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Call for Papers

TNTESOL Journal

Volume 9, 2023

The Call

The Tennessee Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TNTESOL) Journal aims to facilitate collaboration among ESOL scholars and practitioners through discussion and reflection related to the teaching of English as a second or foreign language.

Manuscripts submitted for consideration may be research/empirical reports and analyses, position papers, or conceptual essays.

General Information

- The TNTESOL Journal is peer-reviewed journal that publishes articles focused on the teaching of English as a second or foreign language.
- Manuscripts are accepted year-round. Manuscripts submitted before **February 21, 2023**, will be considered for the Spring 2023 Journal.
- Authors are responsible for the accuracy of information within manuscripts.

Submission Requirements and Communication with TNTESOL Journal editor

- All manuscripts and cover pages should be emailed to journal.editor@tennesseetesol.org with the subject line "TNTESOL-J". Both documents can be included in the same email as separate attachments.
- Manuscripts should be no longer than twelve pages, double-spaced, or no more than 4000 words.
- All manuscripts must be fully blinded to ensure a reliable review process.
- A cover page must be submitted as a separate document from the manuscript. The cover page must include the following information:
 - Title of the manuscript
 - Lead author's name, email address, title/role, and institutional affiliation. All communication will occur with the lead author.
 - Additional authors' names, titles/role, institutional affiliation.
 - A statement that this publication is not under consideration, nor has it been published elsewhere.
- All manuscripts must meet publishing guidelines established by the American Psychological Associations (APA) Publication Manual (6th or 7th edition).
- All manuscripts must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word format.

- All manuscripts must be double-spaced and composed in 12 pt. Times New Roman font.

Review Process

Authors will be notified via email upon receipt of the manuscript. After preliminary editorial review, manuscripts that are aligned with the journal specifications are sent to reviewers. After reviews are submitted, a decision will be emailed to the lead author.

Please send all questions to journal.editor@tennesseetesol.org.

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From the Editor

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the eighth edition of the *TNTESOL Journal*. As I begin my first year as editor of this journal, I humbly approach this issue with profound respect for the hard work and dedication of the educators who have led this work before me. Their valuable time, energy, and innovation laid the foundation for this journal.

It is only fitting that we begin this journal with a piece from one of the founders of this journal, Dr. Craig. In her article, she shares the perspectives of graduate students who are also EL teachers serving active English learners during the COVID pandemic. This article provides helpful insights into the classroom as well as practical suggestions for classrooms serving multilingual learners.

The next article shifts from the P-12 setting to higher education. Drs. Liu, Unger, and Schlueter share their study working with adult multilingual students. This study highlights and reinforces sentence-completions-with-digital-video task as a helpful instructional tool to promote sentence cohesion, metacognition, and vocabulary learning.

With this passion and eagerness to learn, the final piece includes a book review by Dr. Crook. Dr. Crook highlights the extraordinary work of Toppel, Hyunh, & Salva, C. (2021) to explore ways to self-direct your professional learning. Dr. Crook explores helpful instructional strategies presented by the authors while making connections to her own personal professional learning.

As we transition to new issue of the journal, we are thankful for the expertise, dedication, and hard work of previous editorial board members who have transitioned to new roles. We are thankful for the time and energy Dr. Tammy Harosky has dedicated to the Editorial Board. We will miss their talents but are excited for her new journey. I am also thankful to the Editorial Board that has spent hours reviewing manuscripts for this issue. Their hard work and dedication to continuing research pertaining to ESOL education around the state of Tennessee is remarkable.

It is my great pleasure to present to you the work of talented educators who are transforming the world each day. I would also like to encourage you to reflect upon the ways you are making an impact in your classroom and share the research with other ESOL educators across Tennessee. This journal is possible due to the innovative approach to teaching English as a second or foreign language.

With gratitude,
Amanda Nelms, EdD
Journal Editor

Article

A Wayfaring Journey: One ESL Teacher's Experiences Teaching During the Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This two-year Narrative study involved a graduate student participant enrolled in an online Masters' program who at the time of the study was a practicing ESL teacher during the onset of the COVID-19 crisis as well as throughout the following academic year. The participant was part of a larger study involving regular education teachers. Data collected were extracted for further examination within the context of the ESL classroom. Adopting a qualitative framework—the Narrative study traveled the journey of the participant as she survived the public school classroom during the pandemic. Specifically, the study attempted to delve into the lived reality of teaching English Learners during a pandemic and to create meaning, share insights, and offer suggestions. The study examined specific themes that were organized chronologically, and which progressed throughout the two-year research period.

Keywords: *COVID, ESL classroom, Narrative classroom*

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Introduction

It has been over two years since the nation came under the COVID-19 attack. The pandemic caused challenges that the United States hasn't seen since the 1900s. The challenges, although exhausting for anyone in a classroom, were especially heightened in ESL classrooms due to numerous issues including access, home and family responsibilities, and the overall nature of second language acquisition. Now, two years later we are still seeing the influence of the pandemic with regard to health issues, parent and teacher interactions, the rising number of teachers who are exiting the field causing an alarming number of vacant teaching positions, and the general effectiveness of public schools in the United States (Dorn, et al., 2021; Kuthfeld, et al., 2022).

This two-year study involved a graduate student participant enrolled in an online Masters' program with a concentration in English as a Second Language. The participant was enrolled in classes while also teaching full time in a public school classroom during the onset of the COVID-19 crisis as well as throughout the following academic year. Ms. O. (pseudonym) was part of a larger study that involved regular education teachers, however, as the inquiry progressed, her story was elemental in understanding the situation that evolved within the ESL classroom. Thus, the data collected from Ms. O. were extracted and further examined within the context of ESL. Adopting a qualitative framework, the Narrative study (Creswell & Poth, 2018) traveled the journey of the participant as she adapted and survived the public school ESL classroom during the pandemic. Given the intent of the inquiry, purposive sampling was employed. Bogdan and Biklen (2016) share that purposive sampling is applied when a participant is selected because he/she is believed to provide insight to facilitate the inquiry in order to establish meaning and encourage understanding. Furthermore, purposeful sampling does not determine statistical inferences related to a population. Rather, purposeful sampling establishes intentionality that better informs the inquiry (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Specifically, the study attempted to delve into the lived reality of teaching second language learners during a pandemic and to create meaning, share insights, and offer suggestions through the expression of "Wayfaring". Traditionally, a wayfarer has been defined as a troubled traveler who embarks on a journey, usually on foot, facing challenges as he or she goes. In the case of Ms. O, she shared that she at times felt like a wayfarer navigating slowly through the unknown. The study examined specific themes that were organized chronologically, and which progressed throughout the two-year research period. The focused and storied themes included:

- Reactions & Online Transitions,
- Perceptions of Safety, and
- New Beginnings & Lessons Learned.

