of EFAL in schools. Clearly, this study has shown how the world witnesses a reshaping of the English language, as it logically familiarizes to the new values and relations in worldwide communication hence in this study I have been advocating for translanguaging. This invokes Crystal (2003), who proposed the notion of English as "a family of languages" (p. 49). To this end, the central question has asked how EFAL learners could be taught through translanguaging pedagogy in culturally diverse classrooms of a South African school. As said earlier, This study affirmed its faith in the social constructivist view of language learning in which language teaching was viewed as an "educational process capable of fostering educational

outcomes in terms of student's learning" (Elliot, 1991, p. 50). Further, this study advocated for a healthy positive teacher-learner interactions to reduce anxiety in a language class. This was meant to encourage a learning setting free of fear and a teachers' harsh uncomfortable erratic correction in front of a class. Reading on the one hand was seen as an essential skill for students/learners in this study in order for them to have a good command of a second/foreign language. This study extrapolated that the reading process ends when the readers have interpreted as much of the writers' intended meaning as is relevant to them. In view of this, the writers put their meaning into language and the readers reconvert the language into meanings. In other words, as Kepe (2017) explains the writer's intended meaning was under the printed materials and the reader should read between the lines to achieve comprehension. On the other hand, this study looked at the way in which writing was embedded within a wider semiotic frame in a social context. It foresaw, digital media as an enabler for students to create and distribute multimodal work, which has implications for the ways we need to engage with both students/learners and text.This invoked Thesen (2014) who observed that writing centres/schools needed to be equipped to assist with multimodal composition and argumentation such as visual media, posters, videos, comics, PowerPoint, medical pamphlets and storyboards, and information graphics as outlined in my thesis. Invariably, the study advocated for the teachers to rethink whether the language structure was adapted and shaped to produce talk and meaning for others in human interaction in ways that gave shape to a particular social world. To this end, the study was single minded in advancing the notion of translanguage pedagogy as a solution to the unending impasse of language policy in South African schools.

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**Appendices**

**Appendix 1**

FRIDAY 9 OCTOBER 2015 THE BUGLE

# Five die in horror accident near King Williams Town

DEATH CAR: Five people, including the driver died when this Polo crashed head-on with an Opel Corsa on the N2 about 5 kilometers outside King on Sunday night

A King Club employee was one of five people that died in a horror head-on collision on the N2 to Port Elizabeth about 5 kilometers from King on Sunday night.

Siphosetu Mavata, 19, who was a receptionist at the club died instantly. Her twin sister, Siphokazi, who also works at the King Club was taken to Grey Hospital by ambulance and later discharged.

She was the only survivor of the accident.

On Monday King Club staff were in a sombre mood on hearing of Siphosetu's death. A picture of her with a candle burning next to the photograph were placed on the reception desk where Siphosetu spent many hours tending customers.

Most people spoken to only had good words to say for the 'short' girl who was so friendly and polite to all who she came into contact with at the club.

'She was a bright young person and had a great furure ahead of her," said King Clun general manager Mark Lorenz.

He said a Memorial service was due to be held at the King Club yesterday so that friends and staff could pay tribute to Siphosetu.

The accident happened at about 8pm on Sunday night. According to information the car in which the twins were passengers was returning them home after a 'family outing'. It could not be established why the car was driving in the direction of Peddie as it is believed the two stayed in Sweetwaters.

The exact circumstances of the cause of the accident are also not clear but it appears that a white Polo travelling in the direction of Peddie veered onto the wrong side of the road.

It was hit head-on by an approaching Opel Corsa travelling in the direction of King. Both vehicles had their engines ripped from their chassis by the impact.

Both drivers died on the scene and rescue personnel had to use the jaws of life to free the bodies. The driver of the Cora was named as Shadwill Swartz of Breidbach who played soccer for Rising Stars He was apparently returning from Port Elizabeth from where he fetched the Corsa. According to paramedics two people were thrown from the white Polo and died instantly. A third passenger in the Golf also died on the scene.

"We had five dead when we arrived at the scene," said a paramedic, adding their was only one survivor.

The road was closed for several hours to allow mop up operations and traffic had to be diverted.

Speed and negligent driving are believed to have played a large role in the accident. Police are investigating cases of culpable homicide.

**Appendix 2**

Read

On 10 July 2015, Nozuko Matyumza failed to return home from work. After a few days her mother filed a missing person's report with the police. If I was Nozuko's mother, I would have been worried sick if my daughter did not return home. It is very strange that her mother waited for a few days before reporting her as a missing person.

Warrant Officer Vusumzi Sityoshwana who worked on the case said that Xolisa Ntoni, the victim's boyfriend, on the case said that Xolisa became a person of interest when they found Nozuko's sim card in his phone. This sounded very suspicious to me, because why would a missing person's sim card be in her boyfriend's phone. The suspect denied everything.

Nozuko's body was found only 120m from her home and it was discovered that she was strangled with her Shoprite uniform scarf. I find this very disturbing, because I do not understand this man's motive for murdering this women. On that sad day an innocent women died and her mother lost her child.

