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Dear Readers,

This collection of works represents the contribution made by the authors to the VIII Worldwide Forum on Education and Culture, held in Rome, Italy, on 1-3 December 2009.

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The papers in this publication were subject to editing, but changes were kept to a minimum, to preserve the original message of the authors and also to respect different cultures and writing styles from across the world.

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Toward the Anthropo-ethics through film: how to perceive the world as our common homeland

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Abstract

Edgar Morin, French philosopher and sociologist, speaks about our time as if it were a radically new period. Morin is convinced that one of the main goals in the contemporary education is to teach the anthropo-ethics. The anthropo-ethics is based on the conviction that in nowadays highly complex and globally connected society we have to develop a notion of the world as our common Homeland and we have to study and stress the relations between the individual and the human species as a whole.

I will show that film can be used as a means of the anthropo-ethics due to its strong potential to refigure the world, to re-cognize things (situations, people) in a different way. It can concentrate on some important aspect of our reality (globalization, responsibility) and it can reshape our experience. If the spectator re-articulates the reality according to the elements (themes, motives, and characters) represented in the film, the filmic experience becomes full. To enable the full filmic experience (F. Casetti’s concept), the spectator needs to interpret the film actively –he or she has to find and see the relationship between the film’s theme and his own life’s situation. I will show that this kind of film’s reception is also a concrete way how to understand the need of anthropo-ethics.

I will show the possible increase of understanding of anthropo-ethics on the example of some concrete films. I will point out that the directors of those films are artists whose ambition actually is to create a testimony about the world they live in. I will show that their aim is to lead the spectator to the reflection and interpretation of the world.

1. The radically new world: a call for the Anthropo-ethics

Nowadays, we live in a radically new world due to the technology, scientific progress and the number of social changes. We all understand that the world of 21st century is radically different from the world that our ancestors lived in.

Many intellectuals emphasize the new situation of humanity and they warn against a number of unprecedented conditions in our world.

Edgar Morin, French philosopher and sociologist, is one of them. He thinks about our time as a radically new period and he tries to identify the new horizons and boundaries of our lives. Morin is convinced that we live in the phase of the historic mutation in which “l’ère planétaire essaie d’accoucher d’une société monde” (Morin, 2004, p. 206). He calls for new type of ethics, which would be appropriate to the current world situation in which there is already “the hardware” for the planetary society (the infrastructure of communication, technology and economics) but “the software”, 1 that is the concept of one humanity and the concept of the Earth as common homeland in a mind of individuals, does not exist yet.

1 Il n’y a pas encore de société civile mondiale, et la conscience que nous sommes des citoyens de la Terre-Patrie est dispersée, embryonnaire. Bref la mondialisation a installé l’infrastructure d’une société-monde qu’elle est incapable d’instaurer. Nous avons les soubassements mais non l’édifice. Nous avons le hardware et non le software.” (E. Morin, Vers l’abime?, L’Hermé, 2007, p.71-72)
In 1999, Morin published a book called *Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the future*. In this far-seeing text Morin shows the need for a new type of knowledge that would have the search for the *human condition* in its centre. He says:

…we all share a common genetic, cerebral, emotional identity through and beyond our individual, cultural, and social diversities. We are the development of a form of life born of the Earth’s womb and nurtured by the Earth. And now, since the 20th century, all human beings have the same basic life and death problems, all are connected in the same planetary community, sharing a common fate. We have to learn to place our “being there” on the planet (Morin, 1999, p. 38).

The aim is to re-evaluate education toward the real needs of our time. Morin writes about the necessity of teaching “Earth identity”, “Ethics for the human genre” or about the need of “Confronting uncertainties”. He states:

…we all share a common genetic, cerebral, emotional identity through and beyond our individual, cultural, and social diversities. We are the development of a form of life born of the Earth’s womb and nurtured by the Earth. And now, since the 20th century, all human beings have the same basic life and death problems, all are connected in the same planetary community, sharing a common fate. We have to learn to place our ‘being there’ on the planet (Morin, 1999, p. 38).

Morin perceives our time as the decisive for all humanity and he underlines the interdependence of personal, social and “anthropo”- problems. For him, they are inseparable:

The world is made more and more whole. (…) …and the world as a whole is more present in each of its parts. This can be verified for nations and peoples, and also for individuals. Just as each point of a hologram contains the information of the whole of which it is part, every individual now receives or consumes information and substances from the whole universe (Morin, 1999, p. 33).

Morin is convinced that one of the main contemporary educational objectives is to teach the anthropo-ethics. The anthropo-ethics is based on the conviction that in the present highly complex and globally connected society we have to develop a notion of the Earth as our common Homeland and we have to study and stress the relation between the singular individual and the human species as a whole. The anthropo-ethics connects the universal and the singular.

2. What is “sociological imagination” and how we will employ it?

Charles Wright Mills, one of the most important sociologists of the 20th century, published a book in 1959, *The Sociological Imagination* –and the book became very influential later on. Mills writes that the aim of the book is to “define the meaning of the social sciences for the cultural tasks of our time,” (Mills, 1970, p. 25) and he identifies the sociological imagination, to some degree, with an aim of social sciences, particularly with sociology, which should embody it. Such identification has become common in the sociological field: we can find Mills’ concept at the beginning of many introductory textbooks to the sociology - one of the most famous is Anthony Giddens’s *Sociology*. A. Giddens sees sociologist as someone who “is able to break free from the immediacy of personal circumstances and put things in the wider context” (Giddens, 2009, p. 4). Although this is an approach of a sociologist according to Giddens, Mills believes this should be applied to any person. According to Mills, our time is the one in which “men often feel that their private lives are a series of traps” (Mills, 1970, p. 10). The technological and scientific progress has changed the Western society and its structures during last three centuries much faster than ever in history. The position of an individual has radically changed and it is more
than ever true saying “the history that now effects every man is world history” (Mills, 1970, p. 10).

We can feel that Mill’s attitudes are not far from thoughts of Edgar Morin, which were indicated in the previous part.

I will not use the sociological imagination as a fundamental concept of the sociology, as many sociologists do, but I will take it as a kind of competence that is highly important for everyone in today’s world - a world that is affected by many important and unprecedented changes – scientific, technological, cultural, economical and societal. It is also important in relation with the anthropo-ethics, because by using and increasing the sociological imagination, the need of anthropo-ethics becomes pertinent and obvious.

In my point of view, the sociological imagination enables us to withdraw from the everydayness in which we are deeply rooted, which is completely normal fact and it has always been like that. Mills writes “neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both” (Mills, 1970, p. 9). This means that we can’t take our lives and our individual situation separated from the situation not only of our community, our city and our national state, but also from the international situation, which include literally the whole globalized world. Many people have figured these conditions out during the current financial crisis which shows clearly that what people really need is on one side “a quality of mind that will help them to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and of what may be happening within themselves” (Mills, 1970, p. 11), on the other side the need of clear and present imperatives which would not be concerned with individual well-being only, but also with the well-being of the society and, let’s not be afraid of that word - humanity. Mills shows the relation of biography and history on the division of problems on “troubles” and “issues”: whereas “troubles” are private and local; and “issues” are public and depend on social structures. The sociological imagination should help us to understand the interdependence of “troubles” with “issues” and their relation. The financial crisis, as we see, is an important global issue, which has many consequences in our private troubles.

For many people it is very difficult to perceive the changing world around us. Even if we do follow the daily news attentively, it is very difficult to distinguish the important issues from the minor ones. Not only because the media often present the minor issues as important and vice-versa, but also because we are overwhelmed by such amount of information that we are not able to rank them properly. People are closed in the sphere of their private lives. Their thoughts and their concerns are determined by their family, employment and their closest environment. Those affairs concerning the society and not influencing their lives directly (mainly financially) are perceived as something out of their reach. It is something that is not related to their own life closely; so they adopt a role of mere observers. Hence, the gap between one’s own perception of the world, behavior, ethical thinking and style of life on one side and the complexity and interdependence of societies and people in the world on the other side is still growing.

3. Art as a means of the sociological imagination and the Athropo-ethics

For me, the sociological imagination is a very improtant tool for building up the anthro-ethics. It enables us to see more adequately both, our life and its position in the world society - on the “Earth-Homeland” as Morin suggested. Mills writes that the sociological imagination is often possessed, and should be possessed, by politicians, leading critics, journalists and very often by artists too – those kind of people have it and they are aware of its importance. Among the artists Mills mentions only novelists, but we can add for example composers, painters and, of course, filmmakers. This leads us to a basic question –
whether (and how) art, and particularly film, can become a means of the sociological imagination.

We know that art is one of the ways, how to perceive our everyday reality alternatively. It can distract us from our everydayness and show us the world around from another point of view (Mokrejš, 2002). A theme of a film, song, or another piece of art can be far-away from our everyday needs and duties. Nevertheless, it attracts our attention; it forces us to look somewhere where we would never look without its endeavour. Paul Ricoeur (Ricoeur, 2002), a French philosopher, stresses the ability of art to invade our reality. Without this quality, the art is not significant and can be reduced to a mere entertainment. However, the art has a specific capacity to refigure and to restructure our everyday experience. By virtue of art we can rearticulate our experience, we can “shift from one perspective to another “ (Mills, 1970, p. 13) – that is also the basic capacity of sociological imagination.

An individual’s physical, spatial and temporal determination does not enable a full-ranged knowledge and understanding of the world we live in and it is rather difficult to be aware of the real human situation. It is art; however, what can intensify one’s perception of remote areas and domains, both in spatial and mental sense. Art introduces us to new situations; it brings us closer to human condition and situations unknown until recently. That is how art functions as a means of sociological imagination and also as a possible tool of ethics: it shows plurality and incredible colourfulness of life, human experience and human destiny.

3.1 Film as a means of the sociological imagination

The cinema was born on the eve of the 20th century and it is a filmic medium that in many ways shaped our perception of the last one hundred years. A film is a part of media sphere and it is the expansion of media, their power and influence, that is emblematic for the last century. Today, there are three ways to learn: a personal way (direct experience), interpersonal interaction and media. Without a doubt, considerable amount of our knowledge comes from the media. A Czech professor of philosophy and religious studies, Tomáš Halík, qualifies media as a religio of our world, whereas the religio is defined as the power which integrates the society. The media formulate and pass on general perception of the world, they offer the common symbols, influence the style of thinking etc. (Halík, 2004)

Francesco Casetti, an Italian film theorist, argues that cinema recorded many events of the 20th century and, by recording them, it has also proposed a way, how to receive them. The cinema was in many ways revealing. Through the film people could revisit the universe in which they were immersed, as much in its realities as in its possibilities. The cinema constituted, as a title of Casetti’s recent publication implies, an “eye of the century”. Even though that many changes take place in the field of cinema and electronic media in general today, the film still maintains its important place. Its role is still relevant, I believe. Therefore we can study its capacity to increase one’s sociological imagination.

The film, according to Casetti, constitutes a specific experience and it can impress and reorient our experience in general. Due to the filmic experience, we can “see anew” and also “as if for the first time”. In cinema, we re-view the world: the real one in which we live our lives and the possible one in which we could live. The cinema reveals a new version of reality, the possible one, the one, which we are not used to look at. Our everydayness is suppressed; our senses are directed to a concrete and particular vision of the world, which may seem, at first sight, very distant from our real life. This can be presented through some ordinary situation or something very specific and unusual – but whatever is the subject of the film, a spectator is not obliged to react as in the real life. The spectator is only the witness of the events and he or she is free of the everyday urgency to react and to solve the situation. Due to cinema’s quality to keep the spectator in the distance from reality, one can come closer to the portrayed situation. We can study it in a specific way: the spectator can think of
different possibilities of reaction and behaviour, he or she can consider the wider circumstances. The vision of reality represented in the film is able to highlight its potentialities and its intrinsic possibilities.

Thus, the work of art extends our own experience; it sharpens our perception of the real. It can become an occasion for the spectator, in regaining the reality taken from him, to rearticulate it according to the forms of attention and the forms of imagination suggested to him by the film (Casetti, 2007, p. 12).

Hence, the film can allow us to refigure and to restructure our view of the world: when this happens, according to Casetti, the filmic experience becomes “full”.

To enable the full filmic experience, the spectator has to interpret the film actively – to find and see the relationship between the film’s theme and his own real situation. Finding such a relation is often possible by discussing the film with other spectators or through some prepared reflection (by lecturer, in a discussion group etc.).

If we remember the Mill’s concept and our goal to use film as a means to the anthropo-ethics, we can see that the full filmic experience embodies our aim: The film enables us “to shift from one perspective to another” (Mills, 1970, p. 13) and it allows us “to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human life – and to see the relations between the two.” (Mills, 1970, p. 14) That means that due to our experience with film, we can understand our current changing situation better.

Such agreement, eventually, supports a thesis that a reception of film is a very concrete way how to become aware of anthropo-ethic need.

3.2 Examples

Finally I will present two films as concrete examples, where the need of anthropo-ethics is presented well. I will point out that the directors of those two films are artists whose ambition is actually to create a testimony about the world they inhabit. I will show that their aim is to lead a spectator to reflection and interpretation of the world – hence, to build up one’s sociological imagination.

Godfrey Reggio is American documentarist, who is known for his QATSI trilogy. His essays of visual images and Phillip Glass’ score chronicle the human condition of the present time.

I will shortly comment Powaqqatsi (1988), the second part of trilogy. The title is composed by two Hopi Indian words: Powaqa refering to a negative sorcerer who lives at the expense of others and quatsi which means life. In other words, the title means: „A way of life that consumes the life forces of other beings in order to further its own life."

The film shows people of different colours, traditions and cultures from different continents. It shows contrasting ways of life and it underlines the difference between the comfortable Western style of life (dominated by technological and scientific products) and the way of life in other parts of the World. It entwines the traditional way of life with the Western one, and thus shows not only the incredible diversity of life on the Earth but also the fact that all those people portrayed in the film inhabit the same planet Earth. We can see a lot of hard labour, physical effort and suffering, but we also witness some religious rites, moments of ease and peacefulness. This highly emotional portrait of humanity leads a spectator to comprehension of cultural diversity and also to understanding that all those people are in some way connected. Reggio says:

It’s an impression, an examination of how life is changing. (...) What we sought to capture is our unanimity as a global culture. Most of us tend to forget about this, caught up as we are in our separate trajectories. It was fascinating to blend these different existences together in one film (Powaqqatsi, 2005).
Reggio wants to pull out a spectator from his radically limited dailiness and wants to show him or her the part of reality that they can not see. Therefore Reggio’s documentaries serve as a way how to shift from one perspective to another, how to perceive the larger horizon of human’s life than we normally do. It can be used as very apt illustration of Morin’s will to develop the notion of the Earth as our common Homeland. It can be also very illustrating to Morin’s statement:

...humanity is no longer an abstract notion, it is a vital reality because now, for the first time, it is threatened with death. Humanity is no longer just an ideal notion, it has become a community of fate and only the conscience of that community can lead it to a community of life (Morin, 1999, p. 61).

Of course, we enter very difficult and complex themes that can not be easily solved, but only the fact that our attention is led in such direction means that our view of the reality, our understanding of things, is to some degree changed and restructured. Jan Patočka, important Czech philosopher of the 20th century, asserts:

The human situation is, you see, something that changes once you become self-conscious about it. A naive and self-conscious situation are already different. Our reality is always situational, so that if it is reflected upon, it is already different by the fact that we have reflected. Of course, the question is whether by reflection is improved. This is not stated in the least. But, in any case, a reflected-upon situation – in contrast to a naive situation, is to a certain extent a clarified one, or at least on the way to clarification (Patočka, 2002, p. 1).

Thus the sense for the anthropo-ethics (through the sociological imagination) is built – little by little, step by step.

The second example is Paul Greengrass’ para-documentaristic reconstruction of the 9/11 events United 93 (2006). This dramatic real time account of the events on United Flight 93, one of the planes hijacked on 9/11, is not only a tribute to the brave passengers who foiled the terrorist plot, but at first place an attempt to recall this emblematic event of the beginning of the 21st century that shocked a large part of humanity. Paul Greengrass wanted to portray the ceaseless threat of our time, the fragility of our everydayness and the supposed safety of our life. Greengrass also wrote the script and from the beginning of his work, he wanted to portray those, who were the first to enter “the post 9/11 world”. He wanted to present a group of people who already knew what was going on: the passengers knew that they were involuntary actors in a big worldwide play directed by few terrorists. The film United 93 - as Reggio’s documentary – draws a spectator from his supposed unproblematic everyday life and it shows the other side of everydayness in the 21st century. This hidden and very inconvenient side of life is always with us, the danger is always present and it is constantly imminent. Today we live in a world in which the following statement is plausible: “Never in the history of the humankind have so many feared so few.” ² Be it speculators on financial markets or terrorists, these powerful groups are actually made up of very few. And those restraint groups are one of the main threats of our time; they threaten not only one concrete city or nation, but literally every member of our human society.

Paul Greengrass argues:

The truth of this is, these events happen – whether it’s 9/11 or Omagh – and when they happen, we pause for a moment, we see the families, we feel sorry for them, we see them as victims and then, frankly, we want them to go away because we want to get on with the rest of our lives. We want to wait for the World Cup, go

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² This statement is an allusion to the famous Winston Churchill’s proclamation from 1940: “Never in the history of human conflict have so many owed so much to so few.”
to the pub, prepare for our summer holidays – we want our lives unchanged…
(Carnevale, n. d.).

In other words, we want to have our dailiness untouched and unchanged, we do not want to be bothered by difficult reality. Paul Greengrass wants us to see our everydayness anew. The film compels the spectator to *re-figure* his perception of everyday life, and the re-articulation of the mental categories used to face reality is possible.

Through these two examples I proved, although very briefly, that the film can really be used as a means of sociological imagination and consequently, it helps to perceive the main goal of the anthropo-ethics; that is, an individual is irretrievably (without doubt) bound to mankind and, thus, we have to consider, any ethical conclusions it may lead to.

References
An English dictionary for Muslim learners: is there a need?

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Abstract

This paper aims to highlight how meanings in English dictionaries differ from the meanings held by Muslims, hence, a need for teachers of English to highlight the differences when they teach English to Muslim learners. The presence of many English words and concepts, as conveyed through the English language, have meanings different from that which Muslims have ascribed to them has been highlighted by many Muslim scholars (al-Attas, 2001; al-Faruqi, 1986; Sa’Adeddin, 1996; Ratnawati, 1997; Abdussalam, 1999). Al-Faruqi (1986) for instance, advocates the use of Islamic English due to the fact that many English words do not convey, and unable to convey, the meanings that Muslims intend to convey. This is because many Arabic words are not translatable into English. Many of the meanings of Arabic words and phrases are of divine provenance and may not be separated from their Arabic forms. A study was conducted by 21 M.A students to find out how words in an English dictionary differ from the meanings held by Muslims. This paper has pedagogical implications for ESL teachers who teach English to Muslim learners.

Introduction

Many English words and concepts, as conveyed through the English language, have meanings different from that which Muslims have ascribed to them. This is because the nature of the English language itself has been secularized (al-Attas, 2001; Haja Mohideen, 2001; al-Faruqi, 1986; Sa’Adeddin, 1996; Ratnawati, 1997; Abdussalam, 1999). For example, knowledge, to Western people, refers to what the rational mind can grasp of the rational and empirical world, argues al-Attas, as cited in Ratnawati (1997), and it does not include the religious and the spiritual domains, which are relegated to the realm of faith and belief. This is in contrast to the Muslims’ conception of knowledge, which includes not only the “sensory and intelligible realms, but more importantly, the realm of the spirit” (al-Attas, as cited in Ratnawati 1997, p. 6). Similarly, the concept of happiness (sa’adah) in Islam, refers to “a permanent state of the soul when it has attained certainty concerning the most important matters in existence, through living in conformity with that certainty” (al-Attas, as cited in Ratnawati 1997, p. 7), unlike in English and other Western languages, where happiness is considered mainly as the “fulfillment of physical and emotional needs, which are temporary and elusive”. In other words, for Muslims, happiness can be experienced in this world, as well as in the Hereafter.

Haja Mohideen (2001) points out the need to remove elements which are not in line with Islamic values to achieve Islamic correctness in language use. To him, Islamic teachings and values affect Muslims’ spoken and written language, hence, the need for Muslims to use the English language appropriately, reflecting Islamic values in their speech and writing to avoid from indirectly perpetuating anti-Islamic elements. By incorporating morality into language use, Islamically correct language, he adds, will serve to make Islam better understood.
When Haja Mohideen (2001) analyzes the contents of two widely-read English language newspapers, namely The New Strait Times and The Star, from late February to early April 2001, he highlights 25 Islamic sensitivity words like ‘goddess’, ‘prophet’, ‘idol’, ‘worship’, ‘miracle’, ‘followers’, ‘angel’ and ‘devil’, which are not in-line with Islamic perspective. Since Islam espouses the oneness of God and believes in all prophets as His messengers, words like “goddess” and “idol”, he argues, should not be used to refer to the object of worship. The word “worship”, on the other hand, should only be used with reference to God. Similarly, the word “prophet”, he insists should not be used in a negative manner like “prophets of doom”, as Muslims have high respect for prophets. He also asserts the word “followers” of Islam to be strictly used to refer to individuals who admit the teachings of Islam, rather than to individuals worshipping another individual. As for “angels” and “devils”, he insists the words to be used with the original meanings and in a religious sense.

Due to the fact that there are many expressions associated with Islam have been introduced into contemporary English and its dictionaries, based on three main dictionaries, namely, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2003), the Macmillan English Dictionary (2002), and The New Oxford Dictionary of English (1998), Haja Mohideen (2007) suggests sample sentences for sixty-six Islamic terms to enable users of such dictionaries to set them in context. The problem with the study is that he accepts the definitions given by the dictionaries which sometimes result to incorrect definitions of the terms. For instance, the words “fakir” and “hakim”, are defined by The New Oxford Dictionary of English (1998, p.34) as “A Muslim (or loosely a Hindu) religious ascetic who lives solely on alms” and “a physician using traditional remedies in India and Muslim countries” respectively, which are inaccurate from Islamic definitions.

The English language evolves. However, for Muslims, since language reflects its worldview, it cannot detach itself from its relationship with the Creator. This study was conducted to highlight the point that there are many English words and concepts, as conveyed through the English language, have meanings different from that which Muslims have ascribed to them and there is a dire need for the English words to be defined from an Islamic perspective. If these words are not defined from an Islamic perspective, there is a tendency for Muslims, especially young learners to view the words from a western perspective, which subsequently will affect their worldview and faith.

**Methodology**

The study was conducted in Semester 2, 2008/2009 at the International Islamic University Malaysia by 21 M.A students specializing in literature, linguistics or ESL. The students were asked to refer to the New Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2006) by Hornby for the assignment. They were divided into groups of two or three where each group had to concentrate on two or three different letters in the dictionary.

The first stage of the study was for them to identify and list the English words in the dictionary which have been defined contrary to Islamic principles, as well as words which have not been defined adequately according to an Islamic perspective.

The second stage was for them to justify as to why they disagreed with the definitions given. They were required to refer to the Qur’anic verses, collections from hadith (sayings and actions by Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.) and Islamic books for their references.

**Findings**

Since each student was required to find ten words, there were a total of two hundred and ten words which do not fit Islamic definitions in this study. However, in this paper, only twenty-one words will be highlighted and discussed. The words have been categorized into...
one of the following categories: marriage, death, social relationship, religion, and general term.

**Marriage**

In the category of marriage, seven words will be discussed and they are alimony, dowry, bigamy, polygamy, intimacy, unfaithful, and infidelity. Alimony is defined as “the money that a court orders somebody to pay regularly to their former wife or husband when the marriage is ended” (Hornby, 2006, p. 37). A student highlighted that in Islam, the money must be paid by a husband to a wife, and not vice-versa, till a certain period of time. Two Qur’anic verses were quoted to support her point:

O Prophet! When ye do divorce women, divorce them at their prescribed periods, and count (accurately), their prescribed periods: And fear Allah your Lord: and turn them not out of their houses, nor shall they (themselves) leave, except in case they are guilty of some open lewdness, those are limits set by Allah. and any who transgresses the limits of Allah, does verily wrong his (own) soul: thou knowest not if perchance Allah will bring about thereafter some new situation (At-Talaq 65:1)

O ye who believe! When ye marry believing women, and then divorce them before ye have touched them, no period of ‘Iddat have ye to count in respect of them: so give them a present. And set them free in a handsome manner (Al-Ahzab 33:49)

The amount to be given by the husband to the wife is not specified, but according to the husband’s affordability as mentioned in Qur’anic verse At-Talaq 65: 7):

Let the man of means spend according to his means: and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him. Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what He has given him. After a difficulty, Allah will soon grant relief.

The second word in this category is dowry which refers to “money and/ or property that in some societies, a wife or her family must pay to her husband when they get married; Money and or property that in some societies a husband must pay to his wife’s family when they get married” (p.473). The students disagreed with this definition because in Islam, dowry or *mahr*, an Arabic word for dowry, is imposed on the husband to the wife, and not to the wife’s family as mentioned by El Alami (1992), ‘*mahr* is a gift or sum of money given by the husband to the wife in consideration of marriage’ (p. 107).

The third word is bigamy which means “a crime of marrying somebody when you are still legally married to somebody else” (NOALD, p. 137). In Islam, it is not a crime for a man to marry more than one wife. It is lawful and in fact, he can marry up to four wives. However, it has to be practiced with restricted conditions, as highlighted in Qur’anic verse An-Nisa 4:3:

Marriage women of your choice, two or three or four; but if ye fear that ye shall not be able to deal justly (with them), then only one, or (a captive) that your right hands possess, that will be more suitable, to prevent you from doing injustice

In relation to bigamy is polygamy. Similar to bigamy, the word **polygamy** also does not have the same definition as in Islam. In the English dictionary, it is “the practice or custom of having more than one wife or husband at the same time” (p. 1163), whereas in Islam, polygamy could only be practised by men and they are allowed to marry up to four wives, with the condition that they do justice as mentioned in the above Quranic verse.

The word intimacy is defined as “the state of having a close relationship with somebody”, “A thing that a person says or does to somebody that they know very well”, “sexual activity, especially an act of sexual intercourse”(p. 783) has also been highlighted. A student said that it is very important to note that in Islam, intimacy is only allowed between legally married
couples. While Islam encourages intimacy in a marriage, it denounces intimacy between unmarried couples. She quoted surah al-Isra:32, “And go not near to fornication; surely it is an indecency and an evil way” to make her point.

The next word is unfaithful (to somebody) which means “having sex with somebody who is not your husband, wife or usual partner” (p. 1610). A student argued that the term might have been accepted if not because of the third element in the definition. The abominable act done towards a spouse is included in the definition but the term “usual partner” denotes a relationship that has no matrimonial binds. Therefore, she emphasized that this definition cannot be accepted by Muslims until the third element is taken out.

In relation to unfaithful is the word infidelity which is “the act of not being faithful to your wife, husband, partner, by having sex with somebody else” (p. 764). A student pointed out the punishment for committing adultery or zina as stated in surah an-Nur, 24:2 for unmarried couples and surah an-Nur for married adulterer or adulteress. Similar to unfaithful, no sexual activities should be committed other than with their spouse.

Death

The second category is death and there are three words in this category which are death, funeral and martyr. The word is death is defined as “the end of life, the state of being dead; the permanent or destruction of something” (p.392). In Islam, although death is the end of life, it is not permanent. It is a mandatory transitional event between the life before death and the life after death. There is another life which follows it, which is the Resurrection Day whereby people will be judged on the deeds that they have done in this world. In other words, it is the first stage of the journey to eternity.

In relation to death is the word funeral which is “a ceremony, usually a religious one, for burying or cremating a dead person” (p.605). In Islam, there is no cremation process because all bodies are buried in Islam. There are many processes of funeral which include proper bathing of the body, act of shrouding the body with white cloth, funeral prayer for the dead, and lastly the burial.

The third word is martyr which is defined as “A person who suffers very much or is killed because of their religious or political beliefs” (p. 724) A student proposed a definition of martyr in Islam which is “A person who is killed defending Islam (not any other religion or belief)”

Social relationship

The third category is social relationship. In this paper, only the words money lender white lie are discussed. Money lender is defined as “a person whose business is lending money, usually at a very high rate of interest” (p. 792). A student stressed that lending money is associated with usury and it contradicts the Islamic point of view:

Those who devour usury will not stand except as stand one whom the Evil one by his touch hath driven to madness. That is because they say: "Trade is like usury," but Allah hath permitted trade and forbidden usury. Those who after receiving direction from their Lord, desist, shall be pardoned for the past; their case is for Allah (to judge); but those who repeat (The offence) are companions of the Fire: They will abide therein (for ever). Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds of charity: For He loveth not creatures ungrateful and wicked. Those who believe, and do deeds of righteousness, and establish regular prayers and regular charity, will have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and give up what remains of your demand for usury, if ye are indeed believers. If ye do it not, Take notice of war from Allah and His Messenger. But if ye turn back, ye shall have
your capital sums: Deal not unjustly, and ye shall not be dealt with unjustly. If the debtor is in a difficulty, grant him time. Till it is easy for him to repay. But if ye remit it by way of charity, that is best for you if ye only knew (Surah Al-Baqarah 2: 275-280)

Based on the above verses, the student concluded that lending money with interest is totally forbidden by Islam. To her, the use of usury will destroy the society by making the rich population becomes richer and the poor becomes poorer and therefore, money lending should not be done by imposing interest.

White lie is defined as “a harmless or small lie, especially one that you tell to avoid hurting somebody” (p. 1679). A student pointed out that in Islam, a person is not supposed to lie as lying is a sin. Therefore, there is no concept of white lie in Islam. However, Islam does allow a person to lie if he is in a situation where one’s life is threatened and it is a matter between life and death. Muslims have to bear in mind that everything they say and do in this world would later be counted on the Day of Judgment. No one can lie their way out as explained in Surah AnNur:24, “On the Day when their tongues, their hands and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions”.

Religion

The fourth category is religion and there are seven words grouped under this category. The words are ablution, fast, fate, idol, priest, prophet and prophetess. The first word ablution is defined as “(Formal or humourous) the act of washing yourself” (p.3). A student pointed out that in Islam, ablution is a prerequisite before one could perform his prayer. Although it involves washing specific parts of the body, it has certain steps to be followed. Beginning with washing one’s face, it has to be followed by washing one’s hands to the elbows, part of the head and feet to the ankles respectively. The student quoted Quranic verse Al-Maidah: 6 to substantiate his point.

O ye who believe! when ye prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands (and arms) to the elbows; Rub your heads (with water); and (wash) your feet to the ankles. If ye are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bathe your whole body. But if ye are ill, or on a journey, or one of you cometh from offices of nature, or ye have been in contact with women, and ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth, and rub therewith your faces and hands, Allah doth not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean, and to complete his favour to you, that ye may be grateful. (Al-Ma’idah, verse 6)

The word fast is defined as “to eat little or no food for a period of time, especially for a religious or health reasons, and a period during which you do not eat food, especially for religious or health reasons” (p. 534). In Islam, fasting does not only involve abstaining one from eating or drinking for a specific period of time but also not having sexual activities with their own spouse. A student quoted the following Qur’anic verse to substantiate her point: permitted to you, on the nights of the fasts, is to approach your wives…eat and drink, until the white thread of dawn appear to you distinct from its black thread; then complete the fast till the night appears (al-Baqarah: 187)

The third word is fate which is “the things, especially bad things that will happen or have happened to something and the power that is believed to control everything that happens and that cannot be stopped or changed” (p.536). A student pointed out that in Islam, fate does not only refer to bad things but also good things. Allah is the One who plans and decides people’s fate.

No misfortune can happen on earth or in your souls but is recorded in a decree before we bring it to existence. That is truly easy for Allah. In order that you may
not despair over matters that pass you by, not exult over favours bestowed upon you. For Allah loves not any vainglorious boaster (al-Hadid: 22-23)

However, the student also asserted that in Islam, man must work hard as stated in Al-Najm: 39, “that man can have nothing but what he strives for” and al-Rad: 11, “…Verily never will God change the condition of a people until they change it themselves”

The fourth word is idol which is “A person or thing that is loved and admired very much” or “a statue that is worshipped as a god” (p. 740). In Islam, only Allah is to be worshipped and no individual or thing should be worshipped, loved or admired very much. Haja Mohideen (2001) asserts that it is not Islamically correct to use the word idol to refer to someone whom a person loves very much. He suggests the word “hero” or “favourite person” and instead of idolizes, he suggests the word “admiries” or “adores”.

The word priest has also been highlighted by one student. In the dictionary, a priest is “a person who is qualified to perform religious duties and ceremonies” (p. 1196). The student would like to use an Arabic term, an imam or a qadhi to be used to perform the same function.

The word prophet has a significant meaning to Muslims and therefore it is important for the word to be defined in accordance with Islamic principles. The dictionary defines it as “a person sent by God to teach the people and give them messages from God; prophet Muhammad who founded the religion of Islam, a person who claims to know what will happen in future” (p. 1210).

The term Prophet Mohammed needs to be corrected. It is defined as “The Arab prophet who founded the religion of Islam” (p. 756). A student asserted that “Prophet Muhammad for Muslims is the last Prophet whose message is Islam and is sent by Allah to be the mercy and the role model for all humanity”. She emphasized the fact that Muhammad S.A.W is not the founder of Islam but a messenger from Allah. She highlighted that the word ‘founder’ means someone who establishes or sets up something. Hence, the word is only suitable to describe a person who initiates or starts a new idea, theory or institution. Prophet Muhammad SAW was not the one who founded the religion of Islam but he was the last messenger of Allah to propagate Islam and was responsible to deliver messages from Allah to all mankind through the Holy Quran. Furthermore, he did not claim to know what will happen in the future: “And cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth (i.e Muhammad SAW is the messenger of Allah and his qualities are written in your scriptures, the Taurat and the Injeel) when ye know (the truth)” (Al-Baqarah 2: 42)

In relation to the word prophet is the word prophetess which is defined as “a woman who is a prophet” (p.1210). In Islam, all prophets are males. From Adam A.S to Muhammad SAW, Allah has appointed men to be His messengers. In other words, as mentioned before, prophetess does not exist in Islam and hence, it also falls in the last category which is concepts which are not in Islam.

General term

The fifth category is general term and there are three words to be discussed in this category. The words are duty, mother nature and nation. Duty is “something that you have to do because it is your moral or legal responsibility” (p.477). In Islam, duty is not just a moral or legal obligation; it is a religious one.

Mother nature is defined as “the natural world, when you consider it as a force that effects the world and human beings” (p. 763). A student pointed out that in Islam, it is Allah S.W.T who Creates all existence (including nature) and the only force that affects the world and human beings. Based on Quranic verses, the student emphasized that Allah had explained in great detail the creation of earth (nature) and how He had given it to mankind so that they would use it wisely:
Your Guardian-Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and is firmly established on the throne (of authority): He draweth the night as a veil o’er the day, each seeking the other in rapid succession: He created the sun, the moon, and the stars, (all) governed by laws under His command. Is it not His to create and to govern? Blessed be Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds!. Call on your Lord with humility and in private: for Allah loveth not those who trespass beyond bounds. Do no mischief on the earth, after it hath been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the Mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good. It is He who sendeth the winds like heralds of glad tidings, going before His mercy: when they have carried the heavy-laden clouds, we drive them to a land that is dead, make rain to descend thereon, and produce every kind of harvest therewith: thus shall We raise up the dead: perchance ye may remember. From the land that is clean and good, by the will of its Cherisher, springs up produce, (rich) after its kind: but from the land that is bad, springs up nothing but that which is niggardly: thus do we explain the signs by various (symbols) to those who are grateful (Surah Al-'Araf 7: 54-58).

The word nation has a broader meaning in Islam. In the English dictionary, nation is “a country considered as a group of people with the same language, culture, history, who lived in a particular area under one government” (p. 780). Referring to the Columbia Encyclopedia (2008), a student elaborated the term nation which is strongly rooted to the concept of nationalism. She said the main fabric of the school of nationalism was laid by the French Revolution, where it was first put to practice. It was then that the stimulation of emotions towards the flag and country, the glorification and worship of national heroes, the composition of the national anthem, the emphasis on the sanctity of the French language and race, the creation of great national festivals and ceremonies in the style of religious rites, a pride in the history of France and a belief in the great mission of the French nation, emerged and displayed themselves one after another in the course of the Revolution.

To her, the idea of a nation – although it is sometimes used interchangeably with Ummah – is completely foreign to Islam. She elaborated that in Islam, people are not divided according to their nationality, color or ethnicity but are judged according to their religion and deeds. One can find many people who are of different origins and walks of life who refer to themselves as Muslims and see themselves as part of the Islamic Ummah or brotherhood, she added. She quoted a Quranic verse to substantiate her point, “the Believers are but a single Brotherhood: So make peace and reconciliation between your two (contending) brothers; and fear Allah, that ye may receive Mercy” (al-Hujurat: 10).

**Pedagogical implications**

In teaching English to Muslim learners, it is important that Muslim learners, particularly young learners, be made aware of how English words are viewed in Islam. Otherwise, there is a tendency for them to view the words from the Western perspective which may subsequently affect their worldview. Muslim teachers should highlight the difference between the Western and the Islamic conceptualizations of these words. To be able to do this, Muslim teachers should deepen their understanding of Islam by reading more Islamic books.

To non-Muslim teachers teaching English to Muslim learners, it would benefit their Muslim learners more if they are more sensitive and be aware that there are certain English words, concepts and cultures which are not in line with Islamic culture. By doing this, hopefully, resistance from some Muslim learners in learning English could be minimized.
Conclusion

The students were happy with their findings and were very much aware that there are many English words which have not been defined from an Islamic perspective. They came to a conclusion that there was a need for an English dictionary for Muslims to refer to and to raise awareness that there are some English concepts which are not in line with Islamic culture and belief. The dictionary would also benefit non-Muslims on the meanings of the English words as understood by Muslims.

References


E-Kid starter: the beginning of edutainment for kids

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Abstract
This paper considers the issue of conventional technique of design in computer games normally use programming as the ultimate task for developing computer games. In this framework, the development of edutainment for developing computer games for kids will be spearheading towards educators. The development of this conceptualised environment will lead the users to build an application towards a distributed resource available to a group of children. The aim of this paper is to develop an edutainment framework to be used as a tool for non-programming users especially educators for preschool children to develop digital games. Furthermore, it will identify the need for the used of diverse media elements and accommodating different skill levels in interface controls. This is theoretically based paper.

Keywords: Edutainment, Computer games, Conceptualised framework, Preschool

Introduction
Today, the world of multimedia games, stories and activities is a place where education and entertainment meet. Edutainment – a place that asks children to enjoy what they learn with a combination of many media (sound, animation, video, text and images) by simply using a computer mouse to point and click on a particular picture, word, or button, and stories as well as information will come alive on a computer screen. Selecting a picture of a cat might offer an animated romp ending with a loud ‘meow’. Selecting a button might offer another view to a new room to point and click at new images and words.

Children can interact with characters in ancient fables or new original poetry. They can wander through animated reference materials that explain the scientific principles behind a zipper or a nuclear reactor. They can play games that take them back in time, out in space or across the world. Edutainment offers children a way to wander through stories, information or games at their own pace and in their own way. They can connect ideas in paths they choose or investigate one particular idea among many.

Technological innovation in education
The development of edutainment environment is intended to implement technological innovations in education as shown in Figure 1 (Hussain & Embi, 2009). The goal and design principles of this environment emphasis on creating applications that provide common and transparent technology to learners. To promote adoption, it is important to make technology as transparent as possible (Hussain, 2008).

Research indicates that children learn best in an environment which allows them to explore, discover, and play. Play is an important part of a developmentally appropriate child care program. It is also closely tied to the development of cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical behaviours.
The renowned educator Grayson Kirk once said, “The most important function of education at any level is to develop the personality of the individual and the significance of his life to himself and to others” (Simpson, 1988). Today, more and more educators agree with Kirk, finding that character development is fundamental in the learning process. Recognizing this fact, there has been an influx of character development programs at the elementary and middle school level, though unfortunately, these interventions may come too late for some children.

One area that has not been fully explored for moral, personal and social development potential is educational computer games also known as edutainment has quickly inserted itself at all levels of childhood and student-hood, from lap kids to grad students. The issue is not to pull the kids away from the computer- if it’s really where they want to be, they’ll find a way to get there behind one's back- but to make it worth being there (Prensky, 2001).

The creation of edutainment environment

For young children's optimal growth they should be assured of early childhood experiences that maximize their development; experiences that widen their vision, opening their eyes to the wonders of learning and the joys of discovery. Computers may be an influential tool to enhance young children's potential, facilitating the learning process, while computers are only one of many educational resources we provide children, when used appropriately computer software is a valuable resources, enriching young children's growth and development (Prensky, 2001).

The important question is not whether children should be exposed to computers; in this technological age it is inevitable. The important question is how should computers be utilized with young children? What kinds of activities are best suited for the computer? What computer experiences are appropriate and beneficial to young children (Prensky, 2001)?

Below are some criteria needed when we designed the games for children.

- Fun with a purpose: Games create a cognitive engagement between the learner and the topic in a flowing, smiling environment — where successes are memorable moments of shared triumph and celebration and where mistakes mean only that the learner is being stretched to his or her own limits. Games celebrate the topic and reward individual achievement. Games bring fun into the learning environment, but with a focus on learning.

- Experiential learning: Today’s learners need to do and to try things on their own. Games bring learners into direct contact with the topic where they will connect their own dots and experience their own ideas.
- Reinforce learning: Games give you playful ways to present your material to your learners. Additionally, your learners can practice and demonstrate what they have learned from the lecture and readings.

- Provide immediate feedback: Learners want and need feedback on their performance. Games give learners immediate feedback on the quality of their input. With the appropriate corrective feedback, this can become an invaluable learning opportunity.

- Less threatening learning environment: Because the game format is playful, the inherent challenge of the material is less threatening than it is ordinarily. During game play seemingly difficult questions are “just part of the game.” And, facilitators can use the window following responses to build a bridge between the topic and the learner.

- Games improve teamwork: Games are real-time activities that bring learners into teams, demonstrate the rules and roles of working together as a team, and underscore the value of team collaboration.

- Accelerated learning: Games allow you to compress your topic into shorter periods of time, accelerating the speed of learning.

- Motivation: Games engage learners and then allow them to demonstrate their understanding of the topic in a friendly competition against themselves, other players and existing time and scoring standards (Sugar and Whitcomb, 2006)

Play is the medium used by children to translate experience into something meaningful to them. Piaget (1962) agrees with teachers and maintains that children use play as an important symbolic activity, but it serves many purposes beyond this function (Haugland & Wright, 1997). Play clarifies concepts, provides emotional relief, facilitates social development, and creates periods of clearly satisfying delight. While Piaget (1962) defines play as assimilation, or the child's efforts to make environmental stimuli match his or her own concepts, Vygotskian theory states that play actually facilitate cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Table 1 shows adapted from Marc Prensky (2001) in his book titled ‘Digital Game Based Learning’. This table gives an overview on starting the edutainment environment.
Table 1: Types of learning and games (adopted from Prensky, 2001)

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Conceptualised framework for edutainment

In this study, the framework has been made based on the difficulty in helping children to learn in two domains:

- Motivation - to motivate them to want to spend time and engage in learning activities and (Dweck, 1986)
- Psychological needs - to aid them cognitively to construct knowledge (Gardner, 1982)
On the other hand, the best practices for game design also have the influence based on a set of criteria for computer games as shown in Figure 2. The advantages of technologies such as multimedia software and game software will be utilised to perform the edutainment environment. This environment will be designed in one screen that hides incredible programming behind a simple façade for educators to build edutainment games for children. It is also will be used to spearhead the development of the edutainment environment for developing educational game (Hussain & Eshaq, 2001, Hussain, & Embi, 2005)

The design framework is based on the design factors of motivating electronic educational games for children and evolved in the context of observations and reflections made in this study. There are four factors that reflect the design of the edutainment environment that are considered as the best practices for game design that can affect children’s learning that must be viewed collectively and not considered in isolation:

1) Storytelling: It is found that situating a subject learning in a computer game environment brings greater relevance to the subject for children. The learning concept must be
embedded thoroughly to provide an environment in which children find learning a subject especially mathematics to be meaningful and useful (Crawford, 2005).

2) Challenge: The research showed that the degree of challenge children asked for corresponded to their individual abilities; they needed to face a challenge, but not one that was beyond what they could handle. They particularly liked games that would progressively become more challenging. They often became quickly bored with activities within games which were repetitive. Most of the games provide children with a goal or a set of goals to achieve that can make the games challenging. Therefore, we should place them in environments of learning that provide this sense of success. An important factor in feeling successful is how children perceive their mistakes. Since children could recover from their mistakes in the games through the mechanisms without forfeiting much, they would not feel threatened by making mistakes. Rather, mistakes became stepping stones for later success in the games allowing children to progress at their own pace towards the ultimate goal (Ahearn, 2000).

3) Interactivity: This interactive learning process helps children develop a sense of the mathematics they are learning. Educational games provided the children with a concrete, external reference point by which they could communicate their thoughts. Children need such cognitive artefact to motivate and allow them to express their thoughts about a subject, even if the expression is game-bound (Crawford, 2005).

4) Interface: Many children liked playing the games because of colourful graphics, nice images, animations of their favourite characters together with elements of sound effects and background music. It can be seen that for children, such sensory stimuli add to the fun of playing the game and make the learning more enjoyable and memorable. Hence, having an attractive interface in educational games can create an environment in which children get excited about the embedded learning concept and, therefore, are willing to be immersed in it and spend time learning it (Ahearn, 2000).

There are several potential advantages in the design framework for edutainment environment that has been refined in this research:

1. It addresses the difficulty for the children to learn a subject matter by fulfilling their psychological needs. Hence it can increase motivation that is known as the key towards successful education

2. The best practices for game design to be addressed by game designers include content or storytelling, interactivity, interface and challenge. However, within this framework, they need to focus on creating a tool instead of the actual game and therefore need not be concerned of the learning content or storytelling element which they are not familiar with.

3. The educators can acquire the five new roles namely motivator, content structurer, debriefer, tutor and designer by implementing this framework. This will increase their skills and creativity in an effective edutainment environment

4. By implementing this framework, there will be no concern of having to purchase whichever edutainment products that might be suitable for the children’s learning capacities. It will be more cost effective as well as benefits to be gained by educational institution at large.

**Computer games for educational purposes**

Traditionally, education has not been considered a "fun" activity (Herring, 1984). Many educational computer programs carry this to an extreme by simply replicating dry drill and practice exercises commonly available in workbook form. The only positive aspect these programs add is the use of the computer itself. With a computer, math problems can at least be displayed with large colorful numbers, and immediate feedback can result from each problem attempted.
Arguing that familiarity with computers is extremely important for today's students, some people feel that computerized drill and practice is fine. After all, the child learns to use the keyboard, becomes comfortable with the technology, and benefits from having an unemotional tutor who is ready to work whenever the child wants.

Further, learning, by the nature of the way we impose it, is simply not fun. That is not to say that it is not reinforcing. Indeed, many children move quite well from extrinsic reinforcers to their own schedules of internal reinforcement, intermittently strengthened by praise or grades. Yet the fact that something is reinforcing does not make it fun. Few children will sit down with a spelling workbook, just as few adults will scan a technical journal for fun, even though there is real benefit to be had.

In order for a child to choose to play a game, whether educational or not, it must be perceived as fun. Digital games-based learning comes only when engagement and learning are both high. Good digital-based learning does not favor either engagement or learning, but strives to keep them both at a high level (Prenskey, 2001).

In a playful context (Fleer & Ridgway, 2007) kids seem to have an almost infinite capacity for learning. It’s very easy, it’s effortless, and it’s exciting. If you put them in some kind of game situation- a computer game or video game- they’ll pick up skills very quickly, learn how to do things, at an amazing rate (Middleton, 1995).

According to Fleer & Ridgway (2007) based on the research that they have done it recently, they have put in the paragraph below:

Complexive thinking was evident only when children connected the materials with other everyday activities they had observed in their environment, such as potions representing medicine or poison. The conceptual connections were functionally associated through cooking. For instance, oil was combined with sand and water to simulate the cooking of meat. Children only demonstrated complexive thinking when given opportunities to combine substances used in cooking by pretending to be cooking in the sandpit. However, concepts associated with materials and properties were worked only at the everyday concept level. Scientific concepts were not introduced to the children during the playful events observed in the preschool. It is not the intention of this analysis to suggest that the play events were not rich. But rather, the analysis is to make clear what kinds of categories of scientific learning are occurring in these play events. The analysis has shown how important it is for children that play events introduced to support scientific learning be meaningful to children. It has also shown that when conceptual intentions on the part of the adults are not clear to children, or when the core concepts being considered by the teacher are not well understood or thought through, that the play events will be re-framed by the children in ways that suit their interests and connect in meaningful ways to their experiences.

However, the latter does not necessarily equate with conceptual development.

There are a few good examples where learning in a structured way can also be fun (Kafai, 2001). Dynacomp's Hodge Podge is a program which has proven to be entertaining for many young children. For older students, programs like Rocky Boots from The Learning Company introduce difficult concepts in an enjoyable fashion (Herring, 1984). Non stop action games offer the opportunity for reflection themselves, while role-playing, adventure, simulation, strategy, and puzzle games often proceed at a lower pace and offer more built in reflective space. The important thing is that there be a good balance of action and reflection in the final product, just as there should be a good balance of edu and tainment (Prenskey, 2001).

Using their experience the concept of this framework can be used in the next study to develop the interface for utilized digital games in the classroom. The blended approach in
teaching and learning (Hussain, 2008) can be useful for further exploration and implementation at the current situation in teaching and learning environments.

Conclusion

As education design becomes more complex and challenging, a new form of storytelling is required in delivering a new level of interactivity, integration and a more democratic relationship between storyteller and audience (Crawford, 2005). Educators (facilitators) should draw from the games industry to add value to their knowledge development as a step to taking learning to its next stage of evolution. It is suggested that this software will encourage educators to create effective game or course for class. The success (or failure) of the design will much depend on the teachers functioning more as ‘facilitators of learning’ rather than ‘purveyors of knowledge’. Teachers (facilitators) and game designers will be able to realise the potential electronic games have on educational medium not only for supporting traditional school disciplines such as mathematics, language, and art, but for exploring social and cultural issues as well (Embi & Hussain, 2005; 2007; 2009).

The simulation of this environment will be designed in one screen that hides incredible programming behind a simple façade for educators to build edutainment games for children. It is also will be used to spearhead the development of the edutainment environment for developing educational game. Furthermore, technology will tend to support teachers in becoming “facilitators.” It delineates the kind of classroom interaction that will establish a comfortable and respectful environment to promote a culture for each learning style in the blended environment (Sung, et.al, 2009). This will include managing classroom procedures and creating an environment of respect and support. At this point of knowledge, the understanding of the blended approach flow and communication tool is needed to support and deliver between the ideas and technology to enhance e-learning in higher education.

This conceptual framework for edutainment has been studied to develop the teaching and learning styles blended approach in classroom. Therefore, the implementation of the interface for this study will be tested on the usability approach to support the prototype of the ‘E-Kid Starter’ programme.

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References


Enabling our students to flourish: establishing opportunities for flow in the EFL classroom

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Abstract
In university level EFL settings, the pursuit of academic excellence should entail more than the study of English language, literature and culture; it ought to involve a focus on the facilitation of the enhancement of each student’s capacity for deep and intrinsically rewarding involvement with the tasks inherent to the curriculum. The state of flow can be characterized as an experience of such intense positively focused involvement in one’s endeavour that it enables a transcendence of experience from mere deliberate “action” to complete sensory absorption in the activity. The result of which is optimal experience; that which we envision for our students. Emanating from Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s revolutionary work, this paper outlines a practical application of the flow theory. Further, it delineates tasks through which students will learn how to evoke flow and have greater opportunity to facilitate and elicit its occurrence in learning environments. This paper is based on preliminary results from ongoing research which, thus far, suggests that despite reports to the contrary, flow is susceptible to human will. The benefits of enhancing syllabi with tasks based on the theoretically described dimensions of flow are immense. The experience enhances self-confidence and constitutes an impetus for personal and skill development vital to the learning process. Through an amalgamation of extrinsic and intrinsic goal perspectives (as provided by teachers and students respectively), students can be encouraged to transcend attitudes of participation as “a means to an end” and to focus on making the actual learning experience more meaningful.

Unearthing flow
The quality of our lives is dependent upon the quality of our experiences; the potential for exhilarating optimal experiences constantly lies at our fingertips – waiting for us to make them happen. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi pioneered research into what constitutes positive individual experiences and unearthed what he identified as flow: the “process of total involvement with life” (1990, p. xi). Characterized by such intense positively focused involvement in one’s actions that it enables a transcendence of experience from mere deliberate action to complete sensory absorption in the activity, flow allows one to experience the beauty of subjectively perceived and objectively measurable (Jackson & Eklund, 2002; 2004) performance perfection. It is a state of optimal mental performance in which one performs with seemingly effortless precision as a result of complete task absorption. Nine factors, which describe one’s disposition while in flow, have been determined as requisite for the state. These include a challenge-skills balance, the merging of action and awareness, clear goals, unambiguous feedback, concentration on the task at hand, a paradoxical sense of control, loss of self-consciousness, a transformation of how time is experienced, and the cumulative effect of the aforementioned dimensions: the autotelic experience (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).
Despite claims that it is precarious in nature (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999), flow ought not be deemed unequivocally elusive. Rather, it should be considered theoretically akin to that which is delineated in psychological skills training for performance enhancement in sports. Even the most skilled athletes experience fluctuations in athletic performance and these are minimized through deliberate mental training (Taylor & Taylor, 1995; Orlick, 2000). Similarly, fluctuations in university students’ daily performance reflect inconsistent application of mental skills rather than a sudden loss of ability. As educators, we must foster students’ consistent optimal mental performance by imparting skills for the systematic enhancement of motivation, confidence, concentration, and intrinsically rewarding involvement. As, the *effectiveness* of any didactical methodology is contingent upon the *quality* of student involvement. Both motivated active involvement and enjoyment are imperative to the ongoing learning process. When deliberately governed to enhance performance, harnessing the capacities of the mind to enable the emergence of optimal performance (Gallwey, 1997) is an indisputable asset for academic excellence in not only tertiary education (as dealt with in this paper) but in all learning situations.

**Flow in education**

One of the primary arenas in which flow theory is expected to bear fruit in practical applications is the educational context (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975). It is surprising then, that the theory has had minimal impact in schools and empirical studies attesting to its role remain scarce. In English as a foreign language (EFL) classes, whilst fostering knowledge and scholastic competence is pivotal, striving to minimize performance inconsistencies is imperative when learning to refine one’s skills and become a more effective learner (Ellis & Sinclair, 1989) in pursuit of academic excellence. Learning to become an *effective* learner in an EFL setting ought to imply more than an increased awareness of linguistic knowledge and its masterful application. It ought to simultaneously imply fostering the conative dimensions of learning (Riggs & Gholar, 2008) as well as the consistent pursuit of deep and intrinsically rewarding involvement with the tasks inherent to the curriculum.

Fostering deep involvement in EFL settings can be achieved employing sport psychology based mental training, as, for both athletes and learners, confidence, mental strength, and perseverance are among key precursors to subjectively perceived optimal performance. Enhancement of students’ opportunities for subjectively perceived success (the achievement of planned actions in pursuit of task related goals) leads to reciprocal interaction between deeper involvement and subsequent enjoyment.

**Flow as a means of satiating goals**

Described as a “special case of intrinsic motivation…[in which] intrinsic motivation is at its highest and maximum performance is achieved” (Weinberg & Gould, 2003, pp. 144-145) and a “state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter; the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it even at great cost, for the sheer sake of doing it” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 4), the construct of flow brings the issue of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation to the forefront. Intrinsically motivated behaviour pertains to that which is undertaken out of personal interest and enjoyment, whereas extrinsic motivation refers to behaviour inspired by outcomes contingent on behaviour and not inherent to the task itself (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2001). Yet, in an EFL setting, where do extrinsic motivation through curricular goals (which require engaging in tasks designed to develop oral and written competencies) and intrinsic motivation mustered by the student (demonstrable through diligent and committed engagement) fall in this continuum?

Frequently, students focus primarily on the extrinsic goal of earning credits. Yet, whether intrinsically or extrinsically motivated to excel, enhancing one’s mental performance remains
vital to academic success. Although students may demonstrate a vested interest in actively engaging in class, their intrinsic motivation based on the need to feel competent and self-determining (Deci & Ryan, 1985) ought to be fostered. Extrinsic and intrinsic goals can in fact be amalgamated when students are actively involved in the learning process. Teaching students a process in which they can engage to wilfully evoke flow is a means of increasing student involvement. Vying for flow represents a potential means to satiate the goal of doing “well” in class. This particular vehicle, however, opens the door to greater possibility which transcends earning mere credit: the possibility of personal development and growth resulting from unleashing students’ untapped potential.

In the context of writing for academic purposes, Larson (1988) found that successful writing is directly related to flow as it is a result of an ongoing process of balancing challenges faced and skills possessed whilst remaining positively focused and actively involved with the piece one is writing. By logical deduction, educators ought to inspire students to become intrinsically engaged in and enjoy the process of writing.

From a cognitive evaluation theory perspective, as discussed in Gill and Williams (2008), intrinsically (as compared to extrinsically) motivated performance, learning, and perseverance leads to comparatively greater personal development as a result of increased feelings of personal competence and autonomy. This is related to the developmental process of differentiation and integration of the self (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) which results from flow experiences.

Further, research concerning education and sport (Duda & Nicholls, 1992) demonstrates that a task-centred goal orientation is related to the belief that sports and education provide one with relevant and meaningful opportunities for individual development and performance enhancement. Consequently, success is perceived as progress and as a reflection of diligence and invested effort.

EFL textual composition classes provide environments in which challenges, clear task-centred goals and feedback are all inherent to the macro goals of foreign language learning (Harmer, 2007). Hence, imparting what the prerequisites of optimal performance are and how to elicit their occurrence in the EFL classroom is the foundation for student success and subjectively perceived optimal experiences.

Psychological skills training: a catalyst for the wilful evocation of flow

Psychological skills training (PST) involves the “systematic or consistent practice of mental or psychological skills for the purpose of enhancing performance, increasing enjoyment, or achieving greater… self-satisfaction (Weinberg & Gould, 2003, p. 242). In sport psychology, PST is an ineluctable precursor to consistent performance excellence (Rushall, 1989) and scholars have hence delineated facilitative guidelines (Orlick, 2000; Weinberg & Williams, 2001). From an interdisciplinary perspective, the dimensions of flow are intricately related to PST themes. By teaching students strategies and techniques beneficial for the enhancement of psychological skills (Hanton & Jones, 1999b) which are common in sports and consistent with the dimensions of flow, one ought to be able to facilitate the evocation of flow – in any context.

PST conducive to evoking flow in an EFL setting should include tasks in which students set goals indicating what they wish to achieve, steps imperative for goal attainment, and how to actively incorporate the lessons learned on an ongoing basis. The tasks must hence require: (1) mental preparation for class, (2) assessment of post-task (class) learning and goal setting for the next session, (3) mental imagery to reinforce focus prior to and during class, (4) mental preparation related to distraction control and, (5) refocusing techniques to employ during task performance. Although the guidelines in this paper are applicable to both the
improvement of oral and written competence skills, for the sake of brevity, examples will only be provided on how the forthcoming techniques can be applied to writing tasks.

These simple yet efficacious techniques and strategies intended to promote habitual attention to aspects of performance through which flow can be evoked are suggested for environments in which elaborate PST and greater time commitment is not feasible. Based on the findings of Jackson (1996), however, the final two dimensions of flow (the transformation of time and the autotelic experience) are not deemed variables which can be cultivated per se and cultivating tasks are hence not delineated.

**Challenge-skills balance**

Flow commences with a harmonious balance between the subjectively perceived challenge faced, and the skills one employs to meet the challenge wherein the perception of the performer is of key importance. When perceived demands and perceived skills as related to the challenge are in equilibrium and requiring of utmost ability, an essential precursor to flow is established. When performing within the high-challenge and high-skills quadrant of the challenge-skills balance, as depicted in Figure 1, flow becomes possible. From a universally subjective perspective, when one sets a performance goal and strives towards its attainment – employing one’s greatest skills in order to face an equally high challenge, flow can ensue.

![Figure 1: Model of the flow state (adapted from Jackson and Csikszentmihalyi, 1999)](image)

Suboptimal states such as boredom, apathy, and anxiety are the imminent result of an imbalance between subjective challenges faced and skills possessed (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; Larson, 1988). According to Csikszentmihalyi (1975, 1990), when one is highly skilled yet confronted with a comparatively low challenge, attention is apt to wane, which results in boredom. Further, if one is relatively inept and presented with an equally low challenge, one inevitably reacts with apathy. Conversely, confronted with a high challenge which is subjectively perceived as exceeding the skills possessed, one experiences anxiety. Hence, it is imperative that one consistently vies to perform within a subjectively perceived high-skill/ high-challenge zone.

Educators can facilitate adherence to and maintenance of this self-regulation process by providing external feedback regarding a student’s performance, skill level, and the challenges inherent in the goal pursued. Such facilitative support is beneficial; however, one’s subjective reality ultimately dictates what constitutes a high challenge in relation to the tangible skills believed to be possessed.
Facilitating a challenge-skills balance

Conveying the importance of maintaining balance between students’ presumably progressively advancing skills and the correspondent modification of the goals strived towards is essential. Students should set outcome, performance and process goals as they are instrumental in facilitating behavioural change (Burton & Naylor, 2002). Outcome goals, which traditionally focus on a competitive result such as earning a certain grade for an assignment, are catalysts for overall motivation. As discussed in Nicholls (1984), however, a static focus on outcome or ego related goals, which reflect a concern with the actual demonstration of competence or the avoidance of being perceived as incompetent, represent a potential source of performance anxiety. Therefore, task goals, which reflect the development of overall competence, ought to be set. Task goals should be derived from performance and process goals. Performance goals focus on achievement standards related to individual past performance and ought to remain flexible and within the students’ control, whereas process goals reflect steps towards the accomplishment of performance and outcome goals respectively. The goal-setting process is easily augmented employing detailed Goal-setting Forms\(^1\).

Merging action and awareness

Ceasing to discern oneself as separate from one’s actions denotes the merging of action and awareness. This dimension of flow is characterized by an effortless unification and sense of oneness which ensues when one performs with great ability in the face of a high demand which challenges and extends existing performance limits. This level of performance requires undivided absorption in the task. Exclusive involvement in performance ultimately precedes an elegant evolution in which “actor” and “actions” transcend and merge as one entity. Fundamental aspects of performance – action and awareness – coalesce.

Establishing a facilitative mindset

Utilizing an Optimal Performance Recall form, ask students to actively recall the qualities inherent to their best ever experience of full focus and how these played a role in making the experience significant. Those factors can then be purposefully incorporated into future performances. Even if unable to recall such an experience, it is essential that students consider what it takes for them to become totally absorbed in what they are doing. For, in order to facilitate the mergence of actions and awareness, optimal focus is needed. To facilitate optimal focus, previously set process goals must be clearly defined. Encourage students to remain in the current moment, attuned to that which will help them fulfil their set goals using individually determined and subjectively meaningful reminders such as “focus on the step before you” or “connect” to facilitate focus on the imminent task.

Further, allowing oneself to become one with the process of what one is doing can commence with the simple technique of One Breath Relaxation, which not only relieves minimal tension, but also clears the mind. When concentrated on a personal focusing reminder whilst exhaling after a long slow deep breath, one can re-focus and remind oneself to fully connect with predetermined goals. Students should simultaneously visualize what their optimal focus entails. By seeing and feeling themselves perform with optimal focus, totally connected to their task, they increase the likelihood of it actually happening (Murphy, Nordin, & Cuming, 2008). Engaging in this technique for a mere 30 seconds prior to beginning a task is highly effective – and unobtrusive in the classroom. One breath relaxation

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\(^1\) Materials mentioned in this paper are available upon request.
coupled with brief visualization and a personal refocusing reminder enables one to set the stage for merging actions and awareness.

**Clearly defined goals**

Adhering to clearly stipulated goals which express intentions and guide focus reduces the potential for distractions to divert focus away from performance relevant stimuli. To facilitate flow, an unambiguous intention coupled with an intuitive conviction in one’s capability to fulfill the established goal is necessary. The clear and strong sense of intention, however, must be susceptible to ongoing evaluation employing internalized and personally relevant guidelines which indicate the degree of success towards goal attainment.

**Goal attainment strategies**

To foster goal clarity, the previously mentioned goal setting process should be augmented through the establishment of game plans for goal attainment. Hence, specific details upon which students should focus their attention before, during, and after engaging in their writing task should be emphasized. Have students create pre-task and post-task routines which require them to establish specific Goal Attainment Plans to follow. These plans increase the efficiency of the goal achievement process (Burton, Naylor, & Holliday, 2001). Similarly, Establishing Contingency Plans, which equip one to deal with potential adverse events effectively, will facilitate the students’ preparation for unpredictable or problematic situations should they occur.

A pre-task plan specific to refining written composition skills in an EFL setting could consist of a) reviewing one’s most recent responses to self-regulatory questions, b) determining which conjunctions, connectives, and novel vocabulary words to incorporate during the session, and c) engaging in one breath relaxation coupled with brief visualization and using a personal refocusing reminder to ensure optimal focus.

Consistent self-evaluation can be encouraged through post-learning self-regulatory questions (alluded to above) which represent a simplified version of the goal setting form and serve to remind students of what they are doing well and what their focus ought to be in order to maintain their unique challenge-skills balance. Thus, a post-task plan could consist of a) editing one’s work using guidelines for the revision of written compositions as provided in class and immediately thereafter b) completing the Self Evaluation task by responding to the following post-learning questions:

1. What did I do exceptionally well?
2. What can I improve in my next composition?
3. How can I improve my writing for the next draft/piece I write?
4. What specific steps will I take to improve my next composition?
5. What can I do to ensure that I enjoy the process!?

The questions encourage students to reflect upon the writing process and thereby identify areas in which they wish to improve and determine a means of doing so. Ideally, students ought to first review their last self-evaluation and use it as a guideline as to what to focus on during the imminent session (the aforementioned pre-learning phase). The self-evaluations ought to hence reflect clearly defined steps towards the attainment of students’ outcome, performance, and process goals.

**Unambiguous feedback**

Ongoing knowledge of progress made towards one’s goal is of reciprocal importance to clear goals. The nature of feedback is secondary; feedback must be subjectively perceived as
a relevant indicator of the proximity towards goals achievement. For flow to ensue, clear and instantaneous feedback from all relevant sources must be present.

Deciphering relevant cues

Students ought to Decipher Relevant Feedback Cues which they can easily deal with. These cues are essential to attaining optimal performance and fostering ongoing learning and task involvement. In accordance with the previously given examples, checkmarks which indicate the use of each novel vocabulary word or underlining the words, for example, encourages self-praise and draws attention to what was done well. This tangible feedback enhances motivation, fosters goal adherence and indicates the necessity of adjustments to the predetermined successive steps towards goal attainment. Naturally, teachers and peers can also provide feedback through corrections, general advice, and encouragement. However, the feedback offered ought to promote the student’s ultimate responsibility for remaining actively involved in the self-regulatory learning process.

Concentration on the imminent task

The exclusion of superfluous thoughts from consciousness is necessary for flow to ensue. When in flow, all thoughts and energy forge towards a sole purpose, the consequence of which is harmonious unification of experience. While in flow, awareness restricts itself to the “immediate” and performing accordingly.

Fostering concentration

Students must determine a focus which works best for them and then follow a routine which will consistently lead to finding that focus when desired. It is hence paramount that they develop Concentration Routines which detail where their thoughts should ideally be while engaged in their task. Routines should effectively channel students’ focus towards themselves, their task and the anticipated classroom environment. With habitual use, routines serve as subliminal signals of optimal readiness. To create such a routine, a Concentration Identification Profile can provide beneficial information. It assists students in recognizing facilitative (performance-relevant) factors to foster and potentially debilitating (performance-irrelevant) factors to avoid using appropriate contingency plans once recognized.

Have students practise adopting a fully connected focus with small tasks involving skills they wish to refine. Concentration will develop incrementally; the key is to remain focused on performance-relevant factors for increasingly greater periods of time and with progressively unwavering consistency until one can maintain an optimal focus for the duration of their task-involvement. Students must fully concentrate on the optimal execution of a task, forever prepared to reconnect in the face of distraction. Pre-performance and concentration routines facilitate an increase in the quality of one’s performance – as a reflection of undivided involvement in the task.

The paradox of control

As conscious processes progressively give way to well-rehearsed subconscious processes (which emerge and autonomously control performance), control while in flow is sensed yet not truly exercised. Attempting to exert control results in transcendence away from flow and towards rigidity (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999), which is detrimental to performance. Hence, akin to the challenge-skills dimension, one must pursue a harmonious equipoise between control and relinquishment thereof.
Enhancing quasi-control

Help students realize that they are in control of their success, as they alone govern the preparation and energy invested in the pursuit of their goals. They should be encouraged to become cognizant of their thoughts, emotions, and attitudes towards learning. This helps them differentiate between aspects of performance which are under their immediate control and those which are beyond their control: one must learn to Control the Controllable and let all else fall to the wayside during task performance. Therefore, encourage students to ensure that their goals facilitate exercising control over controllable aspects of performance.

Performance Preparation Checklists can help students ensure that all essential factors for attaining optimal performance are under optimal control. Moreover, checklists facilitate planning accordingly for factors still requiring attention. This further self-regulation step instils a sense of trust in one’s preparation and in one’s ability to actively influence continued progress. For students engaged in the flow-evocation process, knowing and trusting that they are “in control”, renders anxiety, self-conscious thought and the temptation to “force” flow superfluous (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999).

The loss of self-consciousness

Belief in oneself and trusting that one can and will perform, or is performing within an individually determined “optimal” realm renders insufficient opportunity for negative concern or doubt to arise, as, the mind can not fully focus on competing stimuli concurrently (Carver & Scheier, 1981; Gould, Greenleaf, & Krane, 2002). Directing attention towards tasks as opposed to self-defeating thoughts can facilitate attentional flow (Jackson, 1996). Ultimately, a reciprocal relationship exists between the amalgamation of action and awareness and the loss of self-consciousness. By directing focus towards that which is beneficial to performance, one reduces and eliminates the potentially debilitating effects of self-defeating thought (Beilock, Afremow, Rabe, & Carr, 2001). Simultaneously, the renouncement of self-doubt liberates one to simply perform and allow well-rehearsed optimal performance patterns to eventuate while only positive, performance-enhancing thoughts permeate consciousness.

Thought-stopping and control

To transcend debilitative self-talk and worry, it is imperative that students identify irrational and distorted thoughts by observing, evaluating, and refining their self-talk and practising Thought-stopping and Control. Through recording self-talk relevant to the performance of a task, one becomes cognizant of how powerful messages sent to oneself are. By determining patterns of self-talk and assessing to what extent they are conducive to optimal performance states (or not), one can actively foster individual change.

“My English is not very good,” is a statement frequently uttered by EFL learners. Once identified as not conducive to building self-esteem or confidence, this statement can be replaced with a more positive one, such as: “I am working hard to improve my English.” To enable flow to ensue, debilitative thoughts must be identified as such and more facilitative replacements must be learned and employed to retrain the mind to respond in a manner conducive to personal success.

To augment the process of thought-stopping and control, students should create a personal Litany: a group of positive statements (complied to repeat to oneself) which emphasize attributes, skills and attitudes which are meaningful to the individual, reinforce positive self-talk and increase self-confidence. Students should keep an ongoing list of positive statements and tangible motivational reminders as well as reasons to believe in their abilities in order to foster an increase in self-confidence before losing it. This is vital for the
alleviation of worry. For, debilitative thoughts prevent the concentration necessary to evade self-consciousness and allow optimal performance to ensue.

**Discussion**

Academia could profit considerably from the field of sport psychology in terms of the positive behaviour modification possibilities of PST. Focused students with clear, subjectively determined task related goals and confidence in their individual capacities to approach the task before them are more likely to perform with consistency and competence than those who find themselves disengaged and awash in classes for which they lack affinity and see no clear purpose. Students must be empowered by a healthy sense of belief in their ability to find a personally high challenge commensurate with their best skills when they perceive required tasks as mundane and seemingly insurmountable.

Realistically, offering comprehensive PST programs is not always feasible. However, by encouraging students to employ, acquire and develop simple yet nonetheless facilitative performance enhancement techniques and strategies (Hanton & Jones, 1999a), educators can enable students to take a more active role in the learning process whilst increasing the quality of their unique learning experience: this starts with exemplifying opportunities for flow. Hence, attempting to facilitate the evocation of flow by means of instruction as to what the prerequisites of flow are and how to elude their occurrence in a classroom setting is a logical practical application of the theoretically defined construct of flow. Through training to elicit optimal mental performance, one inevitably learns to develop a belief in one’s capabilities to master challenges faced, increase active involvement in an endeavour and thereby wilfully enhance enjoyment and positively influence subsequent performance.

Initially, engaging in the described self-regulatory process may seem elaborate yet finding a balance between what one wishes to accomplish employing one’s best skills, and determining how to actually do so establishes the foundation for flow. Introduced with zeal and conviction as of unequivocal importance when vying for optimal performance, the process becomes habitual and almost second-nature for students to maintain.

**Conclusion**

Inviting students to find and maintain subjectively optimal levels of intrinsic motivation and commitment to both ongoing learning and personal development is of unequivocal importance for unveiling students’ latent potential. By unleashing the magnificence of what students can achieve with optimal focus and involvement, great feats become possible and in turn become the impetus for more. It is not enough for educators to believe in their students, students must learn why and how to foster a belief in themselves. This can be accomplished using the flow model as a theoretical framework for enhancing the quality of experience and enabling the evocation of mental states conducive to optimal performance. Using this framework, students can learn to elicit their best when required – an indispensable precursor to excellence. If we aspire for our students to reach figuratively high altitudes, we must foster in them appropriate mental attitudes, as personal and academic success lies in harnessing the capacities of the mind.

**References**


Media literacy in community: introducing new approach in understanding mass media for community and developing community media

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Abstract
Mass media has been playing important roles in Indonesia, especially when the Reform Era begun at May 1998. It raised new order that open a freedom of expression to all citizens. It has created democratization in all sectors, especially mass media. Media institutions increased rapidly since that time, but this condition was not followed by audiences’ comprehension of mass media knowledge. Audiences were just seen as consumers by mass media institutions. This is an ironic and paradox situation for the freedom of expression that has been struggled for a long time in Indonesia. It is a problem that should be solved immediately.

Therefore, media literacy for audiences is the solution to address this problem. Media literacy is an education programme for people, so they can get quite lot of comprehension about media. However, media literacy could not reach its main goal if only based on school or college. Media literacy needs to be implemented in communities. That is the focus of this paper. Thus, the community-based strategy needs a new approach rather than a form that was developed for students in school or college. The new approach should be based on some concepts, such as participatory, local knowledge, and local social-capital.

Introduction: a closer look to media reality
At the bright afternoon, four minutes to 6 pm in the last day of September 2009, an earthquake suddenly hit the West Sumatera in Indonesia. The magnitude was 7.9 in Richter scale. No one imagined before that this peaceful area could become ruins just in a few minutes. Thus, only in the next minutes, the news about what happened in West Sumatera has spread along the country and all parts of the world. Online media and television crews became the busiest people at that moment. The same situation was also faced by other journalists from local, national, even international newspaper, radio, television, online media, and news agency.

Once again, by that illustration, Marshal McLuhan proves his theory that mass media put it roles as the extension of men. Audiences from around the world who live far away from West Sumatera suddenly could hear, see, or read what happened there. Moreover, audiences in every nation could also feel the sorrow that hit people in Sumatera. They send their sympathy by praying. They also send emergency relief as their empathy. Even, some rescue teams from Korea, England, Australia, and so on came to the location by themselves for helping the evacuation process.

How could they know about what happened in Indonesia at that time? How could they, then, decided to give medical or emergency aids, even send their rescue teams? The answer is because of media. There was a penetration of information in rapid spread through mass media. Information was gained from mass media, and nobody put their hesitation that it was a
main aspect to make decisions. This is what I call “the power of publicity”. This is a part of what exactly mass media could do in society.

Does everyone realize this power? Has everyone put their concern to the role of media in society? These are some questions that will be discussed in this paper. Furthermore, the social movement called media literacy that became a method to address those problems will also be analysed. There are many references — theory-based or practical-based — in media literacy put school as major entity of the programme. However, what about the media literacy for adults? What about media literacy for children or youth who live together in community? Does the method that currently developed is suitable, effective, and efficient to address the basic problems on every situation in every nation?

This paper will try to elaborate this matter, to do some critiques on the school-based approach, and offer a new approach that more suitable for media literacy in community. The analysis and the proposed approach are based on empirical observation, and case studies especially in Indonesia. Structure of this paper is also based on historical context of Indonesia, especially in its media issue. This paper begin its discussion by introduce some questions as the main problems. Then, it will invite readers to take a closer look to main concept and historical context in Indonesian media industry. This is a platform to create action in media literacy. As a social movement, media literacy will be assessed from its theory, approach, and practical guidance that currently developed. One of it is school-based approach that will be discussed in the next section. I write some critics and challenges of this approach, especially in Indonesian context.

