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English Literacy Curricula in a Sino-Canadian Transnational Education Program: Teachers' Implemented Curriculum

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Education

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Abstract

This case study explored the English literacy curricula in a Sino-Canadian Transnational Education Program that is accredited by British Columbia (BC). Underpinned by nested pedagogical orientations and critical multimodal literacies, this study focuses on how the BC English literacy curricula were implemented in three English literacy teachers' classes. Data show that two pedagogical orientations (i.e., transmission and social constructivist) were used by English literacy teachers in the transnational education program. This study also found little evidence of transformative pedagogy in all three teachers' English literacy teaching. The implications include missed opportunities to engage students to critically analyze and evaluate the historical, sociocultural, and political relationships and few opportunities that connected students' lived experiences to or activated students' text-to-self connections to develop an agentive self, shaping a critical consciousness and transforming the world (Ajayi, 2015).

Keywords

transnational education, implemented curriculum, critical multimodal literacies, nested pedagogical orientations, teacher education.

Summary for Lay Audience

This is a case study that used ethnographic tools to explore the English literacy curricula in a Sino-Canadian Transnational Education Program that is accredited by British Columbia (BC). The aim was to know the factors contributing to teachers' pedagogical literacy practices. Pinpointing and understanding the main issues confronting English literacy teachers will empower policymakers to better recognize and respond to their needs, ultimately enhancing the teachers' professional development. The research question is: How are the British Columbia English literacy curricula implemented by teachers in a transnational education program in China? This study is undergirded by nested pedagogical orientations and critical multimodal literacies. Following ethical approval, the research team selected a program in a metropolitan city in China that is accredited by BC. Participants were English literacy teachers in this program; through interviews, they shared insights about their teaching practices. We also observed their literacy classes and collected audio recordings and photos to illuminate their implemented curriculum. For the data analysis, we adopted the constant comparison method to analyze the collected interview and classroom observation data. To demonstrate these in the paper, we embedded vignettes of observed English literacy classes as narrative descriptions to show communicative events and use of semiotic resources in the teaching and learning process (Rogers, 2011). We also incorporated quotes extracted from teacher participants' interviews to present their thinking around English literacy teaching in the transnational education setting.

Co-Authorship Statement

This integrated article includes one research paper co-authored with my MA supervisor, Dr. Zheng Zhang, and my committee member, Dr. Rachel Heydon. I contributed to the major work in literature review, data collection, data analyses, and manuscript writing. Dr. Zheng Zhang worked closely with me to analyze data, present findings, and revise the drafts. Dr. Heydon helped review and provided critical suggestions for me to improve the paper.

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First, I would like to acknowledge and give my warmest thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Zheng Zhang. She is the person who sparks my interest in the research of the transnational education field. Her guidance and advice carried me through all the stages of writing my thesis. During the past two years, I have been through various issues and suffered from thyroid disease. She always gave me faithful emotional support and encouraged me to be bold and carry on. I could not complete this work without her motivation and inspiration.

I would also like to give special thanks to my supervisory committee member, Dr. Rachel Heydon. She gave me critical suggestions to improve this paper, and it was a great privilege and honor to study under her guidance.

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Chapter 1

1 Thesis Introduction

This MA thesis follows the format of an integrated-article thesis. Chapter One contains the background information and the research context of this study.

Transnational education refers to education delivered by degree-awarding institutions to students located in another country (McBurnie & Ziguras, 2007). Transnational education in higher education has grown rapidly around the globe in the past few decades (Ding, 2018; He & Wilkins, 2016; Mok, 2021). It has drawn a great deal of attention from researchers and scholars who examine various aspects of cross-border teaching and learning, for example, the lived experience of students in cross-border programs and the characteristics and effectiveness of using English as the main medium of instruction in transnational higher education (Dai, 2020; Jiang et al., 2019; McKinley et al., 2021). In the last decade, studies focusing on secondary education have emerged. For instance, Zhang (2015) led research on literacy curricula in Sino-Canadian transnational education programs to trace how teachers implemented the hybrid curriculum and how students experienced it.