# The Action-Oriented Approach: Integrating Democratic Citizenship Education into Language Teaching

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The action-oriented approach in language teaching as adopted by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and developed in detail by Puren (2004a, 2009b, 2011d, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017g), has a dual aim, unlike the communicative approach, of both proposing a framework for teaching languages and educating democratic citizens for a democratic society. The first aim, that of teaching languages, is at the service of the second aim. This paper aims to outline the basic principles and methodological processes of the action-oriented approach within the framework of Puren (2004a, 2009b, 2011d, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017g). It also aims to explain how the action-oriented approach detaches itself from the recent development of the communicative approach, namely task based language teaching. It is argued that while the communicative approach and task based language teaching aim to train learners to communicative with each other, which is mainly an exchange of information, the action-oriented approach moves further and aims to prepare learners to live and work together in a democratic society. Such an aim requires learners to develop the main skills expected from a social actor such as personal autonomy, collective responsibility, group work, information management, negotiation, design and implementation of complex actions since these skills are important for language learners to live and work successfully in their democratic society.

## Introduction

The Threshold Level (Van Ek, 1976), when first published by the Council of Europe for adult language learning in Europe, was innovative since it didn't consider the aim of language learning as learning of grammar but rather as a means of communication. In other words, it turned the direction of ELT from a focus on the usage of language to its authentic communicative use, and language teaching profession witnessed the rise of the functional and notional categories in language syllabi. The main aim of the Threshold Level was to prepare the adult learners in Europe to communicative effectively in everyday life as a visitor in a foreign country. Thus successful exchange of information became the criteria of success for the teachers, curriculum and test developers. With the recent changes in political, social and

economic domains in European integration process up to 2000s, the needs of European language learners also changed from merely communicating with each other to live and work together with foreigners in their home or target culture. This paradigm of change was reflected in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) by the adoption of the action-oriented approach explained in its chapter 2 as "the approach adopted here, generally speaking, is an action-oriented one in for as it views users and learners of a language primarily as social agents, i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language- related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action" (CEFR, p.9). While CEFR began to view learners as social actors rather than merely communicators, its emphasis on tasks even devoting a chapter (7) to them and their role in language teaching led many researchers, teachers, syllabus designers and curriculum developers to equate the action-oriented approach with what Puren (2004a) called Anglo-Saxon task based language teaching and learning. This might perhaps be natural since CEFR does not make any explanation regarding the relationship or difference between communicative approach and task based language teaching, on the one hand, and the action-oriented approach on the other. The same CEFR, however, indicates a clear paradigm change by viewing language learners as social agents in a multilingual and multicultural society. This issue, however, has been successfully dealt with over the years by Puren (2004a, 2009b, 2011d, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017g), the issue of how to train social actors rather than mere communicators in the classroom in line with a coherent action-oriented approach. In such a view, language classrooms in the action-oriented approach, should be turned into mini-societies in which language users should be social actors who can live and work together harmoniously, which should be encouraged by mini-projects (which can be real) and real projects of project pedagogy or realistic simulations. Learners' involvement in such projects as social actors will develop their main skills of taking collective responsibility, involving in joint action, developing personal autonomy, information management (what Puren 2008b, 2009c, 2014a calls informational competence), making negotiations, decision taking, critical reasoning (Nunn, Brandt, and Deveci, 2016), respect for others, understanding and tolerance since these skills are important for language learners to live and work successfully in their democratic society. Language teaching from this perspective has, thus, a more general educational goal, that of training democratic citizens as promoted by its three great historical representatives: John Dewey in the USA, Ovide Decroly in Belgium and Célestin Freinet in France.

**The theoretical basis of the action-oriented approach**

John Dewey is one of the most influential proponents of pragmatism, also known as experimentalism. The word pragmatism comes from the Greek word 'pragma', which means action or work which is related to practicability. "According to pragmatism, the theory and practice of education is based on two main principles,: (i) Education should have a social function, and (ii) Education should provide real-life experience to the child." (Sharma, Devi, Kumari, 2018, p. 1549). The action-oriented approach draws much on Dewey's notion of education conceived as learning by experience or learning by doing. Dewey (1916) argues that

When we experience something we act upon it, we do something with it; then we suffer or undergo the consequences…To 'learn from experience' is to make a backward and forward connection between what we do to things and what we enjoy or suffer from things in consequence. Under such conditions, doing becomes a trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like; the undergoing becomes instruction-discovery of the connection of things. (pp. 139-140).

This notion of learning characterized by acting on things or doing something with them (learning from experience) goes beyond a mere transmission of knowledge as in traditional school thinking. Thus Dewey's orientation to learning at school focuses on the need to establish a link between school and society and on learners as social actors who act on things or do something with them in school, which is viewed as a mini-society. One way of achieving this is through projects at schools. Ulrich (2016) argues that "John Dewey and his group advocated projects as a means of "learning by doing" based on student self-interest and a constructivist approach" (p. 55).

In Dewey's thinking, school is also considered as a mini-society for educating democratic citizens. In this perspective, democracy is not viewed just as a form of government but a way of life. Dewey (1916) points out that

a democracy is more than a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity.(p.87)

In schools as mini-societies, students are involved in such conjoint communicated experience or in cooperative learning experience by acting on things or doing something with them to produce a product and in doing so they also learn how to make cooperation with peers to take and share responsibility, design actions, collect information, share information, work together, make a production, which means developing such a personality which will break all the barriers of class, race and other negative prejudices. Since democracy requires freedom and voluntary choice, Dewey is also against the imposition of problems to learners by the textbooks or methods. He states that

It is indispensable to discriminate between genuine and simulated or mock problems. The following questions may aid in making such discrimination. A) Is there anything but a problem? Does the question naturally suggest itself within some situation or personal experience? Or is it an aloof thing, a problem only for the purpose of conveying instruction in some school topic? B) Is it the pupil's own problem, or is it the teacher's or textbook's problem, made a problem for the pupil only because he cannot get the required work. (Dewey, 1916, p. 155).

