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**Developing Multiliteracies Pedagogy in Mature Female English Language Learners
in Iran**

By

Yalda Mohiti Asli

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Faculty of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Education
at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

2019

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**Developing a Multiliteracies Pedagogy in Mature Female English Language
Learners In Iran**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how the formal teaching and learning theory of multiliteracies serves mature female English Language Learners in Iran. A multiliteracies approach aims to influence the impact of the dramatically changing social and technological contexts of communication and learning and the potential contribution of a multimodal approach to adult language teaching and learning in the educational context. Data collection and analysis included collaborative researcher and teacher-participant lesson planning, 3 curriculum intervention workshops, observation and field notes, document analysis, and in-depth interviews to explore the English language development of the adult female participants of this research. This research provided the participants with the opportunity to engage with multiliteracies pedagogy designed to meet the specific learning needs of adult female English Language Learners (ELLs). The study unexpectedly found the more mature females were more engaged than their younger counterparts in workshop activities.

Key Words: Multiliteracies pedagogy; ELL classes; mature female learners; multimodal approach; bilingual adult female English Language Learners; adult literacy; English as a second language

DEDICATION

To my husband and my son

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First and foremost, I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Susan Holloway for her assistance and direction throughout this intellectually and academically stimulating experience over the last three years. You have been an inspiration to me; your support and academic direction have guided me and have taught me the value of meaningful research.

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For my parents and my sister I thank you for your time and support in helping me see this through to the end. In particular, my sister, Diba, parents, Hormoz and Mahla, in laws, Farhad and Fereshteh, Armin, and Arman who have listened and encouraged me when I needed it most.

To my boy Borna, who came into the world during this Master, I thank him for being the best baby ever when ‘maman’ was working, researching, and writing.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The evidence of the struggles mature female English Language Learners have faced in my Iranian classes corresponds to the urgency I feel to examine how teachers can assist mature English learners to better prepare to engage in English Language Learner (ELL) classrooms. The focus of this research is on mature female English Language Learners *precisely* because they are more inclined to be accustomed to participating in very traditional methods of learning such as reading texts, memorizing words as well as grammatical structures in a rote fashion, which are probably reflective of the teaching strategies most often used in their own formal schooling in their youth. Mature female English Language Learners are less likely to have been exposed to learning through activities that are multimodal and technology-based. This study will involve using “multiliteracies” – a formal teaching and learning theory – to actively engage mature female English Language Learners in the process of English language acquisition.

I was born and raised in Iran. I speak Farsi. I lived there for about 31 years of my life. I worked there as an English teacher for almost 9 years. This enabled me to more easily connect with the participants, conduct the workshops, and interview the participants. It is noteworthy to mention that my knowledge of Iranian cultural and educational contexts facilitated more naturalized style interviews. The participants of my research felt comfortable to discuss the issues with me since I came from the same background context. I have lived in Canada for about 6 years now. I speak English fluently, and since I have worked and studied in Canada, I am familiar with the culture as well. I gained the knowledge to conduct my research from one of my courses and my supervisor, and I tried to utilize this new skill set in the Iranian context.

Prior to moving to Canada, I worked in different English institutes in Iran, and I also had many tutorial classes there. In Iran, I had many bright mature female language learners in my classes. Many of them struggled in unstructured environments that were not familiar for them. For instance, when as a group we went on a factory tour, I found out that they were having difficulty coping with the changes from a formal class setting to an unstructured setting which was a “real world” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000) setting. Many of them became silent, unengaged, and distanced. In general, the education system in Iran is both public and private. Both public schools and private schools are monitored by the central government. Although there is less control over privately run schools and institutes, still they are required to be approved by the central government. Therefore, the materials and the curricula are all mandated by government. Students in Iran need to go through four levels: primary (grades 1 to 6), middle (grades 7 to 9), secondary school (grades 10 to 12), and tertiary (university) (National Research Council, 2003). It is the requirement to get a high school diploma to be eligible to sit for the national university exam which is called Konkur exam to enter into higher education. English language classes start from middle schools (grade 7), and the quality of English language education at schools is not satisfactory, therefore many go to English institutes or tutorial classes in order to gain better English proficiency (AlaAmjadi, 2012).

In Iran, most of English language institutes are privately run. The number of English language institutes increased significantly in recent years although English is not spoken as a second language, and it has become an inseparable part of many Iranian people’s lives and is becoming more and more widespread (Zarrabi & Brown, 2015, p. 1). As Zarrabi and Brown (2015) report “There are more than seven thousand and eight hundred registered English

institutes in Iran (including 4350 for females and 3450 for males) in addition to numerous unregistered ones where the Iranians learn English (p. 3491). In regard to the approaches used to teach in Iranian English language institutes, “Iran has a fairly traditional, form-focused L2 education with little opportunity to use English for communicative purposes.” (Zarrabi & Brown, 2015, p. 3491) Form-focused instruction refers to learning specific language skills in isolation as opposed to the communicative method which favours all language learning being socially contextualized. “L1” stands for “Language 1” and thus a learner’s native tongue, and “L2” refers to the target language being learned. Tusi (1998) believes that “one of the main issues of mainstream ELLs material developers in the [Iranian] Ministry of Education is that they simply do not identify learners’ needs.” (Zarrabi & Brown, 2015, p. 3491) Iran is a country that might benefit from a multiliteracies pedagogy in its approach to language learning.

The New London Group’s members who are international literacy specialists, introduced the term “Multiliteracies” in 1996 in response to the rapid changes in the world and our capacity to communicate through new media. The idea was to prepare students for the “real world.” Its aim was to make classroom teaching more inclusive of cultural, linguistic, communicative, and technological diversity. The New London Group’s (1996) focus is on the socio-cultural-political implications of literacy, and by extension, of language learning practices, more so than on cognitive language learning strategies. Their vision for multiliteracies is also largely defined by their focus on “multimodalities” – the usage of one or more modes such as visual, gestural, kinesthetic, audio, or spatial modalities to convey meaning. Thus, the linguistic mode, which tends to be privileged in most societies, is perceived of equal value in producing effective communication. In a language learning context, that could thus mean students could use

multimodal means of communication such as through, for example, a YouTube video dramatization, a poster design, or a diorama to help express ideas in the target language being learned. The New London Group (1996) state their view toward education that the mission of education is to ensure all learners benefit from learning so that they can achieve success in their social participation of the civil society and the economy. Literacy pedagogy can play a considerably significant role in fulfilling this mission (Cazden, Cope, Fairclough, & Gee, 1996). Admittedly, the way we use language is being shaped by new communication media. In literacy practice, a significant change can be observed between young learners and older generations. As Kathy Mills (2016) states “the way young children are socialised in literacy practices is radically altered when compared with previous generations.” (p. 1)

The aim of this study is to investigate how using a multiliteracies pedagogy with mature female English Language Learners (ELLs) in Iran might improve their language acquisition. Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also access to more social participation in their communities and the broader society. Mature female language learners have often been schooled in very traditional ways themselves with a strong emphasis on rote learning and isolated grammar drills. Mothers and grandmothers can also play a role in their families’ desire to learn new languages and support language learning informally in the home. For example, reading stories to their children or grandchildren in the target language and explaining cultural connections between language foundations. Thus, these women can have a large impact on successful language learning for many of their family members as well as for themselves.

Based on Zarrabi and Brown's meta-analysis of some research (2015) on the content organization of school English books and classes in Iran, there is not an acceptable level of compliance between the increasing need of English Language Learners and English language teaching methods of the nation (Zarrabi & Brown, 2015; Mazlum, 2007; Hayati & Mashhadi, 2010). Byrd Clark (2012) argues "With the growing number of multilingual students from diverse backgrounds participating in language education programs, there is a critical need to (re)shape pedagogies that reflect the complex linguistic repertoires and social practices of learners with multiple, heterogeneous identities in today's classrooms." (p. 143) As an immigrant and educator myself from Iran, now teaching and living here in Canada for the last six years, I have the linguistic and cultural resources as well as the contacts in my country, Iran, to facilitate this study. This study contributes to the body of knowledge related to English Language Learners, their literacy and the use of a multimodal approach. More specifically, the study provides additional research and evidence for administrators, policy makers, and educators on the significance of offering multiliteracies pedagogy that is designed to meet the language academic needs of adult female English Language Learners, particularly in the Iranian context.

Purpose

The ultimate aim of this study is to suggest some approaches to enable female ELLs to communicate in their second language with less barriers and a higher confidence level. It is noteworthy to mention here that many Iranian ELLs are now living in Canada or other countries where English is the official language. According to the Canadian Encyclopedia (2016) "Iranian immigration to Canada began in the 1980s, in the wake of the 1979 Iranian Revolution. In 2016, there were 170,755 people of Iranian origin in Canada, and another 39,650 had multiple origins,

one of them being Iranian (for a total of 210,405 Canadians). From 2011 to 2016, Canada welcomed 42,070 Iranian immigrants.” It is also mentioned in the Canadian encyclopedia (2016) that “Iran is one of the top ten birthplaces of recent immigrants to Canada, ranked fourth after the Philippines, India and China.”

It is expected that these women will learn English at a faster pace with the help of multimodal ways of communication and a multiliteracies theoretical framework to combat what Soto (1997) historically noted that “children and families who are speakers of second language find themselves immersed in hostile educational and community settings” (p. 17). This current study seeks to further knowledge, theory, consciousness, actions, and debate of main notions that involve socio-cultural reproduction and their impact on gender-based behavioural patterns in learning a new language. A large number of Iranian women have come from a cultural and social background in which the power is not shared equally. It is believed that the unequal distribution of power within communities and institutions of their country of origin has resulted in low confidence and self-esteem level to have an active participatory role, not only in their children’s schooling period, but also in most of the community based activities. Ahmadi-Nia (2001) declares that women’s life in Iran and in the developing world is influenced by the “views and ideologies of men in their environment. The man can be the father who supervises his daughter’s level of education or the husband who determines his wife’s continuing her studies or being active in society” (p. 37). As an example, “a female football star in Iran was banned from travelling to an international tournament by her husband. He refused to sign papers allowing her to renew her passport, meaning she was unable to play in the Asian Cup” (Blair, 2019). I believe

this example clearly shows the restrictions and unequal share of power between men and women in Iran. Ala-Eddini (2005) states that “women’s dependence to family, their husbands’ ideology and housework are the obstacles in the way of their effective participation in society and their promotion in various occupational and managerial positions” (p. 125).

Although in order to better understand women’s roles in Iran, one needs to take a look at the long history of Iran, since their roles have undergone significant changes over the time, specifically before and after the Islamic republic of Iran in 1979. Despite the fact that Iranian women have played crucial roles in different periods of time and in different societal levels, they have faced many restrictions in their lifetime; for instance, restrictions in their workplace, restrictions on what fields to study at university, and social restrictions. Although in contemporary Iran, based on a UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) world survey, at the primary level of enrollment, Iran ranks as the highest female to male ratio in the world among sovereign nations, with a girl to boy ratio of 1.22: 1.00. According to UNESCO data from 2012, Iran has more female students in engineering fields than any other countries in the world. The ILO (International Labour Organization) data, however, suggest that female unemployment has been consistently higher than males in recent years.

An important rationale for this current study is to provide an opportunity for some Iranian women to have some exposure to learning English beyond the basics and to be able to articulate their ideas in the target language, which in this case, is English. It is hypothesized that a multiliteracies pedagogy might encourage their willingness to use the multimodal approach which includes technological tools to learn the new target language and, subsequently, lead them

to have a more active role in their schooling, home life, and broader society. A large proportion of these women in society experience an existing patriarchal order that can significantly influence their English language learning and acquisition process. Therefore, this study also serves to hear the voices of these participants through semi-structured interviews in order to have learners, not only see their own language development, but also help to examine what are some of the most influential social factors which can play significant roles in mature female English Language Learners' active or passive language class participation.

Research Questions

My investigation was guided by the following questions:

1. How does the design process of multiliteracies used by ELL educators facilitate the mature females' English language learning process?
2. What challenges do adult female learners experience in their additional language learning process?
3. How can a multiliteracies pedagogy be utilized in ELL classrooms in Iran to help adult female language learners to make best use of multimodal tools and cope with the challenges they confront?

The participants of this study are mothers or grandmothers. Considering their roles as mothers, it is hypothesized that they might learn English in a faster pace with the help of multimodal ways of communication to better familial functioning. A long-term goal of this type of research is that by empowering these mothers or grandmothers through language, I hope that better educational outcomes will be achieved by the next generation of citizens, immigrants, and refugees. Language can be one deterring obstacle which keeps these mothers away from more

full participation in their children's schooling due to these mothers' own slow language acquisition process, which usually takes a long period of time. The more confident and able Iranian mothers are in their own command of English, the more they will be able to also support their families' language acquisition needs by extension. Thus, there are multiple benefits to focusing this research on mature female Iranian English Language Learners.

Importance of Study

The questions noted above are worth exploring because the participants of this study, who are mothers or grandmothers, are an important segment of society and have important roles within their families. Many of these mothers in their social contexts are expected to be helpful in their children's language learning process. In addition, older females are a social group in society that has been historically marginalized. This research investigates what strategies can be used to facilitate the mature Iranian females' English language learning process, and how these learners can become intrigued and motivated to use multimodal resources in order to enhance their language learning process and gain the confidence to participate in pedagogical activities. In addition, the study also provides applicable and possibly transferrable information that can be used by educators in other contexts. With the help of a multiliteracies pedagogy, it can be expected that adult female English Language Learners will become more confident and knowledgeable in their learning context through "participatory" and "collaborative" (Biswas, 2014) practices. It is essential to conduct this research because the findings can benefit students, teachers, institutes, and any organizations that work with mature female English Language

Learners. This understanding may better foster the teacher-student mutual understanding so that it might help teachers to reflect and possibly revise their teaching approach.

The workshops, which will be discussed in more detail shortly, were developed as the center of this research design, and they include lots of positive reinforcement and learner-centered pedagogy to augment participants' sense of confidence in their own abilities to improve their language skills. This study contributes to the body of knowledge related to English, their literacy, and the use of a multimodal approach. More specifically, the study provides additional research and understanding to administrators, and policy makers and educators on the significance of offering multiliteracies pedagogy that is designed to meet the language academic needs of adult female English Language Learners.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

All the cultural and social changes have resulted in the necessity for a much broader view of literacy than what has been portrayed by the traditional approaches of teaching a new language (Cazden, Cope, Fairclough, & Gee, 1996). Language learning pedagogy in the 21st century's classes now needs to offer a "complex form of multimodal literacy" (Jacobs, 2007, p. 20). Now, let us take a look at what multimodality is. Multimodality is the field that considers how every individual makes meaning through different kinds of modes and their combinations. What is mode? "A mode is a socially and culturally shaped resource for making meaning; for instance, image, writing, layout, speech, moving images are examples of different modes" (Kress, 2010, p. 79). In general, multimodality is a theory that explains communication practices that take place through different semiotic resources such as textual, linguistic, gestural, visual, spatial, aural resources or modes (Kress, 2010). Every person, nowadays, is dealing with multimodality in certain forms. Different "resources" or "design elements" such as audio, visual, gestural, spatial, linguistic work together to make meaning in different multimodal texts (Jacobs, 2007, p. 21).

To clarify this point, consider an English language classroom; the teacher get students to use dramatic role play or create a diorama, and she or he wants the students to use different modes to produce innovative productions. To illustrate, for instance, the modes which combine to convey meaning in a dramatic role play are gestural (when students move on stage; make facial expressions), oral (when students produce the lines using their voices, utterances, and any other accompanying sounds), visual (when students act; the set design, costume design), textual

(linguistic words or markings on the set; the playbill). Kress (2010) contends that “semiotic knowledge concerns how each mode conveys meaning in different ways in the text, where each mode has its own specific task and function in the meaning making process” (Kress, 2010, p. 28). Thus, the tone of voice in delivering a line, a facial expression, or a dramatic contrast between a bare set yet elaborate costume designs – all of these modes with their particular affordances and limitations combine in particular ways to contribute to the overall multimodal communication being expressed throughout the dramatic play.

Today, the digital context has made communication more dynamically multimodal, which means students or audience are provided with more opportunities to produce and/or receive and understand a concept or an idea. Kress (2010) defines “multimodality” using three theoretical points, which help to further explain this concept:

First, the meanings made are not always equally accessible to and understood by all readers. Second, the meanings made with language, whether as speech or as writing, are interwoven with the meanings made with other modes in the communicative context, and this interaction itself produces meaning. Third, the question of what is to be considered a communicative mode remains open. Some of meaning making resources are neither static nor stable, but fluid. Modes of communication develop in response to the communicative needs of society; new modes are created, and existing modes are transformed. (p. 11)

To elaborate on what Kress et. al state here, it can be said the meaning-making resources have been shaped through different social semiotic perspectives, throughout the years, in different societies with the help of “culture.” Thus, all communication, regardless of modalities, is fluid,

socially-based, and responsive to evolving societal contexts. Modalities are a language in and of themselves. The linguistic mode is one mode amongst many that contribute to meaning-making.

There exists a variety of forms of communication such as Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter that are available for people and help them exchange information in any place and time. This has, in fact, made a significant contribution to our understanding of the world and curricula needs which makes it undeniable that today students' needs in English language classes are more varied compared to years ago because of the linguistic diversity and the use of different modes in their communication including a plethora of technologies. Therefore, they need to be equipped with a tool which can help them be prepared for the "real world" changes. Teachers should also be prepared to include the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students in their curriculum and lesson plan design to make the learning environment more appealing and relevant for each student within the online and technological domains. They also they need to be capable of teaching 'new aged learners' or 'Generation P' (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Generation P refers to 'participatory' learners:

...who have different kinds of sensibilities from the students of our past. They have at hand ubiquitous smart devices, connected to the new social media and allowing them to communicate with people at a distance from them at any time of the day and anywhere.
(Cope & Kalantzis, 2012, p. 9)

Cope and Kalantzis (2012) observe that language acquisition pedagogy needs to actively reflect and take into account the new mindsets of learners growing up in a digital age.

To do so, teachers are advised to consider different “knowledge processes in a conscious and critical manner” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2004, p. 64). These knowledge processes are: “experiencing the known and the new” which means “discovering students’ individual motivations, drawing on their lifeworld experiences and that which is everyday and familiar *to them*” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2004, p. 73). One of the activities that teachers can use to draw upon what is known to students is “Think- Pair- Share.” This activity can provide the opportunity for all the students to have something to say and to be heard. When designing a lesson plan, it is important to consider the application of various Designs to stimulate learners’ communicative act, to invest more in “mobility, fluidity, and a knowledge society” (Kalantzis & Cope, 2004, p. 73), and to increase “the saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity” (NLG, 1996, p. 63). “Experiencing the New” is another knowledge process of Learning by Design. (see Figure 1.)

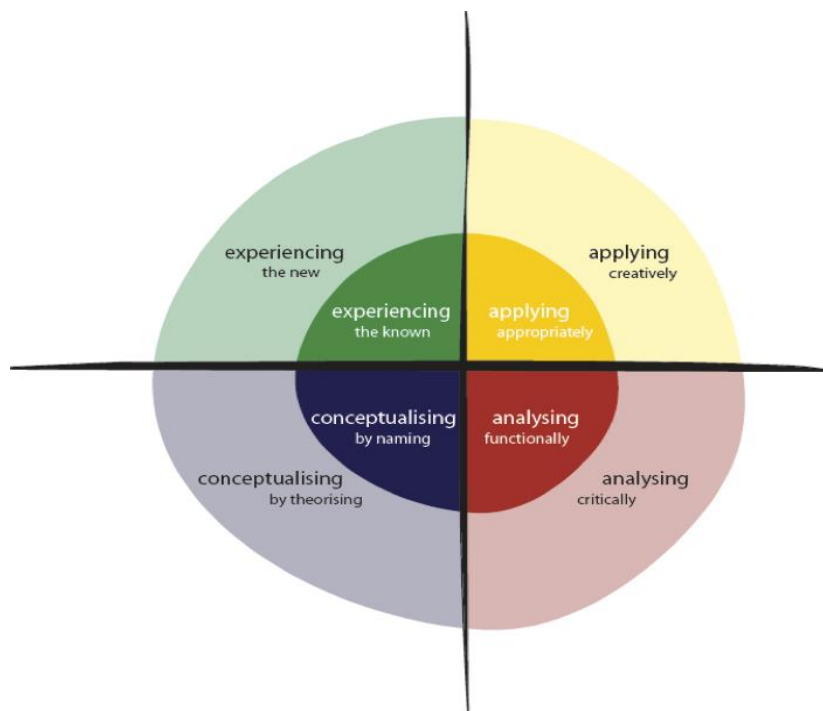


Figure 1. *Theoretical description of the Knowledge Processes by Kalantzis and Cope*

Depending on the discourse, teachers should try to match the lesson plan design to the objective of the discipline being taught and at the same time provide a modular platform to immerse the students in new experiences. This should involve some known and new elements through which students feel the connection between the two. Students come to school with different experiences and considerable knowledge. Inevitably, they have been exposed to various sources of knowledge in different settings. Teachers need to know and understand their students' preconceptions before teaching any new topic or a concept. There can be a significant change in students' learning and achievements when teachers listen to and understand student thinking, and tailor their curriculum accordingly. It is believed that "The process of learning in a conceptual change model depends on the extent of the integration of the individual's conceptions with new

information.” (Pintrich, Marx, & Boyle, 1993, p. 171) This can have a highly significant impact on teachers’ understanding on how to teach and modify their teaching methods, which can help to better their students’ learning process. If the students’ preconception agrees with the concepts, it is easier for them to grasp the new knowledge; and if it contradicts, then studies have shown they might be resistant to change (Pintrich, Marx, & Boyle, 1993). According to this argument, it seems clear that a teaching pedagogy should be based on experience and it definitely requires reflective thinking. Through *engagement*, students mentally focus on the problem and they try to make connections to past experiences. In this phase students can be mentally and physically engaged in the activity designed by the instructor. Once they are engaged, then it is time to *explore* the ideas to formulate concepts. In this phase, they can explore the relationships and observe patterns. Then students’ attention needs to be directed to specific aspect of the phenomenon through *explanation*. Concepts need to be presented in a formal manner. Once students receive the explanation, their experience needs to be extended and *elaborated*. In this phase, teachers can allocate more time for the activities that can contribute to students’ better learning and understanding of the concept. In this phase, students can cooperatively express their understanding of the subject. *Evaluation* can help both teacher and student to determine the level of students’ understanding and assess the educational outcome (Leslie, T & Rodger, B., 2000). “Learning, like inquiry, is best viewed as a process of conceptual change.” (Posner et al. 1982, p. 212) Learning should also be viewed as a rational activity. The new conception must be clear and tangible enough to make sense to a learner. The teachers’ role is very important in this process. They should create a cognitive conflict to make a student feel dissatisfied with what he/she already knows, then, the learner may accept the new concept and idea.

Four components have been initially integrated through the theory of pedagogy developed by the New London Group which are: (a) Situated practice; (b) Overt instruction; (c) critical framing; and (d) transformed practice (NLG, 1996).

The theoretical foundation of my lesson plan and activities that I used as part of the design for my research study working with mature female ELLs have been formed based on this model put forth by the New London Group. I briefly explain these components here. The purpose of the reformation of the new pedagogy around these four components is part of a “larger agenda focusing on Situated Practices in the learning process, which involves the recognition that differences are critical in workplaces, civic spaces, and multilayered lifeworlds.” (New London Group, 2000, p. 36)

Situated practice is “an immersion in meaningful practices within community of learners who are capable of playing multiple and different roles based on their background and experiences” (NLG, 1996, p. 85). With the help of situated practice, communities of learners are guided as “masters of practice” (p. 84). For example, online writing space assists both learners and educators to promote online and offline collaboration. Teachers can incorporate Facebook, Twitter, Mobile Device, Blogs, and Remixing (for example, making videos or trailers) in classrooms (Knobel & Lankshear, 2008; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Pennington, 2011). Immersion and role play are key to situated practice. In language learning, situated practice might involve asking students in the classroom to role play using the target language in everyday settings like a bank or restaurant. Or it could take the form of a field trip whereby students are immersed in a real world event like grocery shopping.

Overt instruction includes “active interventions on the part of the teacher and other experts that scaffold learning activities that allow the learner to gain explicit information” (NLG, 1996, p. 86). It assists learners to develop “conscious awareness and control over what is being learned” (p. 86). Helping students to understand metalanguage and code switching are examples of how teachers use overt instruction to very explicitly make students aware of power and social dynamics in language. For example, students thrive better in the target language and culture if they also have a keen awareness of specific cultural practices and their meanings – for example, accepted understandings of appropriate eye contact or gestures. The way one acts in a bar differs from behavior and ways of speaking in a job interview or family dinner. Overt instruction also teaches students specific metalanguages such as the language of filming (if the teacher has asked students to produce their own videos). In preparation for these creative productions, students will learn the metalanguage of film angles and shots and their implications, and what that language looks like put into practice. The students will work toward incorporating the metalanguage into their own vocabulary while simultaneously increasing their expertise with working in this type of design process, in this example, creating film.