Existent literature has discussed K-12 transnational education, and research papers have provided insightful findings on the development of transnational secondary education (e.g., Lim, 2016; Parkes & Han, 2015; Wang, 2017), the different attitudes towards it (e.g., Steffenhagen, 2013; Wang, 2017; Zhang & Heydon, 2014), and the literacy curricula in the Sino-Canadian offshore schools (Zhang, 2015; Zhang et al., 2018). Addressing the need for more knowledge about the transnational Canadian literacy curriculum at the secondary school level, this thesis drew on data collected from its case study design with ethnographic tools and focused on the English literacy curriculum in an offshore school in China that uses British Columbia curricula which is one majority player province in Canadian K-12 transnational education.

This study was conducted in a Sino-Canadian secondary school transnational program in a metropolitan city in China, which integrated dual-track model that Chinese high school

curricula and Canadian provincial curricula were implemented in this program. Underpinned by nested pedagogical orientations and critical multimodal literacies, this study focuses on how the British Columbia (Canada) English literacy curriculum was implemented in three English literacy teachers' classes. The term implemented curriculum was coined to shed light on how the intended curriculum is actualized and delivered into practice in the "real world" of schools and classrooms (Westbury, 2003, n.p.). It is also known as "classroom curriculum" (Westbury, 2003, n. p.) or "operational curriculum" (Eisner, 2002, p. 32). To respond to the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the globalized world, the New London Group (1996) coined the term multiliteracies and problematized the positioning of literacy education as learning and teaching to read and write through paper-based, standardized, monolingual, and monocultural forms of language. They proposed four pedagogical components: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. Cummins (2006) elaborated three pedagogical orientations—transmission, social constructivist, and transformative pedagogies—that share similarities with the New London Group's four pedagogical components. The nested pedagogical orientations enabled this study to explore the implementation of transnational English literacy curriculum, such as whether and how teachers used specific pedagogical orientations to engage students in meaning-making practices. Apart from nested pedagogical orientations, multimodality (Kress, 2011) also informed this study to view the modes of communication implemented in the transnational education setting.

This study drew on critical multimodal literacy, which explores how teachers engage students in literacy practices with multimodal tools, incorporating literacy learners' linguistic, cultural, and semiotic repertoires, connecting with their life experiences, and expanding possibilities of acting on histories and social realities (Ajayi, 2015; Cummins, 2006; Zhang, 2022). Combining the theoretical lenses of curriculum and literacy in this study enabled us to foreground the implemented curriculum, namely, the teachers' teaching practices and dynamic interactions between teachers and learners in transnational education classrooms.

My MA thesis originates from a SSHRC IDG project led by Dr. Zheng Zhang (2016). In the original SSHRC project, researchers used a multiple case design with ethnographic tools to explore the globalizing Canadian literacy curricula in the offshore programs in China which adopted British Columbia and New Brunswick curricula. The study analyzed the intended curricula, how they were actualized in classrooms, and how students experienced the transnational curricula (e.g., Zhang, Heydon, Li & Malins, 2020). The MA thesis was designed to respond to the following research question: How are the British Columbia English literacy curricula implemented by teachers in a transnational education program in China?

In Chapter One, I provide the background information of this study. Chapter Two presents the integrated article that includes the research context, theoretical framework, methodology, data analysis, findings, conclusion and discussion, and significance of the study. In Chapter Three, I summarize the major findings and the implications for future researchers and educators who are passionate to explore how literacy curricula are implemented in global settings.

Chapter 2

2 Integrated Article

In this chapter, I present the integrated article that is made up of the research context, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, data analysis, findings, and conclusion and discussion.

2.1 Research Context

Jointly designed by a foreign education provider and host country provider (Knight, 2016), transnational education programs offer foreign curricula as a pathway for students to access overseas higher education, usually in English-speaking countries (Lim, 2016). Since the 1990s, China has seen remarkable growth in transnational education, and transnational education programs have become a viable alternative form of education for Chinese students (Lim, 2016). The rapid growth of these programs is related to the increasing number of high-socioeconomic-status families and internationalization of basic education in China (Wang, 2017). Some transnational education programs use bilingual and bicultural curriculum as a key marketing approach to attract wealthy Chinese families who opt their children out of Gaoka—the competitive high-stakes national higher education entrance examination.