Afterwards, I offer a new approach that could be an alternative way for conducting media literacy in community (community-based media literacy). I do an elaboration about the power of community before dive deeper to an alternative concept as a new approach in media literacy. How, then, this alternative approach could be taken as a whole method in community-based media literacy? The last section would be the answer for it.

**Democracy and re-orientation of Indonesian media industry**

Indonesia as a nation has proclaimed its independence since 1945. However, it does not mean that every citizen could express their feelings and thoughts through all channels by that time directly. As a young nation, Indonesia was seeking its suitable form of nation-state. Historical evidences show Indonesia ever tried many systems, from democracy, social-liberalism, authoritarianism, until socialism.

That condition was caused by changes in political context. It has driven the move of Indonesian political system from one to another system as mentioned above. A radical change was happened in the last 1965 to March 1966. In the heat of cold-war as international main issue at that time, Indonesia faced its new condition from totalitarianism to more open nation, especially more open to the West. The new president, Soeharto, a military general, take a lead this nation. He totally changed the basic policy that already done by the previous president, Soekarno, who was one of Indonesia’s founding fathers.

Soeharto claimed his new view will bring the nation to its prosperity through a democracy system. However, he promised, the democracy system would be different from the West system that based on capitalism and liberalism. He called this system: *Demokrasi Pancasila*, a democracy that based on the basic value of Indonesian charter called Pancasila.

At the moment, it sounded like a bright hope for Indonesia’s future. But, the problem emerged later. Soeharto only built the nation on economic-based indicators. Democracy, then, just become a rhetoric term to legitimise his power. This is a power to build corrupted bureaucracy in the whole country. Every policy was not considered public interest anymore, but put state and market as its main consideration.
The situation mentioned above, then, influenced all sectors from politic, social, economy, culture, to public service, including mass media industry in Indonesia. There is a centralistic way in every sector, so do in mass media. Everyone who intends to create a mass media have to ask permission from an authority department before run his or her business. This authority department is representation of the state that controlled every “move” of its citizen, even in mass media industry. It is believed, in such kind of system, mass media has no longer run its role as a public sphere which shows diversity of information and thoughts. Media just became a state apparatus, or in other word it just an extension of state policies. If media published information that different from state policy or even oppose it, then state could suddenly withdraw the media published licensed. Though there were many mass media, from print to electronic media, media role did not work as it should be.

It happened as long as Soeharto regime ran his power in Indonesia from March 1966 to May 1998. After more than 32 years, Indonesian people could no longer stand silent with what happened to them. When economic crisis hit across Asia, started in the mid of 1997, Indonesia also faced huge problem. State become weaker since the crisis happened. It raised people awareness to what exactly happened to them under this regime. Then, led by student movement, Indonesian realise what should they do: they fought back to the regime! They wanted this regime stop, and the social and political system must be changed immediately. Democracy should be done in its correct pattern and daily practice in every sector rather than become regime slogan only. A people power has changed condition since May 1998. A new era emerged to replace the previous one, from New Order Era (under Soeharto regime) to Reform Era (under a real democracy system based on public-oriented values).

Since then, many aspects changed rapidly. So do the mass media industry. Law No. 40 year 1999 about Press represents a new perspective about regulation of press institution. There was no state-permit anymore to start a mass media publication. There were no longer any threats from state to mass media institution. The regulation was followed by another policy, such Law No. 32 year 2002 about Broadcasting Institution in Indonesia. Public interest-based was also represented in this regulation like the previous one. This condition influenced the form of media industry in Indonesia.

Print media publication increased rapidly, more than 300% in the first two years after Reform Era begun. The similar situation happened too in radio broadcasting and television industry. Indonesian people, as media audiences, face a new condition that totally different from the previous era. They could hope a vary information from many mass media, and they could expect many thoughts that represent in every news or information in media.

Afterwards, mass media as social institution and also economic institution run its new role in a democratic system. In other word, democracy has influence mass media industry into re-orientation of its life. In Indonesia’s case, this is re-orientation from state-cooptation-apparatus to public-based institution. But, does it really happen till now?

I think that is an interesting question. After Reform Era in Indonesia run for more than 11 years, I develop a thought based on that simple question. It is a simple question that requires a deeper look for seeking the answer. I use a critical view to find the way for elaboration regarding that question. According to my observation and analysis, now mass media industry in Indonesia is showing a paradox condition regarding to public interest and public needs orientation. Since May 1998 until last 2009 mass media showed quantitative development in rapid increasing, but did not always address public needs and public interest.

It was caused by a more liberal situation in media industry. Information, as mass media substance, has become a commodity rather than as media message that useful to address public needs which based on freedom from any threats and public freedom for expression. This is the basic principle for mass media industry in a democratic society. But, what really happen in Indonesian mass media industry after Reform Era indicates a contradictory
situation from principles mentioned above. Mass media institutions and its business became more liberal, more private, and put its basic orientation on market rather than public. It delivered different values from situation that was imagined before when the Reform Era begun. Now, market-driven journalism is becoming common situation that happen in press institution. The same condition also happens in broadcasting institutions. Radio and television programming use market-driven orientation too. It indicates from their orientation of rating and audience share as main important indicators to create programming instead of using audience-based needs.

I predict if we do not response to this paradox situation, Indonesian people dream of their democracy and freedom through mass media as the main spirit of Reform Era will no longer be reached. Obviously, there would be no more public interest as basic orientation of mass media industry. Indonesia will face its important challenge as a democratic society. Does it really democracy for public, or just a freedom to run media business to gain capital accumulation for some institutions interest only? I suggest Indonesian need to take a new social movement in this matter for bringing back the public interest and public needs as the main orientation of mass media industry.

Media literacy as a social movement

Media institutions increased rapidly at that time. Unfortunately, this condition was not followed by audiences’ comprehension of mass media knowledge, especially when mass media institutions were driven by market and business orientation. Audiences were just seen as consumers by mass media institutions. They still continue to put audiences as a weak side, so audiences will be “the silent majority” that can be steered and influenced through anything presented by mass media. This is an ironic and paradox situation for the freedom of expression that has been struggled since along time in Indonesia. It is a problem that should be solved immediately.

Therefore, media literacy for audiences is the solution to address this problem. Media literacy is an education programme for people, so they can get quite lot of comprehension about media. Media literacy aims to develop audience comprehension about knowledge structures of media content, media industries, media effects, and putting it all together (see Potter, 2001). Media literacy will develop audience awareness about media contents and media industry. The importance of this awareness is located on the audience power in front of media industry. This a power that can increase the bargaining position of audiences regarding the media contents and media orientation.

This view does not intend to erase media role as an economic institution. Every media can still run its business to gain capital accumulation. But, this role should be done together with another role as social institution to address public needs of information, education, and entertainment through media contents. Fairness is a keyword in this matter. It must be fair to public, to address the basic rights of audience: right to get information and right to express. When this situation does not happen, there must be something wrong.

Media literacy is needed to obtain awareness and capacity of audiences about media content and media industry. This should not be done in individual level only, but have to be activated socially. It must be a social movement, locally or globally, to make sure that audience power is stronger than everybody imagined before. So, media industry will consider this power and, hopefully, will take a consideration to put public-based orientation as their main orientation again in developing their programmes or contents.

School-based media literacy: critics and challenges

Media literacy programme has been done in many developed countries. Audience awareness about media content and media industry has increased in recent years. Even, a
national campaign on media literacy has taken an important step. This campaign succeeded to attract local or national authority for adding media literacy as a part of education curriculum in elementary and secondary school. Children will gain more information about how media operated in their daily life, about media content, and also structure of media industry in their surroundings.

Many publications, such as journal articles and books, are published a lot as representation of the media literacy campaign in developed countries. These publications give us insight from theoretical approaches in media literacy, aspects of media literacy, lesson-learned from some media literacy programmes, until complete guidance to do a media literacy activity in school. It is not difficult to obtain information about media literacy as a social movement that is done in school-based approach. However, a new problem came up when media literacy as a social movement will be implemented in developing country, such as Indonesia. Social and political context about society and media industry in Indonesia as stated above showed different situation to what happened in developed country.

The development of school as basis of education in Indonesia, indeed, shows a rapid increasing in the last three decades. But, this development is slower than a move of media industry and media penetration to society. When government still improved number of children participation to enrol in school, mass media penetration is moving faster into communities in urban, rural, even remote areas in Indonesia. Media contents can be seen as quickly as they can, even in private space of these communities. Then questions came up to me, could school-based approach be a suitable approach for doing media literacy in such condition? Does school-based media literacy show its effectiveness for such communities?

School-based approach assumes media literacy main target is children. When combined media literacy in part of the curriculum, policy maker hopes the effectiveness of education in media matter will reach its goal. Children will enrich themselves with quite knowledge in media matter, so when they are going older they could build a stronger society regarding to media contents and media effects. School-based approach will work effective in a developed society that formal education is basis for the social development. However, the different type of society could not be addressed with this approach because of its lack principles, methods, and tools for understanding in community level. School-based approach works in a classroom concept, through formal method, using technology-based instrument, and work with relatively homogenous participant (ages, interest, intellectually, socio-economic background, etc.). This condition will not be found in a community level.

The power of community
Every principles, methods, and tools in school-based media literacy need to be reconstruct if we want to do a media literacy programme in community level. First question is why community? As I described in previous sections, Indonesia as a part of developing countries have a specific situation in its media life. So, there is a necessity to response this condition with a specific approach too. Basically, Indonesian—as a society—is a communal society. Every individual is seen as part of a community. In each community there are specific shared values, cultural expressions, and community goals.

In other side, mass media penetration happened in rapid time. No one could restrain this huge wave, including local community no matter in urban or rural area. Community shared values, cultural expressions, and community goals can be redefined because of the powerful penetration of mass media. That is why media literacy has its significance to be done in a community level. Of course, the principles, methods, and tools used should be specific and different from school-based activities.

In community-based media literacy, basic assumption is located on main target of the programme and perspective of community power. Main target of community-based media
literacy is not only children, but also youth and adults in family and community. They are community members who have more power in a communal community. Who decide what can be done and what cannot are adults. Who decide what can be seen in television and what cannot are adults. Who decide what should be paid attention to information from newspaper and what must be ignored are adults. They are community members who decide the value in community. So, media literacy programme should start its activity from here: targeting adults.

In addition, community cannot be ignored by policy maker, government, or even business industry. Community is a basis level in society after family that hold a power too. They could decide their own shared values, which one is the best and fit for them and which one is not. They also could make a movement based on these shared values, no matter in radical or moderated way. This is why knowledge about media contents, media industries, and every aspect about media will be valuable information for building awareness and developing action to strengthen the community. Strong communities, then, will build a strong nation-state too.

Please welcome, a participatory approach

If we want to handle a community-based programme on media literacy, we need a specific approach that cannot be adopted totally from school-based approach. We need an approach that was aroused from inside the community itself. It is an approach that put important consideration on the power of community, or in other word we have community-based perspective. To gain this perspective we should consider local social-capital and local knowledge. Those are two concepts that emerge from community itself and will useful as consideration when we discuss and create a media literacy programme in community.

That view leads us to meet a specific approach called participatory approach. In this approach, there are principles that suitable with the condition of community. Those principles are community member participation, practice and collaborative, emancipation, critical, dialectic-reflective, and have orientation on the changes of theory and practices (see Cambers, 1996, and Minkelsen, 2003). Participatory approach sees society as subject of social change, not only as object. In this approach, media literacy programme should be designed together among facilitator (trainer) and community member. Programme design also should make community able to sustain programme by themselves.

In this approach, media literacy will be seen as a social process. As a consequence, process is an important part, not only put all efforts to reach goals of the programme. So, in every step or process, every community member will meet a learning space through media literacy programme. There are continuity dialogues among facilitator, community member, and every social context in that community. These will help the programme to reach its effectiveness in community context.

Meanwhile, participatory approach on media literacy programme also shows practice and collaborative principle. In this principles, community member are not seen as object but subject in the whole process. They will be involved too in designing, researching, and disseminating whole process. The principle works in line with other principles, such as emancipation and critical view. Programme will succeed if it moves based on emancipation and gives new hope to every community member. In other principle, dialectic-reflective, this process is seen as a fair relation. There is no student-teacher paradigm, and there is no passive-active role. Everyone in the process is equal and active to respond and gives insight each other. All those principles bring us to commitment on social change that must be sustainable. The sustainability of the programme means that community can design and continue the advance steps of the programme based on their social-capital and local knowledge.
Moreover, situation and principles described above need a technical-operational procedure in a specific way too. Classroom concept, teacher-student role, and technological-based instruments are cannot be adopted in community-based media literacy. We should create concept, social relation, and instruments or tools that based on every community situation through participatory approach. We should adopt their own social-capital and local knowledge to put mass media contents and mass media industry into their own context. I assume it is the best way we should do in order to gain more effective impact of media literacy in community.

**Conclusion and recommendation**

Analysis on school-based approach in media literacy leads me to conclude that this approach could not be used totally to the media literacy programme in community, especially community in developing country context. Media industry in Indonesia, as one of developing country, is rapidly changed from authoritarianism and totalitarianism into democracy. Then, it changed from democracy for people and public interest into democracy that eliminated public orientation, changed into market-driven orientation. This condition emerge awareness to do media literacy programme in community level, rather than in school-based activities. To create and run a media literacy in community we should put community values as its main orientation. There are social-capital and local knowledge inside every community. This lead us to meet a new approach that most suitable perspective for doing media literacy in community. That is a participatory approach with its specific principles that put community member as subject in social process.

I recommend for researchers to take a consideration in this field, especially about participatory approach in community-based media literacy. We need to design, write, and publish more various perspectives and practices in media literacy. So, every scholar or social worker could gain different approaches and choose the most suitable approach to use in many conditions and contexts.

**References**


Teaching Alice Walker’s *Now Is the Time to Open Your Heart* as an activist’s call for global citizenship

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Abstract

Teaching Alice Walker’s latest writing and activism may help in defining the ethos a citizen of the world. Global concern is a dimension of womanist thought. Jacquelyn Grant states, “To speak of Black women’s tridimensional reality … is not to speak of Black women exclusively, for there is an implied universality, which connects them with others” (p. 217).

In Walker’s novel, the character Kate leaves her inauthentic life and embarks on a spiritual journey from which she counsels assault victims and becomes conscious of the ongoing global injustice inflicted on people by insensitive and callous political leaders. With dismay, she learns that the U.S. had bombed eight different locations while she was on her spiritual journey. As a global citizen, she understands the morbidity of hateful violence as well as the necessity of loving kindness. Walker also underscores the contemporary misconception of civilization. The character Hugh comments on the harmful effects of scientific research that involves the dishonoring of Native American sacred grounds. He understands that technological advancement and the oppressive nature of what some call civilization actually work against the development of humanity. Similarly, Kate, also a citizen of the world, respects the Earth, its rivers and plants, and is embraced by a welcoming tree spirit that induces her to change her name from Nelson to Talkingtree.

Finally, the paper elaborates on the interconnectedness between the novel’s content and Walker’s current activism.

Introduction

Teaching Alice Walker’s *Now Is the Time to Open Your Heart* may involve a number of academic interpretative strategies because the novel is a complex construct of various literary devices, narrative techniques, and extraneous references. Apart from being impressively artful formally, the novel has moral import. Through this work Alice Walker outlines an ethos of a global citizen, who respects nature, crosses the confining borders of historically conditioned hatred, recognizes the value of difference, and transcends imposing Western civilization. The main characters, Kate and her partner Yolo, sojourns strengthen their connectedness with mother Earth and different peoples. In this regard, the novel exhibits the global womanist ethical perspective that evolved from the struggle of black women against the multi-dimensional oppression of racism, classism and sexism, as Jacquelyn Grant states, “To speak of Black women’s tridimensional reality, therefore, is not to speak of Black women exclusively, for there is an implied universality, which connects them with others” (p. 217).

Defining an ethos of a global citizen

First of all, becoming a world citizen requires the transcendence of painful histories that have produced deep adversarial hatred. In the novel, Kate learns about the suffering of her ancestor Rufus through a dream. His jealous master ordered his teeth to be pulled out without anesthesia, with pliers used for horses. Furthermore, in the dream, Rufus tells Kate about his
murder at the hands of terrorist nightriders, who sought to subject him to long extended torture, but one of them shot him too quickly. Kate’s thoughts about the dream intertwine with her memory of a white poet Jane Stembridge, who attempted to join the Black Freedom Movement but was “pushed out of the struggle in the South” (p. 93), because black historical memory defined her as a merciless white mistress (p. 93). Kate believes that Jane was also a victim of oppression. On Kate’s Amazon river sojourn, she encounters a shaman by the name of Armando, who remembers the atrocities inflicted on his ancestors by Spanish conquistadores, who “made a game of slicing … people in two…. fed … babies to their dogs. What they did to women is perhaps better unsaid” (p. 94). Armando, does not seek revenge. He recognizes that, no matter how painful the memory is, “we must work with it” (p. 94), continuing “Not because it is Spanish behavior, no. Because it is human behavior. And we too are humans” (p. 94). The gracefulness of the Indians amazes another character, Hugh, who thinks, “[they] really should be giving me hemlock, if they knew what my people had done to them?” (p. 158). Nonetheless, Armando and his assistant Cosmi tend “the sick descendants of the people who’d almost destroyed them” (p. 89) because Armando is of the opinion that a “sick person has no history and no nationality” (p. 90).

Moreover, the characters in Now Is the Time to Open Your Heart develop consciousness of Western colonialism. Kate finds out that during the time she was on her sojourn U.S. forces “bombed eight different places in the world” (p. 182). Yolo learns of the devastating U.S. bombardment of the Marshall Islands, where children “were being born without eyes or spinal column. They were sometimes just blobs of tissues” (p. 186). Alice Walker takes up a topic of American neocolonialism in citing an unnamed exclusive hotel, unaffordable to Hawaiian natives, which Yolo describes as “ugly … the same beige of office buildings in Washington, D.C.” (p. 55). This sign of American capitalism brings back to Hawaiians the painful history surrounding American intrigue leading to the arrest of their queen, who had to surrender her throne to save her people from bloodshed. Afterwards, Americans even banned the use of the Hawaiian language. Another reminder of Western colonialism is Dole’s plantation. The character Alma reflects upon her father’s German and Portuguese ancestry, which placed him in a separate, more privileged class, the members of which “got land without having to buy it, for instance, after Hawaiians like [her] mother’s people had their communal lands taken away from them and were placed on plantations to work. Along comes [her] dad, who’s given everything a young white boy could want. Clothes, money, cars, motorcycles” (p. 110-111). Also Yolo meets young Aborigines who inform him that native people in Australia are tormented by the memory of Western usurpation and how they now sniff petrol “to forget that once upon a time [they] were one with [their] land and with [their] sea … to try to avoid the anxiety of that loss” (p. 135).

Becoming a global citizen involves active participation in the worldwide struggle against the forces of oppression and the search for peaceful resolutions. Kate comes in contact with a Buddhist teacher, who sees “cool,” non-violent revolution as the way forward. She wonders, “What would happen if our foreign policy centered on the cultivation of joy rather than pain?” (p. 183). She discerns the hypocrisy of affluent political leaders, who ostentatiously arrived at peace talks in limousines and later “turned to the military bastion from which they directed their tanks” (p. 78). She also reflected upon U.S. racism towards black Americans, We’re considered second- and third-class citizens of a country whose government never wanted us. Except as slaves. We understand by now the world will be blown to bits, doubtless by this same government, before people of color get their fair share. We can’t afford health insurance, or will it even ever be applicable, the way things are going (p. 56-57).

Earlier, Kate was a Black Freedom Movement activist, whose work was centered in the South. Now, her activism has a global dimension. Just before using a medicinal plant, she
prays “for help for the humans of the planet and for the coming generations and for the animals and plants and rocks … that she be guided to knowledge of how to act in the world for the highest good of all” (p. 62).

Alice Walker also calls upon global citizens to recognize the beauty of difference and to condemn racial erasure. Her character Kate does likewise critiquing passing and skepticism towards ethnic studies:

… since coming to America all of us ‘ethnics’ who could pass for white people did so. We dropped as much as we could of whatever heart, soul, or rhythm made us unique…. And certainly you don’t want ethnic studies taught in schools …, because that is exactly the question that is asked” (p. 161).

Walkers also applies racial characteristics to her characters, who participate in rituals of spiritual empowerment and unification. An oarswoman on the Colorado River is described as a “wiry Texan with a hawk’s nose and piercing grey eyes” (p. 49). A local shaman is African-Amerindian. The shaman’s white assistant Enoba has dark hair and warm hazel eyes. On the Amazon, Kate shares the experience with Lalika, a black woman from Mississippi, who had killed a rapist and a white woman, a woman “ who had been incested from the time she could barely crawl” (p. 89).

In the novel, people of varied backgrounds share closeness with one another to the point that it feels “very ancient and very sweet” (p. 166). Yolo seems to define global citizenship as “Being with people of the world in a certain way…. A way that erases all boundaries …” (p. 169).

Another condition for the obtainment of global citizenship is an ability to discern the profundity of indigenous cultures in juxtaposition to Western civilization. The character Yolo contemplates time as conceptualized by native Australians, who “thought Time was synonymous with Forever and that therefore it was ridiculous to wear it on your arms. Or to think one’s short present lifetime made much of an impression on Time at all” (p. 26). In contrast, his clocks symbolically clatter his space and express a Western pace of life, which entraps people to the point that they do not have even time to change batteries. Another character Hugh tells the story of an Indian man who regularly visited an ancestral burial place, occasionally accompanied by his son or grandson. Hugh finds it hard to imagine his own grandsons walking along with him so peacefully, because they are submerged in the spiritual depravity of consumerism at “play with a little gadget that looks like a handheld TV. They seem to look up from it only when it’s time to eat” (p. 129).

Alice Walker continues to critique Western civilization through characters who condemn the misuse of scientific research. Lalika tells the story of Saartjie, an African woman, whose natural beauty was viewed by European scientists as an anomaly. The woman “was forced to show herself to incredulous Europeans all over Europe…. when she died in childbirth, she and her child were still dragged, embalmed and in an open coffin, around Europe … parts of her body were cut off, pickled, and kept in a jar, ending up in a Paris museum” (p. 114). Likewise, the character Hugh cites the dishonoring of Indian sacred grounds by Western industrialists and scientists who seek coal deposits and study indigenous people. About the latter, he says, “They made up something up … What the White Man Knows About Folks He’s Never Known, and printed it in their journals” (p. 131).
The progress of civilization is portrayed in many ways as detrimental to people and nature. The character Kate contemplates the insecure existence of earth’s inhabitants, “It seemed to her that humans were now in the position of deer or antelope or buffalo or polar bears. There wasn’t any longer a safe place for any of them” (p. 63). Another character Yolo concludes, “The world has never been in worse shape: global warming, animal extinction, people … crazy, war” (p. 185). He finds out that sandalwood forests in Hawaii disappeared because they “went to Asia, Europe, America. They were made into incense, matchboxes, doodads” (p. 75) and that the building of solar-powered house in Hawaii was declared illegal, because certain people “have deals with the construction industry on the mainland” (p. 176).

What is also painful to observe in the allegedly civilized world is the harm one human being resorts to inflict upon another for the sake of profiteering. The character Rick tries to reconcile with his self after learning about the source of his family’s lucrative business of drug trafficking among black people. He discerns his family’s entrapment within the hedonistic, inhumane consumerism. “I felt instinctively that we had too much of everything: food, clothes, money. And my parents, especially my father, was always urging me to take more. Eat! Drink! Buy!” (p. 161) Rick also feels the distance that the blurring affluence produces among people as he realizes that his driver never really perceived him as a human being. Rick concludes, “I saw it was my overcoat, and hat, my well-pressed boots and tailored suits, he recognized” (p. 161). Finally, the civilized world has also produced a dehumanizing, superficial popular culture. Armando warns the participants of the group therapy “to stay out of popular culture and in their own interior world” (p. 142). What one has to focus on is one’s uniqueness and spiritual growth. Once one reaches the inner peace, one is able to open his/her heart to others and to sense the unity with them. In the novel, we read: “All that is required in that everyone becomes one mind…. Television creates this global mind to some extent, but the programming is bad” (p. 77).

As an observer of increasing disharmony between humans and nature and humans themselves, a global citizen should endeavor to reconcile the relationship with mother earth. Therefore, Kate compares her slow walking mediation to vegetation, which is expressed in her newly chosen name Kate Talkingtree. Her connectedness to nature is also revealed by her cave-looking altar room, her dream of a dry river beckoning her to spiritual renewal, her intuitive choice of a healing flower, and her sensitivity to the liveliness of a rainforest.

Correspondence between Alice Walker’s fiction and activism

Alice Walker’s call for global activism through her fiction reflects the author’s actual activism. Like the character Kate, Alice Walker was formerly a Civil Rights Movement activist. In her book Anything We Love Can Be Saved: A Writer’s Activism, she explains the foundation of her global focus, saying, “My activism – cultural, political, spiritual – is rooted in my love of nature and my delight in human beings” (XXII). Her recent undertakings can be traced on her website at www.alicewalkersgarden.com and her blog at www.alicewalkersblog.com. She collaborates with Palm of Her Hand Independent Media Producers, who seek to create positive media in resistance to unhealthy popular media. She has also adopted an orphanage in Sonoma County for children of AIDS victims and this fall, she signed on to boycott the International Film Festival in Toronto because of its decision “to showcase Israeli films in celebration of Tel Aviv’s 100 year’s of existence.” Walker expressed the reasons for engagement thusly:

There are an estimated 11,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails and prisons. There are reports of widespread torture of prisoners, women and men, covering decades of abuse. There is the placing of individuals in grave like boxes for extraordinary lengths of time, beatings and denial of sustenance, and the forcing of prisoners to remain naked, among other horrors…. where men of conscience
are too traumatized to stand beside women. Or where the men themselves are punished for taking a stand. To change all this will require all the courage the world can muster. But change it we must (“Boycotts”).

In her essay entitled “Overcoming Speechlessness: A Poet Encounters "the horror" in Rwanda, Eastern Congo and Palestine/Israel,” Alice Walker references the holocausts that have been inflicted upon people all over the world, referring to the “racist and sadistic treatment of black people before the Civil Rights Movement,” Cherokee decimation during the Trail of Tears, The Nazis Final Solution, mass murder and anthropophagy in Rwanda, and the horrendous atrocities committed in the Congo such as Belgian King Leopold’s policy of cutting off the hands of the enslaved, the sexual abuse of Kigali women in the Eastern region, the death of four million Congolese attributed to wars engendered by lust for mineral resources. When it comes to current conflicts, Alice Walker is particularly concerned with “partitioning of the land” in Palestine and the resulting bloodshed. In an interview, she reflects upon her travel to Gaza with CODEPINK in celebration of International Women’s Day. She condemns the violent and disproportionate use of force inflicted upon Gazans by Israel, actions financed by American taxpayers. She is particularly outraged by the use of white phosphorus and other chemicals that induce great suffering and death. Alice Walker thinks that global citizens, “the world community that cares about peace and cares about truth and cares about justice, will have to find the way to deal with this. We can’t just let it go as if this is just o.k…. As a taxpayer in the United State but a citizen of the planet I feel we have to stop this. This cannot continue, this endangers the world.”

Barbara Christian, a black American literary critic, writes that Alice Walker’s engagement with the world is consistent with the activist and literary legacy of black American women.

For those of us who came out of the sixties, the vision of women moving all over the world was not solely a claiming of our rights but also the rights of all those who had been denied their humanity. In the space created for us by our foremothers, by our sisters in the streets, the houses, the factories, the schools, we were now able to speak and to listen to each other, to hear our own language, to refine and critique it across time and space, through the written word (53).

Walker’s participation in the black freedom struggle is also an impetus for her current global activism. While participating in the boycott against the recent International Film Festival in Toronto, she referred to the arrest of Rosa Parks writing, “those of us who heard about it or saw the photographs, wept. We realized we were one. A people. When the white supremacists arrested Rosa Parks, we felt her love of us. At that moment it was the strongest nutrient for our growth we could have imagined” (“Boycotts”). Connecting her experience with Southern segregation to her present day concern for the people of Gaza, she said, “This is partly because we grew up in apartheid in the United States. We learned just how ugly it was” (“Boycotts”).

Conclusion

Alice Walker warns global citizens against the paralysis that hatred can bring, writing “Once spread about..., it becomes a web in which I would sit caught and paralyzed like the fly who stepped into the parlor” (In Search p. 137). A person should come to know that people are not evil by nature, by nationality, or by race. In her book Anything We Love Can Be Saved, the author writes, “I believe the Earth is good. That people, untortured by circumstances or fate, are also good. I do not believe the people of the world are naturally my enemies…. Whenever I experience evil, and it is not, unfortunately, uncommon to experience it in these times, my deepest feeling is disappointment” (p. XXV). Further developing these thoughts in a Gaza interview, Walker remarked, “All children look the same to me. If the
Palestinian child asked me for bread, I would give it, and if the Israeli child did, I would give it too.”

“Good Germans, Good Americans, Good Jews” (“Overcoming”).

References


*Palm of Her Hand.* Artist, Publisher and Innovator, Reverend Shiloh Mccloud Partners with Alice Walket to Produce a New Greeting Card and Poster Line. http://www.palmoferhand.com/alicewalkershilohmccloudcards.html


Language, culture, and social transformation: Jamaican perspectives (LCST Project) a curriculum development project

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Abstract
The need for raising international and global awareness among educators of different profiles is one of the most important challenges facing comparative and international education and will be at the center of this study group project. One of the most significant impacts of this proposal is the collaborative nature of curriculum development. The Group Study Abroad in Jamaica developed through a Department of Education Fulbright Grant, which allowed teachers to develop new curricula about the multilingual/multicultural context in Jamaica and collect data and course materials to design a thematic unit. Due to the high concentration of people of the Caribbean in the United States, the LCST Project is uniquely poised to address the limited content of the Caribbean in public school curriculums. The impact of working with this population clearly affects most NEIU faculty and staff, and American and Jamaican public schooling. Curriculum units, curriculum boxes and Internet resources have been developed for wide distribution. Information is shared through seminars, workshops, in-services, conferences and professional meetings. NEIU students and faculty involved in Latino and Latin American Studies, Social Work, Foreign Languages-Spanish, Educational Leadership and Development, Sociology and Teacher Education, as well as the Moneague College in Jamaica. The LCST Project on-site study program and experiences in Jamaica created opportunities that could not be replicated without travel and extensive research abroad. Preliminary results indicate that the study in Jamaica’s urban and rural areas has assisted the collaborative team fill the gaps in current curriculum both in K-12 schools and higher education classes.

Introduction
The Group Study Abroad in Jamaica allowed teachers to develop new curricula about the multilingual/multicultural context in Jamaica and collect data and course materials to design and develop thematic units. The group paid particular attention to the degree and extent in which Jamaica, as a country, embraces and values the diversity of languages and ethnic groups. This educational experience is driven by Jamaica’s particularly linguistic, cultural and historical trends:

a) the African, French and Dutch influence in language and culture;
b) the role that British English plays as the official language in schooling; and
c) the role and status of the Jamaican Creole or Patois as the native tongue of the vast majority of the Jamaican people.

After intensive pre-departure seminars, this twenty-two member collaborative a) newly recruited teachers and b) practicing k-12 teachers focused on 1) providing k-12 teachers insight into the culture of Jamaica, furnish a discussion group in a collaborative setting to integrate culture, linguistic, community and educational experiences into lesson plans designed for implementation during the post project phase and 3) establish post program
seminars to disseminate information and teaching modules and to establish an exchange program between the participants schools and the Jamaican host teachers.

**Curriculum project**

This curriculum project has practical classroom application for teachers to develop modules on the history and culture of Jamaica, its indigenous past and present, as well as family and community functioning. The team spent four weeks during the summer of 2007 studying with counterparts from universities and public schools in Jamaica. Participants will visit public and private educational centers in Jamaica as well as several historical sites, including the Seville House. The team was immersed in a rural community where they interacted with families, children and community members as well as story tellers and artisans to learn about the culture and history of Moneague and surrounding villages in and around St. Ann Parish. Participants had the opportunity not only to observe and interact with k-12 colleagues, but also appreciate differences between the systems of education. At the completion of the team’s summer study participants were able to 1) describe in general terms of the history and the impact of the early history and culture has on present day Jamaica 2) understand the impact of colonialism and slavery on present day Jamaica; 3) compare and contrast public and private education programs visited in Jamaica and 4) compare and contrast how U.S. and Jamaican education related education programs addressing the needs of k-12 children. The Fulbright experience enhanced transformations in the teacher and the curriculum and foster greater and personal awareness of multicultural and multilingual experiences and perspectives.

We are particularly drawn to Jamaica for four reasons:

1) The growing concentration of Jamaicans in Illinois (one of the largest in the United States) and the contemporary cultural stresses that Jamaicans feel attempting to assimilate in Illinois, Chicago metropolitan area specifically.

2) As public school teachers serving a diverse population and as professors working in a teaching and research university with a tradition of teacher education across the disciplines we are drawn to the Jamaican schooling system with its respect for minority cultures, its developing language policies, and it’s growing international orientation.

3) As cross discipline professionals (women studies, Latin American studies) serving a diverse population and as professors working in a teaching and research university with a tradition of generalist social work education across the disciplines we are drawn to the Jamaican social service systems with its respect for minority cultures, its developing social and economic justice policies, and its growing international and global orientation

4) The power of expressive culture to facilitate learning meaningful to our students makes us particularly interested in the ways that contemporary global cultural movements, transmitted through music, dance, and new technologies have developed from story telling and traditional practices in the Caribbean context, specifically Jamaica.

Language, Culture, and Social Transformation Project: Jamaican Perspectives addressed a critical “missing piece” at NEIU, and the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) allowing us to develop new curricula about the Caribbean, specifically Jamaica, collect course materials and develop an international network to support public school teachers, and faculty across Illinois and Jamaica. Currently, there is a lack of adequate curriculum which relates to the Caribbean, specifically Jamaica, in primary and secondary schools in Chicago and in most of Illinois. The inclusion of Caribbean content in K-12 learning had a positive impact on the development of all students in that it enhances multicultural efforts, increases the capacity for
cross-racial friendships and understanding, and is related to positive educational outcomes, and for some students, positively affects self-esteem. We included K-12 teachers in the group program who are committed to develop educational programs on the Caribbean in general, and Jamaica in particular, that will be disseminated within Chicago school districts through the use of both traditional teaching methods and advances in educational technology (e.g., Internet and video conferencing).

Selection of participants

Participants in the Fulbright-Hays program were provided the following opportunities to investigate language, culture, arts and social transformation in Jamaica, particularly those related to the social realities of an evolving independent nation; increase awareness of the importance of economic and cultural ties with the Caribbean specifically Jamaica; analyze Jamaica’s educational, family and community systems social, and economic; and establish long-term relationships with educators and educational institutions in the host country. These areas provide a foundation that relates to the participants’ individual projects for curriculum development. The international experience provides educators with the resources needed to further develop and enhance the Latino, Latin American Studies and Caribbean curriculum, develop educational units for K-12 students, and disseminate educational materials on Latin, Latin American Studies and Caribbean studies throughout K-12 and higher education institutions with the use of computer aided technology.

Once participants are selected via an open and competitive process in March, we will begin meetings in April to inform them about the specifics of the pre-departure program, preparation deadlines for travel, etc. The pre-departure program will culminate during the second week of June, when for three hours per day we will have intensive seminars. The seminar program will focus on the social, political, and cultural history of Jamaica, in particular social and economic justice, educational institutions, language and expressive culture. We will learn key terms in Jamaican Patois relevant to understanding these topics. Topics addressed will include: slave trade and colonial occupation, popular arts, migration, change in gender roles, family and community issues, present human rights issues, HIV, and language policies in Jamaican public schools. The seminars will offer a comprehensive overview of Jamaican history from early Taino Indians, through the slave trade, the colonial period, independence and nationhood to learn about the globalization process over the centuries. This history is further explored through hands on experiences in the creative arts such dance, music art and literature.

During the pre-departure workshops, the Project Team developed areas of study for background needed to develop instructional units with their Moneague College (MC) and public school counterparts. We examined curriculum development issues at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) and in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and develop initial plans for curriculum integration on our return. We will draw on experts from MC and CPS. A key outcome will be an initial outline of teaching units to be developed for the university and the public schools as well as best practices for social work professionals. The project is designed to support recent Illinois legislation that establishes international exchange programs and other activities that advance cultural awareness and promote mutual understanding and respect for the citizens of other countries as a priority for our schools.

The Project team produced more inclusive teaching units for a curriculum across disciplines, and consolidate knowledge of culture, language policies and training, social, political, intercultural communication, educational practices, and expressive culture using Jamaica as an example. We will collaborate with the NEIU librarians and the Center for Teaching and Learning, to digitize historical documents, developing and circulating artifacts, DVD movie clips, audio tape and other multimedia materials for classroom use. During the
field experience component of the LCST Project, participants will collect materials from archives, bookstores, museums, craft markets, video shops, and music stores to augment course content with artifacts useful within each represented discipline.

In the final phase the LCST Project Team will spend eight months implementing curriculum units and disseminating results. This work will include the following activities:

- Incorporating new lessons and skills into elementary and secondary school curriculum, and university foreign language and area studies course syllabi and evaluating their effectiveness (meeting the competitive priority requirement to “develop and improve foreign language and area studies at elementary/secondary schools” 34 CFR 75.105 (c) (2) (i), 664.40 (b) and 664 (g);
- Working collaboratively with CPS teachers and university personnel to create and keep current a web page to provide findings, experiences, journals (electronic diaries), video clips, and supportive materials for teaching units;
- Producing an archival video from taping made during the on-site visit as another means of educating relevant audiences about the importance of the LSCT Project;
- Using materials collected during the site research phase (pictures/slides, video presentations, books, paintings, museum reproduction, crafts, music, newspaper clippings) in classroom lectures, public presentations, discussion meetings, local and regional history displays;
- Developing community boxes that will contain artifacts and lesson plans that include the use of those artifacts, this can be borrowed by CPS and NEIU teachers and faculty;
- Using new research and on-site experiences for presentations and at professional meetings;
- Publishing articles based on this project in academic journals and conference proceedings such as the Illinois Council of Social Studies Teachers, Illinois Council of Bilingual Language Teachers, Multicultural Teaching and Research Journal.
- Maintaining and extending communication and collaboration with Jamaican counterparts with the intention of supporting curriculum development on both sides and arranging future exchanges, including the visits of Jamaican counterparts to NEIU and CPS.
- Developing a cultural showcase within the College of Education main offices.
- Conducting ongoing evaluations and revisions of teaching units that evolve from this project, and the impact that they have had on the elementary and secondary, and university students. Team members will be required to keep a detailed daily journal, write site visit reports, conduct ethnographies, collect digital photos, and develop lessons, which will help them to develop presentations on art, music, literature & language, dance, and other areas in Jamaica. Team members will enter reports, download digital photos, and compile ethnographies on laptop computers as they travel. Selected photos, daily journal selections, ethnographies and lessons will be completed and due two months following the field experience. In addition, the Chicago team will meet with and talk to their Jamaican colleagues about society and educational issues in a changing Caribbean and, further establish the groundwork for a continued communication.

Links between project staff at NEIU and institute participants established support for better teaching about the Caribbean, Jamaica specifically. The LCST Project encourages its faculty and participants to make them available for consultation on programs, curricula, or other issues concerning teaching about the Caribbean, specifically Jamaica. Participating preservice teachers and faculty will be encouraged to share their knowledge with other teachers in their schools and school districts. Finally, we established an electronic discussion
board for all the project staff and participants, which will be open during and after the institute. These relationships are expected to continue as we anticipate co-authoring articles and projects at the completion of this LCST project.

**Evaluation phase**

Evaluation is generally defined as the process of selecting, gathering and interpreting information to make personal decisions, or to form judgments about the worth of a product or program or about the value of an approach to solve a problem of accomplish an objective (Roopnarine and Johnson, 1993). Evaluation has become an integral part of programs and policies (Alkin, 2002).

The nature and design of evaluation depends on the purpose of the evaluation. Evaluation of LCST project will use the CIPP model for some of its measures, but also, will use the Evolving, Continuous Feedback Model of Evaluation (ECFME) developed by Mushii & Landerholm (Landerholm et al. 2000) for evaluating the Even Start Family Literacy program. This evaluation was aimed at collecting various types of evidence to determine if the step-by-step milestones achieved were consistent with the goals of the program. Due to the nature of the project, involving a wide variety of activities, it was necessary to employ flexibility in terms of time & method of collecting information. Rather than pre-designing the evaluation approach, flexibility was maintained throughout the program in tapping pieces of evidence as they became apparent.

In addition to creating curriculum materials, we wanted to understand the dynamics of cultural encounter for the teachers participating in this program. We will use a system of pre-briefing and debriefing based on interviews using an interview protocol. This will generate text data that can be summarized through text analysis.

The purpose of these interviews will be to create a record of the participants’ view of Jamaica and Jamaican culture previous to the field experience, and a record of their post-field view of Jamaica as expressed through the curriculum materials they have created. The summary of experience across the project will be a source of rich description about their cultural encounter which can be formatted and included with the curriculum materials.

The project video documenter worked with the project evaluator to develop the interviews and protocols. The interviews will combine video digital photography of concept diagrams and interview transcriptions in the pre-trip phase. She will offer a lab on content development through photography and the use of the video recorders. The strategy of using an activity for two purposes: instructional and documentation was part of the ECFME model. In the LCST project, the development of Curriculum Materials was assessed using a rubric as part of scaffolding for seminars, & data for monitoring the evolution of cultural understanding.

**Initial findings**

NEIU’s Latino and Latin American Studies Program has cultivated the interest of students and faculty across disciplines in the Latin American and Caribbean regions. The Latino and Latin American Studies Program, as an interdisciplinary academic unit, strives to foster the development of multicultural leaders with focus of Latin American and Caribbean constituencies, their contributions and their socio-cultural, educational and political conditions. As an interdisciplinary program, more than 70 courses are offered across the disciplines of Anthropology, Educational leadership and Development, English, Foreign Language-Spanish, Geography and Environmental Studies, History, Inner City Studies, Justice Studies, Linguistics, Philosophy, Political Science, Social Work, Sociology and Teacher Education. Through the Office of the Dean for Academic Development, NEIU is in the Tenth Annual African, African-American, Native American, Caribbean and the Americas Heritage Program to provide the university community with an opportunity to
increase awareness and to further our understanding and appreciation of the influence and rich traditions of these cultures in our global society as well as the opportunity to expand our knowledge of the significant contributions made in the arts and intellectual pursuits of the cultures represented. During the Ninth Annual AAMCH Conference a group of faculty members from NEIU and administrators from Moneague College presented a “making Connections: Global Learning in Education and Social Work: An African-Caribbean Perspective”. These initiatives of the Office of the Dean for Academic Development are supported by the Office of International Programs, the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education and the Latino and Latin American Studies Program.

The project directly supported the educational goals of NEIU and enhance the development of curricula to address Jamaica as part of an international expansion of area and Latino and Latin American Studies Program. For discussion of the commitment of NEIU to international education, see “Need for Oversees Experiences” section. One of the primary goals of NEIU is the preparation of school teachers who are part of a professional reflective community that bring a global perspective to the curriculum. This LCST Project allows university teachers in early childhood and elementary levels to develop curriculum that will improve language and cultural perspective, and acknowledge the impact of Jamaican English-Patois- and British English in the schooling system.

One of the most significant impacts of the LCST and Latino and Latin American and Caribbean area studies is in the proposed collaborative nature of curriculum development. This project is unique in that the learning community established is created between people who typically have few, if any, opportunities to collaborate especially in such neglected areas as studies of the Caribbean, specifically, Jamaica. LCST personnel will bridge the relations between areas studies in Jamaica and use this to prepare teachers, but also for the state and nation. The LCST Project is our commitment to prepare NEIU students, CPS teachers, and others to understand and utilize Caribbean perspectives both in training and in the curriculum of pre-service and in-service teachers. Working collaboratively with various entities within NEIU; The College of Arts and Sciences; The College of Education, The Latino, Latin American Studies Program; CPS and its partnerships with NEIU and in Jamaica (The Moneague interdisciplinary college), we will develop a unique synergism for curriculum development and change.

The dissemination phase of the LCST Project ensures the widest impact possible. First, CPS teachers and NEIU faculty selected must commit not only to learn and incorporate knowledge of the Caribbean, Jamaica specifically and area studies, but to modify and/or change existing curricula. In collaborative teams (including partners in Jamaica), LCST Project personnel will devote time every week to planning and development of curricula and resources that reflect the diversity of our local, national, and international communities. In collaboration with CPS we will create a schedule of city-wide presentations for teacher and curriculum administrators’ area studies and the Latino, Latin American Studies Program, to disseminate the results of our efforts. Curriculum units, resource modules, curriculum boxes and Internet resources will be developed and made available for wide distribution. Information will be shared through seminars, workshops, in-services, academic conferences and professional meetings.

The LCST Project provided substantial benefits to our cooperating partners in Jamaica. We engaged Jamaican teachers and faculty in dialogue about Jamaican and American school systems and the evolving interdependence of our cultures. We will establish communication links that will enhance curriculum development both in Illinois and in Jamaica, and we anticipate emerging exchange opportunities for graduate students, school teachers, and faculty researchers on both sides.
An example of the curriculum development collaborations we have in mind is the joint effort of one course in Jamaica and another course in Chicago. Each course will have a teacher education component (in language/area studies) and an action field research component where groups verify the abstract classroom work. LCST Project participants will know the intrinsic values of curricula that include more global perspectives. The LCST Project will allow participants to develop broader curricula across multiple disciplines, enabling more inclusive representation of our global perspective. Because of the nature of the dissemination phase, many more than those participating in the LCST will be impacted by this project, and will be able to integrate the linguistic and cultural diversity of all students into curricula. The LCST Project offers an interdisciplinary group at NEIU faculty the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of curriculum development, language learning and language acquisition, and the socio-economic, educational and cultural context of Jamaica. NEIU students currently enrolled in Latino and Latin American Studies, Social Work, Foreign Languages-Spanish, Educational Leadership and development, Sociology and Teacher Education, among others, will be directly impacted by the knowledge NEIU faculty will garner from their experiences in Jamaica and all pre-and post-departure activities.

One of the most significant impacts of the LCST Project on teacher preparation is the proposed collaborative nature of curriculum development. This unique project creates a learning community between the NEIU teachers and teachers in Jamaica. LCST Project faculty will bridge the relations between pre-service teachers and teachers in schools in Jamaica and use this experience to prepare pre-service teachers not only for the school districts within Chicago and suburban areas, but also for the county, state and nation.

The LCST Project is NEIU’s commitment to prepare its students and others to understand and utilize socio-economic, cultural and linguistic perspectives in the training and curriculum of pre-service teachers. Working collaboratively with various entities within NEIU (the Office of International Programs, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Ronald Williams Library and the Latino and Latin American Studies Program and Moneague College in Jamaica), we will develop unique synergism for curriculum development and change. The LCST Project personnel devoted time to planning and development of curricula and resources that reflect the diversity of our local, national, and international communities. Locally, teachers and faculty participated in state conferences to disseminate the results of the efforts in curriculum development. At the NEIU campus, pre-service teachers and faculty will engage in a research project for presentation at the Annual Research and Creative Activity Symposium. Additionally, information was shared through workshops and in-services to future pre-service teachers during the university Professional Day for Student Teachers under the auspices of the Office of Clinical and Student Teaching, College of Education.

The LCST Project also offered substantial benefits to our cooperating partners in Jamaica. The Moneague Multidisciplinary College has the resources and personnel to support the LCST Project. The secured campus is located in rural Moneague, with lodging, meals preparation, and classroom facilities for external guests, with convenient access to the national highway system to the major cities of Kingston, Ocho Rios, and Montego Bay. The faculty and staff have hosted groups from the United States, and from other areas of Jamaica on a regular basis, and have shared their expertise, and network of educational and community sources. There is a focus on transmitting humanities and culture to their college students as well as teachers and others desiring this information. There is an existing relationship between the Moneague College administrators, faculty and staff that will assist in the effectiveness of the LCST project. In addition, there are Jamaican schools, agencies, and community groups that are have participated with Chicago faculty and teachers. It is one of the two National Center for Research and Training in Literacy, with a network of demonstration schools, and a teacher education programs for new teachers and in-service professional.
development. Jamaican Ministry of Education and Culture has a regular presence on the campus, with officers available for CLST project team. The College also has strong ties to the artistic community and are positioned to connect the CLST project to the people and resources requested. Furthermore, NEIU International Programs is active in placing students and faculty in Study Abroad and exchange experiences in several countries, with formal partnerships with 6 countries. As part of the University global scholarship goals, international teachers and faculty have come to NEIU for research, study, and exchange of information. The Latino American, Caribbean Studies Program, as a multidisciplinary program draws from faculty from several departments in the College of Arts and Science and the College of Education. The program is built on a strong commitment of international awareness and scholarship.

Need for overseas experiences

Northeastern Illinois University supported our view that there is a great need for overseas experiences to broaden the perspectives of faculty and pre-service teachers injecting a broader perspective to curriculum change. In-country experience in Jamaica is central to the objectives of this Fulbright-Hays Group Projects Abroad application. The Andrew J. Heiskell Award from the Institute of International Education is an example of the vibrant, highly diverse and internationally minded university community that NEIU represents. NEIU has partnership agreements with colleges and universities round the world. The international study tours have made it possible for students to visit many countries: Austria, Belgium, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, El Salvador, England, France, Germany, Guatemala, India, Italy, Jamaica, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, and Spain.

The LCST Project on-site study program and experiences in Jamaica created opportunities that could not be replicated without travel and extensive research abroad. We expect our study in Jamaica’s urban and rural areas to help the collaborative team fill the gaps in current curriculum both in K-12 schools as well as in higher education classes. By combining pre-service teachers and faculty from these respective areas with an overseas experience, participants will be able to consolidate new knowledge of social, linguistic, and educational practices in Jamaica. Through each experience, LCST Project personnel gained an understanding for the need to diversify the diversity and area studies content. Contact with faculty and administrators of Moneague College as well as with classroom teachers helped the pre-service teachers to secure first hand experience on the socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic contexts that impact the children’s schooling system in Jamaica and help them to incorporate these aspects into new curricula reflecting these multilingual/multicultural context and collect data and course materials to design and develop a thematic unit to be shared through group presentations and to other pre-service bilingual teachers and to the entire NEIU community through the Annual Student Research and Creative Activity Symposium. The need for raising international and global awareness among educators of different profiles is one of the most important challenges facing comparative and international education and will be at the center of this study group project.

Conclusion

The need for raising international and global awareness among educators of different profiles is one of the most important challenges facing comparative and international education and will be at the center of this study group project. One of the most significant impacts of this proposal is the collaborative nature of curriculum development. The Group Study Abroad in Jamaica developed through a Department of Education Fulbright Grant, which allowed teachers to develop new curricula about the multilingual/multicultural context in Jamaica and collect data and course materials to design a thematic unit.
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House (1980).
Writing is culture: how some Indonesian students do a collaborative writing by using social software

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Abstract

The significant use of writing in learning process is not hesitated. Writing is a best way for a student in learning something. Nevertheless, social software development as an alternative technology for collaborative writing still needs a deeper research. This research explored how some Indonesian undergraduate students do a collaborative writing by using social software. The important findings in this research are; 1). Group cohesivity is important in keeping group communication, 2). External factors such as environment affects qualitatively to writing condition and collaboration among the members. While, observed personal behavior and non verbal factors are more affected by informant resistance in group working speed, 3). Observation features are needed to keep group awareness, 4). Informant preferences and background also supports social software usage behavior in collaborative writing. Two recommendations from this research are internet mobile use trend in collaborative writing and the need of application which has conversation features.

1. Background

As I found how web technology like social software had affected teaching and learning process in state universities in Indonesia (Faizal 2009b). Also, the price of a notebook is available for the students and the rapid growth of Open Source Software makes undergraduate students in developing country as Indonesia afford to have personal notebook and they start to show a better internet adoption (Wahid, 2007). This significant development and the shifted array of learning pattern that needed to be anticipated, therefore, I suggest that we need to redefine the term “writing”. Writing, in my simple understanding, is a human expression activity in a written text, in its broader sense. Text is Artifact and history was built by it. Nevertheless history supports culture, thus writing is the foundation, so to speak, of all cultures. With a better understanding in writing praxis and the way we apply it recent learning, hopefully this will encourage some new methods in fostering knowledge.

The significant use of writing in learning process is not hesitated. Writing is a best way for a student in learning something. Writing not only helps to develop ability to remember but also develop the interpretation and perception of a student. Students accept the information and manage it to be knowledge, and if they able recall it, then the knowledge will be their ability. Hence, if the knowledge is applied in a social level, then it will be the person’s wisdom. Some of us assumed that writing is a manifestation of personal activities (Storch and Wigglesworth, 2009). Sometimes, we define the ‘author’ as the one, who work alone and almost does not have social interaction. Even though, many studies approved that by collaborating with other writers, with or without supported application, then we can produce a better writing (Faizal, 2009b; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2009).

One practice of the group writing is collaborative writing. My interested is how social software which based as collaborative writing application enables to be used effectively and freely by the students in developing country. One particular aspect that can be researched to
see the affectivity in using the application is the communication model among the collaborative writing application users. As I argued before, that writing is foundation of the culture building, thus by act of writing the intercultural gap can be bridged. Speaking of intercultural communication, there are two interactions that can be defined separately. First, the communication between one culture to the ‘other’ culture, an external relation. For an instance is international collaborative writing by students in dispersed spatial. Second, it is the communication that occurred among the culture components or subcultures, the intracultural communication. For the second one, the instance can be looked at micro level such as communication among students who worked in a group assignment in a same class.

In relation with bridging the gap by the use of technology, with emphasized in the internal cultural communication aspect. In this article I investigated, how Indonesian students do a collaborative writing by using social software. After the background, I will continue with literatures review between main concepts that I used in the research. Afterward, the research finding will brings forth as well as the discussion.

2. Literature review

2.1 Culture, technology, and education

Culture is an endless-debate term, so to speak. The discussions can be brought from many perspectives and multiple point of views. Nonetheless, the term ‘culture’ that being used in this article referred to acknowledgement of culture in social level. Raymond Williams (2001) pointed an understanding of culture from its social context. For him, culture, in its social definition, is a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values and not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behavior. I could not agree more with the definitions, learning is the culture as such. The reception and integration process of information needs activities that involve and cause culture to be acknowledge. How students write or work together in collaborative writing basically is a transaction process and attributes caused by it. Because of that, learning style is effected by the students themselves.

Charlesworth (2008) investigated the relationship between learning style and students preference backgrounds. She compared the variables among Indonesian, Chinese and French students who studied at International Institute of Higher Education, Switzerland. Her research found that there are relationship between learning style preferences and cultural background at the outset of a program of Higher Education. Moreover, she found the nature of each student does influence their learning outcomes. She pointed that for Indonesian students it is of extreme importance that they have time to plan, implement and carry things out. There also seems to be certain deference to authority, or to teachers operating here. The question of time also seems to be something of pertinence. Although both respect and time seem to place a role in how the Chinese students go about their learning it seems to be of lesser importance than for their Indonesian colleagues. For the French group neither of these aspects seems to carry a lot of weight.

Hence to culture and educational technology diffusion, Young (2008) pointed the importance of involving culture element in developing information and communication technologies that going to be use for education. Young (2008) understand that conventional method in human-computer interaction (HCI) and instructional design method is too narrow in holding the users’ behavior together. Based on her literatures review, she concluded a couple of point; first, it is apparent that integrating culture in the design of ICTs serves a broader scope, from the generic or culture-neutral, to the specialized or culture-specific. Second, Young’s review indicated that design has not caught up with technology and that to create for diverse audiences, for instance international students, then the process must be
deliberate. By leveraging the social interactions to be accommodated within the technology, it is consequently supporting the development of a user-friendly and motivating application such as E-Learning (Niemelä, Pekkola, & Wahlstedt, 2008). In global sense, despite the adoption of specific technology, cultural considerations also played a role to enhance the technology absorption and wide spreading, especially in educational field (Gong, Li and Stump, 2007).

2. 2 Collaborative writing, social software, and computer-mediated communication (CMC)

CMC can lead to an impersonation communication since the mode has lack of non verbal cues and the user ‘social presence’ (Tidwell & Walther, 2002). The user might display more selective and yet exaggerated social information sharing online. Even so, a research by Ellison, Lampe, & Steinfield (2007) about Facebook use by undergraduate students found a strong association between the use of Facebook and the undergraduate students will to build social capital. Regardless, more intensives CMC even lead to personalized relationships characterized by intimacy (Tidwell & Walther, 2002). More effective communicators exchange more intimate questions and disclosures than they would in similar face to face contexts, and acquaintanceship develops in CMC as it does face to face. The advantage of such communication mode has been applied in education, such as online business writing class (Mabrito, 2006) or to test the connection between teachers and students via CMC (Paulus and Phipps, 2008).

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) can be defined as interaction between two or more intelligent agents that relies on ICT — usually a personal computer and networks—as its primary medium (Ess, 2007). Godwin, Richardson, & Thorpe (2008) pinpointed that the usage pattern of computer mediated communication (CMC) for the students in distance learning program can give positive experience for the students itself. Focus of their research was to understand the learning effect in using CMC quantitatively. However, they recommended that the actual benefit for the students appear more closely by using qualitative approach. For instance, is how the differences in students education qualification has more effect than the quantity of interaction and integration during the learning process.

Harrise and Park (2008) showed the use of podcast, one of the social software, in teaching and learning process. The use of podcasting emerges three perspective in using it. For the lecturers, podcast passes beyond spatial and temporal limitations of conventional face to face communication. For the students, the empowering ownership of accommodating user preference (Schultze & Orlikowski, 2004) helps to satisfy individual needs of knowledge ownership. The flexibility and affordability of podcasting cater to diverse student’s needs by enabling repeated learning and offering an opportunity for the effective use of time. Finally, from the University’s perspective, podcasting is a communication enabler, reaching out to a wider community. With the same assumption for the rest of social softwares, the more practice of social software use in education were shown by many education experts worldwide (Anderson, 2007; Virkus, 2008).

Lowry, Curtis, & Lowry (2004) have done a splendid work by proposing a taxonomy of collaborative writing (CW). CW likely the extensive of single-author writing activities with involves multiple parties and diverse task distribution to the text. They differed individual writing activity assisted by some else and collaborative writing. So for them, the editing process of a peer reviewed journal article is not a CW. By resuming some refences, Lowry, Curtis and Lawry (2004) highlighted the collaborative writing stages such as brainstorming, outlining, drafting, reviewing, revising and copyediting. They emphasized that CW is dynamic activity where one stage can be moved backward and forward to others’ writing

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stage. For instance is the brainstorming stage, the group able to review the writing anytime without changing the passed stages.

In relation to the CW technologies, the application should support more than basic communication and coordination. Because CW is a complex group task with many activities, hence needs to be based on group support systems, not simpler computer-mediated communication software such as e-mail (Lowry, Curtis, & Lowry, 2004). Moreover, it should support mutuality, that is not only support interactions between group members and with the work artefacts, but increase awareness of others’ work and changes to the artefacts. It should give users control over the local aspects, help members coordinate and negotiate their work together (Noel & Robert, 2003). At university level, it ain’t enough by just providing the writing workspace. Students’ awareness is built by helping them acknowledge the role of the workplace itself. By equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need to write successfully in particular contexts. If that happens, the technology has shifted from merely space into ‘place’ (Niemelä, Pekkola, & Wahlstedt, 2008).

3. The research methodology

The research was done from September to December 2009, and the validity was done in January 2010. Eight undergraduate students were chosen in this research, 4 men and 4 women. All of them major in communication who took sociology of mass communication class in academic year of 2009/2010 at Lampung University, Indonesia. The informants were separated in two groups consisted four students each, equal in gender. They were volunteer participants. Faizal (2009a); pointed the importance to build informants criteria in qualitative observation since there are too many human behaviors that emerges from interaction between human and computer thus might confused the final analysis. Hence, the informant criteria in this research were, first, they are internet and computer literate, second, they have personal laptop, third they had willing to involve in the research after the scholar schedule. I was assisted by two field officials who did the observation in detail. Besides as the analyst I also took place as the second observer for the officials.

This is an explorative research with qualitative approach. Non participative observation is the main data collection technique combined with interview. All of the research activities were documented in literally and video record. Data collection divided in three stages, which are:

1. Pre observation; this stage consists of choosing informants, making questionnaire, briefing with the informants about the research and determining the schedule. This stage is part of the research because it determines the limits of the research and expected result scope.

2. Observation; in this stage both groups were placed in the same room without any separation. Each group sat in a circle with their laptops. The field official sat next to each group. Internet access between the informants and the observators was using wi-fi connection in the multimedia laboratory at Lampung University where this research was done. Each group was freed to meet each other, minimum two times and the duration was one hour and a half. So, the total duration for the meetings was three hours to each group. The reason why only two groups were observed is as a complementary ratio to each group. While, the replacing four informants in one group is to fulfill the element of group communication with adequate network in the research. I expect there will be enough communication between the groups to be analyzed. Before the observation was begun, each informant was asked about their internet adoption and their knowledge about social software. Even though, it will not influence their placement into the group, this information will enrich the result. Each group was asked to make an essay of 1200 words about cyber culture. They were
assigned to use at least two social softwares, one was determined by the researcher and the other was picked by the informants themselves. The determined software is Writeboard, a web-based application for real time collaborative writing. This is based on the ability of internet access for each informant’s laptop. This was a cooperative agreement. Besides, Writeboard is an open source software. After the last meeting, each group was asked about the process of collaborative writing and their perception of the co-working.

3. Post observation; in this stage, there would be a cross check to the result of the observation, confirming talk transcript and validity. This stage is also a research evaluation.

4. Findings

Observation was done in a closed room; however the room was not soundproof. Observation was done in two meetings which had been approved before by each group of informants. The group was named group A and B. All informants had known each other before, even some of them have had collaborative experience before, and so it would not need further explanation. The composition and position can be seen in Figure1. Each group sat on the same table. Their activities were observed by an observer for each group and recorded by camcorders. The researcher position was in the next room, connected with couple of computer screens which showed the groups CMC conversation. The arrangements of this position were determined by the available facility in the laboratory where the researcher did the research. The researcher did not use certain software to observe and analyze data, everything was done manually.

Figure 1. The observational condition

Before the observation, the informants were asked about their internet adoption, the use of social software and their experience in collaborative writing. Most informants can access internet 5 – 20 hours per week. Only one informant can access internet more than 50 hours per week. Informants activities when accessing the internet were watching, MP3 downloading and chatting with friends. Two informants have personal blog and only one informant likes to play online games, such as Massive Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPG). All informants use SNS, IRC and Wikis as social software types. One informant who had access to internet up to 1 Mbps is uses of Blogs, MMORPG, social
bookmarking and virtual world. All informants also experienced in collaborative writing at least two times since they were registered as undergraduate students. Time period needed by the informants to do the collaborative writing was between 1 – 3 weeks, all of them were part of informants’ task in their study.

At the first meeting, the two groups started their writing idea in a good way. Group B was attended by its entire member, but group A only two members attended early; the two others came half an hour later. First problem which appeared was the weak Wi Fi connection because the laboratory was far from the internet router. Group B agreed to use Facebook application in their cell phone to have some chats. While they wrote the writing, they kept trying to be connected with in the internet. Because of the late members; group A was a little bit left behind comparing with group B in doing the writing. The brainstorming process went well. Internal group conversation was dominated by discussion of how to use the Writeboard application and the references they would use in writing. The researcher highlighted that the conversation in both group were dominated by two members, while two other on responded the conversation without any significant contribution to the writing. The surrounding factors as sounds and the observer position dominated the informant and make the informants works distracted.

The second meeting was held a week later with the same condition. Nevertheless, group A was not attended by its entire member again, but those who not attended the meeting were online in somewhere else outside the campus. In the early meeting, group B had finished their essay draft and begin with editing process. While, group A still working with their draft. The condition surround the room was intruded and affected informants working speed. This external factor was highlighted. Both group members seemed that they had a look to the other group. The interesting part was, internet mobile was used more by two groups than the first meeting. They use it if the Wi Fi connection hangs or they need faster access to download the Wikipedia Indonesia pages. Conversation which recommended or contributed to the article was still dominated by 1-2 informants, while the others only responded it with agreement words or with emoticons such as smile (☺) or :D.

After the second meeting, each group was interviewed. The purpose was to look up group understanding, and groups’ perception to each member contribution. Group A complaint about the absence of the members, but not the inequality contribution given by the members. Informants who gave a little contribution admitted about their ignorance about Cyberculture which affected their will to say their opinion. According to them, the most important part was that the group could finish the task on time. They attempted to cohesive by keep the good communication among them. Conversely, group B did not accept if there was any member who did not contribute directly to the article. Even though, they admitted the tolerance to each other and negotiation role from each member to contribute to their writing as the important part. All groups said they did not choose a chief for the groups. They also said that the role was played by each member. In the end of the meeting, both group collected their essay according to the given task.

I noted some observed external factors that affected collaborative writing work. The factors were divided in three parts, which are the environment factor; non verbal factor and personal behaviors factor (see Table1.). The explanation has been validated by the informants and observers. External factors complemented the internal factors effect such as cohesivity feeling which was kept by the member so the working process and communication still had done well. Preferences and each informant’s style in their previous collaborative writing also affected the working speed and ideas transaction among them. There was no conflict appeared, both informants’ conversation and gestures. Group and personal awareness and short meetings made informants focused more to their computers screen. Social software
used beside the Writeboard, are Social Networking Sites (Facebook) and its IRC facility, Blogs, Wikis, and Instant Messaging (IM), like Yahoo Messenger.

Table 1. The external factors observed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Condition/Activity</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Room temperature</td>
<td>Not concentrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noise, phone and sms ringtone</td>
<td>Not concentrated, teralih attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal behaviors</td>
<td>Change sitting position</td>
<td>uncomfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moving legs/restless leg</td>
<td>The informants were confused or unsure in what they were doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>whistling</td>
<td>More relax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Head scratching/face wiping</td>
<td>Attention pengalihan from computer screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Looking to the other group</td>
<td>Attention pengalihan from computer screen, making the informants more relax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non verbal</td>
<td>Using emoticon such as ☺ and :D</td>
<td>Verbal expression substituting in conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Showing handphone to other member</td>
<td>Strengthening opinion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Claping</td>
<td>Opinion agreement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Discussion

Experience and background influenced informants, both in group discussion and technology used in collaborative writing. If William (2001) said that culture is an expression, then the statement was approved in this research. Idea and meaning transaction in writing is a common thing, but sometimes we are unaware that there is a reception every time we agree on something, and it is vice versa. If the reception itself is a concrete thing such as norms and values in society, then collaborative writing is not so different with society development itself. In a group, communication model shown by the informants is a daily activity by most undergraduate students in Indonesia. Well, not every student has personal laptop but they choose to use internet café (Wahid, 2007). Facebook chats, Yahoo Messenger and mobile internet use is not a difficult access for them if compares to Wi Fi connection.

There are some similarities in what is pointed by Charlesworth (2008) about Indonesian student typical. Such as their appreciation to time, even it did not affect the group working. For them, tolerance is a common thing as long as the group members aware of the task that must be finished. Nevertheless, the next question to be address is how are we going to accommodate this tolerance in ICT, more over in collaborative writing technology? As Young (2008) pinpointed that it is important to involve culture element in developing ICT. Informants who have known each other cause the fading of impersonation communication (Tidwell and Walther, 2002) which affects directly to the writing. Different result may be found on different pre-setting condition. The use of emoticon as a non verbal expression has been understandable by the informants.

Even though the final quality of the given tasks is not part of the research, I assured you that essay conditions that must be done by the informants were fulfilled, such as writing structure, quotation and references were appropriate to the scientific writing. Process speed in doing the task was different one group to another. As showed in Godwin, Richardson and Thorpe (2008) research about the quality of student’s experiences in collaborative writing. Simultaneous conversation can develop their awareness and the most important is to keep the group stays cohesively. The united feeling makes writing process can be finished excellently.
The informants agree to their group opinion more than their personal opinion about their working group distribution. In validating data, I repeat the questions I have asked before through an individual questionnaire. Some informants thought that there was conflict among them, but they did not want others know about it. The most important of all is they finished their tasks right on time.

This research does support Lowry, Curtis and Lowry (2004) opinion about collaborative technology must be accommodating more than just email. I recommend two communication features from this research, mobile internet use trend and collaborative writing application. Finally, collaborative writing is more than measuring final result. If we want our students to understand the material that we delivered in class and in the same time they get positive experience in interacting, then writing activity is more than a typing activity. Culture identification and reception, both in between group and internal group is a cultivation of a social perspective where the students exist. The relationship showed assimilation which in the end will establish new opinion, and hopefully, a new culture.

6. Conclusion

If basically writing is a human expression activity in a written text and culture is human view expression, then writing is culture. The benefits of collaborative writing have been approved to be important for students’ learning process. In addition, the development of social software as alternative technologies for collaborative writing feels it still needs deeper research. This research explores how some Indonesian undergraduate students do a collaborative writing by using social software. Important findings in this research are:

1. Group cohesivity is important in maintaining the communication in the group. Group agreement is also an important point for the informants to keep the group working on its track. Informants attempted to avoid uncertainty in working condition with a group of casual conversation.
2. External factors such as environment affect the writing condition qualitatively and collaboration within group. As for personal behaviors and non-verbal factors noted from the informant is influenced more by the informant resistance to the group working speed.
3. Regards to the collaborative writing technology, an observation feature that enables the group in keeping the group awareness and supports is necessary. Group awareness has direct relation with group motivation to finish the task given.
4. Informants’ preferences and backgrounds contributed to the behavior of social software use in working collaborative writing.

Bibliography


iScience and general education: science literacy for all students

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Abstract

The report on Science in the National Interest established the important role of science (research and education) for all Americans (Executive Office of the President, 1994). The report identified five main objectives designed to promote scientific collaborations and communications; the first three objectives (maintain leadership across the frontiers of scientific knowledge, enhance connections between fundamental research and national goals, and stimulate partnerships that promote investments in fundamental science and engineering) deal with the need for continued investment in research and innovation. The last two objectives (produce the finest scientists and engineers for the 21st century and raise the scientific and technological literacy of all Americans) were direct charges to all educators, from K-12 to graduate school. Around the same time several organizations presented their own recommendations for science education reform, and most are summarized very nicely in the influential Shaping the Future reports published by the National Science Foundation (Vol. I, 1996 and Vol. II, 1998) and the subsequent BIO 2010 report (National Academies Press, 2003). This report is an attempt to honestly and accurately assess the state of science education in the US and to create a framework for implementation of science education reform. Since then, and in response to these reports, a growing body of ‘best practices’ has been published in science education journals, all aiming at improving the science classroom and laboratory.

Is the charge met with results?

Despite the progress to date, however, a recent National Assessment for Educational Progress report (NAEP, 2006) showed a marked decline in science proficiency among our nation’s 12th graders. Not surprisingly, this prompted speculation from a variety of commentators on how and why establishing and maintaining science literacy remains such a challenge for science educators in this country. For example, New York Times op-ed columnist Brent Staples, in a piece entitled Why American College Students Hate Science, generated heated debate amongst science educators by charging, “Large numbers of aspiring science majors – perhaps as many as half – are turned-off by unimaginative teaching and [as a result] migrate to other disciplines before graduating.” Regardless of whether the source of the problem is pedagogical, pre-college, a shortfall in qualified teachers, or simply due to lack of interest among would-be undergraduate science students, university science educators must continue to develop innovative and effective ways for improving science literacy for all students, and do so in accordance with national science education initiatives (e.g., Project 2061).

U.S. Census Report data from 2006 indicate less than one-fourth of college degrees
awarded in 2005 were in science/medicine (11%) and engineering (12%), while the majority of all college degrees were awarded in non-science areas such as business (25%); liberal arts (13%); education (13%); social science/law (8%); and “other” areas of inquiry (16%). Roughly speaking, this translates to the bulk of our nation’s future legislators, educators, and corporate leaders – all of whom vote or voice support for or against standards for science education and scientific research – are less likely to make informed decisions based on scientific information (i.e., global warming, stem cell research, evolution in the classroom, and so on). Indeed, one course in the undergraduate years is typically the only chance college educators have to reach students who might enjoy science as a career, or at the very least to create an informed citizenry able to debate, legislate, and appropriate intelligently with regard to matters of science. Thus, we fall very short of the fifth goal in the aforementioned Science in the National Interest report (raise the scientific and technological literacy of all Americans). Science educators must therefore continue to be creative and progressive in developing and implementing science curricula for all students, and in particular non-science students, especially if we are to achieve the goal of a scientifically literate society. Our own experiences described herein and those of others (e.g., Arwood, 2004) indicate that the educational methods commonly and successfully used to teach science students neither restore the enthusiasm for science nor improve the science literacy of non-science students.

**iScience: science literacy for all students**

The starting point was our desire to raise the quality of the teaching of science at our institution, a four-year liberal arts education undergraduate university. Our decision to target primarily non-science students was directly influenced by the most current standards for science pedagogy for all undergraduates (i.e., Project 2061, PKAL Report on Reports II).

![Figure 1. A schematic representation of the iScience pedagogical framework. Each individual component represents practices shown to be successful in science education.](image-url)
Would non-science students connect labs to lectures as readily as those majoring in science? Not surprisingly non-science students come to science courses with a different set of expectations and abilities (i.e., Helms & Montague, 1980; Arwood, 2004). Cognizant of these various apprehensions and anxieties, we developed pedagogical strategies that allow us to come alongside non-science students in creative, effective ways to facilitate and promote science literacy. In the process we engage our students at a level where they are best equipped to comprehend what they historically view as intimidating and overwhelming course content.

We established the iScience framework with two specific goals in mind: provide all students with an engaging science education, and transform the science classroom into a student-centered learning environment using the most current standards for science education. The basic principles of iScience are summarized in Figure 1. This culmination of best practices in science pedagogy has allowed us to create vibrant courses, an example of which is presented below.

**Fundamentals of Neuroscience: a science course for non-science majors**

One hurdle to promoting science literacy among undergraduate non-science students is that by the time they make their way to our classroom they have had ample pre-college time to convince themselves that they dislike science. Paradoxically, these are the same students who ultimately demonstrate impressive capacities to comprehend and analyze complex political discourse; digest intricate economic theory; and evaluate seemingly esoteric poetry. Four years ago when we first began crafting our sophomore-level *Fundamentals of Neuroscience* course, we were understandably reticent about targeting a predominantly non-science student audience only. Could we engage non-science students at each of the five core levels of neuroscience (e.g., molecular, cellular, systems, behavioral, and cognitive)? In our neuroscience course we confront this mindset head-on, Week 1, by identifying it for what it is: namely, convoluted student-speak for “I’ve never seen any value to my learning all these terms and concepts” or, “Science is just something I’ve never been able to relate to.” The first day our class meets, and before any discussion of course content or details of the syllabus are given, we begin with a group activity titled “What does it mean to think scientifically?” Here students apply the tenets of scientific inquiry to critical evaluation of the “I hate science because…” hypothesis. Students are challenged to work through several of the logical fallacies that contribute to this perspective while at the same time gaining valuable insight into their own thought processes. Importantly, they also leave with a clearer understanding of the thrust and focus of the course material we plan to cover over the next 15 weeks of instruction.

Unlike science majors, non-science students often fail to understand the relevance of investigative hands-on laboratory activities to the broader course context (Shan, 1990). To address this we have identified and developed several pedagogical strategies that make this relationship more obvious to non-science students.

**Lab before lecture approach to course content**

The first element is our lab-led approach to introducing weekly course content. Simply put, whenever feasible we introduce lecture content by way of the preceding week’s laboratory meeting. We find non-science students are especially receptive to this format and believe that science educators would benefit from re-tooling their existing laboratory courses to better address this (Stewart & Stavrianeas, 2008). Given our specific curricular goals we crafted a framework that would better suit the needs of our target population. A critical element was our decision to introduce concepts using laboratory activities as opposed to the more traditional approach where laboratories follow initial discussion of subject matter in
lecture. As a first step we scheduled the laboratory sections of our course later in the preceding week (e.g., Thursday), thus allowing us to introduce the following week’s topic during lab instead of lecture. This afforded us the additional benefit of an intervening weekend for any last minute changes to the following week’s lecture content that may have surfaced during laboratory discussion. Moreover, students report benefiting from their weekly textbook readings when ample time was allowed before discussing assigned material in lecture.

A good example of our lab-led approach is the earthworm dissection we use to introduce students to the principles of nerve. This exercise is designed to accomplish two goals. At a conceptual level, the following week’s lectures are foreshadowed through students engaging in a hands-on lab practical that illustrates each of the fundamental properties of saltatory conductance. Secondly, the activity itself eases students toward an elementary understanding and use of the Biopac data acquisition systems, which thereafter become integral to all subsequent lab activities. In addition to creating a more relaxed environment for questions regarding the following week’s lecture topic (vs. during lecture itself), our lab-led approach also retains all of the benefits of traditionally-taught labs (e.g., students exposed to the realities of actual data collection in the laboratory where trial and error are essential components of the investigative process).