Although these two mentioned components are very important in literacy pedagogy, they are not sufficient for the development of critical and cultural understanding of literacy and language. Therefore, two other components were created as part of this theoretical model offered by the New London Group in order to have a more comprehensive pedagogy that demands students are using higher order thinking skills. The New London Group (1996) note that these components are not meant to be taught in any sort of chronological order. Rather, the teacher must use good judgement in deciding when to deploy each of these components. The idea here is

that the New London Group provides these concepts as a way to help teachers ensure that their pedagogy is varied and demanding. It is easy for any educator to get stuck, for example, and only focus on one component such as situated practice.

Critical framing demonstrates both cognitive and social aspects of literacy pedagogy. In this research, the successful implementation of critical framing plays an influential part of how to enable students to interpret the social and cultural contexts of particular designs (Kalantzis & Cope, 2000). An effect of critical framing on a pedagogy of multiliteracies should be the ability to analyze the general function or purpose of a text, making causal connections between its design elements (“analysing functionally”) (Kalantzis & Cope, 2005). For example, students in a language learning context, even at emerging levels of language learning, can evaluate power dynamics of different social institutions. Drawing upon their own experiences and prior knowledge, for example, students can compare and contrast how shopping is done in their country of origin compared to in Canada. Through this evaluative process and a comparison matrix graphic organizer that does not involve a lot of written skills, they develop critical skills in which questions about marketization, cultural mores, food norms, and governmental regulations come into play in the critical discourse critiquing how super markets are normalized, yet they represent specific cultural attributes. Through critical framing, students should be able to step back and critique their learning, extend, and apply their learning in new contexts.

Transformed practice should be embedded in authentic learning where activities are re-created considering the lifeworld of the student (New London Group, 1996). Transformed practice suggests how meaningful learning activities within a classroom can design social futures (New London group, 1996; Newman, 2002; Kalantzis & Cope, 2008; Mills, 2009). For example,

if students in learning the target language spend a month working on biodiversity and water ways, hopefully, when they go on to study about health care systems, they can make connections between the two systems. So, the content will be different, but using *Transformed Practice*, students (guided by their teachers), will consider how policies and regulations play a significant role in ensuring clean water systems. Using this knowledge, they will apply their new knowledge of the impact of policies and regulations when they examine funding and regulating high standard mental and physical care for patients in hospitals and home care. In order to transform information to knowledge and meet diverse language learners' needs, technology-aided educational tools can be used (Egbert, 2007). For example, when combining a text with pictures, music, art or any other visual modes can help students gain better understanding throughout learning process (Ajayi, 2009). Ajayi (2009) points out "multimodal/multiliteracies pedagogy has the potential to provide students in culturally plural classrooms with a more representative platform for meaning-making" (p. 586).

There is newer, revised model suggested by just Cope and Kalantzis (2015), two of the original New London Group theorists, in their book *A pedagogy of multiliteracies: Learning by design (2015)*. (See Figure 1.) The pedagogical scaffold of Learning by Design is centered on a learning experience which is student-centered, engaging, innovative, and inquiry based. Educators design the curriculum in a way that considers both students' passion and a sense of personal identity in order to engage them in lifelong learning. Students experience learning in an environment where they are actively engaged "as knowledge producers and in which teachers have assumed a transformed professional role as designers of hybrid online and face-to-face learning environments" (Cope B. a., 2015). In the new model, the design of the lesson plan is

being developed constantly which means there is no fixed way of instruction. Students have access to available designs of meaning making through which they are allowed to select work on the activities which they are interested in doing at their own pace (designing) and the resources which are made available can be reproduced through designing (redesigned). (See figure 2).

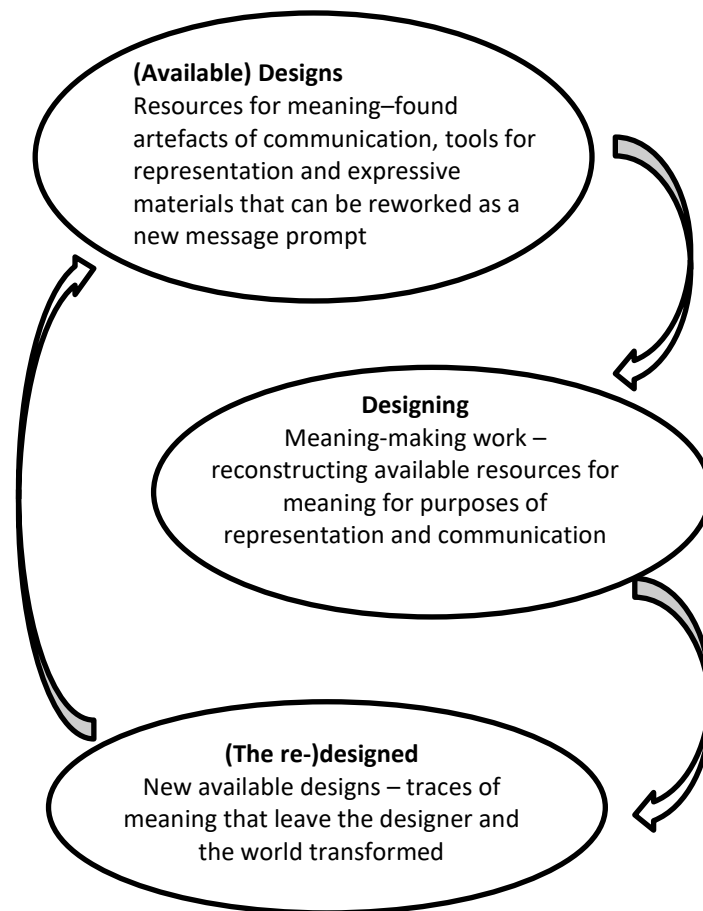


Figure 2: The meaning-design process- The “what of literacies”- Reproduced from page

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Design is a dynamic process, a process of subjective self-interest and transformation, consisting of (i) The Designed (the available meaning-making resources, and patterns and conventions of meaning Multiliteracies in a particular cultural context); (ii) Designing (the process of shaping emergent meaning which involves re-presentation and recontextualisation—this never involves a simple repetition of The Designed because every moment of meaning involves the transformation of the Available Designs of meaning); and (iii) The Redesigned (the outcome of designing, something through which the meaning-maker has remade themselves and created a new meaning-making resource—it is in this sense that we are truly designers of our social futures).” (Cope and Kalantzis, 2000, p. 204) Below you the comparison between two models is shown (see Figure 3):

Multiliteracies Model		Learning by Design	
Situated Practice	The immersion in experience and the utilisation of available Designs of meaning.	Experiencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the known</i> – learners reflect on their own familiar experiences, interests and perspectives. • <i>the new</i> – learners observe or take part in something that is unfamiliar; they are immersed in new situations or contents.
Over Instruction	The systematic, analytic and conscious understanding of Designs of meaning and Design processes.	Conceptualising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>by naming</i> – learners group things into categories, apply classifying terms, and define these terms. • <i>with theory</i> – learners make generalisations using concepts, and connect terms in concept maps or theories.
Critical Framing	Interpreting the social and cultural contexts, where students critically view their study topic in relation to its context.	Analysing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>functionally</i> – learners analyse logical connections, cause and effect, structure and function. • <i>critically</i> – learners evaluate their own and other people's perspectives, interests and motives.
Transformed Practice	The transfer in meaning-making practice, which puts the transformed meaning to work in other contexts or cultural sites.	Applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>appropriately</i> – learners apply new learning to real world situations and test their validity. • <i>creatively</i> – learners make an intervention in the world which is innovative and creative, or transfer their learning to a different context.
Adapted from Kalantzis and Cope (2000) and New Learning Online (n.d).			

Figure 3. Comparison between Multiliteracies Model and Learning by Design

Using understandings gained through Overt Instruction and Critical Framing, students demonstrate that they can apply and revise what they have learned in authentic activities. As Rowsell and Walsh (2011) note,

Situating teaching based on student needs and competencies, teaching students overtly based on the skills that they have when they enter our classrooms, and most importantly and what students do not necessarily possess, are ways of critically framing their learning to think about multiple modes, issues of power, ruling passions, communities of practices, home and community literacy, the role

of their race, culture, religion, and social class in their literacy learning. (Rowseell. & Walsh., 2011, p. 4)

Importantly, when developing lessons or unit plans, the integration of the four components should be taken into account. Traditional, didactic forms of teaching language learning have not drawn upon this range of perspectives in shaping curriculum for ELLs.

In this current research study, this model by the New London Group was used to help co-design the workshops with the teacher-participant to teach mature female Iranian English Language Learners. Considering who our audience are, regarding their age group, their interests, and their culture, the teacher-participant and I designed the lesson plans and activities. In the lesson plans we designed and used in the three day workshops, we tried to incorporate all four knowledge processes. Situated practice helped us to use participants' real life experiences within a community of learners in order to understand each other's viewpoints and make meaningful activities. For instance, students collaboratively made story books and then enacted it with props; all participants watched how words came to life. They could all investigate the world of text and the world of their own imagination; all students were immersed in learning. Overt instruction was also integrated into our lesson plans. For example, the use of graphic organisers helped students focus on important parts of a text and allowed them to experience a systematic and analytic explanation of different modes of meaning, or in the activity that included culture stations, the participants were the key contributors to the activity, and they all built on what they already knew. Critical framing was encouraged throughout the three day workshops. The student-participants of this study were also guided to critically analyze a text about cultural stereotypes toward women with the help of some commercial pictures, texts, and graphic organisers. Students tried to analyze the intention of the designers of these commercials. In another activity, as an example, students then shared their thoughts and analyzed

critically the implicit ideology or values in their culture. Transformed practice was also embedded in the lesson plans. Students worked collaboratively in culture stations and story writing with the help of technology, and story enactment to learn this important skill to help them be successful outside of classroom contexts as well. The technological learning through those experiences could improve their abilities to utilize similar software in the future. The research study design will be explored in greater detail in chapter 6. At this point though, what is important to note is that the New London Group's model (1996) was foundational to the design of the Research Workshops.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews the literature related to the field of multiliteracies that focuses on English Language Learners and the education system in Iran to help contextualize the scholarly contributions of this current study to the larger corpus of existing research.

The key terms I used in my search for the literature review include: “multimodality,” “multiliteracies,” “adult education,” “adult female education,” “multimodal activities,” “education in Iran,” “student centered pedagogies,” “language learning,” “literacy,” “design and redesign,” “visual literacy,” “meaning making,” “language learning,” “second language acquisition,” “ELL curriculum and pedagogy,” “Iranian English Language Learners,” “Cultural impact”.

I used the databases Scholars Portal, CRKN Wiley Online Library, EBSCOhost Academic Search Complete, and Taylor and Francis Journals Complete through the Leddy Library at the University of Windsor, and when looking for literature, I was only focusing on peer reviewed books and journals. The articles I chose are mostly within ten to fifteen years’ period of time (2008-2019). Only a few of them are written earlier. The earlier research is seminal work important to these fields of study. The books and articles explain the use of multimodal approach in language teaching and learning; the theory of multiliteracies and visual literacy’ and the current situation of Iranian female English Language Learners teaching and learning. I also used articles providing empirical evidence for the findings.

The activities we (the teacher-participant and I) have selected to include demonstrate the metalanguage of multiliteracies. Some of them explain the techniques educators can use in terms

of understanding of the concept of multiliteracies, and others relate to social justice issues, which connect to part of the theory of multiliteracies. I targeted the mature female English Language Learners age group when designing the lesson plans and activities.

Female Adult Education in the Iranian Context

For years, “women have been excluded from decision-making positions in social, cultural, political, academic, and social structures worldwide” (Rahbari, 2016, p. 1003).

Depending on societies, cultures, and time, the gap between sexes has been experienced to different extents. Sharvarini (2006) pointed out, although there have been impressive advancements in women’s educational attainment at the secondary and college levels in Iran, not an adequate increase in their social status, or opportunities in the job market has been observed (the unemployment rate for women is as high as 20%, whilst for men it is about 12%). As Rahbari states (2016) “women in Iran have been struggling to reach their rightful positions in a gendered hierarchical structure in the academia.” (1007) Today, despite the fact that the number of female adult learners has increased everywhere such as in Iran because of some changes in females’ roles that have happened in different societal, cultural, economic, and academic levels, there is still a long way to claim women and men can equally hold available positions in different sectors. Rahbari (2016) used different official resources such as the official website of Iranian Ministry of Science Research and Technology and the global Gender Gap Index (Iran’s profile) introduced by World Economic Forum from 2006 until 2015 to identify the percentage of university female lecturers and “the scope of gender-based disparities and their progress throughout the years” (p. 1004). She shared her key findings on women’s social and academic positions by addressing both statistical and qualitative results (p. 1004). She found that “women

are actively engaged in the production of knowledge where they do not encounter official structural limitations” (p. 1008). She also noted gender discrimination is excluding women from many choices they can have in different societal levels, these restrictions have stopped many women to reach to a level which they deserve.

Researchers show women seek further education in order to reach to a better point in self-efficacy and to be able to control “how they live their lives in terms of who they have been and who they may become” (Taylor & Marienau, 1995). As Bandura (1999) rightfully notes, people “function as contributors to their own motivation, behavior, and development within a network of reciprocally interacting influences” (p. 169). According to Duckworth and Smith (2018), through engagement with learning, women can develop their social literacy which enables them to navigate the complexities of different social groups which is about being able to move without feeling like a fish out of water between different contexts: home, the classroom, the school on parents’ evening, the doctor’s surgery, the police station with a sense of agency. (Smith, 2018, p. 14)

Education serves a much broader role than just what has been traditionally portrayed through it. Today, it is more about what contributions and changes one can make rather than just learning and gaining some knowledge to win in the marketplace, without thinking so “education becomes an item to be consumed, rather than a space for dialogical and critical learning opportunities.” (Holloway & Gouthro, 2011, p. 43)

Thompson and Barcinas (2014) state, “Female adult learners are constantly evaluating their roles, values, and beliefs and revising them” (p. 533). As pointed out by Duckworth and Smith (2018) “individuals can (re)discover their agency: an enjoyment of learning and success as

learners that connects with their lives in the outside world” (p. 3). This point is important when we consider this could be a main reason for mature female English Language Learners to engage in language learning as a form of lifelong learning simply for the joy of learning and to improve the quality of their personal lives. Ducksworth and Smith (2018) drew on a research project: *‘FE in England – Transforming lives and communities’* (sponsored by the University and College Union) to explore the intersection between women, literacy and Adult Education, and they found that women who participated in their study who had experienced inequality in their social and economic lives, after the formation of a strong bond with their literacy teachers and classmates, they felt supported to “develop a new identity within a collectively experienced space” (p. 21). The question is what is a good pedagogical choice that can result in a strong bond? What pedagogy can be more helpful in that regard?

A feminist analysis (Hooks, 2000; Smith & Watson, 1998; Butler, 1990) is important to highlight the needs of this particular group of learners: mature female English Language Learners, who are a more vulnerable population. Girls have varied life experiences depending on where they are raised, and their experience as a girl can largely impact their being as a woman. For instance, in *Language and Gender* by Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), a study of girls attending the private Emma Willard School in the eastern US, psychologist Carol Gilligan and her colleagues (Gilligan, Lyons, & Hanmer, 1990) showed that “as they approached adolescence, girls become less sure of themselves, less assertive, more deferential, and generally lost the sense of agency that they had had as children.” (p. 32) They also pointed out “these girls’ crisis of confidence has become a famous gender construct – a kind of developmental imperative for girls” (p.32). They stated although this is a relatively small segment of the population, it shows

“this kind of crisis is common among white middle-class girls, like the ones who attend the Emma Willard school Gilligan et al. focused on” (p. 32).

Eckert and McConnell Ginnet also built on another experience of African American girls who were in this same life stage. The study identified that they did not undergo such a crisis; on the other hand, they appear to have gained a sense of personal confidence (AAUW, 1992). These seminal research studies are still valid to today's women's experience in different parts of the world. Depending on each society and the cultural norms, women's “recognition and redistribution” (Stromquist, 2013, p. 30) can be varied; either they can be accepted or denied. She argues (2013) “Recognition in the form of numerical representation (parity in certain spheres of social life, particularly education) is much easier to attain than redistribution.” (p. 30) As Stromquist states (2013), “Educational attributes can bring women both recognition and (in the longer term) redistribution. But this change is not automatic” (p. 30). Women who are often marginalized from having influence and decision making powers are unable to develop and fulfill personal potential. They are also less well equipped to manage their own health and that of their families, and find themselves trapped in traditional caring, dependent roles in the own country and also if they immigrate to their target country because of their language skills (Cheung & Pomeratz, 2012).

In Iran, current patriarchal power systems keep being reinforced and reproduced in educational settings, so women are often marginalized and have less access to power. This affects the chances of women to achieve any kind of gender-based equality. With the help of literacy tools such as those offered through a multiliteracies pedagogy, it is expected that these women are empowered and gain enough confidence to be socially active participants. As some

researchers have observed, “women are marginalised and often silenced if they are unable to access the powerful literacy tools that can enable them to transform their lives” (Duckworth & Smith, 2018).

Iranian mothers who can communicate in the global language “English” might be more engaged with their children’s schooling and education as now in Iran many parents send their children to an English institute or tutorial classes to have their English proficiency improved. However, for those parents who cannot speak English as their second, third, or maybe fourth language, getting involved in their children’s education might be a problem. Language can be seen as a tool that helps learners “to envision and consider alternative worldviews and perspectives” (Gouthro & Holloway, 2011, p. 54) Thus, the advantages of language learning are not solely for economic advancement. Also, considering the fact that many Iranian families are future immigrants to many English-speaking countries, or at least most of them have plans to send their offspring abroad, then knowing and being able to communicate in English can be considered beneficial for both these women and their children for social, intellectual, and economic reasons. As Thao argues: “Many immigrant parents have had limited opportunities for school and exposure or use of English in their native country, thus, they lack formal education and English language proficiency. This impacts their ability to help their children with school work” (Thao, 2009, p. 2). In Iran, as mentioned earlier, most families send their children to language schools for English from early stages. It is now something called “language fever,” which means like a contagious disease now every family sees and wants to emulate others, and spares no efforts to help their children be successful competitors, in other words, not to be behind others in terms of success in any field. Therefore, it is significantly important for Iranian parents,

particularly for mothers, to be able to participate in their children's language learning process. As Cheung and Pomerantz (2012) state that any type of parental involvement in children's learning is a crucial factor that plays an effective role in children's higher achievement in school and learning process through which women as their mothers gain power and confidence. Admittedly, "literacy can be observed as doing the work of discourse and power/knowledge (Pennycook, 2001). By means of schooling, the dominant values and identities can be redefined, provided, embodied, and normalized for the people of each society. With a multiliteracies pedagogy and its emphasis on exploring power relations and social justice mores, it is hoped that rather than simply reproducing the status quo of language learning in the Iranian context in its current patriarchal form, that mature female English Language Learners and their children will gain critical faculties to better critique their own language learning experiences, and prove to be agents of change for the future toward a more equitable society.

The social system which dominates the education system in Iran, has been trying to teach Iranian boys that they were responsible for outside tasks and matters such as grocery shopping, or washing the car, and women were responsible for those tasks inside the domestic sphere such as cooking and cleaning the house. This mantra is illustrated through the words of a typical Iranian school textbook: "Usually, the father works outside the home. He has the duty to provide food, clothing, and other necessities for his wife and children. In some families the mother works outside the home, as well" (Grade four, social studies textbook, 2006, p. 112–113). Data from Paivandi's research (2008) in the Iranian context illustrates that "the depiction of women as autonomous individuals is absent in textbooks; female autonomy is not recognized and accepted, a woman's individuality is limited to that of the mother, sister, daughter or wife of a man" (p. 6).

It is worth mentioning here that these were all just the efforts from the Iranian system to indoctrinate their own ideal images of genders; however, interestingly, Paivandi's data shows "the most important point of this quantitative growth is the rise in female access to schools and higher education" (p. 9). He added,

The number of girls in school continues to grow: 48% in 2010 compared to 38% in 1978. Likewise, since 1997, more girls obtained high school degrees and many of them passed the public university's entry exam. Feminization of higher education rose between 1998 and 2004, when 57% of seats, on average, offered by public universities were filled by women. As a result, the presence of girls has increased in the student body: 54% in 2010 compared to 30% in 1978. (Paivandi, 2008, p. 9)

Therefore, the data shows the Iranian system was unsuccessful in achieving their goals in regard to shaping women's roles in society in particular ways. As Paivandi (2008) said,

The considerable progress made by women in the context of an anti-women curriculum is a telling sociological phenomenon. Attending school or university has turned into a social challenge for women to accomplish their autonomy and self. Despite the frustrations, humiliations and pressures of the curriculum, the school has a function of emancipation for women (p. 10).

The result can be *perhaps* because of the rich cultural, social or socio-economic background of Iranian families which has greatly influenced women in general. Different cultures and classes vary in values and beliefs about the right way to live, and experience different political and

social attitudes. These class-specific ideologies are not learned by experience, they are passed down over generations within families and communities through socialization and enculturation practices. Women, in Iran, are struggling to gain the positions they deserve in a conservative religious environment, and to reach their rights which have been overlooked since their childhood throughout all these years.

In recent years, more women feel the need of attending English classes in Iran. It is now considered a necessity for Iranian families, especially those who have a child or children at home, to be somehow able to communicate in English language, the global language, in order to aid in their children's schooling and their language needs. Today, many Iranian families travel abroad, immigrate, or move- because of many reasons- to an English speaking country. Therefore, this can also be another reason why the number of Iranian parents has now increased enrollment in Iran's English Language institutes. There are different types of English classes in Iran to support students reaching different targets. Nowadays, in order to hire an applicant for certain jobs, one needs to have fluency in English. Therefore, it can be said that there is a strong willingness to upgrade English teaching pedagogies according to what the "New" systems suggest.

The teaching method is a factor that needs to be taken into account when discussing the challenges adult female English language learners face when learning the new language. McMonagle (2017) in her review on Mills' book states "how critical literacies, which begin with a concern about social inequalities and power, intersect with 'multimodal literacies' through a critical consciousness of domination through language or discourse" (McMonagle, 2017, p. 372). It is of high importance to understand that today's students are required to be more

engaged in strategies which are designed to increase not only their understanding of the content but allowing them become a voice in the conversations. Teachers and students can share power equally; there is no more room in today's classes, filled with students from culturally divergent backgrounds, for teachers who still exercise the traditional approaches to design curriculum (Manke, 1997). It is worthwhile to note that multiliteracies takes the stance that traditional, didactic learning practices do have a place in today's classrooms, but only as part of a larger curriculum that also values student-centred and inquiry-based learning. The truth is that students can make sense of social dynamics the way they do other aspects of the world around them: through experimentation and investigation (Gallas, 1998). This ideology allows students to be not just active classroom students but also active social participants.

While teaching a second language, students must achieve both linguistic competency and critical cultural competency. Non-traditional activities can pave the way for multilingual and multicultural educators to advance their students' creative and critical thinking. The views and opinions that emerge from these activities can boost students' assessment strength and goal-setting processes. A very common situation in adult ELL classes is the variety of language skill levels and culture within one class (Costanzo, 1999) that may weaken the class power dynamic. Researchers also state that each person has different abilities and that each individual has an essentially independent contribution to make (Kallenbach, 1999). In group activities such as games, students' confidence in participation can be strengthened.

Teachers must help learners to tap their "Evaluation," "Synthesis," and "Analysis," which are the higher-order thinking categories of Bloom's Taxonomy, are acquired abilities by designing critical and controversial questions that evoke thinking and inquiry senses. In this way,

teachers are not the center of classes anymore; the authority is shared, diversity is respected, the foundation is cooperation- based not competition (Herrell & Jordan, 2008). In today's classrooms, educators need to strive to be a role model to develop social skills and critical thinking skills that are also culturally responsive. (Gay, 2000)

Many researchers have conducted research to meet the diverse needs of learners and also to find ways to increase level of motivation among adult learners to develop their success and well-being through considering individual's strength (Goldsmith & Bennis, 2010; Yazlik, 2008). Although there are challenges in selecting and applying an "appropriate pedagogy," the overall positive attitude toward putting effort into enriching a motivational curriculum makes it worthwhile. Students who learn in an environment in which diversity is not affirmed soon understand their "difference" is not honoured and consequently lose their motivation (Cummins, 1989). All learners reserve the right of having a class in which they are encouraged to think critically, to participate fully, to reflect, and to solve problems as Cummins (1989) stated. In the language classroom, a student's level of confidence is particularly crucial since success is largely based on the student's willingness to make constant mistakes and be able to reflect upon and grow from those mistakes in the language acquisition process.