The Onset of the Pandemic 2020

Immediately following the onset of the pandemic, Ms. O.'s school began quickly and frantically making the transition to online learning. Villegas and Garcia (2020) share that in general teachers, students, and families were given little to no guidance or information about what would come next or how learning would progress. For most English Learners, the rapid transition to remote learning further impacted the already unequal access to digital resources and technology, Internet services, and related issues. The result was additional limited opportunities

for English learners within the public school classroom (Dorn, et al., 2021). In addition, as schools across the country began to take action to meet the needs of students in terms of remote instruction within all classrooms, one cannot ignore the fact that many schools were already struggling in terms of funding, facilities, and a myriad of other issues surrounding the public education system.

Esquivel (2021) reported that many early findings painted a bleak and dire picture. More and more schools and districts began reporting much higher rates of failure, disengagement, and lack of online attendance among English learners across grades. Most parents, teachers, and students were of the mindset that the school closings and online learning would be temporary. Many teachers feared that the closings would encourage absenteeism both online and once schools reopened in the face-to-face classroom (Garcia & Weiss, 2020, 2018). Williams (2021) reported that the situation and reality for English learners and their families was devastating in terms of economics, lack of supervision due to family work responsibilities, and of course COVID itself. This resulted in many older siblings forced to learn online while taking care of younger brothers and sisters at the expense of their own academic success. Another critical challenge to English learners is that language learning is social in nature. The learner must interact meaningful by using language for both communication and academics. When communicating language plays a large role in human relationships established as a result of learning. These relationships may be extended beyond the classroom to include communicating within any social environment that requires interaction. Thus, language learning and communicating cannot be separated. It was not a surprise that the pandemic caused many English learners to feel disconnected and detached because of the lack of face-to-face contact (Allen, et al., 2004; Esquivel, 2021; Usman, et al., 2022).

Eventually, schools closed for the remaining 2019-2020 academic year leaving educators and administrators still puzzled as to how to prepare for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. As early as summer of 2020, researchers were publishing findings regarding issues and concerns surrounding remote learning for any learner. Robertson (2020a) offers that any of the elements of effective online learning may be applied to instruction for English learners. However, English learners are not heterogenous as they present much more diversity than what is typical in the regular education classroom. Within one classroom there may be varying levels of English proficiency, multiple first languages represented, differing prior educational experiences, and variety in cultural aspects that all impact language learning. Due to the unique populations in the ESL classroom the switch to remote learning further challenged ESL teachers to demonstrate their own professional growth as they applied creative strategies, presentations, and digital learning tools to the classroom (Robertson, 2020b; Victoria, 2020).

The Wayfaring Journey: The Inquiry

The participant, Ms. O., was part of a large study, however, her personal journey reflected ESL teaching. Her wayfaring journey was extracted for deeper inquiry as related to the ESL classroom. The factors considered in the purposive selection (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Miles & Huberman, 1994) process were: a) enrollment in an online Masters class, b) practicing ESL teacher at the time of the study, and c) willingness to share. The study adopted a qualitative framework and used the Narrative Research Approach. The Narrative Approach may take on several forms, utilize different types of analytic processes, and is grounded in different social disciplines. Clandinin and Connolly (2000) offer that as a framework for research, it may begin

with experiences shared and lived through participant stories of actual events or situations. In addition, a critical characteristic of Narrative Research is that multiple forms of data are collected throughout the study. Analysis for this study followed the framework outlined by Clandinin (2013) and Reissman (2008) using the process of: a) analyzing the participant's stories, b) restorying with detail, c) embedding a collaborative approach in the collection and retelling of the stories lived, and d) presenting the narrative through accurately reporting what took place. As applied to this study the personal and professional experiences shared by a practicing ESL teacher surviving the challenges of teaching and living through a pandemic were collected as biographies meaning that the researcher documented the stories through data sets collected including a) interviews, b) open-ended surveys, c) focused discussions, and d) fieldnotes (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007; Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2013). Under the framework of Narrative research Ms. O.'s wayfaring journey emerged as a result of the data collected over the two-year period.

Ms. O.' Wayfaring Journey: Reactions & Transitions

As reported in the initial interview when the study began, Ms. O., was an ESL teacher in an urban school district located in Tennessee. Her teaching assignment was 7th and 8th grade English learners within the structure of a pull-out program. In addition to the pull-out program, 8th grade ELs were occasionally served using a co-teaching model with related content area teachers to further support language learning. Ms. O. was married and had one young daughter who was in 2nd grade at a neighboring school within the same attendance area as her school. Her husband traveled frequently for work and was abruptly taken off traveling and placed on home assignments as a result of COVID.

Ms. O.'s school was extremely diverse with almost 52% of the students identified at English learners representing 16 first languages. When COVID-19 prompted the school to close, Ms. O. shared her first reactions in an interview:

I have to admit I didn't think that COVID was something that we had to be concerned about. This was my initial reaction. Since I was taking online classes for my Masters, I just thought that it would be an adventure for me to apply some of my technology skills to my own teaching. I never even thought about the schools closing for such a long period of time. I was a bit excited about working from home and being with my daughter throughout the day. That initial reaction quickly became a nightmare when my husband was taken off traveling. We ended up competing for space between the three of us. I was busy and our daughter and had to work from home on a school-issued device that never seemed to work properly. (Ms. O., personal communication)

Transcripts recorded during one discussion revealed that Ms. O.'s school system had a few tech-related resources available. However, there was no learning management system in place. Ms. O. did have a classroom website that included a few resources for parents, information about schedules, and occasional homework notes.