Expose students to primary scientific literature

A second element pivotal to engaging non-science students is the use of primary scientific literature both in lab and during lectures. Much has been written on the benefits of introducing students, early on, to primary source material as a means of promoting science literacy (e.g., Gillen, et al., 2004), and we have realized the benefits of this directly. Providing access to and promoting a fundamental appreciation for primary scientific literature is a second key element of our course that allows us to promote scientific literacy in three ways. First, students gain confidence in their ability to both identify and understand empirical questions and their implications for the “real world.” Second, students are better able to articulate research questions and outcomes when journaling and in preparing increasingly more structured lab reports. Third, students learn what it means to design well-controlled experiments for purposes of testing hypotheses and drawing valid conclusions. A good example of how we incorporate primary scientific literature into laboratory exercises occurs during Week 1, when we assign a specific paper (Middlemist et al., 1976) that serves as the basis for a subsequent lab-based discussion and activity on IRB and ethics-related issues. Non-science students uniformly enjoy this activity because it helps them learn about the process of proposing scientific research while simultaneously helping to decrease their anxiety regarding reading and conducting empirical work. Students prepare for the lab via a homework assignment where they must first visit a website and make journal entries on learning how to read scientific literature (Reading Primary Literature in Biology http://biology.kenyon.edu/Bio_InfoLit/ index.html). The lab activity itself involves a mock IRB review panel in which students act in the capacity of would-be proposers or reviewers and role-play outcomes related to the Middlemist et al. reading.

Student journals

The third element of our laboratory experience is the weekly student journal. Here students are given the opportunity to demonstrate not only their capacity to understand the information they encounter each week, but to report material in a way that is more familiar to them than the typical lab report format found in the majority of science-for-science-majors courses. The journal has become a useful tool for our students to express their thoughts on the course material (e.g., Etkina & Mestre, 2004). In essence, the journal is an electronic
notebook in which students record formal and informal writings and reflections having to do with various lab activities. By asking students to write comments, express thoughts, and share observations stemming from lab activities in their journal we “meet” them at their comfort level. Reading journal entries enables us to calibrate the course to student needs as we start to guide them towards more structured and complete reports of scientific readings that are required as the semester progresses. These entries also provide us with useful assessment benchmarks that help us track students’ gradual progress towards scientific literacy (Schuh & Busey, 2001). Providing students with leading questions for each journal entry helps us direct their attention to various aspects of scientific discourse, such as framing the research question, experimental design, and data analysis. More broadly, the journal becomes a bridge to more formal scientific report-writing culminating in the student’s final research project. Student feedback indicates that this type of informal writing is less intimidating, less overwhelming, more personal, and thus more effective overall in moving them incrementally towards a better understanding of what it means to be scientifically literate. In making this decision we were, of course, conscious of the fact that we abandoned the strict rigidity of a scientific report in favor of a better understanding of the scientific investigative process on the part of the students.

Lecture component

The conceptual framework of the lecture component of our course is premised on the Mind-Brain-Behavior (MBB) interfaculty initiative model of neuroscience education from Harvard University (http://mbb.harvard.edu/). The crux of the Harvard scheme is its emphasis on integrating connections across traditional disciplinary boundaries, thus giving rise to unique cross-disciplinary pairings such as biological anthropology, cognitive neuroscience, computational neuroscience, neurobiology, linguistics, behavioral neuroscience, and philosophy. Our own adaptation of this highly successful model uses neuroscience — itself a de facto interdisciplinary topic — as a vehicle for exploring the biological and chemical sciences, behavior, cognition, and even mental disorders, thus allowing us to move beyond the traditional disciplinary boundaries and pedagogical practices that all too often result in distance between academic disciplines at small liberal arts institutions such as our own. For this reason our lecture content includes a rich mixture of classical topics (e.g., nerve structure and function, action potential/subsequent propagation, sensory processing, etc.), as well a number of interdisciplinary bridges to areas as diverse as the arts, genetics, motor control, and philosophy. As explained above, in most cases the lecture topics are introduced by the laboratory activities. The degree of complexity (in topic and learning objectives) introduced in the lab sessions is mirrored in the lecture, so that students are constantly guided in their journey towards achieving scientific literacy. Students advance from the elementary stages of learning how to read scientific literature, to intermediate stages that contain elements of student-initiated questions and experimentation, and culminating in an independent research project. This framework allows students to build upon their previous experiences as they ascend the learning path towards becoming more scientifically literate.

Creating this comprehensive approach to the teaching of science to non-sciences students required a re-thinking of teaching paradigms, presentation of material, design of laboratory exercises, and assessment of student learning. Although the elements of our course are not unique in and by themselves, their combination is ambitious and comprehensive. Furthermore, by targeting non-sciences students for whom this may be their only science course we had to adapt existing strategies and create appropriate ‘meet them where they’re at’ learning opportunities. The implementation of our work required significant re-tooling of our existing laboratory facilities, and support with assessment of the efficacy of this work. For this reason we applied for and secured funding from the National Science Foundation (DUE-
CCLI 0837830) that allowed us to establish a truly unique and interdisciplinary introductory offering in the sciences. Our lab-led approach has generated considerable interest among colleagues within and beyond our institution, and is premised on the fact that in our daily lives we do not have the benefit of several lectures before we observe a natural phenomenon, but rather, the observation spurs an investigation of the phenomenon itself. Thus, observation and formulation of hypotheses precedes experimentation and data analysis, and not the other way around as is commonly practiced in introductory science laboratories.

How would we know if our approach works?

Our over-arching objective was to promote science literacy among non-science students. Yet, there is disagreement even amongst science educators on how best to define science literacy (i.e. Project 2061; Koppal & Caldwell, 2004; Liem, 2005; Roseman & Koppal, 2006). The NSES maintains that “Scientific literacy is the knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts and processes required for personal decision making, participation in civic and cultural affairs, and economic productivity” (National Science Education Standards, 1996). Thus far our practice has been to translate the NSES definition to mean that by the end of our one-semester Fundamentals of Neuroscience course, non-science students demonstrate proficiency in:

- Identifying and discussing scientific research;
- Reading and understanding scientific information;
- Acquiring new scientific concepts and terms;
- Evaluating the quality of scientific information.

As scientists, it is imperative that we follow the rules we establish for our students: allow the data to speak as to the efficacy of our approach. Given our stated objective of improving science literacy for all students we collaborated with our colleague Prof. Jim Friedrich (who served as consultant in our NSF award) and collectively developed a specific formative and summative evaluation plan. This plan included previously validated measures of self efficacy, a determinism scale, and other NSF-funded assessment instruments, such as the CAT (administered by the Tennessee Technological Institute). These evaluations include a combination of paper and pencil surveys (e.g., Scientific Interests Survey pre/post test; Laboratory Assessment Survey) and web-based resources that allow us to create online assessment tools specific to our course needs (http://www.salsite.org and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) (http://www.flaguide.org/index.php) (Angelo & Cross, 1993). Such measures are easy to use, allow for creativity in generating and refining questions, and provide specific information regarding student progress towards educational objectives. We learned from and adapted the experiences of others, including those discussed in the PKAL Roundtable on Assessment, (PKAL, 2002); select elements from the final report on Using Data in Undergraduate Science Classrooms (NSDL, 2002); and various assessment principles of the American Association for Higher Education (for example visit http://www.eric.ed.gov).

In addition to administering our pre/post-semester interest inventory and selected evaluations of laboratory activities (Stewart & Stavrianes, 2008), impact assessment of our three laboratory elements (lab-led, journaling, and primary scientific literature) on non-science students’ development in science literacy was indicated by the following SLOs:

- SLO 1 - To determine whether students have acquired the ability to understand the nature and complexity of scientific problems, identify strengths and weaknesses associated with experimental design, and solve technical problems related to experimental protocols, students were assessed via a targeted, pre-constructed survey. In addition, students were asked to complete a self-evaluation that addresses the same educational goals at the beginning and end of the semester.
• SLO 2 - Weekly lab team assessments, journal entries, and electronic data reports submitted as part of the lab work were collated and used to qualitatively determine the percentage of students who acquired introductory-level competency in computerized data acquisition. At the same time, we also evaluated the students’ skills at discussing and communicating science topics with each other and the instructors.

• SLO 3 - We placed particular emphasis on the students’ abilities to identify strengths and weaknesses in experimental design, experimental procedures, and data collection and analysis. The quality and complexity of the independent student research project were evaluated using a rubric adapted from the list of resources already discussed.

• SLO 4 - Our success in helping our non-science students establish connections between cell and organism, structure and function, and identifying the essential role of science in improving quality of life were assessed through 1) student responses in a special section of the final exam, and 2) student responses in a specific section of the aforementioned student self-assessment survey.

• SLO 5 - The success of the lab-based approach to science education of those less interested in science as well as the students’ ability to understand and appreciate primary scientific literature were addressed through their submitted work and the self-assessment survey.

Having just completed the second cycle of this course, we compared student performance on these objective measures using two types of comparisons, the standard pre- post-test for each student, as well as comparisons between different sections of introductory science courses (our interdisciplinary course on neuroscience, an introductory course in biology, and an introductory course in environmental science).

Preliminary outcomes

The considerable emphasis on standards for science education and the development of pedagogical strategies to achieve these goals on a national level have been met with some success, but such successes are limited to isolated efforts and not a systemic overhaul of science education and research. Our efforts were focused on the fact that an appreciation of the scientific investigative method comes through active participation in observation of phenomena, formulation of hypotheses, experimentation, data collection and analysis, and dissemination of results. Our preliminary results indicate that by transforming the introductory curriculum using the lab-led and student-centered approach we were successful in raising the scientific literacy for all students.

One of the assessment measures we used for this educational approach involved a previously validated biological self-assessment scale (Baldwin et al., 1999) that included the following subset of questions known as the “application” subscale:

• How confident are you that after reading an article about a biology experiment, you could write a summary of its main points?

• How confident are you that after reading an article about a biology experiment, you could explain its main ideas to another person?

• How confident are you that after reading an article about a biology experiment, you could explain its main ideas to another person?

• How confident are you that after watching a television documentary dealing with some aspect of biology, you could explain its main ideas to another person?

• How confident are you that after listening to a public lecture regarding some biology topic, you could write a summary of its main points?
• How confident are you that after listening to a public lecture regarding some biology topic, you could explain its main ideas to another person?

The comparison of these preliminary data from the Fundamentals of Neuroscience course with two other introductory courses in Biology and Environmental Science indicated that the Fundamentals of Neuroscience students performed better that their peers (p=0.001) even though they “started behind” those who enrolled in the other two classes (3.77±0.47 vs. 4.24±0.60 respectively). By the end of the semester they had “caught up” (4.30±0.46 vs. 4.34±0.77, main effect P=0.0181) with their peers in the science classes who showed no marked improvement in this measure throughout the semester. These data provide preliminary evidence that our approach may prove an effective means for improving students’ self-efficacy on issues related to understanding and interpreting science.

Conclusion

iScience is the comprehensive term we use to describe our introductive, innovative, interdisciplinary, and investigative science curriculum. The iScience curriculum and the newly established iScience laboratory are parts of a new interdisciplinary effort called the iHuman Sciences Initiative (iHSI). This new and exciting endeavor forms the framework for truly innovative and transformative changes in science education and collaborative research. Our preliminary data gives us reason to be optimistic about the impact our approach has on improving science literacy for all students, and we look forward to reporting on our progress in the future.

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Digital divide among Thai elderly people

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Abstract
Thailand has 15 million Internet users and there are only 5.2 percent in the age group 50-59 years, and only 0.9 percent that are over the age of 60 (NECTEC, 2008). The digital divide in Thailand exists between young and elderly people. Moreover, among the elderly group, the accessibility to computer and the Internet is problematic. This paper examines the digital divide and factors that influenced the Internet use among the elderly people in Thailand. The author conducted the interviews of 42 respondents who were aged 50 and older. The study found that the barriers to the Internet use among Thai elderly people included lack of Internet access at home, lack of computer literacy and instructor, cost of computers and Internet access, and their health problems. The study also found that uses and gratifications theory can well explain the Internet use among Thai elderly since most of them used the Internet to satisfy their personal needs and goals.

Introduction
Over the past 10 years, the population of elderly people and the use of computers and the Internet have been growing at extraordinary rates. In the United States, 40 percent of people whose ages are 66 and older go online, increasing from 29 percent in 2000 (Annenberg Digital Future project, 2009). However among Thailand’s 15 million Internet users, there are only 5.2 percent in the age group 50-59 years, and only 0.9 percent that are over the age of 60 (NECTEC, 2008).

In the future the elderly people will have to rely more on their technological skills in order to cope with their every day activities, such as contacting their children and relatives, shopping, getting health information, and life-long learning. Thailand has implemented its Information Technology Policy Framework 2001-2010 with its vision towards a Knowledge-Based Economy, but the elderly Internet users still much lag behind their younger counterparts. This will cause a major problem in Thailand’s aging society in the near future.

This study aims to examine 1) the digital divide among Thai elderly people; and 2) the technological or non-technological factors that influenced the Internet uses among Thai elderly people. The results of this study may lead to possible strategies and policy to bridge the widening gap of digital divide, and empower the Thai elderly to live independently and maintain a good quality of life in the aging society.

Theoretical framework

Digital divide
The digital divide is commonly defined as the gap between those who do and do not have access to computers and the Internet (Van Dijk, 2006). Technology is driven by needs, but it is reinforced by a variety of factors, including environment, finance, politics, human knowledge and skills. Technology that is effective and appropriate in one setting may not be feasible somewhere else. From a communication research perspective, research about the
socio-economic impact of having (or using) access to information is not at all new. The
digital divide clearly has its roots in the “knowledge gap” research of the 1970s, when
segments of the population with higher socio-economic status tended to acquire information
at a faster rate than the lower status segments and this increased the gap in knowledge
between the two segments of society (Tichenor, Olien and Donohue, 1970). Moreover, the
intensive users of media services would continuously increase their advantage by making
optimal use of the information available through the media. Lower socio-economic status
(SES) people have little or no knowledge about public affairs issues and usually are
unconcerned about their lack of knowledge.

With the emergence of the digital media, the knowledge gap hypothesis is finally linked
to the concept of “digital divide.” Digital divide can occur on the basis of gender, age,
income, race, location etc, therefore it reflects social impact caused by Information and
Communication Technologies (ICTs). These technologies produce differences in the
development opportunities for people, on the contrary they establish the gap between those
with access to these technologies and those without.

A basic strategy for overcoming the digital divide has been to provide physical access to
computers and the Internet. However Warschauer (2003) pointed out that even wealthy
individuals may be excluded because of discrimination based on gender, race, sexual
preference or disability, or political persecution. Warschauer (2003) clarified that there are
additionally three further aspects with regard to resources: Digital resources (material made
available online); Human resources (in particular literacy and education) and Social resources
(the community, institutional and societal structures that support access to IT). The aspects
that Warschauer (2003) identified as important formed the basis of this research when
evaluating and identifying the non-technical and technical factors that lead to the adoption
and use of the Internet by the Thai elderly.

Uses and gratifications theory

The limited effects theories view media influence as minimized or limited by certain
aspects of individual audience members’ personal and social lives. Katz, Blumler, and
Gurevitch (1974) presented a systematic and comprehensive articulation of audience
members’ role in mass communication process, known as Uses and Gratifications Theory
(UGT). The uses and gratifications approach views the audience as active, meaning that they
actively seek out specific media and content to achieve certain results or gratifications that
satisfy their personal needs. As Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) explain in the book
Mass Communication Research, the uses and gratifications approach has five basic
assumptions: 1) the audience is conceived as active and the viewers are goal oriented. 2) much
initiative in linking need gratification to a specific medium choice lies with the
audience member. 3) the media compete with other sources for need satisfaction. 4) people
have enough self-awareness of their media use, interests, and motives to be able to provide
researchers with an accurate picture of that use, and 5) value judgments of media content can
only be assessed by the audience.

In the Internet environment, users are even more actively engaged communication
participants, compared to other traditional media (Ruggiero, 2000). Some surveys have
shown that users have little trouble verbalizing their needs when using the Internet (Eighmey
motivations for Internet use may vary among individuals, situations, and media vehicles,
most uses and gratifications studies explore them based on some or all of the following
dimensions: relaxation, companionship, habit, passing time, entertainment, social interaction,
suggested that Internet forums such as electronic bulletin boards fulfill many expectations of
both mass and interpersonal communication. The needs gratified by the media are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Needs Gratified by the Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Media Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>Acquiring information, Knowledge, comprehension</td>
<td>Television (news), video</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(how to), movies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(documentaries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>Emotional, pleasant, or aesthetic experience</td>
<td>Movies, television (sitcoms, soap opera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal integrative</td>
<td>Enhancing credibility, confidence, and status</td>
<td>Video (“Speaking With Conviction”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social integrative</td>
<td>Enhancing connections with family, friends, and so forth</td>
<td>Internet (e-mail, chat rooms, listserves, IM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension release</td>
<td>Escape and diversion</td>
<td>Television, movies, video, radio, Internet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Media dependency theory

Media dependency theory has been explored as an extension of the uses and gratifications theory even though there are some differences between them. Some uses and gratifications studies have discussed media use as being goal directed (Palmgreen, Wenner & Rosengren, 1985; Parker & Plank, 2000). While DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1989) suggested that active selectors’ use of the media to achieve their goals will result in being dependent on the media. These goals included 1) social and self understanding; 2) interaction and action orientation; and 3) social and solitary play. Goal dimensions of media dependency theory are shown in table 2.

Table 2: Goal Dimensions of Media Dependency Theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding</th>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Play</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-understanding</td>
<td>Action orientation</td>
<td>Solitary play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. learning about oneself and growing as a person</td>
<td>e.g. deciding what to buy, how to dress, or how to stay slim</td>
<td>e.g. relaxing when alone or having something to do by oneself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social understanding</td>
<td>Interaction orientation</td>
<td>Social play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. knowing about and interpreting the world or community</td>
<td>e.g. getting hints on how to handle new or difficult situations</td>
<td>e.g. going to a movie or listening to music with family and friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach, 1989 p. 306

The intensity of media dependency depends on how much people perceive that the media they choose are meeting their goals and more than one kind of goal can be activated (and satisfied) by the same medium (DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach,1989). Moreover dependency on a specific medium is influenced by the number of media sources available to an individual. Individuals should become more dependent on available media if their access to media alternatives is limited (Sun et al.,1999) and people will become more dependent on media that meet a number of their needs than on media that provide only a few ones (Littlejohn, 2002).
Research methods

The study adopted a qualitative approach using purposive sampling technique. The author was part-time lecturer in Communication Technology Graduate Program at Ramkhamhaeng University in which most students had strong technology knowledge and expertise. The students were asked to help with the arrangement of interviews. The respondents (n = 42), aged 50 and older, were parents or family members of graduate students. Data were collected via semi-structured interviews method. The questions asked involved some demographic factors; the uses of the Internet and some barriers they encountered. These questions included:

1. “Have you ever used the Internet?”
2. “Are you interested in using the Internet?”
3. “How did you learn to use the Internet?”
4. “What are the benefits and pitfalls of the Internet in your opinion?”
5. “What are the barriers you have experienced in using the Internet?”
6. “What are your expectations for the Internet use?”

The interviews were conducted in October 2009. Each interview was tape recorded and lasted approximately half hour. An analysis of data was achieved through qualitative content analysis technique.

Research results

The research results were summarized as follows:

1. Respondent Demographics

The respondents were 28 females and 14 males, age 50-73 years old. Most of them had undergraduate degrees. Their occupations included retired government official, government official, businessperson, lawyer, accountant, employer, and housemaker. The income of respondents ranged from THB 10,000 to more than 50,000. The demographic profile of respondents are shown in Table 3.
Table 3: Respondents by Demographics (N = 42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 – 55</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 60</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 73</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degrees</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate degrees</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate or less</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government official</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businessperson</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THB 10,000 – 25,000</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THB 25,001 – 50,000</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; THB 50,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No specify</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Respondents’ internet use

Among 42 respondents, half of them reported that they never used the Internet, and among those nonusers, most of them showed an interest in using the Internet. The nonusers said that they wanted to use the Internet for e-mail; searching for news and some information relevant to their studies and career. Some of them wanted to chat and play games. The reasons why the elderly Internet nonusers wanted to use the Internet are shown in table 4.

Table 4: Why the elderly nonusers wanted to use the Internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>keep up with news</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search information</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mail and connect with people</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have fun (games, chat)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the elderly Internet users, the respondents reported that they learned how to use the Internet in different ways. Some of them reported that they started using the Internet while they were attending class in the universities and had to do a report for coursework. Some started using the Internet through self-learning because they wanted to get in touch with other people, while some attended the training programs at work. Many of them were taught how to use the computer and Internet by their children and family members. How the elderly users learned to use the Internet are shown in table 5.
Table 5: How the elderly learned to use the Internet

- taught by their children or other family members
- training at work
- self-learning

The elderly Internet users were asked to explain why they used the Internet. There were a number of reasons including: to check e-mail and search for information; to keep up with current events and their children; for work and entertainment. The reasons why the elderly used the Internet are shown in table 6.

Table 6: Why the elderly used the Internet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>search news/general information (politics/social/culture/religion/health)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keep up with current events / children</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search work-related information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search study-related information</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keep in touch with people</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job requirements</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. The benefits of the Internet

The elderly Internet users were asked to explain how they perceived the benefits of the Internet. The respondents reported that the benefits of the Internet included: to keep up-to-date with information; expand life experience; use as resources for knowledge and entertainment; and help the elderly to kill time and boredom. The perceived benefits of Internet among the elderly users are shown in table 7.

Table 7: How the elderly perceived the benefits of the Internet

- up-to-date information
- resource of news and knowledge
- expand life experience
- resource of entertainment
- help to kill time/boredom
- speedy search
- convenient/save time

4. The barriers to the Internet use

For the nonusers, their major barriers in using the Internet included: lack of Internet access at home; lack of computer literacy because their children did not teach them the Internet skills. The cost of computers and Internet access were also financial burden among elderly people. Moreover, many of the respondents mentioned about health problems that prevented them from the Internet use. The barriers to Internet use among elderly nonusers are shown in table 8.
Table 8: The barriers to Internet use among elderly nonusers

- lack of computer literacy
- lack of computer/Internet access
- lack of instructor
- health problems (visual deficiencies and other physical problems)
- non-affordability

The elderly Internet users were asked about the barriers to using the Internet. Their major barriers included: the slow speed of Internet connection; the difficulties in typing and finding information; can’t resolve technical problems; and lack of English literacy. The barriers to the Internet use among elderly Internet users are shown in table 9.

Table 9: The barriers to the Internet uses among elderly users

- slow Internet connection speed / old equipment
- difficulties in finding information / keywords
- difficulties in typing
- lack of English literacy (don’t understand the contents/how to use more)
- being afraid of technology
- Inability to resolve technical problems

5. Respondents’ expectations of the Internet

The elderly Internet users were asked about their expectations of the Internet. Their expectations included: the improvement of Internet connection speed and stability; universal service of the Internet; more security and ease of use. The respondents also reflected concerns about the Internet uses among children. Respondents’ expectations of the Internet are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Respondents’ expectations of the Internet

- improvement of Internet connection speed and stability
- universal service of the Internet
- more ease of use
- more Thai knowledge/academic database
- updated information
- cheaper or free of charge Internet
- more security
- safety for children (chat/games/pornography etc)
- cheaper computer/equipment
- more informative/useful websites
- more training provided by the government

Conclusion

The research results showed a significant digital divide among Thai elderly people. Half of the respondents never used the Internet but they showed an interest in doing so, mainly to keep up with news, search information, and connect with people. The segment of respondents who were excluded from the digital world tended to have lower socio-economic status than their counterpart since their main barriers to the Internet use were those related to accessibility (lack of computer and Internet access; lack of computer literacy) as well as non-affordability. Whereas the problems among the elderly Internet users went beyond basic
physical accessibility. They pointed out their barriers including slow Internet speed, lack of typing skill and English literacy, and technical problems. This situation reflected the “digital divide” which tied in with the “knowledge gap hypothesis” among Thai elderly people.

The uses and gratifications approach can help explain the Thai elderly use of the Internet. Their main purposes were to seek information on various topics, as well as to stay connected with friends and family. Therefore this research results affirmed the elderly use of the Internet for cognitive need (acquiring information and knowledge), affective need (watching movies on the Internet), social integrative need (using e-mail, chat, and discussion board), and tension release (escaping from the real world).

From this study, the digital divide can also be bridged based on the respondents’ expectations. They mentioned an increasing speed Internet connection and its stability, universal service of the Internet, free or low cost Internet, cheaper computer and equipment, and the ease of use. These factors play a significant role as critical catalyst for Internet use. Besides accessibility, the social and cultural aspects should be taken into consideration since the respondents also reflected their concern of Internet security, useful website, and safe sites for children. If the elderly have positive perception of the Internet, the digital divide will not be widening.

Even though the Internet diffusion rate among the elderly is increasing, it still lags far behind the figures of the young users. Cultural preparations and easy access modes are very crucial for the elderly who are the latecomer. Internet literacy program for the elderly people should be created by informal learning and peer group support. This study suggested the collaboration between the government and community with the family support in order to promote the Internet use among Thai elderly, and empower them to live independently and maintain a good quality of life in the ever-changing digital world.

References


Language and culture - the selected problems of international business communication

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Abstract
The paper presents different approaches to culture in organization, different communication styles and different models of intercultural management. It discusses the influence of language on international business communication and indicates language barriers as main source of uncertainty and communication problems in interpersonal relation. In this context the different dimensions of language barriers are described. The paper describes cultural implication for business communication and indicates the main factors conditioning successful and effective international business communication.

Introduction
International businesses are facing a new dilemma whereby cross-cultural communication is introduced due to the major reforms brought about through internationalization, merging and joint ventures. This would make culture an important aspect when it comes to business communication. Communication is the exchange of ideas, information, etc. between two or more people. In an act of communication there's usually at least one speaker or sender, a message which is transmitted, and a person or persons for whom this message is intended-the receiver (Richards, 1985). Communication takes place through a medium and in situations that are limited in time and place. Each specific situation determines what and how people communicate, and it is changed by people communicating. Situations are not universal but are embedded in a cultural habitat, which in turn conditions the situation. Language is thus to be regarded as part of culture. And communication is conditioned by the constraints of the situation-in-culture (Nord, 1997, p.1). All business activity involves communicating. Global businesses activities such as leading, motivating, negotiating, decision-making, problem solving and exchanging information and ideas are all based on the ability of managers and employees from one culture to communicate successfully with colleagues, clients and suppliers from other cultures (Adler, 2002). When business partners come from different culture and speak a different language communication becomes considerably more difficult. The statement “culture is communication and communication is culture” (Hall, 1959, p.186) reflects the importance of each of these subject areas. We can distinguish two groups of communication models. The first group treats communication as transmission, the second as co-creation. Western models of communication rely on the premise that communication is a linear process of information transmission from sender to receiver (Lasswell, 1948). The transmission of information is understood as a controllable process. The western transmission models place the sender in a dominant role. More recent models include the sociological factor in communication by highlighting the importance of culture. Intercultural communication models include sender, message, channel, noise, receiver, feedback and cultural context (Jandt, 1998). Culture may be a filter through which people construct (encode) and receive (decode) messages. As an alternative to viewing communication as
transmission, a model inspired by eastern philosophy is employed. The premise of communication in this dialogic communication model is that communicators cooperate to create meaning. The dialogic communication model depicts the ways of understanding interpersonal, intercultural, and international relationships within which people of diverse cultures can reflect on their cultural differences as well as their similarities (Yoshikawa, 1987). While the linear process models view communication as a transmission of information from sender to receiver, the dialogic communication model builds on the ideas of co-created meaning and reciprocity as a part of an ongoing dialogue. Thus communication is an ever-evolving process of the co-creation of meaning that allows for ambiguity and paradox in intercultural encounters (Fang, 2003). Communication regardless of its kind may happen between people of same culture and language or of different cultures. There are often more problems in cross-cultural communication which happens between people of different cultural backgrounds than in communication between people of the same cultural background (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1993).

**Culture in international business**

The concept of culture have found their equivalents in the organizational literature where history, heroes, artifacts and assumptions make up the cultural fabric of companies (Schein, 1992). Culture is based on “shared or partly shared patterns of meaning and interpretation that are produced, reproduced and continually changed by the people identifying with them and negotiating them” (Soederberg and Holden, 2002, p.105). Cultural differences in business practice could obstruct communication, thus causing, confusion, misunderstandings, and in the worst case failed business deals. Researchers have examined how national cultures dominate or determine the way people act, think and feel. Several attempts have been made to find dimensions along which different cultures can be defined. Hall and Reed Hall (1990) pose three such dimensions of cultures: high and low context cultures, space dimension (psychic distance) and time dimension (monochronic and polychronic cultures). In high context cultures, what is not said is just as important as what is uttered. People belonging to high context cultures live in a perpetual flow of information, and can therefore leave out information that can be regarded as understood when communicating. High context cultures are found in China, Japan and Latin America. In low context cultures the spoken and written word is important and little regard is taken for the context in which communication take place. Low context cultures are for instance USA, Germany and the Scandinavian countries.

Space is another dimension along which cultures differ. It concerns the way people regard territories, if and how they may be owned. It also concerns the physical space between people. The third dimension concerns time. The perception of time may be monochronic or polychronic. In monochronic cultures, things are dealt with one at time, punctuality is highly valued and deadlines are respected. People in polychronic cultures, such as the southern European countries, deal with many things simultaneously, and punctuality and deadlines are of less importance. Hall & Reed Hall (1990) state that low context cultures are often polychronic. Geert Hofstede defines culture as “mental software” (Hofstede, 1980). In Hofstede’s study four dimensions of national culture were identified: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism vs. collectivism, masculinity vs. femininity.

The basic issue of power distance is human inequality and how societies deal with it. It is a measure of the influence between two individuals, for instance a boss and a subordinate, as it is perceived by the less powerful of the two. Uncertainty avoidance deals with uncertainty about future. Uncertainty is dealt with trough technology, including all kinds of human artifacts, laws including both formal and informal rules and religion. Uncertainty avoidance is a measure of the norm for tolerance of ambiguity in a society. The dimension of individualism vs. collectivism describes a society’s relationship between the individual and
the collective. In an individualist society, the needs of the individuals come first, while in a collectivist society, the well-being of the collective is regarded as more important than that of the individual. The dimension of masculinity vs. femininity describes how societies deal with the duality of the sexes. In a masculine country, inhabitants of both sexes tend to favor male, assertive goals, while the inhabitants of a feminine country tend to value female, nurturing goals. Hofstede suggests that the cultural dimension can help identifying culturally conditioned behavior. Large power distance leads to centralized control and decision making. Collectivism leads to a need for stable, long-term relationships. Masculinity leads to ego-boosting behavior and resolving conflicts by fighting rather than compromising, whereas femininity leads to ego-effacing behavior, sympathy for the weak and compromise. Uncertainty avoidance leads to low tolerance of ambiguity as well as distrust for counterparts who show unfamiliar behavior. Processes of markets globalization and globalization of business activity cause the increasing of international competition in the global dimension. Globalization changed rules of competition and the way of managing a company. It is possible to determine globalization as the process, in which markets and production in different countries became more and more interdependent in the connection with dynamics of an interchange of goods and services, the flow of capital and the technology. Globalization is a social and economic process in the result of which is made one market. Globalization is the new economic (as well as political and culture) order. We live, it is asserted, in a globalized world in which nation-states are no longer significant actors or meaningful economic units; In which consumer taster and cultures are homogenized and satisfied through the provision of standardized global products created by global corporations with no allegiance to place or community (Liberska, 2002, p.18).

The patterns of national culture help explain the differences in consumer behavior across nations and these differences in adopting an innovation are subscribed to individual nations’ cultures (Usunier, 2005). Understanding cultural differences is considered a prerequisite for successful international advertising. An innovative country is culturally homogeneous and has a highly concentrated population. Culture is values that are shared across people in a society and these underlying values influence individuals’ attitudes and behaviors. Using Hofstede’s cultural dimensions to map the values of national culture helps explain cultural differences in consumers’ innovative behaviors across countries. Culture is a complex and multifaceted construct. Hofstede’s individualism or collectivism stands out as an important dimension affecting consumers’ adoption of innovation. Cross-cultural research consistently shows that individualists’ behavior is closely linked to attitudes, and collectivists’ behavior is closely linked to norms. In individualist societies, ties between individuals are loose where people are concerned with themselves only. Individualists are motivated by self-interest and achievement of personal goals. In contrast, people living in collectivist societies are tightly integrated and are expected to look after the interests of their in-groups. Collectivist culture emphasizes on sharing, cooperation and group harmony (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1993). Individualists believe that everyone has a right to privacy. The locus of control in the decision-making process resides in the individual and that behavior is a function of the individual’s own action. This is a Western belief. On the other hand, external locus of control is part of collectivist cultures, where people are accustomed to other people making decisions for them. A fundamental difference between individualism and collectivism is between decision making by the individual or by the group. They see interpersonal relationships as very important. In a collectivist culture, decision making is a group process as coercive power may exist in interpersonal communication between group members (Usunier, 2005).
Language and culture

Language and culture may be seen as being closely related and both aspects must be considered for communication process. Communications process involves language and cultural components. Language and culture may be seen as being closely related and both aspects must be considered for communication process.

Lotman's theory states that no language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture and no culture can exist which does not have at its centre, the structure of natural language (Lotman, 1978, p.211). Newmark defines culture as "the way of life and its manifestations that are peculiar to a community that uses a particular language as its means of expression", thus acknowledging that each language group has its own culturally specific features (Newmark, 1988, p.94).

Language is a part of culture and culture is a part of language. Language is a part of culture because language is the tool of cultural expression. Culture is a part of language because the language that has grown with a community is the task of expressing that community’s culture. As a result, cultural concepts are embedded in language, and the architecture of each language contains culturally specific features.

Salient examples are lexemes that exist in one language, but require explanations in another. Some German or English special terms don’t have equivalent in Polish so they require explanation. German terms without equivalent in Polish:
- Stücklegung- podział akcji według ich wartości nominalnej (shares splitting according to their nominal value);
- Neuzulassung- dopuszczenie papierów wartościowych do obrotu na giełdzie (shares admission to stock exchange).

English terms without equivalent in Polish:
- Crosstrade- przewozy morskie między obcymi portami;
- Drawback- zwrot długa w reeksportie.

For instance, many a term in the field of Economy and Management in the world today is borrowed from the English by a large number of languages. Linguistic changes in business language refer first of all to lexical and stylistic changes that are a result of a strong influence of English borrowings. They have changed completely the face of business terminology in recent years. The Americanisation of the world finds a reflection in language. Commercial success and the influence a country has on other countries decide about the attractiveness of its culture and its language. The inhabitants of countries which are less significant on the international scene of politics and economy search for the key to economic, political and military success in other cultures. They willingly imitate the culture and the language of the leading countries, today – the countries of Western Europe and the USA (Lubecka, 1999, p. 108). Borrowing is a consequence of cultural contact between two languages. When two languages begin to coexist due to social, cultural, political, geographical or economic reasons, it is inevitable that they have an influence on each other. When cultures come into contact with one other, borrowing takes place primarily in the realm of lexical items (Anderson, 1973, p.95). An Anglicism is as a word in target language coming from British or American English, an uncommon word compound, or any type of change in word meaning, word usage, pronunciation, or syntax following British or American example (Lipczuk, 2000, p. 268).

Many English loanwords adapt to the Polish or German sociolect of management:
- Franchising; Joint-Venture; Goodwill; Outplacement; Cross trade; Deckort; Break even point; Factoring; Forfaiting; Know-how; Merchandising; Benchmarking; Holding; Clearing; Know-how; Cross-Buying; Cross – Selling; Marketing; Public Relations; Terms of Trade; Swap; Cash – flow; Reengineering; Outsourcing; Offshore banking; Timing; Splitting.
In German and Polish business terminology we can meet not only borrowings from English but also from other languages:

- **Italian**: Agio, Disagio, Contagio, Bank, Netto, Brutto, Konto, Inkasso, Skonto;
- **Latin**: Promotion, Amortization, Distribution, Ad valorem, Konkurrenz, Globalisierung, Internationalisierung;
- **Japanese**: Poka-Yoke, Kanban, Kaizen;
- **Spanish**: Embargo.

All living languages are subject to constant change. Language change may influence phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of a given language. One major cause of language change is linguistic borrowing. The main reason for linguistic borrowing is to fill a void in the borrowing language to describe new concepts and elements, which may not have been in existence earlier and suddenly enters a language, which then demands a term to identify it. It should be noted that a significant number of business terms have the status of internationalisms, that is linguistic borrowings that have occurred in several languages with identical meaning. Internationalisms play increasing role in special terminology forming a large percentage of vocabulary. (Rybicka, 1976, p.53).

It is possible to categorize the loan words into the following groups:

1. **Word consists of foreign and loan words, or words that are transferred from source language in their entirety**: monopol, duopol, marketing, public relations, import, terms of trade, dumping, benchmarking
2. **Word consists of compound words made up of one English and one German part where either the first or second part of the compound is English**: Währungsswap
3. **Word is composed of loan translations -words literally translated from source language into target language**: Einkaufszentrum - shopping center; centrum handlowe; quality circle - Qualitäts Zirkel - koła jakości. Loan translations are commonly known as calques.
4. **Word consists of loan meanings - words that previously existed in German and take on a new meaning under the influence of English**: For instance, Klima (climate) previously referred only to the weather climate, but has taken on the meaning of general atmosphere or ambience as in Betriebsklima (work climate).
5. **Word includes words that have been borrowed into German more than once with a different meaning each time**: Service, which initially referred to sport terminology and now takes on the additional meaning of client services.

Loan words from English may be used for purposes of brevity. We find in business language numerous borrowings whose German equivalents are much longer, which may have been borrowed for brevity reasons. Ten of such cases are illustrated in Table 1:
Table 1: Linguistic borrowings and their German equivalents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borrowing</th>
<th>German equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Centre</td>
<td>Informationsvermittlungsstelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>Anzeiger, Inhaltsverzeichnis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Arbeitsgruppe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Break-even</td>
<td>Kostendeckungspunkt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boom</td>
<td>Aufschwung, Hochkonjunktur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trend</td>
<td>Richtung, Tendenz, Verlauf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepayments</td>
<td>Rechnungsabgrenzungsposten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aval</td>
<td>Wechselbürgschaft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Vorstellungsgespräch, Bewerbungsgespräch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tratte</td>
<td>Schuldwechsel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own elaboration.

The term borrowing refers to the process of speakers adopting words from a source language into their native language. In a general understanding of the term, a borrowing is understood to be a foreign lexical element, whose formal and semantic foreignness is obvious for an average user of language. Such borrowings, referred to as loanwords, are easily recognizable.

Borrowing can be carried out in different ways:
- direct borrowing with very little or no change to the particular word,
- translating the loan word into words already available in the language,
- combining the loan word and an already existing word in the language,
- extension or change of the meaning.

Sometimes foreign words and loan words are borrowed from another language because they do not exist in the target language or cannot be precisely expressed in the target language. In other cases, foreign and loan words are borrowed even though they have equivalents with same or similar meaning in the target language. The distinction between foreign words and loan words relates to orthography and pronunciation. For foreign words, orthography and pronunciation remain unchanged from the source language. Loan words, on the other hand, adapt to the new language with respect to orthography and pronunciation.

Loanwords from the English language into the German and Polish sociolect of management can be divided into two main categories: lexical borrowings and semantic loans. Lexical borrowings which are unassimilated on the levels of orthography and morphology have the status of quotes. It should be emphasized that speakers of the recipient language pronounce quotes using sounds that function in the phonetic system of their language. In that sense quotes undergo the process of phonetic substitution. In case of loanwords proper processes of substitution take place on the levels of orthography, phonetics and morphology. In the process of adaptation loanwords proper undergo changes in their spelling in accordance with the rules of the recipient language. As far as morphological adaptation is concerned, loanwords proper are inflected and are subject to morphological substitution. In a later phase some of them can take on derivational affixes. Finally, semantic loans occur when lexemes already functioning in the recipient language take on new meanings under the influence of a foreign language.

Loan words can be transferred from English or from other languages without changes: Franchising; Software; Joint-Venture; Goodwill; Outplacement; Dumping; SWOT; SWIFT;

Special types of borrowings are hybrids or loan blends-formations in which one element is of foreign origin and the other one native: Anti-Dumping-Zoll – clo antydumpingowe; Anti-Dumping-Verfahren – postępowanie antydumpingowe; Holdinggesellschaft – holding; Leasinggesellschaft – przedsiębiorstwo leasingowe; Leasingvertrag – umowa leasingowa; Dumpingpreis – cena dumpingowa; Swappeschäft- transakcje swapowe; Währungsswap – swap walutowy; Know-How – Verlust – utrata know-how.

The majority of foreign lexical elements are borrowed for nominal reasons. We borrow foreign words to name new object. International vocabulary makes easier professional communication. In such cases it would be difficult to search for an adequate translation. Forming neologisms seems ineffective when we take into consideration the international scope of such terms.

Language barriers

Language is a complex heterogeneous system comprising various interrelated subsystems, each of which can be described at the phonological (phoneme), morphological (morpheme), lexical (lexeme), syntactic (sentence) and discourse (text) levels (Cabre, 1992). Language barriers play a key role in any multilingual group relationship. They contributes to the difficulty of achieving effective communications and collaborative relationship. In this context the different dimensions of language barriers are described: buyer-seller relationship, joint ventures, foreign market expansion, human recourse management. There are different options for managing language problems in international company: Lingua Franca, External language recourses, Language training, Corporate language (Harzing and Feely, 2004).

In the current era, English is increasingly recognised as it dominates the world as a global language of international business. In the world of non-native English speaking background, English language learning and acquiring are consequently seen as a fundamental tool to reach a professional achievement. At the same time, it brings about the increasing number of intercultural communication and interactions in global context. It is undoubted that English becomes the most powerful international lingua franca or a global language and the language of globalisation and the greatest economic and political power. The immediate and understandable reaction to any skills-shortage in a business is to consider language training in personnel development strategy. Certainly the language training industry is well developed, offering programs at almost every level and in numerous languages.

Alternative to a customized training program is to adopt a single corporate language. All recruitment and personnel development could then be focused upon achievement of required
standards in that one chose language. A number of major multinational companies have adopted this strategy. A Corporate Language can be considered to have a number of important benefits: facilitation of formal reporting, ease access to and maintenance of policy, procedure, documents and information systems, facilitation of informal communications between operating units and within cross-national teams, fostering a sense of belonging as an element in diffusing a corporate culture (Harzing and Feely, 2004).

A rational and obvious response to the language barrier is to employ external resources such as translators, interpreters or companies specialized in these fields. Translation is defined as an interlinguistic transfer procedure, comprising the interpretation of a source text and the production of a target text with the intent of establishing a relation of equivalence between the two texts (Delisle, Lee-Jahnke & Cormier, 1999:88). When people of different languages are to communicate, they need a common language for understanding each other. Translation is a reasonable way of communicating in these cases. Translation always involves both language and culture simply because the two cannot be separated. Language is culturally embedded: it both expresses and shapes cultural reality, and the meaning of linguistic items can only be understood when considered together with the cultural context in which the linguistic items are used. Translators should pay great attention to differences in kind and degree of conventionalization in the source and target cultures when transferring a text from one culture to another. (House, 2009)International businesses with a highly diverse workforce in terms of nationality and cultural background face challenges from the differences in language, values, belief systems, business ethics, business practices, behaviour, etiquette and expectations. Cross-cultural differences can negatively impact a business in a variety of ways, whether in team cohesion or in staff productivity. The different methods of communication are just one area in which cross-cultural differences are manifested. In business the most valuable thing would be information and for it to be transferred from one body to the other. Communication is the vital element that drives such process. But when the communication comes to certain influenced by culture, it is a whole new chapter to be understood. Lack of understanding or investment in cross-cultural management would lead to major business problems. Such as loss of clients, poor staff motivation, lack of team building, internal conflicts, and poor productivity. International companies with highly diverse workforce in terms of nationality and cultural background all face the same problem when conflict arises from the difference of culture, language, value, belief, business ethic, behavior, and cultural etiquettes. Such conflict could prove to be a negative impact on the business mainly in team cohesion and staff productivity. Cross-cultural communication problems can manifest into the downfalls of big international companies when taken lightly. That is why more and more companies have realized such dilemma and are upgrading intercultural communication skills within its organization. Lack of investment in cross-cultural training and language tuition often leads to deficient internal cohesion. The loss of clients, customers, poor staff retention, lack of competitive edge, internal conflicts, poor working relations, misunderstandings, stress, poor productivity and lack of co-operation are all by-products of poor cross-cultural communication.

**Conclusion**

Language and culture may thus be seen as being closely related and both aspects must be considered for translation. Business language is changing all the time and it must be said that they follow the changing reality efficiently. Linguistic changes are an excellent illustration of the changing culture and they illustrate not only the American influence, but also other cultural changes that occur globally, especially if one takes into consideration the fact that many of the English words or expressions mentioned here become internationalisms.
One of the most difficult problems in international business communication is found in the differences between cultures. People of a given culture look at things from their own perspective. Indeed, one of the most difficult problems in international management is found in the differences between cultures.

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Soederberg, A.M. (2006). Narrative Interviewing and Narrative Analysis in a Study of a
Developing cultural linguistic competence as a way of questioning stereotypes and enhancing second language learning

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Abstract

The article focuses on the role of a foreign language coursebook in developing students’ cultural linguistic competence. The ideas presented are based on English FL coursebooks and the Polish educational context; however, the issues discussed may apply to other languages and international context as well.

Introduction

The modern world is changing faster than ever before. Thanks to processes of integration and globalization people can easily travel around the world, work or study in foreign countries. Frequently, they start their new lives in geographically, and also culturally, distant places. The global migration we are currently experiencing entails either living in the context of a different culture or in a multicultural society, which poses new challenges on education. The role of school needs redefining: since it prepares students to take up social roles in adult life, the models of teaching should reflect the changes in the modern world. Today’s students are to become not only responsible citizens of a given country but also citizens of the world. Raising students' cross-cultural awareness should be regarded as way of preparing them to living in a culturally complex context, shaping the attitude of openness and tolerance, making them question stereotypes. Developing cultural linguistic competence in the process of foreign language teaching should prepare young people to start an intercultural dialogue.

As a result, the role of foreign languages has been changing - they are becoming indispensable in both private and professional spheres of life. People start realizing that even the knowledge of one foreign language may not be enough to successfully pursue their future careers. Thus, teaching foreign languages effectively has become a priority issue for educators all over the world.

The idea of teaching foreign languages in Poland has been evolving in the past decades. Twenty years ago foreign language was just one of the subjects taught at school for one or two hours a week. The outcome of such approach was that only a small number of people could communicate successfully with foreigners in their adult life. People had no motivation to learn foreign languages because of limited possibility of international contacts. Due to the changes in geopolitical situation in Europe at the end of the 20th century, the benefits of knowing foreign languages have become recognized not only by linguists and teachers but also by businessmen and other professionals who cooperate with foreign partners or work for multinational companies.

European policy on languages supports linguistic diversity but at the same time emphasizes the importance of teaching foreign languages in order to communicate effectively and exchange ideas freely. With school education remaining the basis for development of students’ knowledge and abilities and providing the legal and organizational framework, the European Union supports it with modern educational programmes and funds necessary for their implementation.
The changes in the policy on teaching foreign languages are already visible in Polish schools. In the past ten years the education system has gradually been reformed. Currently, every student learns two foreign languages, the number of classes a week has been increased, and teachers are encouraged to use active methods. New programmes and syllabi have resulted in considerable modifications in coursebooks.

Materials at teachers' disposal are abundant - there are CDs, video tapes, teacher resource packs accompanying student's coursebook, definitely enriching the process of teaching a foreign language. Students can also benefit from the support the European Union offers in the form of school exchanges within the Socrates framework. However, the situation in Polish schools is far from ideal. Only some of them (usually the ones in big cities) have fully qualified teachers and parents who can afford to buy supplementary materials for their children or send them abroad for holidays. As a result the foreign language coursebook remains the major element developing student's foreign language competence.

The concept of competence itself has also been evolving in the past decades. In the late 1980s the term cultural competence started appearing as a supplement to the notions of linguistic competence introduced by Noam Chomsky in the 1960s and communicative competence introduced in 1970s by Dell Hymes. Since then, the concept of competence – limited originally to grammar and lexis – has been broadened to include the element of communication and culture, and become the subject of interest of various scientific disciplines: linguistics, cross-cultural studies, sociology, anthropology and many others.

Foreign language coursebooks and the teacher's activity during classes focus to a great degree on shaping grammatical, lexical and communicative competence. Developing cultural competence – as a constituent of linguistic competence – only recently has been gaining its place in teaching foreign languages. It is partly justified by the natural order in which a learner acquires a foreign language because developing cultural competence belongs to the sphere or level of mastering the language (Rittel 1992). The following example can illustrate this point: You can ask the way to the nearest bank in a number of different ways, depending on the situation and your interlocutor, but in fact it is enough to know just a bit of 'survival English' to get the information. So, the question is, whether your aim is just being understood or behaving according to the cultural models or rules binding in a given society.

In every culture there exist different models of behaviour. Although using phrases from outside these models does not disturb communication we are viewed as strangers, not fully equipped to actively participate in the target culture. The ability to understand and communicate successfully depends also on the shared knowledge of the world and experience of the interlocutors (Tomalin and Stempleski 1993). It depends on the fact how fully all the constituents of linguistic competence are developed – its grammatical, lexical, communicative and cultural components.

Developing cultural competence cannot be left solely to students themselves and the external context; just as the teacher leads the student in gaining speaking, reading, listening and writing skills, equally important is his/her role in shaping student's cultural linguistic competence. The knowledge of language, understood only as a set of words and grammar rules, does not give the students the feeling that they participate fully in the intercultural dialogue.

Out of many factors developing cultural linguistic competence, such as the teacher, other students or external context, the coursebook has been chosen for the following study. A number of English coursebooks have been analysed for the presence of various aspects of target language culture, with the aim of checking to what extent 'culture' is present in foreign language coursebooks, reflecting the changes in the real world, new approaches to language teaching and new challenges facing education. The author is trying to find out which aspects
of culture are extensively covered, which elements are only mentioned, and which ones remain completely disregarded.

**Cultural linguistic competence**

*Cultural linguistic competence* is an important part of foreign language acquisition. The term has recently started to be widely used in the context of foreign language learning and teaching as well. Both teachers and scholars agree that the knowledge of rules governing the language is not sufficient for the proper use of it, taking grammatical, lexical, social and cultural dimensions of language into consideration.

Researchers claim that social and cultural factors are extremely important for successful communication. In the process of learning a foreign language Rittel (1992) distinguishes between getting *knowledge* (grammatical and lexical competence) and *skills* (communicative competence), and later on getting the *knowledge of culture*, understood as the ability to participate in, or share, a given culture. The levels of competence – classified as transitional, approximate and target – respectively reflect the stages in foreign language learning – acquiring, developing and mastering the language.

The terms *cultural competence, sociocultural competence, intercultural competence* and *multicultural competence* have been commonly used in the context of foreign language teaching for the past twenty years. In many publications they are used interchangeably, for researchers in the field they differ mainly in the point of view.

The term *cultural competence* does not have an explicit definition. It is the reason why various scholars present their own definitions of the term, emphasising various aspects of the given notion. They focus on sociocultural factors or social phenomena influencing foreign language and culture acquisition.

Diniejko (2004) defines *cultural competence* as ‘the ability to understand behaviour from the standpoint of the members of a culture and to behave in a way that would be understood by the members of that culture in the intended way.’ (Diniejko 2004:34) He gives an example of a European learning Japanese, for whom it is not possible to speak Japanese correctly ‘without understanding the social structure of Japanese society, because 'that structure is reflected in the endings of words and the terms of address and reference that must be used when speaking to or about other people.' (Diniejko 2004:34)

In order to define *L2 cultural competence* many scholars ask questions about the interdependence of language and culture and its influence on language teaching and learning. Most of them agree that the term deals with a place of an individual in a given group and relations appearing between that individual and the rest of the group in a given period of time. Generally, we can define *cultural competence* as the knowledge about society and culture. The development of cultural competence implies familiarizing learners with specific rules governing culture that differ across countries. The knowledge of sociocultural norms binding in a given society is especially important, as its lack can cause communication block or bring about failure of communication.

Raising *sociocultural competence* concerns the development of the knowledge of cultural patterns and social rules. It includes specific usage of a language, which is an expression of culture. The relationship between language and culture is bidirectional and that is why these two need to be taught together. Language is one of the ways in which culture displays itself, if not the major one. Language is a part of culture and a carrier of important information about culture and its changes.

Tomlinson and Masuhara (2004:6) define *cultural knowledge* and *cultural awareness* by contrasting their characteristic features. For them, *cultural knowledge* is usually external (presented by somebody else), static (not modified by one’s own experience), articulated (reduced to what words can express), stereotypical and reduced (depending on information
available, commonly presented in the form of description, explanation, statistics or generalization). Cultural awareness, on the other hand, consists of perceptions of one's own and other people's cultures, which are dynamic, variable, multi-dimensional and interactive. Cultural knowledge is mostly gained from books and other people, whereas cultural awareness is gained from personal experience.

Developing sociocultural competence in the process of foreign language teaching means not only acquainting learners with a different linguistic code but also teaching them how to use this code in different cultural contexts. The reason for developing sociocultural competence is that all speakers should be conscious of close relationship between the ways of speaking, thinking and behaving. All those activities are closely connected with one another and independent of learner's native culture. The learners of a foreign language should also gain knowledge about customs and beliefs of the other culture. The reason for culture learning is that cultural elements appear in everyday communication and seem to carry specific meaning.

According to Brown (2000:182) culture learning is a process of creating shared meaning between cultural representatives. It is a process which continues over years of language learning and penetrates deeply into one's patterns of thinking, feeling and acting.

As mentioned above, sociocultural competence implies the knowledge of the laws governing communication in the target culture. Developing sociocultural competence stands for familiarizing learners with value systems, behaviours, beliefs, customs, traditions and achievements of the target culture as well as for teaching language and its rules. Socioculturally competent speakers communicate fluently and confidently, which makes their communication successful.

One of questions concerning developing sociocultural competence is how culture should be taught with reference to differences and similarities between native and foreign culture. According to Kramsch (1995) there are two approaches attempting to overcome differences between cultures and these are intercultural and multicultural approach. The first one emphasizes familiarizing learners with cultural facts differing from one's native experience. The other one deemphasizes national differences and highlights the social diversity and cultural pluralism.

Kramsch (1995) notices that although researchers make advances in the intercultural and multicultural research, the concept language and culture in language teaching is relatively narrow. She claims that language continues to be taught as a fixed system of formal structures and universal speech functions, a neutral conduit for the transmission of cultural knowledge. Culture is incorporated only to the extent that it reinforces and enriches, not that it puts in question traditional boundaries of self and other. In practice, teachers teach language and culture, but not language as culture (Kramsch 1995:7)

**Foreign language coursebook**

Teachers of English, when deciding which book they want to use in their teaching of the language classes, pay attention to many features of the books. They take into consideration the way grammar is presented or what topics reading exercises cover; they also pay attention to general organization of the book. Very often they are not aware of the extent to which culture of the English speaking community is presented.

For those who want to make conscious choices, several checklists have been published. They help the teachers to assess the content of the book, the coverage of grammar points and last but not least, their effectiveness in raising students' cultural awareness. Huhn (1978, cited in Byram 1987) proposes the following criteria: giving factually accurate and up-to-date
information, avoiding stereotypes by raising awareness, presenting a realistic picture, being free from ideological tendencies, presenting phenomena in context, relating historical material to contemporary society and making it clear how personalities are products of their age.

Coursebooks aim to develop cultural competence by familiarizing learners with the culture of the target language. Through exposure to British and American tradition, students become aware of the similarities and differences that exist between their own culture and the one of the English speaking countries. They develop their communicative competence by studying the vocabulary used in various situations depicted in the book. This in turn helps them not only to understand the behaviour and habits of the English community but also acquire the ability to behave appropriately in those situations.

The books develop student's cultural competence focusing on developing their communicative competence by showing various situations students may get involved in. This is only one way in which cultural competence can be developed; another one is presenting students with knowledge of the aspects of the target language culture. Although some scholars argue that providing factual knowledge about the target culture should not be the aim of teaching culture, the aspect should not be completely disregarded, since 'for any given culture core information exists that one must share in order to participate meaningfully in that culture' (Seelye 1993:26).

The indicator of a good coursebook is that it allows students to think independently according to their own beliefs and interests, instead of imposing ideologies (Huhn 1978, Secru 1998). Such a coursebook always refers to students' own opinions; on the other hand, it provides thought-stimulating material and gives factual knowledge. The content of the coursebook provokes critical thinking, makes students draw their own conclusions. A good foreign language coursebook builds the attitude of tolerance and openness by showing students that the people whose language they are learning are not better or worse – they are just different.

Since the reality changes so quickly, the elements that used to be part of everyday culture are not so common any more. That is why the cultural aspects which are included in foreign language coursebooks should not be presented as ultimately and always true. They should not be treated as facts to be memorised by learners but rather as elements stimulating observation, critical thinking and discussion. Just as students do not learn all the existing sentences by heart to be successful in communication in the foreign language, and instead acquire the elements of the lexical set and grammar rules binding in the foreign language system, similarly getting cultural competence means being able to participate in the foreign language culture without having knowledge of all its aspects. Culturally competent students are able to analyse culturally-new situations and solve cultural problems. The natural steps they take are: observation, the feeling of astonishment, comparison with their own culture and finally building the attitude of openness rather than assessment. In this way, learning about English culture students become culturally competent in many cultures since the attitude of openness and tolerance is not limited to one culture only.

The usual pattern foreign language coursebooks follow for teaching culture is talking about the unknown comparing it to the world students have knowledge about – their own culture. In this way, the books develop cultural awareness viewed as understanding and recognition of the similarities and differences between the student's own and the target culture. The types of interaction in L2 culture teaching include coursebook – student, teacher – student and student – student interaction since coursebook, teacher and student possess the information that can be exchanged with other students in the process of foreign language teaching.
Evaluation of coursebooks cultural content

Teachers of English, when deciding which book they want to use, pay attention to many coursebook features. They take into consideration what topics are covered in the book and the way grammar is presented. They also pay attention to general organization of the book. Very often they are not aware of the extent to which culture of the English speaking community is presented. It is the coursebook writer’s responsibility to present the cultural issues in the widest possible way. What follows is the author’s evaluation of EFL coursebooks available on the Polish educational market, analysed according to Huhn’s (1978) criteria.

Many coursebooks are up-to-date in presenting the facts and all the other cultural elements, namely problems of teenagers, fashionable holiday resorts, films and TV programmes worth seeing, magazines read by young people nowadays. Consequently, students do not have problems to compare target culture with their own culture, since they live in a similar world with similar problems, they go on trips to similar places and read the same books. Although the coursebooks give factually accurate and up-to-date information about the target language culture, it is not broad enough to cover all the points concerning culture.

However, it is the author's opinion that many coursebooks exaggerate by presenting only the most up-to-date pop stars and films and superficial and shallow teenage ‘problems’. They show a very limited, and thus distorted, picture of contemporary English teenagers whose main interests seem to be fashion, gadgets, films and pop music. One can only wonder why educational role of a coursebook in this respect is so limited, if not none.

As far as stereotypes (understood as fixed ideas or images that many people have of a particular type of person and thing, but which are often not true in reality) are concerned, authors do not go that deep to discredit them. However, many books try not to impose any stereotypes, often showing alternative behaviours of the members of the community. There is always a danger that the students may start to generalize certain aspects and build some stereotypes; in this situation the teacher's role in preventing unjustified generalizations cannot be overestimated.

Some coursebooks not only try to avoid stereotypes, ideologies and class divisions but they try to show an alternative picture of members of the target language culture. They break with the stereotype of an Englishman having his 5 o'clock tea and spending all his free time in a pub. The people in the coursebooks are keen on sport, work a lot to earn money and can still meet friends in their free time. However, some of the English stereotypes still prevail in English foreign language coursebooks, e.g. English people eating fish and chips for lunch or London weather being windy, rainy, cold and foggy, reinforcing the image that most people have about Britain.

Most coursebooks, however, are highly stereotypical in the author's opinion. They use cultural elements which can be easily recognized as typically English. The students in Poland do have the knowledge of some English symbols before they start learning English so the role of the coursebook should be to broaden the perspective and deepen the understanding of cultural phenomena rather than reinforce the stereotypes.

The world presented in the coursebooks is realistic. There are many photos of people and places from the today's world to make them authentic. Moreover, there are many dates of contemporary events given and many hypothetical situations presented which could be happening in reality just now.

Coursebook characters have to face the challenge of everyday reality. They complain about train delays, talk about their daily routine. In one of the books, students also learn about the decline of Cornwall: apart from tourism, there is not much work to be found by local people. Mining and fishing, which were once major industries, have almost disappeared and there is a high level of unemployment. Frequently, Cornish people leave their homes to look
for a job elsewhere. The majority of coursebooks, however, show young people who can easily find a job and whose parents have no problems running their business.

Teenage life is also full of problems to be solved. They usually concern school, friends or demanding parents. Sometimes students observe a problematic situation and are asked for advice; usually, there is no right answer so a discussion follows.

The language books under consideration are also free from ideological tendencies. Many authors encourage students to think independently and draw their own conclusions. They stimulate learners to solve problems, compare and contrast things, express their own opinions. The only element of imposing authors' views on students is the choice of cultural aspects. Introducing or disregarding a given topic and including stereotypes rather than showing the issues in a broad perspective can be regarded as a way of imposing ideologies.

Another important feature of most of the coursebooks is that they present phenomena in context, not as isolated facts. To achieve it, the authors group certain issues together in one unit or develop the topic in many subsequent lessons. This enables to depict the background carefully and to come back to the issues studied previously once the students acquire some new knowledge.

As far as the relation between historical material and contemporary society is concerned, some of the books lack such connection – they have texts on historical events included in culture clips or presented as reading comprehension exercises. Sometimes, however, it happens that depicting the contemporary world the authors go back in history and then such links can be observed.

The last point in the evaluation concerns the issue of presenting personalities as the product of their age. Here, the authors are really successful, because they present characters of different age, different social class, but all of them deeply rooted in today's world. They have similar problems as real people have, no matter where they live, what race they are, what social class they come from. Still, the greatest attention is given to introduction of young personalities that have similar problems to the students who learn about them. Thanks to this fact, it is easier for students to acquire cultural knowledge, because they are interested in the lives of people of the same age.

**Conclusion**

All in all, coursebooks present a very broad picture of the target culture as far the most important cultural aspects are concerned. They are successful in showing people in everyday situations, in typical places, celebrating festivals, tracing lifestyles of famous people.

Teaching culture is a challenging task, especially when teachers have limited time (e.g. two or three classes a week) but may become a powerful motivating factor (*mixed ability classes, bored students*). Teachers often do not want to teach culture of the target language (although in the surveys they report that it is very important) because they themselves do not feel culturally competent. It is the teacher's job to adjust the material (*coursebook as a resource*) in such a way so as to make students interested not only in the foreign language itself but also in the foreign culture.

It can be concluded from the above analysis that it is not only *possible* to teach culture at an early stage of foreign language learning, but, in fact, *it is taught along with EFL*. Language, being a product of culture and at the same time a means of transmitting culture, cannot be separated from it and every teacher of EFL should take it into account while preparing his/her lessons. The question remains: English becoming lingua franca, what culture should we teach? English? American? Polish – for the sake of comparison? or global?
References


“Calling Back Body, Mind, Spirit, and Nature” an integrative holistic multi-cultural training for traumatic stress reduction

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Abstract

This paper introduces the body-mind-spirit oriented traumatic stress reduction training according to the “Trauma healing and transformation” program (Cane, 2000) of the non-profit organization Capacitar International. Cane proposes holistic healing practices as effective techniques for supporting traumatic stress reduction based on her field work with underserved and underprivileged populations such as battered women, children, and refugees in about 25 countries around the world ravaged by war, genocide, HIV, political violence, and natural disasters. Based on a community-oriented multiplicatory model of education, individuals learn how to help heal themselves and others. The impact of the Capacitar training needs further investigation, which fact led to this doctoral research based on a perspective that acknowledges the person’s body, emotions, mind, and spirit, in the context of community and culture. To explore the impact of the Capacitar approach with an underserved and underprivileged population ravaged by exposure to potentially traumatic events, the researcher chose Latin-American migrants living at the U.S.-Mexican borderland. The self-selected 20 female participants were recruited via purposive sampling from the El Paso (U.S.) Capacitar training group. In-depth interviews were used to explore the women’s experiences of change. The data have been analyzed with qualitative thematic analysis and embodied interpretation. Preliminary findings brought forward participants’ experiences of feeling more connected with their bodies, of finding meaning and understanding, of experiencing reduced stress symptoms, and of feeling improvement through sharing the traumatic experiences and healing practices with others.

Introduction: the Capacitar training program

The Capacitar training has been developed by Patricia Cane (2000), the founder and co-director of the non-profit organization known as Capacitar International. The goal of the Capacitar training in holistic healing practices is to support the release of traumatic stress and to increase the energy flow in body, mind, and spirit, including in this transformational process the individual’s broader aspect of community and environment. Cane proposed that several body-mind-spirit practices were effective techniques for traumatic stress release. She emphasizes the spiritual aspects of trauma healing for the individual within the community (Parapully, 1997; Willey, 1997; Wilson & Moran, 1998). Cane’s (2000) assumptions are based on her 12 years of fieldwork with grassroots people and on her research findings from her doctoral research.

The Capacitar approach (Cane, 2000) facilitates training in a combination of holistic healing practices—such as jin shin jyutsu [fingerholds], thought field therapy, tai chi movements, breathing exercises, and acupressure—to foster the release of traumatic stress in an individual. Furthermore, the Capacitar training includes raising awareness for the healing of global communities and of nature (Cane, 2000). The Capacitar program emphasizes outreach to underserved and underprivileged populations and ethnic minorities around the
Cane’s (2000) doctoral thesis was the first study on the Capacitar training approach, followed only by this research. This qualitative inquiry (Heβ, 2009) explored the impact of the seven-month-long Capacitar training (Cane) in holistic healing practices with women of Latin American descent who are being exposed to the ongoing violence and crime in the borderlands of El Paso, Texas, United States (U.S.) and Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico. The central research question was: “What are the subjective experiences of change as a result of the Capacitar training (Cane) in holistic healing practices for women of Latin-American descent who are exposed to the ongoing violence and crime in the U.S.-Mexican borderlands of El Paso?” The participants’ experiences were explored multidimensionally in relation to intrapersonal changes, interpersonal changes, and changes in relationship to spirituality and nature. A lack of knowledge exists in the field of psychology about the impact of the multiple traumatic events taking place in the U.S.-Mexican borderlands and the impact of holistic healing practices as an adjunct treatment that might support the healing of trauma. The aforementioned gaps in the scientific knowledge base led to this doctoral research (Heβ) and constitute the primary significance of this study.

**Personal motivations and assumptions**

My research interest in exploring holistic healing practices that support traumatic stress relief is related to my own experience of surviving a major disaster — the Asian tsunami in Thailand in 2004. My healing process back home in Germany included transpersonal psychotherapy, yoga, meditation, swimming, and the sharing of my experiences with friends, family, and colleagues. In the aftermath of the disaster, being a psychologist (in Germany), I perceived a lack of available simple inexpensive cross-cultural group-oriented emergency interventions that might support the “innate capacity to heal trauma” (Levine, 2005, p. 9) of an individual and support the healing of the community stricken by traumatic events. In particular, I recognized a need for strategies that are applicable to collectivistically oriented non-Western societies as compared to individualistically oriented Western clinical interventions. In my understanding, the Capacitar approach (Cane, 2000) manifests an attitude of outreach to grassroots people, simplicity of healing practices, inexpensiveness, and multicultural applicability.

My assumption is that the dimensions of body, mind, spirit, culture, and nature are relevant and important in researching the human experience of healing and for the development of holistic healing practices within the field of psychology. The relationship of body, mind, and spirit has been fostered throughout the world in forms such as shamanism and yogic practices (Robinson, 1996). Industrialization and the exclusive focus on the advancement of cognitive and intellectual abilities have greatly offset the body-mind-spirit connection (Robinson). This research attempts to support the re-integration of the body-mind-spirit connection—including within it society, culture, and nature—in order to broaden the discussion of healing and health toward a holistic integrative perspective. My second assumption is that scientific research should have social relevance. The social emphasis of this study lies in reaching out to underprivileged and underserved populations, a social orientation emphasized by the Capacitar approach (Cane, 2000).

**The social and cultural context of this study**

The research site of this study is located at the Centro de Mujeres de la Esperanza [Women’s Center of Hope] in El Paso. El Paso is one of the poorest cities in the U.S. (Schmidt, 1995). Factors that cause poverty in El Paso are a high unemployment rate, a lack of skills, and a lack of education (Schmidt, 1995). El Paso inhabitants are confronted with
high rates of violence, illness, and environmental threats (Schmidt). The so-called twin cities El Paso (U.S.)-Ciudad Juárez (Mexico) form one of a world’s largest bi-national urban populations along an international militarized border (Fernández, Howard, & Amastae, 2007). The U.S.-Mexico border region is experiencing unparalleled trade and exchange as cross-border flows of goods and people — such as tourists, shoppers, workers and immigrants — from Mexico continue to increase exponentially (Orrenius, 2001).

Transnational interaction and cross-border interdependence have increased in the U.S.-Mexican borderlands, as has territorial dispute, warfare, violations of sovereignty, banditry, raiding, ethnic conflicts, protectionism, smuggling, forced migration, and environmental pollution (Martínez, 1994). The U.S.-Mexico border divides the first world from the third world and influences economic globalization (Hansen & Mattingly, 2006). The Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldúa (1987) describes the U.S.-Mexican border as an “open wound where the Third World grates against the First World and bleeds” (p. 3).

Border Mexicans and border Americans merged many decades ago and have produced unique cultural patterns referred to as “border culture” (Martínez, 1994, p. 53). The U.S. borderlands have mixed Anglo-Saxon cultures from the northeastern U.S. with indigenous Southwestern cultures, as well as with migrants from all over the nation (Martínez). In particular, a multitude of Mexican identities coexists in the El Paso-Ciudad Juárez border region, ranging from generations of Mexican immigrants in the border region to new immigrants from the indigenous South of Mexico (Ruiz, 1998; Vila, 1997). This diversity of cultural identity illuminates the lack of validity for a Mexican/American binary distinction (Hansen & Mattingly, 2006).

Literature review

There exists a lack of knowledge on body-mind-spirit interventions within the treatment of traumatic stress syndromes. Cane’s (2000) doctoral research explored the effects of the Capacitar body-mind-spirit practices applied in her fieldwork of teaching grassroots people the Capacitar practices. Cane’s research question investigated the truth of the statement: “Body-mind-spirit practices promote the healing of traumatic stress in grassroots people” (p. 101). Data were recorded with two different populations: grassroots leaders who received the training and groups, communities, and individuals with whom the leaders worked in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Cane’s study is primarily based on heuristic inquiry (Moustakas, 1981), yet using a qualitative and quantitative mixed methods design. With in-depth interviews, she explored the participants’ experiences of their trauma from Hurricane Mitch and political violence, their use of body-mind-spirit practices for their own healing process, experiences of grassroots leaders using body-mind-spirit modalities with their groups, and a collection of anecdotal material such as stories and testimonies to be included in the manual. Additional information was gained with focus groups investigating the nature of the communities and cultures and reflecting on the usefulness of the body-mind-spirit practices (Cane). The quantitative part of Cane’s study collected data with self-developed pre-post self-report questionnaires administered to the grassroots leaders that measured the changes during the Capacitar training in physical and emotional symptoms corresponding to posttraumatic stress disorder (DSM IV TR, 2000) symptoms, such as headaches, stomach aches, body pain, insomnia, nightmares, fatigue, depression, anxiety and fear, strong emotions, loss of memory, and other symptoms (Cane, 2000).

Research findings from the questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus groups supported Cane’s thesis (2000) of a lessening of traumatic stress symptoms for the participants after their training in the Capacitar body-mind-spirit practices. Cane reported that all participants’ responses indicated a positive experience of their use of body-mind-spirit practices for grassroots people in her study. Methodological limitations and delimitations are
as follows: The research design lacked randomization and a control group for data comparisons; the participants were self-selected or selected by their grassroots coordinator; the type of trauma, the severity of exposure to the trauma, and pre-existing psychiatric conditions were not differentiated amongst the participants and might have acted as confounding variables. Additionally, factors such as gender, ethnic group, spirituality, religion, and socioeconomic status might have confounded the results. The self-developed non-standardized quantitative assessments lack validity and reliability examinations and, therefore, do not generalize. Cane suggested that further validation of the Capacitar body-mind-spirit interventions cross-culturally be undertaken in future research.

A few other body-mind-spirit interventions have been applied specifically within traumatized and disaster-affected populations and applied in non-Western societies, showing in the research findings a positive impact such as with the application of *Strength-Focused and Meaning-Oriented Approach for Traumatic Stress Relief* (Chan, Chan, and Ng, 2006; *Yoga Programs Applied for Traumatic Stress Reduction* (Gerbarg & Brown, 2005; Telles, Naveen & Dash, 2007; Van der Kolk, 2002); and Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (Kabat-Zinn et al., 1992; Segall, 2005).

Another gap of knowledge about the effect of such treatments exists concerning the relationship between spirituality and psychological trauma and disaster in populations of Latin-American descent. Spirituality appears to play a role in Latin American cultures (Comas-Dias, 2006; Morones & Mikawa, 1992; Ruiz, 1997) that may hold potential relevance for such treatments.

The literature search has not located specific epidemiologic research on populations of Latin American descent living in the U.S.-Mexican borderlands in relation to interpersonal violence and community violence. Furthermore, there exists a lack of knowledge on the epidemiology of psychological trauma in people of Latin American descent in Mexico and the U.S. The literature search showed a few studies, whose epidemiologic research on the relationship of violence, disasters, and adverse mental health outcomes in Mexico documented the risk for major depressive disorder, substance abuse disorders, and other anxiety disorders (Vega et al., 1998), and posttraumatic stress disorder (Baker et al., 2005; Durkin, 1993; Norris et al., 2001; Norris et al., 2003; and Norris, Perilla, and Murphy, 2001). The limitations of the foregoing studies lie in the cross-cultural comparison of symptoms based on the Western diagnostic criteria. There is little knowledge as to how well the construct of the aforementioned psychiatric disorders, which is based on Anglo-European studies, matches Latinos’ own constructions of trauma and its effects (Hough, Canino, Abueg, & Gusman, 1996). Comparative studies are needed to distinguish culturally specific from culturally transcendent expressions of distress (Green, 1996; Marsella, et al., 1996; Norris, Perilla, et al., 2001).

The relationship of culture and mental health constitutes an additional research gap in Latin American populations living at the U.S.-Mexican border. Comas-Diaz and Grenier (1998) pointed out that many immigrants (especially immigrants of color) become ethnic minorities in the U.S. and are likely to experience discrimination that might increase the risk for adverse mental health outcomes. Baker et al. (2005) emphasized the need for epidemiologic data from Latin America to develop culturally sensitive assessment, prevention, and intervention programs.

**Research method and philosophical framework**

This research is embedded in a philosophical framework of transpersonal psychology that advocates the integration of physical and mental health, and includes the spiritual dimension of human existence (Elmer, MacDonald, & Friedman, 2003). Such a holistic, integrative and inclusive perspective acknowledges “the whole person, body, emotions, mind, and spirit, in
the context of community and culture,” (Caplan, Hartelius, & Rardin, 2003, p. 157). Furthermore, this research design is based on a transpersonal pluralistic epistemology wherein the researcher utilized bodily reactions, imagery, emotions and feelings, intuitions, aesthetic sensibilities, and cognition, and includes attention to both ordinary and extraordinary experiences throughout the research process (Braud, 1998). Transpersonal inquiry investigates thoroughly the phenomenon under study by exploring it carefully from many perspectives with the goal of gaining a more complete understanding (Anderson, 1998). The transpersonal approach seeks to learn how people can integrate the somatic, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, creative, expressive, relationship, and community aspects of their lives with the goal of becoming more whole (Anderson, Braud, & Valle, 1996).

Significant life processes such as healing and transformation have been systematically excluded from conventional research (Braud & Anderson, 1998) within the academic discourse of 19th-century positivism and 20th-century behaviorism, and from cognitive science in the field of psychology (Anderson & Braud, 1998). Such exclusion may lead to a lack of new and nourishing forms of knowledge and experiences (Braud & Anderson). The goal of transpersonal research approaches is to address all aspects of human experience, including the most sensitive, exceptional, and sacred experiences, and thereby to expand the conventional framework of scientific research (Braud & Anderson, Todres, 2007). Such a transpersonal conceptualization of research includes complementary, non-experimental methods that acknowledge alternative ways of knowing and of expressing the research findings (Braud & Anderson).