Educators often forget the significance of students' choices in the learning process as a motivating force. When students feel that their existence matters in the class, they endeavor more to participate effectively in class activities. In Iran, a large number of female English language learners are from diverse backgrounds, and in their country, the unequal distribution of power within their communities and institutions impacts their literacy practices' levels and functionality. Researchers in the field of multiliteracies always contend that language must be

understood in its specific cultural milieu (New London Group, 1996; Newman, 2002; Mills, 2009). Through this research, I hope to highlight the socially constructed positioning of women as learners in language classes.

Multiliteracies Pedagogies

Part of what a multiliteracies theoretical framework seeks to address in its social justice mandate is gender power imbalances. By taking a look at how educators can benefit from multiliteracies pedagogy to design a democratic class within the existing social inequality in Iran, one can refer to Gunther Kress's (2004) argument which demonstrates respect for the rights of students as the audience:

If I have a number of ways of expressing and shaping my message, then the questions that confront me are: which mode is best, most apt, for the content/meaning I wish to communicate?" or perhaps it can be asked "Which mode most appeals to the audience whom I intend to address? Which medium is preferred by my audience? All of these call for selections to be made, resting on my assessment of the environment in which communication takes place (Kress, 2004, p. 122).

Kress (2004) suggests that giving learners' the power to make choices in a classroom increases their own power as well as intellectual faculties. Referring to the audience, Kress does not solely mean school students, or young group of learners. In fact, when Kress references "by audience," it can be perceived as all genders and from all ages.

Many scholars have investigated the impact of the use of multimodal approach on young learners (Yelland, 2014; Morgan, 2013); and the findings show in the multimodal landscape of

communication, choice and therefore “design” become central issues. In a recent study, Wing Yin Ng (2018) investigated the “the impact of a Sister Class Project that connected two classes of Grade 7 students from Canada and Hong Kong with respect to the extent to which this Internet-mediated intercultural exchange facilitated multiliteracies pedagogy” (p. 2). The result showed “ELL students’ voices can be widely heard and their roles can be better recognized via the creation of identity texts which value and acknowledge their imaginations, pre-existing knowledge, linguistic and cultural assets, creative work, and the full variety of the representational forms they choose to display and perform in the learning space orchestrated by their teachers” (p. 118). Hesterman (2013) conducted five case studies on how teacher pedagogy impacts on the quality of children's multiliteracies learning experiences. Her research revealed that the five teachers involved in the study recognized the necessity of broadening literacy definitions to include multimodal forms of communication, although all teachers approach this through different ways. Kirchoff and Cook (2016) studied that students believe that multimodal composition positively influenced their writing and helped them better understand the roles audience and design played in their own composition processes. These studies have all been informed by critical linguistic and social anthropology since “reading and writing can only be understood in the context of social, cultural, political, economic, historical practices of which they are a part” (Lankshear & Knobel, 2007, p. 1). The findings of these studies influenced the premise and teaching philosophy based in multiliteracies from which the teacher-participant and I shaped the Research Workshops.

It is acceptable to assume that adult female language learners’ schooling experience is largely different from young language learners in Iran and in many other countries. Many mature

adult female language learners have experienced schooling when the traditional teaching-learning approach was the dominant discourse. They were expected to memorize texts, words, or grammatical structures; this can be one of the reasons why, in today's English classrooms, they might resist to have an active participatory role in the more current pedagogies used by educators to facilitate the language learning process. The traditional method of rote learning might have largely impacted their confidence level in believing in their capacity to learn and to be involved in technology-based activities.

Biswas (2012) contends, "the integration of teaching multiliteracies has a potential to adopt new ideas and overcome the limitations of traditional learning approaches in the 21st century literacies" (p. 39). Several scholars investigated the impact of videos (Ambrose et al., 2010), and games (e.g. Colby & Colby, 2008; Robison, 2008) which are multimodal activities used with students. They found that the use of multiple communicative modes can be helpful in terms of English language acquisition. Clark (2012) argues,

With the growing number of multilingual students from diverse backgrounds participating in language education programs, there is a critical need to (re)shape pedagogies that reflect the complex linguistic repertoires and social practices of students with multiple, heterogeneous identities in today's classrooms. (p. 143)

Burke and Hammets say "Multimodal practice should provide students with profound opportunities to express, explore, and reflect themselves" (Burke & Hammet, 2009, p. 7). They elaborate on this point, stating multimodal practices offer the opportunity "to enhance critical thinking; to foster academic achievement; and to build leadership skills" (Burke & Hammet, 2009, p. 8). With the help of a multimodal approach, it can be expected that these students

become more confident and knowledgeable in their learning context through “participatory” and “collaborative” practices (Biswas, 2014, p. 39). Thus, it is of high importance to make sure the opportunity is provided for all language learners to be engaged in multimodal activities that get into and reflect on their sociocultural identities and their lives. This group of students, mature Iranian ELLS, like younger students, need to be able to make sense of their life in the process of language learning. A large number of female English learners in these classes, are from diverse cultural backgrounds, and what can be pointed out is the unequal distribution of power within their communities and institutions which might have impacted their literacy practices’ levels and functionality. These learning curves can be personally challenging.

By giving women more access to plurilingualism, educators can empower them to be more active citizens involved as leaders in their families and communities. Language acquisition processes require individuals to take risks constantly, which in turn means that it is vital for mature female language learners to foster their confidence which might be result in their upward mobility in their own country and if they immigrate in their target country. Many women, in Iran, are educated, but because of lack of confidence in being able to communicate in English, they might abandon studying or having a societal influence in their new country. Therefore, they can be exposed to a pause in their life that can turn into stagnancy, which might have an everlasting negative impact on them.

Research Studies in Iran about Teaching English

Several studies have been conducted in Iran on different teaching approaches. A study was done by Kalantari and Hashemian (2016) to explore the “impact of the storytelling approach on improving of young EFL [English as a Foreign Language] learners' (age 8-14) vocabulary

knowledge” (p. 221). They conducted this research with 30 upper-beginner EFL learners (out of a population of 134). The participants were divided to two groups: 1 experimental group and 1 group. In this study, the participants were exposed to the key vocabulary via pictures and gestures. They explained,

Once the participants had identified the new words, the teacher started telling and introducing the stories. While reading the stories, the teacher directed the participants' attention to the PowerPoint presentation that included the visual representation of the story to facilitate the comprehension process. (p. 221)

Results of this study and the analysis showed that the “storytelling approach to teaching vocabulary proved effective for the experimental group, and there was a boost in the interest rate of the experimental group participants in terms of motivation” (p. 221).

Tavakoli, Aliasin, and Mobini (2017) studied the impact of Structured Academic Controversy (SAC) on the English proficiency level of 60 Iranian intermediate EFL learners (age 18-20) within the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) context. The participants were randomly divided into two groups of experimental and control groups. They used the Communicative Language Teaching method supplemented by the Structured Academic Controversy technique on the experimental group, and the control group received the same approach but without the help of the SAC techniques. They used the t-test to reveal the results which showed a “significant impact of SAC on the experimental group's performance on the post test, which means that SAC can play a role in EFL learners' English language proficiency improvement” (p. 349). Structured Academic Controversy, it should be noted, is a strategy that purposefully engages students in challenging, complex social issue questions that often provoke

strong feelings and opinions. Within a multiliteracies pedagogy, SAC is considered an important strategy to foster students' abilities to articulate multiple perspectives backed up with sound reasoning and evidence, and furthermore, to do so in a way that is respectful of diverse views.

In addition, Rahimi Tehrani, Barati, and Youhanaee (2013) carried out a study in Iran on the progress of EFL young learners with the help of the two methods of Audio-lingual and Natural approach. The focus of this study was on young female English Language Learners (age 7-9), and they investigated their vocabulary and communicative skills' acquisition. The participants of this study were chosen randomly from two elementary schools. One school received Audio-lingual method and the other was taught via Natural approach. The data result revealed that "young learners' vocabulary learning and communication skills improved significantly in Natural approach compared in that of Audio-lingual method" (p. 968).

Zohrabi (2011) also explored how to promote student's autonomy through Reciprocal approach to Curriculum development. The participants of this study were "undergraduate chemistry students (n=63), three language instructors and three subject instructors (all were 19-25)" (p. 123). A learning-centered approach was used to meet both "course goals (i.e. reading skills) and different students' needs and objectives" (p. 120). Zohrabi (2011) drew upon "informal discussions with the students and instructors, informal needs analysis, field notes, continuous observation of students, journals, and diaries" (p. 124). The result of this study showed "there were heterogeneous group of students in the EGP (English for General Purpose) class. Although their field of study was the same (i.e. chemistry), they had different needs" (p. 126). Therefore, it showed there is a need to consider student's individual differences in learning needs and address them in the pedagogies used by teachers. In the review of literature, no studies

were found in the Iranian context that focus specifically on mature female English Language Learners. While the participant populations are clearly distinct from my study, this review does help to illustrate the research on language acquisition that has been done in the Iran

Empirical Studies on the Impact of Multiliteracies Pedagogy

Aghai and Gouglani (2016) explored the impact of “multimodal pedagogy on L2 vocabulary retention, an experimental study on 60 Iranian EFL female pre-intermediate learners (aged 12-15) in an English Language Institute in Gonbad-e-Kavous, a northern city in Iran” (p. 142). They explained that “the experimental group received vocabulary presentation using Multimodal Pedagogy. The control group followed the conventional pedagogy based on which they just received the library dictionary definition of vocabularies using print-based educational materials” (p. 142). The results revealed that students who were taught with “a variety of modes of meaning making displayed better long-term vocabulary retention” (p. 142). Aghai and Gouglani (2016) argued, “the result may be due to the fact that learners learn vocabulary items more efficiently as the experimental group pedagogy makes connections between their in-class and out-of-class language practices” (p. 142).

Harrop-Allin (2017) conducted an ethnographic study on “children’s musical games in three Soweto primary schools in urban South Africa, followed by case study research that trialed a new pedagogy based on the games’ analysis and interpretation. She added “analysis reveals the games’ sophistication in terms of children’s deployment of multiple modes and the inventiveness their methods imply” (p. 25).

Hepple et al. (2014) also carried out a research study in a high school in Brisbane, Australia. They engaged a post-beginner class in the school in a multiliteracies project. Participants were asked to create multimodal claymation (the stop-action filming of clay figures) texts around the theme of Jurassic Park. The results showed that student agency was promoted, and they took ownership of the outcome of their multiliteracies project by leading the different stages of production through engagement and cooperation. Hepple et. al (2014) stated students became decision makers in the process of the formation of the final product of the given project (p. 225).

In a recent study, Wing Yin Ng (2018) investigated the “the impact of a Sister Class Project that connected two classes of Grade 7 students from Canada and Hong Kong with respect to the extent to which this Internet-mediated intercultural exchange facilitated multiliteracies pedagogy” (p. 2). The result showed “ELL students’ voices can be widely heard and their roles can be better recognized via the creation of identity texts which value and acknowledge their imaginations, pre-existing knowledge, linguistic and cultural assets, creative work, and the full variety of the representational forms they choose to display and perform in the learning space orchestrated by their teachers” (p. 118).

Hesterman (2013) conducted five case studies on how teacher pedagogy impacts on the quality of children's multiliteracies learning experiences. Her research revealed that the five teachers involved in the study recognized the necessity of broadening literacy definitions to include multimodal forms of communication, although all of these teachers approach this through different ways. Kirchoff and Cook (2016) studied that students believe that multimodal

composition positively influenced their writing and help them better understand the roles audience and design played in their own composition processes. These studies have all been informed by critical linguistic and social anthropology since “reading and writing can only be understood in the context of social, cultural, political, economic, historical practices of which they are a part” (Lankshear and Knobel, 2007, p. 1). Overall, multiliteracies pedagogy seems to have reaped positive benefits in the teaching and learning of youth as well as adults in various contexts around the globe. The majority of studies within the field of multiliteracies, whether they focus on language acquisition or a more general education, tend to be situated more in the elementary panel with young people. Yet, I would argue that a multiliteracies pedagogy is also very beneficial for teaching language to adults.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology used in this study. The following sections include research design, participant recruitment, demographic data, data collection, instrumentation, data analysis, and the limitations of this study.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of using a multiliteracies pedagogy with a small group of Iranian adult female English language learners; it seeks to explore, through a critical lens, how a multiliteracies approach may or may not influence the language learning of mature female English Language Learners in Iran.

Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used to investigate the lived experiences of the participants. The process of Participatory Action Research encourages individuals “to be creative actors on the world” while being active participants in meaningful decision-making (Maguire, 1987, p.30). This research was set up as a collaborative effort between myself as the researcher and a teacher in Iran who volunteered to be a part of the study. Together, we planned out several workshops (a Curriculum Workshop Intervention) using a multiliteracies pedagogy. As part of the recruitment, all potential participants were informed in advance that if they participated in the workshops, everything that happened within the workshop environment was a part of the research itself. So, this would include interactions between teacher and students, assignments, activities, and reflections. Following the workshops, the students were given the option to also participate in a follow up interview to gather more data about their experience. Participatory Action Research is “systematic and orientated around analysis of data whose

answers require the gathering and analysis of data and the generation of interpretations directly tested in the field of action” (Greenwood & Levin, 1998, p.122). Thus, true to Participatory Action Research, this study from the very beginning engaged the teacher-participant to work directly with me in creating the workshops. We were partners in several ways throughout the research process.

Qualitative methodologies use an inductive and descriptive approach to understand the events and people studied (Maxwell, 2012). These methodologies focus on inquiry and expand upon the researcher’s interest in understanding how the participants interpret their lived experiences (Merriam, 2014). This approach seemed relevant given my interest in connecting the participants’ school experiences with their home lives. Purposive sampling was used in this research as “this technique is very appropriate for case study and qualitative approaches in which the intent is not to generalize to a larger population but to examine a ‘typical’ case in order to understand it more fully” (Bouma, Ling, & Wilkinson, 2012, p. 147). The purposive criteria were that the participants must be Iranian grandmothers or mothers studying English at the Intermediate level (see figure 4). The criteria helped to hone the focus of the research.

FIGURE TO.2 Performance Definitions of the Five Levels of English Language Proficiency

English language learners can understand and use . . .

Level 1 STARTING	Level 2 EMERGING	Level 3 DEVELOPING	Level 4 EXPANDING	Level 5 BRIDGING
. . . language to communicate with others around basic concrete needs.	. . . language to draw on simple and routine experiences to communicate with others.	. . . language to communicate with others on familiar matters regularly encountered.	. . . language in both concrete and abstract situations and apply language to new experiences.	. . . a wide range of longer oral and written texts and recognize implicit meaning.
. . . high-frequency words and memorized chunks of language.	. . . high-frequency and some general academic vocabulary and expressions.	. . . general and some specialized academic vocabulary and expressions.	. . . specialized and some technical academic vocabulary and expressions.	. . . technical academic vocabulary and expressions.
. . . words, phrases, or chunks of language.	. . . phrases or short sentences in oral or written communication.	. . . expanded sentences in oral or written communication.	. . . a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in oral and written communication.	. . . a variety of sentence lengths of varying linguistic complexity in extended oral or written discourse.
. . . pictorial, graphic, or non-verbal representation of language.	. . . oral or written language, making errors that may impede the communication.	. . . oral or written language, making errors that may impede the communication, but retain much of its meaning.	. . . oral or written language, making minimal errors that do not impede the overall meaning of the communication.	. . . oral or written language approaching comparability to that of English-proficient peers.

Source: From PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards, 2006, TESOL. Copyright 2006 by the Teachers of English to Students of Other Languages. Used with permission.

Figure 4: English Language Proficiency Standards, 2006, TESOL Copyright 2006

I first planned to invite up to 10 mature female English language participants aged 40-55 years old to participate in up to 8 session workshops and an interview. Following recruitment, I finally ended up having 4 student participants in the workshop and one teacher-participant who helped me design the lesson plans and facilitated the workshops. The teacher-participant taught the majority of the lessons while I took field notes. At times, I helped facilitate the teaching

process as well. Following the workshops, two of the four student-participants volunteered to take part in an interview. In the end because of logistical complications, I held three workshops altogether because of the holiday taking place at that time in Iran.

Without any advance notice, I was surprised that while conducting the research, during the workshops, some teachers of the institute showed up to observe. They did not participate in any parts of the workshop activities whatsoever. They just wanted to observe what was being taught and how the classes were being managed. They showed great interest in the materials and the way they were delivered, and they were also willing to participate in the interviews. Through the Minor Revision Form protocol, I got permission from the University of Windsor REB to conduct the interviews with them; however, unfortunately, because of the holiday in between semesters, ultimately, I could not contact them outside of the English Institute to invite them for the interview.

With regards to the content of the Curriculum Workshop Intervention, this research investigates what strategies can be used to facilitate the mature females' English language learning process, and how they can become intrigued and motivated to use multimodal resources in order to enhance their language learning process and gain the confidence to participate in activities that are technology-based. Therefore, the activities were designed based on the purpose of this investigation and thus informed by a multiliteracies theoretical framework. Some activities that were used are as follows: role play, graphic organisers, story enactment, etc. – these are all examples of classroom activities that involve multiliteracies and multimodalities. So, I took a participatory role in this research by helping design and shape the lesson plans and activities, and

also collaborating with the teacher as we brainstormed together. The students' work as well as the pedagogical resources we created provided materials for Document Analysis afterward.

Also, investigating the perceptions of the participants through interviews gave me greater insight in uncovering and understanding their experiences. This combination of data sources creates an approach that is inductive in nature, as the researcher draws conclusions from the lived experiences of the participants, rather than creating assumptions through past hypotheses. It is true that any researcher has bias. I did have the assumption based on my own ELL teaching in Iran previously that the older mature female students would be more reticent about engaging in multiliteracies pedagogy, and on this point, I was proven incorrect, at least with the small number of participants I worked with here in this study. Nevertheless, cognizant that I was not a distant researcher observing from afar, I tried to find a balance in acknowledging my position of power as a researcher and teacher while also trying to actively engage one-on-one involving the participants as much as possible in dialogue about the exploratory nature of this study.

Below, I describe each of the distinct methods in the following section (see Figure 5).

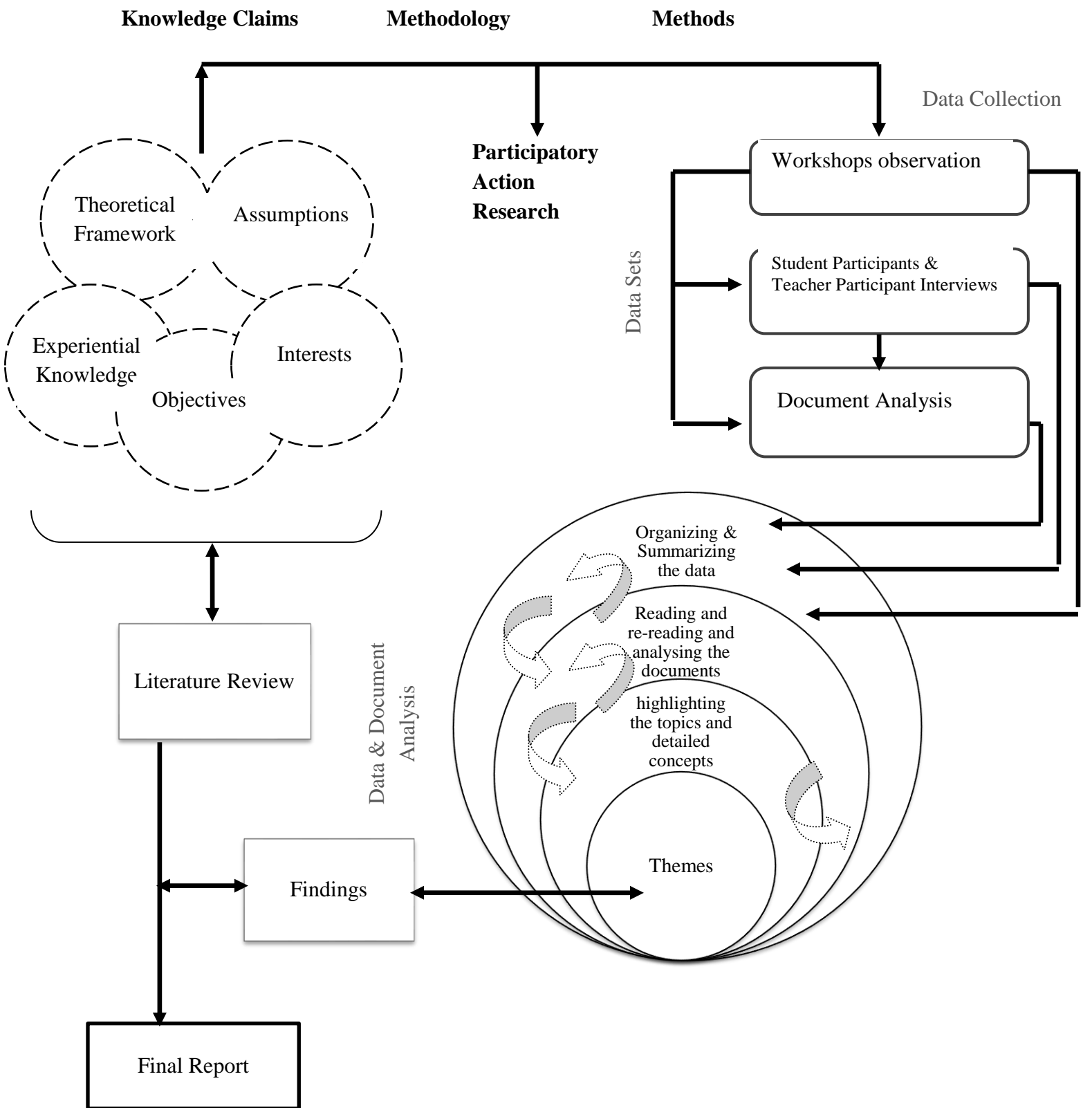


Figure 5. Study design. A concept map showing the steps throughout the proposed study.

Method

According to Greenhalgh and Taylor (1997) the primary goal of qualitative research is “to study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them” (p.740). Participatory Action Research- i.e. participation (life in society and democracy), action (engagement with experience and history), and research (soundness in thought and the growth of knowledge) (Chevalier et. al, 2013) – is a qualitative methodology which they define as “systematic collection and analysis of data for the purpose of taking action and making change by generating practical knowledge” (Gillis & Jackson, 2002, p. 264). Action research is perceived as “systematic and orientated around analysis of data whose answers require the gathering and analysis of data and the generation of interpretations directly tested in the field of action” (Greenwood & Levin, 1998, p.122). PAR seeks to offer some improvements in the situation of a community or organization members (MacDonald, 2012).

As a novice researcher, I have decided to utilize Participatory Action Research (PAR) to inform my Master’s thesis, which focuses on mature female English language learners in Iran and the influence of multiliteracies pedagogy on their English language learning experience. Working organically with the teacher-participant to design the Curriculum Workshop Intervention allowed for multiple perspectives in the design process. In addition, working fluidly

as both an observer of the workshops as I took field notes, and at times as a facilitator, stepping in to work alongside the teacher-participant, the research was a truly collaborative process.

Below I outline the steps taken throughout to conduct the research using the Participatory Action Research model:

1. Development and implementation of the curriculum:

- a. I first contacted the manager of the institute to secure the research site for the Curriculum Workshop Intervention. I sent her some draft materials and the information about the workshop as I envisioned them initially. In addition, I sent her a recruitment poster, and she posted it on the board in order to announce the upcoming workshop event for recruitment purposes of inviting students who might be willing to participate in the workshops. She also sent an email to the teachers of the institutes to see who is interested in conducting the workshops with me as the researcher.
- b. I then met with the teacher who volunteered to help facilitate the workshops. I explained the whole research process and the nature of study. I made sure that she was aware of the fact that this will be a Participatory Action Research where I would help work alongside her to develop the lesson plans for the workshops.
- c. I intended to develop some Curriculum Workshops Intervention with the help of the teacher-participant using a multiliteracies pedagogy to see if it has any influence on student-participants' learning English process. So, we designed the lesson plans in accordance with the needs of the student-participants and what multiliteracies pedagogy seeks to address.