Ms. O. had gone to a Google Classroom training workshop provided by her school for professional development credit but at the time of the study she had not yet fully implemented the tools. In a follow-up discussion and response to an open-ended survey completed toward the end of May 2020, Ms. O. shared that the shutdown was still in effect and that for the most part teachers were scrambling for resources, technology devices, and related materials. The school

(not the school system) identified what individual ELs needed, and the administration went to work to secure devices for distribution. However, many did not have access to Internet services. Ms. O.' school, other schools in the same attendance area, and the Boards of Education representing each school petitioned to the local Internet service provider who agreed to give access to families for up to three months.

Ms. O. tracked her students' progress in the areas of language growth, writing development, and overall academics. She reported that more than half showed signs of halted progress. By the end of the 2020 spring semester, Ms. O. had identified areas of need for each EL. In order to prepare for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year, Ms. O. conducted online discussions with other ESL teachers across her school system to gather information about what was working and what strategies and materials were needed. Interview data collected from Ms. O. in May 2020 showed that the general consensus among the ESL teachers was that there was an overall drop in language use due to ELs being intimidated by online meetings. Fieldnotes recorded during a discussion with Ms. O. that took place at the end of April 2020, revealed that the ELs who had showed steady progress during the 2019 fall semester were reverting to the previous year's performance in oral language as well as written language skills. As a result of the ESL teachers meeting online, the group was able to generate a data base of online resources, library resources, and strategies that targeted the receptive skills followed by the productive skills needed for speaking and writing. Online sources of appropriate reading materials were compiled and the ESL teachers agreed to meet via Zoom once a week throughout the summer months in order to be better prepared for the new school year that would begin in August 2020.

With the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year Ms. O.'s school remained online. In an interview conducted in August 2020 Ms. O. shared that the school had adopted a learning management system that would be implemented by all teachers. The system seemed easy to navigate and included typical components of online learning such as a discussion area; a dedicated space for content, practice, and application; assignment portal; integrated assessment system; communication options; and an announcement tool. Ms. O. was able to schedule online class sessions and follow those with practice, group work, and discussion.

Mrs. O.'s Wayfaring Journey: Perceptions of Safety

Ms. O. shared that her level of confidence was fairly high with regard to teaching online. She felt that she had the new learning management system under control and was equipped with the information and data base gathered as a result of the ESL teachers' discussions. Ms. O. also shared that because her daughter's school was also using the same learning management system which alleviated the level of anxiety regarding her own daughter's learning. In a personal, follow-up email and discussion, Ms. O. discussed her own thoughts about the spread of COVID to herself and her family.

So far, I feel safe because we are all home. My husband continues to work from home but will be returning to limited travel during the spring in 2021. For now we are pretty much in isolation. We have groceries delivered and don't really go into stores. Everything we need is ordered and delivered. I know neighbors who have gotten COVID and have been hospitalized so the fear is still there. I really don't want to go back to school face-to-face because I know that most of my students' parents work in service industries. This means that they are probably exposed on some level. I know that my ELs would benefit from being back at school, but I am somewhat afraid not only for

them but for myself and my family. I really don't want to think about going back face-to-face but I fear that it is coming. (Ms. O., personal communication)

Ms. O.'s school opted to stay online for the spring 2021 semester. Tracking her students Ms. O. once again saw a drop in engagement, interest, and overall progress. In March 2021 and April 2021 discussions, Ms. O. shared that her husband was traveling for his job again. Ms. O.'s discussion follows:

My husband is traveling again. He is driving to his sites right now but was told that next month he will be back on a plane. On his last trip he came in contact with a co-worker who tested positive. I see signs of anxiety in my husband. My daughter is constantly crying because she can't be with her friends. I feel distracted and am still preparing and working so hard on teaching my ELs online. The stress of worrying about my family and my students is getting to a high level. My concentration is non-existent and my teaching is suffering as a result.

I hear from my students when we have discussion and open talk time that they are afraid that one or both of their parents will get COVID. One student was absent for an entire week because his mother was so sick with COVID that she was hospitalized. He had to take care of his three younger siblings because his dad couldn't take off from work.

Overall, I have seen somewhat of a halt in all of my students' progress. They for the most part seem disengaged and disinterested. They always look so tired and distracted during our online meetings. Some complain of stomach problems and headaches. Their home situations are getting increasingly challenging. There are still some students who are on camera holding a sibling on their lap, giving directions to younger students, and generally distracted because of their responsibilities as older children in the family. (Ms. O., personal communication)

The 2020-2021 school year finally came to a close and eventually the 2021-2022 academic year began. With the new year, the school decided to return to face-to-face learning. Policies regarding masking were established. The new year started with face-to-face instruction with all students and teachers wearing masks. Over the summer the school installed plastic shields that separated teachers from students. Social distancing was enforced as much as possible. To prevent the spread of COVID the school adopted the policy of quickly informing parents of exposure and quarantining as needed. Ms. O.'s interview responses in November 2021:

Most ELs come in and out with some being absent for entire weeks. When I check in through email and phone most of the time, I get no response. Then, I'm told that the mother or father or sister or brothers have COVID. This means that my own students have to quarantine or stay home to take care of those who are sick. It's just not fair but that is the family structure.

I did not anticipate the extent of the absences. We are now almost at the halfway point of this academic year and I feel like I haven't done anything! I'm so distraught over their situations. (Ms. O., personal communication)

Toward the end of the fall (2021) Ms. O.'s husband was diagnosed with COVID-19. This caused added tension further distracting her from her teaching situation. A February 2022 interview revealed the following:

I thought we would just miss the COVID bullet but that's not the case. My husband tested positive, and we had to quarantine in different parts of the house. I am now double-masking and making my daughter do the same. I am weary from this and once again my teaching is suffering.

My students' attendance has finally picked up.

I have seen my ELs somewhat relaxing back into the rhythm of school. They seem to be more engaged, and they are slowly making progress. I have told them that the masks protect them, and they seem to put their fears of COVID on the back burner.