The action-oriented approach, basing its theoretical background on this type of learning by doing or learning from experience, thus, goes beyond a single goal of teaching languages but embraces a more ambitious educational goal, that of educating democratic citizens in schools

viewed as mini-societies. This means a contribution to personality development while learning languages. The students freely and voluntarily choose projects they will be involved in and make the necessary search for information and design and implement them cooperatively to give a product. Deveci and Nunn (2018), for example, in their project-based course, state that the students are encouraged "to choose technical topics of general interest such as recycling, solar energy, or mobile technologies. In this way, they gain exposure to a more technical and scientific language. The intrinsic motivation created by their own choice of topics likely provides them with greater engagement in the target language" (p. 31). The endeavor of today's textbooks to impose projects on students must also be approached with caution given the restrictive nature of the textbooks and their directive characters, which hinder freedom and voluntary choice on the parts of the students. In this regard, Puren (2009b, 2011d, 2013), mostly, draws attention to the restrictive nature of textbooks in the implementation of the action-oriented approach in the form of project pedagogy.

It is important to note that the Council of Europe has recently broadened the goals of language learning and teaching to include not only developing successful communicators as aimed by the communicative approach but also developing autonomous learners who know how to learn and thus have the ability to take charge of their own learning, developing social actors who can do things in society and developing personality (identity) in terms of both cognitive and affective dimensions in such a way as to develop persons who can effectively carry out responsibilities towards other individuals and society in general. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) thus goes beyond developing communicative competence in students and includes general competences as a goal which includes declarative knowledge, skills and know-how, existential competence and ability to learn. The Council for Cultural Cooperation of the Council of Europe (1992) also developed a project: Language learning for European citizenship. This is reflected in CEFR as it puts it in this way: "The Council also supports methods of learning and teaching which help young people and indeed older learners to build up the attitudes, knowledge and skills they need to become more independent in thought and action, and also more responsible and co-operative in relation to other people. In this way, the work contributes to the promotion of democratic citizenship" (in notes for the user, CEFR, 2001).

The other theoretical basis of the action-oriented approach draws on the works of a Belgian physician, psychologist and educator Ovide Decroly. Decroly's thinking is not radically different from that of Dewey's. Decroly indicates the necessity of establishing a link between school and society. For him, there is "an obligation on the schools' part to prepare each child effectively for life as a person, a worker and a citizen" (Dubreucq, 1993, p.2). Decroly's educational view is often associated with the slogan of 'for life through life'. He puts experimentation at the center of education. The learners observe facts not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom by, for example, visiting factories or public institutions, then they make associations between what they observe and what they already know and finally they express their view in the form of a product. Decroly classrooms resemble workshops or laboratories rather than traditional classrooms. Learners are encouraged to work in groups cooperatively and record and keep their studies during their study. Decroly, like Dewey, favors

the project pedagogy and opposes the restrictive nature of textbooks and curriculum and argues for liberating the learners from these elements and gives the learners freedom of choice in terms of the selection of topics they would study. "Curriculum planning was thus transferred to the children themselves. Each one of them suggested the subjects he wanted to deal with and all the proposals were negotiated by the whole group, which then put together as a group project (work plan), for a shorter or longer term (from a few days for the youngest children to one year for the oldest ones) (Dubreucq, 1993, p.13).

Like Dewey, Decroly has a deep commitment to educating democratic citizens and to the personality development of learners. Dubreucq (1993) argues in this respect:

School so conceived is a political microcosm, undergoing problems, crises and conflicts that are overcome, as successfully as possible, through the active co-operation of all the partners. The attribution of individual and collective responsibilities is a matter of practical ethics for which a substantial place should be reserved in the timetable. It should be based on the election of different delegates, the rotation of responsibilities, the rendering of accounts, etc. Real powers for the management of the school should be devolved to students. The political option that this education of the citizen implies is clear: 'Democratic government must be considered as the most appropriate form of state for encouraging evolution and adaptation to progress.' This, therefore, is what governs the life of a Decrolian community. (p. 12)

In Decroly's view, like Dewey's, traditional schooling is much concerned with the transmission of knowledge in classes, where the learners are passive recipients. Tests, accordingly, only measure to what extent the learners get the knowledge transferred to them. Decroly, with his experimental pedagogy which is also based on 'learning by doing', opposes both this methodology and the assessment through tests. One of his major contributions is a 'life journal' in which students gather their works. It is the basis of the most popular form of assessment, namely, a portfolio, which is also adopted by the CEFR as an assessment tool.