**Qualitative inquiry**

Standardized measures that include all of the following dimensions—body, mind, spirit, society, culture, and nature—have not yet been developed (Caplan et al., 2003). Therefore, the use of a qualitative research approach to these questions is important in order to reveal the complex and subtle variables of human experience (Braud, 2001) on the aforementioned dimensions. Qualitative method is viewed as an interactive process that is primarily descriptive and relies on people’s experience as the primary data (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). The researcher’s role is to gain a holistic overview of the research subject, attempting to capture people’s perceptions of their own reality in their local context (Braud, 1998). The particular findings of research into human experience depend upon how the experience is observed, and different methods reveal different aspects (Braud, 1998). Braud (2001) described the investigator as the “measuring instrument” (p. 2) in qualitative research and emphasized that the success of the research depends upon attitudes of the researcher that include presence, clarity, mindfulness, discernment, and thoughtfulness.

**Research design**

The data collection consisted of in-depth interviews with 20 self-selected participants of the purposive sampling recruited from the Capacitar training group in El Paso (U.S.). The in-depth interviews were conducted bi-lingually (English/Spanish) with a Spanish interpreter present. In addition, the participants were invited to share creative and symbolic expression material and/or journaling that they produced during their seven-month-long Capacitar training to allow for a more comprehensive inquiry into their experiences. The researcher collected field notes and personal journaling to deepen her understanding of the research process. These additional data were not to be analyzed. The interview data are in the process of data analysis, with this researcher using thematic content analysis (Anderson, 2007) and embodied interpretation (Galvin & Todres, 2009; Todres, 2008; Todres & Galvin, 2005; Todres & Galvin, 2008).
Delimitations in this study include selection biases that constitute threats to validity, such as female gender only, the purposive sample consisting of self-selected participants, and the restriction of sampling to a specific ethnic group (Latin American). The Capacitar training is administered as a bi-lingual program, yet language can constitute another selection effect. Other threats to internal validity, such as participant attrition and maturation of participants, need to be accounted for (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). External validity can be threatened by effects of treatment interaction with the selection of the setting and the history of the participants (Creswell & Plano Clark).

Preliminary research findings

Overall preliminary findings brought forward participants’ experiences of feeling more connected with their bodies; of finding more meaning and understanding in their lives; and of feeling reduced symptoms of nervousness, agitation, headache, body pain, and sleeplessness. The participants gained increased connection with their families, friends, and community through sharing the healing practices with others. The participants experienced relief and healing through sharing their adverse traumatic experiences with others.

It can be assumed that the Capacitar training (Cane, 2000) enhanced the participants’ connectedness with body, mind, spirit, community, and nature, as well as reducing a range of psychosomatic symptoms. However, the impact can only be understood within the specific biography and life context of the participants. Preliminary findings suggest an applicability of the Capacitar training for a spectrum of women from different cultural and educational backgrounds and a multiplicatory result of sharing the practices with others. Further longitudinal research should explore the long-term impact of the Capacitar training within the life context of the participants.

Conclusion

The knowledge base about the effects of body-mind-spirit interventions and stress reduction is extensive, yet the research on traumatic stress reduction using body-mind-spirit interventions such as the Capacitar approach (Cane, 2000) has received little attention. The pluralistic research methodology (Braud, 1998) applied in this qualitative research aimed to tap multiple dimensions of a phenomenon being studied. Braud suggests that information that is emotional, intuitive, bodily, non-verbally expressive, and based in tacit knowing gives a more complete and balanced understanding of what is being studied by the researcher and participants. Braud emphasizes the acknowledgement of the phenomenon being studied as subject, rather than as object.

A transpersonal perspective that acknowledges the dimensions of body, mind, spirit, and environment expands the conventional clinical framework for the treatment of psychological trauma (Braud, 1998). Body-mind-spirit interventions such as the Capacitar approach (Cane, 2000) and other interventions that integrate such a transpersonal holistic, integrative perspective of health and healing that encompasses the individual and community might serve as a valuable adjunct trauma treatment. In the understanding of this researcher, the Capacitar approach integrates fully a holistic perspective, including not only the imperative of restoring the body-mind-spirit unity of the individual, but, just as importantly, of emphasizing the need for the healing of the family, community, and society, based on the assumption that traumatic experiences affect the whole system in which one lives. Capacitar puts into practice the concept of ubuntu (Cane). Ubuntu, or community building, includes the understanding that one has membership in a greater whole (Anderson & Braud, 2007) and implies that the individual is diminished when others of the community are humiliated or oppressed (Shulman Lorenz & Watkins, 2001). The Capacitar training (Cane) in holistic healing practices is a simple and inexpensive intervention that transforms multidimensionally
through the multiplicatory approach. The social benefit lies in its outreach to grassroots people, mainly in developing countries, and in the presentation of its education and training manual as couched in popular language and cultural terms. Research on body-mind-spirit interventions that include the spiritual dimension, ecology, and culture can add ontological and epistemological breadth to the treatment of trauma within the field of transpersonal cultural psychology, clinical psychology, and complementary alternative medicine.

Traumatic events and experiences can profoundly affect the body-mind-spirit integrity of the individual within the social and communal context and may predispose one to either greater resilience or greater vulnerability to life stressors such as interpersonal, social, political, and environmental stressors (Miller, 2007). The science and practice of psychology needs to prepare for trauma and critical health-related issues in the 21st century of global change (Miller). The psychology community must work together from a global perspective of interdisciplinary professional dialogue (Miller) in a plural and dialectical way (Todres, 2002) that includes a holistic conception of human nature with its dimensions of body, mind, spirit, and culture/society to face the needs of the 21st century (Miller). It is this researcher’s hope to contribute, through the presentation of this study’s outcomes, to the attainment of that worthy goal for its audience directly and indirectly for the greater population on whom their understanding will have a concomitant effect.

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“HEART OVER MIND” – The Zen of online teaching

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Abstract

Access to online teaching opportunity is not a recent phenomenon. For the past thirty-five years, distance learning has been delivered through a variety of instructional media, including print materials, original case studies, electronic means, and other technological formats (Keegan, 1980). Distance and online teaching afford a steady dialogue among teacher and students. The opportunity to discuss materials is enhanced with practitioner-based problems in mutual discussion with the facilitator and the students, in asynchronous and synchronous chat rooms. Online teaching student focused, since teachers and students are online 3-5 times a week, depending on courses and schedules.

This study is a qualitative research, which is composed of the writer’s documentary and field research as an online professor for several universities for over five years and as a campus tenured professor for over three decades. The objectives of this paper are to demonstrate that online teaching is far superior in intimacy, one-on-one individualized attention, compassion, student empowerment and community. There is no doubt that online education is critical to the long term strategy of many institutions. Academicians must recognize “heart over mind” is critical to student success and achievement.

The reality of such sharing of knowledge and feeling, is the result of recognizing “heart over mind,” as the renowned Fr. Henry Nouwen believed and acted upon. Faculty share a passion of heart and caring, for as they weave into the course, the intellectual, cognitive, and holistic challenges are discussed online among students and faculty. The result is a challenging thought process, awakening and broadening the student to recognize how to “think out of the box” within a global, cross-cultural environment.

Utilizing Zen, the mind is free from delusion “in order to experience reality as it is.” (Olson, C. 2007) It is the professor who synergizes this culture, threading concepts of leadership, influence, and vision to guide and empower students in their own searching. Such online teaching connects wisdom, faith and insight in academic strategies; its success includes emotionally lessening the bureaucratic controls inflicted upon all participants. The mind is free, and the student excels in learning.

Introduction

When the general conference of the 35th session of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) met in Paris on October 12, 2009, the delegates explored the need for a changing international landscape to develop new spaces of dialogue … Quality education…should equip the learner not only with knowledge and values to understand the other, but also competencies which are specific to openness and appreciation of diversity.

Such is the development of online education in the United States. “Learning on Demand: Online Education in the United States, 2009”, funded by the Sloan Foundation, is the seventh
annual report on the state of online learning in U.S. higher education. The report is based on responses from more than 2,500 colleges and universities. The following was reported:

Over 4.6 million students were taking at least one online course during the fall 2008 term; a 17 percent increase over the number reported the previous year. The 17 percent growth rate for online enrollments far exceeds the 1.2 percent growth of the overall higher education student population”. (The Sloan Consortium, 2009)

Online teaching and distance learning offer greater awareness to openness and appreciation of diversity on a global basis. It raises different perspectives in communication. It is an anomaly of language. It is neither distant nor impersonal in the relationships among students and faculty. Online teaching is “heart over mind.” It offers flexibility and compassion beyond the seat-centered institutional campus environment. The on-site campus environment involves “overkill” in the bureaucratic, regulatory processes.

Zen, according to Fr. Thomas Merton, is not a theology, nor a concrete and lived ontology which explains itself. Zen emerges out of a certain quality of consciousness and awareness. With online learning, we are on the threshold of a new era where the individual faces risks and challenges within a globally, growing technological society. This is because participants have less fear and greater freedom to reveal their inner selves.

Zen includes a true sense of simplicity, self effacement, and contemplation. This is in a setting of community, which involves the online learning environment in chats, discussion posts, seminars, and the faculty through E-mail, and for some, being available 24/7 by telephone. This gives an intimate and innate freedom in sharing one’s mind, through the soul and the spirit of each other. It is not the knowledge that brings in this contemplation but the knowledge of self, Zen is an experience of its own.

Zen is a recognition that the whole world is aware of itself in me, and that I am no longer my individual and limited self (Merton, p. 18). Zen has no map. There is no path or way to come or go on. We attain our true self directly … but we do it without any kind of map. It does not depend on time or space, name or form. Entering Zen practice means returning to your mind, as it naturally is before thinking arises. That is what the facilitator seeks to accomplish as the person leads students to think about the “matter.” Teaching is not to direct as to what is inside the box, but to open it as wide as possible to develop and create one’s own knowledge, based on the original premises. Zen points directly at our “no-mind mind.” Online teaching affords the student to lay out thoughts without fear of the consequences. There are no consequences of rudeness or put-down by teacher or other students. Speech and words cannot hinder. Its participants are not judgmental, for there is a freedom in communicating, when one is not face-to-face.

Basically, our “don’t know mind,” can do anything. Zen means from moment to moment we intuitively perceive how to keep a “free” mind. In the academic environment, this means “letting go,” and not fearing our thoughts or another’s. Students and faculty are learning from each other. All in the universe become one, in sharing and building upon each other’s thoughts. It starts from “no-mind mind,” the Zen experience.

Albert Einstein once said, “I never teach my pupils. I only attempt to provide conditions in which they learn.” Online teaching has no filter. It starts from the “no-mind mind.” There are no surges interfering when student and teacher communicate over the airwaves and through electronics, one on one. This cannot happen in a seat-centered environment.

**The online journey**

Distance Learning can be a well-planned system of instruction designed to provide education to students whose accessibility to the teaching/learning process is limited due to
distance, time, scheduling, professional and personal responsibilities, transportation, physical and financial restraints. It is the faculty who drive the effectiveness of distance instruction.

More than half of college students, today, regardless of age, are taking at least one online course. The boon in online courses offers increased class availability, especially to adult and challenged students, new mothers and others, but also poses economic and oversight challenges to schools. It is true that some universities are reducing their campus faculty, and forcing students to complete their program on-line, and without warning or adequate knowledge. In a 1995 study, from Washington State University, it was stated that “Teaching conducted only in the traditional campus classroom will not meet the public’s demand for tailored educational…” programs, both degree and non-degree.

Towards that end, education, for all, whether student or faculty, must be an on-going lifelong learning process. Faculty must be excellent listeners, whether the words are oral or written. Faculty must be genuinely interested in their students, and want to share ideas, thoughts, compassion, empathy, and help to develop and broaden cognitive learning skills. It is, in essence, a form of servant leadership, shared by faculty and students. Online teaching for both faculty and students, offers a frame of mind in the development of strategic and challenging thinking. The key is to capture individual capabilities.

Such distance learning raises a different perspective in communication and in the positive aspects of emotional labor. It defies any concept of being impersonal and “distant” from the student. One size does not fit all, amidst the regulations and rules of academic discipline. It is not a court of law, but a circulating process of teaching, learning, thinking, sharing, compassion and empathy.

It is serving, giving help, caring; servicing student academic needs…faculty serve as the agent of some organization, which is the academic institution. Faculty are nurturers, and seek to promote the development of their students. With this kind of flexibility and compassion, both students and faculty are “free to explore, express, share, learn, and expand.” (http://pelcoaching.com/blog/index.php/category/risk/ ) (2007) Lunz, Michelle.”Power Energy Leadership.” It is for faculty to recognize that in understanding “Heart over Mind,” there are no cognitive filters, and students can participate online in an emotionally freer and more productive environment.

Relationship development: motivation and emotional labor

This dynamics of relationship development is what makes online teaching “…guanxi–“the Chinese word for relationship – build personal connections. Jiao pengyou (making friends) links with janli ganquing; that is developing connections of feeling between people.

“Karuna,” in Sanskrit is compassion. “Once we experience and feel this interdependence of all living beings, we will cease to hurt, humiliate …” Compassion gives rise to the responsibility to create happiness and its causes for all.” (Suresh Jindal; Interdependence All Living Beings; The Times of India (New Delhi); November 13, 2003) This is online teaching in its fulfillment.

The on-campus settings, for the most part, do not encourage such relationships. Students are running into class; homework not done – it appears many are filled with complaints…they run to the dean, and complain about the professor; many are continuously on cell phones, and become resentful when asked to shut them. How can the teacher teach in such a mentally rumpled setting?

Faculty have the ability to energize and motivate students. Online teaching need not be a more disciplined environment than on-site campus teaching. In “heart over mind,” faculty recognize the awareness of viability and flexibility. Such learning offers challenge in building appropriate attitudes, and linking them through carefully developed processes. Because there is no camera, just voice in this online interaction, the linkage is very different than on-campus
settings. It is well known that decision making in higher education has opposing forces of autonomy and centralization. Individual success may be enhanced by balancing them through effective use of participation and nurturing.

Distance learning provides opportunity for social interaction. Computer mediated communication (CMC) between learner and teacher provide the opportunity to “think” aloud without fear or anxiety. Students seem to be well aware of the fact that distance learning classes demand an inner discipline to accomplish one’s goals.

Student perception and needs

There are multiple channels of communication that are far more personal than being seated in campus settings. They include the chat room, the discussion board, the E-mails- all being distributed, sight unseen. Is a student going to tell you in a classroom that she just finished scrubbing the floor, that her daughter has pink eye, and the social service investigator is coming tomorrow? What does that mean for the homework due in a few hours? It means she cannot get into it or think about it. Is a person going to tell you in a seated classroom he just lost his wife in childbirth, and the baby is fine…and how is he going to get back into his school work? And then today, another e-mail, my child is very sick, my husband, who is in the military, has been injured, and I have to do everything…may I have an extension?

It took twelve years for another student to recognize, through chat room discussions, that she had been terminated some 12 years before, not because she had been doing good work for some 24 years; she could never understand why she had been terminated. It was “association discrimination;” her husband had been very ill, and he was costing the company’s health insurance too much money. In fact, in the hopes that he possibly could have survived, she refused to let her company put him into “hospice.”

There is no hidden agenda; I submit to the honesty of students. Am I going to penalize a student for submitting work late? The answer is, “No.” I thank the student for writing, explain that I, not only understand, but the student, as well, knows their personal priorities. Planes run late; how can we penalize a late submission when the student has a more pressing situation.

What have I accomplished? Is the discipline of being “on time” a learning lesson at this moment? It is the honesty of the situation, and the trauma that a social service investigator is coming the next day, and I certainly do not want the student to lose her daughter. It is the lesson of priorities. That is what online teaching accomplishes. I want the student to learn, to meet her or his growing challenges, to “think out of the box,” and to welcome their learning skills. Challenge does not always have to bring fear. Responsibility can be fostered in a healthy, prioritized environment. “Heart over mind,” is the foremost priority.

What about the student who sleeps and does homework in a truck rig? The job takes him all over the country; when we have our chat room, he is present, and brings a new dimension to the chat room process. Were it not for distance learning, enrolling in college would be near-impossible.

Empathy, on the part of faculty, is the determining factor that builds community, bonding and inspiration among students. One student had injured her arm and could not use the computer, but she came into the chat room. Several students offered that she telephone them, and they would type the submission. Is that true bonding, and friendship? Is that not “heart over mind,” the gift of relationship and learning?

Another student was traveling weekly on business to Japan. He offered another perspective in the chat room. The culture-specific values and experiences that students bring to the educational environment significantly contribute to learning experiences for all. The instructional climate and flexibility in online teaching benefit students and faculty, individually and collectively, in such a way that makes online teaching a richly rewarding...
and significant experience, linking each to the other. One student called me at one in the morning to inform me she was taking her daughter to the hospital emergency because she was having an asthma attack. One husband called to say his wife had just been taken to the hospital. Online students offer more self-disclosure.

The decision to trust

There is a strong feeling of trust that is more than exemplified in online teaching: what are the ingredients that generate this bonding? A sense of patience; coaching in positive awareness; providing choices and explanation, rather than being coercive. Faculty spend time in raising student comfort levels. Students begin to realize they are capable and unique. I show similarities in life with faculty experiences and student experiences; benevolence – taking actions that demonstrate a genuine concern for students; showing candor in communications as a faculty member; letting each understand the values of others for both students and faculty. (Paraphrased from Hurley, Robert F. “The Decision to Trust:…” Harvard Business Review, September 2006). “Trust is a relational concept; good communication is critical.” (Ibid)

When a student asked if I could raise his grade by twelve points so he could get an “A,” I reviewed the paper and wrote him that the grade he had received was “fair.” Another requested an extension of the homework assignment, because her ex-husband was to pick up her daughter, and he did not. She does her homework when the daughter is not home. I said, “Yes.” These are honest and legitimate requests.

Another student’s son had a severe motorcycle accident. She spent days and nights at his hospital bedside. Then, she had to take a third job to pay the medical bills. She would submit her homework late. I was thrilled she could continue to meet the university challenges, amidst her other life and death difficulties.

A colleague asked me, “How long have I been teaching?” I asked, “Why?” Finally, she said, because I said, “I trust.” I am a facilitator and professor with the concept of “I trust.” If I do not trust, my philosophy is that I should not be in the business of academia. The roots of our teaching, the studies and participation of students are drawn from every heritage. Online teaching affords us to move into a moral and spiritual world of communication, more so than within the seated-campus experience. Joined in hands and spirit, the online experiences link us in so many ways, both distant and near, that the campus experience cannot synergize. It affords instantaneous cross-cultural communication. The online student embarks on a very personal adventure through the synchronous and asynchronous opportunities of coming together with fellow students and faculty. Each contact brings new experiences and intellectual challenges.

Emotional dissonance is generated as a measure, albeit small in number, as a measure of faculty-student misinformation. Such misinformation can be generated when students do not perform their homework on a regularly scheduled basis, students needing an extension, but asking such at the last moment. Such emotional dissonance is minimized because online teaching affords a more flexible experience. However, though each situation is individualized, faculty members still need to weigh what is realistic.

Bringing instruction directly to the student reduces travel time, and, therefore, quality instruction and learning can be available any time, including in Iraq, South Korea, Japan, Ghana, and wherever the Internet can find its place through globalization. We share culture, recipes, personal and professional experiences.

Paraphrasing, Swiss painter, Paul Klee, the student linked with the faculty is “like the trunk of a tree, drawing up through its roots in the unknown soil…; it brings life to the branches above; leaves, flowers and fruit…” (Adapted from Self, Margaret. “Sacred Space for Transformation.” America – January 7 – 14, 2009 (page 9). As the flower grows, we too
expand our cognitive and thinking abilities. This is the nurturing within the academic
ministry of serving.

The characteristics of online learning include the concept of distance, people, behavior, discipline, commitment and responsibility. The learning behaviors, overlapping at different
times, and seen through individual lenses include the following: individual perceptions;
values; learning capacities; working within the total organization; working within groups;
thinking out of the box; the wellspring of the external environment; human persona;
strategies, objectives; and the mission as each sees it. Such includes individual behavior,
motivation, and one’s inner rewards. Can you find such stimuli at one time in a campus
classroom?

Motivation includes internal and external supports. The strength of one’s inner supports
includes communicating, decision making, goals, aptitude, ability, and environment. There
are so many individual and environmental variables within a global class setting that come
together in one online class. The campus class setting does not offer such diversity at one
time. In fact, it can even lead to violence and shooting if students elect to vehemently
disagree with each other and with faculty. (New York Times, February 18, 2010, page 1A)

**Learner centered education**

Telecommunications and information technologies provide greater access and choice to
the general population. This has made it possible to develop affordable education and training
opportunities for the increasing student population.

Online teaching offers the foundation for critical thinking. Through chat rooms and
discussion board responses the thoughts of one student connect to a network of their
colleagues’ thoughts. Such Socratic thinking offers challenge and intellectual growth,
building upon self-esteem and self-confidence. Student and distance learning success are
inseparable. In our individualized approach we recognize that faculty do influence students,
more so than on campus. When we communicate we have each other’s individualized,
undivided attention, as compared to being on campus and sharing with each other in the
seated classroom.

The New York Times, Friday, July 11, 2008 (page 1, column 2) stated that online
enrollments are up 35% at many schools. Some schools are reporting that their numbers are
up 50 to 100 % higher than last year.

There have been some who felt they did not get as much from the online class as being in
a seated campus environment. Some students find online work more difficult than classroom
study. To a great extent, I feel it is the professor who teaches online that can stir the students
to their greatest levels of achievements. In this wireless environment web-based discussion is
not cognitively filtered compared to the classroom.

The online nurturing evokes becoming a servant leader; faculty are committed to helping
students develop and grow in a circular process of sharing, and learning. Professors, who are
servant leaders, are receptive and genuinely interested in the views and input of others; they
function and serve from an environment that recognizes “heart over mind” as being holistic,
spiritual and flexible. The discussion board and the chat room offer opportunities to open-up
one’s thinking, with less restraint than in a classroom.

Online teaching, where the student could be at home, or even in his long-haul truck, or at
work, or at any other facility across the oceans where there could be a hookup is student-
centered. We are entering the student’s environment; they are not entering ours. We are a
guest in their space of learning.

Campus teaching is seat-centered and cannot synergize online experiences. The student
may even fall asleep in the classroom, and others notice. A student may be argumentative,
and in a classroom, that may generate heated discussion that is like a ping-pong game—back and forth, until the ball hits the net, and the “game” is over.

Why is the “distant learning journey” so different and so special to all the participants:
- faculty must develop its effectiveness and steer the driving;
- it is an on-going life, long conscious learning process;
- faculty must capture the individual capabilities, abilities, yearnings and pressures of their students;
- faculty must be listeners
- faculty must be sensitive to diverse student perceptions and needs;
- faculty must undergo sensitivity training as in any corporate setting.

SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis is a tool for understanding energies, activities for situations in any organization, formal or informal. SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

The present state of online teaching is both an asset and energizer. Positive energies are generated if the circular process of learning is shared among all participants. That does not necessarily mean, “To agree,” but to listen.

Zen in a no-mind-mind state recognizes the intimacy online teaching generates. Heart over mind respects the passion and the willingness to search and be open to the thinking of others. Hence, the student’s attitude, humor and participation throughout his or her continued learning experiences are enriched. Thinking out of the box becomes a sought after norm, rather than tied down to the inflexibility of “mind over heart,” instilling academic bureaucracy and regulation before the relationships of the faculty, students and the subject matter are encountered. The faculty drives the leadership of what is considered to be decision making in higher education. This results in opposing forces of autonomy and centralization. Student success can only be enhanced by balancing through effective participation and nurturing.

Threats and weaknesses include competition from non-profit and profit-making schools. Such institutions may claim they are accredited, and that may be so, but they may not be recognized by regional accreditation organizations. If a student does not ask and does not know what to ask, they may be led down a path where there is no academic future, such as accruing non-transferable credits to other institutions.

The dynamics of human linkage is exemplified in the Chinese word, “guanxi, which is building personal bonds or connections. Connected to guanxi is “jiao pengyou and jonli ganquing, which is all about making friends. This expresses the links of developing connections of feelings among people, which is more freely expressed in online classes. The Dalai Lama speaks about three major points external world, internal spirit and the interdependency of all people being connected.

Initial benefits of online learning were believed to be cost effective, as well as offering access to new learners. It is generally agreed that the initial cost associated with developing an online course is much higher than the sustained cost of teaching. Cost benefits are not immediate. It is obvious that the flexibility of scheduling available with online learning enables many nontraditional students to acquire an education. Furthermore, the use of online information for teaching provides more immediacy than traditional textbooks. While there are truly a number of advantages to online teaching and learning there are new challenges as well.

To satisfy the requirement of designing such a learning environment, online instructors should consider the following:
- Posing problems of emerging relevance to learning objectives;
- Structuring learning around primary concepts;
- Seeking out and valuing students’ points of view;
- Adapting curriculum to address students’ suppositions;
- Assessing student learning in the context of teaching;
- Assessing students’ fears;
- Being sensitive to students’ higher state of consciousness.
- Responding to those who say, it can reflect a weakness in teaching.

**Conclusion**

Fr. Henry Nouwen’s sense of reality and spirituality was noted in his writings. “What makes a human being human is the heart in which each gives and receives love.” This is translated into the passion and spirit within the spiritual gifts of online teaching. Such can be fostered on a one-to-one basis, which does not lend itself in the multi-seated classroom or in the faculty office. There is a sharing online which face-to-face does not offer. Face-to-face becomes a mask. In connection with heart, “The heart is more important than the mind,” noted Fr. Nouwen, who had already taught at Notre Dame and Harvard. When he took the position at L’Arche located in Canada, as the chaplain of a home for people who are physically and mentally challenged, he recognized that first and foremost the spirit of one’s heart is stronger than the knowledge of the mind.

Buddhist tradition places DANA, the path of generosity, as the first of the ten perfections. DANA means freely giving of one’s wisdom to others. DANA is the first of the ten perfections because generosity is a fundamental aspiration from which all spirituality flows. Generosity is the basis of kindness and compassion.

Zen is the study of making the mind still. In the process of learning via online, such a stillness is not disturbing. That stillness becomes a power that blends into the student’s abilities to improve concentration. Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, noted the interdependence of all people connecting allows us all to flourish. Interconnecting is the gift of online teaching. Helping one person helps each other. Says Tenzin Gyatso, “The destruction of your enemy is the destruction of yourself... Your enemy is part of yourself.” Understanding the relationships among all living things allows unbiased compassion to all others.

Online teaching provides broad and rigorous study, emphasizing the skills and attitudes of what is necessary for a life of learning, and a wide range of career options. Online teaching offers the individual the opportunity to “make the best use of what is in your power, and take the rest as it happens.” (Epictetus 55A.D. – 135 A.D.)

From random sampling and observation the reality of online teaching demonstrates the following: Campus teaching can create violence, competitiveness and alienation. One may fear expressing individuality. The online faculty member must have the sensitivity in helping others to uncover their fears. Students and teachers learn from each other in the online environment. Individually, each is willing to be influenced by the other through the exchange of experiences, ideas, cultural differences and one’s own perspective. Online teaching, without the face-to-face challenge, affords students and faculty the ability to give up their defenses.

Connected with “heart over mind,” is the tradition of Zen Buddhism. The faculty must be more at home with the idea of self fulfillment than with self emptiness. Self emptiness is cognitively analytical: “It must be this way,” and allows no room for compassion and understanding. For faculty to share messages with students, whether right or wrong, faculty must understand student messages, for we are entering into the contractual relationship of student to faculty, and vice versa.
Regardless of the knowledge that is developed within the student on a one-to-one basis, without fear or the trauma of not knowing what is correct, the sense of power and spirit is built into each student; each builds his or her strength and spirit, then it is enhanced by knowledge. Such is the gift of online teaching, when “heart over mind,” is the driving force and motivation. The gift is to have students see themselves as unique, spiritual and each a budding flower blooming towards the light within.

Students may have felt darkness and trepidation as they turned on their computers to enter into the electronic classroom. Many have major work experience, which no faculty member can emulate. Many have suffered through life’s traumas. Entering the online classroom affords them the security and comfort of being in a comfortable and familiar environment. Is that not the road of passion that faculty should recognize for themselves and for their students? Aware of the state of Zen faculty can develop inner movement from the lower to the higher states of mind, and with greater sensitivity. Such is distance learning when “heart over mind” is the path that guides the links to increased student sensitivity and learning. Students are like the trunk of a tree, drawing up through its roots in the unknown soil. As faculty bring life to its branches, they help to nurture the roots. Heart over mind speaks to caring, connecting and community!

“…To the authenticity of the self truth and self wholeness within each of us…”
(Westerhof 2009)
“…The word is near you on your lips and in your heart…” (Romans 10:5)

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My deepest gratitude and appreciation to Fr. Kevin J. Molloy who awakened me to the depth and spirituality of Fr. Henri Nouwen and Fr. Thomas Merton. It was Fr. Nouwen who recognized that the spirit within humanity is “heart over mind.” In this context it signaled for me the passion and awareness of online teaching and learning for both students and faculty. My deepest gratitude and appreciation to Fr. Molloy for stirring the fires” of the inner soul and spirit, and for the sharing of his knowledge and compassion through friendship and trust.

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Writing skills: the inconvenient truth
A case study on the writing process, skills and experience of mechanical engineering students at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

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Abstract
How important are writing skills to a mechanical engineer? Student views were surveyed on their experience of completing an essay assessing such skills through the writing process. They had to first watch the movie *An Inconvenient Truth*, based on climate change. They then wrote a Personal Reflections Term Paper on the question set, with guidelines providing time frames and an assessment grid. On completion of the task, they submitted feedback on their experience and skills learned, then again after receiving their assessment. This case study reviews their feedback on the challenges that students face in the writing process and suggests recommendations to address issues raised. One point became increasingly clear: writing skills of students are limited and stifling their ability to communicate effectively – warning of serious issues in their practice as engineers. This then is the inconvenient truth.

Introduction and context
Writing is an integral part of an engineer’s daily duty, demanding being concise at all times. The engineering diploma qualifications offered at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) do not include any language and writing module. A communications module over one semester teaches how to communicate effectively both verbally and non-verbally, working on the assumption that the student is already somewhat proficient in writing, specifically in the English language.

With students having English as a 1st, 2nd and often 3rd language, writing ability in English is a problem confronting every lecturer. In an effort to address the resultant comprehension and learning problems, the writing of a Term Paper was introduced. Since climate change is an issue confronting every engineer, the movie *An Inconvenient Truth* was chosen as the basis for the paper. Students had to watch the movie initially as entertainment, then as a focus of study.

Methodology
The written task assigned to students follows:
Global warming is a reality facing every individual today, more so if you are an engineer. Each decision you take will have some impact on the environment. Having seen the movie, discuss any 4 points from it that you deem to be important to your career as an engineer. Explain 4 strategies that engineers can use to limit the effects of global warming.

The Term Paper is a Personal Reflections paper recording where the student stands on the issue of climate change, and how this standpoint will shape their future. It is a research assignment recording one’s personal experience/thoughts/consultations with relevant others. Length prescribed was 4 typed pages, single spaced. Content had to show references and include graphs and pictures. Support to the student was provided as follows:

- Copies of the movie were available in the library and to borrow overnight;
An outline of how the paper should be written was offered;
Examples of how referencing should be done was provided;
An example of a reference list was given;
Web references to assist research were given;
The lecturer introduced and reviewed the task over 3 lectures from the outset;
Students had 7 weeks to complete the task;
Time management was addressed through an action plan on what was to be done and when;
Students chose peer editors to review their paper;
One lecture focussed on the writing process and the role of the peer editor;
The assessment grid outlined exactly how the paper would be evaluated.

It should be noted that the module runs for 14 weeks, with other aspects of it content giving integral support to the writing of the paper. These include writing skills – being concise; avoiding ambiguity; using parallel format; register; grammar rules and punctuation. Paragraph and essay structure form part of the writing process. Textual analysis covers comprehension and reading skills. The problem of plagiarism is discussed, together with how to show references when used.

Lectures were held over 3 x 45 minute periods on a Tuesday and Wednesday for a period of 14 weeks. The Term Paper was introduced and taught as follows:
- Week 1 – Introduction to concept of a Personal Reflections paper. Students to see the film twice, first as entertainment, then as a focus of study.
- Week 2 – The question and outline discussed. The Writing Process reviewed.
- Week 3 – The peer editing procedure reviewed.
- Students were consistently reminded to be on schedule, in class and through the Scheme of Work outlining weekly due dates and tasks.
- Week 5 – Peer editing of draft to be completed. Final paper to be completed.
- Week 7 – Final Term Paper to be submitted.
- Feedback provided to students after papers were graded.

The survey investigated The Writing Process through the questions listed below. Students had to refer to The Writing Process explanation page included in the Tutorial Book.

1. How did you find the process of writing the Term Paper?
   Underline one answer:
   A. Challenging       B. Not too hard       C. Easy to do       D. I don’t know

2. In each of the following, list 2 points that you found challenging:
   2.1 About the content of the paper
   2.2 About your writing skills

The sample
The survey was conducted on 34 voluntary participants from the Mechanical Engineering class enrolled for Communication Skills 1222 during July – October 2009. The demographics of the participants are described in Table 1.
Table 1: Demographics

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<td>English</td>
<td>02</td>
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Responses

16 of 34 (47%) found writing the Term Paper challenging. 17 of 34 (50%) found writing the Term Paper not too hard. Table 2 illustrates the details.

Table 2: Responses to Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative Analysis</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student response to their experience of the writing process</td>
<td>Was challenging</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>16= 47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not too hard</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>17= 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01=03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Scored</td>
<td>35-50%</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51-60%</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>03</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61-70%</td>
<td>06</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71-80%</td>
<td>09</td>
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</table>
Raw data from students
The input from students was most revealing. What they shared follows, with common points loosely banded together. If a point was repeated 3 times, it is indicated as (x3).

Challenges identified on the content of the paper
Finding relevant information. Selecting specific material from Google search. Decreasing the content pages. I had too much information. There were too many things to write about. Finding the correct content to use.

Choosing relevant material from movie (x3). Avoiding repetition. Including all the relevant material in one paper.

It is not easy to give my opinion on something that is so big and overwhelming. You had to view things from an engineer’s view and that too is overwhelming.

Could not state possible solutions. I could not identify strategies that engineers could use. Limiting the effects of global warming (x2).

Content to be discussed from the movie was quite vast – as a learner I had to sift through the information to find the most appropriate in terms of an engineer’s view point. It was at times hard to distinguish this. The movie is for individuals, not engineers. Identifying important points for engineers (x2).

I watched the movie 3 times. Many books had to be read. The planning and structure in writing the content was hard. I don’t know how to put all the points together, how to structure the paper.

The movie gave all the information needed – no need for more research. It was hard to distinguish between fact and Al Gore’s fantasy.

Writing a personal reflections paper was a new experience. Could not do personal reflection (x5)

Getting started. Translation of difficult words. Could not watch movie and write an essay on the same topic. The creativity needed was challenging – finding solutions, simplifying long topics and the discussion.

It was hard to use a computer – it was my first time to come across it.

Writing the bibliography. Remembering to quote. I can’t avoid plagiarism. Writing the references in the content (x2).

I don’t like the question. We should see another movie instead of this on global warming. Question was not easy to understand and interpret. I didn’t know how to answer the question. I couldn’t do the introduction and conclusion.

I did not find challenges – content was good and specific.

Challenges identified on the writing skills involved in completing the paper
I could not stick to the question. Keeping things scientific was difficult.

I need to improve my writing skills. Condensing all the information about the movie into the required number of pages was hard. I couldn’t do an easy to follow structure. I couldn’t keep on track without diverging off the topic. I deemed all the points to be important – so writing a summary was quite challenging.

I didn’t know how to use appropriate words for the topic. I must learn to write sensible information. My writing skills are bad.

My grammar and sentence construction is poor. Writing well structured sentences was hard. I had to write my personal reflections in my own words. It was not a review. That took a lot out of me. I couldn’t provide clear points.

To write concise paragraphs was a challenge for me. I learnt to group my information.

The format was confusing. I have to be more concise. I learnt how to be more concise (x2).
Editing is hard because the topic is so big you doubt everything you put on paper. Sentence flow is hard, conjunctions also. I had to learn to use big and long words. I had a problem to find the correct word to understand all types of audience. Grammar and spelling was a big challenge for me. I finally know the correct way of referencing. My writing skills are improving.

**Findings and summarised conclusions**

The findings and conclusions that follow are based on the responses made by students, and the %grades that they scored. Recommendations suggested are aimed at addressing the challenges exposed. The question to which they responded introduces the data that one can draw about their writing experience of the Term Paper.

**Question 1**

1. How did you find the process of writing the Term Paper?
   Underline one answer.
   A. Challenging   B. Not too hard   C. Easy to do   D. I don’t know

   With only 1 student finding the task easy to do, it is no wonder that only 9 of 34 earned over 70%. There does appear to be a discrepancy in answering the survey (17 of 34 said it was not too hard), but their qualitative responses suggest that they did find the process challenging. There is also a discrepancy in that 8 of 34 failed, yet 17 said that it was not too hard, implying that fewer than 8 should have failed if it was not too hard. 50% is the pass mark. 17 (50%) scored between 51-70%, implying that passing is not too difficult. The quality of pass is the problem ie. the quality of the writing process in which students were engaged.

**Summary**

While it appears satisfactory that 26 (75%) students passed this writing assessment, the survey confirms that much needs to be done to improve the quality of pass; to address the challenges facing students in the completion of writing tasks in their practice as engineers. The concept of writing being a process is the first issue – many did not identify with the need for revising, reflecting, rephrasing, rewriting.

**Recommendations**

Writing to learn is the norm that should cut across the engineering curriculum. This implies that the writing process should be an integral part of every module, and that every lecturer should also be familiar with its application and practice. Every student should therefore be taught the theory and application of the writing process right at the outset, and have revision lessons on it intermittently. Teaching for understanding should become the focus of the writing task set for the engineering student. The lecturer is in the informed and educated position of being able to translate the objectives of a course he/she has taught into his/her construction of the writing task - by linking the objectives with the tasks set. In constructing writing tasks, it is essential to have a defined curriculum or set body of knowledge from which lecturers determine what to test. The most important question to be asked of any writing task is "What is it measuring?" (Alderson, 1983). In research on teaching for understanding, Perkins and Blythe (1994) emphasize that to learn for understanding in a writing task, students need criteria, feedback and opportunities for reflection from the start through to the finish.

**Question 2**
2. In each of the following, list 2 points that you found challenging:
   2.1 About the content of the paper
   2.2 About your writing skills

Question 2.1: content of the paper
   Analysis of the challenges identified by students on the content of the paper confirms that they were able to find more than enough information on the topic. They were not able to select information directly relevant to the question. Relevance to the question posed a problem. This prevented them from keeping to within the four pages required. Sifting through research material was daunting. The task proved overwhelming because they were unable to provide personal opinions, to think for themselves. The different requirements of the question posed barriers – personal, reflection, critical thinking, suggesting solutions. Creative thinking was hard. Planning and working on the structure of an argument was difficult. Logical presentation of thoughts within the parameters of the question appears difficult. Students do not know how to reflect on a topic, and on how they themselves think. Five students stated this. Academic writing skills were exposed as a major challenge – no referencing and plagiarism was common.

Summary
   Assimilation, analysis, classification and categorisation of data are foreign practices to students.

Recommendations
   Students should be given more practice on assimilation, analysis, classification and categorisation of data in smaller dosages, before they are given the Term Paper to do for a pass mark. The actual skills needed have to be practically taught. This implies that more teaching time is needed, preferably in smaller groups.

Summary
   Reflection on an issue, evaluating and critically analysing different variables were concepts that they had not done before.

Recommendations
   Reflection is a more difficult task, implying that the student first has to have the skills to engage in evaluation, critical thinking, drawing contrasts and comparisons. This basic knowledge is has to be embedded in the student’s cognitive structure.

Summary
   To take a stand on an issue appears difficult; to substantiate why one holds a specific point of view – even if they had the necessary content to argue their point. Timidity was evident in their approach.

Recommendation
   Debates in class can be used to demonstrate what taking a standpoint means, as well as to explain logic and coherence in presentation. Smaller class units would add meaning here.

Summary
   Academic writing skills are very difficult for most students.
Recommendations

Intense reading and writing skills need to be taught in a very focussed way. Commitment from both lecturer and student will have to be evident. Language and writing skills need to be slotted into the time table, and the curriculum revised to focus on language across the curriculum.

Question 2.2: the writing skills involved

Essay structure was hard for most students. They were not able to present a logical, written argument; unable to formulate relevant paragraphs, to take a standpoint. Language skills are limited – sentence structure; spelling; punctuation; paragraph structure; using one’s own words; being concise. Writing a summary was very challenging. Editing was a new experience for many.

Summary

With most engineers focussing on figures and graphs, the concept of writing an essay within basic academic norms proved a major problem. The paradigm shift required appears to have overwhelmed some of the students.

Recommendation

It would help if lecturers could identify engineering content where such skills apply and use them as short exercises to confirm relevance of writing skills for engineers. This can then be the bridging time needed to enable that paradigm shift. Buy-in from lecturers would also be essential – they will have to visibly support the learning process taking place.

Summary

Logic and coherence in one’s argument did not apply.

Recommendation

As above – with the focus being these two skills during the same bridging exercise.

Summary

Language usage was poor, preventing the scoring of better grades.

Recommendation

Intense language usage teaching is essential. Rules have to be taught. Vygotsky (1987) holds that one cannot apply the rules if one does not know them. He states that grammar and writing help the learner to a higher level of language development. Every writing task assigned to the student of engineering is also a language learning task. The review lesson should be as important as the first lesson introducing necessary skills, with focus on how the language used impacts on the meaning conveyed and therefore, the assessment earned. With the extremely technical content covered in the engineering specific modules, accurate writing skills are much more important.

Summary

Editing was a totally new task, making writing the paper appear bigger than it really was.

Recommendation

Focussed training on the writing process and peer editing will have to form part of the student’s contact time at university. Plumb and Scott (2002) confirm that students produce
better writing if responding to a well structured assignment – one that challenges them to research the topic; provides evidence of research; had clear instructions; describes the audience and specifies how it would be evaluated. The lecturer's role would be to facilitate the writing, to provide a plan for the learner's instruction. The purpose in writing must be the process through which growth takes place, rather than the finished product. Peer marking is recommended. Resinbrink (1987) observed the benefits of peer interaction among students with varied language abilities. When encouraged, peers taught one another, using co-operative strategies to allow each student to contribute according to his/her ability. Those competent in language can help those who are not through group discussion, presentations and common projects. Students with lesser language ability attained higher achievement, while those competent attained positive reinforcement through their instruction of others.

Discussion

Engineering is a much needed profession around the world. At the NMMU, lecturers are identified as those with “scarce skills”. Marketing it is aggressive and many students view the profession as a number one career choice. In the South African (SA) social and economic context, such a career is also the gateway from poverty and oppression. In the education and training, teaching and learning context, such a career is limited by language barriers because the majority of students are African language mother tongue speakers. While SA is seen as a multilingual society, individuals are competent in mainly African languages – isiZulu, isiXhosa, isiNdebele, XiTsonga, Sepedi, Siswati, Sesotho, Setswana, Tshivenda – together with Afrikaans and English. English is a second language (ESL) usually learnt at school. English is spoken by about 45% of South Africans (Gough, 2005), yet ranks fifth in distribution as a first language among all the official languages mentioned; 5.5% of school going children are EFL speakers; 10.1 are Afrikaans first language; 84.2% African first language (HEQC, Statistics SA, 2005).

400 million people speak English as a first language; 600 million as a second language (English Language Facts, 2007). Research on language used in the teaching and learning context consistently points out that success is achieved when the student is competent in the language of instruction, and all that is embedded in it – as is confirmed by the survey on the NMMU mechanical engineering students. While the ESL students (16 of 34) appear to be competent in its use conversationally, they clearly found problems in the writing process demanded of the Term Paper. In similar contexts, Cummins (1991) argues that learning and achieving in the use of academic English proved a challenge. Limited ESL competency is a world-wide problem forming the root barrier confronting both students and lecturers when they are forced to interact in languages which are not their mother tongue. Clegghorn and Rollnick (2002) confirm that not interacting in one’s mother tongue deprives learners of active, in-depth engagement in the teaching and learning process. Ironically, at the NMMU, anecdotal evidence confirmed that the students in the sample preferred to use English because they see it as the language of success, of the business and corporate world. Further, parents encourage their children to speak in English because they see language as the defining factor bridging where they are to where they want their children to be. Research by Dagut (1999) reveals that it is only in Africa that black parents instruct their children to talk English, where its use symbolises freedom, power, authority and success. However, Kapp (1995) argues that while this may be a strong reason to learn English, research proves that adequate proficiency in English for academic purposes at university is still not attained. Chimbganda (2001) confirms this many years later – that even post-graduate ESL students are unable to reason and conceptualise in English. The results of the case study confirm that the absence of assimilation, classification, categorisation and analysis in academic tasks are still contributing
to low grades and on long term projection, low through-put rates among our NMMU engineering students.

Contributing to the above fact is that embedded within the English language is its own culture, so the ESL student has to not only learn the rules of the language, but also a new culture – one totally different to one’s own. On discussing the need for reading and research as part of the writing process, students exposed some of their barriers – they didn’t have books at home, neither did they have newspapers and magazines; parents did not speak English and had little or no formal education; integration between the local schools and community was unheard of; a library was absent; computers existed only on the NMMU campus. In addition, academic literacy was learnt only through the second language, with students confirming that they lacked the necessary linguistic basis to enable them to transfer knowledge from their first language to their second. Those in the group who were English and Afrikaans first language speakers displayed confidence in concept formation, transfer and assimilation – quite unlike the ESL students, many of whom spoke English functionally, but admitted that the challenges they identified were very real to them. The engineering lecturer has to now teach a generic student who does not have the culture required for success in an academic environment, who lacks the literacy which would enable such success. Such literacy should begin at home, but its lack is evident in the responses provided by students in the survey – almost every challenge listed is rooted in an inability to acquire the required English language culture. Clearly, it is vital that all role-players in the teaching and learning situation need to be competent in the language of instruction which, at the NMMU, is English.

Plumb and Scott (2002) clarify that effective reading and writing skills are crucial for engineers, but that engineering programs struggle with how to prepare students for the writing they will do as professionals. For the Term Paper only, the students were expected to do a fair amount of reading, but the impact of other modules, lack of time, the attitude towards the communication course (‘it’s just an add-on’) and the language limitations facing them resulted in students admitting that they needed more language skills, but just could not find more time in the day. Saunders (1991) writes that all reading for such students is a form of drudgery, time is wasted and they do not understand what they have read. Such poor reading habits obviously tell on the quality of their passing, and will affect the NMMU’s throughput rate. Education Minister Kader Asmal (2004) emphasised the teaching of English as a second language during his administration, citing poor academic performance as a direct result of lack of proficiency in the language of teaching and learning. The many English bridging modules, extended program courses and language integrated interventions confirm the fact that at tertiary level, the lack of English proficiency is a major concern (Moodley, 2003). This was the original purpose of the Term Paper, to give students an opportunity to write in order to learn. That students are becoming aware of their limitations through it is confirmation that the task is a learning tool exposing individual challenges in academic writing. The task for both lecturer and student is to now address such limitations. The recommendations made in this paper are by no means complete, but will be a start towards the process.

**Conclusion**

Studies done by the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) at the University of Arizona show that engineering firms and ECE graduates ranked writing ability as the most important skill in determining an engineer’s success. Moreover, they ranked writing above the technical skills of the engineering curriculum (Ostheimer and White, 2005).

The inconvenient truth is that students need more support than is being provided to meet their writing needs. The Writing Process appears to be a foreign concept to most students,
with one lecture on it not being adequate to instil the practice essential for the development of writing skills. Also, the inconvenient truth is that intervention is needed at primary and secondary school level for students to assimilate the writing process before they enter university, and subsequently for them to become effective in their careers as engineers. Until this happens, we have to accept the very uncomfortable inconvenient truth that some of the graduates we produce may write so poorly that lives will be lost because of their inability to write clearly. Whatever it takes, this inconvenience has to be seen as more than just an inconvenience – writing skills form the core of academic success and should therefore be at the forefront of the institution’s vision.

References
Coexistence ethics: a necessary curriculum in the modern education system

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Abstract
After entering the third millennium, humankind still cannot put an end to intercultural conflicts. It is clear that religious diversity is generally the origin of intercultural clashes. Whereas Islam, in the sense of answering the call of God which calls for justice, equality and peace in the world, has emphasized the naturalness of diversities with many Quran verses. One of them is “We have created you from a male and a female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may know each other …” (Quran, Surah al-Hujurat, 49:13). In this article, it will be pointed out that diversity is a natural situation in the will and knowledge of God. In this context, it has been suggested that “coexistence ethics” must take a place in the modern and global education system as a part of the curriculum.

Introduction
Religious people all around the world think that only religion offers ultimate salvation and believe that only religious commands can lead humanity to tranquility and peace. However, religions have also been considered as an inflammatory element for the conflicts and crises throughout history. In other words, religious diversity is assessed as the major reason behind the conflicts among diverse cultures.

Recently, religion has often been seen as a latent source of conflicts and tensions in the world. Islam has suffered from prejudice in this regard. Islam’s popular image, particularly in the West, is increasingly negative. The Quran is generally misunderstood and it is, moreover, seen as a book that preaches hatred, intolerance, and violence. But the Quran includes many verses that provide a strong theological basis for equivalence between humankind and genders, in addition to intercultural and interreligious relations.

Coexistence ethics and being conscious of “knowing each other”
Continuing prejudices and doubts against other religions and believers in the modern global world manifest the necessity of determining of new visions in the education of young generations. This new vision should contain the idea of different religious beliefs that bring about different and original perspectives which help in the reconstruction of the world in peace rather than in conflict and competition. A sense of religious diversity is a natural situation which provides solidarity in mankind’s favor in opposition to discrimination and separation. Therefore it should have a place in the philosophy of modern education methods. It is a matter of fact that the sacred texts of religions inspire the principles that support these ideas.

There are lots of verses indicating that religious diversity occurs according to and within the Knowledge and Will of God. In that regard, the Quran teaches Muslims to coexist in diverse ambiance by emphasizing upon the vision that religious diversity is a natural situation. Quranic ethics about coexisting is an idea which should take place in the modern education system in the process of building bridges between different cultures.
Religious education should give youth a chance to realize that life has different dimensions such as the spiritual, moral and ethical aside from the visual and material ones. That invisible dimension of life asserts onto altruism, forgiveness, justice, honesty and responsibility in mutual relations. These ethical values based on religious education may lead the youth to a path of becoming aware towards others. Otherness is concerned with nation, language, tradition, custom, skin color, spiritual orientation and religion. To recognize and be familiar with otherness will lead to a tolerant society, a multicultural and “multifaith” one. Many verses in the Quran indicate the naturalness of religious diversity. Muslims knows that God, as Almighty, has an unlimited will and knowledge. Thus, religious diversity all around the world has come under the cognizance of God through the ages. But, this diversity should enable people to know each other. The Quran has a noteworthy verse about diversity that can be a opportunity in the face of different conditions.

Quran (Surah al-Hujurat, 49:13) says:

O people! Indeed, we have created you from a male and a female, and have made you nations and tribes that you may know each other. Indeed, the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); indeed Allah is Knowing, Aware.

There is a key word in the verse: ta’aruf; its root form is a-r-f which only means ‘to know, to recognize, to explore’. But, when a-r-f is used in the form of ta’aruf, the meaning of the word becomes ‘to know or recognize and even to understand each other’. This leads to a mutual attempt between different people in knowing and understanding each other and sharing knowledge. Consequently, this Quranic verse promotes multiculturalism and tolerance in societies. The verse also contains another emphasis which says that each person is created by the same formula. The formula is very simple, according to this formula: people are equal in terms of their biological procedure of creation and their social value, since their equality in the process of creation is essential (Selçuk, 2009, p. 1146). The concept of ta’aruf demands the condemnation of all prejudices and hostilities based on the basis of tribalism or racism, because the main point is equality and pluralism in human society.

It is imperative to promote the mutual respect and recognition of one another, and support pluralism and tolerance in our world of humanity; in line with the Quranic concept of ta’aruf, it is necessary to work against prejudices and ignorance. According to many interpretations ta’aruf goes beyond the idea of recognition of ‘the others’ and adds to it that the idea that ‘ta’aruf’ should ensure mutual understanding and mutual respect between different people. Also, there are interpretations of ta’aruf which see that a spiritual element of peace and understanding of each other is essentially inherent by the very nature or creation of human beings (fitrah), and thus, the Quranic concept of ta’aruf should mean that human beings shall follow the requirement of their nature, that is to be in peaceful terms with respect for each other. In conclusion of our understanding of the Quranic concept of ta’aruf, we may see that: (i) Human beings are created from one and the same source; thus everyone is essentially equal. (ii) That every human person has different qualities is God’s grace, which enables everyone to enrich the humanity with his/her difference. (See. Selçuk, 2009, p. 1147).

The Quranic concept of ta’aruf has another inspiration that goes beyond the idea of recognition of ‘the others’ and extends the word’s scope. Its inspiration leads us to live together by help of the second meaning of the verb: the idea of ta’aruf should guide the mutual understanding and cooperation between different people. The concept of ta’aruf, also has an existential meaning that the spiritual element of peace and understanding each other is essentially inherent by the nature or creation of human beings. In this context, ta’aruf means that human beings shall follow the requirement of their nature and respect each other in peaceful terms.
The Quran, on the other hand, declares that the cultural and traditional diversities, the
differences in lives, races, languages and colors are signs of God. But these differences
should not be the source of prejudice, rivalry or discrimination. The Quran exhorts Muslims
to not discriminate others due to these differences (Quran, Surah Ar-Room (The Romans)
30:22).

Faith based education and some approaches for new curriculum of
religious education in Turkey

The concept of ta’aruf should be an essence for faith based education. From Muslim view,
faith based education on ta’aruf concept promotes tolerance of differences, helps
fighting the discrimination, reduces the prejudice, and allows student to broaden their minds,
share views and explore issues within the ambiance of mutual respect. This supports the
development of the child in the respectful thought towards religious, cultural and racial
differences fostering the child's awareness and understanding the range of different beliefs,
practices and values in his society and the outer world. Promoting equality and cultural
pluralism must be a significant task for students in the field of religious education and they
should pay attention to the issue of equality and pluralism, mutual respect and solidarity
between peoples from different faiths and cultures. The youth who are trained by
multicultural education can contribute immensely to the prevalence of peace and coexistence
in our world. Consequently, these children, in the future, will adopt a respectful attitude
towards others instead of suspicion or prejudice against anybody who does not fit the model.

As for Turkey, until 1982, the religious education was a compulsory part of training
process in public schools both primary and secondary level. The official name of Religious
Education changed and its name became “Religious Culture and Knowledge of Ethics”. In
nearly thirty years many revisions have appeared in its curriculum. But, some new
approaches to religious education in state schools are important: a shift was observed by
passing from traditional (religious education) to a pluralistic and interfaith religious education
in the beginning of 2000. In addition to the new religious education curriculum, new
textbooks were published for religious education in the same years. The new religious
education curriculum aims to teach Non-Islamic religions and other beliefs by gaining basic
knowledge and that students understand other religions and cultures.

This new curriculum and textbooks reflect important changes related to content and new
educational approaches. A significant development draws attention to the presentation of
other religions in the textbooks. Firstly, non-Islamic religions and beliefs have more place
than traditional curriculum. Second, in discussing ethical issues and presenting ethical values,
new textbooks refer to the scriptures besides Quran. There are many passages from the Bible
about charity, morality and altruism.

Some examples of the other religious advices in the textbooks

- In the time of presentation of truthfulness, the following quotation from New
  Testament is provided by one textbook: For “he that would love life and see good
days, let him restrain his tongue from what is bad and his lips from speaking
deception (1 Pet. 1, 10, 3) (DKAB, 2009a, p. 146)
- Another quotation from New Testament is appeared in the presentation of charity:
  “But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is
doing, so that your alms may be in secret” (Mat. 6: 2-3). After this quotation, students
  are asked to discuss with their classmates on this advice of Messiah. In lesson on
  justice, this time another scriptural advice comes from Old Testament: “Give justice
to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.
Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked” (Ps. 82:3-4) (DKAB, 2009b, p. 25).

- Citation from Old Testament about poor relief “Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked” (Ps. 82:3-4). Students are asked which principles will be reached from these Old Testament statements that take place in Psalms (DKAB, 2009b, p. 24).

- It is emphasized on the ethical basis of other religions with a praising language. In this frame, it is pointed to an advice from the Ten Commandments of Judaism that is: Honor your father and your mother. Also showing respect to parent in Judaism is reinforced with these Old Testament passages: “Hearken to your father, that begot you: and despise not your mother when she is old” (Prov. 23:22), “Rise up before the hoary head, and honor the person of the aged man: and fear the Lord your God. I am the Lord” (Lev. 19:32). Likewise, to respect senior and to love minor are praised in Christianity. These New Testament passages are attracted attention to this situation: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is just. Honor your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with a promise: That it may be well with you, and you may be long lived upon earth. And you, fathers, provoke not your children to anger: but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:1-4) (DKAB, 2009a, p. 144).

- It is given place to other religions’ suggestions about the making student’s conscious of environmental issues. In the Torah: “If a fire breaking out light upon thorns, and catch stacks of corn, or corn standing in the fields, he that kindled the fire shall make good the loss” (Ex. 22:6) (DKAB, 2009a, p.151).

- It was quoted from other sacred texts concerning perjurer/false witness, like pointing to this in Old Testament. “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Ex. 20:16), “You shall not receive the voice of a lie: neither shall you join your hand to bear false witness for a wicked person” (Ex. 23:1). In the same time, New Testament strictly criticized this behavior: “You shall not bear false witness” (Mat. 19:18) (DKAB, 2009a, p. 154).

- It is pointed out that Islam forbids the killing as well as Torah and Gospel. It is underlined in these passages: “Thou shalt not kill” (Ex. 23:13); “He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death” (Ex. 21:12); “Thou shalt not not kill…” (Rom. 13:9) (DKAB, 2009a, p.152).

As we seen, in these quotations from Bible, the new textbooks in the frame of new curriculum try to highlight the points of agreement rather than conflicts on ethical values among religions. It is evident that with those scriptural quotations, a particular attention is given to ethical issues which are common among different religions rather than controversial theological issues. These textbooks include much objective knowledge about other religions and give students spiritual advices from Hinduism, Buddhism as well as Christianity and Judaism.

**A field research**

We have an important field research that contains cultural pluralist mentalities of teachers which are taking part in religious education system in Turkey. This research has been published in 2009. (See. Kaymakcan, 2009, pp. 45-56)

The field research has many propositions which are directed to teacher, but I dealt with only three propositions of them:

(I) One proposition which is directed to teacher of religious education is given some clues about their theological approaching to interreligious relations. The
proposition is that: If it is compared with my religion, the other religions included some part of the truth. The 68,9 percent of teachers agreed with this proposition.

(II) Another proposition testing subjects about socio-cultural view towards interreligious relation is that: We should continue our cultural connections with people who believe in other religions. The 97,9 percent of the teachers agreed with this proposition.

(III) The proposition to test subjects concerning education of other religions is that: students must learn the religions of others in the religious education courses in order to be more tolerance to believers of other religions”. The 82,7 percent of the teachers confirmed this proposition.

We have no chance to compare these materials with a former pool because of nonexistence of it. But, if it is looked up wholly to research, it is concluded that the anxious and prejudiced viewpoint to religious diversity and different religious traditions gives its place to the tendency of recognition, knowing and learn about religious other. Especially, the worthy of these above percentages increased more and more when it is taken into account the traditional education of these teachers which are test of subjects. In the near future, it is possible to see the increase of religious opinions relating to idea that the all differences are not the sources of confliction but wealth.

It is so obvious that the global and plural education discourses are challenges in the first instance to religious education. In the same time it is natural. Because, the sustainer and obstructive fact of the global and plural education models are religious perception which is shaped by religious education. Therefore, considering this reality, the representatives of Turkish national education ministry state outspokenly the significance of plural educational system in future

It seems that in the twenty-first century world will be quite another the world from that we so far have experienced. We have to understand the new challenges of the twenty-first century and find new means and tools to respond them. Apart from imagination, we need tolerance vis-à-vis other civilizations than our own. We have to educate ourselves, our children and society to cope with the challenges and difficulties of our time and thereby live together. I think, Kant’s call for universal peace may thus have implications for us. If we still rely only on power politics and dominance theory (whether upon Machiavellian or Hobbesian principles), then ‘there is no ground for any international cooperation, because power struggles between competing independent states [societies] will determine all politics’ The failure of this understanding is the hope for intercultural education and why it remains an imperative (Özdemir, 2007: 87)

Conclusion

The sacred texts contain universal discourses. To understand these discourses in these texts correctly, firstly it must be discovered their divine messages. We don’t have any theological evident that almighty creator has a desire of conflication of his creatures in the world. Consequently, the violent activities which are based on sacred texts however, are signs that these texts are not understood by human minds.

In the frame of Quran verse which we deal with, Islam sets the differences between religions as a both theological and sociological phenomenon. The existence of this difference as a fact in the will and knowledge of God requires the respect of humans towards religious differences not the doubt and anxiety. This necessity must be included in educational system in order to teach the theological basics of living together with differences to next generations.

Unlike of Western countries which have multicultural and multireligious tradition classes, some endeavor to establish “coexistence ethics” in the field of religious education are in
question in Turkey. It is emphasized on basic ethical thoughts which religions voices for peace and presence of humanity, in religious education curriculum and textbooks. Thus, it is aimed to cultivate new generations who accept the religious differences as a natural fact and appraise these differences reason for meeting not disagreement. Consequently, if the Quranic conception of ta’aruf is correctly approached, this concept will be discovered as a secret source to support “coexistence ethics” in the multicultural and multireligious global societies.

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Language learning through content: what can help university students develop their communicative competence in a professional field?

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Abstract

The current globalized and multilingual environment requires university graduates to be communicatively competent in a foreign language, especially English, in their professional field. For example, up to 50 percent of engineer working hours are devoted to professional communication: information seeking, reading and writing, presenting results, discussing various aspects of the work, e-mailing, etc. Moreover, in recent years communicative competence in language education has been considered to be a more complicated phenomenon. It is viewed as an integral personal characteristic having a vector of development. Being a personal quality communicative competence is supposed to be connected with psychological factors affecting language learning. The objective of this paper is to find out practical ways to enable our university students to gain deep insights into professional communication in a foreign language. Mini-research, or project work, a step-by-step process beginning with problem formulating and ending with presenting results, seems to be a perspective way of developing language learners’ communicative competence in their professional field. On the other hand, the focus of this paper is on the link between some psychological factors (e.g. tolerance for ambiguity and students’ attitudes towards the English language) and variations of language learners’ communicative competence development.

Introduction

Being one of the leading higher educational institutions of Russia, Tomsk State University (founded in 1878) plays an important role in realization of the Innovative Development Strategy, which is defined as one of the first-priority ways of modernizing the national economy, in the Siberian region. Economic progress connected with transformation in modus operandi and mass production of innovative items is much affected by a human factor. Therefore, revealing and studying specific personal qualities which characterize people occupied in the field of innovations becomes very important nowadays. It is necessary to find out a psychological basis for managing innovation development in education, science and business. The Department of Psychology of the University has started some large-scale research projects dealing with studying innovative personality and innovative behavior. One of the projects is interdisciplinary research into psychological resources of developing foreign language learners’ communicative competence in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Languages.

The theoretical framework of this study is the sociocultural theory of mind originally conceived of by Lev Vygotsky. The core statement of the theory is that the human mind is mediated through ‘the integration of symbolic artifacts into thinking’ (Lantolf, 2000, p. 2). Moreover, in recent years, communicative competence in language education has been considered to be a more complicated phenomenon. It is viewed as an integral personal
characteristic having a vector of development. We suppose that the Vygotskian perspective will contribute to better understanding of the construct under study.

While learning a foreign language, students encounter a new culture and a language system which is different from that of their mother tongue. In fact, intercultural communication is an area of ambiguous situations. One of our research questions concerns the role of ambiguity tolerance in communicative competence development in EFL context, the other deals with students’ attitudes towards the English language that may affect language learning.

The age of globalization requires university graduates to be communicatively competent in a foreign language, especially English, in their professional field. In Russia a foreign language course is a compulsory university discipline integrated into the educational program. English as a foreign language (EFL) is commonly studied by the students majoring in sciences and engineering. A content-based (CB) approach seems to be more beneficial to this category of learners since it takes advantage of the students’ content knowledge and promotes language learning as well. However, most of the traditional courses, being content-specific, are still remaining grammar-translation classes per se. Additionally, this paper aims to find out practical ways to enable our university students, whose major is physics and engineering, to gain deep insights into professional communication in English. We are going to discuss the main principles of mini-research, a technique allowing students to be actively engaged in the learning process.

Innovative behavior

In general, innovation is defined as something new that changes the established ways of thinking and acting. In other words, innovative behavior is such a form of human activity which is realized by going beyond the scope of the existing attitudes and behavior patterns. It is initiated by the potentialities, which an individual finds out in the environment, rather than by the needs periodically actualized. Behind the problem of initiating innovative activity there is a global problem of human self-development, self-actualization and generation of one’s own norms.

The initiation of innovative behavior is caused by human innovativeness which is an integral characteristic including two basic components: person’s innovative potential and motivational readiness for innovative activity (Klochko & Galazhinsky, 2009). It is worth mentioning that person’s innovative potential is a personal resource that manifests itself as a basis for initiating innovative behavior under relevant conditions. It involves three main blocks hierarchically related to each other:

- personal qualities, such as responsibility, self-actualization need, success motivation, risk capacity, reflexivity, tolerance for ambiguity, creativity, etc;
- competences, such as project competence, communicative competence, information competence;
- vitality, namely mobilization potential, self-regulation level, work capacity, psychological resilience.

For the purpose of our further consideration it is worth focusing on the concepts of communicative competence and tolerance for ambiguity.

Communicative competence

Since the time when Chomsky distinguished between ‘linguistic competence’ and ‘linguistic performance’ the meaning of the term ‘competence’ has changed greatly. First, Hymes (1972) extended it to ‘the ability to use language knowledge’ and introduced the notion of communicative competence to cover communicative dimension of language (see Ellis, 1994). In the 1980s Canale and Swain (1980) proposed their model of communicative
competence to meet educational challenges. In spite of the fact that this model was criticized due to its insufficient detailing of the key components of communicative competence, it was ‘extremely influential in defining major facets of communicative language use’ (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995, p. 8). In the 1990s, in their attempt to distinguish between language knowledge and the cognitive styles involved in language use, Bachman and Palmer proposed a model of communicative language abilities, but McNamara noted that its functional and strategic components were overlapped (for detailed analysis, see ibid).

Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell (1995) also developed their own model of communicative competence based on the Canale and Swain’s one. ‘Motivated by practical considerations’ their construct of communicative competence provided ‘more detailed content specifications’ and focused on how ‘to organize the knowledge available about language use in a way that is consumable for classroom practice’ (ibid, p. 29). Discussing limitations of their model the authors pointed out that the constituent components of communicative competence contained ‘a mixture of categories: knowledge, rules, skills, abilities, conditions, conventions, maxims, strategies, lexical items, etc’ (Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei & Thurrell, 1995, p. 30) and they hoped to overcome this disadvantage by specifying the competencies concerned more systematically in further research. However, we assume that this mixing of categories may testify to the impossibility of distinguishing between them in essence because of their complexity from a psychological viewpoint as a combination of cognitive, emotional and behavioral aspects of human mind affected by values and social norms.

Recent publications in Russia as well as abroad have highlighted the tendency of viewing communicative competence as a more sophisticated phenomenon (for details, see Atamanova, 2007). It is considered an integral personal characteristic providing effective interaction with others and being dynamic per se. In order to understand the complexity of the construct under study we have addressed to the psychological basis of language learning. Sociocultural theory of mind originally conceived of by Lev Vygotsky seems to be beneficial to the purpose of our research.

Language learning from the Vygotskian perspective

Vygotsky outlined the main principles of the sociocultural theory in a number of works written in the last decade of his life (he died in 1934, being only 37). The fundamental concept of the theory is social and cultural mediation of human activity (Vygotsky, 2002). It means that human development is initiated and affected by social interaction from the very beginning of a child’s life.

Children grow into the culture around them through learning and mastering its tools [cultural artifacts]. The tools need to be appropriated by children and become their own psychological tools in order to advance their development (Vialle, Lysaght & Verenikina, 2005, p. 49).

Language is a symbolic tool of the culture a child belongs to and plays a crucial role in the development of higher mental processes. It appears in communication and for communication. It is through dialogical interaction with adults or more competent peers that children acquire cultural tools (Vygotsky, 2002; Vialle, Lysaght & Verenikina, 2005; Atamanova, 2007).

The dialogue becomes one of the main forms of our thinking. In other words, the external function, which appeared in social interaction, transforms into the personal, internal cognitive ability of the child (Vialle, Lysaght & Verenikina, 2005, p. 52).

Following this, language acquisition means its ‘internalization’. From this perspective acquiring any foreign language seems to be a process of transformation of an individual’s
mental plane. Language learning contributes to further development of higher mental processes, on the one hand, and transforms the learner’s way of perceiving the world, on the other. Therefore, communicative competence in a foreign language in its broader sense can serve as a measure of the language ‘internalization’.

Tolerance for ambiguity

It is essentially important to be flexible while communicating with a foreigner or learning a foreign language. When learning a new language, we deal with some kind of intercultural contact. Our mother tongue and the language being learnt may differ greatly, but it is more significant to have an experience of acquiring the new one. To be communicatively competent, learners should be aware of values and norms of another culture, since ‘a different set of beliefs and unwritten rules about the “proper” way to communicate’ (Adler R., Rosenfeld L. & Proctor R., 2007, p. 35) is one of the major sources of misunderstandings. In fact, intercultural communication is an area of ambiguous situations.

Without a tolerance to ambiguity [ability to live with uncertainty], the mass of often confusing and sometimes downright incomprehensible messages that bombard intercultural sojourners would be impossible to manage (ibid, p. 49).

Analyzing recent publications (Samovar & Porter, 2004; Yaveroglu & Donthu, 2002) Adler et al. (2007) pay attention to the findings that a degree of uncertainty avoidance is culturally dependent and influences the way people communicate. The higher is the uncertainty avoidance index, the less tolerant are people. Moreover, countries that are low on uncertainty avoidance are more comfortable with change and novelty, i.e. innovations. If so, tolerance for ambiguity may be considered as a predictor of both innovative behavior and variants of communicative competence development.

The relationship between communicative competence, tolerance for ambiguity and students’ attitudes towards the English language

While learning a foreign language, students encounter a new culture and a language system which is different from that of their mother tongue, i.e. they constantly deal with ambiguous situations. It is reasonable to think that language learners may vary in their tolerance for ambiguity and its degree is likely to affect one’s learning. However, little research ‘has considered students’ individual predisposition towards ambiguity itself as an explanatory factor in learning’ (Carver, 2006, p. 2248).

One of our research questions concerns the role of ambiguity tolerance (AT) in communicative competence development in EFL context. In the first stage of our study we examined the possible relationship between students’ AT and their level of communicative competence.

The subjects in the study were 48 students of Tomsk State University whose major was physics and engineering. All the students studied English as part of their educational curriculum in the spring semester 2009. The participants were divided into four groups according to their English level and year at university: Group 1 (N=16) – first-year students (Elementary); Group 2 (N=10) – first-year students (Intermediate); Group 3 (N=11) – students doing their master degree (mixed level); Group 4 (N=11) – second-year students (Pre-Intermediate).

To measure ambiguity tolerance we used a paper-and-pencil form of McLain’s MSTAT-I instrument (McLain, 1993), translated into Russian and psychometrically checked by Lukovitskaya (1998). This is a 22-item questionnaire with 7 Likert-type responses ranged from ‘strongly disagree’ (1) to ‘strongly agree’ (7). Ten of the items are reverse-scored. To assess students’ communicative competence in English, their English teacher was asked to
rate their level of communicative competence using a 7-point grading scale from ‘very low’ (2) to ‘very high’ (5) with an interval of 0.5. Table 1 provides the basic descriptive statistics for the variables examined.

Table 1: Mean scores, standard deviations and medians of ambiguity tolerance and communicative competence in four groups of students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Ambiguity Tolerance</th>
<th>Communicative Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>99.81</td>
<td>16.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>106.20</td>
<td>15.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>102.36</td>
<td>17.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>104.36</td>
<td>19.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The AT scale did not show a statistically significant correlation with the communicative competence (CC) scores either in general or within the groups (see Table 2). However, among first-year students there might be a negative relationship between the AT scale and CC scores. The AT scale was dichotomized at its median score (Carver, 2006) and the subjects were coded as being tolerant or intolerant of ambiguity. Correlation analysis did not reveal a statistically significant relation between the AT scale and CC scores within the ‘tolerant’ and ‘intolerant’ groups as well (see Table 2).

Table 2: Correlations between ambiguity tolerance and communicative competence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communicative Competence</th>
<th>N=48</th>
<th>Group 1 N=16</th>
<th>Group 2 N=10</th>
<th>Group 3 N=11</th>
<th>Group 4 N=11</th>
<th>Intolerant N=24</th>
<th>Tolerant N=24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguity Tolerance</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>-0.243</td>
<td>-0.229</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>-0.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p=0.965</td>
<td>p=0.365</td>
<td>p=0.525</td>
<td>p=0.600</td>
<td>p=0.690</td>
<td>p=0.767</td>
<td>p=0.603</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As scholars note, exploring how motivational orientations towards the languages being learned vary in a certain context may help educators ‘working within that context to motivate their students more effectively’ (Humphreys & Spratt, 2008, p. 314). The results of the nationwide survey conducted in Hungary and described by Dörnyei & Csizér (2002) documented a ‘language globalization’ process, the main characteristic of which is ‘the emergence of increasingly deviating trend in World English learning and non-world language learning’ (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002, p. 455). English was found to be the most popular foreign language among 13/14-year-old teenagers. Furthermore, the findings revealed that an integrative orientation to learn English remained powerful (ibid, p. 441), but the researchers pointed out that it might not be related to an ‘actual … integration into an L2 community’ (ibid, p. 456). Yang & Lau (2003) explored Hong Kong students’ attitudes towards English before and after their university studies. It was reported that most students participated in the study believed that the English language would still be important in the coming 10 years in Hong Kong and having good English skills would contribute to their career and personal development. Studying Hong Kong university students’ motivation towards learning two compulsory languages (English and Putonghua) and a chosen third language (German, French or Japanese), Humphreys & Spratt (2008) found out a greater instrumental orientation to learn the compulsory languages, but the respondents revealed more positive attitudes towards English and the chosen languages.
To explore our students’ attitudes towards the English language we made use of an association experiment (Banerjee, 1994). 25 students were asked to write down the first adjective associated with the word combination ‘the English language’. The instruction was given in Russian and students’ responses were elicited in Russian as well. Taking into account the students’ ambiguity tolerance scale measured during the first stage of the research, we coded the subjects as being tolerant or intolerant of ambiguity. Their communicative competence scores were also used for further analysis. The data obtained were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively.

Table 3 reports the basic descriptive statistics for the communicative competence variable depending on the group of students (ambiguity tolerant, AT=1, or intolerant, AT=0). Differing significantly in their tolerance for ambiguity (t-value =6.639, p=0.000), the two groups did not display statistically significant difference in the communicative competence scores (t-value =0.707, p=0.487). However, unlikely the ‘intolerant’ group, the ‘tolerant’ students ranged greatly in their communicative competence scores, namely from 2.5 to 5.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the communicative competence variable for ambiguity tolerant and intolerant students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Communicative Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerant</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intolerant</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative analysis of the students’ responses on the adjectives associated with the English language revealed that in the group of ambiguity intolerant students – we called this group ‘Learning English is a real joy’ – the associations elicited were emotionally colored and sounded more positive. English was viewed as being ‘beautiful’ (3), ‘interesting’ (2), ‘funny’ (1), ‘complicated’ (1) and ‘accurate’ (1), see Fig.1. On the contrary, the ambiguity intolerant students – we called this group ‘Learning English is a hard job’ – tended to characterize English less positively. It was considered to be ‘difficult’ (4), ‘interesting’ (2) and ‘beautiful’ (1), see Fig.2. The number of such characteristics as ‘international’, ‘necessary’ and ‘foreign’ was approximately equal in both groups. We suppose that the different attitudes towards the English language may affect student’s communicative competence development and our further research is aimed at exploring some dynamics of communicative competence in the groups of ambiguity tolerant and intolerant students.