I am still using many of the online resources and reading materials. We have been integrating the iPads supplied by the school. If one good thing came out of this, it is that the ELs are talking more about their experiences. Talking about their personal experiences and fears seems to have helped. We are collecting COVID Stories and plan to put them into a book to help others get over fears and get back to learning. Now they are back in their own space at school and can be 7th and 8th graders again. (Ms. O., personal communication)

Ms. O.'s Wayfaring Journey: New Beginnings and Lessons Learned

In reflection, Ms. O. felt that the ELs as well as herself learned from the experience of the school shut down, online learning, and the challenges of COVID. The online instruction went smooth for the most part, however, due to each EL's personal family situation many students just could not concentrate or put the effort needed into their own learning. Health fears, family responsibilities, and the overall impact of learning online took its toll on progress. Incidentally, similar findings have been reported by Kuhfeld et al. (2021) and Robertson (2020a). Ms. O. herself experienced high levels of stress and anxiety due to her own personal challenges causing her teaching to suffer.

Ms. O.'s suggestions in moving forward with regard to preparing for what might come next include always considering an ELs home situation first. No matter how much training or preparation goes into any mode of instruction, if the student's affective filter is clogged, then learning just cannot take place. Although one teacher can't possibly fix all problems related to home responsibilities, all teachers can show empathy and patience. Ms. O. also stresses that the collaboration and collegiality among the ESL teachers that was a result of the online, weekly discussions was extremely beneficial on many levels. Ms. O. strongly suggests that all ESL teachers consider some type of collaborative interaction as in most cases they are isolated being the only teacher on a faculty who is in ESL.

Having an open line of communication with parents such as use of email, announcements, and when needed, interpreters, is another effective means that encourages EL success and growth in language as well as academics. Ms. O. adopted the practice of weekly emails and follow ups with interpreters to conduct "checks" whenever a student was absent for even one day. Even though instruction is back face-to-face Ms. O. suggests that elements of

effective online teaching be integrated into EL instruction. Last, in the final interview that took place in April, 2022 Ms. O. shared that all ESL teachers must adopt an advocacy framework because who better than the ESL teacher can truly help English learners.

Discussion

Within the framework of Narrative Research, the participant's individual, lived experiences are offered in order to provide evidence of what took place. As appropriate with this type of qualitative inquiry one cannot dispute or connect the individual experiences to any other because of the unique events, feelings, and perceptions that emerge. However, considering Ms. O.'s stories within the larger social and cultural context of what was going on in the world at the time the individual experiences somewhat reflect the information reported earlier by Dorn, et al. (2021), Garcia and Weiss (2020a), and Robertson (2020a).

This examination provides a window into the experiences of a practicing ESL teacher who, based on experiences, school location and policies, personal perceptions of online learning, and personal challenges lived through teaching during the pandemic. While Ms. O. approached the transition to online learning positively, she became overwhelmed by health-related factors and her EL students' personal challenges. She lived in fear for her own family as well as for the well-being of her students. Luckily, her school remained online for the entire 2020-2021 school year which provided some consistency in a chaotic year. This policy had pros and cons. The transition to online learning encouraged the collaboration among the ESL teachers that continues. Because the school system "bought into" online learning, teachers for the most part embraced new technology and further developed technological skills. The downside was that many of the ELs were forced to take on the responsibility of caregiver for sick parents and siblings. In addition, Ms. O. saw a drop in progress in language learning as well as academics in part due to the family responsibilities and not necessarily the online format. Many of the ELs did not attend online or face-to-face instruction on a regular basis because of family challenges. Given the sporadic attendance due to the shutdown and remote options Ms. O. saw a continued dip in her students' performance into the 2021-2022 school year similar to what was reported by Garcia and Weiss (2020a). All in all Ms. O. was able to rise to the occasion and draw from empathy and her personal desire to serve as an advocate for her students. Eventually she did see a trend for back-on-track learning as students began to feel safer within the overall context of learning through a pandemic.

Moving forward as educators the experiences lived by Ms. O. convey that online learning in itself is not necessarily a sole problem. Continued teacher training on creating engaging online content, delivery methods, incorporating interactions, and the ability to transfer the face-to-face classroom to the online classroom continue to prove effective. Ms. O.'s experiences showed that planning was critical in delivering effective online instruction for English learners. As with face-to-face instruction, meaningful language use and production integrated with recurring needs assessment, appropriate materials, and technology used to enhance the learning experiences were a few of the strategies Ms. O. suggested. The suggestions are supported by Robinson (2020b) who further offers that structure is important in EL success. However, if there comes a time when schools must abruptly make the switch due to national crisis education institutions must be prepared. Much research has been conducted on preparedness. Many schools have moved forward with developing emergency crisis plans that consider aspects such as providing devices

to students and having a reserve of technology to distribute as needed, delving further into teacher training for online delivery, adopting a learning management system, offering a variety of formats for instruction (online, hybrid, hyflex, etc.), and establishing detailed plans to deliver instruction during prolonged school closures as well as developing a process to address daily food insecurity (Dilberti, et al., 2020; Kuhfeld, et al., 2021). Last, The American Academy of Pediatrics (2022) suggest that health and safety must also be considered. Simple policies related to masking, immunizations, and staying home when sick can all be embedded in emergency plans which encourage good health practices for students as well as teachers.

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Article

Sentence Completions with Digital Video Task: From Theory to Classroom Practice

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ABSTRACT

Adopting Tomasello's (2003) usage-based language acquisition theory, this case study presents sentence-completions-with-digital-video as a potential task to enhance language learning. Data were collected from two students who were enrolled in a college-level English for Academic Purposes course. In the sentence-completions-with-digital-video task, students completed a sentence with a target academic word and created another sentence that supports the meaning of the word. Students then recorded a digital video explaining how and why the first sentence supports the second sentence. A detailed analysis of the exemplar cases showed that the task helped students learn the academic word and cohesion, and gave students opportunities to detect errors. The limited data also show evidence of metacognition under the framework of Scribner's (1997) Conceptual Levels. The action-oriented case study provided preliminary evidence that the sentence-completions-with-digital-video task can be a useful teaching tool to promote vocabulary learning, sentence cohesion building, and metacognition cultivation.