The third most influential pedagogue underpinning the theoretical basis of the action-oriented approach is the French educator Celestin Freinet. Like Dewey and Decroly, Freinet also emphasizes the importance of project pedagogy and he was the most influential promoter of project pedagogy in France. Freinet also embarks on establishing a link between school and society. Students are viewed as social actors carrying out projects collectively. For this purpose, he introduced different techniques like inter-school correspondence, the class newspaper, free text, the class library and printing house. Inter-school correspondence with classes abroad is a means of exchange of students' works. "The sending of varied documents (written documents, sound recordings, videos, illustrations, etc.) is done from class to class by all possible means of transmission: by post, fax, etc." Schlemminger (2001, p. 6). Preparing a class newspaper is a technique also adopted by the CEFR (p. 10). "The class newspaper is the place where the cooperative work is published: a selection of corresponding documents, surveys, evaluated questionnaires, etc. will be published there, to be read, the newspaper must be imperatively bilingual." Schlemminger (2001, p. 7). It is then sold to the parents or schoolmates. The free text provides a tool for communication for the students. "The students are encouraged to write when he or she can draw on the richness of class life and its exchanges (correspondence, journal, exit-investigation, etc.)" Schlemminger (2001, p. 8). The class library is formed from useful

documents for the class and also the students' works: "various manuals, dictionaries, leaflets, books, maps, magazines, photos, advertisements, etc." Schlemminger (2001, p. 8). Lastly, students print their works, for example, a magazine prepared by the students, in the printing house. All these techniques allow the students to work cooperatively, to take responsibility, to think and express their views freely, to choose their topics of study voluntarily, to design and implement their own works, to respect one another, to share their products collectively, all of which contribute to their personal development and educate them as democratic citizens.

## Communicative Approach and The Action-Oriented Approach

Hymes's (1972) development of the theory of communicative competence as a reaction to Chomsky's (1965) linguistic competence in the field of linguistics turned the attention of the language teaching profession from an emphasis on structural aspects of language to its communicative use. The Council of Europe aimed to develop in students communicative competence, which will enable the learners to move internationally across Europe mainly as a tourist and to communicative with foreigners. For this purpose, The Threshold Level (Van Ek, 1975) was published, which aimed to specify objectives in terms of communicative use, in other words, what the learners should be able to do with the language. It basically aimed to prepare a learner to use English as a visitor or a short term resident in the foreign language environment. The rise of the functional-notional syllabi has been witnessed during this period. The theory of communicative competence along with functional notional syllabi of various types and various ways of defining objectives in terms of communicative language use like the Threshold Level (Van Ek, 1975) led to the development of the communicative approach. Thus, the criterion of success in the communicative approach has been a successful exchange of information (talking with the others), realized through simulations, role plays and other communicative activities.

Because of the political changes and expansion in the European integration process, from 1990s to 2000s, the Council of Europe decided to broaden the aims and objectives making them more complex than the first Threshold Level document and the Threshold Level was republished in 1990 "taking into account the development of the individual as a communicator, learner, social subject and person." (Van Ek, 1990, p.2). The Threshold Level was used as the basis for developing two lower levels, Breakthrough (1990, unpublished) and Waystage (van Ek, Alexander & Fitzpatrick 1980) and one higher level, Vantage (van Ek & Trim, 1996). These developments contributed to the formation of CEFR by the Council of Europe. This time, the Council of Europe attempted to view learners as social actors, who can live and work together in a long term in a multilingual and multicultural society as outlined by CEFR rather than as communicators as a short term visitor in a foreign language society. However, its adoption of tasks to develop these social actors led many curriculum developers to equate the action-oriented approach with what Puren (2004a) called Anglo-Saxon task based language teaching and learning. This is mainly because CEFR does not make any explanation regarding the relationship or difference between the communicative approach and task based language teaching, on the one hand, and the action-oriented approach on the other. As a result, the application of CEFR to various contexts like Turkey resulted in ELT curriculum development processes, which emphasize the communicative approach rather than the action-oriented approach, which is clearly observed in 2013 and 2018 ELT curricula of Turkey. The authors of

the 2013 ELT curriculum of Turkey, for example, while claiming to create a curriculum truly consistent with the CEFR, interpret CEFR's action-oriented approach as the communicative approach:

> The communicative approach to language teaching, which is grounded in this view and has strongly influenced the Turkish approach to English instruction, highlights the forms and lexis of English in real-life contexts in order to create relevance in learners' daily lives. Furthermore, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), a set of guidelines for language teaching and learning that is widely observed in the European context and beyond, emphasizes the development of communicative competence in foreign languages (CoE, 2001). (Kırkgöz, Çelik, Arıkan, 2016, p. 1202-1203)… (and) The newly developed curriculum, in accordance with the principles of Communicative Language Teaching and the CEFR, gives primacy to spoken language in grades two through four, with the main emphasis on the development of oral-aural skills." (Kırkgöz, Çelik, Arıkan, 2016, p.1207)