Figure 1: Distribution of adjectives associated with the English language in the ambiguity tolerant group

![Figure 1: Distribution of adjectives associated with the English language in the ambiguity tolerant group](image-url)
Content-based approach in EFL settings and a mini-research technique

The current globalized and multilingual environment requires that university graduates should be communicatively competent in a foreign language, especially English, in their professional field. Technical communication is defined as a process of managing information in a way that allows people to take action (Johnson-Sheehan, 2007). It becomes extremely important in the technical workplace nowadays. The ability to communicate effectively is crucial for a successful career. One of the surveys (Silyn-Roberts, 1998) on the problem of technical communication showed that within 2-3 years of graduation, engineers spend about 30% of their work time on the job writing, engineers in middle management spend 50-70% and engineers in senior management spend 70% or more (cited in Johnson-Sheehan, 2007, p. 5). Yang & Lau (2003) pointed out that the Hong Kong students who had taken the English courses for business or engineering majors commented that the courses focused on developing learner’s ‘research and reporting skills, both in writing and in speech’, were useful for preparing them for the workplace (Yang & Lau, 2003, p. 117).

The question arises how to engage university students in meaningful communication inside and outside the classroom if their primary field of study is not specifically related to English. A content-based approach seems to be successful in this case. On the one hand, some attention is given to language development. On the other, language is viewed as a means to convey information on the specialized subject.

Successful integration of language and content will raise students’ awareness of both the language as an object of study and its role as a vehicle in the acquisition of disciplinary concepts and text comprehension within the disciplines (Crandall & Kaufman, 2002, p.5).

Therefore, seeking some practical ways that will enable university students to gain deep insights into professional communication in English becomes essentially important nowadays.

Mini-research, or project work, a step-by-step process beginning with problem formulating and ending with presenting results, seems to be a perspective way of developing language learners’ communicative competence in their professional field. We suppose that mini-research may be an effective technique since it enables our students to enhance the understanding of their specific subject, create something and learn language at the same time. Here are the main steps of the mini-research: 1) defining the subject; 2) gathering information from a variety of sources; 3) drafting the content / organizing ideas; 4) revising and editing; 5) designing slides for presentation; 6) delivering the presentation; 7) receiving feedback.
Conclusion

The age of globalization and its challenges dealing with innovative development in education, science and business have actualized scholars’ efforts throughout the world. On the one hand, science and engineering play a crucial role in modernizing national economies. On the other, economic progress is much affected by a human factor. To meet the challenges of the modern world, university students should become competent in their professional field as well as develop their communicative competence in a foreign language. They are required to gain deep insights into professional communication in English. In our opinion, interdisciplinary research into psychological resources of developing foreign language learners’ communicative competence may help educators enhance language learning in EFL context.

The paper outlined the main theoretical perspectives of the research and discussed some preliminary empirical results. First, one of the perspectives mentioned above concerns innovative behavior which is defined as a form of human activity being realized by going beyond the scope of the existing attitudes and behavior patterns (Klochko & Galazhinsky, 2009). Second, the sociocultural theory of mind originally conceived of by Lev Vygotsky enables us to consider foreign language acquisition as a process of transformation of an individual’s mental plane. Third, the tendency of viewing competence as a more sophisticated phenomenon broadens horizons for studying communicative competence in a foreign language and helps researchers investigate its complexity and dynamics.

The first stage of our empirical study concerned the possible relationship between students’ communicative competence in English, their tolerance for ambiguity and their attitudes towards the English language. The data analysis did not reveal statistically significant correlations between the students’ communicative competence and their tolerance for ambiguity. Perhaps, this is explained by some limitations of the first stage of research, namely the sample and the simplified form of communicative competence assessment. However, some interesting results have been obtained. The students with high tolerance for ambiguity tend to view the English language more positively and more emotionally than those with low tolerance for ambiguity. Moreover, the ambiguity tolerant students’ communicative competence ranges from 2.5 to 5.0, the interval of communicative competence scores of the ambiguity intolerant students varying within 3.0 ÷ 4.0.

Finally, we discussed the main principles of a mini-research technique which enables university students whose major is physics and engineering to enhance language learning using the advantages of a content-based approach in EFL context. Our further research is aimed at exploring some dynamics of communicative competence in the groups of ambiguity tolerant and intolerant students.

References


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Abstract
The OSLO conference and agenda on “Entrepreneurship Education in Europe: Fostering Entrepreneurial Mindsets through Education and Learning”, highlight the main experiences in Europe and their outcomes regarding the promotion of entrepreneurship in education. Education and training should contribute to encouraging entrepreneurship by fostering the right mindset, providing relevant skills for self employment, raising awareness of career opportunities as an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurship learning has taken place almost everywhere at secondary school in Europe, but there are no shared entrepreneurship oriented models for different educational levels and systems.

Entrepreneurship is defined (European Commission 2002) as a dynamic and social process where individuals, alone or in collaboration, identify opportunities for innovation and act upon these by transforming ideas into practical and targeted activities, whether in a social cultural or economic context
therefore, entrepreneurship in education includes economic, social and cultural factors. For this reason it is important to identify educational models to support students in the development both of personal qualities and attitudes and of formal knowledge and skills, and in particular:

- Personal qualities and attitudes increase the probability of a person recognizing opportunities and acting on them.
- Knowledge and skills concern what must be done to establish a new enterprise, and how to be successful in developing an idea into a practical, goal-oriented enterprise.
- Our research focuses on the study of ICT solutions concerning online entrepreneurial environments based on social networking.
- Entrepreneurial networking is more than just collaboration since it stimulates the ability to find and create new relationships, the ability and the know how to identify the key competencies that can be useful in developing entrepreneurial mindsets.
Introduction

In the last few years, some activities have been carried out to introduce and promote awareness in young people of the culture and methodologies used by global enterprises. This awareness is fundamental to allow them to develop the competencies required in an evolving labour market as it responds to the development of the ‘knowledge society’.

Many young people become disenchanted because of their school experience as what they learn at school is often of little relevance to their lives in the outside world and they seek to develop a different range of competences from those offered in the traditional school curriculum (Selandar 2008; Ziegler 2007; and Selwyn 2007). The main aim of our research is designing a training model to stimulate an entrepreneurial mindset in young people and to help them acquire the “modern skills” required by the knowledge society, based on the findings of research in this area. The training model will be run in collaboration with professional/entrepreneurial organizations rather than solely by schools, and will also use new ICT tools defined to create innovative and motivating learning activities. In fact, the model will include a new software platform, created to help students in developing the necessary skills and stimulating their ability to find and create new relationships, the ability and the know how to identify the key competencies and resources that can be useful in developing their ideas. The professional qualities which are most highly considered today are those typical of an entrepreneur, even in a context of subordinate work (Armbuster 2008). These qualities are conceptualised for this study such as: motivation to achieve results and take initiative, tenacity, flexibility and creativity (based on various interpretations of the term ‘professional’ including Friedson 1994; Quinn et al 1996; Macdonald 1995; Moore 1970 and Abbott 1998). These will be reached through the involvement of students by the setting up of the training laboratories, making use of active and motivational learning methodologies and technologies to raise young people’s level of competences. The laboratories will let them acquire the skills required by the knowledge society, while enabling them to take control of their learning processes and giving them the opportunity of expressing their aptitudes and potentialities to make better informed choices. Our research begins from the analysis of key elements of successful Enterprise Education Programs in Secondary Schools in Europe and, in particular, from the projects indicated in the Oslo agenda and the following experiences in other European countries. The model we are going to define will include active learning experiences, and ICT based environments, so providing pupils with a more rewarding way of acquiring knowledge. In fact, ICT have always played a key role in managerial education, especially in the creation of simulation environments. For this reason the model will include the use of a software platform that will support students in developing the necessary skills identified to foster entrepreneurial mindsets.

Education and professional training should contribute to encouraging an entrepreneurial spirit, promoting a suitable mindset, awareness of the opportunities of following an entrepreneurial career and professional skills. The Eurobarometer survey (European Commission 2007) indicates that 37% of Europeans would like or would have liked to follow an entrepreneurial career, but only 15% have achieved their ambition. The surveys show that if you are familiar with the procedures for setting up an enterprise, it will increase the probability of becoming an entrepreneur. In the surveys carried out by Eurobarometer, the interviewees whose parents were self employed, were more inclined towards self employment than those whose parents are employees. According to the GEM survey people who are confident about their skills and their experience are from two to seven times more likely to be involved in setting up or managing a new enterprise; for those who know a young entrepreneur the probability is three or four times greater. On the basis of the British Household Survey, people who have more contact with the business world (through friends, relatives or education) are more likely to consider setting up an enterprise. The educational
system must help to promote an entrepreneurial spirit by providing competences and contacts.

A relevant experience in this field, was the Greek one, at the technical school "Sivitanidios" in Athens, where virtual enterprises were used as educational tools. The students divide their time between theoretical lessons and management of a virtual enterprise. Since the results are extremely favourable the programme will be extended to all technical schools and will include a new course on entrepreneurship that will consider theoretical aspects and practical notions regarding the drawing up of business plans. Job centres then guarantee students advice and support in choosing an entrepreneurial career. In this paper we will focus on the ICT solution identified to support the development of entrepreneurial mindsets. First of all we will describe the general characteristics of some effective on line educational environments and in particular of role playing games. Then we will illustrate the solution identified in our research.

Games based learning

Games are usually associated with amusement, playing and not with learning activities. In the last few years this stereotype has been deeply modified. It has been demonstrated that using games in the didactic field, improve the learning process: the so called “simulation games” are examples of this. Simulation is a process that emulates the behaviour of a real system and can use informatics technology. (Michael D.2006). Simulation allows learning through the so called “learning by doing”, “learning by failing”.

Nowadays simulations are widely used by enterprises in training activities. For example, a training system for call centre sellers is able to teach how to behave in all the situations that can occur. The system is able to create a virtual client request and present a set of possible answer to the trainer. The choice of an answer will generate another question and in this way the call will evolve in a way or in another one according to trainer’s choice. At the end of the simulation, the call will be analysed with a tutor that, according to a “what if” methodology, will revise all the answer and will show the trainer what would have been happened facing different choices.

Another example of learning game are the role-playing game. They originate as a particular kind of board game, in which players act as characters of an adventure that often has a fantastic setting. Under the guidance of a game master (Dungeon Master or DM), that has the task of interpreting not player character roles, and describes for other players what they see and hear in this imaginary world (Fine, A. 1983), players have to move in a theatre of epic fights and monstrous creatures to conquer points and complete their missions. The first one and the most known role-playing game is “Dungeon and Dragons” (D&D), published in 1974 by authors Gary Gygax e Dave Arneson, fascinated more the 20 millions players.

The world of games, the development of personal computers and of the Internet, have greatly increased the development of role-playing games, improving their expressivity and user involvement. The result is the creation of MUD (Multi User Dungeons&Dragons, computer version of D&D) and after MMORPG (Massive Multiplayer Online Role–Playing Game), evolution of MUD with massive use of graphic and audio contents.

MMORPG can be considered part of the category of MMOG (Massive Multi-player Online Game); one of the most famous present-day MMORPG is World of Warcraft; in its virtual environment every day millions of players interact to achieve personal or common goals and develop their own character (Papagiannidis, S. 2008). This phenomenon was considered by training sector; role-play techniques focused on the student and his learning process, originating from Moreno’s psychodrama and spontaneous theatre (Moreno, J. L. 1946), have been used as methodologies which are different from traditional teacher and
content centered strategies. Serious games (those with educational aims) developed from this technique include simulation and role-playing environments facilitating emotive and experiential learning (such as “learning by doing”, “learning by failing” and “discovery learning”) (Kebritchi, M. 2008). Besides, by using simulated environments which are specifically created to achieve an educational goal, students can learn in a safe context, where mistakes do not cause damaging consequences (Dieleman H., 2006). As confirmation of the validity of this training approach, nowadays serious games are widely used both in the field of business training (Pannese L., 2007) and in military training (McDowell P., 2006), because of speed with which competences and knowledge can be reached.

A new learning environment

An MMOLE is a multiuser environment allowing spontaneous and enjoyable learning, thanks to a serious MMOG (game with educational goals) (Foreman, J., 2007).

The social aspects of this kind of environment are extremely important; players can collaborate with other players to reach a common goal. Multiuser environments are better than single user ones because they can promote collaborative learning, or rather the acquisition by individuals of knowledge, skills and attitudes resulting from group interactions or individual learning as a result of a group process (Kaye A.R. 1992). The social aspect of the games is therefore one of the main elements to stimulate since it promotes learning. Collaboration to achieve a common objective requires a clearer and more careful clarification of one’s ideas to share them more easily with other players; moreover, comparison with other people’s ideas produces critical reflection and advanced reasoning, leading to more meaningful and permanent learning. The chance to have heterogeneous groups, compose by experts and beginners, promotes what Lave (Lave J. 1991) defines as legitimate peripheral participation. The presence of a beginner in the community of practice must be legitimized by the possibility of having a role within the group, even if the role is peripheral; his desire to become an active and central participant will develop in a socio-cultural activity that will lead him to interact with expert members, and will let him move from the periphery to the center of the community of practice, in a process that enables him to become informally more expert.

MMOG in an MMOLE is used as a training environment, where the student/pupil can develop skill and ability through a “learning by doing” methodology. To enhance MMOG capability, the virtual world should reflect, as close as possible, the real world allowing the so-called “virtual situated learning”. Virtual situated learning promotes more rapid learning and provides the necessary confidence for putting into practice, in the real world, what he has learned in the virtual world (Jones, S. 2007).

An MMOLE has the following feature:

- An MMOG integrated with a Learning Management System
- Communication tools
- Progress tracking
- Tutor supervision

LMS integration provides links to traditional e-learning course and resources to deepen game issues. Communication tools let students to receive feedback both from other students and tutors following the game evolution. An immediate feedback helps students to reinforce wished behaviors. Through tracking systems teacher can also follow students’ progress. Tutors supervise learning processes, manage the starting phase, provide feedback to players and stimulate collaboration among them.
An MMOLE to enhance entrepreneurial mindsets

The MMORPG’s popularity has greatly risen over the last few years. Millions people all over the world play with these kind of games (A.Meredith, 2009) and the 22% of players are young students (N.Yee, 2006). Users are growing and the market is a source of great economic interest (Papagiannidis, S. 2008).

Baldassin analyzed main market management games and stated that MMORPG’s are their natural evolution, because they overcome limitations regarding the flexibility of the model and the complexity of the business (Baldissin, N. 2007).

Considering the pedagogical and attractive potentialities of the MMORPG and considering Baldassin’s studies results, we choose to develop an MMOLE platform based on a MMORPG to create an environment to enhance entrepreneurial mindsets in young students.

The aims that an entrepreneurship education programme should achieve are:

- To learn to understand entrepreneurship (What do entrepreneurs do? What is entrepreneurship? Why are entrepreneurs needed?)
- To learn to become entrepreneurial (I need to take responsibility for my learning, career and life. How to do it)
- To learn to become an entrepreneur (Can I become an entrepreneur? How to become an entrepreneur? Managing the business)” (Hytti and Kuopusjärvi 2004)

The first aim can be achieved providing the necessary information through the LMS. Online modules will be created to show the role that entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship plays in modern economies.

The second aim can be achieved through the creation of a networked entrepreneurial environment that combine aspects of social networking with relevant aspects from the use of business games. Entrepreneurial networking represents more than just collaboration since it stimulates the ability to find and create new relationships, the capacity and the know-how to identify the key competencies that can be useful in developing their ideas.

The third aim can be achieved through the use of the MMORPG. In this virtual world students will learn how to set up a business, make decision and compete in a free market. Students/pupil’s choice could be winning or losing, but both useful in order to create the basis for the potential entrepreneurial career.

Delwiche (A.Delwiche 2006) states that “Game accessibility is crucial to learning”. Games with a user friendly interface is preferable to encourage novice player. Information overload of a complicate user interfaces is not useful especially in the first days, because a failure in the virtual world can quickly lead players to abandon. For this reason the game will be designed to manage different levels of complexity, in relation to the experience acquired by the players. Players start at a basic level in which they have a simple role, and then, as they acquire more experience, they have new resources that can be used to play an advanced level in which their role is more complex. In this way, at different times a player can occupy different roles and observe and simulate different conditions.

Entrepreneurship in education is defined in a broad way and includes economic, social and cultural factors. Starting from the definition:

Entrepreneurship is a dynamic and social process where individuals, alone or in collaboration, identify opportunities for innovation and act upon these by transforming ideas into practical and targeted activities, whether in a social cultural or economic context.

the educational environment, and the model in which it is integrated, must support students in the development both of personal qualities and attitudes and of formal knowledge and skills. These two main elements will give pupils/students competence in entrepreneurship:
Personal qualities and attitudes increase the probability of a person seeing opportunities and acting on them;

Knowledge and skills concerning what must be done to establish a new enterprise, and how to be successful in developing an idea into a practical, goal-oriented enterprise.

The MMORPG we are going to develop will be centred on operative enterprise phases (supplying, production, sale, human resource management), but with a strong orientation on the market. It will not be a zero-sum game, that is to say that when a player wins it does not necessarily corresponds to the other’s defeat; on the contrary, many activities of the game will be studied to promote cooperation among players to reach a common goal.

From a technical point of view, we chose to develop a browser game MMORPG; in fact, browser games provide a compromise between complexity of the development (there are a great number of framework for the optimization of web based application development) and pedagogical potentialities. Today’s audio, video and textual contents can supported by browser and that, according to Roden (Roden, S. 1991), if opportunely combined, increase of the 30% the learning speed of the student.

Although combination of audio, video and text resources help student learn, Cooper warn about the dangers of a massive use of multimedia in learning content. Chee (S.A. Chee 2006) examines cognitive load problems while playing a MMORPG and he develops best practice (recommendation) for game developers. A better handling of the cognitive load will make the game more manageable for players, especially novices, and so it will help students to learn the lessons’ content.

Another relevant aspect, comparing our environment to other business games, is that it is not only a simulation game but an on line world. In a simulation game only one person is interacting with the software at a time; in an on line world instead, the user has to interact and cooperate with other users, to improve business, to make decisions, to reach goals he cannot reach alone. The simulated environment will offer tools to interact both with the software and other users; so learners activities can have effect both on their own enterprise and on the others. An example could be advertising tool that describes the features of its product, enhance the enterprise brand and increase customers attractive capacity.

To make real-time user interaction easier, student can use communication tools, such as chat tools, VoIP channel or webcam. Real-time communication tools shoot down distance limit and help the emergence of communities of practice that stimulate cooperative learning.

The browser game we are going to develop will include some non-player characters (NPC), created to perform some tasks guiding students to understand some important mechanisms of the market. For example, if there is an NPC creating obstacles to the development of a company, the owner has to understand the best strategy to overcome them, learning how to protect his/her business from that kind of problems. Besides, NPCs will allow the simulation of important actors of the market. NPC are also useful tools for instructors to help learning events and activate/manage some interactions within the environment.

It should be underlined that the learning environment we are going to develop, will be a game in which students will play autonomously, improving their skills and knowledge. Anyway in some phases or situations, instructors can activate managed learning events to lead students to reflect on particular aspects, making the game more effective for learning.

Conclusion and future work

Educational MMORPG are now beginning to emerge. In particular, games based on browser MMORPG can allow the development of on line educational environments reducing the cost of production, respect to the first experiences with this kind of games.
Considering that nowadays million of people all over the world play with MMORPG and an increasing percentage of them are young students, we think that these environments can have great perspective for learning purposes, especially in some contexts in which the simulation of the real world and the interactions with other subjects are crucial. For these reasons we thought to develop a new model for enterprise education, based on a browser MMORPG, for young students, to make them acquire entrepreneurial mindsets.

Although we will develop a simplified model of the environment in which enterprises work, it will be able to provide students the chance to:

- Learn, through learning by doing and learning by failing methodologies, dynamics in an open market and the main factors influencing the start-up and the success of an enterprise
- Learn cooperative work with other players, to reach common aims
- Develop inductive reasoning attitudes (what-if analysis), analysis, planning and verifying capability and problem solving.

It is important to highlight that the new learning environment will probably be able to involve students in the first phase and, if it is well structured and attractive, also in the following levels of the game; the integration of the game in very well known social networks will be another way of attracting and engaging young students. To be an effective learning environment it is crucial, in the design phase, to create the right “rules” to interact in the virtual community, guiding students trough the key factors of the complex world of the market. However, to make students acquire entrepreneurial mindsets, it will be important to involve them in all the activities of the educational model we are designing with educational institutions and associations of enterprises.

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Developing teacher education students’ multicultural capacity for the 21st century

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Abstract
Teachers for the 21st century for the global world need to be proficient in technology and skilled as reflective practitioners. The paradigm shift of the 21st century is that teachers need to be team players who are skilled at operating in collaborative partnerships. They need to have experiences that help them develop multicultural/international viewpoints. Teacher Education Programs need to constantly add new programs and experiences to broaden students’ multicultural capacity.

Introduction
Teachers for the 21st century for the global world need to be proficient in technology and skilled as reflective practitioners. The paradigm shift of the 21st century is that teachers need to be team players who are skilled at operating in collaborative partnerships. Teachers for the 21st century need to have experiences that help them develop multicultural/international viewpoints. They need to learn skills that develop their technology and international communicative competence. Since 1988, Northeastern Illinois University’s Early Childhood Education program has been developing practices and experiences for pre-service and practicing teachers to develop multicultural capacity: 1) Clinical experiences in urban schools with children of a variety of ethnic backgrounds, 2) Two week study abroad experiences in Jamaica, China, England, or Mexico, 3) Classes taught by international faculty: Nigerian, Tanzanian, Chinese, Hispanic. 4) Grant project experiences in urban schools and community agencies learning team planning and collaboration with parents and community agency personnel, 5) Professional development experiences presenting at local, state and international conferences, 6) Technology experiences in clinical and grant project sites documenting learning with digital cameras, and computers.

Currently, Northeastern Illinois University’s Teacher Education Department, has developed four new international initiatives built on previous programs. Developing international programs takes time and personal contact and is built a little at a time. The four new Northeastern Illinois University initiatives are: 1) Student Teaching Abroad Program in South Korea, 2) Fulbright Group Study Abroad Program in Jamaica, a Collaborative program with the Social Work Department, Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education and Bilingual Education Programs in the Teacher Education Department, 3) Student Presentations at International Conferences, 4) Developing a Bilingual Approval Program for Early Childhood Students with bilingual field sites.
Review of the literature

Technology and digital technology skills for the 21st century.


For children, the “digital natives”, the computer itself is basic. They have moved on to scanners, mp3 players, digital cameras (still and video,) and camera phones to export digitized images into the computer. Digital cameras enable children, parents and teachers to record field trips and classroom experiences, and play them back or print them out for immediate feedback. Children, parents and teachers explore the web, seeing and hearing video images from across the world. This information becomes interactive when they respond by email to people they encounter on the computer. In innovative formats, such as Face Book and Twitter, people globally are using the Internet to describe their life and experiences to the world, seeking to dialogue with “others” who find their messages. Students nearly everywhere in the world have grown up in a world where cell phones, Google, the internet and text messaging have always existed. (Wilmarth, 2009)

Landerholm (1999). Pastor and Kerns (1997) describe how children and parents use digital photos and video to document experience. The Hundred Languages of Children (Edwards, 1993, 1998,) which describes the Reggio Emilia approach to education (from Italy,) stresses the importance of observation of real experiences and objects, and the use of photography to document those experiences. Documentation of experiences through photography, drawings, and journal writing is important for children because it boosts memory, helps guide thinking, helps children become more aware of experiences and more able to articulate what they see.

If teachers are going to help children learn this approach, they first need to experience this documentary learning themselves. Gehrie, Landerholm and Valverde ( Parecki-DeBruin, 2008) describe workshops with Early Reading First teachers experiencing the Reggio Emilia documentation process first hand with art, photography and digital technology.

Today’s “digital natives” are busy using new digital tools: computers, calculators, MP3 players, camera phones are “extensions to our children’s brains,” and cell phones, not computers, are the new most important tools. (Prensky, 2005-06, and LaFraniere, S, 2005). According to Prensky, (2005-06) programming is the most important difference between the 20th and 21st century, and the key to skills for the 21st century because it involves the process of creating original documents or personalizing a digital tool, by downloading a song or ring tone, conducting a Google search, capturing and inserting a picture in a document, developing a PowerPoint. Technology is a new world language that children are using to communicate with other children across all physical and cultural boundaries. Technology is itself multicultural, involving multiple viewpoints and diverse cultural expression.

Reflective thinking and multicultural awareness for teachers in the 21st century.

Reflection as a specialized form of thinking has long been recognized as a factor in improving the quality of teaching ( Dewey, 1933; Cruishank, 1987, Hernandez, 2001). Reflection is also a multiple perspective skill and involves multicultural awareness. Research
on effective teaching indicates that effective teachers are more often reflective thinkers (Korthagen and Wubbels, 1991, and Eby, 1992. The cultivation of reflective practitioners has become a major goal of many teacher education programs (Benson, 2000.) Multicultural awareness involves reflection and being able to see another’s viewpoint which can be developed from study abroad experiences, experiences with international teachers, seeing videotapes of other cultures and studying how other cultures educate their children. (Landerholm, 1995, Stevenson, 1990. 1992, Tobin, 1993.). Multicultural awareness is also fostered through collaborative projects where students have experiences in collaboration with people from many different roles in the community. Landerholm, Gehrie, and Jennings (2004), Landerholm, Karr, Hao and Mushi, (2004)

A number of strategies have been used in teacher preparation programs to encourage reflection during student teaching. Strategies such as journals, staff meetings, case consultation, supervisory feedback, and problem solving conferences have been found effective in assisting the development of higher levels of reflection (Bowman, 1994; Stahlhut and Hawkes, 1997). Recently, the use of technology to facilitate students' reflections and collaborations has received support from teacher educators who have incorporated e-journals and class listserves into university classes in teacher preparation programs (Bennett & Pye, 1998; Zimmermann & Greene, 1998; and Benson, 2000).

Benson (2000) found that electronic journaling promotes the development of a supportive learning community and encourages open communication between university students and instructors. In a collaborative learning environment, students' ability to reflectively think about the classroom environment and teaching practice is fostered. Social Production has expanded since 2000, and Web 2.0 applications such as blogs, wikis, and other collaborative interactive tools are being used everywhere. Wilmarth(2009). Teacher education students use of these collaborative tools adds to their development of multicultural viewpoints as well.

Review of the literature on teaching English as a second language

In the United States, diversity in the public schools is becoming the norm in urban and rural areas, making it even more necessary for teachers to have experiences and training in multicultural awareness. From 1991-1992-2001-2002 the number of identified English Language Learners( ELL’s) in public schools grew 95% - close to 5.5 million. (National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2002, Boals, 2006)). The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) is working hard to service ELLs and to ensure that their academic achievement is a top priority for our nation.

Title III of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requires that all English Language Learners (ELLs) receive quality instruction for learning English and grade-level academic content. This USDE initiative permits local flexibility within each state to choose their own instruction. These new accountability requirements also mandate that states create common standards of English proficiency. To meet these demands, the Illinois School Board of Education (ISBE) has joined the World-class Instructional Design and Assessments Consortium (WIDA).

The WIDA consortium, located in Madison, Wisconsin, is a non-profit cooperative of 20 states that works to meet the demands of NCLB for ELL students which was founded in 2002. This group of states is dedicated to the design and implementation of standards-based education for ELLs. WIDA has developed English Language Proficiency Standards and Assessments.

All ELL teachers in Illinois are trained to administer the WIDA initial qualifying screening tool and the ACCESS yearly achievement assessment. Besides specialized qualifying and achievement tests, the WIDA consortium has developed a chart of CAN DO
 descriptors. These descriptors help the ELL teacher identify what the ELL student can already do, and where would be the best place to begin their instruction. WIDA’s instructional design for teachers encourages a positive view of the child that highlights what a student CAN DO and not their limitations.

ELL Teachers use the CAN DO Descriptors to design appropriate lessons that work in conjunction with the WIDA Performance Definitions of English Language Proficiency. The Performance Definitions use three criteria: Linguistic complexity, Vocabulary usage, and Language control to describe the increasing quality and quantity of students’ language processing and use across the levels of language proficiency (https://www.wida.us//February 2010). These WIDA standards and instructional design plans link directly to the Illinois state academic standards as Title III of NCLB Act required.

In order to identify ELL students, the ELL teacher must first evaluate all students who speak a second language with the WIDA screening tool. All parents are required to complete a “Home Language Survey” upon enrolling new students in school. Any child whose parent’s have indicated their child speaks any languages at home other than English will be administered the WIDA Oral Language Proficiency screener. Each student is then designated at one of the 6 WIDA English Proficiency levels. The levels range from 1-6. Level 1-Entering; Level 2-Beginning; Level-3 Developing; Level 4-Expanding; Level 5- Bridging; and Level 6-Reaching. The ELL teacher uses these tools to design lessons that can scaffold the states goals to the student’s appropriate learning level. The WIDA instructional objectives are designed to scaffold the state’s standards with increased support built in.

The goals of a language rich academic program are to provide increased input to build a strong foundation of background knowledge required for later learning. By utilizing different modalities of Total Physical Response (TPR) and other visual and interactive scaffolds to help children access content concepts and vocabulary, ELL teachers reduce the anxiety and offer students a successful path toward bridging their gap in comprehension of English. A variety of learning methods: role playing, matching pictorial images to text, visual supports, graphic organizers, K-W-L-charts, the use of drama, art and music, provide differentiation of instruction. These methods help the students to visualize the concepts and to make strong personal connections to the material being taught. The main goal as an ELL teacher is to offer the ELL student appropriate opportunities to interact with oral and written language while aiming to meet the same academic standards as the other English only speaking students.

Along with these new methods being developed, standards for new teachers’ knowledge and skills for working with ELLs have increased. Teacher Education Programs need to add new courses to meet the approval/ certificate standards for educating ELL’s in the 21st century.

Historically, ELL instruction has focused on J. Cummins’ theory of language acquisition that identifies two main types of language: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). (Cummins/1979). In this work, he introduced the distinction between classroom and playground English. Recently, there has been a shift and researchers such as Collier (1995), Scarcella (2002) and Gottlieb (2006) have moved away from the goal to first teach social language to ELL’s. The major focus with WIDA today is the importance of the Academic Language Instruction with ELL students. http://www.wida.us/Research/Language/index.aspx.

The process of implementing new initiatives for developing multicultural/international competence in a teacher education program

Developing new initiatives for developing multicultural/international skills with teacher education students goes through 4 phases:
1) **Phase one - idea phase**: starts with a person with a passion for international experiences, who comes up with an idea and finds other people interested in developing a program;

2) **Phase two - development**: is searching out people and material resources, figuring out how to implement the program, overcoming obstacles;

3) **Phase three - recruitment and implementation**: is recruiting participants for the program and implementing the program; and

4) **Phase four - student outcomes, feedback, and revision**: The contacts and the inputs involved in revising include the students and teachers who participated in the program, their ideas and offshoots that develop. It also includes the ideas of the original people who developed the program and people in both cultures that participated in the development and revisions. Over time, the contacts become friends and partners, the relationships become stronger and a variety of new programs can be developed.

**Student teaching in South Korea**

**Phase 1, idea phase.** The key person in this initiative was a professor of Asian Studies at Northeastern Illinois University. The first phases of this initiative from 2000-2005, included having Korean professors from a community college in South Korea attend NEIU on sabbatical, and Korean students from the same college, attended English classes at NEIU. Then in 2006, A delegation from NEIU went to visit the community college in South Korea to see what other exchanges could be developed. As a result of that contact, several new professors from the community college and a principal from a school district in South Korea came to NEIU for a sabbatical.

**Phase 2, development.** At that time, the principal and the NEIU professor developed the idea of NEIU students doing their student teaching in Korea as English Language Interns. They would do 8 weeks in Chicago of their regular student teaching and then spend 5 months in Korea teaching English as a Second language. They would be paid a salary and receive free room and board and airfare. **Phase 3, recruitment and implementation.** Recruitment started in the fall of 2008 and the program was implemented in March of 2009 with 9 students. The Recruitment phase was difficult as with any new program, but was supported by the President of the University, the Dean of Education, the Dean of Liberal Arts, The director of the Student teaching Placement Office, a committee of faculty and the original professor. This support by the administration made a big difference in getting the program launched. **In Phase 4, feedback and student outcomes.** Of the 9 students who attended, 3 students have gone on to sign up for the year long teaching commitment in Korea. These students also have helped recruit new students for the coming year for student teaching in Korea and were involved in helping orient the students for their experience. The new students have added input already by developing a Facebook group for the program. As for adaptations, In the first year, only one group of students was sent. But in the second year, a fall group and a spring group will be able to go as it is now possible for the fall student teachers to do their 8 weeks in the summer (a first). Feedback from the first group was that they felt they had had made friends from another culture, had learned new ways of doing things, new foods, and new ways of teaching.

**Fulbright Group Study Abroad Program**

**Phase 1:** The key person was a Professor of Elementary Education who had started going to Jamaica in the seventies for the music festivals. She contacted an Early Childhood Education professor who had just completed taking students to England but was looking for a
more inexpensive place where more undergraduates could afford to go. They decided to apply to take students on a two week summer program to Jamaica for undergraduate credit.

**Phase 2:** Contacts were made with a Jamaican-American teacher who had previously worked with the Elementary Professor. She contacted her sister who was working in Jamaica.

**Phase 3:** After many emails and phone calls and letters, the first program was developed and the recruitment phase begun. Eleven students attended that first program in 2002. A professor of Social Work was recruited for the following year and 21 students were recruited. Three more groups were recruited and implemented from 2004-2007.

**Phase 4:** Student outcomes and feedback were that the experiences were life changing and students felt a part of the global world. One student volunteered to teach in Jamaica for a year as a result of her experience. Another student raised money at her work in a bar so that the first student could have money to live on while in Jamaica. The school in Jamaica provided room and board. Then in 2007, a new phase 1 and 2 were started as the 3 professors recruited another professor of Bilingual Education and wrote a grant application for a Fulbright Group Study Abroad grant to take 10 teachers to Jamaica for a month in the summer of 2008 and continue outreach and dissemination for the school year 2008-2009. They were awarded the grant based on the contacts and information they had obtained over the years from 2002-2008 and previous experiences and interest in the culture. Phase 3 was recruitment of 10 teachers for the Fulbright group study abroad grant and setting up the month long program. Phase 4, teacher outcomes were the same: teachers felt that the experience was a life changing event, that they were now citizens of the world, and that they wanted to explore other, new multicultural and international experiences.

**Student Presentations at International Conferences**

**Phase 1:** The key person for this initiative was a professor of Early Childhood Education who presented papers at various international conferences, so in the first phase, students who had attended summer sessions to Jamaica, came to her with the request to present at conferences. In the development phase 2, it was discovered that NEIU had scholarships available to students who were accepted to present papers at either state or international conferences. **Phase 3 recruitment and implementation:** the students recruited themselves for the first conference in Verona, Italy (3 graduate students who had attended the Jamaica two week study program). These students presented a poster about their experiences on the Jamaica Study Tour. **Phase 4, feedback and evaluation:** The three students were so enthusiastic about their experiences in Italy and the professional development of presenting at an International Conference that they suggested that this opportunity should be opened up to students in her undergraduate classes and graduate classes. So continuing this process, the professor asked for volunteers to present at international conferences in her classes. In 2008, an undergraduate student presented in Rome, Italy at the World Forum on Education and Culture. In 2009 the professor and a graduate student presented this paper in Rome, Italy at the World Forum of Education and Culture. The first student did not have previous international experience but was interested in the opportunity. The second student had previously taught English as a 2nd Language to students in Korea. Because of that first international exposure, she changed her career path to teaching English Language Learners. When the opportunity came up to explore another culture and present at an international conference, she accepted the challenge. She shared her experiences as an ELL (English Language Learner) teacher for Preschool and Kindergarten in Skokie, IL (a suburb of Chicago, Illinois, USA) with the conference attendees at the World Forum of Education and Culture. Her public school district is rich in cultural diversity with thirty different home languages spoken in the Kindergarten and Preschool program. Because the variety of student languages is so great at her school instruction for ELLs is taught only in English. If a school
in Illinois should have 20 or more students in one grade who speak a common language only then does the State law require that the school district must hire a bilingual teacher for that group.

Her feedback about presenting at an international conference was that by attending this conference, she was able to participate in the educational discourse of teaching today with other passionate and dedicated professionals. She also was able to hear voices from around the world as to what the important objectives are in ELL instruction today. As an ELL teacher, this conference provided great opportunities for growth and awareness.

**Bilingual Approval Program**

Students who have international experiences, are more likely to choose new international experiences. The co-author of this paper, who had taught ELL students in South Korea before going back to school at Northeastern Illinois University to get her ELL approval/certificate, was looking for international experiences rather than needing to be persuaded to participate in an international experience.

This last initiative is being developed (Phase 1 and 2) because of a change in the certification requiring early childhood students who are getting the early childhood certificate to also take courses for a bilingual approval. This lead to the co-authors of this paper working together to develop schools for field sites for NEIU /ECED students to do their practicums for the bilingual approval. The co-author’s school in Skokie is an excellent choice for a practicum site. The co-author will also be a wonderful mentor for preservice clinical and student teachers, because, as an ELL teacher, she strives to ensure her students keep pace with the other students in the school who only speak English. As part of the mentoring process of collaborating with a university, she also hopes to inspire other classroom teachers to adopt best practices of instruction such as increased visual supports and more opportunities to practice oral language in the classroom with peers. Some of her other recommendations are as follows: Subject area teachers need to be more aware of the language demands of their content. All teachers need to be language teachers. If classroom teachers and ELL teachers could collaborate more often to integrate language and content comprehension all students would benefit. Administrators need to provide teachers more planning time to share their expertise with each other. As part of the new collaborative initiative with Northeastern Illinois University, we hope to develop these new experiences and skills.

**Conclusion**

In summary, all of these initiatives build on previous initiatives or previous experiences. In all the variety of experiences, students gain an understanding of other viewpoints, other cultures. Having a wide variety of opportunities available, makes it possible for students to start at their own level and build on that. Maybe their first experience is in a school with children and families from another culture. Maybe after that they enroll in a two-week summer study abroad program. Maybe they next present at an international conference or do their student teaching in South Korea. In all of these experiences, they make friends and have personal experiences with people from other places. They can never look at the news the same after those experiences. For example, after his experience in Jamaica for the Fulbright project, the Bilingual professor said that in the Olympics, he found himself cheering for the Jamaican runner as if he was from his own country!

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GEMELLAGGIO: sister school relationship between Hunter School of Performing Arts, Newcastle, Australia and Istituto Comprensivo Don Aldo Mei, Scuola Secondaria San Lorenzo in Treponzio, Italia

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Abstract

The purpose of this presentation is to present a work in progress which involves a sister school relationship between two secondary schools, one outside Lucca, Italy, the other in Newcastle, Australia. Since 2005 the two schools have been involved in sharing languages and cultures. A group of Year 8 Australian students began an email-pal correspondence with a group of students from the Prima Media in Italy. In the beginning the students shared basic information in the form of presentations of self, family, friends and leisure activities. As the relationships progressed the school in Australia planned a trip to Italy in 2007 with an important 5-day stay with the email pals in Capannori, just outside Lucca. The students were to be hosted by the families of their email-friends and finally see the school and 'put a face to a name'. The process of this gemellaggio demonstrates how technology positively contributes to education in a global world. The students involved have become fast friends and have shared worksheets, peer assessment and webquests. As the first students in the program have moved on to senior high school, new students have established contact. This paper presents the positive aspects of creating a sister school relationship on two sides of the globe and the difficulties in communicating across two hemispheres.

What is a gemellaggio?

The concept of a gemellaggio in English is referred to as Twin towns or Sister cities and the reasons for linking are varied; organisations form relationships to share ideas and projects; governments come together to discuss important issues, such as the environment or economics; and, schools create bonds between teachers and students, students and students, families and families, to bring their languages and their cultures together and to forge lifelong experiences. Lia Bartolomei and Pamela Burns established a gemellaggio in 2005 for their students - in Italy studying English and in Australia studying Italian. The aims of the relationship were to establish friendships between the students, to practise the language by using authentic vocabulary used by teenagers and to broaden the students' viewpoint on what is culture. Being twinned with a foreign school also encourages cross-cultural exchanges of knowledge, fosters students' intercultural awareness, and improves their communication skills.

The Queensland Independent Education Union presents the concept of Twinning between Australia and East Timor, where there is a specific need for curriculum support and resources. This type of twinning involves funding and sponsoring teachers to come to Australia, or teachers from Australia to East Timor.
Another type of twinning is that between universities, to enhance the courses of both the institutions. In these cases students would travel from one country to the other to undertake study that would provide credits in the home university course.

The Beijing Olympics established twinning between schools in China and Australia which followed the Olympic values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect. Schools were encouraged to exchange cultural and social backgrounds.

**Who we are**

In Europe eTwinning has been established as part of the EU programme for schools and eTwinning is where schools are paired with another school elsewhere in Europe. The two schools communicate using the internet, for example, by email or using video conferencing and projects can be established for any time period, from weeks or months to a permanent relationship between the schools. In Australia, however, there is no set programme such as eTwinning and it is up to the individual teachers to initiate contact with possible sister schools.

The two teachers in this ongoing project between Italy and Australia first met on a website called www.teaching.com, which boasted “a place for young people, teachers and students to locate and correspond with other youth and students around the world”. The site proved to be extremely professional and safe. In 2005 the teachers approached each other through the site and communication was established after they were sure they wanted to begin a keypal relationship for their students. Some of the questions that the two teachers had been asking themselves were; are we so different? or, are we very similar? and, how similar is the language of young students across two hemispheres? The keypal relationship was initially set-up for students in the Prima Media in Italy and in Year 7 (secondary school) in Australia. These students were 11-12 years old.

Two of the first emails from Australian students, including as much Italian as they could in the early stage of their language study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cara Giulia</td>
<td>Mi chiamo Brigette. Ho dodici anni. I am in Year 7 at the School of Performing Arts. I would love to be in correspondence with you! Mi piacciono la musica e l’equitazione. I also enjoy spending time with friends. Arrivederci! Brigette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ciao Martina</td>
<td>My name is Carlotta and I am in Year 7. Ho dodici anni and I like music and going to the cinemas. Hope to see you soon. Carlotta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2005 the internet was relatively new for students in government schools and the difficulties were many. Firstly, parental permission had to be obtained in order for the students to share personal information and to send photographs of themselves and their families. The issues of duty of care for the teachers and accountability were always paramount. Also, the availability of computer rooms was always a problem. The classes in
junior high school are always large (approximately 25-30 students) and often the classes were only timetabled in a computer room once every two weeks. Many students did not have internet, or indeed computer access at home, so their only opportunity to contact their new friends was in the school situation. The internet was also unreliable and in some cases it still is. Another problem was that of the logistics of the two schools. There was the issue of time differences, so the thought of setting up a connected classroom or conference classroom was impossible. Also, the school year is quite different, with Italy having a long break in July/August and Australia having its long summer break in December/January. In some cases the students who did not stay in contact during the long breaks because of no computer/internet access actually lost touch completely.

As the project continued over three years, the Italian students then moved from the Terza Media (third year of secondary school) to a liceo high school, usually in a different campus setting. These students no longer had the direct support of their teacher (Lia Bartolomei) and subsequently many of these did not maintain contact with their keypals from first year in secondary school. However, in 2010 six of our original keypal students have remained in contact and they are talking of meeting up again in the future.

Progress

In January 2006 a group of students from HSPA travelled to Italy and although the keypal relationship with Aldo Mei was still new and fresh it was suggested that they visit for a day. The group from Australia was not the keypal students, rather a group of older art and language students. However, they met with the students in Italy and in the words of Lia Bartolomei “it was love at first sight”. The Australians took photographs and envelopes containing sweets and tickets and anything else that the keypal students wanted their new friends to have and they brought back similar items from the Italian students.

Poster created by the students in Italy.

Lia

In one morning my students and Enza’s (from Australia) grew incredibly close. Some students also reached Enza’s group on their own means for the afternoon visit to town. It was a really positive experience that convinced my school to get further up in the twinning.
The positive experience from that visit encouraged HSPA to plan a trip for 2007 for the keypals to finally meet two years after beginning their relationship. Plans were made for families from Aldo Mei students to host the HSPA students for 5 days. The school in Italy had support from the Regional Principal and the families of the students were approached to host the Australians. In some cases families offered to host the Australians even though their children did not have keypals with them. It was also necessary to do fund-raising and approach local entities for sponsorship and support. In the meantime, in Australia, the trip to Italy was being planned with numbers being finalised (22 students, two teachers), payments being made and relief to be organised for the teachers. Although the trip was planned for the school holiday period of two weeks in September/October, there were two days prior and one day after where teacher relief had to be arranged (casual teachers).

This poster was made by the students of Aldo Mei in early 2007.

The Australian group arrived in Italy at the end of September and spent eight days travelling and sight-seeing with the prospect of visiting Lucca and the students of Aldo Mei always of major importance. The Australians travelled by coach and arrived at the Aldo Mei school in the morning to a tumultuous welcome by all, students and staff. The Australians spent five days with the families and students and staff of Aldo Mei. They were welcomed at the school and in the community and the experience proved to be positive and encouraging for all concerned.

At the Town Hall and interviewed by the local media. All students wear a T-shirt with the emblem of the camellia flower, the emblem of the Aldo Mei school.
The whole school had been involved, with the art faculty guiding the students as they designed and put together a banner; the music faculty arranged for a concert which included performances by the Australians; the home economics faculty assisted the families to put on a multicultural evening where the many nationalities within the school brought in traditional food which was a culinary experience for all.

Program for the concert which took place at the Aldo Mei school. Note: the national anthems of both countries were sung by tutti (all).

A cultural difference which intrigued the students is that of the school uniform (Australia on the left, Italy on the right).

The Italian school, Aldo Mei, then began making plans for a trip to Australia, however, this did not proceed for various reasons. Firstly, in within the region there are many schools, so it is difficult for one school in particular to justify assistance with funding. Also, these young students had never travelled much more than one or two days on an excursion so the prospect of a 24-hour plane trip and being away for two weeks was extremely daunting for
some families. Although the distance is the same for the Australians, for them it is quite usual to travel 5-6 hours in a plane and still be flying over Australia, so long distances and not an issue.

Today

During 2008 the students from the two schools continued to correspond and share their experiences and their cultures. The students sent each other work samples for comments and this practice was endorsed and encouraged in both schools.

In February 2006 Lia Bartolomei wrote:

I think you are just about to receive a pack of letters from students of 14 years old by traditional mail. Most of them are addressed to Britney, because it was the name they remembered best but consider them addressed to the girls’ group as a whole, really. Hope you can find a suitable match in them for your older student. The corresponding class are making a written research (a verrrrrrrry simple note) on Australia, then we will try to send it to you and your students can elect the winning work. What do you think of it? I hope I can manage to send files with pictures on. The other thing I am at is the opening to each of the students of a new account and have a new e-mail (after parents’ permission ughf!) that operation will take me some time though, (but here we are already at a half of the school year). Students are receiving their written quadrimestrale report (pagella) this afternoon. It would be kind of your students to ask what marks were like in their upcoming messages as that would be also very nice. Longing to receive more messages from your students. You will hear from me soon. thank you again for the cooperation, I know it's a good deal of extra unpaid work for us, but it's one of the most enjoyable moments of our teaching, isn't it? a presto lia

The making of a gemellaggio relationship between a school in Australia and one in Italy has been a challenging and rewarding experience for both the teachers and the students involved. Distance has been a major problem, as has the time difference and the differences

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A sample poem from a student at Aldo Mei after studying Shakespeare.

inglese
every friend
is a world
within us,
a world never born
until his arrival, (sic)
it is only through
this meeting
that a new world is born.

Comments from Australia.

I felt that the poem was very artistic and unique. I loved it!

You only had one spelling mistake but overall it was well done.

[Image of a sample poem in Italian]

inglese
every friend
is a world
within us,
a world never born
until his arrival, (sic)
it is only through
this meeting
that a new world is born.

Elena Daccio

[Image of a handwritten note from a student]
in dates, semesters, terms in the scholastic year. In all, the participants have enjoyed, and are
still enjoying, communicating, sharing their languages and cultures and planning possible
meetings for the future.

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Training all teachers to accommodate the needs of English language learners (ELLs) in schools (Training All Teachers Project: TATP)

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Abstract

Addressing the cognitive, linguistic and educational needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) has become a challenge to classroom teachers. To prepare pre-service and in-service teachers to work effectively with these students, ELLs issues should be addressed on teacher preparation programs. This paper explores the design, implementation and learning outcomes of a project geared to the infusion of ELLs in the curriculum of faculty members working with pre-service and in-service teachers in teacher preparation programs at a Midwest state institution.

Literature review

Today, approximately 19.5% of the U.S. population speaks languages other than English; among others, Spanish, French, Chinese, German, Polish and Arabic. From this group, nearly 65% of bilingual people living in the United States speak Spanish as their first language (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). The U.S. public school population reflects this growth and it is estimated that approximately 19% of school-aged children (ages 5-17) speak another language other than English, and there are indications that this number will to continue to increase (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005, 2006). By 2030, the Federal Government expects this number to increase up to a 40% (U.S. Department of Education, 2003).

Statistical data indicate that 67% the children designated as English Language Learners can be found primarily in the states of California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois. Nonetheless, states as Alabama, Kentucky, Indiana, North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina and Nebraska have experienced a 300% percent of higher growth in a ten-year period from 1995-2005 (Tomas Sanabria Institute, 2005). Today, some 1.4 million immigrants live in the Chicago Region-counties of Cook, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will- and they represent about 18 percent of all person. In 2006, Latinos accounted for 20 percent of the region’s population, making them the largest ethnic group in metropolitan Chicago. With the number of ELLs predicted to double by the year 2050, it is more than likely that every teacher will have ELLs in his/her classroom at some time. Facts such as these have prompted academic accrediting and state education agencies to require training in the many and complex issues related to linguistic-minority students (Samway & McKeon, 1999). By many accounts, however, the more complex and critical aspects of working with ELLs have merely received lip service and are often subsumed under the umbrella of local efforts at "multiculturalism" (Cummins, 2001). There is a need to provide appropriate, meaningful, and effective schooling so that ELLs can be successful.

Infusion of ELLs issues into the teacher preparation curriculum

The Training All Teachers to Help ELLs Succeed in School’s project was designed as a comprehensive program drawing on research in professional development, bilingual
education, English as a Second Language (ESL), teacher education, as well as the University’s Teacher Education program experience in professional development programs for program faculty of pre-service and in-service teachers. Both the pre-service and in-service components of this project were designed so that they are consistent with a substantive body of research which shows that in order for bilingual students to become academically successful: (1) the language and culture of the students must be incorporated into the school program; (2) the ability to draw parents of bilingual learners into classroom-related activities and to tap into the “funds of knowledge” which parents and community members can contribute to enhancing the instruction of ELLs; (3) students must have opportunities to be creators of their own knowledge through problem-solving and inquiry in their native language as well as their second language; (4) an understanding of how pupils use their knowledge to make sense of what is going on in the classroom; (5) opportunities need to be provided for students to have genuine dialogue and interaction with their teachers and fellow students; (5) learning must be embedded in cultural contexts and demanding enough to intellectually challenge students; and (6) students should have every opportunity to demonstrate their cognitive and linguistic abilities through an on-going performance-based assessment (Milk, Mercado & Sapiens, 1992; Nieto, 2008; O’Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; Hurley & Tinajero, 2001).

Much recent research and the College of Education’s years of experience in working with schools has demonstrated that effective professional development must address how a culture of inquiry can be developed in the context of school work sites (Banks, 2003; Dias-Rico & Weed, 2002; Gay, 2000; Goldstein, 2003; Gollnick & Chinn, 2002; Kramsch, 1993). It is within such a culture of inquiry that teachers and students ask critical questions about their work, non-judgmentally explore its meaning, and reflect with colleagues on how they can jointly solve instructional problems. The TATP was a professional development program that goes beyond offering workshops and in-service sessions to faculty members from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education. It offered a comprehensive approach to professional development which fosters a culture of inquiry through activities such as formal and informal conversation among educators within and across schools, team building with university professors and opportunities to meet and reflect on bilingual educational and ESL practices. Through such a process of joint reflection and inquiry, new institutional roles will be created and modified as public schools and universities collaborate to redesign curriculum and assessment in the field of bilingual education.

TATP goals and objectives

The TATP aims are:

**Goal 1:** Infusing English Language Learners Issues through Professional Educator Curricular

1.1 Providing a series of seminar sessions to Northeastern Illinois University faculty to infuse curricular and pedagogical changes in their pre-service and in-service courses.

1.2 Making curricular and pedagogical changes in teacher education course at Northeastern Illinois University.

**Goal 2:** Implementing infusion strategies and pilot them in the classroom.

2.1 Faculty members from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Teacher Education who teach courses in the pre-service and in-service teacher education program would infuse ELLs issues in their teaching.

2.2 Faculty members from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Teacher Education
Goal 3: Assessing the infusion of ELLs issues in the teacher education courses by pre-service and in-service teachers at the end of the school semester.

3.1 Summative evaluation by pre-service and in-service teachers of the effectiveness of the infusion of curricular and pedagogical innovations and their applications in teaching English Language Learners.

TATP Activities: The following activities were undertaken to meet Goals 1, 2 and 3.
1. Develop at least five seminars for faculty members from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education.
2. Engage at least 30 faculty members at Northeastern Illinois University to infuse curricular and pedagogical changes in their pre-service and in-service course.
3. Introduce curricular and pedagogical changes on at least 20 courses in the teacher education program.
4. Conduct a student survey to assess the effectiveness of this project.

TATP participants
Faculty members from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education were invited to sign-in as participants for the six seminars on topics/themes related to language acquisition/learning; culture; special education and the ELLs; curriculum bias; and myths and realities of ELLs. A total of 24 tenured, tenure-track and instructors participated on the five seminars representing the following programs: Early Childhood (2), Elementary Education (11), Special Education (1), Educational Leadership and Development (5), Reading (1), Linguistic (4).

TATP implementation and participants commitment
A total of 24 tenured, tenure track and instructors from the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education attended five seminars during the months of November and December 2007 on issues related to ELLs. External consultants and faculty members from the College of Education addressed the following issues related to ELLs:

a. Language acquisition: the process of first language (L1) and second language (L2); including best instructional practices and accommodations;
b. Special Education and ELLs: issues of overrepresentation and under-representation of English language learners in special education programs;
c. Myths and realities about ELLs;
d. Assessment: effective assessment tools and practices for ELLs; avoiding bias in assessment;
e. Multicultural issues: ethnicity, race, gender, language and culture; and
f. Faculty participants were expected to attend the five seminars; to infuse relevant ELL topics in their teaching for spring 2008; provide the faculty coordinator of the TATP a copy of the spring 2008 syllabus that reflects the infusion of ELLs topics and provide class time for students assess the ELL infusion in their course.

TATP evaluation
At the end of spring semester 2008, students from 22 courses from participating faculty were asked to complete a two-part student survey. Part I of the survey addressed questions of issues related to ELLs and Part II had four open-ended questions related to issues when teaching ELLs in bilingual or general classroom settings. Following are responses from
students to the open-ended questions. I arranged the responses to each question in a cluster of themes related to ELLs.

What are some of the strategies in which a teacher can present content to facilitate ELLs understanding and comprehension? In teaching language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies, give an example of how you might teach a particular topic to ELLs?

a) using a lot of examples and manipulative
b) use of native language for instruction; work in groups
c) use a lot of visuals to help students understand the concepts and stress the vocabulary terms. Also try to accommodate and help find words in their native language to help them translate when a difficulty occurs.
d) Cover any needed vocabulary for better understanding of the content.
e) Have more hands on activities on the subject.
f) Have key words in their native language with English definitions, so that students can learn between languages.
g) Very hands on and visual; little text and/or individual work.
h) Have books in different languages, books that represent diversity, classroom signs written on various languages.

What are some of the effective strategies that can be used with ELLs to assist them in learning the language and encourage their literacy development? The following students’ answers were clustered under the following themes:

**Vocabulary Development**

a) Using formal and informal vocabulary > doing daily vocabulary
b) Put important terms on the board > label things in their language as well as English > writing out words with tangible examples
c) Give students a word wall that can be looked up for the definition
d) English words can be included with images to better understand the meaning and the concept of the word.
e) Repeating information in comprehensive vocabulary
f) Reinforcing language by weekly vocabulary lessons which are utilized each day across different domains

**Visual Representations**

a) visual aid (picture of image and words) > cards with lost of pictures and words
b) used pictures that represent words and concepts
c) using both literature and pictures to put the vocabulary and picture together
d) use many visual aids and hands on activities.

**Collaborative Work**

a) pair ELLs with stronger readers; allow ELLs who speak same first language to work together.
b) Most students learn through interaction with others, so I would use a lot of group discussions.

**Cultural Sensitivity**

In addition to comprehending the English language; it is essential for a teacher to also become familiar with the student’s first language (L1) and the culture. If the teacher is a familiar with all these factors of the ELLs, then perhaps they would have a better chance of successfully assisting an ELL to learn the target language (L2) and enhance their literacy development.

**Teacher-Student Relationships**

a) building trust
b) put them in situations that they will excel in
c) create a warm classroom environment encouraging students to take risks.
Home-School Relationships
a) working with the family, learning about their culture/background
b) working with the child and the family so that you can see where the child is at in their language learning process.

How could a teacher encourage the participation of ELLs and facilitate interaction between them and other members of the class? Students responses were clustered under the following themes:

Promote Student Engagement
a) do small group work activities, helping set up students for success at all levels
b) grouping and making relevant ELLs experiences in class discussion
c) pair students with students that can work in a productive manner
d) pair them with a buddy that can help them
e) collaborative working groups
f) group work where the ELL students have strong abilities
g) make partners with English learners and other students so that they can accomplish the same task
h) working in groups frequently; group/partner work
i) setting up students in groups with other students that speak their native language; using simple vocabulary

Group Interactions
a) encourage students participation and facilitate interaction by setting up a comfortable and open classroom atmosphere; to connect the content and lesson to the ELL’s culture
b) encourage the ELLs to participate in smaller group discussion and then gradually build up their interaction/participation in front of the whole class
c) the whole classroom would need to respect everyone’s knowledge of the English language
d) making a welcoming environment for the student to feel he/she can speak up without being ridiculed or feeling embarrassed, where students can speak freely without being judged (making fun of)
e) making ELL children and native English-speakers feel comfortable with each other
f) games and activities that include knowing all children names

What are some of the strategies in which a teacher can present content to facilitate ELLs understanding and comprehension?

a) use of visual aids, clear examples
b) repeat the concept several times and speak slowly to make sure the ELL students comprehend the concept
c) use repetition; pair the words with the objects so the child understands what is being discussed; use pictures and words together
d) visual, constant checking for understanding, repeat instructions
e) give general context to each subject studied; require concrete proof of comprehension
f) give enough time to accomplish tasks; have students keep a word bank of words they have trouble with
g) adapt some form of sheltered instruction to help present content more clearly; applying visuals, pictures, graphs, real-life objects and situations
h) associate the content with visuals in order for students to really understand
i) let the students do a report or presentation on their home country and/or their culture
j) use stories, books, posters on the wall, pictures, movies, books on tape.

In teaching language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies, give an example of how you might teach a particular topic to ELLs?

a) using a lot of examples and manipulative
b) use of native language for instruction; work in groups
c) use a lot of visuals to help students understand the concepts and stress the vocabulary terms. Also, try to accommodate and help find words in their native language to help them translate when a difficulty occurs.
d) Cover any needed vocabulary for better understanding of the content.
e) Have more hands on activities on the subject.
f) Have key words in their native language with English definitions, so that students can learn between languages.
g) Very hands on and visual; little text and/or individual work.
h) Have books in different languages, books that represent diversity, classroom signs written on various languages.

Recommendations

Taking into consideration the results of the survey and the overall experience with faculty participants of the TAPT, I consider vital to continue developing more program initiatives. Moreover, future initiative should continue encouraging training programs for pre-service and in-service teachers for the engagement of faculty across disciplines to address ELLs issues in their courses. This will facilitate collaborative efforts among and between faculty across programs and colleges to create, a teaching culture on multicultural education and the infusion of ELLs issues in the teaching of pre-service and in-service teachers will become part of course syllabi. Finally, these efforts might encourage state legislatures the requirement of a multicultural course for teaching entitlement 0-12 (from early childhood to secondary education).

References


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Assessment of intercultural competency development of employees of multinational corporations through company-sponsored programs and business schools

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Abstract

Intercultural competencies play an increasingly important role in the business world of the 21st century. Business schools and companies can take steps to develop a workforce that possesses those competencies. The study analyses data collected from 60 companies and 40 MBA programs in the United States and Europe about the prevalence of company-sponsored programs and business school curricula that emphasise intercultural competency development.

Introduction

Business success is something that all companies aspire to achieve. The mix of ingredients leading to business success is as diverse as the pool of companies operating around the world. Each successful company has its own recipe inscribed in its corporate strategy. However, several generalizations can be made. A successful company has industry-specific know-how that it guards well against competitors. It also usually has well managed finances. It has a pool of experts at its disposal who are very good at what they do. Another success factor is the extent to which the so-called “soft-skills” are valued by the company. The human resource departments of corporations have long realized that soft skills are important, and their hiring decisions have been structured accordingly. In fact, this is the reason why a job interview can make a job deal or break it.

As we live in a world that is greatly influenced by an ongoing and seemingly endless process of globalization, soft skills in a globalized setting logically play an increasingly important role. Employees of multinational corporations are engaged in business dealings with persons who come from different cultural backgrounds, which is a situation that creates a wide range of possibilities to commit cultural faux-pas.

For example, some cultures value a collective approach while others favour individualism. Specifically, this could mean that after-work social events are considered the norm in some cultures, such as the Japanese culture, or uncommon in others, such as the Germany work culture. Some cultures have a rather strict understanding of time, while others view it as a broader concept. For example, an American host for a business meeting might grow upset if the guest does not show up on time or within a five-minute grace period. At the same time, a South American business partner might consider meticulous punctuality to be rude.

The list of examples could fill an entire book but is not the subject of this paper. Rather, the paper is meant to explore how companies and business schools prepare people for the intercultural encounters in the business setting. The data collection and analysis is going to be focused on the availability of intercultural training seminars and international assignments that are part of management trainee programs. The analysis of business schools’ role is focused on international exchanges that are part of the regular curriculum. Throughout the
data analysis, there is a comparative element to the study in that European and American approaches are compared and contrasted. Once the research results have been presented, the paper will address limitation inherent in the research as well as opportunities for further research that can be based on the present study.

Company-sponsored programs

Human resource departments of internationally operating companies play an important role in preparing their companies’ workforces for the intercultural encounter. This section of the paper first provides information about the methodology of our study, presents and interprets the results, and addresses some limitations inherent in the research methodologies chosen.

Methodology (company-sponsored programs)

The first step in the data collection was a round of ten qualitative personal interviews with human resource employees of multinational companies to acquire a sense of what companies can typically do in terms of developing an interculturally competent workforce. According to the experts interviewed, some of the most effective methods are international assignments as part of managerial trainee programs and seminars on intercultural communication. Secondary research of relevant academic literature has also shown that those two methods are prominent examples of effective competency development. For example, a study points out that “models in the social psychological literature view cross-cultural exposure as a learning experience” (Janssens, 1995, p. 158). This would imply that spending an extended time period abroad working in a different cultural setting can provide this learning experience. Given the findings from secondary literature and the expert evaluation, the data collection for this paper has been limited to data about these two methods of competency development.

In order to ensure the comparability of the dataset, the criterion for the assessment of the prevalence of international components in trainee programs is whether an international assignment is mandatory or most strongly encouraged (i.e. practically mandatory for trainees aspiring to climb the corporate latter at the company), not merely optional.

The comparability of the dataset about intercultural training seminars is ascertained by establishing the criterion that such training is readily available. This means that for a company to acquire a positive rating (i.e. makes the training readily available), it must make the processes of participating in those seminars feasible (e.g. seminar time is counted towards regular work time or overtime, coverage of travel expenses, etc.).

Data has been collected from a total of 60 internationally operating corporations. In order to allow for the comparative element of the study, the set contains data from 30 companies based in the United States of America and 30 companies based in member states of the European Union. The data has been collected from official company websites or personal interviews with human resource staff members.

The American companies examined were randomly selected from a list of Dow Jones and S&P companies that have substantial international operations. The European counterparts were randomly selected from the S&P Europe 350 Index and national European stock indices (e.g. DAX, IBEX, etc.). The extent of the international operations of the subject companies has been assessed by an examination of the percentages of employees whose nationality is different from that of the company seat, the percentage of international revenues, and the number of international business holdings. No numerical cut-offs have been used, but rather a holistic and reasonable assessment of the three criteria named above.
The data about European companies has been analysed separately from the data about American companies to calculate the percentage of companies in each geographical group that have an international component in management trainee programs and make intercultural training seminars available for employees.

The calculated percentages were analysed statistically to calculate the statistical error and the actual difference of the percentages. Using those statistical values, it has been determined whether the difference is statistically significant or not significant.

**Results (company-sponsored programs)**

The analysis of the data about international components in trainee programs has shown that 30 percent of the American companies analysed have a mandatory international component in managerial trainee programs. At the same time, the analysis showed that 50 percent of the European companies represented in the dataset have such an international component in their managerial trainee programs.

The difference of the percentages is 20 percentage points. The comparative error is 24.3, which means that a difference of up to 24.3 percentage points could be due to statistical error. Consequently, the difference of 20 percentage points is not statistically significant.

The other segment of the analysis has shown that 50 percent of American companies make intercultural training seminars readily available for their employees. Correspondingly, the analysis has shown that 60 percent of the European companies included in the study make such intercultural training readily available for the employees.

The difference of the percentages is 10 percentage points. The comparative error is 25, which means that a difference of up to 25 percentage points could be due to statistical error. Consequently, the difference of 10 percentage points is not statistically significant.

As shown by the foregoing analysis, some companies in the sample have incorporated intercultural competency development in their human resource development operations. The availability of training seminars seems to be slightly more widespread than mandatory international assignments as part of management trainee programs. While the percentages within the sample differ slightly geographically, there is no statistical significance which establishes that intercultural competency development in terms of either mandatory components in trainee programs or training seminars are more widespread in Europe or the United States.

**Business school curricula**

Complementing company-sponsored programs, the curricula of business schools can be another effective method to prepare future corporate employees for the intercultural interaction. Similarly to the foregoing analysis of company-sponsored programs, this section presents the results of our data collection about international components in business school curricula, analyses those datasets, and presents the results.

**Methodology (business school curricula)**

The research into the characteristic of various business schools was preceded by qualitative interviews with the admissions staff of eight business schools in the United States and the European Union. As a result of the interviews, it has been determined that the focus of the research question in this section should be on whether international student exchanges are common elements of the education received by business students.

The criterion for the assessment of the prevalence of international exchange programs in business school curricula is whether an international exchange is mandatory or common at the university whose data is analysed, not only offered to students as an option that few students take advantage of. For the study, international exchanges are classified as “common”
if at least 75 percent of the students who are graduating from the business school have had an international experience in the form of a semester or year abroad, an international internship, or an extensive international study tour for which they have received credit points.

Data has been collected from a total of 40 MBA programs. In order to allow for the comparative element of the study, the set contains data from 20 MBA programs based in the United States of America and 20 MBA programs based in member states of the European Union. The data has been collected from official university websites or personal interviews with admission office staff members.

The data about European MBA programs has been analysed separately from the data of their American counterparts to calculate the percentage of programs in each geographical group that have an international exchange component as defined in the preceding paragraphs.

The calculated percentages were analysed statistically to calculate the statistical error and the actual difference of the percentages. Using those statistical values, it has been determined whether the difference is statistically significant or not significant.

**Results (business school curricula)**

The analysis of the data about international exchange components in MBA program curricula has shown that 20 percent of the American programs have an international exchange component as defined for the purposes of this study. At the same time, the analysis showed that 50 percent of the European MBA programs that were examined have such an international component in their curricula.

The difference of the percentages is 30 percentage points. The comparative error is 28.1, which means that a difference of up to 28.1 percentage points could be due to statistical error. Consequently, the difference of 30 percentage points is statistically significant.

As shown by the foregoing analysis, international components are noticeably more widespread at MBA programs in the European Union. The difference is not necessarily attributable to a lack of understanding for the need to possess intercultural competencies on the side of American business school leaders. In fact, the interviews with admissions staff members at American MBA programs have revealed an awareness of the importance of intercultural skills. It is more reasonable to attribute the difference of 30 percentage points to the actual geopolitical circumstances of the European Union and the structures of the European economy.

The European Union consists of 27 member states, with each state having its own cultural identity. Some member states consist of more than one cultural unit (e.g. Spain with its Castilian, Catalanian, and Basque cultures). There are 23 official and working languages in the European Union, each being the linguistic expression of individual cultures (European Commission – Education, Culture, Multilingualism, and Youth, 2009). This intercultural hotspot takes place at a relatively small geographical area that is economically intertwined. And business school curricula simply cannot ignore this fact.

Although the United States is culturally diverse (maybe even as diverse as the European Union due to active immigration), this cultural diversity is not expressed as explicitly in everyday business or workplace situations. Conversations among business partners are usually carried out in English, and business etiquette is following rather uniform norms across the United States. Simply put, intercultural competencies seem to be less important on the surface, unless the business partner is actually based in a different country.

**Limitations of research**

There are limitations inherent in the research findings of this study in both of its components of company-sponsored competency development and business school curricula. The first challenge was to devise a methodology that would allow a statistical analysis and
comparison of programs in Europe and the United States. The key to such an objective analysis is the availability of quantitative data on the characteristics of the programs (e.g. percentages of programs that have an international exchange component). Such data is not readily available because some observations cannot be quantified without a degree of subjectivity. The following discourse will illuminate this circumstance.

During the data collection phase, raw data has been collected through interviews and the browsing of relevant websites. However, the data had to be arranged by criteria which would provide for as much objectivity as possible. In other words, the programs had to be classified into groups (e.g. groups that have an international exchange program and groups that do not). Specifically, this has been accomplished by defining criteria under which the research subject fulfils the criteria for a particular classification. In some cases, the nature of the raw data has allowed for methods to perform the classification objectively (e.g. percentage of MBA programs that have an international exchange component). In other cases, this task has been more challenging. For example, the classification of companies that make intercultural training seminars readily available for their workforce required some degree of subjective judgement. Of course, one could measure whether company policy stipulates that seminar participants receive overtime pay for the time spent on the seminar. But it is rather difficult to objectively determine whether the corporate culture as a whole supports the enrolment in the seminars. Similarly, it is also impracticable to measure whether individual managers truly encourage their associates to seize the training opportunities offered by the company.

Future research

Future research on the topic should certainly encompass an expansion of the sample size to allow for better statistical analysis. The collection of data on business schools might also be expanded to include undergraduate programs in business, as opposed to the study’s exclusive focus on MBA programs. The study has provided insights into the extent of competency development by companies and business schools. It would now be interesting to establish a link between those two research subjects by performing a study to assess how satisfied managers are with the business schools’ role in developing interculturally competent university graduates. In fact such preparation is likely to impact the success of the first international job assignment. A study from 1993 on international internships has shown that pre-departure preparation is essential to the success of the assignment (Gonzales, 1993). Although the paper studied internship settings, the results are also applicable to full-time assignments.

Conclusion

The study has provided a snapshot of the landscape of intercultural competency development in the United States and Europe. Little differences between the United States and Europe have been detected in the realm of company-sponsored intercultural competency development programs. The transatlantic disparity was more pronounced when the study analysed the prevalence of international exchange components in business school curricula. European MBA programs have a greater intercultural orientation in this regard. Possible explanations for this circumstance have been given, such as the greater multicultural density in the European Union (i.e. dozens of cultural areas within the relatively small European continent and the corresponding interconnectedness of national economies of member states of the European Union).

Companies in Europe and the United States understand the stakes of acquiring and developing employees who are interculturally skilled. Given the pace at which globalization is unfolding, it is essential that companies continue to put this understanding into practice by making seminar-type training more available for employees. Even though the implementation
is more complex than for seminars, managerial trainee programs should also be structured to expand international assignment opportunities to allow for an effective on-site learning opportunity abroad.

References
Multiple intelligence and language proficiency: is linguistic intelligence psychologically real?

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Abstract
The present study was conducted to investigate the possible relationship between Multiple Intelligences (MI) introduced by Howard Gardner (1983)–both as a unitary and as a multi-component construct on the one hand, and the English proficiency of Iranian students at Payame Noor University (PNU) majoring in English on the other. To fulfill the purpose of the study, a Paper-Based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) together with an MI questionnaire were distributed to 102 students at Shahriyar PNU Campus. The results of the data analysis indicated that, with the significant level set to 0.05, there is no statistically significant relationship between language proficiency and MI in general and the types of intelligences in particular, except for the linguistic intelligence.

Introduction
Among different human undertakings, education process can be considered as one of the most significant and multi-faceted efforts. It is believed that one of the characteristics of any successful educator is the ability to understand the process of learning and the fact that learners bring many individual characteristics to their learning processes, which will have an effect on the way they learn and also on the results of those processes. Williams and Burden (1997) have considered the followings as obvious examples of individual characteristics influencing learners’ success in learning a foreign language: age, gender, personality, aptitude, cognitive styles and strategies, anxiety and preparedness to take risks, motivation, and intelligence, which is the variable studied in our investigation.

Intelligence and different schools of thought
There are two main schools of thought on the nature of intelligence. Indeed, one is based on the belief that all intelligence comes from one general factor, known as ‘g’, which is supported by such psychologists as Eysenck (1982), Galton (1870), Jensen (1993), and Spearman (1904), while the other believes in the existence of more than just one general type of intelligence, that is to say, there are different types of intelligences. This controversial view is mainly supported by Gardner (1983), Sternberg (1985), and Turnstone (1938).

General intelligence
The proponents of the traditional view believe that intelligence is a general ability found in varying degrees. It is present in all individuals, and is vital to success in school performance.

Alfred Binet was a pioneering figure in the study of intelligence, who in collaboration with Simon, realized that intelligence was measurable. They developed a questionnaire
known as the IQ test (Binet & Simon, 1916).

Multiple intelligences

This view suggests that the mind is composed of different and distinguished domains of function (Gardner, 1993). There are two recent approaches to learning which are concerned with both the development of intelligence in general, and achieving success in certain contexts such as school in particular. The first, Sternberg’s (1985, 1988) triarchic theory of intelligence, defined intelligence in terms of: (a) the internal world of the individual; (b) the external world of the individual; and (c) the experience of the individual in the world. The second approach which has been put forth by Gardner (1983) – the approach adopted in the present study – highlighted the importance of skills being used in specific cultural contexts. This theory expands intelligence beyond verbal and mathematical intelligences and maintains that all humans possess at least eight different intelligences that represent a variety of ways to learn and demonstrate understanding (Armstrong, 2000; Gardner, 1983, 1993, 1999, 2006; Lazear 1999). The eight intelligences identified are Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Visual-Spatial, Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, and Naturalist.

Considering the nonstop changes in the field of education, which has led to the formation of a variety of educational modes, an intense need for understanding the impact of each type of intelligence on success of different learners is felt more than ever. Particularly, in the open and distance system of education, in which due to the nature of the system, learners go through a learning process somehow different from conventional learners, this effect should be investigated. In addition, ways of diagnosing the more influential intelligences and thereafter enhancing them should be identified. Payame Noor University of Iran, the only university in the country solely dedicated to distance courses, is not an exception in this regard, and in the researchers’ opinion, there is a need in this university, too, for investigating the influence of multiple intelligences on achievement of the students in general and EFL students in particular.

Research questions

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Is there any relationship between the overall score of the multiple intelligence tests and the proficiency levels of EFL students at PNU?
2. Is there any relationship between the sub-components of the multiple intelligence tests and the proficiency level of EFL students at PNU?

Significance of the study

In view of the specific characteristics of distance learning and to some extent distance learners, helping the learners in gaining a higher degree of self-esteem and subsequently self-confidence seems of great value. However, the way to deal with these certain qualities is a big challenge with which educators, material developers, and also administrators are supposed to cope. In this specific educational context, to compensate for the insufficient time assigned to face to face instruction and for the limited contact between the learners themselves, greater care should be taken when developing teaching materials. One factor which can contribute to the quality of the materials is considering learner differences such as their preferred learning styles and strategies, and also their different types of intelligence. Unfortunately, to date most of the PNU materials have been designed based on the assumption that intelligence is a unitary capacity; therefore, students are not given any opportunity to improve their intelligences. One way of remedying the situation would be
identifying those intelligence components which can be more influential in achieving success by EFL learners.

By improving their understanding of the way intelligence works in education, educators can apply the findings in many ways. Material development is one such example. Normally, pedagogical materials are developed without paying enough attention to the way intelligence should be treated. Moreover, the issue of ‘mental construct’ is still a valid topic for investigation. Still, scientists and scholars in the domains of psychology and related branches are eager to know about mental constructs and faculties. For example, when dealing with language, is it to be considered a unitary construct working by itself or as a module working in collaboration with other constructs in the brain/mind?

Most importantly, by revealing the flexible and adaptable nature of different intelligences to learners, they will know that it is never too late for becoming a more intelligent person, and that there is always some room and possibility for improvement, as long as they believe in themselves and their various abilities.

Furthermore, by identifying the more influential intelligences in learning in general and in learning English language, the focus of the present study in particular, material developers would realize on the development of which type of intelligence more emphasis should be put. This would hopefully help us in the fulfillment of our obligation, as educators, in providing education for all people without discrimination and teaching in accordance with the students’ ability.