2. Observation of the implementation:

- a. During the workshops themselves, I wrote field notes while observing the teacher-student dynamics. The way a lesson plan was designed and how it actually played out when implemented could at times be very different. The observations allowed me to better understand which elements of lesson plan design functioned effectively and explored the students' learning processes. The field notes also allowed me as a researcher to observe the multimodal interactions of the teacher and students; for example, how students might respond to being asked to role play (depending on the supports put in place to help them in this type of pedagogical activity).

3. Interviews with the Participants:

- a. I interviewed participants on a voluntary basis to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experience, and I transcribed audio recordings after the interview took place. If a student's interview responses were in Persian, then I translated them. The transcriptions were returned to participants for the purpose of member checking, so that they could have opportunities to delete, add, or clarify their ideas or descriptions.

Participants

With the approval of UWIN REB (University of Windsor's Research Ethics Board), the research was conducted in the north of Iran. The research was done in an ELL classroom of a privately-owned Language institute. The participants of this research were four female English learners who were mothers or grandmothers approximately between the ages of 40 to 50 years old and one ELL teacher to facilitate the study. The purposive sampling was used in this research.

Recruitment of Participants

The recruitment process included two stages: recruitment of the teacher; and the recruitment of the participants.

Recruitment of the teacher.

Only one teacher was needed to help facilitate the research. Therefore, an email to teachers who teach intermediate and upper intermediate level was sent to invite them to develop the Curriculum Workshop Intervention. It was indicated in the email that only one teacher would be selected to teach the Curriculum Workshop Intervention. The first teacher to volunteer was chosen to help facilitate the research. The teacher was considered as a participant of the research, therefore two consent letters/forms (one for the workshop and one for the interview part) were provided for the teacher.

Recruitment of the participants.

Once the teacher was selected, the participants' recruitment process was conducted through a recruitment poster on the Institute's board explaining there will be some workshops (Intermediate level workshops for senior female students as extra classes will be developed using a multimodal approach). In the poster, it was stated that up to 10 students aged 40 to 55 can participate in the workshops, and if interested, they can also participate in the interview at the end of the project. The four students who signed up (who met the purposive sampling criteria) were accepted. If more than 10 applied, I would have accepted the first students to apply who also met the criteria of the purposive sampling.

I then arranged a meeting with the participants to introduce myself and to explain the purpose of the study and go over the REB forms – Letter of Information and Letter of Consent forms for participants. Students were asked to return the forms signed prior to the workshops. Should they have any concerns or questions, they were welcome to contact me (as stated in the letter and through what I communicated verbally to them in this information session).

Four adult female English language learners participated in three sessions of Curriculum Workshop Interventions, and one teacher participated as well in this study. Two of the student-participants and the teacher-participant participated in the interviews conducted after the workshops. All the student-participants were mothers and two of them were grandmothers as well.

Data Collection

The sources of my data are my field notes from the workshops' observations, interviews with student-participants and teacher-participant, all pedagogical materials produced, and interactions between us as the teachers planning these workshops as well as our interactions with the student-participants. Therefore, in order to collect the data, interactions through co-designing the curriculum, field note observations, pedagogical materials for document analysis, and the in-depth interviews were used. The interview was used in this research to collect data because interviews can explore the details of the problem or issue (Creswell, 2015). The interview questionnaire and guideline (see Appendix II) were used as the instrument. All participants were interviewed after class hours in a safe and conducive environment. The interviews were face to face, and they lasted approximately one hour. The interview questions were developed based on existing literature and the multiliteracies theoretical framework of this study. The interviews

were recorded, and I transcribed the audio recordings afterwards. A separate audio recording device was used to record the interviews. If student-participants' interview responses were in the Persian language, then I translated them all. According to Bouma, Ling, and Wilkinson (2012), researchers should organize and summarize the "vast amount of information" before analysis (p. 245). Both student-participants preferred to answer the interview questions in Persian, but the teacher-participant replied to all questions in English. I then analyzed the field notes, the pedagogical materials produced by us as teachers and the work of the student-participants, and the interviews based data by reading them several times, and then I highlighted the topics and detailed concepts that emerged from the data, then I tried to make connections between the key points and the literature review. Several themes and sub-themes were then identified and organized by me as the researcher.

Study Limitation

This study took place in a privately-owned ELL classroom, and the main participants were mature female language learners. There is a high probability that some might refuse to participate in the multimodal activities designed to investigate the research purpose because they might feel shy as they are more accustomed to the traditional approach of teaching-learning method. Student-participants may feel stigmatized for being selected to participate in the study. The other delimitation can be time constraints in this research. A four-week period might not suffice to reach to desirable data. Some might withdraw from participation, and there might be a need to recruit some other participants.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to investigate how a multiliteracies theoretical framework and pedagogy can help mature female English language learners learn English better. By “better,” I mean if multiliteracies can expand literacy and language learning of this age and sex group including as well as supporting beyond basic writing and reading. This theory suggests language is learned more deeply and reinforced when teaching includes things like dramatic role play, board games, and creative technology using the knowledge processes and Design processes outlined by the New London Group. Three workshops were co-created with a teacher, who was also a participant. These workshops were offered as part of this research study focusing on using multiliteracies to teach English and explore how well this approach to language learning might work. After the workshops, some interviews were conducted to learn more about the participants’ experiences of the workshops. Therefore, my data was collected through (1) collaborative design of the workshops with the teacher-participant; (2) my observations and field notes of the three-day workshops; (3) my collaborative team teaching with the teacher-participant; (4) document analysis of all pedagogical materials produced and interactions between us as the teachers and the student-participants; (5) face-to-face interviews with the teacher-participant and some of the student-participants. Participatory Action Research was used to investigate the lived experiences of the participants who were willing to take part in this research. Firstly, I will provide brief descriptions of the participants who partook in the study as well as some autobiographical information about myself as the researcher of this study. Within the framework

of participatory action research, researchers collaborate fully with members of organizations in studying. (Greenwood et al, 1993).

What follows is brief vignettes to introduce the reader to the student-participants and the teacher-participant of this study, then the description and the analysis of the Findings from all sources of data collected for this Participatory Action Research (see Figure 6):

Participants Pseudonyms	Age	Number of Children	Educational Background/ Occupations
Shiva	44	2	Hairdresser
Mahsa	41	1	PhD Student/ Engineer
Niloo	56	2	Math Teacher
Soheila	53	3	Housewife
Sara (teacher-participant)	36	0	English Teacher`

Figure 6: Student-participants and teacher-participants' brief description

Description of Each Student-Participant, the Teacher-Participant, and the Researcher

Soheila is a 53-year old woman who has three sons; two of them living abroad with their families; and one son is still living with her and her husband. I found her very eager to learn and also very witty. She was a lively woman with a sensational character. She tried to avoid speaking even a word in Farsi/Persian. For her artifact, Soheila chose a teapot, a traditional music track (I helped her find it on the Internet, and then I facilitated playing it in the background while she was presenting to the class), and a picture of her family on her phone. She said she loves guests

and having her friends over. Soheila commented, “I have a big terrace, and I love sitting there with my friends, chit chatting, and drinking our tea; this is what I love the most these days.” Obviously, that is why she chose a teapot to represent her kind and hospitable characteristics. Also, she mentioned that her family, her children, mean everything to her. She was a true family-oriented person. Soheila said, “I can gather my family together around a table with a tray of tea.” She has travelled abroad many times, and that is one of the main reasons she has been learning English. The other reason she mentioned is that “I want to prevent to get Alzheimer when I get older because my mother got Alzheimer before she passed away, so I can say it runs in our blood.” To my mind, Soheila was a strong and confident woman who has proved that she is persistent in the path she chose; she wants to learn English, and as she also mentioned in her presentation, she stated, “I am never gonna give up.” She was a very keen and active student-participant willing to participate in the activities. Overall, she had a great influence on the class atmosphere and she helped to break the ice when we first started with the workshops. Although she made some grammatical errors, she could talk in English very well.

Niloo, 56 years old, was the second student who volunteered to present herself. She was a mother of two children who are now adults. One was married, and one was single at home. In Iran, a large percent of children do not leave their home until they get married. Even if they are financially independent, they still live with their parents. Niloo picked a plant from the class, not from the basket. She observed, “I love gardening; every year I plant some vegetables in my small yard and pick them when it is time.” Niloo was a retired math teacher, who was now mostly at home. She loved to speak in Farsi most of the time- especially with the beautiful Gilaki accent. In keeping with the strong focus on welcoming diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds with

a pedagogy of multiliteracies, because of her accent, she brought the sense of Gilaki culture to the class which was openly embraced. She needed some help to pick suitable vocabularies and grammar. She chose a new music by Macan Band, a popular Iranian music band and I helped her google it and played it for her when she started talking. She had a picture of her granddaughter to show to the class, “I love her so dearly, I should see her everyday.” Her one son with his family, also, lives abroad. Since her granddaughter was born, she has tried to contact them every day through FaceTime or Imo. “I want to learn English because I am scared of the day I cannot talk to my granddaughter in her language.” Immigration, now, is so important in Iran. Many families send their children or grandchildren to other countries to study and live. This trend can be seen and felt stronger than ever before in my country, because of the current social and cultural circumstances dominating in Iran. After Niloo’s presentation, I am observing that students have started talking about real issues they are having, in the last couple of years, with the sanction, the currency’s value, the problem of changing their Rial to Dollar, and etc. The situation, now, has stopped many to be able to afford plane tickets to go and see their families.

Mahsa is a PhD student who has one child (4-5). She used to work as a university lecturer for a while and now she is mostly at home taking care of her child. They are planning to apply for immigration to Australia. Mahsa picked a book. She said she loves reading. I found her very capable and fluent in speaking in English, but she was a bit shy to express herself. This was very interesting for me that the older ladies were more actively engaged student-participants, although it has been a long time since they went to school and universities. Mahsa picked a Chris De Burg song, and I played it for her while she was talking. She was very calm and full of tranquility. She mentioned she loves shopping and walking. She also showed us a picture of her baby.

Shiva is a hairdresser. Shiva is also a younger woman in her 40s. Her mother was an English teacher, which was one of the reasons why she started to learn English. She has two children. Shiva asked if she can act as an observer in the first workshop. She did not want to participate in this activity. Maybe she was not sure what she was expected to do yet, so she sat down and watched when students were giving their presentations. She participated in the class discussion in Farsi about the current situation in Iran in the first session of the workshop though. In other workshops, she showed more willingness to engage in the activities.

Sara, the teacher-participant is in her 30s. Sara is married but she does not have any children. Sara became fluent in English by going to English classes, both public and private. She did not study English at a university though. She has been teaching English at different institutes and tutorial classes for several years now. I found her very willing to learn new approaches and apply them in her classes. She has a very friendly and energetic character, and she is very easy to communicate with. This is actually one good point that has made everyone feel more comfortable in these workshops. As a teacher, she circulates around the class trying to help everyone. In our discussion time about the lesson plan, she became very eager to know more about multiliteracies pedagogy so I used a PowerPoint to explain the notion in detail for her. She spent some time at home doing more research about the multiliteracies pedagogy.

Yalda (myself, the researcher) As a researcher engaged in Participatory Action Research, I want to similarly disclose some aspects of my own identity, which I think played a role in my ability to relate to and to work with these participants. I am also 35 years old, and I have one child. I started learning English since I was in primary school; I used to go to different English institutes. I always loved listening to English songs and watched cartoons or films in English

even though the Persian translated copy was available, I used to stick to their original versions. That helped me a lot in learning English. When I was in high school, everyone – students and teachers – in our school, knew me as the girl whose English was really great. Then I studied English literature and language at university, and I was hired by one of the best English institutes in our city. So I started teaching English when I was 19 years old.

Curriculum Intervention Workshops

I, with the help of the teacher-participant, designed the lesson plans to use in the workshops prior to their start date. I initially intended and offered to have up to eight workshops, but because of the holiday in-between semesters in Iran, I could only hold three. I had some ideas for the initial plan of how to conduct the workshops. With the help of Sara (pseudonym), the teacher-participant, we could develop detailed descriptions of our lesson planning and learning trajectory, drawing upon a multiliteracies pedagogy, which was new for Sara. We tried to pay attention to the needs of the students, the goal of the lessons, and the assessment to see how the goals were achieved. Of the four workshop student-participants, two students took up the invitation to participate in the interview. The teacher-participant took part in all facets of the research. Participants' demographics are illustrated in Table 1. Three of them were in the Developing stage of English language proficiency, and one was in Expanding stage (Figure 2); therefore, they were able to produce expanded sentences in oral and written communication.

Based on my interpretation of the data collected through this Participatory Action Research, my original hypothesis proved to be untrue. Prior to conducting the research, I had hypothesized that older female participants would be more resistant and reticent about engaging

in a multiliteracies pedagogy for learning English. However, it turned out, at least within the contours of this small research study, the older female participants' level of engagement was unexpectedly impressive. These student-participants were very engaged, arguably more so than the younger student-participants in this study. This finding was unexpected compared to my initial conceptualization for this research, which albeit was based mostly my anecdotal experiences of what I had observed while teaching in Iran previously. Of course, there are a variety of factors which could be attributed to this finding, for example, the outgoing personalities of the particular research subjects in this study. I think the impressive degree of full participation from the student-participants is probably due to their introduction to a multiliteracies pedagogy as well as the increase in number of children and grandchildren living now abroad which has brought English language learning to a forefront in Iranian culture. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Day One – Workshop Observation

Day one of the workshops started off on September 16, 2018 on a rainy afternoon. At the beginning of the session, I felt there was not much enthusiasm in the class. Everyone introduced themselves, and then the teacher, Sara, explained briefly about what to expect in that session. The session was about how to present/introduce yourself; the lesson was planned to show how they can present themselves and their stories with the help of artifacts (which can be an object made by a human being and typically an item of cultural or historical interest), pictures and a piece of music to share with the other students. Student-participants were asked to bring something to the class which represents them, however since it was the first session of the workshop, we prepared

some items that student-participants could choose from in case they had forgotten to bring an artifact. Different items were put in a basket such as a book, a pen, cookies, a shopping bag, and etc. The teacher-participant modelled the activity with the help of objects from the basket and with her choice of music. She also played a video to give them some ideas of the phrases they can use while doing the activity. The link to the video is

[https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Self-](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Self-Awareness+Activities&&view=detail&mid=61062A5DFA57EB9AACD861062A5DFA57EB9AACD8&&FORM=VRDGAR)

[Awareness+Activities&&view=detail&mid=61062A5DFA57EB9AACD861062A5DFA57EB9](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Self-Awareness+Activities&&view=detail&mid=61062A5DFA57EB9AACD861062A5DFA57EB9AACD8&&FORM=VRDGAR)

[AAC D8&&FORM=VRDGAR](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Self-Awareness+Activities&&view=detail&mid=61062A5DFA57EB9AACD861062A5DFA57EB9AACD8&&FORM=VRDGAR). She also provided some handouts, which included some

adjectives they could use when talking about themselves. (see Figures 7 and 8.)



*Figure 7 & 8: Sample words to describe oneself
Adapted from <https://owlcation.com/humanities/how-to-describe-yourself>*

The student-participants could also look up the pictures of the items on the Internet or draw them during class (if they could not find the item that could somehow symbolize them) and choose a piece of music. They were still not so sure about what they were exactly expected to do following the initial instructions. After the teacher, Sara, helped model the activity, students clearly started to feel relief, which was evident in their facial expressions and body language, since now they clearly understood what they were expected to do. They had some discussions

together, their discussion took place in both English and Farsi language; they were exchanging ideas on what adjectives they could use or how they could connect things to what they were interested in talking about, so they had a code switch while they were talking.

It is worth noting that in the beginning of the session, Sara explained to students that they are allowed to speak in their mother tongue, Farsi language, in case they did not understand some points. They were all surprised since it was not something common in that institute: nobody was allowed to talk in any language except English in this institute's classes, some even mentioned they would be penalized if they spoke a word in Farsi in the class. As Cummins et. al (2006) suggests "schools should rethink their implicit assumptions about how to develop literacy among bilingual/ESL students. It is time to acknowledge that students' home languages represent powerful resources for learning." (p. 25) After they felt prepared for the presentations, one student volunteered to do the activity; one of the older student-participants -- Soheila.

In the beginning of this first workshop, a short video about how to present themselves to others was played for the students, and some words were given to them with their pictures, in order to give them some ideas to help them get prepared for their presentations. More or less everyone was engaged, although the activity was somehow new to them- presenting themselves with the help of picture, music, and an item; having the students use artifacts and music to represent some facets of their personal identities was a multimodal activity. After everyone presented their artifacts, a game was introduced to them: Getting to know you. To boost their engagement, they were given an identity card of a famous person. They were paired up with their elbow partner. Each group picked a card; the card had a photo on it; it could be Nelson Mandela, Britney Spears, Obama, Einstein, Michael Jackson, etc. Then, students stood up and they role

played the famous person. They now started introducing themselves (based on the name on the card), without mentioning their names, then the other group started guessing who the person was. They laughed a lot. Soheila danced like Michael Jackson, and the other group acted as Trump.

In terms of a multiliteracies framework, through the first designed lesson plan, the teacher-participant and I tried to bring the students' identities into the classroom with the help of different means. Student-participants engaged in multimodality through various modes which interacted to construe meaning. For their presentations, multimodality increased the range of ways each student-participant could express herself in the target language through the combination of the selection of individual artifacts such as photos (visual), plants (textural), books (linguistic) as well as background music with specifically chosen spoken words, songs, and voice (audio). We did encourage students to ask questions in their own mother tongue if they wanted to; an option that they were not allowed to pick in the institute. Also, artifacts – personal or cultural – could be helpful in regard to the creation of a space that allows all individuals to reflect and articulate their thoughts around self-concept. As The New London Group (1996) contemplated, a multiliteracies pedagogy might provide “access without people having to erase or leave behind different subjectivities.” (p.18) Students could experience multimodal self-representation enabling them to present and critically explore their identities, language, and even politics.

Through presentations with the help of the items of their choice, students could give meaning to their interest, desire, and objects they held; they all had a voice that was heard in the class. Regarding the teacher's attitude and pedagogical practices, “productive diversity” was rigorously encouraged (Michaels and Sohmer 2000, p. 267). As Sara, the teacher-participant

stated, “I was so surprised by the fact how everyone was so engaging and involving in the diverse projects in their own ways, and they were willingly doing and creating what they were asked for.” The lesson plan specifically targeted students with different cultural background and linguistic abilities so that even students with a weaker ability could experience success in terms of L2 production. Students were allowed to draw from resources that are already familiar to them such as a teapot, a piece of their known music, or a picture, and this scaffolding provided an opportunity for them to feel empowered and experience that their learning needs are welcomed in the class.

Day 2 – Workshop Observation

The main theme of this workshop was “Culture.” The lesson was expected to show students how they can present their culture with the help of different modes and mediums such as artifacts, folklore music, something edible from their region, and a souvenir from their city. The students were expected to engage in some real-life activities using stations set up around the classroom space, which each symbolized their city. The teacher modelled the activity with the help of objects brought in and with her selected music. The students could look up the pictures of the items and a piece of music.

The students entered the room with the lights off. They were guided to be seated; they all looked excited about what was going on. Different music from different parts of the world started to play: a piece of music from India, a piece from China, a song from Ireland, then they were all asked to reckon where the music belongs to. They could all guess right. After this section of the lesson, which made the atmosphere of the class more lively and appealing, the teacher-participant played a short video which was in English. The link is

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FtYjUv2x65g&list=PL6tCIjHCEBl6D0xB6mzxZyUm5>

TNUwfreM

This link was played for everyone which was about culture of the people in different parts of the world in order to make the theme of the session more tangible. In the previous workshop, for homework, everyone was asked to bring different items such as souvenirs of their city, folklore music from their region, or any symbolic artifacts that represent their cultures. Two students were from Rasht, one from Yazd, and one from Astaneh. They were divided into two groups: one Rashti woman with one Yazdi, the other group was one Astanei lady and one Rashti. In terms of the layout of the class for this session, we separated the class into two parts with signs stating “Station 1” and “Station 2” representing two stations.

One station was Rasht, the other station was Yazd. They were organized in a way that students could walk around them easily. The stations were set up as if students were actually commuting between the two cities. They were given some time to prepare and put their items in each station. The teacher was also helping them facilitate the activity. The classroom dynamic was very friendly and positive at this point. Everyone was helping each other, communicating comfortably with other students and the teacher. I felt, at this point, that students are more confident perhaps because the learning objectives and the expectations for them were now clear to them, so they no longer were puzzled or surprised by these particular tasks asked from them, despite that fact that a multiliteracies approach is not common in most educational settings in Iran. This activity went well, and each group presented aspects of their culture to other students.

After this part, the teacher asked the students to sit down in a circle. The teacher held a rope in her hand. She asked students to give their own opinion – positive or negative – about

Iranian culture. After each student-participant shares her opinion, then the person gives the rope to another person randomly. After all student-participants gave their opinions, the teacher said to all: “We are all connected, and we are the ones who have built up this web and shaped our culture. We all have a role”. Students really liked this part, since they brought their own knowledge to the class, and their personal points of view on their culture was being valued and given voice in the classroom space. The teacher taught them some new words with the help of pictures such as “diversity”, “rituals”, “customs and traditions”, etc. I saw they were trying to use those words when talking about culture. The final part of this session concluded with reading comprehension wherein students were given different texts all about “culture” along with a graphic organizer, then they were expected to analyze the texts with the help of this graphic organizer. According to Herrell and Jordan (2008), "the use of advance organizers with English language learners is particularly effective because their design depends on building on the past experiences of the learner and providing bridges to the new material to be taught" (p. 35). Below I have included one of the graphic organizers filled out by one group. (See Figure 9.) some of their responses are as below:

1. Culture is associated with history, religion, or way of life. For example, Persian New Year, Christianity, or clothing.
2. Culture is reflected in art and society. For example, architecture or the language people of a country speak.

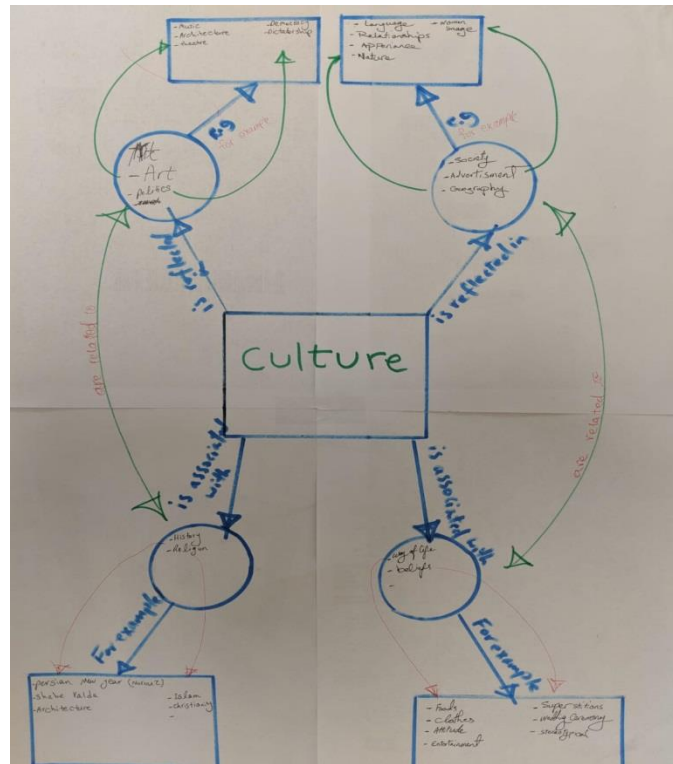


Figure 9: One of the graphic designers filled with one group in the class

In the second workshop, all students showed some development in understanding the multiliteracies pedagogy to some degree. Their understanding was clear to us because they did not look puzzled or surprised at any points as the workshop progressed. They were able to participate in the activities, engage in meaningful discussions with each other and the teacher, and follow instructions with some support. From a multimodal perspective, in this session, students were exposed to different modes such as gestures, audio, video, and image which were all semiotic resources for meaning making. According to Jewitt (2008) modes and “the ways in which something is represented shape both what is to be learned, that is the curriculum content, and how it is be learned” (p. 241). In this workshop, student participants experienced learning through multiple representations such as video, music, cultural stations, and text, so the diversity

of activities allowed both the teacher-participant and student-participants to experience a creative and flexible environment in which interaction and learning in the classroom were encouraged. I observed that student-participants responded favourably to multimodal input in their learning experiences.

It is important to note that often language classes run in a way that focuses only on basic grammar. As in Figure 10, language expression as part of language learning related to grammar is more fully contextualized in its meaning in relation to larger social and political context. (See Figure 10.) A multiliteracies theoretical framework advocates that language is always immersed in larger issues of power relations, political choices, and social mores. Language is never neutral and must be critiqued for its role in shaping identity.