As seen in the quote, the 2013 Turkish ELT curriculum, though it claims to be consistent with the CEFR, cannot go beyond the communicative approach, let alone outline the action-oriented approach. Similarly, Zorba and Arıkan (2016), in their "a study of Anatolian high schools' 9th grade English language curriculum in relation to the CEFR" devote one paragraph to the action-oriented approach and characterize its key elements as "communicative language competences, language activities (production, reception, interaction and mediation), domains (public, occupational, educational and vocational), tasks and strategies since these key aspects play a vital role in the development of skills which are essential in language learning" (p.14). This characterization of the action-oriented approach here is also ill-defined since it makes reference to both the communicative approach (with the mention of communicative competence) and task based learning (with the mention of tasks) in defining the action-oriented approach and does not make any distinction among the three approaches or methods. By doing so, it ignores the transition from developing communicators who will use English as visitors in a foreign language to developing social actors who will live and work together, defined by Puren (2002b, 2008e 2014a) as co-action, in a multilingual and multicultural society, a transition indicated by CEFR but reflected coherently at the approach level by Puren (2002b, 2004a, 2008b, 2008e 2009c, 2014a) as the action-oriented approach. Zorba and Arıkan (2016) go on to argue that "Communicative language teaching is one of the key principles of the CEFR" (p. 17) and that "Task-based learning has a significant place in the CEFR. In fact, the action-oriented approach that the CEFR adopted is based on tasks" (p. 18). This time, the authors clearly indicate that the action-oriented approach is task based language learning, which is again a wrong equation as emphasized by Puren (2004).

In the published version of the 2013 Turkish ELT curriculum, however, the statement regarding the approach is "eclectic": "As no single language teaching methodology was seen as flexible enough to meet the needs of learners at various stages and to address a wide range of learning styles, an eclectic means of instructional techniques has been adopted, drawing on an action-oriented approach in order to allow learners to experience English as a means of

communication, rather than focusing on the language as a topic of study." (2013 Turkish ELT curriculum, p. II), a statement aiming to train learners to use English as a means of communication rather than training them as social actors and thus it reflects a view that the action-oriented approach is the communicative approach. A constant flow of ideas going from the communicative approach to task based language teaching and learning, on the one hand, and equation of task based language teaching and learning with the action-oriented approach and also equation of communicative approach and the action-oriented approach on the other hand, leads the English teachers in Turkey to a methodology in the ELT curriculum in which it is very difficult to understand these concepts clearly. It is, therefore, necessary to indicate the differences among the three approaches or methodologies and in fact this is what Puren (2004a, 2009b, 2011d, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017g) has been doing successfully for many years, which was completely ignored by the authors of the 2013 ELT curriculum of Turkey (Kırkgöz, Çelik, Arıkan, 2016), who do not make a single reference to Puren.

Puren (2014a) states that, "The CEFR announces a new social reference situation - the multilingual and multicultural society - and two new reference actions namely not only communicating with visiting foreigners, but (1) living and (2) working over the long term with people partly or entirely of different languages and cultures, which form the basis of two new didactic orientations." (p.3). Thus the main characteristics of the communicative approach are its adoption of the tourist trip as the social reference situation and of exchange of information as a social reference action. The action-oriented approach, on the other hand, takes as a social reference situation the multilingual and multicultural society as in CEFR and it takes as social reference action living and working with people from different cultures in the long term. In other words, while the communicative approach aims to prepare learners to communicate with foreigners in the short term as a tourist, the action-oriented approach aims the prepare social actors to live and work together in the long term in the multilingual and multicultural society. The communicative approach emphasizes interaction through communication (realized through various communicative activities with a focus on functions and notions) but the action-oriented approach emphasizes what Puren (2002b, 2008e 2014a) calls co-action, which is acting with the other (realized through mini-projects and project pedagogy of Dewey, Decroly and Freinet), defined also by Nunn (2014) as "a holistic and constructivist philosophy of learning" (p.19). Puren (2002e) argues that "This dual co-action-co-cultural perspective is best suited to all collective mechanisms - they have multiplied in recent years and are likely to become more widespread in the coming years - where language is taught/learned for and by action with a social dimension" (p. 10). Thus training social actors who will not only communicate with others but also co-act will necessarily require a different competence along with communicative competence and Puren indicates that informational competence is required for these social actors. The concept of competence is more holistic in this respect as is also indicated by Nunn and Langille (2016). To Puren (2014a, p.10), informational competence refers to the fact that learners are asked to perform operations:

- pre-communicative: define their information needs, search for it, select it, evaluate it and prioritize it; decide to whom, when it will be transmitted and for what purpose,... .;

- and post-communicative: assess the relevance of the information transmitted, the time and the recipient chosen; decide whether to delete the information, or whether to keep it because it could later be useful to oneself or others, and then decide whether to keep it as it is or whether to update it periodically,... This is called "knowledge management", of which a social actor must, in our current societies, have good command."

Thus the classroom in the action-oriented approach is viewed as a mini-society where the students are social actors who not only exchange information as required by the communicative approach in an intercultural environment but also act with each other, which Puren (2002b, 2008e, 2014a) defines as co-action in a co-cultural environment. The social actors, on the other hand, need to rely on their informational competence (Puren, 2008b, 2009c, 2014a), which is the ability to act on and through information as a social actor, while the communicative approach only aims to develop communicative competence in learners. Such a co-actional and co-cultural perspective to language teaching will develop social actors who can live and work together harmoniously in their democratic society. The communicative approach, in so far as it does not go beyond viewing students as language learners whose main aim is to achieve successful communication in the classroom, is also far from adopting the goal of educating democratic citizens.

Puren (2008e) contrasts the action-oriented approach with the communicative approach in the following way:

In the communicative approach, the aim is to train learners to communicate in a foreign language with the native speakers they will certainly have the opportunity to meet, to have them communicate with each other in the classroom as if they were native speakers, each didactic unit being designed in such a way as to ultimately enable the learners to succeed in this simulation.