Literature review

In fact different societies have different ways of characterizing perfect models for human beings. One of the outstanding theories on how humans gain knowledge is formulated by Swiss psychologist, Jean Piaget, which has had a great influence on psychology and become an important basis for understanding the brain’s natural learning capacities. Piaget (1972) maintained that individual differences should not be taken into account in defining intelligence. To him, intelligence is a developmentally-based process which is developed in all children through the constant shift of balance between the new and old information (APA, 1995). Charles Spearman (1904) considered intelligence as a single general factor that encompasses a set of specific factors. He described the general factor as ‘g’ and believed that it was due to individual differences in logical power (as cited in Sternberg, 1988). In addition to this one-dimensional view on how to evaluate people’s minds, there has been an equivalent view, which Gardner has called the ‘uniform view’. He describes uniform school as one with a core curriculum which consists of a set of facts that everyone should know and offers very few electives. Obviously, in these schools, better students, perhaps those with higher IQs are allowed to study courses which require critical reading, calculation, and thinking skills. Although there are various concepts of intelligence presented, the most influential ones are based on psychometric testing. Stanford-Binet, Raven’s Progressive Matrices, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, and the Wechsler-Bellevue could be some examples of intelligence quotient (IQ) tests.

In recent years, an alternative view has been put forth, which suggests that the mind is organized into relatively independent domains of functioning (Feldman, 1980; Fodor, 1983; Gardner, 1983). According to the theory of multiple intelligences (MI) developed by Gardner (1983), there are a number of distinct forms of intelligence that each individual possesses to different degrees. Lazear (1999) points to the recent discoveries in the nature of human intellect and its limits, and states that these findings have raised some doubts about all previous findings on humanity and its potentials, including the following:

- Human beings are able to increase and improve their intellectual capacities;
- Human beings not only can change their intelligence, but they can also teach it to others;
Intelligence is a multi-faceted property of the human mind; and
While the human intellect has different forms, at some level it has only one.

**Theoretical basis for the MI theory**

Based on the MI theory, in order for a set of abilities to be qualified as intelligence and not just a talent, skill, or aptitude; it has to meet eight criteria from different scientific disciplines, namely, biological sciences, logical analysis, developmental psychology, and traditional psychological research. This is in contrast with the traditional concepts of intelligence which are based on statistical analyses of a few sets of specifically selected tests such as linguistic, mathematical problem-solving and logical reasoning (Gardner, 1983). “Candidates for the title ‘an intelligence’ had to satisfy a range of these criteria and must include, as a prerequisite, the ability to resolve ‘genuine problems of difficulties’ within certain cultural settings” (Gardner, 1983, P. 62).

- Isolation by brain damage/neurological evidence;
- The existence of prodigies, idiot savants, and exceptional individuals;
- Distinguishable set of core operations;
- Developmental stages with an expert end state;
- Evolutionary history and plausibility;
- Susceptibility to encoding in a symbol system;
- Support from experimental psychological tasks; and
- Support from psychometric research.

In sum, the intelligences identified by Gardner all meet these eight criteria. Nevertheless, in his 1999 work, he has stated that the above criteria presented in 1983 are not the last word in identifying intelligences, and more stress should be put on the relevance of cross-cultural evidence. Still, he believes that these criteria can comprise a set of factors contributing to progress in studying human cognition.

Gardner (1999) believes that there might be other intelligences, and that is why his theory is called Multiple Intelligences. To him, there is a possibility of more intelligences being discovered in the future, just as he recently added the eighth one, the naturalist intelligence.

**The eight intelligences described**

In his earlier work, *Frames of Mind*, Gardner (1983) proposed the existence of seven separate human intelligences. More recently (1993, 1999), he added an eighth intelligence to his list. Weinreich-Haste (1985) maintained that the intelligence categories identified by Gardner surprised many people because they do not think that they are related to intelligence and view them as talents and aptitudes.

**Verbal-Linguistic intelligence (word smart)** is the ability to understand and use words and languages effectively, and the capacity to communicate both orally and in writing. People with high verbal-linguistic intelligence are often very much interested in playing with words and using such devices as puns, metaphors, similes, and the like. They also like to read books for hours. Individuals with a strong linguistic intelligence often choose careers as lawyers, reporters, writers, and poets. William Shakespeare, T. S. Elliot, and Agatha Christie are some examples of people gifted with this intelligence.

**Logical-Mathematical intelligence (number/reasoning smart)** refers to an individual’s ability to use numbers effectively and reason well. Individuals strong in this intelligence are sensitive to logical patterns and relationships, functions, scientific principles and methods, and other related abstractions. This kind of intelligence can be seen in such people as statisticians, logicians, computer programmers, accountants, and, of course, mathematicians. Albert Einstein, Marie Curie, and Thomas Edison are examples of individuals who exhibited strong logical intelligence in their lifetimes.
Musical intelligence (music smart) is seen in individuals who recognize and use nonverbal sounds such as pitch and rhythms. Composers, piano tuners, musicians, and music therapists are among professionals strong in this area. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Louis Armstrong are some examples of people gifted with this kind of intelligence.

Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence (body smart) highlights the potential of using the body skillfully to solve problems or create products. Athletes, surgeons, dancers, actors, models, choreographers, and crafts people all use bodily-kinesthetic intelligence. Their tactile sense is usually well developed, and they enjoy all types of sports and physical activities. Michael Jordan, Jackie Robinson, Tom Sullivan are examples of people possessing this kind of intelligence.

Visual-Spatial intelligence (picture smart) refers to the capacity to perceive the visual-spatial world and also comprehend and manipulate a mental model. The spatially intelligent people often express their feelings and moods through art, and notice colors, shapes, and patterns. Some examples of people who are gifted with this intelligence are Pablo Picasso, Leonardo da Vinci, and Georgia O’Keeffe.

Interpersonal intelligence (people-smart) involves the capacity to show empathy toward the feelings of others, help, comfort, and persuade people skillfully. Interpersonally intelligent people like to work with others and have a talent for understanding other people’s moods, feelings, intentions, and needs. Politicians, clinicians, salespeople, religious leaders, and teachers are among those people who are strong in this intelligence. Some examples are Winston Churchill, Oprah Winfrey, and Bill Clinton.

Intrapersonal intelligence (self-smart) involves sensitivity to understanding and knowing oneself and being aware of one’s strengths and weaknesses. Since intrapersonally intelligent people use and trust their self-understanding as their guide, they would rather work on their own than with others. People with this intelligence usually tend to become philosophers, Psychiatrists, spiritual counselors, and religious leaders. Some examples of people with this intelligence include Mahatma Gandhi, Carl Jung, and Jean Paul Satre.

The eighth and most recent intelligence validated by Gardner’s research is the naturalist intelligence (nature smart). To be strong in this kind of intelligence, individuals must be able to recognize and classify the numerous species of their environments. This kind of intelligence can be seen in such people as biologists, botanists, farmers, zookeepers, and forest rangers. Charles Darwin, George Washington Carver, and E. O. Wilson are examples of people gifted in this intelligence.

Candidate intelligences. Apart from the eight intelligences discussed in this study, spiritual and existentialist are the new candidate intelligences. However, Gardner (1999, 2006) rejects both of these intelligences; mainly because they do not meet all of the eight criteria other intelligences meet so well.

MI and assessment

One of the educational goals is to evaluate students’ learning progress. Contrary to the formal testing model which can be implemented as an objective and decontextualized form of assessment, Gardner (1993) has suggested that educators should ask students to participate in a wide range of experiences in all eight intelligences within a naturally occurring context. He has called this type of assessment the ‘apprenticeship’ model. To him, using multiple modes of assessment gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of subject matters, their strengths, and consequently perform in optimal conditions.

In fact, the following eight general features form the foundations of the MI model of assessment proposed by Gardner (1993):

- Emphasis on assessment rather than testing;
Assessment as simple, natural, and occurring on a reliable schedule;
Ecological validity;
Instruments that are ‘intelligence-fair’ [italics added];
Use of multiple measures;
Sensitivity to individual differences, developmental levels, and forms of expertise;
Use of intrinsically interesting and motivating materials; and
Application of assessment for the student’s benefit. (pp. 174-179)

Therefore, as Gardner (1993) had mentioned, one of the important key points of the MI theory is integrating assessment into the learning process. Educational outcomes can be enhanced by evaluating and subsequently identifying weak and strong intelligences of students and designing the appropriate activities afterwards.

**Experimental research support for the MI**

Hosseini (2001) studied the relationship between Iranian EFL learners’ MI and (1) their use of language learning strategies, and (2) their language proficiency. The results obtained indicated that there is a meaningful relationship between the subjects’ MI and their use of language learning strategies. The researcher stated that among the eight intelligences identified by Gardner (1983, 1999), four of them—linguistic, kinesthetic, interpersonal, and naturalist—were found as the predictors of language learning strategy use. The results showed that there is a meaningful relationship between language learning strategy use and language proficiency while the metacognitive strategies were appeared as the positive predictor of language proficiency. The author believed that however the correlation index was too low to be considered.

Chen (2004) examined the use of the MI theory in large computer-assisted EFL college classes in Taiwan. A total of 100 students participated in this project, which were assigned to two groups of control and experimental. According to the author, the mean average in various intelligences showed that those in the language department were stronger in linguistic intelligence than those from other departments; however, two groups’ mean of the scores in interpersonal intelligence differed slightly.

Chen (2005) attempted to examine whether the implementation of cooperative learning (CL) activities, incorporating the insights given by Gardner’s (1983) MI theory, and the notion of Whole Language Approach (WLA) in college EFL classrooms will have a positive effect on students’ language proficiency and attitude. The results of this study indicated no relationship between the variables under study. Based on the findings, the researcher suggested that attention should be paid to incorporating MI into classroom activities and guiding the students to focus on linguistic forms within a student-centered cooperative learning context.

Loori (2005) reported the differences in intelligences preferences of male and female students learning English as a second language at higher institutions in the United States of America. The subjects were 90 international students registered at ESL centers at three American universities. A significant difference was found between males' and females' preferences of intelligences. Males preferred learning activities involving logical and mathematical intelligences, whereas females preferred learning activities involving intrapersonal intelligence.

Saeidi (2003) investigated the effect of MI-based instruction on the development of different intelligences. The researcher intended to find out whether those students who were assigned the tasks in accordance with their high intelligence had more opportunity to develop their intelligences. In doing so, a quasi-experimental research, involving 49 Iranian university students, was conducted. The results of the study indicated that MI-based instruction had a
positive role in the development of abilities in a range of intelligence areas. The author suggested that EFL teachers should begin to see the possibilities for the application of MI to language education in even the most traditional language learning setting, such as EFL grammar classroom with large number of students.

Razmjoo (2008) aimed at examining the strength of the relationship between language proficiency in English and 9 types of intelligences. According to the author, the primary objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between multiple intelligences and language proficiency among Iranian Ph.D candidates who participated in Shiraz University Ph.D Entrance Exam. The second objective of the study was to explore whether one of the intelligence types or a combination of intelligences are predictors of language proficiency. Finally, the study aimed at investigating the effect of sex on language proficiency and types of intelligences. To collect the needed data, a 100-item language proficiency test and a 90-item multiple intelligences questionnaire were used. 278 people participated in the study. The results showed no significant relationship between language proficiency and the combination of intelligences in general and the types of intelligences in particular. Similarly, the results revealed no significant difference between male and female participants regarding language proficiency and types of intelligences. Moreover, none of the intelligence types was diagnosed as the predictor for language proficiency.

Method

Population

According to the latest information on the PNU's website, a total of 800,000 students are studying at this university, of which 23127 are studying English. Among these EFL learners 22089 are studying English Translation. All these students who had studied English Translation for at least 5 semesters comprised the target population of this study.

Sample

A total of 102 juniors and seniors majoring in English Translation were selected. All students who enrolled for the study had already passed at least 5 terms at PNU.

Sampling method

Although a better sampling method would have been the clustering method, due to administration difficulties in applying the randomizing procedure, it was preferable to use available students as subjects. Therefore, the type of sample used in this study was convenient or available sample.

Research instruments

In order to carry out this study, two instruments were used: 1) The Multiple Intelligences inventory, which was presented on a four-point Likert scale; 2) The Paper-Based Testing (PBT) of the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), using a multiple-choice format.

Research design

In this study, which is a descriptive one, Multiple Intelligences are regarded as independent variables and the TOEFL score as the dependent variable. The correlational nature of this study prevents us from drawing any conclusions about any possible cause and effect relationship between the variables being studied.
Statistical data analysis

In order to examine the relationship between the MI as a unitary construct and its sub-components on the one hand and the TOEFL scores of the subjects on the other hand the Pearson Correlation was calculated.

Results

This section discusses the results obtained through data analyses conducted to investigate the research questions.

Data analysis

Before presenting the results, and for avoiding redundancy throughout this section, it seems necessary to mention that since the number of participants (N) is 102 and the significance level (α) is 0.05, the critical value taken from the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation table is 0.194 for the non-directional hypothesis, and due to the fact that N and α remain constant in all such cases, the critical value does not change. For this reason, the researcher does not see it necessary to repeat the aforementioned information for each case individually.

Investigation of the first research question

To explore whether there is any relationship between the subjects’ overall score on the MI test and their TOEFL score, which is the first question of the present study, the following null hypothesis is suggested:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the subjects’ overall score on the MI test and their TOEFL score.

The scatter plot below is a display of the relationship between the TOEFL scores and the overall MI scores.

**Figure 1: Scatter plot of TOEFL versus MI**

As can be seen in the plot, there is no possibility of a linear relationship between the two variables. Indeed, the observed Pearson value between the overall MI scores and the TOEFL scores was found to be 0.060. Since our observed correlation of 0.060 is smaller than our
critical value, that is, 0.060 < 0.194, it can be concluded that at this level of significance H0 cannot be rejected; in other words, there is no relationship between the overall MI score and TOEFL score of the subjects.

Investigation of the second research question

Based on the second research question, the following null hypothesis is suggested:

H0: There is no relationship between each single sub-component of subjects’ MI scores and their TOEFL scores.

In testing this hypothesis, we examine the relationship between each individual intelligence and TOEFL scores of the subjects, applying the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation technique.

In addition to the means and standard deviations, the summarized results of examining the relationship between each one of the intelligences and TOEFL score of the subjects are presented in the following table.

Table 1: Summary of hypotheses testing results of individual intelligences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intelligences</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Observed Value</th>
<th>Critical Value</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Interpretation of Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic</td>
<td>29.69</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.203</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Rejected</td>
<td>There is a relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical</td>
<td>30.59</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Supported</td>
<td>There is no relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>30.07</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Supported</td>
<td>There is no relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodily</td>
<td>28.59</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.016</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Supported</td>
<td>There is no relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial</td>
<td>27.75</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Supported</td>
<td>There is no relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>31.56</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>-0.038</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Supported</td>
<td>There is no relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>32.08</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Supported</td>
<td>There is no relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naturalist</td>
<td>25.76</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td>0.194</td>
<td>H0 Supported</td>
<td>There is no relationship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

After examining the relationship between individual intelligences and English proficiency, gaining more insights into the interrelation of each set of two intelligences seems to be of value. By presenting the following table, it is intended to show the obtained correlations among different intelligences.

In investigating the relationship among the eight intelligences, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was conducted.

As can be understood from Table 2, all the P-Values are greater than 0.05, therefore, we can infer that a linear relationship exists between all the intelligences.
Table 2: Relationships among individual intelligences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intelligence Score</th>
<th>Linguistic</th>
<th>Mathematical</th>
<th>Musical</th>
<th>Bodily</th>
<th>Spatial</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
<th>Naturalist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>0.320</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematical</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>0.340</td>
<td>0.252</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musical</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>0.445</td>
<td>0.300</td>
<td>0.548</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bodily</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>0.458</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.570</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spatial</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>0.420</td>
<td>0.308</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.505</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>0.303</td>
<td>0.333</td>
<td>0.321</td>
<td>0.346</td>
<td>0.294</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intrapersonal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coefficient</td>
<td>0.380</td>
<td>0.304</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.537</td>
<td>0.595</td>
<td>0.249**</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-Value</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The highest degree of correlation is found between Spatial and Naturalist intelligences.
** The lowest degree of correlation is found between Interpersonal and Naturalist intelligences.

Discussion

The results obtained from the data analysis indicate that no relationship exists between the variables, meaning that the two null hypotheses of the present study are supported. Regarding the first hypothesis, which investigates the relationship between MI theory and EFL proficiency level, the observed correlation is 0.060, which is not significant at $\alpha < 0.05$. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no meaningful relationship between the subjects’ multiple intelligences and English proficiency. This finding is supported by Razmjoo (2008) as well.

Among the eight intelligences identified by Gardner (1983, 1999) – linguistic, mathematical, musical, bodily, spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist – just linguistic intelligence was found to be a predictor of English proficiency level. The findings reject the second null hypothesis only in relation to linguistic intelligence and TOEFL scores of the subjects, that is, linguistic intelligence and English proficiency level have a direct relationship; whereas, other intelligences do not show any correlation with TOEFL scores. Regarding linguistic intelligence, it is worth noting that even though the observed value of 0.203 is not very high, the significance of this correlation should not be ignored. As Hatch and Lazarton (1999) stated, “A correlation in the 0.30s or lower may appear weak, but in educational research such a correlation might be very important” (as cited in Hosseini, 2001, p. 83). The relationship between the two variables of this hypothesis has been investigated for the case of the PNU EFL learners and the result of this study confirms some of the previous research findings, such as Chen’s (2005), Hosseini’s (2001).

As for the gender differences, with $\alpha$ being set at 0.05, in the TOEFL scores, no statistically significant difference was observed between the two sexes. That means both groups are almost at the same level of English proficiency, which again corresponds to Razmjoo’s (2008) findings. Furthermore, the differences between the overall MI score of the groups were not statistically significant. However, male participants’ linguistic scores were found to be higher than those of females.
By studying the MI profiles of the participants, it can be said that different people develop different intelligences and not just one type of intelligence, and not all intelligences develop in one person to the same degrees.

According to Gardner (1999), all people possess the potential for developing all intelligence types; however, they are developed at different rates and to different extents. There are a number of factors which can influence the strength or weakness of each intelligence type. One of the most influential ones is the learner’s culture. To Sternberg (2004), one cannot understand intelligence completely and meaningfully outside its cultural context. “Work that seeks to study intelligence acontextually risks the imposition of an investigator’s view of the world on the rest of the world.” (Sternberg, 2004)

It is evident that different societies have more or less different cultures and sets of values. Moreover, such diversity also exists within a given society, that is, different families might not share the same beliefs and values. This, naturally, will lead to the development of different intelligence profiles in different people with different family and cultural backgrounds.

After culture and family factors comes the environment in which children, who are the future language learners, are raised. As an example, for nomadic people spatial orientation is important to survival; therefore, chances are that these people would develop spatial intelligence more fully. Such ability might develop less in other people who do not need it as much.

Another influential factor is a family’s economic background. For example, some people might have interest in a specific sport such as horse riding, but–because of financial problems—they might not be able to provide their children with the opportunity to develop the intelligence related to this activity, that is, bodily intelligence.

One of the other influential factors is a family’s social status. For instance, in the case of musical intelligence, the social status of a given family might stand in the way of developing this skill because they might believe that it brings disgrace to the family.

There are some other factors such as race and discrimination which might play a role too. (Gardner, 1999)

The existence of all these elements suggests that intelligence is not a one dimensional entity, fixed at birth and under the influence of different factors each intelligence type might flourish to a different level.

One of the natural consequences of this is the possibility of learning a given subject in a variety of ways. Language learning is not an exception and progress can be made through taking advantage of musical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, mathematical, and naturalist as well as linguistic abilities, since each one of the intelligences provides the learner with a distinct way of learning the same content. Even the learners who enjoy the exact same learning opportunities, due to elements such as their dissimilar goals, preferences, needs and wants might learn variously (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004). This approach to language learning can give the learners the chance to learn in a way that suits their individual learning capacities. In addition, it helps to make the learning process more interesting and less tiring, since it requires “frequent circling back over the same material if learning is to be sustained” (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004, p. 125). Schumann (1997) believes:

Sustained deep learning (SDL) is controlled by stimulus appraisal. This learning is characterized as sustained because an extended period of time (often several years) is required to achieve it; it is characterized as deep because when it is complete, the learner is seen as proficient or expert. (as cited in Arnold & Fonseca, 2004, p. 125)
According to Arnold and Fonseca (2004), it may be logical to assume that it is possible for MI-based language learning to help reduce the learners’ various proficiency levels by taking full advantage of different ‘talents’ of learners.

However, at PNU, the issue needs to be treated with some caution. As a higher education institute offering mostly distance education, PNU differs from conventional universities in an important sense, and that is the relatively limited amount of possible interaction between students and instructors or among the learners themselves. Having in mind the small number of sessions for each subject of study in this distance education milieu, one can see that it is not practical for students to rely much on others for learning. It is only natural for distance learners to become dependent on learning materials and most specifically on their books. This calls for more attention being paid to developing learning materials that suit this specific mode of education.

Sadeghian (1996) believes in the importance of materials, course-team writers, and administrative support and the role they play in the success or failure of distance learners. To him, the issue is not using or not using teaching material. What is significant is that the material should be appropriate, and should compensate for the limited amount of instruction. In comparing the materials in regular classroom with those in distance learning, he comments that in conventional classrooms where there is a direct contact between learners and their teacher, the materials stand behind the teacher and have a supporting role. However, in distance learning, they are moved to the front and play a more significant role. He further adds that they should provide an appropriate structure to learning and teaching, help learners to develop autonomy, and assist them in becoming more effective learners (as cited in Dorrimanesh, 2008).

The results of this study show that EFL learners who are linguistically more intelligent, are more successful than others in learning the English language. Based on the description of linguistic intelligence offered by Gardner (1993) as the ability to use words effectively through oral and written communication, this finding seems reasonable and is also supported by some other studies (e.g. Chen, 2005; Hosseini, 2001).

Although the issue of MI theory and its effects have received attention over the last few decades, it would be an ideal to go beyond the theory and give students a chance for developing and improving all their potentials. For this reason, in today’s language classrooms, focusing on linguistic or even communicative competence does not seem to be enough (Arnold & Fonseca, 2004). Gardner (1993) explains:

"It is of the utmost importance that we recognize and nurture all of the varied human intelligences, and all of the combinations of intelligences. We are all so different largely because we all have different combinations of intelligences. If we recognize this, I think we will have at least a better chance of dealing appropriately with the many problems that we face in the world. (P. 12)"

In addition, by using MI theory as a tool for planning language learning activities educators value ‘individuality’ and ‘personalization’ of education, and by this, they can make certain that students are provided with various ways of dealing with challenges of learning. Consequently, in such atmosphere learners see what they can achieve which leads to improved self-confidence and success in learning a language.

**Pedagogical implications**

There are some pedagogical implications which arise from the findings of this study. The most significant one concerns all people involved in material development, such as designers and writers of the PNU learning materials. Educators are responsible for finding ways of facilitating distance learning process by presenting materials to learners in a variety of ways, making it possible for learners with different intelligence profiles to take the best possible
advantage of the material. By the same token, various mediums for delivering the materials, such as audio, video, print, and web-based materials should be made use of. However, it is not an issue of addressing all the individual MI profiles of each learner in each class at the beginning of each course of study, but of offering a balanced approach where “different windows on the same concept” are incorporated (Gardner, 1993, p. 204).

If an approach or learning material is based on students’ current intelligence profiles, learners can work within the ‘zone of proximal development’ introduced by Vygotsky (1978), which refers to the level of performance that a learner might reach with appropriate help from a supportive teaching method.

In addition, Gardner (1999) states that if educators want to apply MI theory in presenting the learning material, they need to incorporate the theory into the whole instruction program and not just part of it. This means that material designers should create opportunities for distance learners to learn using different types of intelligence, and since in this study and some others (e.g. Chen 2005; Hosseini, 2001) it is found that more linguistically intelligent people are better English learners, special care should be given to developing this intelligence in EFL learners.

An extremely important point which material developers should be aware of when trying to apply MI theory to material preparation is that students should be encouraged to use their strongest intelligences in order to facilitate the learning process. Thus, students who have a relatively strong intelligence in one area should be encouraged to approach their learning using that particular intelligence as a point to start (Christison, 1998). This is possible when learners have access to materials which present the content in a variety of ways and that content can be learned using at least a few different intelligence types.

Gardner (1999, 2006) believes that using several “points of entry” for introducing a new content will produce better results. Therefore, curriculum designers and/or material developers must be flexible in compiling the material which is to be learned by distance learners. In this way, the learners have the chance to use their strongest intelligences for learning a given content. This is not an easy task by any means. Nevertheless, if curriculum designers and/or material developers can come up with strategies for using students’ strengths, the process of acquiring knowledge will be facilitated. Team of material developers should help students develop their potentials as fully as possible. According to Lazear (1999):

We need diverse forms of product and/or process-based, individualized-based, contextualized-based, performance-based and ongoing-based assessment which include paper-and-pencil tests, portfolios, journals/logs, projects, exhibits, performances, and displays, etc. with feedback gained not only from teachers and parents but also from students themselves and their peers, to reflect and reinforce MI-inspired instruction. (as cited in Ying, 2007, section V. ¶. 3)

After the application of the MI theory in preparation of materials by curriculum designers and/or material developers, the issue of appropriate method of assessment is to be taken into consideration. Gardner (1993) maintains that assessment, as a fundamental part of education, should take into account different types of intelligence. Thus, tests should be developed based on these differences, and it is absolutely necessary to use multiple modes of assessment. In this way, learners can use their strength and perform satisfactorily.

The last issue of importance is the awareness of instructors of the MI theory and its application to teaching. Therefore, it would be reasonable to make TEFL students, who might be the future instructors, knowledgeable in the MI theory and its application to teaching and assessment.
Delimitations

Despite all the efforts made, the present study has some limitations which should be acknowledged.

- This sample size, like any other study, is limited; therefore, in interpreting the results and making generalizations, one should be cautious.
- The long time students had to spend on the TOEFL is another issue. Completing this test generally takes about 105 minutes which might be very tiring for participants; moreover, they were required to complete the MI questionnaire. Unfortunately, this might have affected the participants’ performance on the test.
- Another problem is the one which is associated with almost any self-reports, such as the MI questionnaire. Sometimes, the participants are not completely careful and truthful when responding to the items of a questionnaire. It is also possible that they might have misinterpreted some items. In the case of filling out the MI inventory, they may not fully realize their own strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, questionnaires are common tools for obtaining useful information. As Grenfell and Harris (1999) have stated, “….it is not easy to get inside the 'black box' of the human brain and find out what is going on there. We work with what we can get, which, despite the limitations, provides food for thought …” (p. 54)

Although like any other research project, this project might have some limitations, which warn us against making too much of a generalization, it can serve as a point of departure for interested educators and researchers.

Suggestions for further research

Future research may shed more light on the MI theory and its application in education and students, teachers, researchers, and theorists should remain open to new evidence. Based on the findings and limitations, several recommendations for further research are made:

- The scope of this study was limited to Shahriyar Center which is one of the PNU campuses. As a result, the study sample was restricted to students of this venue. It is suggested that this study be carried out with larger samples from various study centers in the country;
- The current study materials should be examined to see how much they are based on the MI theory and what modifications they need;
- Variables affecting the development of each intelligence profile of the PNU EFL students should be examined;
- Further studies should be conducted in order to find the possible best ways of incorporating an MI-based approach in material development and teaching;
- The possible links among multiple intelligences, learning styles, and learning strategies of the PNU EFL students should be investigated;
- Differences between the PNU learners and conventional learners should be compared with regard to strengths of MI as a whole and its sub-components; and
- The best way of assessing and measuring success in implementation of the MI theory should be identified, both in material preparation and teaching.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study suggest that: a) There is no significant relationship between language proficiency and MI of the PNU EFL students; b) There is no relationship between the sub-components of the MI and proficiency level of the PNU EFL students, except for the linguistic intelligence; c) There is no significant difference between the language proficiency level of male and female EFL students at PNU; and d) There is no
significant difference between the MI scores of male and female EFL students of the PNU, except in the case of linguistic intelligence in which males showed more strength.

Based on the available literature, the results of the present study, and the above discussion, it can be concluded that not all people develop different intelligences to the same extent. As a result, those in charge of developing learning materials should tap into diverse ways of learning using different intelligences. According to Gardner (1999), “the incorporation of intelligence is not simply a matter of exercising the intelligence muscle” (as cited in Chen, 2005, p. 151). If there is an interest in implementing an MI-based approach in education, concepts should be presented in a way that makes learning possible through using various intelligence profiles.

References


Bridging affectivity and language success: *appraisal systems* in foreign language instruction*

*Danuta Gabryś-Barker, University of Silesia, Institute of English, Sosnowiec, Poland  
e-mail: danuta.gabrys@gmail.com*

**Abstract**

Emotion-related research has always been one of the main areas of language learning/acquisition and educational research, focusing on the influence of emotion and subjective experience on motivation and acquisition/learning outcomes. Numerous, mostly psychological, studies reporting on the role of motivation and goal-orientedness and affective personality factors in general emphasize the fact that the affective domain has to be the centre of interest both of teachers trying to create conditions conducive to learning and of learners themselves. This is in order to make them recognize their own affectivity and how it influences their success or determines their failure (Gabrys-Barker 2007). In learning there is interaction between cognitive and affective processing, giving primacy to the latter, as the information entering the brain is received first by the emotional brain and filtered through it. In consequence, it may be anticipated that success in learning is emotionally-driven (Schumann 1997).

I would like to present the key concepts of stimulus appraisal systems as discussed by various scholars (e.g. Scherer 1993 and Clore 1994) and to elaborate on the implications they may have on success in instructed FL learning and teaching. I shall also comment on the ways in which teachers can make their learners more aware of their individual appraisal systems and their role in achieving success or responsibility for failure in FL learning.

**Introduction**

Various studies discussing the role of motivation and personality factors in general emphasize the fact that the affective domain has to be the centre of interest of teachers aiming to create conditions promoting learning. It should also be of interest to learners themselves to make them recognize their own affectivity and how it influences their success or determines their failure in learning. Thus it might be interesting to look at the processes and mechanisms controlling one’s affectivity. Table 1 presents examples of empirical studies focusing on possible correlations observed between the affectivity and learning and teaching effectiveness and achievement.
Table 1: Selected studies on emotions in a learning/instructional context (based on Gabryś-Barker 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scherer 1984</td>
<td>Cognitive and motivational aspects of emotions</td>
<td>Subjective and idiosyncratic qualities of emotions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brophy &amp; Good 1986</td>
<td>Teacher-centered instruction</td>
<td>Negative effects on emotional and affective aspects of learning</td>
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<td>Hattie 1992</td>
<td>Self-concept</td>
<td>Negative expectations in relation to achievement create anxiety</td>
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<td>Slavin 1995</td>
<td>Cooperative learning</td>
<td>Positive influence on learning achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boekaerts, Pintrich and Zeidner 2000</td>
<td>Emotions in self-regulation processes in learning</td>
<td>Self-regulation creates positive emotions versus negative ones which originate in external regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diener 2000</td>
<td>Cognitive and emotional evaluation of a learning context (school experiences)</td>
<td>Positive evaluation correlates with school achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidi, Berndorff &amp; Ainley 2002</td>
<td>Role of interest in a learning task</td>
<td>Emotions are domain specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pekrun et al. 2002</td>
<td>Information processing</td>
<td>Emotions influence significantly information processing at each stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glaser-Zikuda &amp; Mayring 2003</td>
<td>Appraisal systems</td>
<td>Value systems influence an appraisal type, the role of pleasure and interest in task performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hascher 2003</td>
<td>Didactic competences of teachers, one’s achievement and interest, social interaction at school</td>
<td>Significant influence on feelings of one’s well-being</td>
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The studies on affectivity

(…) highlight the relevance and importance of multiple forms of affect in learning situations, their situatedness to the person – context interface, and their dynamic nature at different stages of the learning process. (Efklides and Volet 2005, p.377)

As research shows affectivity has a neural basis and its symptoms are demonstrated by certain physio-anatomical activity in bodily behaviour and reactions. The use of neuroimaging techniques has allowed scientists to observe that there are specific areas of the brain responsible for forming and processing emotions and research demonstrates that there is interaction between cognitive and affective processing, giving primacy to the latter, as the information entering the brain is received first by the emotional brain and filtered through it. Thus it may be expected that success in learning, say a foreign language, is emotionally-driven (Schumann 1997).

**Appraisal systems form a psychological perspective**

In discussing a learning process, Efklides and Volet (2005, p.378) emphasize its complexity and interaction of cognitive and affective variables responsible for learning outcomes. They characterize a learning process as:

(…) a process influenced by **person** and **task-characteristics**, by the **context** in which it takes place, and by individual on-going evaluation of the learning process and outcome (…) Emotions and feelings are present throughout the learning process, because they are triggered by situational characteristics as well as **by the person’s appraisals**. (Efklides & Volet 2005, p. 378). (emphasis mine)

One of the variables mentioned is one’s appraisal system, which is defined by Smith and Lazarus (1993) as a personal evaluation and assessment of the environment and how it affects an individual in a learning process:
Each positive emotion is said to be produced by a particular kind of **appraised benefit**, and each negative emotion by a particular kind of **appraised harm**. The emotional response is hypothesized to prepare and mobilize the person to cope with the particular appraised harm or benefit in an adaptive manner, that is, to avoid, minimize, or alleviate an appraised harm, or to seek, maximize, or maintain an appraised benefit. Whether a particular set of circumstances is appraised as harmful or beneficial depends, in part, on the person’s specific configuration of goals, and beliefs. Appraisal thus serves the important **mediational role** of linking emotional responses to environmental circumstances on the one hand, and personal goals and beliefs on the other. (p. 234)

Such an understanding of one’s appraisal system implies its both cognitive and affective character and direct relation to motivation and attitudes in any context of activity, such as for example, teaching and learning.

Appraisal systems operate as a complex phenomenon functioning at two levels. **A primary appraisal** expresses individual relevance of a stimulus (e.g. a learning or teaching task) to a person (a learner/teacher), and results in promotion if the stimulus is relevant to achieving a personal goal, or hindrance of a personal goal if the stimulus is evaluated as irrelevant. **A secondary appraisal** expresses one’s ability to cope with a task to achieve a goal (a coping ability) *(ibid.)*. Both characteristics: **personal relevance** and **coping potential** contribute to positive attitudes and motivations in learning and teaching.

**Taxonomies of appraisal systems (based on Schumann 1997)**

In psychological models of emotion (e.g. Frijda 1993 or Clore 1994) there is an agreement about the role of appraisal in cognition in creating responses to a stimulus and consequently, activating the thinking part of the brain which “allocates attention and memory resources to various problems, and the variability in such allocations affects learning” (Schumann 1997: xix). The appraisals are seen as activating some kind of response, either positive or negative depending on the characteristics of appraisals made. Various models categorize criteria of appraisals differently (Table 2).
## Table 2: Selected taxonomies of appraisal systems

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<tr>
<td><strong>Novelty:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Suddenness</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Unexpectedness</td>
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<td>Attention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
<td>Familiarity</td>
<td>Appealingness</td>
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<td>Predictability</td>
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<td><strong>Intrinsic</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pleasantness</td>
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<td><strong>Goal</strong></td>
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<td>Significance:</td>
<td>Focality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Certainty</td>
<td>Likelihood</td>
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<td>relevance</td>
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<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Presence</td>
<td>Prospect realization</td>
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<td>probability</td>
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<td>Desirability</td>
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<td>Expectation</td>
<td>Open/Closed</td>
<td>Proximity</td>
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<td><strong>Conduciveness</strong></td>
<td>Urgency</td>
<td>Proximity</td>
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<td>Goal/Path</td>
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<td><strong>Urgency</strong></td>
<td>Intent/Self-</td>
<td>Agency</td>
<td>Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Control</td>
<td>Motives</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coping</strong></td>
<td>Modifiability</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Potential:</td>
<td>Control</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Compatibility</strong></td>
<td>Power</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards:</td>
<td>Adjustment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>External</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Internal</strong></td>
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**Appraisal systems from a neurological perspective**

It has been known for quite some time now which parts of the brain are responsible for the processing of emotions. It was already in the 40s of the past century that the neurologists observed that the removal or disconnection of the part of the lower brain, i.e. prefrontal cortex results in lack of emotional processing in a patient. The stimulus one is exposed to
enters the brain first through the areas responsible for emotions and thus it is the affective filter that responds to cognitive in nature stimulus (described in a greatly simplified way).

Schumann (1997) clearly sees the relation between motivation processed by the affective filter and appraisal systems as constituting a generative mechanism for motivation. He says:

The appraisal system is necessary in order that the emotional relevance of sensory information (touch, sight, sound, etc.) can be assessed and appropriate behavioral activity can be taken in relation to that sensory information (e.g. fight, flight, approach, attend, think, learn).

Schumann (ibid.) emphasizes the role of one’s contextual adaptation, irrespective of the past experience and degree of open-mindedness as significant variables in one’s goal achievement. Also relative plasticity of the prefrontal areas of the brain contribute to the possible adjustments of the appraisals systems. The evaluations and adjustments are based on the appraisal systems and relate to various features such has pleasantness, individual needs and coping potential, among many others. The neural mechanism explains then why it is so that in the context of L2 acquisition/learning variability in L2 achievement is commonly observed as it relates directly to this emotional appraisal of the stimulus in a given learning context. This is the most evident proof for what was more or less intuitively proposed by psychology and consequently by language instruction theories, namely the role of the affective domain and more precisely, motivation in a language learning environment. (Gabryś-Barker 2007).

**Stimulus appraisal in language learning: appraisals at the input stage**

Following the assumption expressing the significance of stimulus appraisal in language learning tasks, appraisal variables are seen as significant, first of all, at the stage of input (The input stage is understood here as the first exposure to the task itself and instruction given to a learner and language content.). Their influence is on the level of:

- formulation of goals: learning goals (task-involvement) versus performance goals (ego-involvement),
- in terms of choice (strategies used to perform the task),
- persistence and effort (switch on or switch off approach to the task).

So the input stage is this stage of processing where the appraisal system most visibly influences the whole process of task performance. The input stage processing can be described as a three-stage process: the pre-perception stage, the perception stage and the attention / noticing stage.

The pre-perception stage “the alertness stage” (the term used by Tomlin and Villa 1994) demonstrates “a general predisposition to be involved in the learning task, the so-called “pre-actional stage”(the term used by Dorney 2002), it is related to motivation and attitude. Here, goals are being formulated. The appraisal systems which relate to the formulation of learning goals are shown in various studies to be more success-conducive as they directly relate to achievement rather than performance goals which focus on the personal dimension (ego-involvement). The focus on either of the two goals will determine the learners’ approach to the task to be performed:

- **Learning goals** are seen as challenging the ability (even if it is perceived as low) one has and promote risk-taking as the tasks/skills to be developed by it are interesting/novel/ important (etc) enough
- **Performance goals** promote defensive/withdrawal strategies if one’s ability is seen as low and the ultimate goal of the task (as seen/appraised by an individual) is evaluation of his/her ability/result of the performance.
The perception stage—this stage of processing will clearly be determined by the above two approaches (focus on the learning goals versus the performance goals): they will be either openness to input or activation of switch-off mechanisms or limited perception both in bottom-up and top-down processing.

The attention / noticing stage—here, only selected elements of the input will be attended to and consequently noticed and potentially stored in LTM and hence open to further processing, as stated by the noticing hypothesis. Attention is limited in its capacity so the selection will be dictated by the appraisals made by the learner and the goals selected as mentioned earlier.

It can then be safely assumed that the input stage will have a direct impact on the later stages, those of central processing and the output stage, as it will “enhance or block the learner’s intention to be involved in the task or their strategic approach to the task” (Manolopoulou-Sergi 2004, p. 436). Persistence and amount and type of effort (strategies) put into the task performance will result from the appraisal system responsible for the task approach and evident at the input stage. If we accept this view, we may anticipate that in our daily didactic practices, task-based teaching will be highly influenced by the type of instruction we provide in terms of the methods and materials used, and it will contribute significantly to learners’ appraisal systems resulting from their learning experiences among other variables. (Gabryś-Barker 2007)

Scherer’s appraisal systems’ model in classroom teaching and learning

One of the first models of stimulus appraisal related directly with the motivational and attitudinal dimension of undertaking an action (for example to perform a language task) is that of Scherer (1984, Table 2). Scherer sees appraisal of a stimulus as a combination of affective and cognitive variables of:

- **novelty**: the degree of familiarity of the stimulus, be it a task, data or action to be undertaken
- **intrinsic pleasantness**: how pleasant the stimulus is which will determine the approach to it (indulgence versus avoidance)
- **goal/need significance**: evaluation of how relevant, significant and immediate the stimulus (task/action) is for an individual
- **coping potential**: checking one’s ability to cope or change the stimulus to adjust to one’s potential
- **norm /self compatibility**: evaluation of the social/cultural appropriacy of the stimulus.

Implementation of the Scherer’s model of appraisals

Assuming the importance of one’s appraisals in motivation and goal-oriented activities, such as a learning process, I see the use of Scherer’s appraisal model in:

- diagnosing learner appraisal systems on the basis of self-constructed questionnaires or available tools e.g. *Geneva Appraisal Questionnaire – GAQ* based on Scherer (2001, also see Schumann 1997 for other examples of appraisals’ questionnaires and learner biographies);
- Giving feedback to the learners in relation to their academic achievement as resulting not only from their cognitive abilities but also affective characteristics (their individual appraisals), explaining and awareness raising about appraisals, discussing individual learner variables;
- Focusing on Scherer’s variables in teaching, e.g. developing one’s awareness of how novelty, intrinsic pleasantness, goal significance or learners’ perception of their coping potential can influence their achievement.
Additionally, I would like to emphasize that it is also significant for every teacher not only to diagnose learners’ appraisal systems but become aware of his/her own individual appraisal variables as they contribute to and are directly expressed by the approach to teaching and perception of oneself as a teacher.

A learning process understood an emotionally-loaded experience can be measured by the above mentioned Geneva Appraisal Questionnaire (GAQ). The objective of the questionnaire is well-expressed in the instructions given to it:

In this questionnaire, we ask you to recall moments when you experienced an intense emotion, either positive or negative. It could have been something that really happened or that you expected to happen (whether it finally happened or not). The events might have been brought about by you, by someone else, or by natural causes. Now try to remember some of the strongest emotional experiences that you have had in recent times (for example, during the last year). Of those, please select X episodes that you thought of spontaneously. Try to recall as many details as possible that are pertinent to the chosen emotion episode.

The questionnaire focuses on an emotional event selected as a well-remembered experience of an individual to be reflected upon in terms of:

1. Event description (a descriptive comment)
2. Occurrence of the emotional experience
3. General evaluation of the event
4. Characteristics of the event
5. Causation of the event
6. Consequences of the event
7. Reactions with respect to the real or expected consequences
8. Intensity and duration of the emotional experience (weak moderate strong/seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks)
9. Verbal description of the emotional experience
10. The emotion terms listed related to the event


The areas of focus of GAQ presented here relate directly to what is assumed to be significant in a learning processes, i.e. affectivity and its impact on an individual as a system of appraisals consisting of Scherer’s appraisal elements of novelty, intrinsic pleasantness, goal relevance/significance, coping potential and compatibility with standards. The administration of GAQ in a classroom context should be preceded by a detailed explanation of its purposes and an awareness raising session on the appraisals themselves.

Summary and Conclusions

One’s evaluations and adjustments to the context and response to it (behaviour) are based on the appraisal systems and relate to various features such has pleasantness, individual needs and coping potential, among many others. The neural mechanism explains then why it is so that in the context of L2 acquisition/learning, variability in L2 achievement is commonly observed as it relates directly to this emotional appraisal of the stimulus in a given learning context. This is the most evident proof for what was more or less intuitively proposed by psychology and consequently by language instruction theories, namely the role of the affective domain and more precisely, motivation in a language learning environment. In consequence, we are bound to accept the view that all human actions are directed by appraisal systems and values either accepted and in consequence direct one’s actions, or rejected and ultimately, lead to avoidance of certain actions by an individual.
The theory of appraisals has a direct application to classroom teaching as described above. The use of its instruments such as GAQ, will allow us, teachers and our learners to become more aware of our own affectivity and how it influences our successes or failures. In consequence, we will become more effective teachers of more successful learners.

*Note: A full version of this paper will appear in Arabski, J. & Wojtaszek, A. (Eds.) (in press, 2010)

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Internet source:
Geneva Appraisal Questionnaire (GAQ)) at:
Professor Silpa Bhirasri’s influential role in the organizational culture of Silpakorn University

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Abstract
This study is a qualitative research which is composed of documentary and field research. The objectives of this research are to study charismatic leadership role of Professor Silpa Bhirasri as the founder of Silpakorn University, the famous contemporary art academy in Thailand and to examine the current organizational culture of Silpakorn University influenced by Professor Silpa. Theories for the study appear concepts of leadership and organizational culture. For the methods of data collections were participation observations and in depth interviewing of students who could live in the same period of Professor Silpa’s living. The results of the research show that Professor Silpa Bhirasri, or Corrado Feroci, a great Italian artist of the twentieth century, expressed charismatic leadership with a progressive vision, a practical consultation, a good behavior and abilities. Professor Silpa Bhirasri, designated “Father of Thai Contemporary Art”, decided to be an official sculptor at the Fine Arts Department in Thailand in 1923 so, he educated Thai students and performed his talents in many magnificent monuments such as the Walking Buddha at Buddha Monthon and the Monument of Democracy. He had the important role in the operation of Silpakorn University in early period, especially his practical suggestion could empower a value of his students for working and living. He devoted his abilities for artistic and academic development until his death in 1962 in Thailand. Therefore, his students needed to set memorial things for Professor Silpa, for example a statue, rites, motto, and stories which originated a part of the organizational culture of Silpakorn University. The study examines that the founder could influence in organizational culture directly and indirectly.

Keyword
Silpa Bhirasri / Silpakorn University / Charismatic Leadership / Organizational Culture

Introduction
Each institution of education functions as a mold of graduates with skills and intelligence in many fields for earning and living. Therefore, the institution of education is an important part in educating both of academic knowledge and behavior under conditions, regulations, and shared assumptions in each institution called, “Organizational Culture”. Santiwong, T. and Santiwong, C.(1999:43) defines that the organizational cultures are values, concepts, and beliefs which have caused development, creation and socialization for a long time until they become the adherence of organizational members who have held and acted continuously. Most of organizational cultures were from founders or leaders creating with intention and
something effects in the features of symbols and traditions which the organizational insiders could understand together while outsiders could notice obviously.

According to the meaning of “Organizational Culture”, founders or leaders have important roles in the creative process of organizational culture in both of the direct way: founders or leaders specify organizational culture by themselves, and the indirect way: organizational members get the influence of thoughts or see the behavioral model of founders. Thoughts and work methods of founders and early leaders would crystallize firmly in mind of employees until they become ways of thoughts and works (organizational culture) which employees apply for solutions in the organization.(Gagliardi,1986, Ott,1989, Schein,1992 cited in Wongvisayawan,1997:130)

Although the organizational culture is the significant heart which socializes members to be confident in the organization and to exert the energy of working utmost life (Deal & Kennedy,1982 cited in Subsont,1994).the organizational leadership is crucial as well as the brain thinks and controls all organs of human working in usual, both of heart and brain must work together for strong body. Therefore, the organizational culture could sustain because the leadership has the crucial roles and establishes the strong organization.

Leadership is important to the administration in higher education as other institutions because the success and progress of each university, crucial changes, beginning of new things, pioneering of new knowledge having successful factors are leadership role and ability in management of executive in the institute. Administration in Higher Education must be operated by the executive with the worldwide vision and must be got the essential role of higher education in society and in human sensibility. Leaders must have communicative knowledge and administration, motivation, morality, ethics and good relationship to others both in domestic and international level. (Boonprasert and others,2009)

Silpakorn University, a famous higher education in art creation and conservation in Thailand, has unique and interesting organizational cultures. Moreover, Professor Silpa Bhirasri or Corrado Feroci as the Italian founder of Silpakorn University, who has a remarkable leadership designated to Father of Thai Modern Art. Silpakorn University is the source of artists and masterworks in various qualitative fields both in domestic and international society. To summarize, the researcher is interested to study Professor Silpa Bhirasri’s leadership role and the organizational culture of Silpakorn University.

The objectives of the study

- To study charismatic leadership role of Professor Silpa Bhirasri.
- To examine the current organizational culture of Silpakorn University influenced by Professor Silpa Bhirasri.

Conceptual framework

Concepts of charismatic leadership

Charismatic Leadership or Charisma Leader means to leaders have personal characteristics, creditable, respectful, faithful and reliable for subordinates or members in the organization. Generally, charismatic leaders who are attractive and inspirational could motivate, empower and influence to the others. Charismatic leadership has concepts, beliefs, values and behavioral ways which others accept and are pleased to do following him. (House, R. cited in Witayaudom,2005:139, Salitvanich,2006, Sereerat and others,1998:210-211)

House suggests that charismatic leaders are characterized by self-confidence and confidence in subordinates, high expectations for subordinates, ideological vision, and the use of personal example. Followers of charismatic leaders identify with
leader and the mission of the leader, exhibit extreme loyalty to and confidence in
the leader, emulate the leader’s values and behavior, and derive self-esteem from
their relationship with leader. (House, R. cited in Luthans, 2005:560)

However, charismatic leadership are divided into two types following (Howell & Avolio
cited in Salitvanich, 2006), ethical charismatic leader and unethical charismatic leader. This
research expresses the study of ethical charismatic leader. Moreover, from the study of
“Direct and indirect effects of three core charismatic leadership components on performance
and attitudes” in the Journal of Applied Psychology vol.81,36-51, Kirkpatrick & Locke (1996
cited in Witayaudom, 2005:141) classify three qualities of charisma: 1) vision and view; 2)
expressions of open communication; and 3) consultation for the work development of
subordinates. In the research, the researcher adapts these items in the examination of
Professor Silpa’s charismatic leadership in three classifications in order: 1) Characteristics,
inelligence, and behaviors; 2) The Nature of language usage in communication; and 3) view
and vision.

Concepts of leadership and organizational culture

Organizational culture means to a pattern of concepts, shared basic assumptions, values,
attitudes and behaviors set by organizational members. Cultures basically spring from three
sources; (1) the beliefs, values, and assumptions of founders of organizations; (2) the learning
experiences of group members as their organization evolves; and (3) new beliefs, values and
assumptions brought in by new members and leaders (Schein, 1992:211). Moreover, cultural
manifestation shows three types of symbols as following: material symbols, verbal symbols,

The organizational members, inheriting from a generation to the new one, hold to do
together in the way of life however, the organizational culture could change upon group
assumptions including to both of external factors such as social situations in the period and
internal factors such as nature of organizations, values and founders’ beliefs which partly
specify patterns and contents of the unique cultures differing from others.(Wongvaisayawan,
1997:121)

Research methodology

This is a qualitative research which the researcher adapts the research methodology
according to Schein’s findings of organizational cultures which suggests to investigate
manifestations of organizational cultures such as the sources of organizational culture, the
information from members learning, the interview of functional people in organizational
culture socialization for group members, the crisis in organization. These information derived
from the manifestations would suppose clues of organizational culture well .(Schein,1983,

Methods of study and data collection operated from January to September in 2009. The
research shows 3 ways as following: 1) Documentary research; 2) field research: participant
observation and non participant observation; and 3) in depth interviewing

Key informant interviewing for the depth interviewing are people who got selected by
purposive sampling. The qualifications of key informant interviewing are the students studied
with Professor Silpa directly, the successful and famous artists in society, got the award of
National Artist or people can give information of Professor Silpa’s charismatic leadership
characters and concepts in working. These informants can tell about the organizational
culture of Silpakorn University. For the research, there are 4 people of key informant
interviewing: 1) Angkarn Kula yanapongse, the student of 4th generation of in 1946, National
Artist Award (literature) in 1989; 2) Chamruang Vichainkett, the student of 7th generation in
1950, National Artist Award (Visual Art: Sculpture) in 1996; 3) Nipon Kumvilai, the student
of 16th generation in 1959, editor of book in the title, “Professor Silpa and students”; and 4) Jackrapan Posayakrit, the student of 18th in 1961, National Artist Award (Visual Art: Painting) in 2000. However all key informants interviewing are in different generation, the information are still in shortage of some periods, the solution is to find more information of another generation by other ways such as the book and CD/DVD which show the interviews of the students.

**Important Tools of data collection** such as

- Questions in the interviews are divided into 3 parts as following: firstly, information about Professor Silpa Bhirasri. Secondly, information about the organizational culture of Silpakorn University. Thirdly, information about concepts of working and living of the key informants who got the teaching of Professor Silpa.

- The researcher is arranged to be the crucial tool in the qualitative research (Pothisita, 2009:56). The researcher must be neutral without bias and show the ability of science and arts to access information.

The researcher selects to study in qualitative because the nature is proper with the organizational cultures which are hard to measure in quantity clearly. In addition, the nature of artists, and key informants, are famous and senior. So, the researcher is necessary to access information properly.

**Results and discussion**

**Professor Silpa Bhirasri and Silpakorn University**

Professor Silpa Bhirasri, Thai name of Italian man, called Professor Corrado Feroci was born on 15th September, 1892 at San Giovanni in Florence, Italy. His parents were Artudo Feroci, father and Santina Feroci, mother. His merchant family was in moderate
status. Professor Silpa Bhirasri graduated from Institute of Art Santa Croce in Florence, Italy when he was 23 years old, he got the certificate of sculptor-painter, and he could also qualify to be a professor with the position of first honor in the examination. He was praised to be young professor who won many competitions including the competition of Siamese (Thai) medal design in Europe. Furthermore, he was selected by the Italian government according to King Rama VI’s request. So, Professor Silpa Bhirasri worked as a sculptor in the Fine Arts Department in Thailand in 1923.

“Fine Arts School” was established in 1934 in order to educate art subjects for Thai officials and people gradually and this section served working of Fine Arts Department. Later, this school change to the new name, “Silpakorn School” which Professor Silpa was a director using the educational style of European academy focused on basic practice, abilities in producing the realistic work by the main information of nature.

Then, “Silpakorn School” curriculum and upgraded to be “Silpakorn University” on 12th October 1943 opened only one faculty was the faculty of Paintings and Sculpture. Professor became the first Dean of the faculty. Later, there were the faculty of Architecture, the faculty of Archaeology and the faculty of Decoration in order.

Though during the World War II in 1942, the problem occurred because Japanese Force passed in Thailand, and arrested every Italians including Professor Silpa as a prisoner of war after Italy surrendered the alliance. The solution of Luang Wijitvatthakarn, Director-general of Fine Arts Department, negotiated to free him successfully, at last he had his name changed from Corrado Feroci to Silpa Bhirasri to accord with the change of nationality, from Italian to Thai.

He married Fanni Viviani and had two children later; a daughter called Isabella, and a son called Romano. After the Second World War, Professor took his family back to Italy because of the terrible economy, he quit the work from Fine Arts Department. Later, Thai government requested him to work and he felt living in Thailand as hometown. In 1949, he decided to separate from his wife and children because his family did not want him to work in Thailand. So, he came back to Thailand only one. In 1959 he remarried Malini Kenny, Thai woman, without children and had a blissful life with her until the end of his life in 1962.

The significant works of Professor Silpa Bhirasri appeared both of art work and art academic as following:

Art work such as Sculpting The Memorial War at Porto Ferraio in Italy, Model Sculpting and controlling the mold of the Monument of King Rama I in Bangkok (1929-1932), designing the sculpture of Phra Srisakaya Tossapollayan Prathan Buddha Monthon Suthad, at Buddhamonthon District in Nakorn Pathom (1941), King Rama VI, Lumpini Garden, Bangkok (1941), etc. including many distinguished monuments and statues were sketched by him, such as the Monument of Democracy (1938-1940), the Monument of H.R.H. Prince Mahidol at Siriraj Hospital, etc.

Art Academic, he composed many text books on art in different topics such as Art (1956); Is Art Necessary? (1959); Culture and Art (1953); Contemporary Art in Thailand (1959); The Origin and Evolution of Thai Murals (1959); An Appreciation of Sukhothai Art (1962), etc. Moreover, he taught many subjects such as Sculpture, History of Art, Critic of Art, etc. (Pongrapeeporn, 1993, Kumvilai, 2008)

Professor Silpa’s charismatic leadership

The researcher classifies Professor Silpa’s charismatic leadership in three types in order: 1) Characteristics, intelligence, and behaviors 2) The Nature of language usage in communication; and 3) View and vision (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996 cited in Wittayaudom, 2005:141)

1) Characteristics, intelligence, and behaviors
The researcher collects the storytelling and the interview of Professor Silpa’s students for being considered together with documents expressing that Professor Silpa was intelligent, diligent, responsible, patient, and generous in ethics. The students respected him like their father. He could give advices and encourage the students for working and living. He always offered good chances and forgave the students. Sometimes he gave money to help the students or paid before getting the official budget. He had strategies and tricks for controlling and giving knowledge to students with methods and metaphor in lecture. The students could understand the lessons easily. He had various emotions and a good humor. He could adapt himself matching Thai Cultural context well until he felt as a Thai who loved Thailand. These excerpts following showed some characteristics of Professor Silpa’s Charismatic Leadership:

**Excerpt 1** Attawee Srisawas (Kumvilai, 2008:462)

“Supposing to be your father, the father has always to teach a child in good behavior, if the child don’t obey and do the bad things. Others will blame or abuse us, they don’t abuse only you but they will blame the father that I don’t teach my son to become a good person, is it right, guy?”

**Excerpt 2** Wichai Apaisuwan (Kumvilai,2008:620)

Professor Silpa tells Khun Luang (means a title of nobleman or person works for the royalty) Manop, “my figure is foreigner but, my spiritual life belongs to be Thai and deeply, I am human being, Khun Luang”. As Khun Luang Manop answers at once, “But the human like professor being a genius.”

2) The nature of language usage in communication

Professor Silpa had the rhetoric and the intelligence of speaking and writing. He could blame students cleverly and could communicate in multilingual such as English, French, Thai and Italian (native language). However, he spoke Thai not as well as the native people, he could communicate and select the sharp wording according to the period. Sometimes, he said jokingly or teased his students with attention.

**Excerpt 3** Chamruang Wichiankett (the interview on 31st January,2009)

Some students worked improbably, a student changed his style to copy the western style. When Professor Silpa saw the student’s work, he said to me, “Look! That is a toilet, guy.” Professor Silpa compared the art work which expressed too much, too realistic, it is not good so, we have to do sufficiently.

**Excerpt 4** Quotes of Professor Silpa Bhirasri when students visit him at the hospital (Kumvilai,2008)

“Guy...if I’m dead, you miss me, you love me, do nothing...you just work.”

3) View and Vision which is worldwide and open.

Professor Silpa planned and prepared the development plan in the future. He was also a pioneer of art field by reasonable perspective and concepts, remind the value and the conserve the ancient art including to invent the new education style of “Research” and “Art critic” in the curriculum of Silpakorn University. Nevertheless, he innovated to arrange the First National Exhibition of Art in 1949 and propose to set the project of National Art Gallery.

**Excerpt 5** Poon Ketchamras (Kumvilai, 2008:111)

During the time in the air raid shelter, the voice of bombs does not happen. “Bomb coming! Bomb Coming!”, Professor Silpa says when we see above. He pretend to walk strongly at the edge of the air raid shelter then, he laughs in good humor and asks, “some water? Is it hot? ” He says to the students in the shelter kindly later, he says, “I have to work, I’ll make a copy of documents for lectures becoming two sets reserved. In case, a set will be
damaged by bombs, the other one still rest for teaching further.” His way of documentary copy was made by handwrite with pens and pencils although, it is difficult to find the stationery during the World War, he used various pencils in red, green, any colors which he could rarely find. But he is diligent to write by his own hands.

The organizational cultures of Silpakorn University

The organizational Cultures of Silpakorn University are divided into 3 types as following: material symbols, verbal symbols and action symbols, according to Alvesson & Berg, 1992:86 cited in Wongvaisayawan, 1997:167).

1) material symbols: The symbolic color of Silpakorn University is veridian green. The statue of Professor Silpa Bhirasri, contained a part of his ashes, at the faculty of Painting and sculpture.

2) verbal symbols: the stories about Professor Silpa life especially, his quotes, “Tomorrow is too late.” The motto of Silpakorn University is “Ars Longa Brevis Vita”, the anthem of Silpakorn University in Italian version is “Santa Lucia” which he liked to sing frequently while he was working. Maybe, he would sing in the party when the students requested him to sing a song. Later, this song was composed in Thai version with the same rhythm in title of “Silpakorn Niyom” (means to Appreciation in Fine Arts).

3) action symbols: Professor Silpa Bhirasri’s Day on September 15th in every year when students did activities in particular, they light the candle in front of the statue of Professor Silpa while they are singing the songs, “Santa Lucia”, and “Silpakorn Niyom” among members of Silpakorn University, including artists. the founder, and critic in current event. The values and concepts of students are to work hard and have individuality as artist.

Leadership of Professor Silpa Bhirasri in Silpakorn University

The researcher analyze the leadership according to the conceptual framework of the research in 3 items followings: 1) Roles of Professor Silpa Bhirasri in Silpakorn University show that he had the power and the authority as an executive and an operator. All the term of his working in 1923-1962, he functioned in Thai official, a founder of art curriculum, a selector of students, an art academic instructor, a dean of two faculties (Painting-Sculpture and decoration) in the same time. 2) Charismatic Characters of Silpa Bhirasri was intelligent, talented, elegant, expertise of art in both theories and acting. He was praised to be genius by colleagues and he could communicate in multilingual. He could correspond with sharp wording for the solution by accident. Remarkably, he has a worldwide vision and progressive concept, in addition to put the new style of study at that time: research and art critic. He collected the text books and wrote the academic art writing and new textbooks including to practice the students getting all: general subjects, English and art academic. Significantly, he looked a role model working with diligence and ethics. And 3) Genre of Influential creation, for this research means to Professor Silpa’s positive influence according to charismatic leadership in ethics. Professor Silpa created the influence impacting of Expert power which expressed in the intelligence, personal abilities and behaviors. For Reference Power (French & Raven, 1995 cited in Wittayaudom, 2005:167-168) or called “Moral and Social Power” (Etzioni cited in Tosi, 1978:75 Wittayaudom, 2005:166-168) was to behave oneself as role model being acceptable from students or others. (Yawiraj, 2007:159-160). He gave advices, suggested, treated, educated, and acted as father caring for children. In order to build the dynamic power, the inspiration, the spirit, the value and the impulse of pushing others to reach the goal.
Leadership and the creation of organizational culture in Silpakorn University

Professor Silpa Bhirasri who had the charismatic leadership could urge subordinates and organizational members directly and indirectly. The organizational culture of Silpakorn University will inherit by generation, though, new students have never met Professor Silpa Bhirasri indirectly. They could perceive the organizational culture in symbolic information transferred by the students under Professor Silpa’s motivation in the direct way. (Witttayaudom, 2005:166)

The researcher studied the direction of Silpakorn University’s organizational culture got influenced from Professor Silpa Bhirasri by two ways: the direct way and the indirect way (Witttayaudom, 2005: 148)

- **The Direct way** that Professor Silpa specified to use for mode of practices and concepts of work. Professor Silpa Bhirasri expressed by action as a role model, writing and teaching to students who studied and obtained the information directly, for instance, the curriculum of art academic, the competition of National Art exhibition, Modern Art Gallery, concept and philosophy of work

- **The Indirect way** that Professor Silpa’s behaviors and concepts expressed to his students in the period of his still alive directly. So, the students memorized them and adapted the memory related to Professor Silpa to set shared assumptions, action, and concepts following the founder’s thoughts and teachings for satisfaction of Professor Silpa both in alive time and after his death for instance, the song of Santa Lucia which was the favourite song of Professor Silpa, the song of Silpakorn Niyom expressing Professor Silpa’s teachings about human beings, and practices, etc. The students appreciated to do following his leader whom they respected very much.

Thai social context impacts to Professor Silpa’s leadership and the creation of organizational culture of Silpakorn University

Thai social context in 1923-1962 is arranged to be external factors of organization which defined style and content of Silpakorn University. There were many changes and problems because of Thai social context in both of general situations and Traditional Culture following some samples partly

- In General Situation especially politics : During the World War II in 1942, Japanese army, setting in Thailand, declared to capture Italians as prisoners of war because Italian army withdrew from Axis group defeated in the war. Luang Wijitwatakarn as Director-general of Fine Arts Department, negotiated to Japanese Government for freeing Professor Silpa and changed his nationality including renamed into Thai, Silpa Bhirasri.

- In Thai Culture: a traditional belief that whoever poses as a model for portrait sculpting, that person may die soon. This belief became his problem of working. At the first time in Thailand, Professor Silpa worked inconveniently because the ancient Thai beliefs. In addition, the design of the Monument of King Rama VI at the front of Lumpini Garden, he set a hat in hand of the King’s statue, but some conservative officials oppose this style in the reason of King Rama VI being hot without wearing the hat. He faced many problems of working because of the ancient beliefs, sometimes he tried to compromise or to explain the reasons.
Figure 2: Findings Model of the study of Professor Silpa Bhirasri and organizational culture of Silpakorn University

Conclusion

Leadership is significant to organizational management especially the founder who establish in basis. If the good beginning can control the direction probably, the organization will develop rapidly and stably. Professor Silpa Bhirasri acted as the role of Charismatic Leadership obviously, he had the outstanding character, the intelligence, the talents, the expertise until he was accepted in the art circles of internal and external organization, the national and international society. In addition, he was able to communicate multilingual in speaking, writing and expressing in good behavior for motivation, direction and suggestion for all levels of people from the national leaders to subordinates. Professor Silpa Bhirasri had a worldwide vision and created the innovation of learning in new styles for art circles in Thailand.

Professor Silpa Bhirasri acted as a role model and charismatic leadership in ethics. Thus, he was designated as “Father of Thai Modern Art”. The charismatic qualities influence in positive ways to his students and co-workers to accept and keep faith in his behaviors and teachings. Moreover, the organizational culture of Silpakorn University has been formed because of Professor Silpa’s creative influence by direct and indirect way. Whether the leader exists in the organization, the organizational members still hold the shared assumptions and the norms by generations. Remarkably, insiders and outsiders can perceive the manifestations of organizational cultures expressing the strength which can reach the success.

References


Goal setting for learning English language of EFL students

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Abstract

This study investigated goal setting for learning English language of Bangkok University students. A set of questionnaires for the assessment of goal settings and problems of learning English was administered to 370 second-year students. The study revealed that the goal setting was at a moderate level. There were statistically significant differences found in the students’ opinions for goal setting at .05 level as classified by gender, faculty, and English learning experience, but no statistically significant differences in terms of educational background. Moreover, there was a positive relationship between English background knowledge and goal setting at .05 level. There was a negative relationship between English background knowledge and problems of learning English at .05 level. In addition, there was a negative relationship between goal setting and problems of learning English at .05 level.

Background of the study

Due to economic and political interaction with English speaking countries, there is growing popularity for and parental emphasis upon learning English in Thailand. English has long been a required course for all Thai students; however, only one percent of the Thai population has fluent English listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities (Wongprom, 2003). During my experience with university students, I noticed that students came to class with different perceptions about the English language. Some students came with high enthusiasm for learning and set learning goals by themselves whereas others did not consider the English language a very appealing subject. These students lack motivation, enthusiasm, practice, good attitudes towards the English language that greatly affect their English efficiency. Most Thai students have performed poorly because of these inner feelings (Masang, 1989).

The concept of goal setting has been a central concern of scholars in education and language learning in particular. A goal reflects one's purpose and refers to quantity, quality, or rate of performance (Locke & Latham, 1990). Setting goals can help students make the connection between their own personal choices and the end results. First, goals motivate students to exert effort necessary to meet task demands. Second, goals direct their attention to relevant task features, behaviors to be performed, and potential outcomes. Finally, goals help them focus on the task, select and apply appropriate strategies, and monitor goal progress. Schunk (1990) pointed out that when students enter learning activities with goals and self-efficacy for goal attainment, they observe their own performances and evaluate their own goal progress. When students perceive satisfactory goal progress, they feel capable of improving their skills; goal attainment, coupled with high self-efficacy, leads students to set new challenging goals.

Some research shows that setting goals and making commitments to achieving goals increases motivation and performance (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Latham & Locke, 2002).
students set and write their goals for learning by themselves, they will keep concentrating on their goals and achieve greater success (Suwan, 2003). In other words, they need to be able to make their own decisions and guide their own behavior. In many countries, it was found out that ninety percent of successful students are those who have learning goals and proper methods of learning (Jamornmarn, 1995). Therefore, teachers should provide opportunities for students to select their own goals to boost intrinsic motivation and increase self-efficacy (Slavin, 2003).

In order to improve English proficiency, students should be assisted in developing goal-setting skills which will help them learn how to manage their time, make better decisions and take ownership of their own academic progress. Thus, the purpose of this research was to study students’ goal setting for learning English with the hope that the findings might help them develop their goal-setting skills in the future.

**Purposes of the study**

1. To study students’ goal setting for learning English and problems of learning English.
2. To compare goal setting for learning English of students with different background (i.e. gender, school, educational background, and English learning experience).
3. To investigate the relationship between the relationship between English background knowledge and goal setting for learning English.
4. To investigate the relationship between English background knowledge and problems of learning English.
5. To investigate the relationship between goal setting for learning English and problems of learning English.

**Literature review**

1. **Bandura’s social cognitive theory**

   Bandura’s social cognitive theory provides a framework for understanding, predicting, and changing human behavior. Bandura (1986) bases his theory on the acquisition of complex behaviors on a triangular diagram illustrating the interactive effect of three factors: the behavior, the environmental factors, and the personal factors in the form of cognition, affect, and biological events. The relationship between these three factors involves the influences of a person’s perceptions and actions. First, the interaction between the person and behavior involves the influences of a person’s thoughts and actions. Second, the interaction between the person and the environment involves human beliefs and cognitive competencies that are developed and modified by social influences and structures within the environment. Last, the interaction between the environment and behavior involves a person’s behavior determining the aspects of their environment and in turn their behavior is modified by that environment.

   **Figure 1:** Diagram of the Social Cognitive Theory (Pajares, 2002)
Bandura (1986) divides goal setting into four types: specific, challenging, short-term, and realistic goals.

1. Specific goals represent a managerial commitment to achieving specific performance targets with a specific time frame. The goals should be straightforward and emphasize what we want to happen and what we are going to do. Specific goals raise performance because they specify the amount of effort required for success.

2. Challenging goals ought to serve as a tool for stretching us to reach our full potential; this means setting them high enough to be challenging to energize us and our strategy. Easy goals do not motivate. However, the challenging goals that we set need to be practical and achievable. If our goals are so challenging, they will become impossible, and we will easily be discouraged.

3. Short-term goals are ones that you will achieve in the near future. They are achieved more quickly. The achievement of these goals are unlikely to increase motivation levels and improvements.

4. Realistic goals describe objectives that are specific with respect to magnitude and time. Realistic, in this case, means "do-able." Realistic goals are like stair steps to our mission, vision and reality.

2. Related research

Cheung (2004) used goal setting as motivational tool in self-regulated learning in college students. This study discussed the components of academic self-management which included motivation, methods of learning, physical environment, and social environment. Participants were 182 final year undergraduate students with computing major. They were invited to complete the questionnaire which asked them to state the grade they expected to achieve in the module of Organizational Behaviour. The expected grades were then matched with actual results at the end of the semester. Twenty of the participants were invited to participate in the focus group in discussing what are their barriers in goal setting. It concluded that the use of individual goal setting accompanied with appropriate feedback and teacher support is crucial in building effective motivational approaches and self-regulatory learning strategies in enhancing academic success.

Cunningham, Krull, Land, and Russell (2000) used goal-setting and self-evaluation techniques to improve self-efficacy in the students in kindergarten through fifth grade. This action research project implemented and evaluated a program to improve students' lack of effort and use of ineffective learning strategies. Participants were students in one kindergarten class, one second-grade class, one high ability fourth-grade class and one high ability fifth-grade class in a Midwest suburban school. Student and teacher surveys indicated the need to reduce six target behaviors: (1) reliance upon seeking help; (2) lack of metacognition; (3) failure to learn from mistakes; (4) quitting; (5) producing poor quality work; and (6) apathy. Goal-setting and self-evaluation techniques were implemented to improve self-efficacy in the students. Specific interventions included: (1) authentic evaluation (teacher observation checklists); (2) student self-evaluation; (3) student initiated academic goal-setting, and (4) student self-regulation of goal achievement. Specific interventions were implemented over a 12-week period. Improvement was measured by a series of student surveys and teacher observation checklists. In kindergarten and second grade, findings of the surveys and checklists indicated substantial improvement in the focus areas of persistence, problem solving, motivation, and accuracy. In fourth and fifth grades, findings of student surveys remained consistent, while the teacher observation checklists showed some improvement in the focus areas.
Bogolin, Harris, and Norris (2003) used goal setting to improve student writing. This research showed that students often lack the ability to set appropriate goals for their learning. The students in this study did not take ownership in their education, and expected teachers to make decisions for them. The students in the study were fifth grade students in middle class communities in the Midwest. Analysis of probable cause data revealed that students were unable to foresee their future, and therefore do not construct long-term goals. Children who did attempt to set academic goals for themselves were unable to do so realistically. Because students were not involved in keeping track of their progress, they had a misconstrued perception of their writing ability. A review of solution strategies revealed that by setting their own goals in writing, students were more likely to be motivated and take ownership in their learning. When tracking progress, students were more goal-oriented and had the ability to see their writing progress and create further goals. Students who continued to see success of their writing goals had a higher level of self-efficacy. The results of this research revealed an increase in student writing ability. Appendixes contain a staff goal-setting survey with results; a student goal-setting survey with results; a persuasive/expository paper rubric; a narrative paper rubric; a parent goal-setting survey with results; expository and narrative writing prompts; a student goal chart; a parent post goal-setting survey with results; a student post goal-setting survey with results; and a letter to parents.

In Thailand, Sungthong (1996) studied the effect of cooperative reading with group goal setting on the Thai language reading comprehension. The subjects comprised of 32 students in Chumchonkhongwitaya School. They were selected by simple random sampling and divided into experimental group and control group. Each of which consisted of 16 students. The students in the experimental group were trained to read by using cooperative reading with group goal setting. The students in the control group were trained to read by using traditional method. The subjects were taught sixteen sessions within 8 weeks. Each session lasted 60 minutes. The reading comprehension post-test by the researcher were administered after the experiment. The t-test was utilized for data analysis. The result demonstrated that the students in the experiment group obtained higher reading comprehension scores for the post-test than those in the control group.

Research methodology

1. Subject

The subjects who took part in this survey were Bangkok University students in Thailand. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to formulate a sample of 370 second-year students from 9 faculties who were taking EN211 (Intermediate English) course.

2. Research instrument

The instrument used for collecting data was a three-part questionnaire which was used to collect the data in order to find out student’s goal setting for learning English and the relationship between their goal setting for learning English and problems of learning English.

The first part gathered personal information from the respondents who are asked to answer the questions on gender, school, educational background, English learning experience, and English background knowledge. This general background might have something to do with students’ goal setting.

The second part was a survey of goal setting. To respond this part, the respondents were asked to check their methods for setting goals: specific, challenging, short-term, and realistic goals.

The last part concerned the respondents’ problems of learning English. The questionnaire was prepared for rating in a form of five-rating scale.
3. Data analysis

The acceptable statistical significance level was set at alpha (α) < .05. After the receipt of the completed questionnaires, the data were statistically analyzed by using SPSS 12.0 for Windows through the following steps:

1. The data of personal information were brought to calculate for average means.
2. The data of goal setting and problems of learning English were brought to calculate for average means and standard deviation.
3. A t-test and a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test were used to compare the students’ goal setting for learning English regarding gender, school, educational background, and English learning experience. Then Scheffe was used to test a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of any two groups.
4. A t-test and a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test were used to compare the students’ problems of learning English regarding gender, school, educational background, and English learning experience. Then Scheffe was used to test a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of any two groups.
5. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient test was used to investigate the relationship between goal setting for learning English and problems of learning English.

Results

1. Results of fundamental analysis

The average means of goal setting for learning English and problems of learning English were used to find appropriate mean range based on the criterion of X±.5SD. The results were presented in Tables 1-2.

1.1 Level of goal setting for learning English language

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of goal setting for learning English language of Bangkok University students shown in all items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal setting for learning English</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Specific goals</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Challenging goals</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Short-term goals</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Appropriate and realistic goals</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.36</strong></td>
<td><strong>.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>moderate</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study revealed that the overall goal setting for learning English language of Bangkok University students was at a moderate level (X = 3.36). Among four items of goal setting for learning, the highest mean was challenging goals (X = 3.58), followed by appropriate and realistic goals (X = 3.36), and by short-term goals (X = 3.27). The lowest mean was specific goals (X =3.23).
1.2 Level of problems of learning English

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of problems of learning English of Bangkok University students shown in all items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems of learning English</th>
<th>$\bar{X}$</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>.63</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Personal problems</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Language skills</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Textbook and teaching equipment</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Classroom</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average mean of problems of learning English was at moderate level ($\bar{X} = 2.79$). Among five items of goal setting for learning, the highest means of problems of learning English were language skills ($\bar{X} = 3.20$), followed by classroom ($\bar{X} = 3.14$), personal problems ($\bar{X} = 2.64$), and textbook and teaching equipment ($\bar{X} = 2.62$) respectively. All of the items fell on moderate level. The lowest mean was teacher ($\bar{X} = 2.36$).