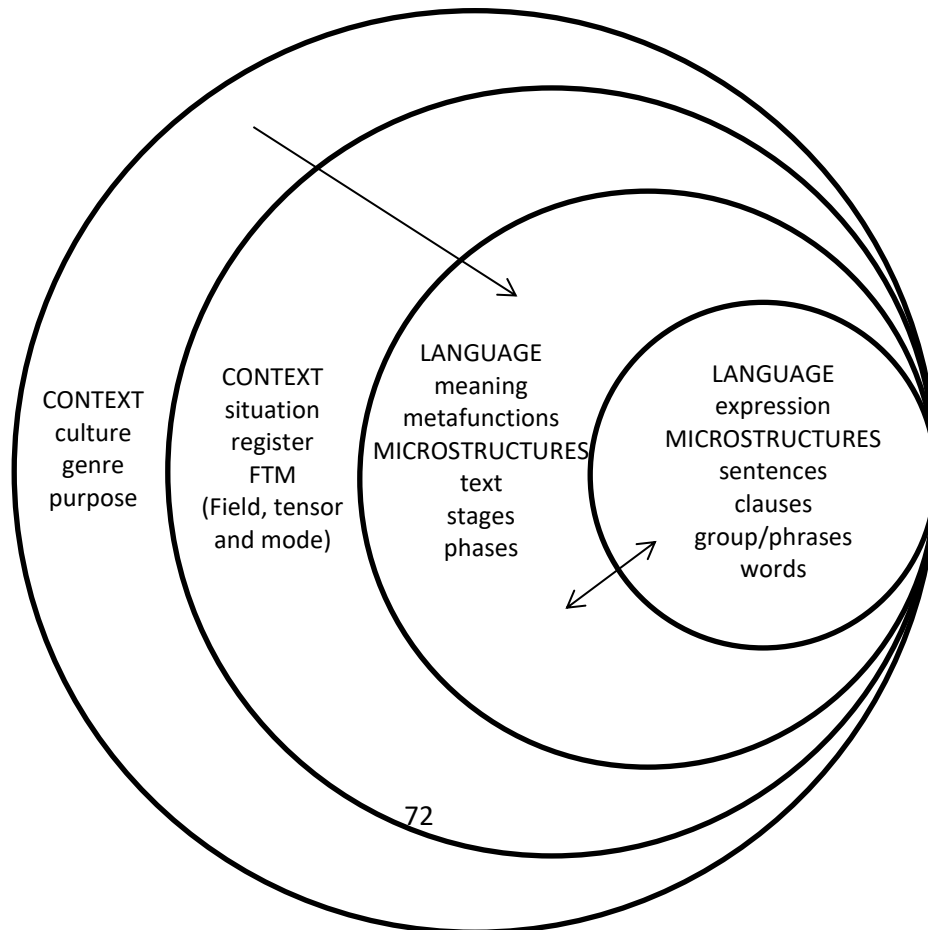


Figure 10: model of text in context- focus on meaning and function- Approaches to literacies- reproduced from page 148

Day 3 – Workshop Observation

In this session, students were asked to write a short story. The teacher and I selected some topics in advance and printed them on cards with their related pictures. Below a sample of some materials used are shown. (see Figures 11 and 12.)

You have been invited to produce a piece of creative writing about how children play imaginatively.
Either: Write a story set on a dark night as suggested by this picture:



Or: Write a story about a game that goes badly wrong.

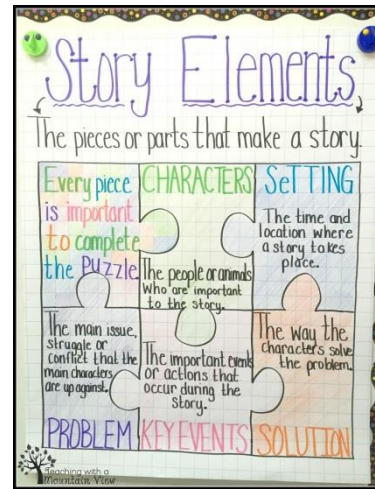


Figure 11: One of the sample cards

Figure 12: Story elements

Students could pick a card and find the topic of their story. At the beginning of the workshop, the teacher explained how to write a short story in order to improve their writing. After that, a video in English was played for them to show different parts of a good story, the link is provided below,

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=how+to+write+a+short+story+children&&view=detail&mid=A85C5511ECAE5D6984F6A85C5511ECAE5D6984F6&&FORM=VRDGAR>

Then, a website (i.e. <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/student-interactives/stapleless-book-30010.html>) was introduced to help the student-participants build their own short story book. They could also select pictures from the website for their books. Some action verbs were given to them, and they were made aware that they should use them in their stories. Student-participants, at this point, suggested that they wanted to be paired up with a partner. As the teachers, we accepted this suggestion! In fact, it was encouraging to see that the student-participants felt comfortable enough to state their preferences for how they wanted to be grouped in the learning process. The teacher-participant went around the classroom and helped them. Students also could share their thoughts together. Students started with some tips given by the teacher. I witnessed they were getting very excited as they were developing characters, selecting settings, and writing meaningful dialogues with the help of graphic organisers. Below please find the graphic organisers used in the workshop (see Figure 13):

SHORT STORY PLANNING

FIRST (*Exposition/Introduction*: Introduce the characters. Describe the setting of the story. Most importantly, introduce the main conflict (main problem) of the story.

NEXT (*Rising Action*: Build suspense and reveal more information about the problem. What prevents the main character in the story from getting what he/she wants? What does the main character do to continue to try to get what he/she wants?

SUDDENLY (*Climax*: Create a dramatic turning point for the story. How does the main character come face to face with the major problem of the story? How does this experience change the main character?)

LAST (*Falling Action/Resolution*: Tie up the loose ends and bring the story to a close. What is the ultimate solution to the main problem? What is the final result of this solution?)

Created by John DePasquale
© 2008

*Figure 13: Sample graphic organizer for stories
Created by John DePasquale*

The student-participants were all given some samples beforehand as a model. Now they started to write their short stories, and they began to work with the website. The Internet connection was not working well, which made the activity take longer than what had been expected. The teacher-participant suggested that they also jot down everything on pieces of paper

instead. The teacher-participant reminded them that they are expected to write a very simple narrative – nothing complicated. The teacher sat down with each group; I also helped to facilitate the session. After, they all wrote their stories (see Figure 14). Please find one group’s story below, the title of their story was “Magic Button”:

It was a lovely, sunny day.



The magic button can help her and many of her friends.



She wants to help everyone with this button.

One day, Sara was sitting in a park.



Sara was dreaming about a magic button.

One can get money, one can travel to her dream country, one can go to her favourite concert, etc.

Suddenly, she woke up from her dream because her head was hit with a ball.

Everyone can take a chance to wish for something and then push the button to see if her dream can come true.

SaSa group
Copyright 2002 IPANCTE

Figure 14: Sample work done by one group

Then the teacher-participant guided them to a basket containing different items such as masks, dolls, ribbons, etc. and they were asked to role play their stories for the whole class. If the student-participant stories did not include and require any props, that was also fine. They themselves could play the role of their stories’ characters. This part of the lesson sounded very interesting to them. The student-participants spent some time thinking about who plays what

role, and who can be the narrator, and what items they might choose. Then both groups played their own story. The result was satisfactory. They all loved it. They changed their voices to match with the characters. They turned off the light when part of the story was happening at the night time. They owned the moment. They themselves were the ones who were running the class at times.

I saw that the student-participants became more comfortable now that they were more adapted to the multiliteracies pedagogy. We had the plan to print off the story books and give them to each student, but unfortunately because of some technical issues this could not be done. On the first session of the workshop, some students were unsure if they wanted to even participate in the workshops, but on the last workshop they were all participating in the activities eagerly and the atmosphere of the class was so lively.

Interviews

After the workshops, I invited the student-participants and the teacher-participant to participate in an interview with me about their experience in these three days and their experiences of learning and teaching English in Iran in general. Two students consented to be interviewed and the teacher-participant who helped me facilitate the workshops. The two student-participants, who were younger than their peers, participated in the interviews: Mahsa and Shiva. All participants were given the chance to answer the questions either in English or Farsi. The student participants preferred to answer in Farsi and the teacher-participant answered in English. I translated the student-participants' transcriptions. The topics explored in these interviews included the reasons that prompted the student-participants to start and continue learning English, the differences they witnessed between learning English now and in the past,

whether their role as a mother has had any influence on them learning English, and their overall experience of these three day workshops and multiliteracies pedagogy.

The Findings are organized according to 6 major themes: (1) Reasons participants have been learning English and their progress; (2) Student-Participants' overall experience learning English in Iran; (3) Use of technological devices in their language learning and teaching process; (4) Participants' perception of an ideal English class and teaching method; (5) The influence of their role as a mother on their English learning process; (6) Participants' experience about the three-day workshop – learning engagement and challenges.

Reasons participants have been learning English & their progress. All participants started learning English when they were very young. When they were asked at what age they started learning English, they had a common answer that they first went to an English class when they were in primary school which means between age 6 to 12 years, but for none learning a new language was a serious endeavor. However, in later years, they all felt the necessity to start learning English in a more dedicated way since they felt the need to learn this international language in order to be able to communicate with other people at a global level. Mahsa explained about the reasons why she continued learning English:

English is an international language that is being learned by many people around the world so that they can communicate with others at a global level, with other societies in order to be able to exchange information and express yourself and also transfer your knowledge to other parts of the world and receive information from other countries.

Mahsa also needed to learn English because she believed most references and resources for different fields of study are in English. In Iran, the formal language taught at school and university is Farsi/ Persian; however, all students have English courses while they are in school and after that when they enter university. Everyone is expected to find information, references, and resources in English. Therefore, students at different stages necessarily have to deal with academic English texts. Although not stated directly, the other reason all three participants implied in their responses was to take the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam. As mentioned earlier, many families and individuals in Iran, nowadays, pursue their studies or careers abroad, and mostly in an English-speaking country. In order to apply for higher education or immigration to an English-speaking country, one needs to achieve an acceptable IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), or a formal English test score to be eligible to even apply. As a consequence, many Iranians spend their time and money on learning English in either English institutes or tutorial classes.

In terms of their progress, both student-participants who took part in the interviews, although they had been learning English for a long period, based on their comments, they both did not feel that they had achieved the language proficiency level they had wished to achieve. Mahsa stated:

My progress in different periods of time has been varied. In the beginning, when I was in my secondary school and high school, my progress was much better. When I was at university, since I was very much involved in my university works and duties, my

progress stopped at that point. Then I started my Masters, at the same time I started going to English classes and I am still going. Now, I am back to my good days of learning English, although I still feel my mastery has a long way to go.

Shiva, whose mother was an English teacher, shared her thoughts on how she feels she has progressed in learning English: “Sometimes I think if somebody hears that I have been learning English for years, they expect a perfect English from me, but because in our country English is not our first language so less attention is paid to this language.” She also mentioned: “I also did not go to English classes continuously, and because of that I should say my progress is not satisfying!”

I asked the same question to the teacher, Sara, as well. Sara, who has been teaching English for years now, stated that “Since English is a compulsory subject at schools in Iran, so I started taking English classes from early years”. Sara, also, did not find her learning satisfying so she enrolled in an English learning institute when she entered university. “I started going to English classes, because I found out how important it is to learn an international language in my life because I needed to communicate with other people abroad and I needed to read and understand scientific essays relevant to my field”. When asked about her thoughts on her progress learning English in English classes, Sara explained:

Actually in public classes it was not that efficient. For years, we went to English classes in different English institutes but we did not learn much. By the time I started having a private tutor at home, my English progressed really well!

All participants were of the similar opinion that their learning English language learning process was not in a way they all expected to be. Although all of them referred to the point that, in recent years, they have witnessed positive changes in methods and materials used in private English classes. One reason for this change, can be globalization and familiarization with the the new techniques that are being used in today's classroom worldwide. All participants pointed out they see technology use more often in recent years in their classes, and this is part of what multiliteracies pedagogical-based approach recommends.

Participants' overall experience learning English in Iran. All participants indicated their views toward their experience learning English in Iran. When participants were asked about their experience learning English in Iran, comparing now and the past, they all declared that years ago, their first exposure to English classes were in a very traditional way and that was one main reason which made both student-participants reluctant to continue learning it at some points. Shiva indicated that when she started learning English, her classes had very strict rules: "the teacher said something and we had to repeat it, and there was no cooperation among students whatsoever." She also mentioned: "As far as I remember those methods were not appealing to me at all, even from early years; I can now vividly remember the rigidness of our classes". I also asked her about her recent years' experience in learning English and whether she has seen any changes in the teaching system. Shiva said,

Now I am aware of the fact that teaching approaches have changed in recent years and because of media and all these social communication panels somehow we deal more with English language and because of that students watch more films or listen more to English music, in general foreign music. The main topic of most of the English classes I attended

has been recent global news about international artists, actors, and since students have more access to social media, I think comparing to years ago, that strict class atmosphere has changed dramatically.

Mahsa also described her early years' experiences learning English as being strict. She shared, "Before, our classes were in a very traditional way; they were like school classes. Exactly like our schools! There were students sitting in rows, and there was one teacher standing right in front of the blackboard explaining about different subjects, and the ultimate use of technology was a cassette player to play some dialogues. After years, computers and videos have been added to classes, and I can claim in recent years there are now updated approaches used in classes". The pedagogy of multiliteracies emphasizes a "learning environment in which the blackboard, textbook, exercise book and test are augmented and at times replaced by digital technologies" (Kalantzis & Cope, 2005, p. 6). Sara, the teacher participant, did not talk much about her experience learning English in Iran even though I asked her more than once in the interview. The only thing she pointed out was that she thinks students can learn better in tutorial classes (one-on-one or group teaching at the students' houses) because teachers can have more authorities on what approach or technological device to use to teach their students.

Use of technological devices in their language learning and teaching process. When the student participants were asked about the use of technological devices in their English language learning process, they shared their thoughts on how much they use them in their classes and to what degree and how they use them while learning. Mahsa said:

In our classes, in recent years, computers and videos have been playing important roles. For example, our teacher might show us a part of a film and then we talk about that part.

In the past, mostly it was just audio, some listening tracks used to be played for us and of course I should mention in our school where it was more high tech comparing to other schools of our city at that time, we had an English lab that the hour in which we had our English class, our teacher took us to the lab to study English; we had our headphones and very often there was a video played for us.

She then added, “Now in our institute, they play videos, we also have audios, we can use our laptops to listen to a song. I myself mostly use my laptop to watch films or I listen to English songs and try to understand the lyrics and sometimes I try to write them”. When asked about how often she uses technological devices to learn at home, she explained, “I might use videos, films. I watch movies a lot; this helps me in my listening and I learn many new vocabularies. I also have some apps on my phone, that whenever I see or hear a new word I use them to find its meaning”. Shiva also mentioned that, in recent years she has seen more technological devices in the classes she participated, however she still thought it is not enough. She said, “In our classes, they might play a video for us once in a while or maybe play a listening track. I mean students are not asked to collaborate when using technological devices in the class like the workshops that we had together! I remember, for example, in one of my classes, we were asked to find the latest news on the internet, which is one thing I remember that needed technology in our classes”. Today, knowledge acquisition happens through multimodal affordances of digital technologies (Conole and Dyke 2004). Multimodal learning in both formal and informal settings today requires an integrated use of technology which encourages “pedagogical act” or “knowledge processes” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 184). Shiva, then, was asked about her own use of technology at home while studying, she shared,

I watch films, in my opinion, watching film can help our learning and understanding of a foreign language a lot! Because watching a film can help me concentrate more on the language being used by the characters of the films, this is much better than just listening to something. When I watch a film, I can use the subtitle to find the meaning of new vocabularies. Also, I can see how they live in other places or how they behave with each other.

When Sara, the teacher-participant, was asked about the use of technological devices in English classes, she said, “In the past, the only electronic device was just a Walkman and a tape.” She then continued,

But day by day, they started using laptops, CDs, headphones, speakers, and etc. all these devices have helped students tremendously to improve their listening skills and also to examine their speaking through recording their voice. Now, students, in addition to those devices that I mentioned, can use their cell phones to use some special applications to learn English easier and better.

Sara, herself, in her classes, uses whiteboard, markers, posters, and computers to teach.

Sara also mentioned she always looks for new methods to use in her classes. She said, “I am also after the methods that require more engagement by students and encourage effective interactions among students and the teacher. If the technological devices can play a helpful role in that regard, I always welcome them in my classes.” Therefore, all participants agreed with the idea of how helpful technological devices can be while learning and teaching English.

Multiliteracies pedagogy suggests “changes in the contemporary communications environment simply add urgency to the call to consciously deploy multimodality in learning”

(Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 181). In order to help students attend to new information, they need to access and be exposed to different channels through which they experience multimodal forms of expressions and “critical learning practices” (Ajai, 2009). Student-participants in the interviews mentioned videos which are used in their English learning process. It is important to consider it is not the video itself which makes a difference, but how it encourages communication, or stimulates individual cultural expression. That is what matters the most.

Participants’ perception of an ideal English class and teaching method. When Sara, the teacher-participant, was asked about her opinion of an ideal English class, Sara described her ideal image as follows:

First of all I should say an enthusiastic teacher who is highly knowledgeable and creative is required. The teacher needs to know how to convey his/ her knowledge to her students. She/he should be able to influence them, even psychologically. In this class, the teacher needs some tools to facilitate teaching and learning, for example a voice recorder to help students to listen to their own voices and recognize their mistakes, and then, the teacher and students can correct them together.

Clearly, although not previously familiar with the theory of multiliteracies and the concept of multimodalities, Sara intuitively felt good teaching was achieved by drawing upon a range of modalities to accomplish language learning goals.

Sara also shared, “The quality of learning that the learners receive is dependent on the team’s cooperation, passion, and understanding of the students’ needs.” She also talked about the importance of class setting, and how it should be designed in order to be more effective for the

learners. She preferred a semi round shape that allows students to sit facing each other. She also noted that she believes when she plays games with her students or she plays music in the class, her students become more eager to learn. When she was asked about her ideal teaching method, Sara mentioned, “The best approach is to use a combination of strategies that meet the needs of your learners; all modes are helpful when teaching and learning English, so they need to be used in an ideal English approach.” She added,

When for example students listen to piece of music, it activates part of their brain, and when they watch or see something, the other part of their brain gets involved, and all these have important roles to help students learn better and remember the information for long term.

Retention of knowledge and skills is an important aspect of good pedagogy.

Sara expanded further on her ideal image of a teaching pedagogy by relating her answer to her experience of delivering these three-day workshops,

I really liked the method we used in these workshops, because of their great lesson plans for each session. We considered students’ different level, their age, and their talents. I mean all levels were welcome in these workshops because we designed some effective ways to help each individual, no matter what age or level, could make most of the lessons. Also, I did not find them monotonous, you know the atmosphere was really lively and creative for them.

Student-participants were also asked the same question about an ideal English classroom, and an ideal teaching method for learning English. Shiva shared her view with me in an interesting way. She explained, “I can give your answer in this way that the class which is NOT

my ideal class is the one that only teachers dictate to us and I can only hear what he/ she says in the class.” She then explained,

I believe in student-centered pedagogies, students should have teamwork, and the class time should be mostly spent by students not their teachers; the teacher needs to encourage his/her students to talk more in the class and participate in the class activities and make them engaged and fully involved in those activities.

As Deaney, Chapman, and Hennessy (2009) argue, students should learn in a supportive environment where there is “active student participation, encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning.” (p.383)

At this point, Shiva referred to her experience in the three-day workshops,

For example after these workshops, my mind has still been engaged even after the workshops were done, for instance after one workshop that we were asked to introduce ourselves with a picture, item, and a music, after that class I was thinking to myself that I could have talked about myself in another way, this is exactly what I mean when I say class activities should be in a way that intrigue the students to *be* part of that class.

Shiva, then, explained that she has had a short experience of living in an environment where English was spoken as their first language, and she said because she could see and experience everything herself, this made her learn a lot. Similarly, Shiva was asked about her ideal perception of a teaching method, and what approach has helped or she thinks can help her learn better. Shiva explained, “It is important to have a teacher with updated knowledge and updated teaching technique.” She then drew upon her experience of the workshops,

In these three-day workshops, I have totally had a different experience of teaching and learning. Having faced with this version of teaching approach, I feel much more motivated and intrigued now to learn English. So I believe it is very important that teachers are encouraged to learn new methods and apply them in their classes.

Cope & Kalantzis (2009) elucidate their view about a pedagogy of multiliteracies,

A pedagogy of multiliteracies requires that the enormous role of agency in the meaning-making process be recognized, and in that recognition, it seeks to create a more productive, relevant, innovative, creative and even perhaps emancipatory, pedagogy. Literacy teaching is not about skills and competence; it is aimed at creating a kind of person, an active designer of meaning, with a sensibility open to differences, change and innovation. (p. 175)

In the landscape of multiliteracies theory, the focus is on the changing of the mindset toward considering students as passive listeners and learners, and instead it encourages an approach which can perceive learners as producers rather than consumers of knowledge.

Mahsa, who has also had some years of teaching experience in higher education, explained how she still feels anxious when she is in a class and she is expected to answer questions or to be tested. For her, an ideal English classroom was a class where she keeps forgetting that she is situated in a formal setting. She noted,

Something that has always been with me especially when I was younger, was that I have been a shy person, and talking in front of other people has always been very difficult to me, especially when I wanted to express myself in English. Thinking about making an

even small mistake has always made me scared; that's maybe because of the way I was brought up, and so I tried not to participate a lot in the activities.

Mahsa's anxiety is true to many students' experiences in the classroom. She then added her further thoughts as she tried to picture her ideal classroom:

My ideal English class is a class where makes me so much involved that I forget about my stress and anxiety. I am now picturing myself when I was very young and when I got engaged in a game my anxiety would go away, and it would help my lack of confidence. The teacher should be able to design activities in an artistic way that make all students interested and eager to participate.

In terms of an ideal teaching approach, Mahsa pointed out that there are important features that an ideal teaching method can have. She referred to the point that how important it is for a teacher to be knowledgeable enough to design a lesson plan in a way that no students feel pressured or forced to sit in that class and do the activities. For her, encouragement was an important factor to intrigue students to attend a class eagerly. Mahsa mentioned, "A teacher should be patient enough to consider new methods in her/his teaching career, and patiently tries to implement them until the students get their desirable results." She then stated that teachers should be able to teach and engage students in activities that develop their thinking and understanding of the subject being taught. Mahsa stated, "I also want to be able to learn by myself, I mean my self-learning skills need to be developed, so what I expect from my teacher is to help me and guide me to be able to bring up that part of me within, which is hard-working." She added, "Also maybe instead of just giving a presentation or having exams every week or so, teachers should be able to put together enough materials to make the teaching and learning

process more fascinating and provide an opportunity for students to observe and experience learning process in a more effective way.” She also emphasized the importance of cooperative learning and how it helps students work together and learn at the same time in a respectful environment “where there is no fear of asking questions and making mistakes.” She also referred to the point of how important it is in today’s classrooms to use technology and visual aids. “They can speed up the learning process,” she stated. Mahsa’s description largely fits with a multiliteracies pedagogy.

The influence of their role as a mother on their English learning process.

The student-participants agreed that their role as a mother has had impact on their learning language process. The influences mentioned in the interviews have been both positive and negative. Both Mahsa and Shiva emphasized the fact that today’s children learn a new language and the use of technology at a fast pace, and how it is difficult for older generations to adapt to the pace of the new generation in learning new things without feeling overwhelmed.

Shiva, who is a mother of two, stated,

I have two children, and my children are learning English in a very fast pace, and gradually they will be part of environments where English is spoken, and technology is used and I can see that they are being updated day by day, I don’t like to be very behind what they are learning and exposed to, so I wish to reach their levels so that, for example, if they ask me couple of questions, I be able to answer them... however, sometimes I really feel that my progress is at a snail’s pace.

When Shiva was asked how her role as a mother has influenced her learning process, she explained on the one hand, because of her responsibilities at home, she does not have enough

time to study or even work outside, on the other hand her children are the main reason why she is continuing learning even though she does not progress fast enough:

Because I have two children, I do not have enough time for my own things, but when I am free, I prefer to attend two classes of my choice; one is my English classes, and one my sport class. Now, about English as I mentioned because children are fast learners, so they are progressing very fast; therefore, I, as a mother, prefer not to be very behind them and I would like to adapt a fairly good speed in order to be able to connect with them, to understand them and their world, and I can say my kids are the main reason why I have become more interested in learning English.