-If we extend the functioning of this principle of fine-medium homology to the actional perspective (and we do not see for the moment how this principle could be abandoned), we will now train students to act socially in foreign language culture first by making them act socially in foreign language culture in the classroom: as I have already mentioned above, this already has a name in general pedagogy, and it is the "pedagogy of the project". (Puren, 2008e, p.7)

In the communicative approach, it is the unity of place ("In the street", "At the post office", "At the café"), but also behind the unity of characters, time and theme of conversion: in a dialogue of a communicative textbook, they are the same people speaking for a limited time in the same place about the same thing (uniqueness of the theme of conversation).

- In the co-action perspective, it is the unity of action: "Making a poster of your favourite heroes", "Recording a radio show on animals", "Preparing a Christmas show", "Celebrating a birthday at school", "Organizing mini Olympiads at school", to use some titles from a teaching

material for early English teaching, whose different didactic units are also significantly called "projects". (Puren, 2008e, p.13)

While Puren (2014a) contrasts in this way the action-oriented approach and the communicative approach, he states that co-action, working together, will necessarily include communication. Thus the action-oriented approach and the communicative approach are two genetically opposed and complementary methodological organisms (Puren, 2014a).

Puren's (2002b, 2008b, 2008e, 2009c 2014a) contrast of the action-oriented approach and communicative approach can be summarized as in Table 1.

## Table 1. The Action-Oriented Approach and The Communicative Approach

| | |
|---|---|
| The action-oriented approach is based on Dewey's educational notion of pragmatism with reference to socio-cognitive dimension in line with Piaget (constructivist psychology) and Vygotsky (social, collective constructivism), whose implementation is reflected in project pedagogy of Dewey, Freinet, and Decroly. | The communicative approach is based on no sound theory of learning. |
| The action-oriented approach goes beyond the view of language as a means of communication. It doesn't view communication as an end in itself but as a means of doing something, in other words, communication is at the service of action. | The communicative approach views language as a means of communication. |
| The goal of language teaching is to train social actors who will live and work together in a multilingual and multicultural society | The goal of language teaching is to train learners to meet the natives of foreign languages on a tourist trip and enable them to be involved in successful interaction. |
| The goal of language teaching also adopts a more general educational goal, that of educating democratic citizens as promoted by Dewey, Decroly, and Freinet. | The goal of language teaching does not have a broader educational goal beyond communication. |
| The social situation of reference is a multilingual and multicultural society. | The social situation of reference is the target language society where the learners would take a tourist trip. |

| | |
|---|---|
| The reference activity is action (common action or co-action as in a real project). | The reference activities are simulations, role plays and various communicative activities with an emphasis on speech acts |
| While the action-oriented approach favors real projects and in cases in which it is not possible to carry out real projects then realistic simulations. | The communicative approach does not give any priority to realistic simulations but it consists of full of artificial simulations as well. |
| In the co-action perspective, it is the unity of action: "Making a poster of your favourite heroes", "Recording a radio show on animals", "Preparing a Christmas show", "Celebrating a birthday at school", "Organizing mini Olympiads at school", to use some titles from a teaching material for early English teaching, whose different didactic units are also significantly called "projects" (Puren, 2008e, p.13). | In the communicative approach, it is the unity of place ("In the street", "At the post office", "At the café"), but also behind the unity of characters, time and theme of conversion: a dialogue of a communicative textbook, they are the same people speaking for a limited time in the same place about the same thing (uniqueness of the theme of conversation) (Puren, 2008e, p.13). |
| The action-oriented approach aims to train learners for both individual autonomy and collective autonomy in both as groups and as whole class and this autonomy is given to the individuals and the whole class in the initial stage of a class by allowing them to choose their projects that they will work on and learners can search and add their own documents (informational competence). | The communicative approach focuses on individual autonomy by allowing the students to carry out communicative activities themselves but the activities and documents are provided to students by the teacher, in which case the students' autonomy is more restricted. |
| The action-oriented approach requires a co-cultural component ( a culture shared by and for collective action), which is necessary for co-action, in which the focus is on common cultures of action in the multicultural environment (building a common cultural competence in cultural diversity in the sense that getting along with someone requires understanding him/her since just listening to him in communication is not enough) so the matter is not knowing who we are but what we are going to do with who we are, and what to do together both despite and with our differences. | The communicative approach requires intercultural component (the discovery of otherness and the awareness of one's own identity), which is necessary for cross-cultural communication (in a tourist trip). |

| Competence is both communicative competence and informational competence. | Competence is communicative competence. |
|---|---|
| In the action-oriented approach, the evaluation criterion is social action: both the process (collective action and individual participation in that collective action) of work (project) and the final product are evaluated. | The communicative approach assesses successful communication. |

**Task based Language Teaching and Learning and The Action-Oriented Approach**

Task based language teaching and learning as originated by Prabhu (1987), which is mostly seen as a development in the communicative approach, embarked on organizing syllabus around tasks rather than functions and notions. Thus functional-notional syllabi, "in which the focus is on the communicative skills that the students will be able to display as a result of instruction" (Nunan, 1988, p. 42) gave its place to task based syllabi in which the content was no longer formed of communicative skills (functions and notions) but rather of methodological units called tasks. The move from the communicative approach to task based language teaching and learning, thus, can be characterized as a move from organizing the syllabus around functions and notions, and practicing speech acts through various activities like simulations and dialogues to organizing syllabus around tasks, and teaching language through tasks that the students will complete in class.