2. Results of hypothesis testing

2.1 Hypothesis 1 compared students’ goal setting for learning English with different background information

Hypothesis 1 was partially accepted because not all variables of background information affected students’ goal setting. According to the results of the comparison of the mean scores of goal setting, there was no statistically significant difference found in the students’ goal setting in terms of educational background at level of .05. This means that background information had no impact on their goal setting. Goal setting of the students with different background information (secondary school, vocational school, and non-formal education) was not different.

However, there were statistically significant differences found in the students’ goal setting at .05 level as classified by gender, school, and English learning experience. First, there was statistically significant difference found in the students’ overall goal setting in terms of gender at .05 level. That is, female students set higher goals than male students. Second, there was statistically significant difference found in the students’ overall goal setting in terms of school at .05 level. The overall goal setting of students in different schools was different. It was found out that students from School of Humanities set higher goals than students from other schools. Finally, there was statistically significant difference found in the students’ overall goal setting in terms of English learning experience at .05 level. That is, the overall goal setting of students with different English learning experience was different. Students who had studied English for more than 12 years set higher goals than the two other groups (7-12 years and less than 6 years).

2.2 Hypothesis 2 investigated the relationship among English background knowledge, goal setting for learning English, and problems of learning English

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient test was used to find out whether there was a statistically significant relationship among English background knowledge, goal
setting for learning English, and problems of learning English. The results were shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlations among students’ English background knowledge, goal setting for learning, and problems of learning English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>English background knowledge</th>
<th>goal setting for learning English</th>
<th>problems of learning English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English background knowledge</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goal setting for learning</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problems of learning English</td>
<td>-.22*</td>
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2.2.1 The relationship between English background knowledge and goal setting for learning English

There was a positive relationship between English background knowledge of Bangkok University students and their goal setting for learning English at .05 level. In other words, students who had high grades tended to set high goals for learning. On the other hand, students who had low grades tended to set low goals for learning.

2.2.2 The relationship between English background knowledge and problems of learning English

There was a negative relationship between English background knowledge of Bangkok University students and their problems of learning English at .05 level. In other words, students who had high grades tended to have less problems of learning English. On the other hand, students who had low grades tended to have more problems of learning English.

2.2.3 The relationship between goal setting for learning English and problems of learning English

There was a negative relationship between goal setting for learning English of Bangkok University students and their problems of learning English at .05 level. In other words, students who set high goals tended to have less problems of learning English. On the other hand, students who set low goals tended to have more problems of learning English.

Conclusion

This study attempted to investigate Bangkok University second-year students’ goal setting for learning English language, factors affecting goal setting for learning English, and relationships among English background knowledge, goal setting for learning English and problems of learning English. The statistical analyses revealed that the overall goal setting for learning English language of these students was at the moderate level. In addition, the correlation analysis revealed that the students who set high goals tended to have less problems of learning English while those who set low goals tended to have more problems of learning English. Therefore, teachers should help their students to set their own learning goals and encourage them to demonstrate effective planning, time management, and purposeful behavior in order to achieve enhanced learning outcomes. More emphasis should be placed on the students who are male, non-English majored, and less-experienced in English since these students tended to
set lower goals than female, English majored, and more experienced English students respectively.

References
Teaching writing to undergraduate students: top twenty writing flaws

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From my experience in teaching writing at the undergraduate level, I find that one of the common complaints of first year composition students is that they are judged so critically on the mechanics of their writing, but that they do not feel that they have been properly taught how to avoid these types of errors. However, a course in essay writing assumes that the student has a command, and not simply a basic understanding, of grammar. Thus we arrive at an impasse; the professor’s desire to teach writing at the essay level is waged against the student’s desire to improve his or her writing at the sentence and paragraph levels. This paper attempts to bridge these two agendas by showing effective ways of teaching these students to solve this problem without going into the trouble of reading a large bulk of grammar prose. This is done by first showing them how sentence and paragraph-level errors directly impact the grades they receive on their papers, and secondly, by providing them with a practical checklist of the most committed flaws and different and efficient ways to eliminate them. Limiting the flaws to only twenty in order of importance, from the most serious flaw to the least fatal one, will not only help students focus on the major problems they face in writing, but it will also provide them with more focused exercises to learn how to eliminate these flaws from their writing once and for all.

The following steps can be followed by teachers to help students eliminate their flaws in writing:

1. Present the grammar in a compact and easy-to-follow format: when faced with a large bulk of grammatical prose, students get often intimidated about having to read lengthy sections of grammar and stylistic prose in order to understand some of the difficulties they are having with writing. Although there are many books and handbooks that deal with improving the writing of college and university students, the approach and language used in these books are sometimes too complicated for students to understand, and they are often without practical exercises. The teacher, therefore, should try and find an appropriate curriculum that is accessible to students who might get bogged down by complex grammatical prose and who want an easy and quick checklist to their most common writing flaws.

2. Provide a checklist of the most fatal mistakes the students normally commit: Limiting the number of flaws to the top twenty will focus the course on these specific writing flaws and on the mistakes they usually commit and have to get rid of. Limiting the flaws to only twenty will not only narrow down and thus put better focus on eliminating these writing problems, but it will also provide enough space and time for exercises and application, so students have time to check the exercises with their teachers and make sure they have learnt to eliminate the flaws.

3. Order the flaws in terms of importance: Giving a hierarchy to the flaws is essential as it limits the students’ concentration on a certain number of flaws, and this will make them concentrate more on the mistakes they commit the most. They will learn the most fatal mistakes i.e., mistakes in which their papers or essays will surely get a failing grades compared to those less serious mistakes, which even if students commit, they can still get a passing grade.
4. Concretize the flaw: using names like “coordinating conjunctions”, “dangling modifiers” and other complicated grammatical jargon might sound hard for students to memorize. Our undergraduate students do not have to retain these names unless of course they plan to become grammar teachers themselves. Therefore, it is important that teachers exert time in making them “understand” these terms by bringing a lot of examples so that the problem becomes tangible to them. Sometimes creating acronyms to difficult concepts would make them understand the grammatical term i.e., FANBOYS is usually used to replace the more complicated term “coordinating conjunctions”.

5. Give as many options for the elimination of the flaw as you can: always provide students with a list of options on how to eliminate their writing flaws, so that if they are not comfortable with one option, they can turn to the other one, and so on. This helps them vary their sentence structures, and learn that the English language is so rich in its variety and its sentence combinations that one can write one thing correctly in many different ways.

6. Provide students with real examples to support a grammatical rule: use examples from the students’ writings; the more examples they are provided with, the higher are the chances that they will not forget the rule and retain it for a longer time. Also, instead of bringing far-fetched examples from topics they will never tackle in their school and college books, it is better to vary the examples across curricula and bring them with “real” mistakes; mistakes that they or their classmates usually commit.

7. Give students time to practice in-class and out of class: The more exercises the students do, the more comfortable they become with how to correct a flaw. Ample exercises have to given in-class, but the teacher has to make sure to give students enough practice at home. Of course, the teacher has to make sure that these exercises are thoroughly corrected and given back to the students.

What are these top twenty flaws? From my experience in teaching writing at the undergraduate level, I have gathered many examples of flaws, but the most common ones are the following ones listed below and ordered according to a hierarchy of importance. Of course, the hierarchy is debatable among teacher: one professor might think that the weak beginning is worse than the agreement error, or another might argue that misspelling should come first in hierarchy. Thus, what I present here is what I believe are the most important flaws regardless whether the gradation is debatable or not:

1. Plagiarism: this is by far the most serious flaw. Students have to be warned in any writing course they take that plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty in which a student takes either the words or the ideas of another writer without acknowledging where these words or ideas come from. Of the twenty writing flaws listed here, this one is the most fatal because it is a dishonest act and entails penalties not only in the academic environments but in all professions, as well as in copyright law. Plagiarism is considered a kind of theft or a serious academic fraud, and so the consequences of plagiarism are serious and might lead not only to failure in the course, but the act could be so looked down that the student can risk being dismissed from college or university. In either case, there is a permanent record of the student’s plagiarism. Students should also be aware that professors know about the essays purchased from on-line databases and are familiar with these websites, so they have no problem in tracking down plagiarized essays. Students have to be taught what cases imply plagiarism. Most of my students in advanced writing courses are usually surprised to know that paraphrasing or restating the word of someone is also considered plagiarism. They think that since they did the rewording
themselves, they are exempt from plagiarism. Therefore, it is essential to explain to them that they will be committing an act of plagiarism in the following case:

1. When they take a phrase, sentence or a whole passage from another writer without using the proper quotation marks.
2. When they summarize a passage from a writer’s work without acknowledging the borrowing.
3. When they paraphrase a passage from a writer’s work without acknowledging the borrowing.
4. When they try to slant or distort the words of the author or scholar you are using in a summary or paraphrase.
5. When they purchase a paper or a research paper online from a term-paper mill and submit it as their own.
6. When another student or a person they know or they are related to writes the research paper for them or helps them in the organization, the ideas or the language, and they do not acknowledge that in their paper.

2. The Incomplete or Weak Thesis Statement: Most students get a failing grade in their essays because they have no point to prove; the essay lacks an effective thesis. Students need to know that whatever the reasons they are writing for are, the essay must be governed by a controlling or a leading idea—a thesis. The thesis provides the focus of an essay, so that all the other ideas and information presented should be related in some way or another to the thesis. Without a clear thesis, the paper will split apart into scattered fragments with no clear connection between its paragraphs and no clear point to be made. An essay without a point to prove (a thesis) is a pointless endeavor.

Another thing that students always have a problem with is where to place the thesis. There is no rule as to where the thesis statement should be placed because where you put the thesis depends on your objectives, your audience, your purpose and your paper’s organization. However, the most common position for the thesis statement is near the beginning of a paper. It can be the first sentence of an essay, although that often feels like a simplistic and unexciting beginning. It more frequently appears at or near the end of the first paragraph. Although there are other locations for the thesis statement, students need to know that readers like a clear sense of what is going on; and so placing the thesis in the first paragraphs controls the paper and provides the reader from the beginning with the point of their essay and its relevance.

3. Sentence Fragments: Sentence fragments are major grammatical errors that can penalize students’ grade dramatically. This flaw is more common in in-class essays and final exams than on take-home papers, mostly because students tend to make them when their minds are skipping back and forth between ideas. The best way to eliminate fragments is to remind students that they need to make sure that all the sentences composing their essays must have independent clauses. An independent clause has a subject, verb and a direct or indirect object. Moreover, the sentence has to contain a finite verb. When students find a fragment, they can correct it by supplying the missing sentence part: the subject, verb, or independent clause. Students need to be given many concrete examples to understand the meaning of “sentence fragment” in addition to examples on how to correct and eliminate them.

4. Agreement Errors: This chronic flaw with agreement, whether it is subject-verb agreement or pronoun antecedent agreement will almost always prevent a paper from receiving a passing grade, so it is extremely important to teach students the various situations in which agreement errors most commonly occur.
Subject verb agreement errors are those that occur when the verb does not match the subject in person (first, second, or third) and number (singular or plural). Making subjects and verbs agree is rarely difficult for students except in the certain situation that might confuse them about where the verb is. For example, when there are phrases between subjects and verbs that come between them. In the sentence, “the number of the essay’s errors startles me”, the prepositional phrase “of the essay’s errors” should be ignored when deciding where the verb is. The subject of the sentence is “number”, and so the verb should be singular: startles. Students need to be told that if they looked specifically for the subject and verb, the error would probably be obvious and the correction easy, so to find and fix subject/verb agreement errors, students need to look systematically for the subjects and the verbs in their sentences.

As for pronoun agreement errors, these occur when a pronoun refers to more than one antecedent, instead of only one; i.e., it is unclear which of the two or more words in the context the intended antecedent is. For example, “When John visited his father, he had a cold.” It is not clear whether “he” refers to John or his father. Pronoun errors also occur when the pronoun does not have an antecedent at all. For example, the sentence “They do not manufacture cars in the Middle East” contains a pronoun error since they is a pronoun that does not have an antecedent. An antecedent is the word a noun or another pronoun refers to. If the antecedents of the pronouns in students’ essays are not clear, their writing will not be clear. Additionally, pronouns should refer to one specific word or group of words, never to an entire sentence or an entire concept. If there is no such word or group of words (that is, if a pronoun has no antecedent), then a reference pronoun error exists.

5. Comma Splice and Fused Sentences: The comma splice and the fused sentence are two serious grammatical errors that occur frequently in students’ essays. The comma splice occurs when a writer attempts to join two sentences with a comma. In a run-on or fused sentence, two independent statements are thrown together without any attempt to punctuate at all. Comma splices and fused sentences are types of run-on sentences because they are run together sentences that should be separated. Students need to be given many examples on how to eliminate these two connected flaws as well as many exercises on them as these two flaws influence also punctuation.

6. Weak Beginnings and Rushed Conclusions: The most disappointing thing a teacher experiences when correcting essays is to read an introduction which immediately puts off the whole reading experience, or when he or she gets to the conclusion of the essay and finds that it is only a sentence or two in length. It is sadly true that students pay little attention to the beginnings and endings of their compositions. If they consider the opening and closing paragraphs at all, they treat them like luggage tags, hurriedly tied on to announce where they are going or where they have been. Beginnings and endings are much more than this. How a writer begins will determine whether his/her readers bother to go on reading the essay. Starting the essay is like starting a journey: to turn left or right will lead to very different destinations. Closings are equally important. It does little good to develop an idea through many paragraphs or even pages only to lose the reader with an abrupt and inadequate final paragraph. Students need to be given concrete examples on how to start and how to end an essay. It is also important to read articles/essays/chapters written by important scholars and take their beginnings and endings into deep consideration as models to be followed.
7. Misspelling: In general, professors have mixed feelings about this problem; although they all agree that students should be able to spell, some much more lenient than others when it comes to deducting marks for spelling mistakes on in-class and take-home essays. However, the general consensus is that while all words in a paper should be spelled correctly, misspelling fairly complex words in an in-class essay is occasionally forgivable. All other instances of misspelling, however, are not acceptable. There are certain strategies that students can adopt to become better spellers. This includes learning certain rules. It is also useful if the teacher provided a checklist of the most important misspelled words and has students study them carefully or keep writing them in a special journal or notebook.

8. The Misplaced Semi-Colons and Commas: The misplacement and the misuse of the semi-colon and commas occur in about three quarters of the papers I read during the course of a term. One of the reasons this error occurs so frequently is that as students develop their ability to write longer and more complex sentences, they run into difficulties punctuating them. They have been encouraged by previous teachers to write complex and compound sentences, but they have not always managed to get a handle on when commas and semi-colons should and should not be used. In order to eliminate these flaws altogether, one must know well the uses of the two most problematic punctuation marks. Therefore, students should also learn to edit whole paragraphs and essays to eliminate the problem altogether.

9. Padding: Padding is synonymous to wordiness i.e., using many useless words that clutter writing and make it imprecise and indirect. Good writing is simple and direct; it uses the simplest word possible that conveys the same meaning. Wordiness takes away from this clarity. Padding results from many sources. Many of us have learned to pad our writing with all sorts of empty phrases to reach length requirements for academic writing. Padding also occurs when we are struggling to clarify our ideas, or when we are tired and not thinking clearly. Consistent elimination of wordiness results in a stronger and a more concise writing style that is easier to read, and it provides fewer opportunities for misinterpretation. In contrast, a wordy style makes reading laborious and, thus, encourages skimming and leads to inattention. Students need to be given strategies to eliminate wordiness in their writing and should learn that using simple and concise language is usually more effective.

10. Tense Switching: Tense switching is a serious grammatical problem that plagues students’ essays. The most important thing about the use of tense is its consistency throughout the essay. Continuously switching back and forth between different tenses (for example, between the present and the past) is confusing and distracts the readers’ attention. It is also stylistically detrimental. A verb tense establishes the time of the action of a piece of writing. A change in tense indicates a change in time. Students usually do not have a problem with tenses when they are writing a personal narrative essay, but they often develop serious problems when they are writing a review of a book or a film. This confusion results because although they saw the film or read the book in the past, the review of these past events of the book or film should be written in the present tense.

11. Succession of Short Sentences: One thing that you would always want to remind your students is to avoid constructing a string or a series of short sentences. A student who depends solely on short sentences would create an essay which is choppy and almost child-like. Grouping together a number of short sentences is almost always a stylistic mistake. A paper containing sentences of one short pattern bores both the writer and the reader for two main reasons; first, repetition of a
single, simple sentence pattern draws attention to itself, not to the ideas in the paper. Secondly, simple, short sentences cannot show the reader the many relationships that exist among ideas of different importance. However, many students think that the longer the sentence they write, the better the sentence looks to the teacher. This is far from the truth. You do not need long, complicated sentences to show that you are a good writer. In fact, short sentences often pack the most punch. The best essays contain a variety of sentence lengths, mixed within any given paragraph. I always teach my students to read their essays out-loud, pausing at every period and to listen to the rhythm of their prose. Are all of the sentences the same length? If each of their sentences twists and turns for an entire paragraph, or they run out of breaths at any point, then this is a sign that they need to break them up into smaller statements.

12. ‘(s) or (s’); (it’s) and (its): A common mistake among students is the misuse of the possessive apostrophe ‘(s) or (s’). The position of the apostrophe in a noun (to indicate possession of something) often causes problems for students. Yet, the rules are simple. In fact, learners only need to decide whether the possessive noun (the possessor) is singular or plural and whether or not it ends in -s in its written form. Students also confuse between (It’s) and (its). The reason for this mistake is that when we are talking about something that someone owns, we use an (‘s) to indicate possession, so when we have to make a decision about whether to use (it’s) or (its) for the possessive case, we often make the mistake of thinking that we should use the one that LOOKS like a possessive, and so choose (it’s). Students should be given the rules for the possessive in all its cases and a lot of exercises to eliminate these problems.

13. The Dangling Modifier: Students need to be taught how to eliminate all types of dangling modifiers: dangling participial phrases, dangling phrases that contain gerunds, infinitive phrases and elliptical clauses.

14. Unparallel Constructions: Teachers should help students create parallelism in single and successive sentences as well as whole paragraphs, in addition to parallelism in elements joined by co-coordinating or correlative conjunctions.

15. The Giant Block Quote: The problem with block quotations used in a 5 page paper is that they are too long. Students need to be taught that they have to use block quotations sparingly. Too many of them interrupt the rhythm of their paragraphs and suggest that they are actually doing little thinking. If they find that their essay relies on too many block quotations, then they have to find the essence of those long quotations; either by summarizing or paraphrasing the essential information and only quoting the words or phrases that they need to prove their point.

16. Usage Errors: Teachers need to help students avoid being confused with the use of certain word pairs that are commonly seen as the victims in usage errors, such as “affect” and “effect”. Teachers should give students a list of word-pairs that are frequently confused and ample exercises for students to avoid confusing them.

17. The Poor Title: One of the most frustrating experiences as a professor of writing is to read a student’s well developed essay with very few mistake and fresh prose but with a very uninspired title or with simply: essay 1 or 2! The reason why students often do that is because they leave the title until their papers are due. Although it is right to leave the title till the end of the writing process to suit one’s subject matter, tone and style of writing, spending some time to think of one’s title not only completes the essay, but it also gives the impression that the writer has actually spent some quality time over his/her work.
18. The Wrong in-text Citation: teachers need to help students how to deal correctly and effectively with in-text citation, how to acknowledge the sources inside the research paper and how to use the proper quotation marks.

19. The Wrong Works Cited Page: It is very frustrating for professors to give a lower grade on the research paper of a student who has done a good job in researching and in presenting a convincing argument in the paper, but did not exert enough effort in following the correct format for writing a work cited page following the MLA citation system. The works cited is the list of works at the end of the research paper, and it plays an important role in one’s acknowledgement of sources. If one does not provide sufficiently a detailed and precise information or documentation of the sources that were used, the reader will find it hard to find these sources if they wish to expand on something the writer has written, or if they want to check these sources. The teacher in an advanced writing course should spend some time dealing with the “Works Cited” page format when referencing books, periodicals, journals, interviews, on-line sources, films with sample Works Cited entries.

20. Inadequate Revision of the Essay: If I were asked what the single worst error in a paper was, I would answer the carelessness of students who submit the essay without revising it. There are many mistakes that can be avoided if students spent more time editing their essays and proofreading them. Missing letters, extra spaces, periods instead of commas, first words that are not capitalized are not the result of ignorance but of negligence and speed.

I usually hear my colleagues in meetings arguing about the number of essays they should include in the syllabuses of their writing courses, as if we were in a writing contest or a serious competition. My respectable colleagues seem to think that the more essays these poor students are given, the more efficient writers they become. I keep wondering who taught them this fallacy; maybe their previous teachers? It is true that practice makes perfect in every field, but unless students are taught to distinguish a semi colon from a comma, or taught how to start and end their essays, or taught how to eliminate dangling modifiers, they will surely repeat the same flaws in every essay they write. It is like making a cake, if you do not have the right ingredients or you keep putting a cup of flour instead of two, your cake will never look or taste perfect, even if you keep making the cake every day. Rather then tell them to write an effective thesis statement, it is high time we show them how to write one, and not simply assume always that they were supposed to have taken this in lower classes of writing, and it is nor our responsibility to repeat these basic rules in our courses. I honestly believe that it is our role as teachers to TEACH the students to correct these flaws and make them disappear from their writing, the future of these young writers is in our hands, and the sooner we start with this, the better.
Thai civil society and the media reform movement

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Abstract

Civil society is autonomous from the state and associated with democracy. Roden (1997) described its possible involvements and activities as ranging from demonstrations and strikes to less forceful movements. Civil society is considered to be a vital context for media democratization. In this article the meaning of Thai civil society is not only restricted to civic movements that are demonstrating or criticizing specific government policies or acts characterized as “anti-state”. Instead, the characteristics of Thai civil society are more collaborative than anti-government.

The reform of Thai communication policy was initiated for more than a decade, since the 1997 Constitution. The new structure of communication regulation, especially the broadcasting media, is going to change the face of Thai communication system and industry. It was expected that the communication reform would enhance the quality of the service and content to better serve the public interest. Participatory democracy should be the direction for which the Thai public seeks. Civil participation in the development of a state policy is rarely seen, but not for the broadcasting policy reform. Applying document review and in-depth interview, this research focused on the media advocacy group and its contribution to the reform of communication regulation.

The media reform movements seek partnership among leading intellectuals, journalists and non-governmental organizations. They are mainly drawn from middle-class groups rather than local or community sectors. With their knowledge, experience and appreciation of democratic values, these media reform advocates have tried to collaborate with key policymakers to push changes in the media policy and the broadcasting structure. Thai civil society play roles and contributions during the reform process (2000-2007) emphasized that policy development should not only leave in the hands of politicians and policy makers alone.

Introduction

Civil society is a physical public sphere where people propose and discuss their viewpoints on socio-political issues (Habermas, 1989; Dahlgren, 1995). From another point of view, it is also the collective actions of the public or popular sectors outside the state which might either collaborate or challenge the state. The latter is the definition of civil society used in this study. Civil society has become the major concept used in studying democratization, especially among those who were interested in social change and shifts in the political democratic system. Participatory democracy is based on the individual role of active citizens who are aware of their rights and roles in the social transformation process.

Civil society could also be Autonomous from the state and associated with democracy. It emerges in either formal or informal organizations (a registered non-profit and non-governmental organization (NGO) or a loosely collective group, interested in the same social issues). Roden (1997) described its possible involvements and activities as ranging from demonstrations and strikes to less forceful movements. Civil society is considered to be a
vital context for media democratization. In this article the meaning of Thai civil society is not only restricted to civic movements that are demonstrating or criticizing specific government policies or acts characterized as “anti-state”. Instead, the characteristics of Thai civil society are more collaborative than anti-government.

In this article, the author explains the development of Thai civil society and the media reform movements. Thai media reform movements seek partnership among leading intellectuals, journalists and non-governmental organizations. They are mainly drawn from middle-class groups rather than local or community sectors. With their knowledge, experience and appreciation of democratic values, these media reform advocates have tried to collaborate with key policymakers to push changes in the media policy and the broadcasting structure.

Context of Thai civil society

Civil society in the Thai language is called Pracha Sangkom. Kritaya et al. (1999) gave some examples of other terms used by Thai scholars with a similar concept, such as collective society (by Prawase Wasee in 1993), strong society (by Teerayuth Boonmee in 1993), strong communities (by Chattip Nartsupha in 1994), and citizens’ ways (by Chai-Anan Samudavanija in 1996). Some Thai scholars define civil society as a group outside the state, but they also claim that the people’s sector has to be involved and participate with the state and not always be opposed to the state.

Richard Holloway (as cited in Anuchat & Kritaya, 1999, p. 289) classified civil society organizations into three groups based on their interests: (1) mutual benefit organizations, such as political parties, professional associations, labor unions, chambers of commerce, and cultural organizations; (2) public benefit organizations, such as social welfare, philanthropies, charities, rural development NGOs, and research institutes; and (3) private benefit organizations, such as illegal or criminal organizations, funding foundations for business interests, and NGOs created by the government to serve its interests.

Chuchai (1997) observed that certain factors in Thai society could challenge the emergence of civil society. First, the hierarchical structure of Thai society hinders the creation of a civil society since it is not congruent with a democratic doctrine embracing egalitarianism. A horizontal structure of a society supports the ideology of civil society. A vertical structure exits in the strongly bureaucratic Thai state, which has built its empire over a long period of time and has gradually strengthened after the end of the absolute monarchy in 1932. This bureaucratic realm has weakened the local administration and it is difficult for local civil societies to emerge.

Second, the Thai multi-party system was not created based on certain ideological standpoints or support for specific groups, neither conservative nor liberal. Unlike the Labor Party, Green Party or other socialist parties in Europe and unlike the liberal Democratic Party or conservative Republican Party in the United States, Thai political parties are established along with the power of the creator, mainly retired military men and business tycoons. For example, these include the Seri Manangkasila party of Field Marshal Pibulsonggram in the 1950s, the Chatthai party and the Chatpattana party of General Chatichai Choonhavan from the 1980s, Samakkeetham (though established by compiling several political parties, it aimed to be led by the military of NPKC in 1991), the New Aspiration Party of General Chavalit Yongchaiyudh in the late 1990s, and the Thai Rak Thai Party of Thaksin Shinawatra, a telecommunication business tycoon, in the early 2000s. Many Thai political parties, thereby, fail to become political institutions, since they were constructed to legitimize some retired military individual entering the political arena. Hence, when a new powerful leader enters politics, the newly established party catches the attention of many politicians. Suthichai Yoon (1995), a leading Thai journalist of The Nation newspaper, noted that:
the real reason for secession or a noisy declaration of independence among politicians in this country has always been the search for a new name, new leader or a new financing-project—never a serious, new professional approach towards a different set of platforms, to draw up new objectives or divergent strategies to get things done (as cited in McCargo, 1997, p. 114).

Third, the Thai educational system culturally teaches people to follow authority, as stated in the proverb: *When you follow the old man, the dog will not bite* (Dern tame pu yai, ma mai kat). Classrooms are more lecture-based than discussion-based, even in many graduate schools. Challenging teachers in class is uncommon and oftentimes viewed as aggressive in manner. The collectivistic nature of Thai culture influences people to dislike those being distinctive from their groups, as another proverb states: *Do well but do not be too distinctive otherwise you could be in trouble* (Jong tam dee, tae ya den ja pen pai). Paternalistic-cliental ideas were cultivated in Thai society through education and other social institutions. The Thai public in general believes their unsatisfied status results from following the wrong authorities; thereby, instead of refraining from following authorities they change to follow a new power center (Chuchai, 1997, pp. 9-10). This also replicates the vertical structure of relationships in Thai society, unlike civil society which is sustained by horizontal relationships.

Last, but most important is the media role in, and as, the public sphere. Since the Thai bureaucratic system does not have an effective mechanism to check and counter balance those in power, the public then relies on the media to play a watchdog role in Thai society. However, only the press can exercise its watchdog role while the broadcasting media play their role as lapdog. An important question, therefore, is: How under these unique traits of Thai society can a civil society emerge?

**The emergence of Thai civil society**

The early development of Thai civil society exists arising from critical events which have vast impacts on citizens’ lives and their whole communities. The networking and groupings of civil society, therefore, developed as ways to find solutions when people realized that they were not able to solve their critical problems alone. Chuchai (1997) explained that the gathering and networking of Thai society in the form of associations, foundations, and clubs developed around certain issues at a specific period of time after the change from an absolute monarchy to a constitutional democracy in 1932. For example, associations of Chinese immigrants in Thailand aimed to assist those immigrants from the same clans. Other examples are foundations or associations focusing on social welfare, such as the Red Cross Society and Council of Social Welfare. There were also clubs or associations composed of professionals and mutual careers, such as Lawyers Council, Medical Council, and Thai Press Council. These associations’ missions are more focused on ethical concerns of the professionals. They are not unions.

Thai civil society—civil groups situated outside government—can be traced back in the early nineteenth century, when international Christian missionaries came to Thailand for religious missions. Their activities focused on education, health care and social welfare. At the same period of time, Chinese people in Thailand also started foundations to help new and poor Chinese who migrated to Thailand during the mid 19th century. Later, the government wanted to control their influence after China changed to a communist government. Instead of hostile feedback, those foundations adjusted their activities to avoid political involvement while meeting social welfare needs. Therefore, they were seen as charitable or philanthropic associations which could partly assist state activities. These Chinese groups later established chambers of commerce and became a powerful interest group in Thai business (Kanjana, 1999).
The evolution of Thai civil society, hence, started from civic consciousness on particular issues or events, mostly problems of daily life. Organized civic groups evolved which later established networks and became institutions in society. Such problem-solution objectives were widely found in local development and social welfare associations, which were formed around small groups of people in certain areas. Later, the focal issues changed from rural development and resource allocation to environment, awareness of local and community rights, and democratization.

At the beginning, Thai civil society focused on social welfare and public benefits rather than a struggle with the state for policy making. Some organizations were even supported by state funding, such as the Red Cross society, whose early establishment aimed to help veterans but later targeted the general public, and the National Council for Social Welfare, initiated in 1960 and funded partly by the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Interior Affairs. After World War II, the government decided to legitimize various clubs, foundations and associations by promulgating the Cultural Act in 1942, which required them to register and prohibited their political involvement (Kanjana, 1999). Until the late 1960s, the civil sector spread out to stimulate the development of the local community in the villages. Some projects were initiated by groups of intellectuals. During this phase, the civil sector mainly focused on rural development, but its mission was mainly infrastructure development such as buildings, streets, and schools (TDRI, 2000). The shift of focus from philanthropy to development was partly due to the emergence of national development plans and the change in the socio-economic structure of Thailand from a domestic-oriented economy to an export-oriented economy.

The early civic movements believed that social change could be achieved without a class struggle, so social welfare, aiming for social resolution and development, gained wide support from Thai governments. Actually, there was mutual collaboration between the state and public sectors on many policy issues, but they were mainly social and economic development, not social injustice, democratic values or human rights. Several decades later the movements were separated into two tracks: a civil movement and politics in the public sphere. The former focused more on policy discussions, participations in a triple collaboration between the state, private and civil sector. Their strategies were not protests, demonstrations, or to create mobs in the streets which were the strategies used by the latter groups. Up until recently, NGOs’ activities were varied and subtle. Some even criticized other groups about their movement strategies. The critics were that during a press conference the speakers are NGOs but not people from civil sectors. This seems no different from a top-down dictatorship instead of horizontal, mutual agreement of civic groups (TDRI, 2000).

As shown in Figure 1, Thai civil movements in the early stage focused on development and welfare issues, such as providing assistance for the have-nots, mostly the poor and rural people, rather than challenging the state at a policy level. Their initiation was encouraged by governments in corresponding with the national development plans. Rigg (1991) noticed that although the National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP), started in 1961, aimed for grass-roots development to give greater responsibilities and power to those at the local level, the development plans were rarely implemented in a systematic fashion. A main factor was the nature and functions of Thai bureaucrats and the hierarchical structure of Thai society. Likewise, village society was still hierarchical and paternalistic. In spite of this, Hewison (1993) argued that “for NGOs, implementation strategies were developed …but [target] groups [were] often neglected by the state” (p. 1699).
However, challenging the state at a policy level gradually occurred after socio-political developments during the 1970s, evidenced in the 1973 student uprising. Civil movements shifted their focus to the public’s dissatisfaction with the state’s performance, unfair resource allocation, democratic awareness, freedom of expression and human rights. The 1973 political transition affected the strength of Thai civil society and a political opportunity structure was opened. Student activists, led by the Center of University Students of Thailand, assisted workers and farmers in creating unions and federations so as to protest against...
corrupt government officials and social injustice. They demanded more favorable laws and regulations as well as a redistribution of resources (LoGerfo, 1997). The NGO community in 1973 (i.e. foundations and associations both registered and non-registered) numbered around one thousand organizations. The largest group was philanthropic. But in 1989 the number of NGOs rose to more than five thousand: four large groups concentrated in education, philanthropy, social services and development, plus civil rights and advocacy groups (Amara & Nitaya, 1994, pp. 65, 87; and LoGerfo, 1997, pp. 183, 401).

In the 1990s, Thai civil society also was bolstered by changes in social and economic conditions, following the economic boom of the 1990s (see Figure 1). Such changes included the expansion of the middle class, proliferation of non-governmental organizations for social development and serving local people, development of information and communication technology and infrastructure, and the eagerness of the middle class to seek information and freedom of expression. All of these have gradually changed Thai social structure to become more horizontal than vertical (Chuchai, 1997). Yet, it should be noted that capital gains from an economic boom among the middle class in the 1990s did not result in more resources or better strategies in civil society. According to Ukrist (2001), economic development might shift the balance of class power, strengthen some social groups (particularly the private or business sector), and even create a new popular civil society, such as labor unions, professional associations and chambers of commerce. But strategic movements were designed mainly to support the economic interests of their members. Their capital assets were not employed to benefit the popular sector.

As shown in Figure 1, Thai civil society changed its focus with social, economic and political conditions. This does not mean that while one gains attention others are not active. Many of them still carried on for decades. After the May crisis in 1992, the development of Thai civil society concentrated on a community-centric civil society; particularly between 1997 and 2000 Thai NGOs motivated governmental concern for the public interest and public participation in the media (Anuchat & Kritya, 1999). The Constitution of 1997 has “equipped civil society with new powers to monitor the working process of the government, politicians and bureaucrats” (Ukrist, 2001, p. 34).

The development of Thai civil society has been around social and economic development, whereas concerns over civil rights and democratization has just been developed during the last two decades and strengthened subsequent to the 1992 May crisis. A social movement concentrating on media democratization was newly fortified into the public sphere a decade ago following the 1997 Constitution. Previously, democratic movements’ strategies focused on social injustices, corruption, and political democratization against government dictatorship. They concerned freedom of expression and basic human rights as well as democratic values. None of them concentrated on liberalization of the state-owned media system which could immensely enlarge the discourse of the public sphere in both quantity and quality. Thereby, the media reform movement can be considered to be a new social movement in comparison to other social movements, such as rural development, social welfare, environmental concerns, social injustice and human rights.

Thai media reform movement

Thai media activism existed amidst the press before it spread to the public and other civic groups; but as such it concentrated on press freedom and self-regulation. The Thai Journalist Association (TJA) and the National Press Council of Thailand are the main media advocacy groups focusing on freedom of the press. Actually, journalism associations have been active for more than four decades. Established in 2000, TJA was an organization arising from the merger of the Reporter Association of Thailand (established in 1952) and the Journalist Association of Thailand (set up in 1964) in order to avoid overlapping activities, and to
coordinate the activities of press associations concerning press freedom protection, professionalism and welfare. Members of TJA are varied, and the total of 1,500 members included both print and broadcast journalists (Thai Journalist Association, 2001). The roles of print journalists in criticizing and investigating government performance have induced almost every government to suppress their operations. Meanwhile, the Press Council monitors the quality of media practitioners and guards against any violations of the code of conduct and any unethical journalism. On the contrary, broadcasting media are seen as a mouthpiece of the government and as a commercially-oriented medium. Their role of watchdog instead of watchdog is a common perception of the broadcasting media in the eyes of the Thai public. These roles have not changed since the student movements in 1973 and 1976. After the 1973 student uprising, concerns about liberalizing media were raised, but civil society and socio-political situations did not assist in creating a thriving media reform movement.

The era of the media reform movement apparently flourished after the democratic uprising in the 1992 May crisis, when the Thai public started questioning how and why the event had been distorted in television broadcasts of the news. The main assertions were unconstitutional actions against the public’s right to know, and the ownership system which allows the government to control fully the electronic media. Actually, questions relating to state-owned media reports have been raised since 1973 and every time when the military seized power. However, Ubonrat Siriyuvasak, a communication policy professor and president of CPMR, believes that the government after May 1992 responded to this issue more actively than after the 1973 student uprising because of powerful civic allies consisting of media professionals, academics, business and the middle class. Pressure from media advocacy groups, such as intellectuals, journalism professionals, and NGOs caused the government to launch a new television station, purported to be independent from the government (it was called iTV, which stands for independent television).

However, the launching of a new television station, from the viewpoint of many media reform advocates, was not really a change of the institutional structure of the media. Hence, the idea of restructuring the broadcasting system was initiated during the process of drafting the 1997 Constitution. Thanks to some members of the Constitution Drafting Assembly (the 1997 People’s Constitution) consisting partly of former media professionals and other intellectuals, the sections relating to protecting media freedom and decreasing the state control of the broadcasting media were embedded in the charter. In principle, the former owners of broadcasting, mainly the government and military, were to cede some of their frequency bands to the public.

After the proclamation of the 1997 Constitution, movements toward media reform were more dynamic. Communication scholars collaborating with NGOs and TJA created a working group to follow the implementation of Section 40 of the 1997 Constitution. During the first three years (1997-2000) the media reform movement expedited a media democratization campaign urging civil sectors and media workers to implement Section 40 of the Constitution. Core movements of media activism in 1997-2000 were mass communication scholars, TJA and NGOs concentrating on democracy, local development and civic networks. Thai media activists tried to achieve their goals by exerting influence at both a policy level and a grass-roots level, which is similar to what Carroll & Hackett (2006) suggested four major movements of media activism: (1) influence mainstream media and their contents; (2) advocate that the state reform the media system and media policy; (3) establish alternative media to serve as public communication channels for marginalized people, and; (4) empower citizens to be an active audience by enhancing media literacy or media watchdogs (pp. 88-89).
On the one hand, these media reform activists aimed for change at the policy level. For instance, mass communication and legal professors who became members of the parliament committee drafting the new broadcasting law. Another action was lobbying some parliament members to implement the Section 40 of the 1997 Constitution during the process of drafting the broadcasting law by the working group. The group was established by cooperation between NGOs and some media and legal scholars. It was later named the Campaign for Popular Media Reform (CPMR) in 2000.

On the other hand, instead of proceeding at the policy level, other media activists moved to the grass-roots level by providing training and encouraging local communities around the country to create their own community radio stations. For example, CivicNet, a non-profit organization, served as a network coordinator and civil society information support center. It provided funding and collaborated with communication professors to launch several community radio seminars and forums (Chalisa, 2007).

Table 1 summarizes some of the non-profit, non-governmental organizations advocating democratization, media reform and strengthening civil society. Actually, there were many organizations, foundations, and associations working on similar issues (democracy, human rights, media liberalization, and the like), which are not mentioned in the table.

Media reform movements are funded by a variety of sources. Research activities of mass communication professors (mostly from state universities) have been funded by state, private, and public institutions such as their universities’ research budgets, TDRI, Thailand Research Fund, and other international grants. Resources of NGOs are mainly from international non-profit organizations concerned with press freedom, democracy, civil movements, human rights, local development, and media democratization. For instance, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, a non-profit organization from Germany, and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and UNESCO, fund several series of media reform seminars and forums organized by TJA and TBJA (the researcher had participated in several forums while on a university faculty). Another example is grants to Uajit Virojtrairat, a university professor, for developing community radio stations funded by Social Investment Funds (SIF) and Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI). Both were financed by the Japanese government’s aid to the Thai government under Miyasawa plan. While SIF was a non-profit organization aiming to assist community recovery from the 1997 economic crisis, CODI was set up with the state’s collaboration to support the activities of civic groups. Many local civic groups or local NGOs applied for funding for their community development projects through CODI.
Table 1: Media reform advocacy groups

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<th>Organization</th>
<th>Goals and missions</th>
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| Campaign for Popular Media Reform (CPMR)          | - Collaborate and network with civil sectors and other NGOs supporting democratic values, human rights, and civic participation (working under TVSF).  
- To investigate the state and capitals in media reform process.  
- Support the democratization of communication with an emphasis on civil society. |
| Thai Volunteer Service Foundation (TVSF)           | - To provide development-training services to other Thai NGOs.  
- To train young Thai volunteers and then, to match their skills to particular community development programs run by Thai NGOs. |
| Thai Broadcast Journalist Association (TBJA)       | - To ensure a fair and transparent frequency allocation process.  
- To prevent it from being controlled by a minority group of people.  
- To develop skills of broadcast journalists in order to produce high quality programs, to provide a forum where member can meet, discuss and share plans activities such as seminars, training, sports, etc. |
| Thai Journalist Association (TJA)                 | - To improve the activities of press associations.  
- To encourage press freedom protection and professionalism. |
| National Press Council of Thailand                 | - A self-regulation mechanism to monitor journalism professionals under a code of ethics and encourage press freedom and free speech. |
| Civic net                                          | - To strengthen civil society and local communities for social, economic and political development through collaboration of three sectors (the state, private entities and civil sector). |
| Media monitor project                              | - A research project to monitor television program content under a healthy public policy program (funded by Thai Health Organization) |

Conclusion

The media reform movements in Thailand push pressure on the government and policy makers to reshape the nation’s communication policy and structure. However, along a decade of the movements there have not been any drastic changes in media contents, ownership or structures. Only launching a new public television should not be counted a success of the movement. The regulation institution and structure still did not successfully function, while communication technology and market competition are accelerating. Postponement of the reform would harm rather than help the nation’s democratization.

Mueller et al. (2004) remarked that the political opportunity structure could explain why civil society movements arise and grow and why they decline. The features of political opportunity are dependent upon certain factors; that is, “a change in conditions of political participation that opens up access, unstable alignments of dominant political coalitions, the
appearance of influential allies in a ruling elite, and the emergence of conflicts within and among political elites” (p. 171). As stated elsewhere, one should not cling blindly to the principle of elections alone in determining a democratic government, when consultation, transparency and accountability are also important in democratic governance. Likewise, there is no reason to be confident that changing a political or social institution alone can democratize both politics and society. This study of the reform of the media system and its institutions evidently mirrors this insight.

The ideal institutional reform is expected to create and enhance the diversity of ownership, content, and access. The new independent regulatory agency should also set rules for fair market competition as well as being independent of government when regulating the media industry. All of these could in turn enhance the flow of information and democratic practices. Still, these ideals are dependent upon several factors. Socio-political and economic circumstances, political players, and publicly supported media independent from commercial considerations are just a few examples of these factors. One implication is that in a policy process, once an idea is initiated, no matter how creative, achieving its objectives solely by enforcing a law or successfully implementing a policy is almost impossible. An example is the U.S. Telecommunication Act of 1996, at its initiation targeted to deregulate the market and boost competition in the communication industry. After a decade, in McChesney’s (2003) words—there is no such thing as deregulation. Unintended consequences can happen during enforcement and implementation, even though policymakers might project these challenges while designing a policy or program.

Also, it should be noted that democratizing communication is not easy to achieve through any single strategy. Democratization is a process geared toward enhancing democratic practice. In the process, competition and participation are key elements. No matter whose ideas were initiated, processed, eliminated or achieved, no matter how each sector or actors were involved, the record of struggle has proven democratization exists. This is the case even if at the end of the day, the struggle toward democratization does not yield the creation or reform of any institution, such the case of the NBC establishment in Thailand. In another sector where an institution was firmly established (telecommunication) there still is no sign of a full-fledged democratization of the communication system.

Another theoretical assumption of participatory democracy concerns civil society. The involvement of civil society groups in the process of broadcasting reform should not be ignored. Media activism movements were clear in their resistance to state ownership of the system. Even though the movements are less aggressive and do not have street demonstrations, networking among different sectors and mobilizing around policy decision-making has evidently impacted the reform.

Civil society theoretically is often defined as a cohesive interest group. The particular set of advocacy groups involved have also claimed to be representatives of civil society as a whole. The analysis of media activism in this study is an example in which civil society was apparently comprised of non-governmental organizations, intellectuals and journalists. However, it would be a mistake to justify the existence of some civil society groups as modern, fully developed, or formal examples of non-state organizations, since many civil sectors might be less formal or even not registered. This non-organized civil society might offer less concrete evidence or records of their goals, missions, and movement activities, making it difficult for researchers to find recorded data for analysis.

References*


Awakening in the voice: the dynamism of the Dalang

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Abstract

To Ghouse (2000), the arts are a manifestation of humanity, moulded through test and time. The Malaysian *Wayang Kulit* performance has evolved accordingly, blending in our nation’s diverse landscape. It is not solely a speech, song and music of a particular state or race. Its stories are both archaic and contemporary by virtue of the wisdom trained *Dalang*. The *Dalang*, the Malaysian wayang puppeteer, is the playwright, principal narrator, conductor and director of shadow world, highly skilled in the techniques of ventriloquism, and carve their own puppets. He is familiar with all levels of speech according to the dramatic personae, modulating his voice and employing up to nine tonal and pitch variations to suit each puppet's temperament. Sadly, the society is now devoid of interest with traditional performing arts in Malaysia except a few. Perhaps they could not determine its significance (Boon Joo Hock, 2007). Efforts to preserve, promote and comprehend this art, in this context, *Wayang Kulit* (*The Malaysian Shadow Play*) must be made for the originality of our heritage to be revived.

Sweeney (1972), in his research in Kelantan, Malaysia found that there were less than 300 *Dalang* (Puppet master) in Kelantan in 1969. In 1999 it decreased to 11. Having absorbed religious, cultural and artistic influences from diverse sources, it has evolved locally into a typically Malay art form, and reflects Malay aesthetics. In Kelantan, its base, about a dozen puppeteers remain active but this number is rapidly diminishing (Performing Arts. Vol 8 of The Encyclopedia of Malaysia (2004). With only several platform to teach, learn and perform and the banning of its art in Kelantan, the dynamics of the *Dalang*, the central figure in *Wayang Kulit* may disappear. This has sparked research in ethnomusicology locally (Ghouse Nasaruddin, Tan Soo Beng dan Ku Zam Zam) and globally by Malm (U.S.A.), Kartomi (Australia), Uehara (Japan) and Patricia Matusky Nonetheless, many more aspects of the *Wayang Kulit* has not been researched (Mohd Taib Osman, 1989). Thus, the Wayang Kulit is subject to constant redefinition and appreciation. At present, no research has been conducted focusing on the dynamics of the voice of the *Dalang*. This research employs a philosophic interpretation on its dynamism as a geometric gesture (the dot, the line and the circle).

Introduction

The *Wayang Kulit* Shadow play is the traditional puppet theatre, a dramatic art which embraces the elements of dialogue, narrative, vocal and music. The puppet figures are curved out of buffalo hide or goat skin. These puppets are manipulated by one or more puppeteers behind the lighted screen to cast the shadows onto it. The theatre is performed for rituals as well as entertainment purposes (Uehara, 2008). The *Dalang* is highly respected and is often believed to possess supernatural qualities – especially healing – because of his position as mediator between people, gods and spirits (Boon Jong Fook, 2007). Linguistically, the word *Dalang* is thought to be associated with *langlan*, which means ‘to go round’ something. A *Dalang* is a ‘wanderer’, but also a ‘diviner’, a protector in a religious or magical sense (source). *Dalang*- is the central person in wayang, being the producer, director, puppet player, reciter and singer as well as the conductor of the orchestra, maker of sound effects and
lighting technician. He sits in front of the screen, his right leg crossed over his left thigh, and holds a wooden drum stick (a cepala) between the big and the next toe, using it to strike the box for puppets on his left as an accompaniment to the stages of the story (http://www.puppets.cz/dokumenty/2009-pruv.texty/Pruvta-2009.doc).

The awakening; rousing; quickening, a revival of interest or attention, a recognition, realization, or coming into awareness of the Dalang is central to this research. It seeks to interpret the voice; vibration of vocal chords in speaking, a medium of communication or expression of the Dalang to produce the desired sounds found in his repertoire, Kosi and Serawi. In Kelantan, the basic repertoire of the Ramayana is divided by Wayang Siam Dalang into what is known as the main or trunk stories (cerita-cerita pokok) and the branch or twig stories (cerita-cerita ranting. Cerita-cerita pokok deal with the basic Ramayana story as it appears in the Hikayat Maharaja Wana and the cerita Kusi Serawi (Ghulam Sarwar Yousof, 1992). This is an attempt at comprehending human’s evolution (1).

Problem statement

It is a known fact that the society is now devoid of interest with traditional performing arts. Perhaps it is the significance of it that they do not see in their daily lives (Boon Joo Hock, 2007). Efforts to preserve, promote and comprehend this art, in this context, Wayang Kulit must be made for the originality of our heritage to be revived. Sweeney (1972), in his research in Kelantan found that there were less than 300 Dalang in Kelantan in 1969. In 1999 it decreased to eleven. Having absorbed religious, cultural and artistic influences from diverse sources, it has evolved locally into a typically Malay art form, and reflects Malay aesthetics. In Kelantan, its base, about a dozen puppeteers remain active but this number is rapidly diminishing (Performing Arts. Vol 8 of The Encyclopedia of Malaysia (2004). Islam and the art of wayang kulit, or shadow puppetry, have co-existed in Malaysia for centuries but in 1990 a new generation of political Islamists, influenced by the theology of Wahhabism, outlawed the tradition in its home state of Kelantan (www.abc.net.au/rn/encounter/stories/2008/2284252.htm). With only several platform to teach, learn and perform and the banning of its art in Kelantan, the dynamics of the Dalang, the central figure in Wayang Kulit may disappear.

Significance of the study

To Ghouse (2000), the arts are a manifestation of humanity, moulded through test and time. Thus, Wayang Kulit performance has evolved accordingly, blending in our nation’s diverse landscape. It is not solely a speech, song and music of a particular state or race. Its stories are both archaic and contemporary by virtue of the wisdom trained Dalang. This has sparked research in ethnomusicology locally (Ghouse Nasaruddin, Tan Soo Beng dan Ku Zam Zam) and globally by Malm (U.S.A.), Kartomi (Australia), Uehara (Japan) and Patricia Matusky Nonetheless, many more aspects of the Wayang Kulit has not been researched (Mohd Taib Osman, 1989). The knowledge of Wayang Kulit is principally to enhance the public’s awareness and understanding of these moribund arts. “We fear that future generations would be ignorant of these symbols of our unique skills, that were handed down to us from generation to generation and would one day view them as some museum artifacts” (Faisal Tehrani, 2001). Thus as has been presented above, the Wayang Kulit is subject to constant redefinition and appreciation.

Literature review

The study on voice are varied. In the cosmological circuit of the Dogon people who inhabit the Upper Niger in north-west Africa. Researches by ethnologists Marcel Griaule and
Genevieve Calame-Griaule reveal that the Dogon regard the voice and speech as the original movers behind the forces of creation and the perpetuity of existence, and have based their complex systems of astronomy, calculation, anatomy, physiology, pharmacology and theology on the symbolic power of speech and ‘the Word’ (Dyson, 2004).


**Philosophic and interpretive social science approach**

The methodology of this research will employ a qualitative approach. By definition a qualitative approach is an interpretive technique which seeks to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain or more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world (Levy, 2003:148-162). Interpretive social science (ISS) is related to hermeneutics, a theory of meaning that originated in the nineteenth century. Hermeneutics is largely found in the humanities: philosophy, art, history (Neuman, 2006:1-17). Therefore, film as an art-form must be approached in the context of its meaning. These meanings are however deciphered by the spectator that shares a meaning system which allows them to interpret action of the figural as a relevant sign.

Until the early 1800s, only philosophers and religious scholars who engaged in armchair speculation studied or wrote about human behaviour (Neuman, 2006:1-17). As time progresses, these dialectics were replaced by scientific methodologies. Methodology, in its common usage, refers to the logical assumptions that outline research practice. Methodological issues press directly upon the ‘big’ philosophical questions about truth, ethics, value, justice and beauty, relevant to poetics (lived life). Methodological debates are conducted around questions about how we know things, the nature of the objects being researched, and the nature of ‘reality’ itself.

Based upon concepts; Radiancy (The Dot) representing the commoners; Vibrancy (the Line) representing the Nobles and the Potency (Circle) representing the coarse characters, the voice will be decoded to derive philosophical interpretation. To Fuchs (2007:25), theories and concepts are medium and outcome of human action that is transformed into methods of observation. All methods are technologies of experience and observation. They are a form of knowledge that connects theory to practice. Hence, it is a practical knowledge. Philosophy’s contribution can be found in many research areas. In the area of gender studies Judith Butler (1990) analyses the existential sources. Lewis Gordon (1995) combines existentialism to race theory. Charles Taylor (1999) narrated a conception of self-identity, Paul Ricoeur, David Carr (1986), refers to Hegelian notions of temporality and its critique of rationalism. Hubert
Dreyfus (1979) developed criticism of the Artificial Intelligence program found especially in Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty’s; that the human world, the world of meaning, must be understood first of all as a function of embodied practices and cannot be represented as a logically structured system of representations. Introducing a “new existentialism,” John Haugeland (1998) introduces the role of existential commitment in scientific practices as truth-tracking practices.

Philosophy is also essential to educational endeavors. That is why Dewey (1916) argued that philosophy is, when understood correctly, the general theory of education. Philosophic method’s relevance to other forms of research have the important task of clarifying our thinking to constructs that both clarify experience and direct practice. That methodological purpose is important as a means for philosophers to understand concepts, language, and logic as they operate in real, lived, experience, but it provides a necessary discussion that can become the bases for other kinds of research (Sheffield, 2004). The phrase “human experience” should be highlighted as a working definition than the more limiting phrase “education”. As the questioners, protectors, and adjusters of educational thinking, philosophers play a very practical role in bringing to light and then addressing basic ideological conflicts; and, more importantly, because it is in education that broad social ideological questions appear, are debated, and ultimately passed on or jettisoned, philosophy is especially essential to educational endeavors.

In this research, a philosophic interpretation based upon concepts will be performed; Radiancy (The Dot) representing the commoners; Vibrancy (the Line) representing the Nobles and the Potency (Circle) representing the coarse characters, the voice will be decoded to derive philosophical interpretation. To Fuchs (2007:25), theories and concepts are medium and outcome of human action that is transformed into methods of observation. All methods are technologies of experience and observation. They are a form of knowledge that connects theory to practice. Hence, it is a practical knowledge. The concepts, language, and logic that philosophers take as their subjects of study, are in fact relevant life qualities and the philosopher’s tools are practical instruments for making life better. It is in the analysis, modification and application of these subjects (concepts, language, and logic) as they work in qualitative living that makes philosophy relevant and explains why it is so important to view philosophy as a viable research method (Dewey, 1958). Other philosophers of merit have slightly different descriptions. Seen in the right light, philosophy is meaning making, all-encompassing, visionary, open-ended, and therefore, a useful, relevant research method for understanding experience In Reconstruction in Philosophy (in which he advocates a new view of philosophy as a scientific, experimental, method), Dewey (1920) makes the point even more powerfully:

This change of human disposition toward the world does not mean that man ceases to have ideals, or ceases to be primarily a creature of the imagination. But it does signify a radical change in the character and function of the ideal realm which man shapes for himself.

**Interpretation**

The Dot (Radiancy).

The voice depicts the first dot of potentials; it is speechless with only the breath to be heard. Roland Barthes (1977: 183-4) writes: "The breath is the **pneuma**, the soul swelling or breaking, and any exclusive art of breathing is likely to be a secretly mystical art". The dalang in this dot falls within a circuit of the Adamic existence, trained within the breath. This is a writing without language as Derrida contends, as the denigration of writing to an outsider, banished to the outer limits of language (Essays in Philosophy A Biannual Journal Vol. 9, No. 1, January 2008).
The dot is the potentialities of creation within the Dalang. This is the absence of form and movement where he is in statism. It is the ability for him to inhale/exhale. Its dynamism, an energetia (actuality) is an expectorant of the guided ritual though freed from it. Just like the inspired Impressionist who captures the moment, not only in the fleeting lights of a landscape, but in the day-to-day lives of people (Rosenblum, 1989). In the dot, the Dalang is told of stories as parables to look upon as Socrates’s care for the soul, similar to Astruc’s writing-in-movement transcends the image because writing occurs across the frame in a flickering alternation between presence and absence (Brunette & Wills, 1994). For one, the Dalang’s breath, like ours is derived from the breath of the Most Merciful, The breath of Ar-Rahman. The breath that becomes the kalam (speech), the dynamic Pen to be inscribed on the Tablet (earth). The first words (silent), is a life-force (water-vapour), a creative, existential technology which also embraces multiplicity: the multiplicity of sounds constituting the first 'language' of the world; ... breathed sounds scarcely differentiated from one another, but nevertheless vehicles of the beginning of all things (Dyson, 2004).

Through breathing the Dalang interacts with his dotted surroundings. This is matching the breathing of another (knowledge), breathing in unison with another (message). To De Georgio (2001) this is one of the fastest ways to create a rapport. Perhaps the Dalang does this by passing his or her breathing and then leading by slowly changing the pattern (story), depending on what he desires to accomplish - e.g. stimulate more excitement or calm down another in his preparation for performance. This is radiancy at work. Within the body, systems are constantly in motion, in action — heart pumping, blood flowing, lungs expanding and contracting, muscles fluttering. It is what Arthur Lessac calls “inner turbulence”. Tuning in to this inner turbulence is in itself a meditation which is both calming and energizing (Volume 2, Issue 1. Lessac Newsletter 2005).

The Dalang points to the archaic denomination of the gentle attributes of the highs and lows of creation as a product of geometric gesture. It is depicted in the caste that represents the voices; of noble, commoner and antagonistic characters. In the Dalang (man); the dot are all aspects of creation that multiplies within itself as a holocaust of knowledge that finds peace and interconnection that superimposes itself. As in ‘Meno’, Plato shows geometry as a birthright of mind (Vandenbroeck, 2008). The positioning of the Dalang at one point (dot) is a discipline of the entire trust (knowledge in breath) in its practical existence; the mind that does not falter and is ransacked of its potentials. It is in stasis. The Dalang in his training understands this strict discipline. It is a self surrendering to the story that awaits telling. It is the density of anamorphic hinges of the seal within him, the foundation of his fountain of consciousness.

The Dalang is very much in us, for we too contain the dot, the potential in degrees that we do not harness. The subjectivity of the dot does not only point to the Dalang as the perfected (in the performance) but also the unperfected (in the cosmos); being the microcosmic self in a macrocosmic existence. The dots of characters that the Dalang is taught are but dots within us, the multi-faceted egos and logos we hold close to our heart. Plato adopted Heraclitus’s conception of primordial logos, defined as divine and universal reason, which serves as the rational principle of which the human soul has a share. As expressed in oft-cited passages from Sophist, Phaedrus, and the Seventh Letter, Plato believed that speech flowed directly from the soul, and that the outer, spoken form of logos was a reflection of the inner logos of the soul (Kimbrough, 1997). This is seen in contact with the Dalang’s soul.

The sanctity of the human that we speak of and parade are the dots of uniformity of the humanity in their inhumanity. The dot is the first letter before the Alif (2). The dot is the last letter of the unseen letters. The dot in the Dalang represents a clear conscience of man in becoming. The roles and aspects of the beauty and terrible majesty of the archaic fleet of the
Dalang (myth), are the one who bears the secrets of the gods and ancestors waiting to be unfold. The dot relishes the hours and minutes and seconds of great uniformity in creation. The dot is the Dalang at loggerheads with the many species he finds within himself that has to be connected to find a perfect story, the story of story; God’s. Derrida sees voice as a voice-as-presence created through the system of “hearing-onself-speak,” (Derrida, 1976). The voice of the Dalang in this sense seem to point to the representative of the many voices that is “us”.

It is said that none would be inflicted during the session with the Dalang. To Plato the universe is unique with nothing lying outside. It is therefore whole and cannot suffer assault (Oliver, 2005:10). Perhaps the Dalang’s universe is godlike. He is the adamant beater of the heart that perceives truth in paradoxical suspension of his own self, in the breath. The life-force known also as energy, ki, chi, prana (De Giorgio, 2001) can be further increased through awareness, a kind of livelihood. The bounties and virtues that are endowed in the stories of the Dalang are far more taxing than it seems to be, rejuvenating the acts of heroism and melancholic tears of the lovers and the grotesque roar of the villain. The Dalang in its becoming and as a guardian that protects, is always in interpretation, a constant conflicting, controlling and overcoming of quantities of power energy. To Nietzsche, this rendering is a world picture, one of an immense manifold of struggle and change that repeats itself within the great cycles of eternity. It is a dynamic vision of life that values life in its aspect of Becoming (http://caae.phil.cmu.edu/Cavalier/80254/Nietzsche/W_P_5.html).

This repetitive aspect finds the mechanism of the Dalang in full bloom, awaiting the personified aurora borealis to be released. The colours of the dot though multiple, is still within the dot. The internal spine of the Dalang circumambulate the stars and the heavens (man as a smaller cosmos) a cosmological arena that feeds the Dalang in his penumbra of secrecy, as a direct apprehension of the spirit-like dialogue within the character and its own dots. The radiancy of light engulfs the Dalang in a way that he is able to transcend these dots. He is able to radiate a vibration of the eternal nowness in his performance. In Radiancy, he is the commoner as shown by Tobolski (2009). He is able to dissect the virtues and derogatory aspect of the colours within the common souls. This radiancy is a kind of energy that multiplies itself in quadrants, that is susceptible to its varying degrees and numerics and its geometrical alignment being cosmology. This invisible utterance in the dot (Dalang) is by far a grand manifestation of man at its helm. The bounties and dimension of the radiancy adds the lower caste to rise to its nobility (Pak Dogol).

The radiancy affects the performance of the Dalang that is imbued in the inner, the sounds and rhythms of patterns the Dalang experiences within. This is the radiancy of energized movement, a vibration that leads the Dalang into comprehending the radiancy in its characters, the strength found in the many (the commoners). The foremost architecture of this radiancy is the unseen dots of affirmation that the Dalang understands in rituals he undergoes before Pelimauan (graduation of the Dalang), a kind of struggle of the common man to attain meaninghood. This is the sanctity of direct manifestation of the radiancy within the Dalang that upholds the image of thought and of the intention and inspiration of the Dalang; as interplay of radiant energy and susceptibility of the ring of dots that the Dalang inhales in conclusion. The frame of the dot encircles the body of the Dalang in radiant beats of the songs of the myth and the universe, the nature within the animals and sounds of the creation (music) that accompanies the storytelling. The frame of the Dalang is radiated with the abstraction of the gigantic metaphors of god through its infinitesimal souls found in the living. It is a connecting whole that circumscribes to the grains of the inner voice of the Dalang. The radiancy of the degrees of its colours (though black & white), subjects the Dalang to many interpretations of the self; the colourful Monet. The self is seen as a locus of communication between the heavens and the earth. This is the intergalactic series of
utterances that appends the life of the human as microcosmic cosmos that is part of the larger cosmos; which cannot live without its microcosmic origin.

To this, Derrida (1976) believes that the voice is more than a means of communicating, it is the source for ideas of truth, being, and presence. “The system of hearing-onself-speak, through the phonic substance ...” Derrida contends, “has necessarily dominated the history of the world during an entire epoch and has even produced the idea of the world, the idea of world-origin”. The radiancy of the Dalang in the manifest, the radiancy of the bourgeoisie, the commoners and the lowly of creation infuses in its dot of life. Thus, the Dalang in radiancy comprehends the duties of his stylus in the two dimensional art of Wayang Kulit. On a homogeneous two-dimensional field best termed as a plane, the stylus is posited in a gesture of inscription, the inscription of the pen (kalam/ speech) on a tablet (world/ plane). The Arabic word "qalam" means both "word" and "wound," alludes to the tremendous power of words.

The contact of stylus with plane (world) breaks the homogeneity of the undifferentiated surface into a heterogeneity of the point of contact and the remainder of the plane. The final complexity of inscription must pass through this initial stage: the contact of stylus with plane” (Vandenbroeck, 2008:17). This is the dome of the Dalang’s mosque, the pillar of his castle and the point/ dot of his ‘tawaf” in pilgrimage. It is to him a continuous investigation of the soul he dwells in, a continuous swirl of the Dervish. He, in this condition is a man, possessed. Said Shephers (1990),

the only major channel of communication that actively vibrates inside the body … sound is felt in addition to being heard. It is … a way in which we possess others and are possessed by others.

The radiancy is the Staccato (means literally detached in Italian) rhythm with short bursts of words; few pitch glides on words. In Kosi and Serawi, this is the Dalang (dot) in the commoner, detached and existing in moments of silence (submission) in the stylus kingdom of Sri Rama where the Staccato (rhythm and feeling) not only comes from where it begins, but where it ends shortening their duration creating various rhythmic effects (http://www.studybass.com/lessons/bass-technique/legato-and-staccato/). The commoner (Dalang) is the radiancy in the dot, noted as Staccato that seemed insignificant but without which the beat of the kingdom may loose its heart.

The line (bouyancy)

The line is the first manifestation of the dot. It is here that the Dalang take in the form that is imbued with the dots of unification in the two dimensional Wayang Kulit. Although, as line, it cannot be a surface, it clings to the plane by a dimension of length and thus forces upon contemplation a second dimension of width which is the thickness of the inscripting stylus. “To examine the line, motion of stylus has to be arrested … If the motion of stylus is not arrested, a continuous line results” (Vandenbroeck, 1987: 18). The arresting of the Dalang in a sense is a dependency of the outer and the inner derived out of an inner awakening. He contracts and expands the line, the Alif as a scope of linearity that is vertical in tone and prosaics. He undertakes the participation of the incense of creation into what he believes to be, a supernatural world of the shaman, the healer that connects to the unseen. The dalang dives into the line of axis where the hidden and the manifest emerge. In duality there is affinity, an affinity of the man and his soul. He, in buoyancy to Tobolsky (2009), expands the overall medium pitch range; use of pitch glides with greater range of notes in intonation in Seri Rama, Sita Dewi and Maharisi.

This line links to man as the keeper of the tablet. In many rituals and beliefs of the ancient knowledge, man is incidently both of a higher nature and of the lower nafs. He is a complete craftsman of a godlike quality. It is said that man descends to earth after the battles in the
heavens where he falls from grace. This mythic approach in the one the Dalang thrives upon. The buoyancy in Kosi and Serawi is a denomination of the heavens and earth, the Father (Sri Rama) and the Son (Kosi). It depicts how the son is left to travel the earth, experience its might and danger without a father (guardian). There is a close affinity in this vast empty space of lineage that addresses the need to come back to the source of livelihood, a kind of sirraat (line of ascendance and descendence) (3). The vertical line of assessment is one that pulls upward in its mythic journeys that is resembled by its worldly aspirations. Along the way, the characters interpreted vocally, is the Dalang’s line of ascension. To the greater part, this is an ascension that seeks the human to recognize its vulnerability without this line of contact. Stories that the Dalang unfold is but steps that assists him in developing a buoyancy towards the story he leads despite its enormous amount of pain and misfortune. As shown in Kosi and Serawi Tobolsky identifies the Dalang in the nobles with the voice as medium to quiet volume level; loudness used to punctuate words or when confronting obstacle or difficulty.

The lines of suffering is but a training that the Dalang impresses to become cultured and known, a stability in chaos, a noble that strives to find wisdom in his creation, a subjectivity in the object (life) and the spirituality in the manifest. The buoyancy is imbued in the voice as a sense of lineage to the pure, the godlike and the gods of power with mercy as well as wrath in it. Such depiction is seen as ‘The Order’ that must be adhered to, without question nor mental thoughts that goes against it. The decree is final. Such buoyancy floats in between the altars and the avatars, a virtual reality, a noble persona that invokes the known and unknown of linearity and sublimity. The lines of caste is further enhanced, reassuring the representative of God (the Dalang within Sri Rama) in to reside in the kingdom of forms. The streak of power and of endowment in the quality of sorts perfects the buoyancy and beauty. The Dalang in this sense to Tobolsky implies the buoyancy as a higher class; is in control of emotions; is in control of thoughts (longer phrases) with precise articulation; with a slight ‘pleading’ or alternately soothing effect in smooth intonation. The ability to subscribe to the highs (God) and lows (castes) are but an example of the principal of harmony and of mortality in the essence of the noble the Dalang creates. The higher caste (Sri Rama and Sita Dewi), represents the lines that flows directly and vertically from the heavens as in the gods in the Greek tradition. Though this existence can be seen as a fall from grace, it is rightly so for then, the stories may never be told. It will remain in the heavens. The buoyancy needs to be felt in the expansion of geometric alignment (of the world and the cosmos). The submission to the lowly worlds is required for the Dalang to enhance the buoyancy of the nobles in its nobility (Sri Rama’s embracing of Kosi in the end). One such voice is the essence of the grand idea, the tablet that surpasses nature and its existential element, branding and re-branding the cosmos of sorts into a unifying system that does not penetrate each other but intermingles with one another in consciousness. Perhaps this what Nikulin (2006) sees as polyphonic, that indicates how a voice is permeated by other voices at the very moment it claims to be its own.

The subjugation of the Dalang towards this affirmation is intact as even the legend and myth of Sri Rama survives its beaten track. Over and over a line of descent is created and it is evident in Kosi and Serawi, the son of Sri Rama that was never known and he as the father of Kosi that is seen as attainable. It is too present in the separation of Sri Rama and Sita Dewi, the unknown birth of the son (Kosi) that Sri Rama knew not. This is a delightful meeting of castes as they travel in their line of questioning into their lineage and origin. A line of destiny is seen intertwined in the buoyancy of the Dalang. Such attitudes are intrinsic to the soul’s perception of reality and are not colored by any other energy that would distract the soul from its awareness of these qualities. The line of connection or ‘line of light’ which links the higher self (wisdom) with the lower (worldly), transmits these energies of higher emotion to
the embodied self and allows the energies to translate into the conscious perception of feeling (http://lightomega.org/Ind/Pure/EmotionalandMentalBodies.html). This is buoyancy that unites the nobles in Kosi and Serawi.

The smoothness and longing to be known in the unknown worlds of both the commoner/noble (Kosi) and the noble (Sri Rama and Sita Dewi) is felt. Perhaps, the process of perceptual contemplation of this buoyancy focuses the Dalang into 5 five aspects (Armstrong, 2000): 1. Animadversion: noticing details; 2. Concursus: seeing relations between parts; 3. Hololepsis: seizing the whole as the whole; 4. The lingering caress; and 5. Catalepsis: mutual absorption” (p81). There is a kind of majesty in its mimicry of God’s Mercy and compassion as the test after test is embarked upon by Kosi and Serawi in a voice that tells tales of the absence (God). Such dialogue of Sri Rama is composed by the Dalang with pitches, high in the act of decree, as the master of the kingdom (world).

This is a submission to the command of the magical ‘Voice’, the swelling in the hearts if it is not spoken and made known. With regard to Spirit, this ‘magic’ operates like the Platonic Idea, just as rhythm acts on our will of movement; we obey despite and at odds with everything, even when we do not give in” (De Lubicz, 1981: p69-70). It is a might in the buoyancy that keeps the kingdom alive. It is the decree in buoyancy that dictates the lines of living that puts the kingdom in order. It is the destiny in the buoyancy the Dalang projects that endows the nobles with an existential relevance, the becoming that unifies the noble and the commoner in one time-line. This buoyancy in the Dalang is perhaps a kind of manifestation where characters manifests their greater selves as "enlightened," filled with energy at its highest frequency: light. They accept themselves at all levels, so that they are free to express their many facets to others (Schoonmaker http://facweb.furman.edu/~bschoonmaker/without.html).

It is nonetheless an accumulation of thoughts, deeds and inner transactions that beholds man at every moment in time. The buoyancy is intoxicating as the conscious (Man) arise itself to the unconscious and Supreme existence (God), a depiction of the cosmos it depicts. This manifestation of the noble is but a glimpse into the ritual of the seen and unseen that engages itself to the moment of co-creation, of God’s and the human. Just as the speed of carelessness is devout of its karma, so is the speed devout of the light that exhales the rituals of life.

In ritual, human beings decide what they are and stipulate that identity for themselves, thereby asserting the most fundamental freedom of all, the freedom to be what they choose. The great life-crisis, calendrical, sacrificial, celebratory, and mystical rituals propose counter-structures to the normal structures of society and thereby constitute a large part of a society’s evolutionary and adaptive potential. (journal.oraltradition.org/files/articles/1i/4_turner.pdf)

The buoyancy of the Dalang is in the consistent invocation of the sacred text that has become his vein, a life-line that feeds his breath with energy. The motion of the voice is the resemblance of this buoyancy as power to recite and the recital being the mirror of one’s life if one could comprehend. This is the antagonistic soul at play, beaten by its own tyrant self and fallen into surrendering towards its higher self; a myth. To Campbell (2009) in An Open Life,

"The imagery of mythology is symbolic of spiritual powers within us." In this symbolism, we see mythological characters who represent love, youth, death, wealth, virility, fear, evil, and other archetypal facets of life -- and we also see natural events such as rain and wind. The deities are personifications of those facets, those "energies." As an interplay of deities, we are viewing a dream-like fantasy which portrays the interaction of the elements of our own lives.
It is through the firstness and lastness in reciting, singing and the orchestraic buoyancy that the Dalang manifest the complexity of the becoming- as an image or likeness of the living creatures which resides in the realm of the Forms. The Dalang becomes the speaker that amplifies the stories of Godliness in creation, that resonates with truth and convey his/our voice to the outside world. As his voice penetrates the kelir it mesmerizes the audience, knowing that it is a one man show. He is the master that connects the vibrations and rhythms, affecting the reception to its cellular level. To a certain extent, the buoyancy in the voice is a manifestation of the throat chakra, the mission being; I express, I listen, I communicate.

As it is a three way psychic radio his voice penetrates the kelir bringing in the celestial sound from the musical ensemble to celebrate stories of life in succession and repetition that resembles Bazin’s (Brunette & Wills, 1994)... an illusion of unbroken space, as well as on a coherent and complete composition within the frame; remains that art is a mirror for reflecting transcendent truth or reality. It is a kind of reminder as to the subjective world of the unseen that must be seen in one’s heart; its truth. A well-balanced chakra in a way reveals the truth that our life is built on our words, thoughts, beliefs and ideas. The throat, thyroid, trachea is a superhighway that connects the higher realms into the lower realms and into it. It is a dialogue that can be seen as a “zone of contact” (Nikulin, 2006); that of the buoyancy in the Dalang.

This uniform, indefinitely prolonged motion of stylus finds its perfect representation only in the circle”.

The circle (potency)

The circle represents a cumulative goal, a potency towards perfection in the performance of a Dalang. The interconnected dots and lines releases and multiplies itself at the mercy of the Gunungan in the Dalang’s hands. The two dimensional Wayang Kulit (as all other archaic arts) points to a circular affirmation of creation like a “Mandala” (Sanskrit for "circle") is a symbolic diagram of the universe, arranged in circles, used in tantric Buddhism (Sarhangi & Martin, 2009). The sphere or circle representing the sphere in two dimensional is the most universal symbol known to man. It is the ultimate representation of the unity and inseparability of all things. All points within the sphere have equal importance, are readily accessible and interrelate within the whole. The sphere is both the macrocosm and the microcosm in one whole unit. All other symbols reflect the perfection and unity of the sphere to bring us into conscious awareness of the Source (www.shamanelder.com/newsletterjuly.html).

In a performance of Wayang Kulit, the white screen is considered the sky of the world. The banana trunk which the puppets are placed represents the earth, the shadow puppets projected from the screen seem to symbolize the human beings in the real world and the oil lamp stands for the sun. The sight of the light becomes a spot-light of events that are meant to be revealed and comprehended, that the world is liberated, made known through the voice. The light shining from the lamp on the head of the dalang – and making possible the projection of the shadow of the puppets on the screen – represents the divine light infused through the upper chakra in the dalang (intermediary between gods and humans); a locus of potency for discovery. The light becomes the source of shadow from the movements of the characters as a shadow dance choreographed by the Dalang as the “storytellers pond” (Kolam Penglipurlara). The holes in the lamp (pelita) is known as “Lubang nyawa” and the light from the sumbu is known as “the Light of Muhammad” (http://seniart.info/blog/). The bounty that evades is but a few as the Dalang could not contain the entranced rasa he has discovered and embraced. Rasa has two primary meanings: ‘feeling’ and ‘meaning’ as in Tobolsky’s (Loud and forceful sound; short bursts of words); as ‘feeling’ indicates both feeling from without (taste, touch) and from within (emotional); exhibiting anger and impatience;
articulation clear on certain words; consonants are spit out at times. ‘Meaning’ indicates the implicit import, the connotative ‘feeling’ of dance movements, polite gesture and so forth (source) in the voice. The Dalang subscribes to pure beauty in this. The truth that he addresses is but the Glory of the creator as he took the gods to the stage and re-enact in guided improvisation and behold, the magical fiat of the Potency in the voice is seen as Tobolsky’s assessment as highly variable rhythm punctuated by quick breaths in between short bursts of words. One must comprehend the essence of the voice as it inhales and exhales the presumably evil characters, disguising its outwardness (zahir) and its inwardness (batin) as a complete note.