Keywords: *sentence completions, Digital Video (DV), usage-based language acquisition, metacognition*

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Introduction

Addressing the needs of linguistically diverse students transitioning to college is a well-known challenge (e.g., Kamaşak, Sahan, & Rose, 2021; Kleine & Lawton, 2015). Almost a decade ago, in an effort to better understand adults learning English as an additional language, we began to research how digital video serves as a pedagogical tool for multilingual learners in areas such as reading, writing for summaries, responses, and essays (e.g., Liu, Unger, & Scullion, 2014; Unger & Liu, 2013; Unger, Liu & Scullion, 2015; Unger & Olifer, 2019). This paper extends the past research into integrating digital videos into sentence completion tasks in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses to promote vocabulary learning, which is crucial for language acquisition (Yang & Coxhead, 2020).

Our intention here is to share the sentence completion data and show how sentence completion tasks, together with digital video cameras, can provide an effective task that can help students understand sentence cohesion, and vocabulary. Another benefit is that it can be a way to improve students' *metacognition*, with an emphasis on *self-regulation*. We will define these terms in more detail shortly. For this paper, the focus is on two participants enrolled in English for Academic Purposes courses over the course of one academic year.

Multiple learning objectives have guided the use of video cameras at the sentence-level. These include learning college-level academic vocabulary, producing context clues, editing sentence grammar and cohesion, and improving metacognition and self-regulation, which are important for student success in higher education.

We will begin with the adaptation of Tomasello's "*Usage-based theory of language acquisition*" and other supporting theories (van Lier, 2004; Vygotsky, 1998; Wertsch, 1998). This will be followed by the relevant literature review, methodology, the presentation of the data, discussion and conclusions. To make this interpretive, descriptive case study more transparent, we invite readers onto a webpage with the videos, documents, the basic directions, and other materials (see Data section for the link). Our intention of providing the materials is that readers can draw their own conclusion if needed. We believe transparency is key to validity and reliability of case studies because transparency makes it possible for the procedures and tasks to be repeated or adapted in different learning contexts.

Theoretical Background and Literature Review

Signification, mediation, and ideas from semiotics inform our use of Tomasello's (2003) and others' ideas (Vygotsky, 1978; van Lier, 2004; Wertsch, 1998) for classroom activities, and our perspective on language acquisition and learning. Signification refers to the process of giving meaning to the self, objects, others, and the environment we live in (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978); Mediation is the use of concrete and abstract objects and ideas, including language (i.e. signs) to organize, plan, and complete goal-directed activity (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch 1998). The digital video activity is an ideal tool to promote language acquisition because it creates opportunities for students to assign meaning to new words, use target words to communicate and create meaning among students.

Tomasello (2003) proposed a usage-based approach to language acquisition, which states that children acquire language through two major skills: "intention reading" and "pattern-finding" (p.4). Children, in communication, develop the ability of realizing the goals or intentions of other

speakers using utterances or signs to achieve social functions, which is the functional dimension of the usage-based approach. The other dimension is grammatical, which happens when children capitalize their pattern finding skills to extract linguistic constructions from language input. Some notable points about usage based Second Language Acquisition (SLA) are: 1. Communicative function comes first in SLA; for example, infants at very early months begin to more carefully track others' intention toward a third entity; they communicate by pointing to objects to declare intentions. Speakers understand the intentions of others' use of signs or symbols as used by Tomasello. 2. Speakers create Joint Attentional Frames: they use signs to direct another's attention and influence the behavior and actions of others through the establishment of an intersubjective space. When designing the current classroom practice, we attempt to ensure that students create Joint Attentional Frames (Tomasello, 2003) by using a visual (poster), speech, and the act of pointing in the sentence completion task (see Unger, 2016, for more). Students also pair up and teach each other. The paired digital video teaching activity affords learners opportunities in intention reading through understanding, and pattern-finding through discussing the sentence structure, which promote language development. Specific procedures will be introduced in the methodology section.

Some differences exist in these definitions (Reyne et al., 2014), however, metacognition is generally understood as awareness of one's cognition; how one is thinking about a task; self-regulation is identifying areas for improvement and self-correcting to complete a task. Many studies have established that metacognition directly contributes to second language reading (e.g., Bjørke, Bjørke, & Dypedahl, 2018; van Gelderen, Schoonen, Stoel, de Gloppe, & Hulstijn, 2007). The ability to plan, monitor and evaluate one's mental activities in reading comprehension and language learning is essential in language acquisition. Graham (1997) and Zhang & Zhang (2019) stated that metacognitive strategies are of central importance in learning, especially the ability to choose and evaluate their own strategies and learning. Griffith and Ruan (2015) found that readers use strategies of evaluating including self-questioning, self-correcting, and reflecting. Readers with high metacognition have the ability to apply the knowledge in the higher order thinking process while reading (Anderson, 2012). Teng and Reynolds (2019) found that metacognition and self-regulation affects learners' ability to learn vocabulary. More recently, Marantika (2021) reported a positive relationship between metacognition and learning outcomes among language learners. All the literature reviewed points to the importance of metacognition in language learning (e.g., Li, Hiver, & Papi, 2022).

The current sentence completion task coupled with digital video cameras has the potential to promote self-regulated learning and metacognition. Students are prompted to explain aloud their thinking process and are offered opportunities to self-correct and reflect on the sentences they have just created. In addition to following along with Tomasello's usage based approach (2003), the discrepancy reduction theory (e.g., Butler & Winne, 1995; Thiede & Dunlosky, 1999) maintains that learners apply monitoring in order to reach their desired goal, i.e., when detecting discrepancy between their current understanding and their goal, learners will restudy the material or redo the task. The learning or more learning happens when the discrepancy disappears. The current pedagogical task offers students opportunities to detect deficiencies in academic English and correct mistakes and learn.

The Study

Research Questions

Based on the theoretical framework and literature, the current case study aims to answer: How does the sentence completion task coupled with DV promote academic vocabulary learning and sentence cohesion building in EAP courses? How does the DV task promote metacognition and self-regulation?

Methodology

This study generally follows Yin's descriptive case studies (2009). Validity and reliability are grounded in transparency: all data (including video data and relevant documents) are provided at transitional-literacy.org (See below for the password). The study will compare and contrast two cases with a social-cultural perspective of second language acquisition and analyze the digital video data generated by participants.