While different task based lesson designs have been suggested in the literature （e. g. Candlin, 1987; Prabhu, 1987; Estaire and Zanon, 1994; Skehan, 1996; Willis, 1996), they share the common feature that a task based lesson is organized in three phases: pre-task, task and post-task phases. Tasks are also defined in various ways. Nunan (1989) defines the task as "a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than on form" (p.10). According to Willis (1996), "a task can be defined as an activity where the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose in order to achieve an outcome" (p. 23). Prabhu (1987) defines the task as "an activity which needs learners to come to a conclusion from given information through some process of thought, and which allows teachers to handle and control that process" (p. 24). To Skehan (1998) a task is an activity in which: "(1) meaning is primary; (2) there is some communication problem to solve  (3) there is some sort of relationship to comparable real-world activities; (4) task completion has some priority; (5) the assessment of tasks is in terms of outcome." (p. 95)  Ellis (2003) defines the task in the following way:

A task is a work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in

language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills and also various cognitive processes. (p. 16)

While there are various definitions and ways of organization of tasks in task based language teaching and learning, generally accepted principles are that the primary focus is on meaning (communication of meaning or exchange of information), task accomplishment is important, a task has a communicative result and outcome, and assessment is made through this outcome.

CEFR (2001) places high importance on tasks and devotes a chapter (chapter 7) to tasks and their role in language teaching. In CEFR (2001)

a task is defined as any purposeful action considered by an individual as necessary in order to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfill or an objective to be achieved. This definition would cover a wide range of actions such as moving a wardrobe, writing a book, obtaining certain conditions in the negotiation of a contract, playing a game of cards, ordering a meal in a restaurant, translating a foreign text or preparing a class newspaper through group work (p. 10)

In CEFR grids, however, speech acts of the communicative approach (e.g. I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information..CEFR, p.26) can be observed but there are no elements of the action-oriented approach. In doing so, in fact, CEFR cannot reflect successfully, at the approach level, the transition from viewing Europeans as tourists who are involved in an exchange of information in a foreign society to viewing Europeans as social actors who can live and work together harmoniously in a multilingual and multicultural society. This endeavor is undertaken by Puren (2004a, 2006e, 2008e, 2009b, 2011, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017g), who (2008e, p.4), criticizes CEFR in the following way:

Neither in everyday language (French or Spanish), nor in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), is the distinction I propose here made between action in the sense of "social" or "use" action, and task in the sense of "school" or "apprenticeship" action. Indeed, here is how the new "action perspective" is defined by the authors of the CEFR:

A framework for the learning, teaching and evaluation of modern languages that is transparent, coherent and as comprehensive as possible must be based on a very general overall representation of language use and learning. The perspective favored here is, very generally also, of an action-oriented type in that it considers above all the user and learner of a language as social actors having to perform tasks (which are not only linguistic) in given circumstances and environment, within a particular field of action. If speech acts are carried out in language activities, they are themselves part of actions in a social context that only give them their full meaning. There is a task insofar as the action is carried out by one (or more) subject (s) who strategically mobilize the skills at their disposal in order to achieve a specific result. (CEFR, Chapter 2.1, p. 15)

Puren (2008e), who thus makes a distinction between 'action' as social action (real social activity) to develop social actors and 'task' as school action (simulated school activity) to develop successful communicators, goes on to argue that

We see that the authors of the CEFR do not propose different terms to designate learning action and usage action: they use indistinctly "action", "task" and "activity", undoubtedly under the influence of the communicative approach, whose reference exercise, simulation, aims precisely to neutralize the difference between school activity and social activity; indeed, they ask learners to behave in class as if they were users in society. But once these authors of the CEFR (very healthy, in my opinion, and finally!) establish the difference between user/use and learner/learning, it would have been necessary for them to make a conceptual distinction between the two types of action. I propose for my part "act" and "activity" as generic concepts, "action" for action/use or social activity, and "task" for action/learning or school activity (Puren, 2008e, p.4).

Thus, once the CEFR's distinction between language user/language use and language learner/language learning is recognized, it is also necessary to make a distinction between real social action (language use) and simulated school (or learning) action (language learning), namely, action and task, in the former students are viewed as social actors, in the latter students are viewed as language learners. In this way, Puren (2004a) clearly indicates the distinction between task and action by defining the task as "what the learner does in his/her learning process" and defining action as "what the user does in society" (p. 18). In short, the training of social actors should be made by means of real social actions since with the action-oriented approach "it is now a question of training citizens of multilingual and multicultural societies capable of living together harmoniously (and foreign and second language classes in France are mini-societies of this type), as well as students and professionals capable of working with others over the long term in foreign languages and cultures." (Puren, 2009 b, P. 125).

One way of realizing this move from task to action in language teaching is through project pedagogy as implemented by Dewey, Decroly and Freinet. As Puren (2008e) argues "If the principle of action-task homology continues to work, what is to be expected from this perspective, which I propose to call more precisely "co-actional", is a very strong reactivation of the so-called "project pedagogy", the basic principle of which is precisely to give meaning and coherence to learners' learning by making them mobilize themselves on collective actions with a collective dimension."( p.6). At a practical level, an analysis of how a holistic project pedagogy was carried out in a local context at freshman university level has been described by Wyatt and Nunn (2019).