This points to a whole note or semibreve that appears as a "circle" on the staff in a measure (http://www.voice\How to Read Music - wikiHow.htm). One must comprehend it as it is the tool to magnify what is in the hiddenness of the outwardness (pauses used to break up shorter phrase in middle of sentence; audible intake of breath) the one section within the emblem of the Dalang that engulfs the toxic ailments of the people as his own portrayed as Tobolsky interpretes as potency. This is “powerful through threat of violence or ruthless”. Perhaps, this is his art. To Santayana "art, when successful, clings to the life of the world and sucks in strength parasitically through its practical functions (Altman, 2007). The “storytellers pond” seemed to point to the circle as "existing independently of human thought, as ripples in a pond, or the appearance of the sun and moon, or the shape of the iris of an eye” (Sarhangi & Martin, 2009).

In due course, this is a broadband that connects, reads the beating of the succession nodes of the heart. Such a beautiful experiment must and have to be seen as the subjugation of the faith, the falling from grace that requires constant saving, close to Hegelian’s art as experience. The expulsion of diety from the sky-country, Kayangan often brings encounter with Seri Rama. The condemned diety has to commit a second or even a third crime which leads to battles between him and various lesser characters before a final battle brings him face to face with Sri Rama. These evils include kidnappings of women, sometimes that of Sita Dewi or invasions. In the final battle, Seri Rama’s attempt to kill the transformed diety is usually instrumental in the latter’s retransformation into his original form (Ghulam Sarwar Yousof, 1992: 131).

The inter-space of the voice becomes the particle of atoms unseen yet is felt in the repetitions and rhymes of the story, a kind of ascension within the levels of its own voice. As a geometric gesture, it suggests a kind of polarity (dynamics of everyday life), a movement around the inside of the circle. As a symbol, it can be as personal and internal as a heart, which gives and receives blood through each complete cycle. It can also be as general and external as the cycles of day and night (Sarhangi & Martin, 2009). Symbols can exhaust verbal explanation but verbal explanation can in no way exhaust symbols directed towards that undifferentiated unity (ibid). This embracing of the circularity within the Dalang is a sign of a potential geometric gesture. It is in a state of constant becoming, a frequency that resonates to cause reflection, bringing balance, and upliftment as it harmonizes the potency with it (3). The Dalang as the Shaman, teaches himself to listen to these frequencies. He uses them to tread a path through time and space, locating the specific thought form, object, being, or human he chooses to encounter and work with in perfecting his characters. This approach is also known as "energy signatures" (www.shamanelder.com/newsletterjuly.html).

The wonders and grand illusion of the voice entranced one with the supra-intellengentsia of the cerebrum of the Dalang. In potency, it appears that his mental system maintained by the right cerebral hemisphere is highly developed in the performance, social-emotional, bilateral, and in many ways dominant over the temporal-sequential, language-dependent half of the cerebrum. It can independently recall and act on certain memories with purposeful intent. This is the dominant source of our dreams, psychic conflicts and desires, and is fully
capable of motivating, initiating as well as controlling behavioral expression - often without the aid or even active (reflective) participation of the left half of the brain (Rhawn, 2000). The gate of icon and Plato’s cave has been opened to let us peep into its powers. The zone of knowledge is seen as the Dalang’s voice responding to the inner voice within the heart that in grandiose, is musically aligned, just like the heavens; the spatial unity/ integrity. The music fixes a determinate concoction of genera that moves into and beyond the subjective membrane and thus, the list of the voice is heard in the heart, beating one’s presence of the absence, ones invocation of the soul. In singing this means that technique must never be more important than musical/dramatic content. Interpretation supersedes technique (Schoonmaker, 2009).

Such value is thus a different agenda that sparks the self into realizing the many selves it is. The dynamism of the levels of voices in one’s being is the drive that illuminates the storytelling of the Dalang. This intra-personal dialogue within the Dalang seem to point to “the primacy of speech and phonetic writing in language that is not a ‘natural’ human attribute, but the result of a metaphysical and historical prejudice; a Potency not of his as what Derrida refers to as “the most original and powerful ethnocentrism” (Derrida 1976: 3). One must comprehend this as an infinitesimal aspect of the ratio of God and man. In God is the voice that is unheard of but remains there ever existing, in constant conversation with the human, His image of Majesty and Beauty. Yet, Dewey’s aesthetics highlights that some art is intended for communion with God, not with men, and some art is intended for communion with no one but the artist him or herself. It is here that we find another realm of the Dalang that does not interact with others but only interacts with him alone (Wang, 2008). Says Lessac, “Perfection, then, is a state of being, a point from which there is no going forward. There is, in fact, no motion at all. It is stasis” (www.lessacinstitute.com/newsletter_jan_2004.pdf).

At the center of a sphere there is a point, the smallest of all points, some say located in the null or void of the innermost depths of the sphere, where the spark of creation is located and creation is first formed beyond time and space. The Dalang recognizes that he is here in this existence to cherish the oneness that together we all are, that all individuals are unique and precious yet all are one equally within the sphere. Thus, the circle, and its centre, is not only the perfect expression of justice-equality in all directions in a finite domain--but also the most beautiful parent of all polygons, both containing and underlying them (http://www.salaam.co.uk/themeofthemonth/march02_index.php?l=3). This expresses the Creator in the creation, the Container contained and the Lover in the Beloved, an emblem of the Dalang’s Potency in Kosi and Serawi.

Endnotes

(1) Schechner’s interest in the evolutionary history of performance touches on the concern with language origins expressed throughout the twentieth century in linguistics and the philosophies of language. In the first half of the century, linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf could justifiably assert that “the story of evolution in man is the story of man’s linguistic development” (ibid: 84), since language, through the studies of Pierce, Russell, and Frege, was coming to be accepted at the time as the one tool by which we conceive knowledge and construct culture. More recently, from within the humanities Michael Taussig in Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses (1993) argues for a view of language as springing from the need to account for the world through mimesis, and, in a similar vein, Jerry Gill in such works as Mediated Transcendence: A Postmodern Reflection (1989) and Merleau-Ponty and Metaphor (1991) views the metaphoric and mediational aspects of language as “primordial.”
This extension of unity to the first letter of the Arabic alphabet, aleph, as the “creative ray which initiates existence at the diacritical point of bey [the second character] and thence proceeds to expand horizontally with the lateral gesture of the second character. By this the fundamental three-fold nature of reality is established—the descent of the light, the expansion into creation and (in the symbolism of the written words of the Quran) the means whereby the ‘light’ returns to its source” (p. 8). Critchlow, Keith. 1976. *Islamic Patterns: An Analytical and Cosmological Approach.* London: Thames & Hudson.

In this world-view of Ibn Arabi nothing remains static; the world in its entirety ... transforms itself kaleidoscopically from moment to moment, and yet all these movements of self-development are the 'ascending' movements of the things toward the Absolute-One, precisely because they are the 'descending' self-expression of the Absolute-One. ... The 'new creation' he speaks of in [his book Fusus]... concerns the concrete things of the sensible world ...[and]... not the permanent archetypes [themselves] ... Thus in Ibn Arabi's thought, everything in the world (and therefore the world itself) is constantly changing, but underlying this universal flux of changing things there is Something eternally unchanging. ... The Descent is followed by its reversal, that is, Ascent ... thus the whole process of creation forms a huge ontological circle in which there is in reality neither an initial point nor a final point ... the whole circle ... is a trans-temporal or a-temporal phenomenon. ... Everything is an occurrence in an Eternal Now ..." (http://www.valdostamuseum.org/hamsmith/Sufiphysics.html)


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Building virtual bridges: utilizing technology to promote an online learning community

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Abstract
This study examines methods of building community and social presence within online distance learning programs particularly in the field of Humanities. Distance learning offers students with time limits and family obligations the chance to learn from home. Similarly technology helps bridge the distance between students and instructors filling the spaces that in traditional schools allow for face to face interactions. Technology creates new methods for connecting through easy access, free technology, and diverse possibilities. Technology bridges gaps in communication between students, instructors, and the discipline itself. Many technological and pedagogical tools are available which can develop a stronger sense of community and network of communication between the online student, classmates, and the teacher. Pedagogical practices and standards for both traditional and online classrooms will be reviewed to assess and evaluate how technology can enhance both student and teacher experiences. Research indicates the importance of teachers creating a strong presence in the classroom whether traditional or online. Twitter, Face book, Voice Thread, Wiki Pages and MySpace are all popular social networking websites. How can we utilize these technological resources and other developing technologies for use in online classrooms? These tools can enhance the online learning experience while building camaraderie within the student population. Utilizing tools such as Wiki Pages can provide environments where students can work collaboratively on projects. Wiki pages can also transform traditional research papers into online exhibits where students and instructor share their work and gain new insights. By implementing technology instructors can expand the chances for shared experiences and build stronger communities. Students not only gain skills in the discipline being taught but also in the ever growing technologies they need in both their careers and personal life. Technology builds bridges thus allowing the online classroom to reshape our traditional ideas of learning and create new opportunities for student learning to take place. It forces us as educators to think beyond the box and find new ways to enhance learning through technology

Introduction
“I never teach my pupils. I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn” Albert Einstein once said. Educators and academics always strive to find new systems of delivery to appeal to student interests and increase interaction and communication. With the rapid development and growth of online teaching there is the need to evaluate and review practices and standards and assess the areas of concern when applying technologies in classroom settings. How will pedagogical standards and practices be applied effectively so that we are creating learning experiences and not just meaningless activities? Social networking is a new buzz word in technology that has grown rapidly in recent years with the development of My Space, Face book, and Twitter. How rapidly is online education growing? J.F. Lyons discusses date from the United States Education Department which documented that in 1994-1995 distance education courses totaled 750,000 and by 2000-2001 these had grown to 2.9 million (as cited in Li and Beverly, 2008). Utilizing new technology
involves more than just installing programs into Blackboard or eCollege platforms. It is of vital importance to ensure that the opportunities for teacher and student interaction to be authentic and meaningful and enhance the learning experience. In online classrooms the need for meaningful interaction is even greater because of the lack of face to face interaction and limited amounts of time. Students need to feel connected to their instructor and peers to eliminate the feeling of isolation which can lead to the idea that they are alone in their academic pursuits without support or assistance. Secondly, it is important to be sure that we apply educational principles. Technology adds to the online classroom by offering diverse ways to express and communicate, build relationships and create opportunities for shared experiences. This paper will explore ideas, uses for technology, and research current scholarship regarding these. How can technology create new opportunities? Voice Thread, audacity, wiki pages, Twitter, and blogs are a few of the technologies investigated.

First the foundation of good teaching standards is important when applying new technologies. Frank Ganis (2009) defines social learning as knowledge gained in a social group and “The process in which individuals observe the behavior of others and its consequences, and modify their own behavior accordingly” (Ganis, 2009). Ganis also points out this idea began at Yale University in the 1930s. (Ganis, 2009). Social learning theory involves 4 basic elements: 1) attention, concentrating on the topic or task; 2) retention, remembering the information for later use often by using imagery and language; 3) reproduction, translating the imagery and language back into an action; and 4) motivation, reinforcing the behavior through rewards, punishments, incentives and repeat exposures. (Ganis, 2009) Ganis points out that social media tools must be matched with principles of social learning to be effective. Face book, LinkedIn, Ning’, Twitter, Word Press and YouTube are a few of the technologies mentioned (Ganis, 2009). This is where the instructor’s role is crucial in defining the purpose, goals, and guidelines for usage, as well as and the learning outcomes.

Another important standard in teaching is based on fifty years of educational scholarship. Joanna C. Dunlap and Patrick R. Lowenthal point to the ideas of Chickering and Gamson’s (1987) Seven principles of Good Practice in Education which begin with “Encourages contact between students and faculty” (as cited in Dunlap and Lowenthal, 2009, p.130). These Seven principles include: 1) Encourages contacts between students and faculty; 2) Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students; 3) Uses active learning techniques; 4) Gives prompt feedback; 5) Emphasizes time on task; 6) Communicates high expectations; and 7) Respects diverse talents and ways of learning. (1987). These principles reflect the importance of interaction between student and teacher.

Cheuk Fan Ng (2006) discusses the Sloan-Consortium framework for online education in colleges consisting of five pillars: 1) learning effectiveness; 2) cost effectiveness; 3) access; 4) faculty satisfaction; and 5) student satisfaction (Moore, 2002). Developing technology usage must consider these elements and so must rely on those critical thinking skills and even Socratic method of old when developing technology usage.

Can technology be valuable in an online classroom? Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) point out that technology is effective in establishing social presence because learning is a human experience and activity. They emphasize the need for interaction with students to increase the probability of learning occurrences (Knowles, 1990, pp. 129). Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) found studies confirming social presence as a factor in student satisfaction development of community, and perceived learning. Additionally their research supports “a relationship between social presence and student satisfaction” and cites the work of Gunnawardena, 1995, Gunawardena and Zittle, 1997 and Richardson and Swan, 2003 (as in Dunlap and Lowenthal, 2009, p. 130). Cheuk Fan Ng discusses in his article “Academics Telecommuting in Open and Distance Education Universities: Issues, challenges, and opportunities” research by
S. Wheeler who identified a sense of isolation and A. P. Rovai, M. J. Wighting, and J. Liu who recognized a lack of social community could be a problem in online courses. (As in Ng, 2006, pp. 2). While Ng’s study focused on assessing the experiences of telecommuting educators he found that use of technology is important even in establishing a social community among instructors who experience similar difficulties. Ng also explores a study by Belanger, Collins, and Cheney (2001) which found that the “… availability of information system technology, availability of communication technologies, and work-related communication patterns within their work groups, positively impacted telecommuters’ productivity, performance, and satisfaction.” (As in Ng, 2006). If this is effective for instructors wouldn’t this also be true for students? This indicates that there is a need for an infrastructure and standards for applying technology so it is meaningful.

Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009) discuss at length the use of Twitter in the classroom and provide tips on usage and best practices. Their study again points to the importance of social presence in online classrooms. They discuss the need for students to become comfortable so that they can build camaraderie and really connect with both peers and the instructor. In using these types of technologies we need to understand the basics about the technology used. Twitter is a Web 2.0 social media tool which allows individuals to send an email of up to 140 characters. This can be done online as an email, instant messaging, or from a cellular phone. It sends messages out to those individuals who subscribe as followers. Twitter defines their service as “… a service for friends, family, and co-workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing?” (Twitter, 2009). Dunlap and Lowenthal point to the ideas of Vygotsky (1978) stating “we attend to the ‘socialness’ of the courses we design and teach because we subscribe to the theory that learning, as a human activity, occurs within a social context, with higher cognitive processes originating from social interactions”. Social exchanges also effect student commitment according to Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009). Online learning, the rise of the internet, and the information age accordingly has increased the importance of social presence as these sources point out. Furthermore, other studies evaluate uses for technology and its effectiveness. One discusses the use of audio and video technologies (Aragon, 2003). Text messaging was utilized as a tool for communication in another program (DuVall, Powell, Hodge, and Ellis, 2007).

Dunlap and Lowenthal believe that learning management systems (LMS) contain tools for communication such as announcements, email, and discussion boards but these have limitations. Communication, they state, may not be readily used because students must first log in and consequently may not be able to do so when at work, when traveling or due to other limitations that may be present. This is where they applied the use of Twitter to overcome those limits and create opportunities for more freestyle contact as what would occur naturally in a face to face situation. Twitter offers a chance for instant contact saving time without appearing to be cold or distant as this is how it is designed to be used. Short simple yet meaningful correspondence that can communicate instructor interest in student success.

Currently the Humanities Department of Kaplan University has developed a department Twitter site called Infinite Mosaics. This is used to communicate facts and events related to history, philosophy and humanities. Most recently Twitter has actually been embedded in all of the courses in the Humanities Department and students response has been positive. Additionally the department has been spotlighting the use of different applications in the classroom on the department page and Kaplan offers many training opportunities on different technologies both in house through the Center for Teaching and Learning and opportunities through Sloan-C. Additionally Kaplan offers opportunities for both part and full time
instructors to learn, adopt and adapt new technologies through the Innovations Lab that offers fellowship dollars to support these endeavors.

As an instructor this writer is continually pursuing technology training in order to expand and improve courses and student experience. After recently attending a session on RSS or Real Simple Syndication a web 2.0 tool or blog this writer developed a blog tool for use in a humanities course (Cercone, 2009). While not an expert on this technology it appears to have the potential for easy access and the ability to accommodate a broad range of information and applications in one location. It also promises to allow the instructor easier email access in one location. Students have the option to subscribe or not because the information will be embedded in the course announcements in the e-College platform where it can also be accessed. Consequently this instructor is developing and preparing to use this tool as a new way to communicate with students. It appears to be efficient in that students aren’t required to sign in on the eCollege platform and a variety of information can be posted including pictures and documents and is secure in terms of FERPA. Instructors can post pictures, audio, and video so that students identify with their instructor and it provides the opportunity to post a variety of additional resources to supplement the course materials. The RSS also allows the instructor to share their interests and personality and consequently provide opportunities for the student and instructor to connect through common interests.

Audacity is another application that can enhance classrooms. Announcements, emails, and other elements in the course can be enhanced through the use of audio with this easy to use recording tool that can be downloaded for no charge. Again this tool brings alive the human presence and elements of human contact that can appeal to different styles of learning and personalities and draws students out who might not respond to the printed announcements. Audio announcements offer the opportunity for instructors to inject themselves into the course through these types of communication and can also offer the human touch and personality. While a large portion of courses are composed of text Kaplan incorporates technology in each unit with video introductions that prove an overview of the unit. In addition to sound Kaplan courses have a virtual guide in courses named Paul who welcomes you to the course when you open the eCollege platform. This too offers a break from the text rich environment and diversifies the delivery of material. One course, Art and Humanities, opens Unit 2 a video about prehistoric cultural and artistic ideas. Unit Four opens with a short video of one of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr speeches.

In summary online instructors should continue to explore the options offered by technology. No doubt the technology will continue to expand and develop in the near future. Universities must support the continuing education efforts of instructors so they keep up with the new developments. Instructors also need more opportunities to converge and share ideas of how to incorporate these technologies. No doubt just as online universities have developed quickly and continue to grow so too will be the use of new applications of technology. While many schools prepare much of the framework of courses for instructors these technologies allow the instructor to insert their personality and develop the sense of community necessary to nurture learning.

References


Crossing classroom borders: internationalizing curriculum and creating cultural bridges at Portland Community College

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Abstract

This paper describes the collaboration between two courses at Portland Community College, Sociology 206: Social Problems, and ESOL 260, Level 8 Academic Reading/History of Racism in America. The purpose of the project was to internationalize curriculum and create cultural bridges between native and non-native English speaking students at Portland Community College through Service Learning. The project provided students from a variety of cultures and backgrounds an opportunity to meet and discuss social problems. The college’s focus on internationalization promotes interaction between students of different backgrounds to build international awareness and to promote tolerance at the college and in the community. Service Learning is a teaching/learning method designed to offer students a chance to interact with others in their community.
Portland Community College internationalization of curriculum

To provide students with a global perspective, faculty at Portland Community College have been augmenting their curriculum during the last decade by undertaking the following “Internationalization Initiative”:

Internationalization initiative, vision and mission statements

Internationalization -Definition- A process that transforms the curriculum and the campus community by advancing intercultural competence, deepening comparative knowledge of peoples and cultures, and encouraging global learning as essential to understanding the complexity of issues in the world today.

Internationalization Initiative Vision and Mission Statements/Vision: Portland Community College will be a leader in offering learning opportunities to our diverse community in a rich international context, using an integrated approach to advance intercultural competence, a deep, comparative knowledge of peoples and cultures, and a recognition of the impact of global issues on the lives of the members of our community.

Internationalization Mission: Through the Internationalization Initiative Portland Community College provides multiple opportunities and services to help all members of our college community develop the ability to communicate effectively, to understand deeply and to analyze critically their place in a complex interconnected world.

The ESOL program - English to speakers of other languages

The ESOL Department offers eight levels of English, from level 1, for students with no or very little English, through level 8, after which students can continue on with their college classes. ESOL levels 1 - 8 serve the needs of adult refugees, immigrants, permanent residents and U.S. citizens. Levels 4 - 8 also serve the needs of professional personnel working or training in the U.S., international students, and international visitors. American-born deaf or hard-of-hearing students may take levels 4 - 8 if their first language is American Sign Language. All ESOL students are working to achieve various personal goals, such as learning enough English to meet daily communication needs, conducting business, getting involved in their children’s education and interacting in their community. Most ESOL students also have work- or education-related goals, such as GED or high school completion, professional or technical training, professional development, or continuation of college studies within an English-speaking medium.

Sociology

Sociology students are expected to develop the sociological perspective in order to understand the social context of society, recognizing that historical patterns, structural conditions, and cultural frameworks have significant impact on the lives and experiences of individuals. This system-level perspective, which has both cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary significance, connects individuals to external events, social organizations, and stratification systems which create structural inequalities that shape or limit their access to opportunities, resources, and privileges. Students enrolled in Sociology courses may be lower-division transfer students to area colleges and universities, or those completing general education requirements for a career technical program.

Service learning

Service Learning is a teaching/learning method rapidly gaining popularity in schools and colleges across the country. When students enroll in a Service-Learning course at PCC, it means the professor has agreed to include a service option or requirement in the course.
Instead of writing a research paper or taking an exam, students perform community service and then relate that service to the course material in a written report, presentation, or other method of reflection of the instructor's choosing. The amount of time required for this option is entirely up to the professor and, therefore, will vary from course to course. Service learning provides students with an opportunity to apply academic knowledge and critical thinking skills gained through coursework to collaborative partnerships between the college and the community, and promotes reflection and assessment leading to deeper understanding of course content and civic engagement skills.

**ESOL 260: Level 8 Academic Reading / The history of racism in America**

This course is a 5-credit college transfer course designed to enhance students’ abilities in the following reading skills: content comprehension, textual analysis, critical thinking, study skills, and language analysis. These skills include finding themes and main ideas, summarizing, paraphrasing, inferencing, evaluation of sources and analysis of arguments. In addition to a reading skills textbook, students read a novel and explore the themes of this novel in various ways.

*To Kill a Mockingbird*, the novel chosen for this project, introduces students to social problems in American culture and history, and explores the history of racism and its ramifications in contemporary American society. While reading the novel, students researched and reported on the history of racism in America using the following topics:

- Slavery in the United States
- Underground Railroad
- Civil War
- Emancipation Proclamation
- Assassination of President Lincoln
- Reconstruction
- Ku Klux Klan
- Jim Crow Laws
- Scottsboro Trials,
- Great Depression
- Tuskegee Airmen of World War II
- Rosa Parks
- Murder of Emmett Till
- Civil Rights Movement of the 1960’s
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- 16th Street Baptist Church bombing
- Tuskegee Experiment
- Southern Poverty Law Center
- Election of Barack Obama

To fully understand the implications of these topics, and to discuss the themes of prejudice, gender bias and discrimination in American society and worldwide, collaboration with students from Sociology 206: Social Problems taught by Dr. Melody McMurry was implemented. ESOL students attended presentations given by Dr. McMurry’s students, and the Sociology 206 students attended ESOL 260 classes to discuss the issues presented in both courses.
Sociology 206: Social Problems

The Soc 206 Social Problems course applies the sociological frame of reference to the study of social problems, their identification, and analysis of possible solutions. Problems explored may include mental disorders, drug and alcohol addiction, crime and delinquency, group discrimination, inequality, poverty, alienation, domestic and international violence, environment and energy.

In the “internationalized” Social Problems class, text, supplemental reading and videos selected are geared to problems and solutions from other societies. Students work in groups and individually present information about problems, and focus particularly on solutions from other societies (primarily Western European “Solutions” text). Video clips from The New Heroes (Oregon Public Broadcasting, 2005), primarily feature solutions to problems in other societies (Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, India, Peru, Tanzania, Thailand, Zambia). Direct observation examples are integrated into the class from students with a variety of personal experiences with those from other cultures or subcultures including:

- Immigration;
- study abroad or travel;
- family, ancestor, or research materials;
- projects abroad done with groups or military; or
- service learning experiences

Collaboration between Sociology 206 and ESOL 260

Learning the target language effectively and quickly in any culture requires two key elements: 1) an opportunity to actively engage in the language and culture, rendering the language acquisition meaningful and necessary, and 2) lowering the affective filter. These two elements have long been acknowledged, introduced by Krashen and Terrell almost 3 decades ago. Krashen stated that

Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding. In the real world, conversations with sympathetic native speakers who are willing to help the acquirer understand are very helpful. (http://www.sk.com.br/sk-krash.html).

ESOL students at Portland Community College have few opportunities to interact with native-English-speaking peers. They are somewhat isolated in the ESOL program, their language skills make them hesitant to approach other students on campus, and their daily lives do not afford them many opportunities for meaningful discussions with members of the English-speaking community. Language barriers become social barriers. ESOL students want to interact with other students, and collaborations with other courses gives them a chance to discuss issues and problems, to share their points of view with other students on campus, and to have a voice in the college and the community. Their opinions and experiences are valuable. Furthermore, interactions with ESOL students contribute greatly to the education of English-speaking students on campus in regard to international perspectives and global awareness.

The collaboration between Sociology 206 and ESOL 260 was implemented in the following manner: Students in Sociology 206 who chose the Service Learning option of participating in this project attended ESOL 260 classes for a minimum of 10 hours during the term. Class time was devoted to discussion of the themes, issues and problems of racism, gender bias and discrimination in American history and worldwide. Students in ESOL 260 attended presentations in Sociology 206 on “The Bases of Inequality” related to race and

**Results**

The project was a success on many levels. ESOL students were given an opportunity to attend a class from the list of General Education courses, and to observe academic culture in programs they will soon enter. In addition to language skills, international students must understand how to present information, express their opinions, and participate successfully in a college classroom. The interaction between students and teachers differs greatly from what ESOL students experience in their own countries and in the ESOL classroom. Interacting with native speakers gave ESOL students a chance to test their language skills, realize that they have greater abilities than they had previously feared, and to become comfortable in this environment. They were able to express opinions and points of view that reflected their own experiences and cultures, and to share these with American students, many of whom had not had an opportunity to discuss such issues with someone from another country. Portland Community College students in the Sociology 206 class were able to understand global perspectives and alternate points of view on a personal level, and to meet people on campus who come from different backgrounds than their own. They became aware of the challenge faced by students learning a new language and observed the attitudes and behaviors of someone from another country. Student reactions from both classes were unanimously positive.

**ESOL students made the following comments about the project:**

- We learned each other’s perspectives and how to collaborate. (Somalia)
- If we have more people who understand other cultures in the community, we will have fewer issues of racism. (China)
- It is interesting to see how language barriers become social barriers. (China)
- If American people don’t like foreigners, maybe if they know us they can change their minds. With better communication between us we will make a better world. (Mexico)
- I felt very excited making new friends. I would like more opportunities to do this. (Thailand)
- This collaboration helps ESOL students feel more comfortable in a foreign country and overcome culture shock. It’s good for the college because it encourages people to mix and breaks language an culture barriers. It’s good for the community because it makes people more tolerant and open-minded. (Spain)
- At first I was nervous, but soon I could talk naturally. I’d like to attend more classes with native speakers. (Korea)
- The opportunity for this kind of collaboration is good for everyone because we all have experiences to share and a lot to learn from others. (France)
- This collaboration keeps people talking openly and allows the college to be more democratic. Whatever is good for the college is good for the community as well. (Germany)

**Students in service learning reported that the experience related to Sociology because:**

- Sociology is a global study. The world is getting smaller through technological advances, so social problems, in turn, have a global reach.
• I learned to see things from a global perspective and I’ve come to understand that other countries social problems are different than I had previously thought.
• My experience was related to education and globalization. I was teaching those from other cultures about my own and visa versa.
• I helped students solve the issues related to belonging in this society. I have some of the same experiences and told them what I did to overcome my prejudices, racism issues.

When Sociology students reported on what service they provided they stated:
• This program is helping people transition from other countries; to make it easier.
• It is preparing ESOL students through a sneak peek of college; how to get help.
• It is helping those who want to fit in and; it helps to unite cultures
• It is a chance for ESOL students to ask questions and discuss the culture with a native speaker
• This class helped us learn how to be helpful to other students
• I was able to tell others the expectation in this country to avoid cultural conflicts
• I think it helps people new to the country who might feel isolated and alone because of the language barrier.

When evaluating the experience these Sociology students claimed:
• It is important for students to be exposed to cultures besides their own because students need to bond with other students to be ready for college classes;
• It makes you open your eyes to everything around you rather than staying in your little box. It opened my mind to problems in their counties and I loved the experience.

Conclusion
The project had an impact on the courses taught, the college community, and the greater community outside Portland Community College. Students in these two courses learned valuable skills and were exposed to diversity on a personal level. The college benefited from interaction from diverse student populations and cultural bridges were built within the academic community. Outside the college, the community will benefit for a long time to come, as students who are aware of global perspectives will make decisions and raise their families with more tolerance and understanding.

Finally, the class collaboration and exchange specifically addressed several of the core outcomes of the college articulated in the Portland Community College Academic Master Plan related to:
• Communication
• Community and Environmental Responsibility
• Critical-thinking and Problem Solving
• Cultural Awareness
• Professional Competence
• Self-Reflection

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Cultural globalization: philosophical aspects of sociocultural influences

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Abstract
The focus of the paper will be on several ways cultural competence can be achieved when interacting with various cultures nationally and internationally. As globalization and global interaction increases it is mandatory that we as ethical beings become aware of our role in perpetuating and maintaining cultural bridges. Some suggested ways this can be done include philosophical determinants, contextual factors, educational issues, role of the teacher, culturally relevant pedagogy, cultural realities, environmental contexts, societal repression, institutional rejection, learner perceptions, modeling, and global exchange programs.

Introduction
A student from Japan asked to see me after class. I invited him to my office and as we walked down the hallway many questions and concerns rushed through my mind. What was it that he did not understand? Did I talk too fast? Was the pace too fast? Should the lecture material be approached from a different perspective to accommodate his learning style? Did he have questions about the assignments? The class? His classmates? What was it that he did not understand?

As we entered the office I offered the student a seat. He sat and stated: “My room mate date different girl every Friday. Me no understand.” I advised that in this (American) culture people date different people to determine whom they would prefer to marry or forge a long-term relationship. Despite repeating this statement three times the student’s response was the same: “Me no understand. Room mate date different girl every Friday.”

A female student was initially excited about the class. Early in the semester she stopped by my office and advised that she had gone to the library to obtain an assigned journal article and was amazed to see the aggression exhibited by some of her classmates. She continued by stating that one of the students literally tore the article out of the journal. “On the reservation everyone works even the Chief. People here are too aggressive and selfish. I may go back to the reservation.”

Another student from a farming community in Iowa used “farm” examples when responding to discussion questions in class. Some students snickered and laughed at his “farm” examples that often entailed cows, bales of hay, silos, horses, and pigs.

Cultural perspectives
From a cultural perspective, what can be stated regarding the above classroom examples? Culture can be defined as that which is socially learned and shared by members of a society. Furthermore, culture functions in two ways: (1) it adapts the individual to his physical environment and (2) it adapts the individual to a social group.

Real culture is that which people actually do (folkways, mores actually practiced). Ideal culture is formally approved behavioral patterns (folkways, mores which people are supposed to follow).
Notice that the Japanese student was focused on his cultural norm, that is, an idea of how people ought to act. So for him folkways were customary ways of behaving and mores were strong ideas of right and wrong which require certain actions and forbids others. This student had already advised that he did not raise his hand to answer questions because in his culture the professor has the knowledge and students never ask questions. In addition he stated that his parents had already chosen a woman for him to marry (implying that there was no need for him to date or choose a mate). So culturally, the dating behavior of his room mate was puzzling.

Hierholzer’s model that focuses on the philosophical aspects of cultural differences. His model delineates various ethnic groups in terms of their worldview, axiology (the theory or study of values), epistemology (the branch of philosophy that investigates critically the nature, grounds, limits, criteria, or validity of human knowledge), logic, and process.

According to Nichols, from an axiological perspective, Asians and Asian Americans are person-group oriented. This means that the highest value lies in the cohesiveness of the group. The Japanese student’s culture mandates that marriage choice is a “person-group” decision, not a “person” decision. Recall that the student stated that his “marriage mate” had already been chosen (and not by him).

Native Americans are (person-group and) person-person oriented. This means that the highest value lies in interpersonal relationship between people. Consequently, the Native American student advised that even the Chief helped with work was appalled by the lack of consideration for others on the part of her classmates.

From an axiological perspective, Nichols would argue that European and Euro-Americans are person-object oriented. This means that the highest value lies in the object or in the acquisition of the object. This may account for the student’s references to the number of cows, pigs (hogs), and bales of hay. Additionally, we can plug in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory here.

Theoretical perspectives

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theory focuses on five environmental systems that impact the individual. Those five environmental systems are: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. For sake of discussion, the microsystem is applicable for the student from a farming community in Iowa. This system is the setting in which the individual lives. The contexts include the person’s family, peers, school, neighborhood, and work. It is in the microsystem that the most direct interactions take place – with parents, peers, and teachers.

The three examples above suggest that there are two views of learning: cognitive and behavioral. The cognitive view of learning sees the teacher as a mediator who intervenes in the process (of learning). Literally, the teacher intervenes in and facilitates the logical processes of the learner by (1) asking questions about the learner’s perception and interpretation of environmental information and (2) by asking questions about the logic behind the learner’s selection of responses. Thus, the teacher is active and the learner is active.

This cognitive view of learning is representative of Piaget’s theory of cognitive development. His cognitive development theory has four stages: (1) sensorimotor (0-2), (2) preoperational (2-7), (3) concrete operational (7-11), and formal operational (11+).

Piaget’s age-stage theory was primarily concerned with how children develop knowledge – how they think and reason. Thus, he was more interested in the process of thinking and reasoning that a child uses in answering questions and solving problems. Thus, he used the Socratic method of asking questions to get at the child’s reasoning (logic) behind his answers.
Additionally, Piaget maintained that not all children of the same chronological age are at the same cognitive stage (of development).

The behavioral view of learning suggests that the teacher creates a stimulus (learning experience), reinforces appropriate responses, and extinguishes (ignores) inappropriate responses. In effect, the teacher is active and the learner is (relatively) passive.

Cross cultural communication

In addition to the two views of learning let us consider the following examples of cross-cultural communication in school settings. A sixth grade school teacher was concerned that one of her female Hispanic students was dressing too provocatively for a twelve year old. Perturbed by the student’s daily dress, the teacher advised the principal of her concern and planned to ask the mother to come to school for a conference.

The mother tried to arrange a conference time when her husband could accompany her after he left work. The teacher advised that the school did not have conference times after 5:00pm. After a few more telephone calls a conference time was confirmed. When the appointed day arrived, the mother showed up at school with her husband, her oldest son, her mother, her father, and a cousin.

This example represents a clear case of cultural misunderstanding. The teacher proceeded with her normal modus operandi, despite the obvious cultural differences. She did not consider the fact that in a traditional Mexican family, the wife would not make a decision without first consulting her husband who represents and speaks for the family in formal situations.

In addition, the teacher had a narrow view of what constitutes a family and was accustomed to dealing with a nuclear family as opposed to an extended family. The cousin was the student’s godfather and godfathers in a Latino culture are responsible for the spiritual lives of their godchildren.

A teacher advised her colleague that one of her first grade immigrant students had an offensive body odor. The colleague suggested that she call the mother and set up an appointment. The mother was annoyed that the teacher was offended by the smell of garlic coming from her child. She pointed out that Americans smelled like milk and she found that odor offensive.

Some years ago a graduate student stated that when she was in fourth grade a substitute teacher from France was her teacher for the day. After recess, the students came into the room perspiring from their physical activities. This student raised her hand and asked, “Can we crack the window a little bit?” The teacher quickly replied, “Oh no, you don’t want to break the window today.”

Another graduate student advised that while he and his mother were visiting his dying grandmother in the hospital one evening, the grandmother spoke “rubbish.” The student asked his mother twice, “What is she saying?” The mother stated that she would tell him later. The mother later advised her son that his eighty-year-old grandmother came to the United States from Ireland when she was five years old.

On her first day in kindergarten this five year old responded to the teacher’s question in Gaelic. The teacher immediately yelled at the student, “We speak English in this class, not Gaelic.” The five year old started crying, ran out of the classroom, out of the school door, and continued running until she reached her home. She never went back to school and never learned to speak English.

Insights for education

What can we take away from the above (cultural) classroom examples? From a cultural perspective, teaching is a cultural activity. In Japan all the teachers teach the same way since
there is a national school and a national curriculum. Of course there are similarities within the culture and differences across the culture.

We know that teaching is a private activity with no shared language. In the United States there is no definition of what a problem is. Teaching is a complex system and the classroom is complicated. In Japan, for example, teaching occurs in different ways with a combination of teacher/student directed activities. In the United States there is no single feature that indicates quality teaching, as the teachers have not developed an understanding of the system.

In America there is a cultural script. There are cultural activities and learning is implicit (participate). This cultural script is very hard to see and hard to change since the cultural code determines what you do.

**Accommodation and environment: Perkins, Piaget, and Vygotsky**

Perkins suggests that when teaching for transfer (the direct application of knowledge) there has to be sequestered problem solving (SPS) in preparation for future learning (PFL). This means that the direct application of knowledge can be seen when people apply their previous knowledge to solve new problems. The preparation for future learning involves critically evaluating new information and changing one’s views (accommodate) and allowing people to actively interact with their environments. In this way one can receive feedback and learning can improve quite dramatically.

Interaction with one’s environment can be seen in Erikson’s psychosocial development theory and Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development theory. Both theorists advocate interaction with the environment. When comparing Vygotsky and Piaget Vygotsky is viewed as a social constructivist (interaction with environment) whereas Piaget is viewed as a cognitive constructivist (interaction with objects).

Both Piaget and Perkins use the term accommodate in their theory. For Piaget, accommodation occurs when children adjust to new information. For Perkins, accommodate involves critically evaluating new information and changing one’s views (in preparation for future learning).

An example of accommodation can be (clearly) seen in the following scenario. Three-year-old Tyler is asked to help pull the airplane out of the hangar. He replies that a hanger is something you hang your clothes on. After repeating his definition of hanger three times in response to the “help” statement he is advised that a hangar is a garage for airplanes.

In Tyler’s mind, based on his environment, a hanger is for clothes and a garage is for cars (and bikes and his red wagon). Keep in mind that this three-year-old is hearing “hanger” not “hangar.” To him hangar sounds like hanger. After some thought Tyler helps pull the airplane out of the hangar.

Did this thinking involve adjusting to new information in a new/different environment? Did this new information involve changing one’s views? Did Tyler critically evaluate this new information? Was new information learned in this new/different setting/environment? Will Tyler remember this new definition for hangar in preparation for future learning? Was Perkins’ view of transfer (DA/SPS/PFL) seen by the use of an analogy? The answer is yes, yes, of course, yes, yes, and of course.

**Conclusion**

What are the cultural implications for globalization? Perhaps it can be pointed out that history advises that each ethnic group has a unique history, different problems, and diversity across and within groups. In addition, dominant Anglo Saxons view white ethnics (dominant group members whose origins are not Northern Europe as culturally different yet perceived as part of the (Anglo) majority. Consequently, the white ethnics feel suspended between being culturally different and perceived as part of the (white) majority.
Many ethnic groups, such as, Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, and Puerto Rican Americans have felt the weight of bilingualism, deculturalization, assimilation, acculturalization, destruction of traditional family roles, distorted/misrepresented cultural history, and objects of derision. The psychological and cultural impact has been devastating.

New cultural immersion experiences have to be included in our curricula. This includes learning outside the classroom; practical learning assignments that enhance students’ understanding and acceptance of diversity; modeling; listening to opposing perspectives; learn about other cultures through interpersonal contact; maintaining reflective journals; students’ reflective writing about their cultural immersion; and increasing cultural school trips abroad for class credit.

Most culturally diverse students have experienced some level of acculturalization or are bicultural in varying degrees. For these individuals, a full return to traditional cultural ways is probably neither possible nor desirable. More relevant to their situation is the use of models of teaching and helping that have sensitively and extensively adapted to the cultural needs of their group by educators, either indigenous or culturally different, who are truly culturally competent. Globally, as the demand for cross-cultural education continues to grow and as effective strategies for serving culturally diverse students are developed, it is just a matter of time before dominant forms of learning begin to lose their Northern European perspective and become increasingly infused and informed by a variety of other cultures.

The needs of students, especially the needs of culturally diverse students, are not limited to the classroom. Students are defined by cultural and social forces that have deep emotional impacts on their psyches and shape the very essence of what and how they will learn. Thus, it is necessary that educational institutions immerse and combine students’ cultural experiences into the curriculum. We can no longer exclude students’ (cultural) experiences as a learning tool and must connect these experiences with theoretical implications in the educational process. It is imperative that educational institutions understand and respond to the impact of globalization and its effects on students and culture.

References
One step, two step, three step, four: the rhythmic dance of silence about the discourse of sufficiency of women’s work in leadership positions in Higher Education.

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Abstract
This paper is about the dynamics of power attributed to white male privilege as experienced in women’s work in a variety of leadership positions. Further, the paper treats this dynamic as an active and troublesome agent which is informed by cultural perceptions based on race, gender, ethnicity and accented speech about women’s work. Race, gender, ethnicity and accented speech are the four discursive features framing the perception of sufficiency of women’s work. Women’s narratives as well as a critical analysis of the existing literature are used to provide rhetorical analysis and criticism of this phenomenon.

Introduction
Thalassa Ali in a 2004 Bantam publication entitled *A Beggar at the Gate* has one of her characters, the albino, voice his wonder and puzzlement of invisible power whiteness between the English and the Indians in their 19th century relationship:

He had seen English people on his journey to Calcutta. They had sat upright in their carriages, with sour expressions on their faces, the men dressed in dusty black, the women clad in shockingly tight, stiff clothes that revealed the curve of their breasts. Instead of the graceful veils worn by Indian women, these females had worn baskets on their heads covered with drooping ribbons and bobbing flowers. Unlike his own endlessly inquisitive people who noticed everything around them, these foreigners seemed to ignore even fellow travellers on the road around them. If they cared nothing for what happened around them, he had wondered, why were they here? How were they so powerful? (p.47).

This paper is about the dynamics of power that the paper attributes to white male privilege. The quotation above encodes the dynamic of both the invisibility and the power of the privilege that are the substance of cultural whiteness. The paper treats this dynamic as an active agent which informs perceptions about women’s work. This agency of power is generally understood as a cultural norm.

Scholars of whiteness have long studied the power of white invisibility, McIntosh, (1988); Houston and Chen, (1999); Warren and Hytten (2004). The effects of white privilege as power are so culturally ingrained in the psyche of most Americans, including older and newer Americans, Caucasian Americans and Americans of colour, that the exercise of the interplay of this invisible power between its users and receivers is, often, unlikely seen by either as the privilege it is, but rather as a norm that requires its existence. Thus, its existence is fed by its silence. Those who experience it, often question themselves about the validity of their experience. Many end up like the puzzled albino in Ali’s novel wondering “how are they so powerful?” Faculty of colour, for example, tell me that they experience their white American colleagues in a way they think would puzzle their colleagues
I collect the talk of women colleagues from differing areas in leadership positions for over ten years in higher education, from medicine, law, and corporate business. By email or by phone, I recognized the recurring theme of an inability to name a problem that deeply affected not only women’s work, but women’s health and determined to find its source. The recurring theme was of imbalance in perceiving attributions of value and attributions of expectations for work in leadership positions for women. This problem, I thought, was important because the results of its solution would break the discourse of silence around a problem often ignored by many in academe. Further, this examination could expose critical linguistic attitudes of delineating differences in women according to their accents, ethnicity, and their race.

James Watson (Watson, 1986) prefaced remarks in his book about the necessary and sufficient elements for how science develops and takes shape in our age, by recounting the illogical manner being placed at the fulcrum or apex of change: chaos, fermentation. “Science steps forward and backwards and forwards” he says; and it appears to me that this reflects the chaotic ambience in academic life. The breakthrough is to discover a language to voice the condition of cultural perceptions and behaviours which push us as professionals towards an apex of change. I am encouraged by Watson’s remarks as I look to this process for the breakthrough in social and professional communications across race, gender, ethnicity and accented speech.

Limitations of the study

Generalized postulates are often fraught with seams of weakness and can collapse the premise of the study because in this case, some women, from both populations under study, demonstrate acquisition of power and leadership in the academy as well as in the corporate world. Moreover, the term “leadership position” is a fairly broad one and can mean anything from “in residence tutor”, “writing lab director”, “coordinator of freshmen off campus trips” and so on. For the purposes of this paper, I confine the positions of leadership to academic positions of “faculty”, “chair” of program or department, “deans”, “Vice Presidents” for Academic Affairs, “Presidents”.

In addition, the concerns of this paper are also applicable to those women whose work seems never to meet the criteria of sufficiency and necessity and, therefore, find themselves absent from leadership positions. So then, the relevance of the study is easily restored when we ask “what does it mean that, in general, more white men occupy positions of academic leadership than white women and women of colour?” And “how does it happen?”

Employ narratives as data and construct the term, “Communication Signification” as a tool of elucidation to get to the depth of the applied norms and expectations of work viewed silently through gender and colour. Communication Signification also underscores the discursive, and non-discursive effects of personality choice and selection choice based on cultural traditions of expectation of complexion, body type, and accented language to conclude the critique of this problem. In using discourse as critique, my intention is to attempt an explanation, and set up the makings of a solution by putting words to concerns, voice to a vicious dilemma, and a theory based on cultural orientation, which can offer heuristic possibilities for further inquiry by others into this phenomenon.

Shattering the silence with a new language: Genderization and deconstructing colour at work

The current models of viewing women’s work disallow women to perform the same way and receive the same benefits as their male colleagues. I have borrowed the term from
feminist and postmodernist literature as useful, and rhetorically strategic, to highlight the differences in the work place of women’s work.

It is in the place of genderization, ethnicity, colour and race that these issues of sufficiency and necessity of woman’s work become relevant. Firstly, the paper exposes, as a first dance step in this problem, the significance of the term “woman and minorities” as is generally used in the literature on the politics of culture and ethnicity in the United States (Samovar and Porter, 1995, Gudykunst and Kim, 1992, Koester and Ludwig, 2005). The rhetoric of gender and colour are rendered separate by scholars who persist in signifying the term “woman” most particularly to mean “white or Caucasian woman” and to use a qualifier such as Hispanic or African American to support a signification of “minority” status. Often, in textbooks on culture and communication, even in the narratives of stand up comedians, one finds this linguistic distinction of “women and minorities” where the term “women” represents white American women.

This construction is the first problem that obstructs and confuses the value of sufficiency in work. White or Caucasian women are separated from women of colour. Thus, the dynamic of what is termed genderization that is, the separation of workers into groups, based not on competence, nor even on gender, but on colour and ethnicity, is one source for the perception of competence, its assessment and its feedback. With this distinction, the differential in value is huge for both groups of women but, more problematic for women of colour. First, women’s competence is marginalized and compromised because they are separated from white men and secondly from each other culturally and ethnically. Thus, the dynamic deepens because the cultural assumption about the expectation of each (either too much or too little) then leads to a logical assumption that is perceived as real. If the worker is separated from the mainstream worker pool, then the work is also, somehow separated. Seen in this context, the work of black women and other women of colour is compromised and competence, assessment, and feedback are now evaluated on a different scale, a different trajectory.

A second linguistic liability in the overall study of leadership, for women is the other half of the term,” minorities”. I argue that the term “minority” is problematic on several levels in the lives of women at work. First, the term gives no substance or meaning to the fact that people of colour live elsewhere in the world and actually constitute the world’s majority. Secondly, and following de Lauretis (1987), I argue, that the term “minority” is the deliberate construction of white self-representation and perpetuation of a power schema which deepens the divide between and across ethnicities including white American ethnicity. This encourages us to look for a set of different behaviours from these two distinct groups: “women” and “minorities”.

The linguistic separation of “women of colour,” from the term “women” is a cultural projection of two distinct trajectories of assessment of competence, assessment, and feedback. The competence of black women and other women of colour is now based on a trajectory of colour and ethnicity, or national origin; and on gender for Caucasian women. Consequently, rather than competence and sufficiency of work, women’s competence tends to be viewed and assessed based on the personality of women and on how near or how far their work performance coincides with the norm of white men.

The One step, two step, three step, dance is a metaphor used to explain a choreography that might be invisible to others but painfully cognizant to women of colour especially. The metaphor helps to show the contrapuntal tension between the collision of race, ethnicity, and gender at the apex of a dynamic drama. Often, black women are viewed, first, as black individuals as opposed to their white counterparts who are viewed first as “women”. Charisse Jones and Kumea Shorter –Goodeen (2003) raises the question that is a perpetual dilemma for the black women. They state:
“Black women are constantly made susceptible to both racial and gender discrimination and [are] sometimes left wondering which bias is [more] potent in disadvantaging them. I am black but ain’t I a woman?” (p. 38).

Indeed, this classic piece of insightful rhetoric by Sojourner Truth uttered in 1851 questions whether or not rhetoric or social discourse is strong enough, or effective enough to change personal, and cultural or organizational world views about the two step problem of being woman and being black. That was 1851. It is now 2010. One hundred and fifty nine years later we are still grappling with this delicate duality. In fact, over the century the problem has grown in complexity for the 21st century black woman not only still grapples with the question of Sojourner’s truth, but has to contend with ethnicity, national origin, and accented speech. Even worse, it is the 21st century, and white Americans as well as some individuals of colour are still unaware that there is a problem and are still unengaged in the solution.

Ethnicity and national origin complete the “four step” dance. They play a part in the theatre of cultural identity of women of colour and of their performance trajectory at the workplace. The judgement and assessment of competence about their work are sometimes worse for international black women. First, international black women have to decide if they should stay in the ethnicity they have been given (African American) or to operate from their own ethnicity. Which carries least bias? An additional burden their African American colleagues and their white American colleagues do not have to face.

It is the 21st century and still, black women from other ethnicities, other than African American, must circumvent the prejudices of race, gender and ethnicity. Many white Americans, are unaware, that there is a rich body of historical experiences and traditions from Africa, Latin America, the Dutch, Francophone, the Anglophone Caribbean areas, and parts of Europe which inform the lives and work of their colleagues and which, in turn, should change the lives of those with whom they interact. So an international black individual carries a fourth dimension of the dance at work. The Francophone Caribbean black woman, for instance, or European black women for that matter, like the African American woman must, according to Jones and Shorter-Gooden, “stifle themselves” (p.38) and always exist in a rhythmic dance of one two three or four steps considering which bias is more or less advantageous to their performance and assessment: race, gender, ethnicity, national origin or accented speech. So goes the Four Step dance. Jones and Shorter –Gooden call this phenomenon “shifting”. I call it the psychic “one step, two step, three step, four, dance” on the road to personal dissonance. Jones et al share narratives from their research of African American young women who epitomize three of the steps in the dance as discussed in the paper.

Silence about this work norm affects women’s health: Jones and Shorter-Gooden’s Double Duty

In the chapter entitled Double Duty, Jones and Shorter-Goodon share this from three young women:

The stress [at work] comes because you are a woman and you are black. Being a woman can be enough stress right there. But being an African American causes another problem. You want to succeed and you put too much stress on yourself. And you have to deal with Tom, Dick, and Harry, and they’re all White. And Jane, she white, and there you are, poor little African American girl, you are not even a woman now. You’re a girl (p.147). “As a black woman at my office often say: ‘The real me isn’t in yet’” (p.147)

The confluence of race and gender is marked by a third example, a story, the writers tell of Jennifer (Ginny), a gym instructor, whose three step dance includes rationalizing the fact
of the inequities she experiences on her job; the rebuffs she receives (when Jennifer is teaching a class white women in her gym come to the door, see her and decide not to go in, or refusing to have her as a personal trainer citing personal preference) and the additional work that her supervisor imposes and which she accepts. Jennifer says she accepts the extra work given to her and even gives to herself extra work in order to convince others that she is “not lazy”. “I work a lot of hours because I am afraid of being called lazy. I put up with a lot of crap that I don’t have to go through because I don’t want them to think that I am too aggressive or I am ignorant…” (p148).

According to Jones and Shorter-Gooden after two years of “Shifting” doing the three step dance, Ginny developed stomach ulcers from the stress and anxiety of “Shifting’ or doing the step dance at work.

If Ginny plays the three step dance at work, the black women of diverse ethnic background play harder and get sicker from their increase rhythm of the dance. In the narrative axioms developed in this paper from diverse women, one is drawn from a medical doctor from Anglophone Caribbean who asks “is it me making it up or can somebody else see it?” In most cases no one does see it. It is a discourse that is silent and invisible.

**Narrative axioms: when women’s work is never enough**

In narratives shared with me from faculty regarding classroom management and from deans regarding feedback of their competence, and from other professional women including medical doctors, and corporate attorneys, it is clear that another way of viewing women’s competence is at work here. The women’s narratives are all similar in their description of their experience. They are apprehensive in the display of personality because they fear that will be assessed instead of their competence. Indeed, communication affective behaviours such as humour, or assertive tones in meetings for administrators, or classrooms for faculty are perceived as “soft’ on the one hand and are afforded little respect and “problematic” or aggressive on the other, and also, given little respect.

The following are examples of the substance of women’s narratives which show how they view others viewing them in performing sufficient and competent work. The narratives are self assessments which also give us a clear understanding of the kind and quality of the experiences these women have in their own words in working in our predominantly white academic institutions in the United States. Since this was not a Content Analysis, I have compiled the raw data of the narratives into 16 axioms for ease of establishing similar and repetitive experiences.

- It is hard to be seen as competent
- I have to work twice sometimes three as hard to achieve recognition for the same or similar task my male and Caucasian colleagues can half heartedly do
- There is less humour about my mistakes than my male or Caucasian colleagues
- I have to talk louder and longer to be assured that I have been heard
- I have to ensure the sound of my English is American in order to be taken seriously or be seen as an important part of the team
- I will make suggestions in meetings and they are often ignored
- If a Caucasian male or female colleague endorses my suggestion then it can be taken as serious or workable
- The same or similar suggestion that requires endorsement from white male or female colleague is easily accepted as a breakthrough idea and requires in most cases, no second endorsement of validity is necessary
- I feel pressure to do all of my work at a super level of competency and go overboard to do extra work. It is often not noticed.
I know colleagues who do not do all of their work such as reports or a botch job such as a surgery with little or no consequences for others to see.

It is funny or humorous if my other colleagues turn in work late. It goes against my professional record if I do.

Black male colleagues do not support me, if they do, they do so privately.

Black women colleagues hardly support me. I have more support from white women colleagues.

If I use the same script in classroom management with my students as some of colleagues do I would be in grave fear for my reputation.

My black or white male colleagues can be tough, or tougher with his students and be respected while that same toughness on my part can cause minor revolt to the VPAA or the dean and further cause me low Teacher Evaluation Scores (TES) for the course.

Am I losing it? Or can anyone else see what I have seen?

American cultural norms and expectations inform of women’s work of “meeting criteria” and “relevance to stated objectives”. The kind and quality of work that is acceptable as sufficient and necessary in value amount to one, two, three, times more for women of colour than for white men, white women, or men of colour. Women of colour must be seen to work three times as hard; harder than white men, harder than white women, and harder than men of colour.

Here is the problem for the woman of colour. Creative latitude and originality are not given to her as to her male colleague and the assessment of her competence is often confused with her communication affective behaviour. Although there is nothing harmful in judging work by communication affective behaviour, their shapes, sizes, ill-humour, tones of voice, accented speech, ethnicity and colour often are informed by the normative values of popular public culture.

If any of her counterparts is perceived as working in excess of the standard of sufficient and good quality of work, her work is, thereby, reduced and a fourth level of rigour of work is the only other option open to perceived competence in leadership.

One step, two step, three step, four: counting on the literature for more exposure

Although I always had a deep urgency to put a theoretical frame around the narratives of my friends and colleagues, I was always constrained by the paucity of research on the discursive and non-discursive dynamics of the work relations in the context of the university. Despite the plentiful support from scholars of whiteness, I wanted hard numbers, statistics, and evidence that would not be misinterpreted. I realized I was fulfilling one of the axioms of my narrative data.

The scholars in this section provide for the paper some evidence of the realness of the experiences of the women’s narratives framed as theoretical axioms above.

Holmes, L.S. (2004) in an Overview of African American College Presidents: A Game of Two Steps Forwards, One Step Backward and Standing Still, investigated the experiences of six selected African American presidents in public and private institutions and came up with a descriptive trend. The study sought to understand the factors these presidents found most prominent to their success and failure.

Holms’ study shows how a disparity still exists at various levels of higher education when African Americans are compared to their white counterparts. According to Holms (2004), reports show that “as late as 1997, African Americans represented only 8.9% of fulltime administration in higher education, while his/her white counterparts held 85.9% of the positions. A study of African American females and the administrative positions they held, showed, similarly, that African American women constituted 5% of overall
managerial group in American higher education (Wolfman, 1997 in Holms, 2004). The statistics showed that female presidents represented 21.6% of the total number (2,366) of university presidents in 2001, representing an 11% increase in the total number of female presidents from 1997 to 2001. This 11% is the sum total of 235 women. When compared to white males, and white females, African American men and women, still constituted an insignificant portion of the total number of college and university presidents at the beginning of the new millennium (p. 28).

In reference to the paper’s direct query of how much work and what kind or quality is necessary and or sufficient to establish value or visibility to women’s work, in general and, more specifically, to the work of women of colour, Gabbidon’s study of college students “Exploring the Role of Race and Course Content in Criminal Justice Course Content in Criminal Justice Course Evaluations: A Case Study” offers much on which to chew, in considering the relationship between credibility and competence. His 2002 study of college students found that white professors were believed to have instant credibility in the classroom, while black professors had to earn this as they taught their class. Gabbidon’s case study, although marred by limitations, resonates with narratives from academicians of colour of their experience of “working harder” to obtain the same results.

Turner’s, (2002) “Women of Colour in Academe: Living with Multiple Marginality” focuses on the experiences of faculty of colour in higher education. Turner used narratives and interviewed four Asian Pacific American women, fifteen African American women, four Native American women and eight Latina women. The narratives, Turner says, “present the lives of faculty of colour as filled with lived contradictions and ambiguous empowerment” (p 74). According to Turner, women of colour experience many relationship interaction challenges when in higher positions of a corporation; these challenges include the following:

- being more visible and on display,
- feeling more pressure to conform,
- feeling more pressure to make fewer mistakes,
- becoming socially invisible,
- finding it harder to gain credibility,
- being more isolated and peripheral
- being more likely to be excluded from peer networks
- facing misperceptions of their identity role in the organization
- being stereo typed and
- facing personal stress (Turner, 2004)

In contrast to the challenges these ‘minority’ women face, Turner found that their white counterparts face the opposite challenges—or none at all. Ultimately, the women in this study perceive that being both “of colour” and female hamper their success as faculty members.

Combs, G. (December, 2003), in the Duality of Race and Gender for Managerial African American Women: Implications of Informal Social Networks on Career Advancement, notes that although the presence of women in managerial positions in various organizations has increased over the years, research shows that these improvements do not reflect the status of African American women, for example, in managerial positions. According Coombs, African American women have to contend with the convergence of race and gender in improving their organizational standing and career advancement opportunities. Coombs provides data drawn from several research studies that reveal the dissimilarity of the status and advancement of African American women in comparison to White women. Following Coombs, the intersection of race and gender is suspected to have a negative impact on the work experiences of African American women. Again, statistics for leadership positions for white women and women of colour are telling. According to Coombs, “white women
comprise 86% of managerial positions held in the private sector, and African American women represent only 7%." Coombs states that:

- African American women with similar work experience, and, in some instances, more education that white women managers seldom reap similar rewards: labour statistics show that a larger percentage of African American women in the labour force have a college degree than their white female counterparts. However, African American women hold a substantially lower percentage of managerial positions. (Catalyst, 1999: US Department of Labour, 1997).

Other barriers with which African American women are faced include lower promotion rates than white women managers (Bell & Nkomo, 1994 from Coombs, 2005), occupational job segregation and negative career outcome expectancies resulting from racism and sexism (Golden, 2002; Hackett & Byars, 1996 in Coombs, 2005) and covert or subtle forms of discrimination (Cose, 1993; Grossman, 2000).

Coombs (2005) finds that the predisposed views of women held by men, as well as the biases that can accompany being African American in a white world, converge in the experiences of African American women in management. The focus perpetuates a dichotomy in the experiences of African American women managers that serve to both separate and intertwine.

Valian (2005) also observes the current status of the advancement of women in academia. According to her, advancement is slower for women than for men, and the problem is general, occurring in all the professions, science, business, medicine, law and academe. Valian argues that the slow advancement rate for black and white women is caused by the perceptions about women and their abilities that exist in society; that is, what people think women are capable of doing and what roles they think women should play in society. Valian uses a social-cognitive account which relies on two key concepts: gender schemas and the accumulation on advantage. I agree with Valian in asserting that once, gender schemas, are invoked they work to disadvantage women by directing and skewing our perceptions. This is similar to my earlier argument of linguistic delineation of the term “women and minorities” where “women” signify white women and separate women of colour from their white colleagues. Valian refers to a study in which an experiment showed bias towards women professionals and preference towards men engaged in the same activity. The experiment shows how women are perceived in roles of leadership:

**Who is the leader: head of the table experiment**

In this experiment, college students were shown slides which displayed five people seating around a table. The group was described as working together on a project. Two people sat at each side and one person sat at the head of the table. Sometimes all the people were male, sometimes they were all female, and sometimes the group included both males and females. The students were asked to identify the leader of the group. In the same-sex groups, the man or woman sitting at the head of the table was always identified as the leader. But if a woman was at the head of the table in a mixed group, she was not reliably labelled as the leader; a man seating elsewhere at the table was labelled as the leader about equally as often (Valian, 2005).

**Communication signification: analysis and conclusion**

In light of the discussion so far what does this mean for white women and women of colour in leadership positions in the university whose work and life experience are of constraint and marginalization? Well, we know that what has been shown to be suspect is not the actual work performance and that the criteria for necessary good quality work, relevance...
and meeting expectations, are not sufficient for ensuring credibility or respect; visibility, promotion, gaining or sustaining leadership positions for white women or women of colour.

We know, also, as the statistics pointed out in the paper that there is a huge divide between female leaders and male leaders. The data examined showed two things. First, there was nothing to indicate a low competence level in woman’s work on campus, compared to their male colleagues. Second, the data showed that there are cultural obstacles which constrain the woman as well as the constituents for whom she worked to bias their judgement of the competence, relevance and significance of her work. Third, we know that the linguistic separation of “women” and “minority” introduces a schema that sets up bias across race, ethnicity, and accented speech.

It seems, then, that with the issue of women’s status as leaders both in academe and the wider world of work, there is a force which constrains the players in assessing the relevance and degree to which women’s work, and more particularly, the work of women of colour is evaluated. This force is an embodiment of white privilege which silently teaches the norm taught to be associated with work that is sufficient as work that is performed by white males. Interestingly enough, those who do not widely benefit from the vectors of this privileged norm are, themselves complicitous with the silent rules, by going along to get along, thus, enriching the discourse of silence and making it harder to voice and frame this phenomenon.

Solutions to this dilemma can be found in the term Communication Signification. This is the application of critical insight and foresight to all women’s work so that all relations, assessments, and feedback are informed by a consciousness of privilege versus anxiety. Male and female feminists from all sides of the cultural divide can practice critical insight and foresight so that all can acknowledge the difference between work informed by anxiety and that informed by privilege.

Communication Signification asks “what is the relationship between our work and the relationship between us and other women colleagues?” (“women” here means both women of colour and white women). Since Calabrese says that competence is often assessed by work through relationships, barring sexual harassment, knowledge of how our women colleagues see and engage in their work provide critical foresight.

In the end, this essay has employed a metaphor of dance choreography using race, gender, ethnicity and accented speech as steps that are silent to address the invisible power of white privilege at work. The essay, also, embodies the anxiety-ridden experiences of women of colour from the narratives both given to me and drawn from secondary data source. Hopefully, this essay and students’ conversation shatter the discourse of silence and give voice to the vector of white privilege as a cultural factor which informs how the work of women is assessed.

References


Science learning through Second Language Acquisition

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Abstract

This paper is about the teaching of science in English. As the teaching of the English language continues to spread in schools at all levels, those of us involved in working with it try to keep up to date with the new parameters of the knowledge in this field. This experience of teaching science in a foreign language, a project called CLIL, attempts to demonstrate how students may successfully communicate and study the content of the subject improving their skills at two different levels: second language acquisition and second language learning.

Introduction

In analysing the didactic results regarding the acquisition and the learning of L2, science has been chosen as the area of knowledge for the students to study which seems well adapted for this kind of experiment considering that the scientific language is known to be “univocal” (Della Volpe, 1971). When the subject learned by the students is linked to a univocal language it stimulates a language awareness without diminishing the L2 used for this purpose. The students in fact in their daily life use a language defined as “plurivoca”, that is to say, which could be addressed to many meanings which change in the different contexts and this makes the students speak giving little preciseness and value to the words used by them. It is also very true that any subject may be used for CLIL lessons, Delle and Price list many experiments on different subjects (Delle, Price, 2007). Nevertheless science as a subject adapts very well. Therefore I agree with what Professor David Marsh, the founder of the CLIL, said at the conference on the 16th of October in Rome. He has highlighted science as a positive content in being used with the teaching of the English language. I would also like to say that a broad range of books and articles on science are written in English which makes it an authentic language. Many scholars and teachers have written how important authentic language is in teaching. Nevertheless Widdowson (Widdowson, 1979) says that the criteria of the authenticity does not reside in the objective configuration but in the relation between those who speak and those who listen. Therefore I think that CLIL teaching shows all its effectiveness without contrasting Widdowson’s judgement.

I myself taught two 4th year high school classes science in English for the academic year 2008-2009 at the “Valerio Gaio Catullo High School” of Monterotondo near Rome. I was also responsible of the CLIL project in my school. Moreover, in Rome from the 13th of March to the 21st of April 2009 I attended e-clilt, e-based Content and Language Integrated Learning Training, a course that not only informed us teachers on what is happening in Europe and Italy but also gave us the opportunity to meet and speak to other teachers who have taught different subjects at all levels in English in other schools in and close to Rome. A detailed analyses of these CLIL Content and Language Integrated learning lessons will highlight the different phases hoping to contribute in having a better understanding and also to suggest to use in teaching together both Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning.
CLIL and CLIL classes

CLIL stands for Content and Language Integrated Learning. The concept of it refers to the teaching in a foreign language the content of a subject. The foreign language, the L2 is a vehicular language used to teach the content which may be one of the subjects at school. In other words, the L2 exchanges role with the L1, that is to say the language of the school for example Italian in Italy or German in Germany. Obviously the non-language subject is taught at a slow pace. Nevertheless, if the subject is well understood and is at the learners level of comprehension, students definitely will understand and increase their knowledge. It is important not to take for granted the language L2 which has to receive the appropriate attention in order to provide students with the necessary technical background of the topics for them to understand the explanations and the content of the subject taught. It is very important to keep in mind that CLIL generally speaking is a way to promote the L2 language therefore attention should be given to it but not limited only on focusing at the language itself, in other words L2 is merely used as a vehicular function but well and thoroughly applied to teaching the subject.

CLIL is spread all over Europe, there are countries where it has been taking place for years and others where it still has not been experienced. In Italy it has taken place in high schools which participated to the so-called ministerial CLIL project. Moreover the board of education in Italy has recently made a proposal of the reform of the school which has been accepted by the government and therefore will soon become law. It is articulated in having many changes in the public school system and I will limit myself only in saying that it is completely and totally very negative except for the one and only positive element which is to introduce CLIL to promote the second language teaching as part of the curriculum of certain high schools.

English language teaching in Italy in the last decades has been enriched by different laws applied by the board of education. In 1985 the foreign language was introduced at the elementary level. In 1978-9 when the new middle school programs “Nuovi programme della Scuola Media” were written up, there was the “Progetto Speciale Lingue Straniere” which was a special project which introduced the foreign language and enabled teachers to attend courses in order to understand and learn the new parameters in education. Then starting from 1991 there were other courses for teachers to widen their knowledge on the changes taking place. At a high school level some of the schools were involved in the “Brocca” programs, English classes were being added to the curriculum. When “Lingua 2000” was introduced besides having two languages in the curriculum at school many novelties took place for example forming groups of maximum 15 students for the afternoon courses not to mention that teachers attended courses in order to know on whole of what was happening and also learned and got acquainted with the Common European Framework of reference for Languages. Students on the other hand have been receiving, after attending courses activated by the schools and taking the appropriate exams, certifications of different language levels given by the European Committee. To all these novelties and devises which developed, improved and strengthened the second language learning in Italy at all levels today we can also add CLIL which we know will grow and give a wider perspective in language teaching.

Now I will speak about the CLIL lessons which helped me understand better the contest of this new way of teaching language. I am going to speak and comment the work I have done from the start. The topics of the science content were Brain, Nervous System and Stem Cells. As I began this project, I had planned in doing one or two lessons on terminology but the lessons turned out to be not as I had expected, the students started out showing little interest or no interest at all. Not happy with their attitude nevertheless I continued to work on terminology for five or six lessons. I was well aware of the difficulty of the subject but I introduced the terminology, having them read the definition, having them write the definition.
and then I also asked them to write one word at a time on the blackboard including the pronunciation after it, that is to say using the international phonetic alphabet. Playing around with the sounds of the pronunciation but most important of all, as I was thinking on how to get them to be more interested and stimulate them in being curious, I asked a few students to draw some pictures of what these scientific words represented. This made the class spontaneously laugh due to the strange shapes of these drawings. This was the first step that brought the students in getting them started up in doing this project CLIL.

I was not happy to see that I had to struggle to get only the terminology across. This was not a positive beginning they showed no interest. Nevertheless, students were acquiring the English language, and I will underline that my classes have always been in English but for them to learn science was not going to be easy, maybe I was not going to succeed. After, we went to the computer lab. The students in groups of two or three had to search on internet a picture to match every word of the given terminology. Obviously as I monitored I insisted in having them see, read and recognize this terminology in order to get each group ready to work on a topic. Together we also looked at certain pictures, certain scientific structures and functions. For example how the synapses work.

Regarding the fluency of the language, I was satisfied, that is to say they were speaking English and it was a correct English. I must say that the two classes were different, one according to me was more fluent than the other, and also within the classes there were exceptions of students who were weaker than others and produced less and had the other students help them or they helped themselves using the Italian language. To encourage and stimulate the interest of one of the classes I did throw in a very easy written test which boosted their spirits because they all received high marks.

The following phases were what I considered the lessons well done not only in second language acquisition but also in learning a subject, science using L2. These lessons were very successful. The science topics students dealt with as above mentioned were divided in three: Brain, Nervous System, Stem Cells. First students studied the Brain, it was divided in A, B, and C. A - what it looks like, B - how it is divided and C - how some parts work. And, the students after doing some research on it they spoke about it. Then, the students studied the Nervous System, and when they had enough knowledge in pairs or in groups of three chose an illness or nervous system disorder, did a few weeks of research and then they spoke about it always showing many pictures. For example the students which chose “Neurons” dissected it as follows: What is a neuron? What does a Neuron look like? How does it function? How does it function with the other Neurons? Some of the other topics were Parkinson’s Disease, Panic Attacks, Depression, Epilepsy, Muscular Dystrophy, How Drugs affects the Nervous System, The spinal cord, Sleep disorder, Schizophrenia, Stroke etc. Important to note that I had to select well the order of students presentations to have them all understand and also help the weaker ones having them not speak among the first. This part ended by having a conference in English on the nervous system and on how drugs affect the nervous system. The students understood and intervened at this conference held in the mouth of February by a researcher from the EMBL, the Mouse Biology Unit which has alliances with other European research and clinic centres. This research centre in Monterotondo does experiments such as the mouse functional genomics and advanced genetic manipulation to study aspects of biology including cancer regeneration cells.

After this first and important chunk of work came to an end the lessons that followed had the same procedure in studying Stem Cells and again we had someone from the EMBL came and deliver a conference on the topic. Then the lessons continued with one last activity which was to see a power point documentary related to the reproductions of cells and this took place in what we call at school the science lab but it is a mall room with a few computers and a skeleton.
What made my project successful? What would I do to improve it? The science teacher for me was very important. Mrs. Gabuggi with her professional background not only provided me with the authentic material, books, CDs, slides but also helped me understand the topics I covered in class. I teach English not Science, and I strongly feel that team work among teachers is a requirement to be successful in a CLIL class because although I read and studied a lot it is always limited respect to experts and professionals who have titles and years of experience in the field which makes their knowledge a very precious contribution.

Two elements come to mind in thinking on how to improve a future CLIL work: space and pictures. Pictures, diagrams, illustrations used during these CLIL lessons have been a great resource. As an English teacher, I have always taken pictures and illustrations for granted in the past but in teaching science in English I have drawn upon the pictures as my need in allowing my students to understand well scientifically the information. Today, I definitely feel that pictures and illustrations are important in a CLIL course and should be considered prior to starting the lessons. There are some nice pictures and diagrams in various books an author as an example in which they could be found is Kauffman (Kauffman, 2005). Regarding the second language acquisition, the fact of seeing some pictures and learning certain things about them for the first time using English gives students the absolute maximum opportunity of facilitating their assimilation of the information having them enrich their knowledge of the second language in a spontaneous and natural way as if they were using their mother tongue.

Now, considering the space that is to say classroom, computer lab and science lab which as I mentioned before was only a tiny room with a skeleton and a few computers, during and after this experience has been carefully studied on my behalf on how I would change things to improve the experiment. External factors are definitely very important in language learning. I will also say that tools, specific tools or equipment are very important. In fact if I had worked in a science lab, a real science lab, with a few microscopes the students would have lived the experience of seeing certain scientific developments. When the students were in the computer lab a space which respect to the classroom gave them a better opportunity of exchanging opinions among themselves, it helped them gain more information on the subject. From this I learned that where and how students are placed in a classroom makes a difference in facilitating their learning. Moreover classroom, computer lab, science lab have had all a very important impact for the students in creating a positive learning environment facilitating their understanding due to the fact of having the space used up in a correct way.

Conclusion

The possibility to speak and understand different languages, even to a modest extent, has a very positive impact on the educational and intellectual growth of the students. Many scholars and teachers agree that due to the broad range of methods, materials and experiments we must keep in mind that in order for students to achieve a certain fluency the effectiveness of teaching has to also concentrate on a variety of elements. Goals as we all know must be set. In teaching a foreign language and in learning a foreign language, it is very important and also very obvious to know, regardless the complex of the matter, what is the objective and the different way or ways it will be accomplished. In translating a book for example, it is very important to try and write exactly what the author wants to say. Nevertheless the translator has to go beyond the words he reads. CLIL has a double focus goal foreign language and content but also here the teacher has to go beyond in being precise and fluent.

In Italy language teaching in the past, even fifteen years ago, gave priority to the preciseness of the grammar and the language in its written form. In Italy, we must remember that the humanistic tradition has had a strong influence. Even today, the Liceo Classico, where they teach Latin and Greek, is known to be one of the best high schools. The Liceo
Linguistico, where after five years the students have the exams and receive their diploma, the school in which I teach, gives priority to the study of modern languages: English, French, Spanish and German. Always regarding languages in the first two years the students study grammar and syntax and the other three years besides grammar they also study literature of the country of the language they study. In English they study English literature. It has been for some time now that the students also have one hour a week of conversation for all the languages they study and obviously the communicative approach is more than appropriate. An interesting retrospective on how this method has been relevant in recent years is well analysed by Rosa Angela Scalzo (Scalzo, 1998).

Therefore this CLIL experience, which I hope will be integrated and enriched with appropriate studies and new materials, seems, at least as things are today, to bring together two primary language elements necessary in teaching: the traditional need, focused on the learning of the linguistic terms with rules to be respected which guarantee the formal and syntactic preciseness, and the need to be fluent in the language, which is geared to stimulate the language and the communicative linguistic dialogue. CLIL interpreting both tradition and innovation is able to practically verify the elements of these theoretic studies and slowly overcome the different difficulties in order to obtain only the advantages in building up the content of what is been studied or talked about and the developing of the fluency of the language. Experience in teaching also makes us teachers become always more aware of the importance to integrate methodological tendencies due to the fact that different are people to whom we teach and various are the situations in which teachers and students find themselves in.

References