Task and Procedures

Students in an English for Academic Purposes course completed the sentence completion activities as part of the classroom practice. The target words are all academic words from the Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000), which is a gold standard for EAP students. Procedures of the activity involve the following five steps:

1. Pair up.
2. Each person chooses a different sentence to complete.
3. Complete the first sentence that is related to the vocabulary word.
4. Write another sentence that explains the meaning of the vocabulary word.
5. Teach your partner about the word. On video, while pointing at the sentence, read the sentences and then explain the relationship of the first sentence to the second to your partner.

Data

The data comes from two cases: Case Terri, a Vietnamese speaker; and Case Leonard, a Spanish speaker from Honduras. This paper presents these two cases for contrast propose to show the potential benefits of the teaching technique. Both cases enrolled in a college level English for Academic Purposes course, which focuses on academic vocabulary, academic reading, and academic writing. Students have practiced context cues such as giving examples, using synonyms and antonyms to build sentence cohesion; Students have also created two DVs before completing the video tasks used in the paper. The current contrasting data are from three prompts. One example prompt is:

After the hurricane, the **volume** of relief supplies needed in Puerto Rico is _____.

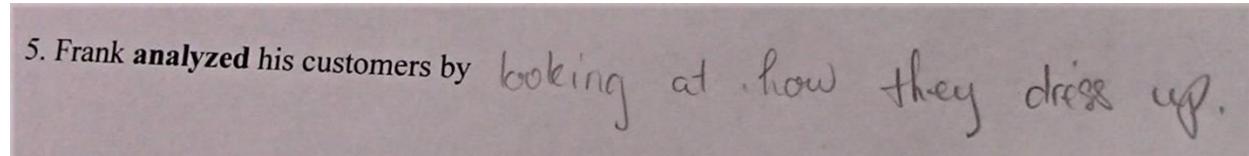
Here "volume" is one of the target academic words that students are learning in the lesson. Students completed the sentence related to the meaning of the target word and then wrote another sentence to support the meaning of the vocabulary.

Instructions to students are:

The ten questions start on the bottom of this page. Please only choose one question. Each of the group should choose a different word. Please revise errors and talk about the errors anytime during the entire process; this will help illustrate your critical thinking and ability to self-correct.

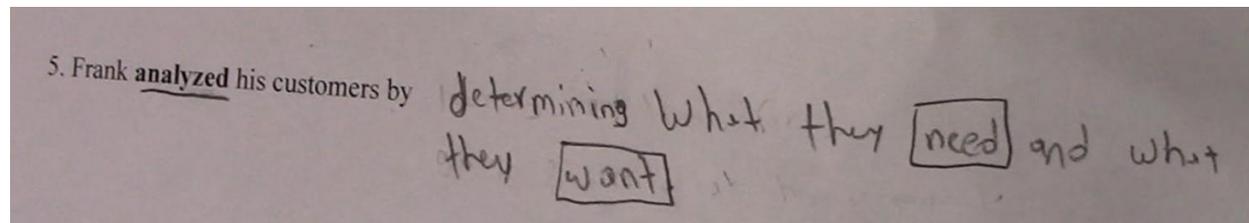
Case Terri and Case Leonard's Visuals:

Figure 1 Case Terri's Example Visual



As shown in Figure 1, Case Terri's answer on the visual is: Frank analyzed his customers by looking at how they dress up.

Figure 2 Case Leonard's Example Visual



As shown in Figure 2, Case Leonard's answer on the visual is: Frank analyzed his customers by determining what they need and what they want.

VIDEO data for both the cases are available at <https://transitional-literacy.org/sentence-completions-with-digital-video-task/>. The password is otter21. Both students recorded a digital video using the visual while teaching each other the sentences they wrote. The digital video task also requires students to explain why the second sentence explains the first one. Tables 1, 2, and 3 are the comparison of the two cases based on the three units of analysis: visual, reading of the sentences, and explanation of the sentences.

Table 1 Comparison of Case Terri's and Case Leonard's Visual, Reading and Explanation on "Analyze"

Prompt one: Frank analyzed his customers by _____. (Both Terri and Leonard)	
<u>Case Terri's Sentences on the Visual</u> Frank analyzed his customers by looking at how they dress up.	<u>Case Leonard's Sentence on the Visual</u> Frank analyzed his customers by determining what they need and what they want.
<u>Case Terri's Reading of the Sentences</u> <i>Frank analyze his customer by looking at. * how they tress up.</i>	<u>Case Leonard's Reading of the Sentences</u> <i>Alright, so Frank analyzed his customer by determin(ing) what they need and what they want.</i>
<u>Case Terri's Explanation of the Sentences</u> <i>And um the subject is Frank an(d) analyze is the transitive verb analyze and . * so how how they dress up.. * Support to the analyze</i> <i>*Each period means a second delay</i>	<u>Case Leonard's Explanation of the Sentences</u> <i>Alright, the verb is analyze and basic like he analyzed his customers customers is the direct object</i>

Table 2 Comparison of Case Terri's and Case Leonard's Visual, Reading and Explanation on "Mental"

Prompt two: Frank built his mental strength by _____. (For Terri)	Prompt two: The best way to promote a product is by _____. (For Leonard)
<u>Case Terri's Sentences on the Visual (mental)</u> Frank built his mental strength by trying to relax his mind. Frank read the book to building his brain.	<u>Case Leonard's Sentences on the Visual (promote)</u> The best way to promote a product is by putting an advertising in the side of the road, every customer will see it when they drive by the road.
<u>Case Terri's Reading of the Sentences</u> <i>My best senten is Frank buil(t) his mental tren trength by trying to relax his mind. Frank reading the book to built his mind.</i>	<u>Case Leonard's Reading of the Sentences</u> <i>The best way to promeite a product is by putting an abertizing in the sides of the road and um that way like every customer will see it when they drive by the road</i>
<u>Case Terri's Explanation of the Sentences</u> <i>Spurt the men mental.. *brain (pointing at brain and then mental)</i> <i>*Each period means a second delay</i>	<u>Case Leonard's Explanation of the Sentences</u> <i>and this support like basically like to promeite (circling the word using a pencil) and um putting an abertizing (circling those three words) thus basically like the supporting idea this promeite (pointing at promote).</i>