Implementing the action-oriented approach in the classroom, thus, necessitates a move from task to mini-projects and, in its strongest form, the real projects of project pedagogy, which are explained coherently by Puren (2006) in a grid, which indicates the departure from task based language teaching to the action-oriented approach in the following way:

**Table 2. Analysis grid of the different current types of implementation of the action in foreign language textbooks**

| | ACTION PERSPECTIVE | |
|---|---|---|
| Task based language teaching (**communicative tasks**) ⟷ | Weak Version   Strong Version ⟷ (**action tasks**)  (**mini-projects**) | Strongest Version (project pedagogy) (**real projects**) |

Puren's (2006) analysis grid explains in full detail the different characteristics of communicative tasks, action tasks, mini-projects and projects of project pedagogy, among which the projects of project pedagogy reflect the real characteristics of the action-oriented approach. That is why they are considered as the strongest form of the application of the action-oriented approach. Puren (2009b, p. 126)  argues that "in this type of pedagogy, all students activities are organized according to "pedagogical projects" which have a real (and not simulated) dimension and which they design and conduct themselves with the help of the teacher" and that pedagogical projects should not be "a simple pretext to propose situations of simulated communication ensuring the final reuse more or less free of its contents" (Puren, 2009b, p. 127). In cases where it is difficult to implement real projects which are real social actions, simulated projects can also be used but these simulated projects must be realistic rather than artificial as mostly the case in the communicative approach and task based language learning, that is, they must reflect  social action as realistically as possible. In this regard, Puren (2009b) indicates that "even if the simulated projects will still be necessary, the perspective of social action leads to a focus on real projects, possibly in combination with the first ones. The interest of simulated projects for the authors of a textbook is of course that they can control them from start to finish, from design and preparation to implementation and exploitation, the real projects necessarily involving a greater autonomy among learners" (p. 133). Since the projects of project pedagogy require maximum individual and collective autonomy by the students, the essential point is to allow the students to choose, design and implement their own projects collectively under the guidance of the teacher rather than imposing on them projects designed by the authors of the textbooks. Whether the students will carry out these projects in the class or outside the class is a secondary issue, in which case  Puren (2004a, p. 19) argues that "a project can thus be entirely carried out in class for the class, as well as in the preparation by a small group of a civilization dossier then presented in large format group; be fully simulated, as in global simulations professional training carried out in class; be carried out entirely in class but for the external company, as in the preparation in class of an exhibition, which is then presented in the hall of the town hall of the city; or combine these three types differently."

Finally, Puren (2006) indicates striking differences between task based language learning and the action-oriented approach, some of which are:

The tasks are predetermined by the teacher /textbook, actions are chosen and designed by the learners (with the help and under the teacher's own control) at the beginning of the project. Learners plan and organize their own work. Projects are not limited by the time frame of the

didactic unit or sequence, nor are they guided upstream by predetermined language objectives. They are negotiated with the teacher, who integrates the language objectives into his or her own criteria. While tasks are done in simulation, the actions are real: inter-school correspondence, class newspaper ('printed on the classroom print shop, and distributed outside), lectures, debates, exhibitions, files, leaflets,...While (in task based language learning) we are aiming only at a language objective: communicative competence, (in the action-oriented approach) we also aim to achieve an educational goal: the formation of a true citizen who is an autonomous and supportive social actor, critical and responsible, within a democratic society. This citizen must now be able to live harmoniously and act effectively in a multilingual and multicultural society. While (in task based learning) priority is given to inter-individual interactions: the reference group is the group of two, (in the action-oriented approach) reference groups (or major group) are "project groups", where all decisions are made and activities concerning the project(s) are carried out. The organization into groups and sub-groups is instituted in the classroom according to the types of activities: production workshop teams, working groups. The "large group" dimension is instituted in the "council", a place for mediation and collective bargaining. While (in task based learning) the evaluation criteria are communicative (e. g. in the CEFR: linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic), (in the action-oriented approach) the specific evaluation criteria for social action are added as priorities: the success of the action and the "professional" quality of the production. (p. 1-4)

**Conclusion**

With the recent changes in political, social and economic domains in the European integration process from 1970s to 2000s, the Council of Europe also embarked on a transition in language teaching methodology, which is reflected in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, a transition from a view in which students are language learners aiming to achieve successful communication to a view in which they are social actors who can live and work together harmoniously in a multilingual and multicultural society, a transition from a communicative approach to an action-oriented approach. While CEFR turned its target to training social actors, its grids of communicative skills suggest that CEFR is still under the influence of the communicative approach. The question at this point is whether communicative activities and tasks whose primary focus is on communicative meaning in the exchange of information can really train social actors who can live and work together in a multilingual and multicultural society. This issue has been successfully undertaken over the years by Puren (2004a, 2009b, 2011d, 2013, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2017g), the issue of how to train social actors rather than mere communicators in the classroom in line with a coherent action-oriented approach. Puren, developing the action-oriented approach introduced in CEFR, puts forward the idea of co-action (moving from talking with others to acting with others) instead of interaction and suggests implementing the action-oriented approach in the classroom in the strong form as mini-projects and in its strongest form as real projects of project pedagogy.

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