Shiva also stated that she daily spends most of her time with her children at home, since her husband works two jobs to meet his family's needs. "I need to drive them to their classes, help them do their homework, cook for them, prepare them for the day after, and etc." Shiva stated. "I spend a lot of time with my children, and almost most of their responsibilities are on me, so because of that I have very limited time to do what I like. I think everybody is aware of some of their strength points, talents, abilities, and they set some goals for themselves based on them although they might never reach them, and about me, because of my responsibilities, and I can say most of my two kids' responsibilities are on me, so I cannot actually do my best in many things because of lack of time."

Mahsa, also, referred to the importance of learning and knowing English language because of its influence on her son's future. She believed, in a near future, English will be used everywhere all around the world. Mahsa explained in her response,

I am definitely more eager to learn at this time because I feel, I as a mother, can be able to influence my son's future better, and help him communicate with the whole world easier, or even I myself can communicate better with my son. In the future, I believe, there will be more and more use of English everywhere. Also, we are thinking about immigrating to another country; to an English-speaking country, then I need to keep myself close to my child, and perhaps one way could be knowing the language of our target country: where we are planning to go. All this has resulted in me having more enthusiasm to learn English.

Mahsa listed two main reasons for her interest in learning English as a mother. As a mother, she feels responsible for the future of her child either in Iran or in another country where English is spoken. Regardless of place, she does not want to lose the connection between herself and her son. In other words, she feels language can act as a bridge for their mutual relationship, which obviously means a lot to her. She then started talking about the negative impact she has experienced in trying to devote time to learning English. She said,

It is undeniable that my responsibilities as a mother has caused me having less "Me" time comparing to the past, this makes me upset because I love to spend more time on learning English, since I am motivated but I can't!

Then she pointed out that,

I should also say the time I spend now on learning, since it is limited, I try to make most of it! My concentration is much more than ever before, maybe my role as a mother has helped me in this way, those times that are my free time, I have high concentration. For example, those times that I am out of my home for something such as my classes, when I

get further from my family, I try to be there with all my heart, and concentrate on what is being taught. Try my best to devour the information!

In terms of her family's impact on her and their thoughts about her learning English, she stated,

I think their role as my family on me, I can say.. when I think about the time my child will grow up more, and he will definitely know English more fluent than me, I eagerly want to help myself more to be better in English, and as a consequence, in communicating with him. Also, immigration! I want to take my family to an English-speaking country, and for that purpose I need to master English, because if we go there I will be able to communicate with the people living there! And maybe I can work there!

She also explained about her impressions of the workshops and their influence on her through the lens of a mother.

Mahsa said,

Something that I was thinking about after one of the workshops, on my way home, was that how effective it was for me as a mother, because I was trying to teach my child in a very direct way, for example, a poem, when I wanted to teach him something I was very strict about it and trying to teach things in a direct way to him! That I should repeat things and he should repeat after me, until he learns! Now, I have seen it is not the right way at all, and it was a whole new world opened in front of my eye that when I want to teach something to my baby, I can teach him, for example, while we are cooking together! I can ask him to come bake cake with me and teach 4, 5 English vocabularies to him! Or for example I can teach him something ethical in a game like pantomime! I don't have to

teach him directly because I have seen that he has always tried to get away from learning in that way; he does not want to learn in that way! And I see yes this has helped me in my mentality regarding the ways we can choose to teach things.

Sara, the teacher-participant, was also asked about her opinion regarding any kinds of influence that motherhood might have on the language learning process. Sara stated, “In general, women, in my country, are considered as the heart of their domestic lives. It is, I think, something that is very common in Eastern countries, so this might be a reason why they have less confidence to have a role in the society. They have less tendency to use technology, even those who are younger that are presumed more informative and up to date, have refused to participate in activities that are technology-based.” She, then, added,

Of course I should also mention when it comes to the use of social media, it is a different story, or for example nowadays we have many parents and grandparents whose children or grandchildren are living abroad, so they are somehow forced to learn to use some apps to contact them, but in terms of activities that are technology-based they are still reluctant to be part of them.

In general, because mothers or grandmothers have been so involved in their domestic lives and family affairs in Iran, they have been distanced from utilizing modern technology. Although the vast majority of all families now have access to Internet, the ultimate use of it usually is contacting their children or grandchildren who live far from them or social media such as Instagram. Technology has not been successfully integrated into the lives of mature females, in this context English Language Learners, in a way that benefits their learning process.

Sara also believed that nowadays most families know and understand the significance of modern technology and learning English language, and she said now it has become a trend that everyone goes to an English class, either in an institute or at home. This trend is why, now, everyone – men, women, and children – in big cities, one is encouraged to continue learning English as an international language. There is a hope to make technology use embedded in their learning process and in their learning classes so that they can benefit from this development in a salient way.

Participants' experience in the three-day workshops – Learning engagement and challenges

Participants were asked about their experience with these workshops; what they enjoyed most about these workshops and found engaging, what they learned, and what part was challenging for them. The teacher-participant was specifically asked about what she noticed in terms of their participation, her observation, and the comparison between classes with the help of a multiliteracies approach and without it. First, I share what the student participants stated regarding their experience.

Both student-participants indicated that what they saw in the three day workshop was very new to them. It was the first time they have experienced such a class and such activities. They also mentioned, they were both hesitant to participate in the workshops since they had no clue what they might be expected to do. Despite the Letter of Information and Consent as well as me going over the expectations for the workshops in advance, the prospect of the workshops felt intimidating to these participants. However, they both felt satisfied with the result and the experience in the end. This was confirmed by Shiva who stated that, “I think these workshops

have given me enough motivation that I try more to learn better and faster, and if these workshops will be held again, I will surely participate and complete them.” She then added,

After these workshops, I was thinking, in that story I could have talked about that topic or I could have chosen that character or setting; in other words, it has made me and my mind so engaged and involved. As another example, in the part “to introduce yourself”, we were asked to bring a picture and music, after that class I thought to myself that I wish I would have chosen the other music to talk about myself in another way! Because of that I say the class and class activities should be in a way that encourage me to be in that class.

In multiliteracies pedagogy, the role of student agency in the meaning-making process is so influential to highlight.

It is highly important to create learning opportunities to accommodate students’ diverse needs, interests, and experiences (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Jewitt, 2008). Unlike traditional views of literacy, teachers’ lesson plans and activities should focus on “transformative effects of an approach to literacy based on student-led, generative, joint activities supported by strategic assistance, rather than the traditional ‘remediation’ practices of preplanned, scripted, generic practice of basic skills” (Hepple, Sockhill, Tan, & Alford, 2014, p. 227). According to Cope & Kalantzis (2009) “the multiliteracies approach suggests a pedagogy for active citizenship, centred on learners as agents in their own knowledge processes, capable of contributing their own as well as negotiating the differences between one community and the next.” (p. 172)

Mahsa also found the workshops effective although she was initially reticent to participate, “The most important thing and at the same time strangest thing for me is that I have noticed how learning can happen so differently, in a very interesting way.”

The student-participants found the social aspects of the workshops very engaging. Mahsa explained,

The first thing this method has given me was my confidence, even in other social activities! Not just in learning the language itself! That I learned more about my own self! That how comfortable I can interact with other people, and I can listen to them! I listen to their experience and I express myself! This was absolutely wonderful for me! Such an amazing experience in only three days workshops!

They both believed the activities made them so involved and engaged that even after the workshops they were still thinking about them. Mahsa described her experience as a social activity, for her it was not like a formal class, therefore she felt more comfortable and confident participating in the class and doing the activities. Mahsa explained,

The most interesting thing for me was that it was not just English language learning workshops for me, I experienced them like a social activity; I felt I participated in a 3 day social activity that I really enjoyed doing. I should mention I love social activities with psychological flavour, so for me it was like I was in a seminar or workshop that I really enjoy doing it; I had a lot of interactions with the people around me. When I left the workshops, I was still thinking about them: it really made me engaged! All this was very interesting and exciting for me!

When Mahsa was asked to talk about some details related to the activities they were engaged with, she stated, “The part that was about cultures was very interesting, appealing, and new to me! I think maybe there could have been more focus on that part! Because I think learning by seeing and experiencing real aspects of students’ lives, can actually boost up learners’ confidence of who they really are! And it makes you more comfortable with yourself, with expressing yourself.” Despite her initial discomfort, Mahsa was able to grow from this learning experience.

Shiva also expounded on how interesting it was for her to see a class where there is not just a more traditional teaching and learning phenomena, whereby students are expected to bring their books and notebooks to the class and then study those texts only. She said,

When this approach was used in our classes [the research workshops], I was encouraged to think about it at home or even when I was driving and I was listening to a piece of music, this made me think, for instance, in my next class I can use this piece, and introduce it to my classmates. I loved this engagement and the way everything about these workshops made me think about it even when I was not in the class! It was totally different from my other experiences.

Shiva mentioned her overall experience of these three days was really positive. When she was asked what part she enjoyed the most, she stated,

The most enjoyable part was the day that we entered the class and there were the sounds of different music, and the lights were off! That day was very interesting for me and I became very curious to know what would happen next, and then we talked about different

music and we got to know different cultures and their music; this was really interesting for me, the way it started surprised me!

Sara, the teacher-participant brought a unique perspective to the workshops, drawing upon her own substantial experiences to teaching language. Sara and I collaborated in designing the lesson plans. We had really fruitful discussions during the design time about the approach. I used a PowerPoint presentation to explain about multiliteracies pedagogies and multimodal approach in detail using visuals to make my points. We discussed about how teaching and learning can be so different from what we used to know and experienced in our own lives growing up in Iran. I specifically talked about my own experience as a student in one of my Master's courses in Canada, and the way our professor utilized multiliteracies pedagogy to make our learning experience so different in every single class in which we participated. I talked about how interested I was attending every session since there was always something new. I shared, "the first day that we sat down in the class, our professor had a sack and in the sack she had several items. When she wanted to introduce herself to the class, instead of standing there and just start talking about herself, she showed us a piece of clay that she made, so visually she presented herself." This was actually the sparking moment when the idea of having the student-participants use different artifacts to present themselves appeared to me when I recollected that moment in one of my own learning experiences.

In the interview, Sara shared her thoughts on what she enjoyed most in these workshops. Sara said,

The most interesting thing for me was that it was not monotonous at all as I mentioned before! I enjoyed the happy atmosphere of the class, and this new method was very

interesting to me because it was really active and all students were involved in the class activities and I had enough motivation to go on.

She also added she enjoyed the class dynamics that made everyone feel comfortable learning and communicating with one another. In her opinion, she vividly witnessed active learning, which was encouraged in these three days, and that diverse talents were respected. She also enjoyed the fact that a variety of student-centered and student-active teaching activities were used in the workshops and she believed everyone somehow was successful in terms of finding their own ways of utilizing the approach to reach a desirable result. Sara stated,

Sometimes the most difficult thing for a teacher is the high level of creativity and concentration which were needed in these workshops and it was really difficult to select best items in the activities regarding the topics chosen. Also for students, when they wanted to prepare a new item for some activities, each time it's kind of a challenge or surprise for them which made them think!

What was surprising for Sara, and also for me, was the older generation's participation rate. What was interesting for both of us was that older women were the first volunteers to try the new activities which was the opposite of what we had hypothesized before these workshops. We thought younger people would be more interested in these activities, but surprisingly we found out that the older generation was very enthusiastic in participating in these workshops and activities. She said, "I think the younger ones are scared of making mistakes and being judged for the knowledge they have about something." Sara also pointed out that it was great that different modes and mediums such as audio, visual, gestural, linguistic, and etc were used in our teaching approach. She said,

The music (audio) or the videos that were played (audio, visual, linguistic), in addition to the activities for example in the role play activity, audio, visual, linguistic, and gestural were used in the lesson plan, they all were there to influence students' learning in the best ways possible.

She stated her view using the metalanguage of multimodality and semiotics which I had introduced her to in our collaborative process of working together.

Use of all modes is helpful for students to acquire, process, and learn knowledge. As for me and as for my students, each mode has its importance in learning effectively. Now, with the help of combinations of different modes such as visual, gestural, audio, etc. in these lesson plans, students could receive the message simply and this made them able to reflect on what was taught and what was targeted to achieve.

She also added at a later point in the interview:

I believe a multimodal approach, the approach used in the workshops, can help students improve their English. It can create motivation and it also shows that every level of talent and even every level of knowledge is welcomed in these classes. This method can boost up students' creativity and their teacher's creativity as well. We used video, music, pictures, role play; they all satisfied students different learning styles. Learning through visual, audio or text and movement channels which were used in this classroom is wonderful. As a teacher, I found that students were really interested and motivated.

There are several strategies which can be used in the class to promote different learning styles. For example, cooperative learning through Visual Scaffolding, Realia Strategies,

Reporting Back, Learning Centers (Herrell & Jordan, 2016). These are all active participation approaches which can lead to a more dynamic class atmosphere where creativity is encouraged.

Student adaptation to the approach. The student-participants and the teacher-participant were asked to explain what their thoughts are on the overall adaptation of the participants to the multiliteracies approach which was used in the design of the lesson plans and the class management. For the student participants who were interviewed, both declared when they learned about the workshops through the recruitment poster, they were hesitant to participate in them, since they had no idea of what they were going to be expected to do, and also because of lack of time. The workshops were held in the duration of a two-week holiday which was between their two terms, so many students had already planned for that time. This made them unsure whether they would be able to attend in all sessions or not. When Sara, the teacher-participant, was asked about her opinion on students' adaptation, she explained, "As I mentioned earlier, in the beginning, some students kind of refused to participate, but very soon they got very adapted and interested in participating in the activities and in continuing the workshops." I, as the researcher, have also witnessed the attitudes change of the students to adapt to this new multiliteracies approach. When they started to play games, or introducing their cultures by using stations, when they wanted to write their story and then enact it, they were all very excited and fully engaged compared to the first activity introduced to them in the first workshop. She then indicated that she found the multiliteracies approach very fruitful in terms of motivating students' participation. "The results I saw were great," she added. Sara said,

As I mentioned I always look for new methods, new ways to influence my students' language learning, because I want to see the progress. I don't want to waste my time and

my students' time, so in this method I found out that applying different modes and the help of different modes such as visual, audio, gestural can be very useful and it encourages their participation in the activities, and if we work on new approaches and we experience and examine them in a right way, like this one, we can expect better results, and I welcome it!

That being said, for a teacher new to applying the tenets of a multiliteracies approach, it may feel slow and unwieldy because the students have to lead the way much of the time.

Then she was asked whether she found students' attitude toward this approach positive, negative, or neutral, she declared,

It's difficult to say, because it's a really new method and since they have never experienced it before, at first they did not want to be part of it and they were somehow reluctant to continue it, but because of its diversity during the class and the use of different modes when teaching, their minds adapted itself to the new things they saw, and it kind of helped them remember things better, so now I believe they think about it in a positive way, and I think now they like it!

It was interesting for Sara that in this approach all levels with any level of interest and English knowledge was welcomed, and every learner based on their interest could demonstrate different levels of connections and engagement in the class activities, the core content and concepts. She believed it is of high importance to understand students' interest and try to match it with their learning profile and by this allow them to process understanding of concepts with the help of different modalities, such as watching video or story re-enactment, or role play, etc. She stated,

I believe in these workshops, students got to understand the language learning process from a new perspective, I think each of them could make the connection they needed, even those who were not so interested in participation in the beginning of the workshops, benefited from the activities which made them engaged.

Students' adaptation to the multiliteracies approach used in the three day workshop guided this part of our conversations. Shiva, who was a bit hesitant to participate in the workshop in the beginning, shared her view in this way,

In the workshops we attended, maybe I was not very enthusiastic to participate in the first session, but then when I thought about it and I sat in one session, for the second workshop I literally was so eager to actively participate and collaborate with others.

For her it was a great experience since it was something like her real experience when she travelled to another country. She said, "I had a very short experience that I was in an environment where English was their first language, I think because I could see everything and feel it, this has made me learn a lot. These workshops were the same for me. I could really see everything, real things." She continued,

In these two, three workshops, when I thought more about them, I can honestly say these three workshops have encouraged me and intrigued me to learn and participate because when I think about it this way that I have two children , and my children are learning English in a very fast pace, and gradually they are entering to environments filled with English and they are being updated day by day, I don't like to be very behind what they are learning and exposed to, and I like to reach their level that for example if

they ask me couple of questions I be able to answer them and I think these workshops have given me enough motivation that I learn faster, and if these workshops will be held again and more I will surely participate and complete the level needed.”

Fostering motivation is a key in helping students feel encouraged to continue learning. If they feel that they are part of the learning journey, they become more motivated to participate in their classes. This is crucial as Kalantzis and Cope (2005) maintain that “a learner will not learn unless they belong in that learning” (p. 43). Students come to the classroom with different cultural backgrounds, learning abilities, and personal experiences, which is the reason why educators need to identify them and provide interventions to assist students in developing their English language proficiency (Diaz-Rico, 2012).

Shiva also had some suggestions to improve the workshops. She stated,

The only thing I can say is that I feel we could have spent more time for these classes! In my opinion, for example maybe the 10 min time for writing a story, for those who are doing it for the first time like me, was not enough, but that I learned how to write it and I found the courage to write a short story even with no special content, and then playing it was really excellent! But If I had a little bit of more time, then that would be even better!

We talked about the fact that the length of the workshops were supposed to be longer than what they were, and the activities were supposed to be shared in more sessions, but because of lack of time, we were forced to put them together and there was no possibility to postpone them. Shiva also hoped that all these new approaches begin to be used in our country, she said, “Because I am

sure they will motivate many students like me and help us not to scare from meeting new people from different nationalities and cultures, making it easier for everybody!”

Mahsa, was also asked about her adaptation to the approach. She shared what she found difficult in the beginning of the workshops, she stated, “Maybe just a little bit how to express myself! Talking about myself openly to others that I really did not know much! It was a bit hard for me to explain and express myself! This part was challenging for me; it was difficult to talk about myself in front of others! That’s it! Yes! That was it. The rest was so exciting and much better for me.” Mahsa then added,

There were many positive things for me. I was very 50 - 50 when I first decided to participate in these workshops, now I can confess they had opened many windows for me, even for my own future, when I start my own career as a teacher later, because our field is engineering, and it’s very, at least in Iran, tough and strict, and one dimensional, and I had experienced bad times at my university period for this! Many times I escaped from my classes for it! Now, I can see no! we can make it more fun and interesting for students in a way to have all the students involved! Even in Math and physics, furthermore for myself in my learning English language process it has helped me a lot; changed my viewpoint somehow.

Multiliteracies framework suggests various teaching approaches which can be aligned with the age of students and the nature of the subject being studied. Thanks to digital technologies, many valuable learning resources and experiences are now available to meet the needs of today’s students who are ready to “get beyond the classroom walls into the borderless world of internet resources” (Luke, 2000, p. 82). In the case of Mahsa, even though these

workshops have nothing to do with engineering, she was able to conceptualize how this approach to teaching could similarly work well in other disciplines.

When Mahsa was sharing her idea about the impact of these three-day workshops on her, I was listening to her and thinking about “choice” or “choices” we make throughout our teaching career. The choices we make, certainly, play important roles in the result we see, and our satisfaction of the results we reach largely depends on all the choices we make in every second of our classes. The way we, as educators, shape this journey, our students’ experience learning a new language, can either lead to enhancing learners’ enthusiasm in learning, or making them frustrated in class adaptation, and as a consequence in a broader view, less confident in the social level roles and participation. In order to maximize the impact of an effective teaching method on students, a teacher needs to make best possible choices on what to teach, and most importantly how to teach it. There is no doubt that every change requires some time to be embedded, so I believe the transformation of current traditional lesson plans which are still being used in many classes in Iran, and at the same time the adaptation of the students and the teachers to new ways of meeting students’ needs in these classes need some time, knowledge update, and ongoing collaboration with teachers. Multiliteracies pedagogy has potentially paved the ways for both teachers and learners to experience an effective way of teaching and learning. It has “awakened literacy educators to recognize that the skills required to communicate effectively in society are constantly changing” (Mills, 2009, p. 108).

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

Identity and the Iranian Cultural Context through a Feminist Lens

Explicit stereotype in society. In Iran, there is a conflict between women's socialized norms and image in cultural and social contexts and the values, dreams, and what women are really capable of doing. Having been born, raised, and lived in Iran for most of my life, as a woman, I myself experienced this contradiction in many formats. Some of the responses from my research participants who were all women also mentioned some points with regards to this conflict which exists in the Iranian cultural context towards women. Through the lens of a constructivist (Vygotsky, 1978), the formation of identity occurs in a "social-community context", and not in "individual isolation" (p. 163). Therefore, the power of culture and society, in most cases, far outweighs the person's desire. Many women in Iran are victimized by an oppressive context which reminds them daily "you are a woman so you can't!", or "since you are a woman, you are intellectually less capable than men, and you have less power and control over your life." On the other hand, there are many women who have been struggling and fighting to gain what they have deserved and lost all these years despite all the limitations. This struggle is not something negligible, even in learning a new language. In fact, learning a new language is power laden. These women gain independence, insight into other cultures, and develop their own voices in new ways. In Iran, the dominant hierarchical social and cultural perspective has penetrated in every aspect of Iranian women's lives and has made them have less confidence compared to men in the same contexts.

Some comments such as “Act your age” or “You are too old to do that” have discouraged and stopped many to do what they really like and are capable of, for instance, learning a new language. In Iran, when you become a mother, regardless of your age, you need to act maturely enough in order not to be judged in a wrong way. So you are responsible for others’ judgement about you even if it is wrong! In Iran some sales people, especially in a traditional bazaar, might call their customers who are young girls the term “sister”, and those who are older “mother”; by older I mean even a woman who is in her 40s might be called “mother”. Some of these salesmen might even be older than 40, but this is how they might call a customer who is a mature lady: “mother”, and this way of naming means you are old enough to be my mother, so act your age. It is imaginable how difficult it can be for many women to study, work, live, and strive to reach to higher level in anything and everything. Of course, not 100% of men behave in this way, but in most cases this is what a woman experiences in contemporary Iran.

Implicit stereotype hidden in families. When an Iranian woman becomes a mother, she needs to always put her family and families’ expectations first; this is what is mostly believed in Iranian families. In Iran, when it comes to family and home, their needs and wants are said to be prioritized, especially when a woman is the mother of a family. This is a belief in Iranians’ parenting system. It is a common belief that women are raised to take care of others and to always *be* there, at least physically. Throughout the three sessions of the workshops and also the interviews done, most of the participants’ choices were somehow connected to their families. For example, when asked about choosing a picture to help them present themselves, they chose their children or grandchildren’s pictures. When asked about why they are learning English, their main concern was to be able to keep the connection with their children once they live in English-speaking countries or

for those who have had grandchildren abroad. In the discussion that happened at some points during the workshops, their main concern and the topic they mostly talked about when they switched to their own language, Farsi, were their children. It is as if they all somehow believe their identity and their being is interwoven with their families and children. They are happy, but only if their children are happy. They learn English, because of their children, because now it is a must which is nice but scary. It is scary because I feel their own identity is felt lost somewhere under the state of love and affection. Now that they are “mothers” or “grandmothers”, other important aspects of their identities get lost. They are never first and foremost an “engineer woman” who is in love with reading books and novels, not a “hairdresser” who also loves travelling, not a lively “retired woman” who loves gardening, and not a “teacher” who is great in math. These all come last. Above all, their role as a mother or grandmother has redefined their beings. As we talked, all of the participants were the center of their domestic lives with the least time for themselves. In order to do what they really liked to do, they should have left home, and most of them were unhappy with their progress in learning English because of lack time. Shiva mentioned her husband works two shifts to meet the family’s need, therefore although she used to work before, she cannot anymore because of having no time, it seems that having a dual-income family is not considered feasible ,and it is assumed she will be the full-time caregiver to their children.

Lack of Confidence. Based on the participants’ responses and my observations, lack of confidence was mentioned and seen by the student participants especially in the beginning of the three day workshops. “The psychological literature on confidence strongly suggests that women have lower confidence than men in a variety of contexts” (Cross et. al, 2017, p. 656). There are many factors reported which influence one’s confidence. These factors include gender stereotype

which largely exist in Iran. Gender stereotype can be defined as a *perceived* potential that is expected from one gender, rather than valuing their actual performance. Gender stereotype can result in lowering levels of confidence in the sex that is considered to be less competent (Oswald, 2008). Some women who participated in this study were not willing to participate in some activities because they were scared of being judged, or at least their knowledge of English gets judge.