Table 3 Comparison of Case Terri's and Case Leonard's Visual, Reading and Explanation

Prompt three: The cat and dog were fighting until Frank interceded by _____. (For Terri)	Prompt three: Because Betty wanted to settle down somewhere peaceful, _____. (For Leonard)
<u>Case Terri's Sentences on the Visual (intercede)</u> The cat and dog were fighting until Frank interceded by yelling at them. Frank put the cat and the dog far away from each other.	<u>Case Leonard's Sentences on the Visual (settle down)</u> Because Betty wanted to settle down somewhere peaceful, she is in the island looking for a house. Because Betty wanted to settle down somewhere peaceful, she looked for a house on the island. (Revised version)
<u>Case Terri's Reading of the Sentences</u> <i>The cat and the dog were fighting until Frank interceded by yelling at them. Frank put the cat and the dog far away from each other.</i>	<u>Case Leonard's Reading of the Sentences</u> <i>hello this is my sentence um because Betty wanted to settle down somewhere peaceful um she is in the island looking for a house.</i>
<u>Case Terri's Explanation of the Sentences</u> <i>um the main verb is the interceides and the subject the cat and dog fighting. * This senten the second senten Frank put the cat and the dog far away from each other is the example for the word interreikes. *Each period means a second delay</i>	<u>Case Leonard's Explanation of the Sentences</u> <i>So my new sentences with the revision on it is because Betty want to seteed down somewhere peaceful she looked for a house so the thing I changed here was the in into on and I shange the sentences to she looked for a house because can not be she is after the comma. And for my subject is Betty want is transitive verb um to seteed down is the verb phrase somewhere peach is the direct object and she looked for a house on the island should be the object complement.</i>

Findings and Discussion

Examining the two students' work as shown in the above tables shows differences in their grammatical competencies; it is clear that Case Terri made more grammatical errors than Case Leonard. For example, Case Terri confused infinitive and gerund, when she wrote "Frank read the book to building his brain". The visual, in fact, does not demonstrate the striking contrast between the two cases as much as the reading of the sentences. Case Terri struggled to pronounce words so much that many words are not comprehensible. We sometimes had to rely on the visual to decode the speaking part. The tables also show that the two cases differ in the ability of explanation. Case Terri often only repeated what is on the visual and cannot expand the words or sentences beyond the written texts. For the last target word *intercede*, case Terri did a great job when recognizing "Frank put the cat and dog far away from each other" is one example of interceding. However, she was just reading the text rather than explaining why it is an example. In contrast, case Leonard did a much better job. For the target word *settle down*, case Leonard self-corrected mistakes and explained the rationale. For example, he changed the verb tense from the simple present tense to the simple past tense to be consistent with the previous part of the sentence "Because Betty wanted to". He also fixed the preposition: changing *in* the island to be *on* the island; this is evidence that Leonard used the opportunity to detect errors and self-correct. Of course, case Leonard was not perfect. There were mistakes in grammar, pronunciation and explanations as shown in the tables.

For example, he misunderstood what an object complement is when he misstated that “She looked for a house on the island should be the object complement” and also misstated that “somewhere peaceful is the direct object”. Those errors were very common among the EAP group and were expected because it requires sophisticated sentence structural knowledge.

The data above showed that two students understood the meaning of vocabulary and provided an explanation of the relationship of the two sentences they created. The task provides opportunities of deep processing the target word because students completed the sentence and wrote a second sentence related to the first sentence and orally explained to their peer. The digital video task gave them chances to detect errors and self-correct. The task also prompted them to explain the logical relationship between sentences spontaneously.

Besides providing evidence of students learning the academic words and cohesion, the above data shows two other notable differences. Salient different acts of pointing were observed in the digital video. Those acts usually focused on the Gesture Stroke, i.e., the movement pathway of a person’s finger or hand. Certain types of repeated “beats” during moments of speech disruption are prominent in the data as well. The beats can be understood as the up and down movement gestures. Those beats often indicate a speaker is searching for a word or making an error. A certain type of confident synchronicity with many participants has been found in sentence-level videos, paragraph videos, brainstorming videos, and math word-problem data in our past research (e.g., Unger, 2016; Unger & Olifer, 2019). Case Terri often moved her pen abruptly and awkwardly and thus beats were not synchronized with her speech. Case Leonard’s pointing in general were more smooth and synchronized with his speech and the text and showed much confidence when doing so. A case in point is when case Leonard explained the word promote: he circled *promote* using his pencil and circled *putting* and then circled *an advertising*; finally he pointed at *promote*. The movement or beats were very smooth and happened while he spoke.

The data also shows evidence of metacognition and self-regulation. Using the theoretical Comparison of Conceptual Levels (Scribner, 1997, p. 179), we found that several salient differences exist between the two cases in metacognition. Table 4 includes the Conceptual Levels:

Table 4 *Theoretical Comparison of Conceptual Levels* (Scribner, 1997, p. 179)

Level 1 “Object” Concept	Level 2 “Word Object” Concept
Direct relationship to some object or attribute of an object. Object of thought is an object.	Indirect relationship to object; object is mediated by some other concept. Object of thought is a verbal concept (word).
Generalization on the basis of objects or attributes of objects; generalization of things.	Generalization of earlier generalizations (concepts) - therefore, generalization of thought.
We are aware of the object of thought, not of our mental activity.	We are aware of the act of thought.
Language internalized as inner speech regulates our behavior.	Written language that is internalized regulates our thinking.

Through language we become conscious of our behavior; we describe it and reflect upon it.	Through this new system of language, we become conscious of our thoughts; we can describe it and reflect upon it.
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Case Terri is not moving much beyond the word in front of her, struggling with pronunciation of words, grammar, and more importantly her explanation of the logical relationship between the two sentences. This suggests she is most likely at Level 1 based on Scriber's conceptual levels (1997) because her literacy skills are at the object concept level. For example, she said *Frank reading the book to built his mind* instead of *Frank read books to build his mind*. She struggled with the target word intercede and mispronounced it as *interreske* or *interkeide*. Moreover, she exhibits much less synchronicity with her pointing than Leonard. Case Leonard, in contrast, self-corrects more, and expands his explanation beyond the words immediately in front of him (see tables 1, 2 and 3 for the data). Also, he shows much more synchronicity with pointing. Applying Scribner's Conceptual levels to our data clearly shows the contrast of Case Terri and Case Leonard. The overall analysis of Case Terri's and Case Leonard's visual, reading and explanation of the sentences suggest Case Leonard is functioning at a higher level of abstraction and language competency than Case Terri.