Motherhood and mothering is perceived as a holy role in Iran and in many other places. Mothers become the main person in the family to refer you when facing an issue, when hungry, when are in need, and this is why it is expected from them to make the least number of mistakes, since others' lives are interwoven to them and their *holy* role, and in other words, they are agents in their lives. As Badinter argues (1981) "Motherhood became a gratifying role because it was now a repository of the society's idealism The mother was frequently compared to a saint, and it was believed that the only good mother was a "saintly" woman. The natural patron saint of the mother was the Virgin Mary, whose whole life bespoke her devotion to her child." (p. 180) Although it is important to qualify that Badinter is not directly referring to Iranian women, his argument is valid to Iranian general way of thinking toward mothers.

Interestingly, the older participants demonstrated more confidence in terms of class activities in their participation. One reason can be because their youth was spent before Iran's revolution in 1967, so they are more courageous and less conservative in general. Mahsa, who was a PhD student suffered from lack of confidence since a younger age, although she has always had sufficient knowledge. At some points, she was not willing to participate in some activities because she was afraid of "being judged and misunderstood"; these attitudes are perhaps embedded in the culture, specifically toward women. They gradually started to enjoy the variety of activities, in part

because they were given different choices. Shiva and Mahsa, the two younger participants, had more time and energy dedicated to their roles in their domestic lives even though they were both educated and young. Going to English class was considered one way for both to get away from their role at home: “being a mother”. It is believed based on the ideology of the new motherhood, a woman is not complete without a child, she must be the primary care-giver of that child, and she must devote herself fully to her children (Thomson, 2017). Although Thomson is not referring to the Iranian context, this idea is also valid in Iranians’ philosophy towards “being a mother.” This is why many women, in Iran, do not work or continue their education after their child or children’s birth in order to be considered a real mom. As I discussed in the literature review, the perception of a woman in Iranian school books and also media has had an influential impact on how to consider mothers’ roles. Data from Paivandi’s research (2008) illustrates that “the depiction of women as autonomous individuals is absent in textbooks; female autonomy is not recognized and accepted, a woman’s individuality is limited to that of the mother, sister, daughter or wife of a man” (p. 6).

Women’s voice. What the participants experienced in the three-day workshop seemed to make them content, since they were valued; their voices were valued, their knowledge was valued, their achievements were valued. They were given options to choose from, not just one fixed method or activity that they *had to* follow and participate in, but a variety of them, so this gave them some power, and as a consequence made them confident to present their knowledge and create a product which they themselves owned and shaped. They were all given the chance to choose whether they wanted to participate or they do not. This autonomy to participate or not during the workshops was mentioned several times in the interviews were taking place. The traditional method of teaching in Iran which is usually based almost solely on traditional didactic pedagogies of reading, writing, and

grammar were criticized by the participants, and as they were discussing the reasons behind their criticism, they did mention because they felt the teacher had the main role and it was just him/her who talked all the time and no cooperation was encouraged. When New London group talks about knowledge processes, they believe that sometimes the best choice is traditional didactic teaching, and that it is a matter of professional judgement and the teacher making good choice, for example after a role play, teachers might want to have students do a mini-quiz to reinforce certain vocabulary, then although a multiliteracies approach focuses largely on student-centered principles, the importance of traditional approaches, such as direct instruction, remain (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012; New London Group, 1996; Mills, 2006).

Hannafin & Land argue (1997) “Student-centered learning environments represent significant potential for optimizing the capabilities of both technology and learners” (p. 172). Based on what I observed, the participants were all motivated by the class dynamics which helped facilitate and valued the various learning styles of the participants. Participants expressed their expectation of their ideal class, and how they would like it to be in a way that the teacher is not the sole speaker and others cooperate, and the time is shared amongst all to *talk*. They further noted how some activities such as games can boost their confidence and motivate them to take an interest in and excel in the lesson target, and potentially provide a richer and multimodal opportunity by which they can benefit best.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy

The participants’ understanding of the new pedagogy used in the three-day workshop influences whether the workshops were successful or not. When interviewed, all the participants described the basic understanding of the multiliteracies pedagogical approach. “Multiliteracies”

was introduced in response to the changes in the world and our capacity to communicate through new media and also to address “the multiplicity of communications channels and media, and the increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity” (NLG, 1996, p. 63). The idea is to prepare students for the “real world”; its aim is to make classroom teaching more inclusive of cultural, linguistic, communicative, and technological diversity. The participants of this study gained an understanding that literacy is more than just print-based texts, and that multiliteracies is not only multimodal, but it is also a focus on cultural and linguistic diversity as well as the role technology can play. It uses an inquiry based learning and student-centred approach.

Multiliteracies focuses teaching on “modes of representation much broader than language alone...[that] differ according to culture and context, and have specific cognitive, cultural, and social effects” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 5). It is important that the educators understand that they need to address “increasing multiplicity and integration of significant modes of meaning-making, where the textual is also related to the visual, the audio, the spatial [and] the behavioural” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 5). Through a conscious effort to move beyond the definition of single literacy, the design of the lesson plans, the setting of the classroom, and overall the way learning opportunities were structured made them aware of the notion of multiliteracies pedagogy in practice. The participants were successful in terms of creating multimodal projects in the class, such as speaking about themselves with the help of artifacts or creating a short story with the help of technology and then role playing it, or introducing their culture with the help of music and different items. Students’ interaction was also another positive point to look at. The class atmosphere was lively and active. The interaction among students seemed to effectively boost their engagement and made the participants feel more

invested in what they experienced and produced in these three workshops. During the workshops, students were challenged with the questions to help them think deeper about why they are choosing what they are choosing, and what effect does their selection have on the overall meaning they wish to convey. .For example when student-participants were given a text about gender stereotype (See Figure 15 &16) with a picture, they were asked why the author chose this image? Why the woman is positioned from this angle? These questions led to a sophisticated discussion about gender relations using visual literacy skills despite the limitations of the student-participants' abilities to express themselves fully in English. Or, when they were writing their stories and creating a short story book, they were questioned about the moral of their stories, why they chose the characters that they chose, and how they could be compared with other characters they knew. Students were also asked about challenging their own culture by posing different questions in regard to who shapes what we experience today, and in what ways it could be different. So the questions helped student-participants experience critical framing that allowed them to analyze what they were learning in terms of “historical, social, cultural, political, ideological, and value-centered relations of particular systems of knowledge and social practice” (New Londong Group, 1996, p 86).

These images help to keep the standards about men and women in place. These taglines and images associated with each gender are what we see almost everywhere, so it almost becomes easy to associate these images with our expectation. It is interesting to see how men are so dominant in our society whereas in other societies, women are dominant and strong. What we have set in our society is problematic because as mentioned before, they create expectations.



Figure 15: Part of the pop text about culture given to the student participants

Popular culture reflects this polarization of women's efforts toward equality, but it also contributes to it. When books, movies, television shows, and songs present women as passive and submissive, they're upholding the same view of women espoused by conservative religious leaders—that women are not fully capable of shaping their lives or making their own decisions. That is, they are depicting women as less than fully human. As humanists and feminists, we should support popular culture when it gives us rich and complex female characters who exercise agency in their own lives while also vocally criticizing popular culture when it spits out one-dimensional or stereotypical

female characters.



Figure 16: Part of the pop text about culture given to the student-participants

There is some evidence from the field notes and transcripts that the participants were thinking in a critical and engaged way that might help improve their language learning and disposition to take some risks in. Sara, the teacher participant, also indicated that in her professional judgment that the way we scaffolded the whole process using a multiliteracies

approach could significantly make a difference in terms of assisting students' learning. Sara, the teacher participant, believed and I also believe it is important that we seek out multiple ways to encourage students, especially older females, to get involved in multiliteracies teaching and learning. We as educators need to get to know, understand, and feel the needs of our students in order to be able to create and conceptualize a lesson plan or an environment that is both encouraging and engaging. A secure zone is where most mature female English language learners especially in Iran are in; this is where they prefer what is known to them, such as traditional texts. Multiliteracies, on the other hand, in a socially responsive way, seeks to enable learners to understand the changes that are happening in a local and a global level, and in order to be prepared for work, civic and personal life, students need to develop skills to engage critically in different rapidly changing communities. In Chapter 2, I explained about the theoretical framework of my research. I referred to the term "situated practice" which "positions students as the providers of knowledge, rather than simply the teacher. They can bring many outside experiences, interest, and knowledge to the table" (Henderson & Exley, 2012). As Gee (2007) would argue:

If people are to nurture their souls, they need to feel a sense of control, meaningfulness, even expertise in the face of risk and complexity. They want and need to feel like heroes in their own life stories and to feel that their stories make sense. They need to feel that they matter and that they have mattered in other people's stories. If the body feeds on food, the soul feeds on agency and meaningfulness. (p. 10)

As a matter of fact, we should see students as "active minds and souls," rather than passive audience.

Multimodality in Action

As we now understand, multimodality refers to “the use of several semiotic modes in communication” (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001, p.20), and “mode is a socially shaped and culturally given resource for making meaning’ (Kress, 2014, p. 60). Modes are not global; they have been formed through social processes. They are considered as resources that people choose to use. For example, the folklore music the participants of this study chose, or the souvenir, or the dialect of their region through which they all were provided opportunities to explore their multiple literacies and identities were socially situated in their specific context. Learning happens through the semiotic work of making meaning which is connected to involving with the world through resources (Kress, 2014, p. 62). It is a necessity that learners “learn to use symbol systems, including images, sound and music, as a means of self-expression and communication, as these are now an integral part of contemporary life” (Hobbs, 2006, p. 15).

For example, in these workshops, the words and the images that were given to students when asked to write a story, or the moving image and the sound of the videos shown to the class, or the items students used to introduce themselves and their culture with the music of their choice or speech, gesture, and etc. that were used to form the interactions, they all used different modes and targeted to convey meanings with the help of communicational means. In the third day of the workshops, we played a short video about how to write a short story, and they were asked to write their digital short stories and then add in some pictures to it. The production of digital text accompanied by images supported students’ learning through visual representations, so they all experienced multimodal learning. As Kress (2010) argues “different modes offer different potentials for meaning making” (p. 79). In addition, what student-participants chose to present, the items, the story they created, the way they played their roles, and the

connection they made between a text and the graphic organizer, in general, the classroom context and the practice of teachers and students were all in favour of the multimodality.

In this study of classroom practice, multimodal activities were used to plan the lesson plans, and then the participants of this study were allowed to pick what best serves their interest, and this could also give them a chance to even identify and recognize their interest. The participants of this study gained a familiarity and exposure to multimodal approach and teaching practices. Within the interview data, results indicated that both student-participants and the teacher-participant understood the importance of a powerful and resourceful teaching tool for teaching and learning. A multiliteracies approach could pave the way for all students with multiple identities, irrespective of culture, language, and their ability, to engage and benefit from learning in an environment where student diversity was welcomed. With the help of several activities designed based on multiliteracies theoretical frameworks, many opportunities opened up in the workshops to value students' cultural and linguistic diversity. For instance, students could introduce their cultures to others with the help of items and music belonged to their culture, or they could also present themselves with artifact, music, favourite picture to the whole class. It is noteworthy that I did not intend to go into deep culture as this was only an intro, and since I was not trying to pose really hard questions about gender relations in Iran throughout the workshops or interviews.

The integration of technology into the lesson plans was also another goal of this research study although the main body part of the research was its focus on the culturally and linguistically diverse mature students' needs. In the interviews, students mentioned that the use of technology in their classes are usually limited. Although they all had positive attitudes toward the use of technology since they all believed technology could help speed up and facilitate their learning and teaching, they still expect to use

it more often in their classes. It is undeniable that having access to technology and more technological devices could be beneficial for all students and teachers in terms of teaching and learning support if used in a pedagogically appropriate way.

When, in the third session of the workshop, students were asked to write their story with the help of a web application, they all showed enthusiasm to do so. However, unfortunately, because of internet issue the activity took us more time than expected, so we were forced to ask them to write their stories on piece of paper. This is something that might happen in any class, in any part of the world which might result in giving up on its use. Admittedly, at a professional level, it is best for teaching and learning environments to be equipped with tech support with the use of technologies. All participants emphasized the importance of the use of technology on their learning and teaching process when at home doing their homework.

The pedagogical purposes that can be conceived of focusing on technology in multiliteracies is not about fancy new gadgets – it is about how tech allows for new design possibilities and how its use can be integrated into the activities to better facilitate the teaching and learning process. For instance, the music of different places in the world was played in the beginning of one workshop to encourage interaction and create a positive learning environment with the help of providing students with opportunities of exposure to a technological resource. From a simple use of technology to having a virtual class, what is so important to consider as an educator is how we conceive of technology for pedagogical purposes and how innovative we are to integrate it into our lesson plans that simultaneously offer a deeper, better applicable knowledge and an interesting and supportive environment. The class environment which is supported by electronic resources should “... promote engagement through

student-centered [learning] activities” (Hannafin, 1992, p. 51). Students need to be engaged in multimodal activities that draw on linguistic, visual, spatial and digital texts to support visual, media, technological and critical literacies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Hobbs, 2006; Unsworth, 2006) in order to have a better understanding of “culturally and linguistically diverse and increasingly globalised societies...[as well as] the burgeoning variety of text forms associated with information and multimedia technologies” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 9).

Limitations

There are various limitations that pertain to this study. One is the limited number of participants which raises concern for generalizability (Yardley, 2000). Four participants volunteered to partake this research, and only two who were younger participated in the interview which has affected the overall data result, and because of that the analysis gave me a surface understanding rather than a deep understanding of what was exactly going on when older female students experienced a multiliteracies pedagogical approach. Besides, the limited available time of the participants shortened the length of the empirical part of the study as it had been expected. Ideally, I was hoping to hold up to 10 workshops, but because of the holiday in-between two semesters in Iran and since it was an overseas research, I could not have my participants for a longer period to gain more data through observation and field notes. It is possible as well that the other two participants in the workshop might have been interested in participating in the interviews had there been more time to develop a rapport with them through the workshops.

Recommendations

Based on the student participants’ responses, the teacher participant’ responses, and my own observations I suggest the following recommendations:

Create a class community. Having a successful teaching and learning experience is not about adding “things” to the classroom or to the teaching and learning process, but it is more about the process or a system that stimulates progress. Multiliteracies approach is about how teaching and learning can happen so differently in a dynamic learning environment where students can draw upon their lived experience and then challenge and analyze new ideas and concepts. A democratic environment where all needs of students are understood and respected, their voice and thoughts can be shared and heard needs to be provided for all learners. In this environment, students are allowed to question what they learn and see, and there is no room for forcing them to accept the status quo. In Iran, there is still a long way to reach to a point that diversity of opinions is respected and dynamic conditions are accepted, especially when it comes to women. Although in the language institute where I did my research, the idea of having a multiliteracies pedagogy was welcomed and embraced openly because of the Iranian dominant thinking system, it was difficult to handle the whole research as expected. Trying to put into practice a new methodology which requires critical thinking and higher order thinking needs extensive training and time allocation. The participants of this research, in these three day workshops, experienced English language learning at a different level and way than what they had previously experienced. A multiliteracies theoretical framework was put into the class, class activities, and the lesson planning design. In order to tailor the best design for the specific group of learners, educators need to consider their attitude towards what is being used in the class; whether they have positive or negative attitude, both teachers and students, towards non-linguistic modes. As a class community, if considering each class as a community, every individual’s needs and interest matter. What is important in this regard is how to put multiliteracies framework into practice. With the help of “Situated practice,” “overt instruction,” “transformed

practice,” and “critical framing,” we should evolve and change the lesson plans in order to model ways to involve and include all students in multiliteracies teaching and learning.

Increasing mature female English language learners’ engagement. What I tried to seek to address in this research was to see how developing multiliteracies pedagogy with mature female English language classroom can be of any help in terms of their engagement. Apparently, based on what was said in the interviews and what I observed during the three day workshop, I found the lesson plans engaging and appealing to the participants because of the variety of different modes to accommodate a range of learning styles; this could motivate mature female English language learners to select and participate in the activities they were more interested in. They all stated even after the workshops, they were still thinking about the activities and trying to find ways of approaching the tasks in a better possible way. In the beginning, the student-participants were somewhat reluctant to participate, but after being engaged in some new forms of activities and class dynamic, they became more interested and willing to partake in a different kind of learning experiences. What I believe is so important to consider is “design” which is the main key factor that played an important role in their engagement level. If we consider who our audience are, regarding their age group, their interest, and their culture, then sufficient time needs to be spent on designing the lesson plans and activities aligned with the learners’ interest factors. In the lesson plans we designed and used in the three day workshops, we tried to incorporate all four knowledge processes. Situated practice helped us to use participants’ real life experiences within a community of learners in order to understand each other’s viewpoints and make meaningful activities. Vygotsky (1978) defined the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable

peers” (p. 86). Although this definition was geared toward children developmental potential, later the term was adapted to suit adult language learners’ development as well (Ohta, 2005). The adapted definition states “the ZPD is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual linguistic production, and the level of potential development as determined through language produced collaboratively with a teacher or peer” (Fania & Ghaemib, 2011, p. 1550). In our lesson plan, for instance, students collaboratively made story books and then enacted it with props; all participants watched how words came to life, they could all investigate the world of text and the world of their own imagination; all students were immersed in learning. Overt instruction was also integrated into our lesson plans. For example, use of graphic organizers helped students focus on important parts of a text and allowed them to experience a systematic and analytic explanation of different modes of meaning, or the culture stations the participants were the key contributors to the activity, and they all built on what they already knew. Critical framing was encouraged throughout the three day workshops. The student participants of this study were also guided to analyze a text about cultural stereotypes towards women critically with the help of some commercial pictures, text, and graphic organizers. Students tried to analyze the intention of the designers of these commercials. In another activity, as an example, students then shared their thought using a rope to analyze critically the implicit ideology or values in their culture. Transformed practice was also tried to be embedded in the lesson plan. Students experienced to work collaboratively in culture stations, and story writing with the help of technology, and story enactment to learn this important skill to help them be successful outside of classroom contexts as well. In classroom practices, teachers should design different events which can occur in sequence to aid students create a scenario based on those events. Students can then experience a journey, like a story, where they themselves are the main characters of the story that can make meaning throughout this journey. The New

London Group emphasized that “meaning-making is an active and dynamic process, and not something governed by static rule” (NLG, 1996, P. 74). Doubtless, this can make students and teachers work harder, since now it is not something that has been pre-prepared for everyone like a traditional textbook or a simple text to look at, now, it can be at times challenging to switch views of literacy.

Adapting to new strategies. Currently in Iran, there is no single approach that is being used in English classes. Although there are still teachers who are using rote-teaching and traditional methods, there are many educators and institutes who now support the use of more updated strategies in the teaching system. In order to enable all students to make most of new pedagogies, it is important to consider all age group and better understand their needs in our contemporary teaching and learning to better design our lesson plans. *If* we know and understand most of our students’ concerns, and allow them to figure out how flexible they can be in terms of adaptation to new pedagogies, then it can make it more feasible to gain a mutual understanding of the multiliteracies notion and how effective it can be in terms of teaching and learning needs. When the class environment is where students, apart from their age, sex, background, can feel safe, respected, and at the same time engaged and challenged, then there can be more hope for a conductive learning environment for this age group.

Conclusion

The investigation of how the design process of multiliteracies used by ELL educators facilitating the mature females’ English language learning process shed insight into the understanding and application of multiliteracies pedagogy in adult female English language classroom. The participants of this study, although they had a limited time exposure to multimodal activities and multiliteracies, still made meaningful contributions and participated in the design elements of the workshop as producers and consumers. Admittedly, there are many

digital technologies beyond those that were used in the workshops, but what matters is the needs of classes and students being shaped with the aid of educators in selecting the most appropriate pedagogical tools and resources when designing their lesson plans and activities.

It is highly important to deeply understand and value the multiliteracies structure and scaffolding models in the area of English language learning. In a multiliteracies framework, technology serves as a tool to provide students ,based on their interests and understanding about the world, with several opportunities to experience learning beyond school within which deep and critical thinking is encouraged in order to strengthen the learners' abilities to cope with the challenges they confront, not just in the classroom, but in the broader society as well.

Communication has become more dynamic than ever before, and this is something we, as educators, instructors, or learners should keep in mind when opening up to contemporary educational practices. Based on findings from this current study, when selecting the best approach to use in class, teachers should consider a conceptualization of literacy beyond passively receiving a set of skills. In order to achieve this goal, teachers should create a learning environment that supports students' subjectivities with the help of integrated technology and multimodal approaches.

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APPENDICES

Interview Questions

Background

Q1: Would you like to tell me a bit about yourself?

بگوئید خودتان از کمی لطفا

Q2: When did you start learning English?

کردید زبان یادگیری به شروع زمانی چه

Q3: Why did you start learning English?

کردید؟ شروع دلیلی چه به

Q4: How is your progress?

است؟ چگونه پیشرفتتان

Q5: Please describe your language learning experience in Iran.

دهید شرح ایران در زبان یادگیری مورد در را خود تجربه لطفا .

Q6: Tell me about your experiences with these workshops and your thoughts about learning English in this way?

بگوئید ها ورکشاپ در شرکت از خود تجربه از لطفا

Q7: To what degree have technological devices have been used in your language learning process?

میشود؟ استفاده شما زبان یادگیری پروسه در تکنولوژی حد چه تا .

Q8: What tools have you most used in your English classes?

شد؟ می استفاده شما زبان کالسهای در بیشتر ابزاری چه از .

Q9: What tools do you use at home to learn English? When do you use them?

کنید می استفاده ان از زمانی چه کنید؟ می استفاده زبان یادگیری برای ای وسیله چه از بیشتر خانه در شما

Q10: What strategies do you use to learn the new language?

میکنید؟ استفاده زبان یادگیری جهت در بیشتر هایی استراتژی چه از

Q11: How would you describe your ideal English class? What helps you learn faster? کمک می کند
کالس زبان ایده آل خویش را چگونه توصیف می کنید؟ چه چیزی به شما به یادگیری سریع ترتان

Q12: What mode influences your learning more? Please circle

دارد تاثیر شما یادگیری روی بر بیشتر زیر راههای از کدامیک

Audio

شنیداری

Visual

دیداری

Spatial

فضایی

Gestural

بدنی

All of above

همه

None please identify:

بیرید نام را خود انتخاب لطفا کدام هیچ

Q13: How would you describe your ideal teaching method?

چیست؟ شما نظر از ال ایده تدریس روش

Q 14: Overall, How satisfied you are with your language learning process?

10. هستید راضی زبانتان یادگیری روند از حد چه تا کلی صورت به

Q15: What can be named as a challenge in your English learning process?

چه چیزی را می‌توانید چالش بنامید در پروسه یادگیری زبانتان؟

Q17: To what degree your role as a mother or grandmother has influenced your process of learning English? What is their impression of you learning a new language?

زمینه این در هایتان نوه و فرزندان بود؟ نظر موثر یادگیریتان روند در بودن مادر بزرگ یا مادر بودن نقش حدی چه تا چیست؟

Q18: What had stopped you from learning English earlier? What has motivated you to learn a new language?

بود؟ مشوقتان چیزی شد؟ چه می‌زبانتان یادگیری مانع چیزی چه

Q19: As a mother or grandmother, how would this role have influenced your decision of learning a new language?

میدانید؟ زبان یادگیری برای تصمیمتان در موثر را نقش این چگونه مادر بزرگ، یا مادر عنوان به

Q20: what did you enjoy the most in these workshops?

1. بود چه بردید لذت هفته چهار این در که چیزی بیشترین از

Q21: What did you find the most difficult to adapt with?

بود چه برایتان چیز سختترین

Q22: What were the most challenging aspects of the method used in these workshops?

بود؟ چه برادران مدت این در شده استفاده متد بخش برانگیزترین چالش

Q23: What do you believe are the qualities of a good method to learn English?

چیست؟ تدریس خوب روش یک خصوصیات شما نظر به

Q24: Tell us about your experience using Multimodal approach?

بگویید مودال مولتی روش از استفاده مورد در خود تجربه از لطفا

Do you think the approach has helped you improve your English?

کرد کمک یادگیریتان بهبود به برنامه این که کنید می فکر.

Questions For the teacher-participant:

1. How would you describe your experience using multiliteracies pedagogy?
2. What do you think about the students' adaptation toward this approach?
3. Did you find this approach helpful in the students' learning process? Please give examples.
4. In general, have you found the students attitude positive, negative, or neutral toward this approach?

Letter of Information for Consent to Participate



LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH:

(Workshops for Students)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli. I am doing a Masters degree in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor, Canada. My supervisor is Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca, or contact my research supervisor, Dr. Susan Holloway, at Holloway@uwindsor.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose for this study is to learn more about how a teaching theory called “multiliteracies” can help students learn English better. Multiliteracies expands literacy and language learning beyond basic reading and writing. This theory says languages are learned more easily when teaching includes things like dramatic role play, board games, and creative technology. The workshops offered as part of this research study focus on using multiliteracies to teach English and explore how well this approach to language learning works.