Limitations and Conclusions

Adopting a social-cultural approach to second language acquisition, the action-oriented study provided some preliminary evidence showing that the sentence completion task with digital video can be an effective teaching tool to promote academic vocabulary learning, sentence cohesion building, and metacognition cultivation. The DV data is very revealing about the competencies of the two cases. The visuals were not much different at first glance, however, the video data showed a stunning difference in the quality of grammar, structure and deep processing for the participants. As with most case studies, we acknowledge that the findings may have limited generalization. More data and research would be needed to strengthen the validity and reliability. We welcome and invite readers to access our website at <https://transitional-literacy.org/> and use the materials in teaching and research.

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Book Review

DIY PD: A Guide to Self-Directed Learning for Educators of Multilingual Learners (Book Review)

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ABSTRACT

DIY PD: A Guide to Self-Directed Learning for Educators of Multilingual Learners (Toppel, Huynh, and Salva, 2021) offers current and perspective teachers strategies and resources to grow professionally in their field. The authors not only share their personal journeys through professional growth, but they have also carefully curated the resources included in this book. As the title implies, the authors challenge educators to re-envision professional development; instead of passively receiving professional development training in a traditional meeting, readers are challenged to take ownership of their own professional growth. This book review will provide an overview of the contents, as well as a critical analysis of this text.

Keywords: *professional development, self-directed learning, multilingual learners*

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Educators are well-acquainted with the need for professional development (PD). Usually, thoughts of a packed room of faculty members, a few snacks and drinks, and a “sage on the stage” come to mind when a teacher hears, “There will be a professional development meeting today.” However, Toppel, Huynh, and Salva (2021) have forged a new premise for professional development. Birthed from their own personal experiences in education and their on-going need to grow as teachers, they describe the steps to initiate professional development avenues that are most relevant to the individual educator. In short, they strategically share their personal journeys as they expertly apply Garrison’s (1997) model of self-directed learning as the book’s theoretical premise.

The book is divided into five chapters. The first chapter justifies the importance of self-directed professional learning and analyzes how the COVID-19 pandemic created a strong motivation for educators to seek individual growth. The authors’ write, “Teachers around the world began to read and share articles, watch videos, listen to podcasts, attend webinars, and connect with colleagues on social media” (p. 10). Granted, prior to the pandemic many teachers already collaborated with others; however, Toppel, Huynh, and Salva (2021) suggest that the pandemic stimulated the need and desire to connect with other educators supporting multilingual learners (MLs). The pandemic gave educators an opportunity to analyze and reflect on the quality of their instructional practices, as well as the gaps in implementing remote and other learning strategies. Independent and self-reliant educators suddenly had a pressing need to learn and collaborate. From this need, a new perspective on collaboration and self-directed professional learning arose. *DIY PD: A Guide to Self-Directed Learning for Educators of Multilingual Learners* (Toppel, Huynh, and Salva, 2021) is an extraordinary response to this new perspective and pressing need.

After establishing the importance of self-directed learning and the impact that COVID had on stimulating educators’ awareness, the authors divide the bulk of the book into four distinct types of professional learning categories: interpretive, expressive, interactive, and extending. Each chapter identifies, defines, and provides examples and resources for readers to use in their teaching practice. In chapter 2, the authors explain that the interpretive professional development not only points to the interaction that educators have with existing content, but also emphasizes the deeper understanding and interpretation that result from the interaction of this new knowledge with individual experiences. While the authors explain that interpretive learning can be in an individual or group context, no matter the context, they caution educators to evaluate every resource critically. The chapter further provides a comprehensive description of audiobooks, infographics, podcasts, newsletters, research, and curriculum documents, as well as QR codes and URLs for each of the suggested sources.

Chapter 3 continues the discussion regarding the second category of professional learning: expressive learning. This type of professional learning rests on a constructivist’s approach; the authors write, “Teachers can turn passive professional learning opportunities into active ones through the same approach by writing about them, creating visuals, to process the ideas, and presenting evidence of implementation to fellow educators” (p. 44). Teachers can journal, blog, create graphics, present to other educators, as well as other opportunities that challenge them to create, process, and reflect. The authors carefully discuss each of these activities and provide numerous resources that apply to expressive learning.

Chapter 4 introduces the reader to interactive professional learning. Based upon the benefits of collaboration and healthy interdependence, this interactive learning approach for teachers is characterized by “. . . both receiving new ideas and contributing from your own background and experience” (p. 68). The authors expertly present a plethora of checklists, suggestions for innovative means of collaboration, and various resources that promote interactive professional learning for teachers. Without question, chapter four provides robust options for immediate application.

The fifth chapter includes the final category of professional development: extending. The authors provide anecdotes and analysis of model teachers who have applied the various categories of professional development. Additionally, the final chapter helps the reader to better understand that many of the best practices that educators use with their students can (and should) be applied to their own development.

Given all of the authors’ suggestions, examples, and anecdotes, reading this book feels more like reading a compelling magazine than it does a book. The authors seemed to intentionally structure the book to mimic an informal magazine-like reading experience, so that the materials would be more easily accessible in order for readers to apply ideas based upon their learning and teaching needs. As such, much like a magazine, the authors expertly include thought bubbles, call outs with anecdotes, graphs, and even samples. Toppel, Huynh, and Salva (2021) provide a wealth of knowledge and resources in only 119 pages. Thus, *DIY PD: A Guide to Self-Directed Learning for Educators of Multilingual Learners* (Toppel, Huynh, and Salva, 2021) is not only practical, but it is simultaneously uplifting and challenging; this book is a necessary addition to personal libraries among language development teachers. Needless to say, the authors achieved their goal of helping to equip educators that serve MLs.

References

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