PROCEDURES

I will meet with you to go through the purpose of the study, all procedures, forms of data collection, confidentiality and the dissemination process to provide you with the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns or ask for further clarification.

If you volunteer to participate in this research study, you can participate in up to 8 curriculum workshops outside of regular classroom time. If you decide to participate in the workshops, you must then complete the consent form and send it back to me. Information regarding the research and consent forms will be sent home with you so that you have the chance to reflect on it.

By signing the consent form, you as the participant actively consent to being part of all of the components of the research. All aspects of the workshops are a part of the research. Your assignments, any learning activities that you do in the workshop, and your interactions with the teacher or the other students are all part of the research.

The consent form will be constructed using yes or no check boxes and will be written in both English and Persian. I will ask that forms be returned by a specific date before the workshops begin. My contact information will be given to you in case any questions come up throughout the study.

1. I consent to participate in this research (up to 8 sessions workshops)
 YES NO
2. I agree to allow Yalda Mohiti Asli to see my classwork, and class reports, and to take field notes for the purpose of her research
 YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You might feel some peer pressure about whether or not to participate in this research. In addition, many of you as mature language learners may feel embarrassed about learning a new language, which makes you feel more vulnerable in general about trying new language learning techniques. You may feel vulnerable about sharing your stories about your experiences of learning English.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional teaching approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also have access to more social participation in the new language. By participating in this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students might be able to learn more effectively through teaching that uses multiliteracies.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information collected through this study will remain confidential. However, because this is a small group and others may know of your participation in the research project, there might be limitations to confidentiality. I will try to ask the manager of the institute to allow the workshops and interviews to be conducted after class hours if possible. Also, pseudonyms will be used to protect all participants' privacy.

Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect your privacy:

Pseudonym:

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in the workshops is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from the study by no longer attending the workshops, however, you cannot withdraw the data you have already provided (i.e. cannot withdraw observation data, artifacts provided, etc.) up to the point that you no longer wish to participate.

After the workshops are done, you will be invited to participate in an interview to share your experience. If you choose to do the interview, there will be a separate Consent Form explaining that part of the research study.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The study report will be published on the REB website.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb

Date when results are available: July 1, 2019

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, publications, presentations. You agree to all of the research that comes from these workshops that you have participated in and consented to can be used again in the future for my research.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor,

Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I understand the information provided for the study Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant, Signature and Date, These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

Consent to Participate Workshop for Students



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH:

(Workshops for Students)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli. I am doing a Masters degree in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor, Canada. My supervisor is Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca, or contact my research supervisor, Dr. Susan Holloway, at Holloway@uwindsor.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose for this study is to learn more about how a teaching theory called “multiliteracies” can help students learn English better. Multiliteracies expands literacy and language learning beyond basic reading and writing. This theory says languages are learned more easily when teaching includes things like dramatic role play, board games, and creative technology. The workshops offered as part of this research study focus on using multiliteracies to teach English and explore how well this approach to language learning works.

PROCEDURES

I will meet with you to go through the purpose of the study, all procedures, forms of data collection, confidentiality and the dissemination process to provide you with the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns or ask for further clarification.

If you volunteer to participate in this research study, you can participate in up to 8 curriculum workshops outside of regular classroom time. If you decide to participate in the workshops, you must then complete the consent form and send it back to me. Information regarding the research and consent forms will be sent home with you so that you have the chance to reflect on it.

By signing the consent form, you as the participant actively consent to being part of all of the components of the research. All aspects of the workshops are a part of the research. Your

assignments, any learning activities that you do in the workshop, and your interactions with the teacher or the other students are all part of the research.

The consent form will be constructed using yes or no check boxes and will be written in both English and Persian. I will ask that forms be returned by a specific date before the workshops begin. My contact information will be given to you in case any questions come up throughout the study.

3. I consent to participate in this research (up to 8 sessions workshops)

YES NO

4. I agree to allow Yalda Mohiti Asli to see my classwork, and class reports, and to take field notes for the purpose of her research

YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You might feel some peer pressure about whether or not to participate in this research. In addition, many of you as mature language learners may feel embarrassed about learning a new language, which makes you feel more vulnerable in general about trying new language learning techniques. You may feel vulnerable about sharing your stories about your experiences of learning English.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional teaching approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also have access to more social participation in the new language. By participating in this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students might be able to learn more effectively through teaching that uses multiliteracies.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information collected through this study will remain confidential. However, because this is a small group and others may know of your participation in the research project, there might be limitations to confidentiality. I will try to ask the manager of the institute to allow the workshops and interviews to be conducted after class hours if possible. Also, pseudonyms will be used to protect all participants' privacy.

Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect you privacy:

Pseudonym:

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in the workshops is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from the study by no longer attending the workshops, however, you cannot withdraw the data you have already provided (i.e. cannot withdraw observation data, artifacts provided, etc.) up to the point that you no longer wish to participate.

After the workshops are done, you will be invited to participate in an interview to share your experience. If you choose to do the interview, there will be a separate Consent Form explaining that part of the research study.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The study report will be published on the REB website.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb Date when results are available: July 1, 2019

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, publications, presentations. You agree to all of the research that comes from these workshops that you have participated in and consented to can be used again in the future for my research.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor,

Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

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Name of Participant, Signature and Date, These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board

Letter of Information for Consent Interview for Students



LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (Interview for students)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli. I am doing a Masters degree in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor, Canada. My supervisor is Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca, or contact my research supervisor, Dr. Susan Holloway, at Holloway@uwindsor.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose for this study is to learn more about how a teaching theory called “multiliteracies” can help students learn English better. Multiliteracies expands literacy and language learning beyond basic reading and writing. This theory says languages are learned more easily when teaching includes things like dramatic role play, board games, and creative technology. The workshops offered as part of this research study focus on using multiliteracies to teach English and explore how well this approach to language learning works.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this part of the study (interview), I will invite you to participate in an hour to an hour and a half interview where you can share your experience of learning English as a mother or grandmother.

If you decide to participate in the interview, you must then complete the consent form and send it back to me. By signing the consent form, you agree to reflect on the workshops and participation in the project. All the questions will be provided for you to take a look and see if you are still interested in participating in it.

I will meet with you to go through the purpose of the study, all procedures, forms of data collection, confidentiality and the dissemination process to provide you with the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns or further clarification. Information regarding the research and consent forms will be sent home with you so that you have the chance to reflect on it. If you have any questions or would like further clarification you will be invited to meet with me. The consent form will be constructed using yes or no check boxes and will be written in both English and Persian. I will request that forms be returned by a specific date prior to the commencement of the workshops. My contact information will be given to you in case any additional questions or concerns arise throughout the study.

1. I consent to participate in this research (Interview)
 YES NO
2. I consent to the digital recording of interviews in which I partake as part of this study.
 YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You might feel some peer pressure about whether or not to participate in this interview. In addition, many of you as mature language learners may feel vulnerable about sharing your experience learning a new language.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also have access to more social participation in the new language. By participating in this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may

influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students might be able to learn more effectively through teaching that uses multiliteracies.

CONFIDENTIALITY

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Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect you privacy:

Pseudonym: _____

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in the workshops is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from the study by no longer attending the workshops, however, you cannot withdraw the data you have already provided (i.e. cannot withdraw observation data, artifacts provided, etc.) up to the point that you no longer wish to participate.

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FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The study report will be published on the REB website.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb

Date when results are available: July 1, 2019

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

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I understand the information provided for the study Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

Consent to Participate (Interview for Students)



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (Interview for students)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli. I am doing a Masters degree in the Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor, Canada. My supervisor is Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca, or contact my research supervisor, Dr. Susan Holloway, at Holloway@uwindsor.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

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PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this part of the study (interview), I will invite you to participate in an hour to an hour and a half interview where you can share your experience of learning English as a mother or grandmother.

If you decide to participate in the interview, you must then complete the consent form and send it back to me. By signing the consent form, you agree to reflect on the workshops and participation in the project. All the questions will be provided for you to take a look and see if you are still interested in participating in it.

I will meet with you to go through the purpose of the study, all procedures, forms of data collection, confidentiality and the dissemination process to provide you with the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns or further clarification. Information regarding the research and consent forms will be sent home with you so that you have the chance to reflect on it. If you have any questions or would like further clarification you will be invited to meet with me. The consent form will be constructed using yes or no check boxes and will be written in

both English and Persian. I will request that forms be returned by a specific date prior to the commencement of the workshops. My contact information will be given to you in case any additional questions or concerns arise throughout the study.

I consent to participate in this research (Interview)

YES NO

I consent to the digital recording of interviews in which I partake as part of this study.

YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You might feel some peer pressure about whether or not to participate in this interview. In addition, many of you as mature language learners may feel vulnerable about sharing your experience learning a new language.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also have access to more social participation in the new language. By participating in this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students might be able to learn more effectively through teaching that uses multiliteracies.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information collected through this study will remain confidential. However, because this is a small group and others may know of your participation in the research project, there might be limitations to confidentiality. I will try to ask the manager of the institute to allow the workshops and interviews to be conducted after class hours if possible. Also, pseudonyms will be used to protect all participants' privacy.

Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect you privacy:

Pseudonym: _____

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in the workshops is on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw from the study by no longer attending the workshops, however, you cannot withdraw the data you have already provided (i.e. cannot withdraw observation data, artifacts provided, etc.) up to the point that you no longer wish to participate.

After the workshops are done, you will be invited to participate in an interview to share your experience. If you choose to do the interview, there will be a separate Consent Form explaining that part of the research study.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The study report will be published on the REB website.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb

Date when results are available: July 1, 2019

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, publications, presentations. You agree to all of the research that comes from these workshops and interviews that you have participated in and consented to can be used again in the future for my research.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I understand the information provided for the study Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

Consent for Audio (Students)



CONSENT FOR AUDIO Iranian TAPING (For Students)

Research Subject Name: mature female English Language Learners using multiliteracies pedagogy

Title of the Project: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran I consent to the audio-taping of interviews.

I understand these are voluntary procedures and that I am free to withdraw at any time by requesting that the taping be stopped. I also understand that my name will not be revealed to anyone and that taping will be kept confidential. Tapes are filed by number only and store in a locked cabinet. The destruction of the audio tapes will be completed after transcription and verification.

I understand that will be respected and that the audio tape will be for professional use only.

(Research Participant)

(Date)

Letter of Information for Consent (Workshop for Teachers)



LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH: (Workshops for Teacher)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli, a Master candidate from Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Now, I am doing my master thesis under the supervision of Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca or my research supervisor Dr. Susan Holloway at Holloway@uwindsor.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate how using a multiliteracies pedagogy with mature female English Language Learners (ELLs) in Iran might improve their language acquisition. Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also access to more social participation. This study will provide insight into the experiences of female ELLs. With the help of a multiliteracies pedagogy, it can be expected that adult female English Language Learners will become more confident and knowledgeable in their learning context through “participatory” and “collaborative” (Biswas, 2014) practices.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I will invite you to participate in up to 8 curriculum workshop intervention where you will get a chance to learn what multiliteracies pedagogy can offer in the English language learning procedure. , I will help develop the lesson plans and the activities according to the participants’ level of study for the workshops. I see this as a collaborative process between you as the teacher and I. For the teaching of the workshops themselves, we will share the teaching, although you will probably do more of the actual teaching. You will be invited to share any assignments, work, and observation notes of the participants that you feel is representative of their progress or lack of progress since using the approach. Any material shared with me will remain confidential.

If you decide to participate in this research project, you must then complete the consent form and send it back to me. By signing the consent form, you as the teacher participant actively consent to being part of all of the components of the research. I will meet with you to go through the purpose of the study, all procedures, forms of data collection, confidentiality and the dissemination process to provide you with the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns or further clarification. Information regarding the research and consent forms will be sent home with you so that you have the chance to reflect on it. If you have any questions or would like further clarification you will be invited to meet with me. The consent form will be constructed using yes or no check boxes and will be written in both English and Persian. I will request that forms be returned by a specific date prior to the commencement of the workshops. My contact information will be given to you in case any additional questions or concerns arise throughout the study.

1. I consent to participate in this research (up to 8 sessions workshops)

YES NO

2. I agree to collaborate with the research investigator Yalda Mohiti Asli to conduct her research entitled “Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English Language Learners in Iran”. YES NO

3. I agree to share my thoughts on the students’ performance using the multiliteracies pedagogy. YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You might feel discomfort using the new approach or the feedback you receive from the students in the class. Prior to the commencement of the workshop, We are going to design the lessons together, and we might have different views in the collaborative process. You are encouraged to share your thoughts on any segments of the workshops.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also access to more social participation. By participating in this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students should get taught using a multiliteracies theoretical framework. Being part of this, you will get a chance to gain experience through the implementation of the new pedagogy and decide whether you might be interested in developing it in your future classes or not.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. However, because this

is a small group and others may know of your participation in the research project, there might be limitations to confidentiality. I will try to ask the manager of the institute to allow the workshops and interview to be conducted after class hours if possible. Also, pseudonym will be used to protect all participants' privacy. Following the interview, the digital recording will be transcribed. This transcription will then be sent to you for you to edit as you wish. All participants' personal information, audio recording, raw data, and transcription will be securely handled and stored in separated password-protected files in the researcher's laptop. The laptop is only accessed by the researcher and her supervisor. Once the report is finished, all raw data which can lead to an identification of the participants will be obliterated.

Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect you privacy:

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in the workshops and the interview are both on a voluntary basis. You can choose whether or not to participate. During the workshops, you are expected to help deliver the class activities designed with the help of the multiliteracies pedagogy. You can withdraw from the study by no longer attending the workshops, however, you cannot withdraw the data you have already provided and helped to collect (i.e. cannot withdraw observation data, artifacts provided, etc.) up to the point that you no longer wish to participate. After the workshops are done, you will be invited to participate in an interview to share your experience. All the questions will be given to you in advance. You can choose to withdraw at any time without any consequences until the data is gathered.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The study report will be published on the REB website.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb

Date when results are available: _____

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

Data will be used for my Thesis, subsequent studies, professional and peer-reviewed publications and presentations, and any public outreach.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I understand the information provided for the study [Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran] as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant Date SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

Consent to Participate (Workshop for Teachers)



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH: (Workshops for Teacher)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli, a Master candidate from Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Now, I am doing my master thesis under the supervision of Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca or my research supervisor Dr. Susan Holloway at Holloway @uwindsor.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate how using a multiliteracies pedagogy with mature female English Language Learners (ELLs) in Iran might improve their language acquisition. Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also access to more social participation. This study will provide insight into the experiences of female ELLs. With the help of a multiliteracies pedagogy, it can be expected that adult female English Language Learners will become more confident and knowledgeable in their learning context through “participatory” and “collaborative” (Biswas, 2014) practices.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I will invite you to participate in up to 8 curriculum workshop intervention where you will get a chance to learn what multiliteracies pedagogy can offer in the English language learning procedure. , I will help develop the lesson plans and the activities according to the participants’ level of study for the workshops. I see this as a collaborative process between you as the teacher and I. For the teaching of the workshops themselves, we will share the teaching, although you will probably do more of the actual teaching. You will be invited to share any assignments,

work, and observation notes of the participants that you feel is representative of their progress or lack of progress since using the approach. Any material shared with me will remain confidential.

If you decide to participate in this research project, you must then complete the consent form and send it back to me. By signing the consent form, you as the teacher participant actively consent to being part of all of the components of the research I will meet with you to go through the purpose of the study, all procedures, forms of data collection, confidentiality and the dissemination process to provide you with the opportunity to ask questions, share concerns or further clarification. Information regarding the research and consent forms will be sent home with you so that you have the chance to reflect on it. If you have any questions or would like further clarification you will be invited to meet with me. The consent form will be constructed using yes or no check boxes and will be written in both English and Persian. I will request that forms be returned by a specific date prior to the commencement of the workshops. My contact information will be given to you in case any additional questions or concerns arise throughout the study.

1. I consent to participate in this research (up to 8 sessions workshops) YES
 NO

2. I agree to collaborate with the research investigator Yalda Mohiti Asli to conduct her research entitled “Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English Language Learners in Iran”. YES NO

3. I agree to share my thoughts on the students’ performance using the multiliteracies pedagogy. YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You might feel discomfort using the new approach or the feedback you receive from the students in the class. Prior to the commencement of the workshop, We are going to design the lessons together, and we might have different views in the collaborative process. You are encouraged to share your thoughts on any segments of the workshops.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

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this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students should get taught using a multiliteracies theoretical framework. Being part of this, you will get a chance to gain experience through the implementation of the new pedagogy and decide whether you might be interested in developing it in your future classes or not.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. However, because this is a small group and others may know of your participation in the research project, there might be limitations to confidentiality. I will try to ask the manager of the institute to allow the workshops and interview to be conducted after class hours if possible. Also, pseudonym will be used to protect all participants' privacy. Following the interview, the digital recording will be transcribed. This transcription will then be sent to you for you to edit as you wish. All participants' personal information, audio recording, raw data, and transcription will be securely handled and stored in separated password-protected files in the researcher's laptop. The laptop is only accessed by the researcher and her supervisor. Once the report is finished, all raw data which can lead to an identification of the participants will be obliterated.

Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect you privacy:

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in the workshops and the interview are both on a voluntary basis. You can choose whether or not to participate. During the workshops, you are expected to help deliver the class activities designed with the help of the multiliteracies pedagogy. You can withdraw from the study by no longer attending the workshops, however, you cannot withdraw the data you have already provided and helped to collect (i.e. cannot withdraw observation data, artifacts provided, etc.) up to the point that you no longer wish to participate. After the workshops are done, you will be invited to participate in an interview to share your experience. All the questions will be given to you in advance. You can choose to withdraw at any time without any consequences until the data is gathered.

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Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb

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Data will be used for my Thesis, subsequent studies, professional and peer-reviewed publications and presentations, and any public outreach.

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I understand the information provided for the study [Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran] as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

Letter of Information for Consent (Interview for Teachers)



LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (Interview for teacher)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli, a Master candidate from Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Now, I am doing my master thesis under the supervision of Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca or my research supervisor Dr. Susan Holloway at Holloway@uwindsor.ca

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PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this part of the study (interview), I will invite you to participate in an hour to an hour and a half interview where you can share your experience and reflect on the students’ performance using multiliteracies pedagogy.

1. I consent to participate in this research (Interview) YES NO
2. I consent to the digital recording of interviews in which I partake as part of this study.
 YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You may feel discomfort to share your thoughts about the implementation of the pedagogy.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also access to more social participation. By participating in this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students should get taught using a multiliteracies theoretical framework. You will also get a chance to experience the implementation of multiliteracies pedagogy through being an important part of it.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. However, because this is a small group and others may know of your participation in the research project, there might be limitations to confidentiality. I will try to ask the manager of the institute to allow the workshops and interview to be conducted after class hours if possible. Pseudonym will be used to protect all participants' privacy. Following the interview, the digital recording will be transcribed. This transcription will then be sent to you for you to edit as you wish. All participants' personal information, audio recording, raw data, and transcription will be securely handled and stored in separated password-protected files in the researcher's laptop. The laptop is only accessed by the researcher and her supervisor. Once the report is finished, all raw data which can lead to an identification of the participants will be obliterated.

Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect you privacy:

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in the workshops and the interview are both on a voluntary basis. You can choose whether or not to participate. All the questions will be given to you in advance. You can choose to withdraw at any time without any consequences until the data is gathered.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The study report will be published on the REB website.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb

Date when results are available: _____

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

Data will be used for my Thesis, subsequent studies, professional and peer-reviewed publications and presentations, and any public outreach.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I understand the information provided for the study [Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran] as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant Date SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

Consent to Participate in Research (Interview for Teachers)



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (Interview for teacher)

Title of Study: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Yalda Mohiti Asli, a Master candidate from Faculty of Education at the University of Windsor. Now, I am doing my master thesis under the supervision of Dr. Susan Holloway. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca or my research supervisor Dr. Susan Holloway at Holloway @uwindsor.ca

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to investigate how using a multiliteracies pedagogy with mature female English Language Learners (ELLs) in Iran might improve their language acquisition. Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also access to more social participation. This study will provide insight into the experiences of female ELLs. With the help of a multiliteracies pedagogy, it can be expected that adult female English Language Learners will become more confident and knowledgeable in their learning context through “participatory” and “collaborative” (Biswas, 2014) practices.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this part of the study (interview), I will invite you to participate in an hour to an hour and a half interview where you can share your experience and reflect on the students’ performance using multiliteracies pedagogy.

1. I consent to participate in this research (Interview) YES NO
2. I consent to the digital recording of interviews in which I partake as part of this study.
 YES NO

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You may feel discomfort to share your thoughts about the implementation of the pedagogy.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Multiliteracies can overcome the limitations of traditional approaches, enabling ELLs to not only improve language skills, but also access to more social participation. By participating in this study, you will be contributing to new knowledge that may influence nationally and internationally how (and why) students should get taught using a multiliteracies theoretical framework. You will also get a chance to experience the implementation of multiliteracies pedagogy through being an important part of it.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. However, because this is a small group and others may know of your participation in the research project, there might be limitations to confidentiality. I will try to ask the manager of the institute to allow the workshops and interview to be conducted after class hours if possible. Pseudonym will be used to protect all participants' privacy. Following the interview, the digital recording will be transcribed. This transcription will then be sent to you for you to edit as you wish. All participants' personal information, audio recording, raw data, and transcription will be securely handled and stored in separated password-protected files in the researcher's laptop. The laptop is only accessed by the researcher and her supervisor. Once the report is finished, all raw data which can lead to an identification of the participants will be obliterated.

Please choose a pseudonym in order to maintain the confidentiality; this will protect you privacy:

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

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FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

The study report will be published on the REB website.

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Name of Participant

Signature of Participant Date SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

Signature of the Investigator

Date

Consent for Audio Taping (Teachers)

Research Subject Name: Iranian mature female English Language Learners using multiliteracies pedagogy Title of the Project: Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English language learners in Iran I consent to the audio-taping of interviews.

I understand these are voluntary procedures and that I am free to withdraw at any time by requesting that the taping be stopped. I also understand that my name will not be revealed to anyone

and that taping will be kept confidential. Tapes are filed by number only and store in a locked cabinet. The destruction of the audio tapes will be completed after transcription and verification.

I understand that will be respected and that the audio tape will be for professional use only.

(Research Participant)

(Date)

Recruitment Poster

Female Research Participants Needed

You are invited to participate in 8 English workshop sessions if you are:

- A female
- Aged 40-55
- A mother or grandmother
- Studying English at an intermediate level or upper-intermediate level

Each session will last about an hour, and in the end of the pilot workshops you will be invited to partake an interview which is about your experience using the new method. No marks & no fees included!

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research is to suggest some approaches to enable mature female English Language Learners to communicate in their second language with less barriers and a higher confidence level. This research is funded by an Ontario Graduate Scholarship. If you want to know more about this study please contact Yalda Mohiti Asli at mohitiay@uwindsor.ca.

Thank you in Advance,

Yalda Mohiti

Recruitment Email to Teachers



Hello Mr/Mrs _____,

My name is Yalda Mohiti and I am a master student for the Education department at the University of Windsor and I am working under the supervision of Dr. Holloway. I have experience as an ESL teacher. I am conducting a research study titled: “Developing multiliteracies pedagogy in mature female English Language Learners in Iran.”; This research has been cleared by the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board.

I am currently in the process of researching the impact of the multiliteracies pedagogy on the mature female English Language Learners. I believe that investigating the effects of this approach will allow educators, administrators and policy makers to better understand an effective pedagogy for our students to thrive.

I am now at the process of recruiting a teacher who teaches intermediate and upper intermediate level. I will only need one teacher to help me conduct this research, therefore thanking everyone who replies to this email in advance, I will pick the first teacher who will reply back.

As the researcher, I will observe students’ performance over two 4-week period. I will be conducting an in-depth interview with the participants.

If you are interested in this research, I will help develop the lesson plans for the workshops. I see this as a collaborative process between you as the teacher and I. For the teaching of the workshops themselves, we will share the teaching, although you will probably do more of the actual teaching. You will be invited to share any assignments, work, and observation notes of the participants that you feel is representative of their progress or lack of progress since using the approach. Any material shared with me will remain confidential.

If interested, you can contact me via email_mohitiay@uwindsor.ca , if you have any questions or concerns.

Your contribution to this study
is greatly appreciated. Thank
you kindly.

VITA AUCTORIS

NAME: Yalda Mohiti Asli

PLACE OF BIRTH: Rasht, Iran

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1983

EDUCATION: Bachelor of English Language and Literature
from Guilan University- Iran