Besides well-established Sino-foreign cooperative higher education programs, K–12 transnational education has grown (Lim, 2016). English-speaking countries such as the USA, UK, Australia, and Canada are competitors in K–12 transnational education (Parkes & Han, 2015) offering programs rooted in their respective public school curricula. According to the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials, in 2023 126 Canadian offshore K–12 schools offered elementary and secondary education, with 67 offshore schools in China located in over 40 cities. Since the first Canadian offshore school in China was established by the province of British Columbia (BC) in 1995, the number of such schools has surged, providing curricula from Nova Scotia, BC, New Brunswick, and Ontario (Wang, 2017). Currently, 23 Canadian offshore schools in China are solely inspected and certified by the BC government.

This project is situated in a Sino-Canadian transnational education program that delivered the BC curriculum in an economically developed city of Mainland China. Apart from the subject area curricula transplanted from BC, in which English is used as the medium of instruction (usually delivered at least partly by Canadian teachers), some Chinese mandatory subjects are included in this program and taught by Chinese teachers. Graduates are awarded both a Chinese high school diploma and the BC “Dogwood Diploma,” a credential that has aided recipients to gain admittance to universities in English-speaking countries.

2.2 Literature Review

Over the past few decades, China has witnessed profound changes in its primary and secondary school systems and expansion of K–12 transnational education (Wang, 2017). With China’s rapid development of the market economy, the Chinese government has allowed private schools, which have internationalized K–12 education in China (Wang, 2017). Transnational education programs and Sino-foreign cooperative schools have also increased, with the government’s intention to introduce high-quality foreign educational resources and strengthen international exchanges and collaboration through education (China’s Ministry of Education, 2003). The growth of offshore schools is also a consequence of market forces (Zhang & Heydon, 2016), parents’ interests (Wang, 2017), and the competitiveness of Sino-foreign secondary collaborative programs (Lim, 2016).

Existing studies report controversies about social equity issues in transnational education. First, tuition fees in transnational education programs in China are much higher than in local public schools. These programs are not affordable for most Chinese families. Transnational education thus tends to drive Chinese education towards marketization and aggravates elitism and social stratification (Wang, 2017). Second, literature also addresses English dominance and cultural biases that are entrenched in transnational education programs in China. In some Sino-Canadian cooperative programs, bilingual and bicultural programmatic curricula are adopted (Zhang & Heydon, 2014). English is used as the medium of instruction, promoting English language proficiency to better prepare students for higher education in economically developed countries. Local Chinese students have difficulties understanding the Western worldviews, values, and

beliefs transmitted in textbooks and study materials (Wang, 2017). Steffenhagen (2013) reports that school exams in transnational programs are culturally biased against students who didn't grow up in the West; for example, exams about Christmas and baseball are replete with slang and metaphorical language. Zhang and Heydon (2014) point out that students in transnational education programs need to take internationalized English-language tests (e.g., TOEFL and IELTS) to apply to overseas universities. Students' reports of their lived experiences indicate that those tests center transnational curricula on preparing students for those exams, hindering their literacy options and constraining their opportunities to study abroad (Zhang & Heydon, 2014). In addition, such tests promote the literacy practices of the dominant culture and risk privileging Western-centric literacy assessments (Zhang & Heydon, 2014).

Studies report that some Canadian transnational education programs in China use a hybrid curriculum model that includes both Canadian and Chinese public school curricula in order to promote bilingual and bicultural education and prepare students to be global citizens (e.g., Zhang, 2015; Zhang et al., 2020). However, scholars have reported a power imbalance between the Canadian and Chinese curricula and classes in those programs. Zhang (2015) highlights that Mandarin literacy courses are compressed and marginalized because the school's strategic emphasis focuses on math and English-related courses to prepare students for postsecondary study overseas. Moreover, teachers in hybrid Canadian and Chinese programs lack communication and pedagogical interactions (Zhang et al., 2020). A hybrid model allows transnational education students to receive credits and diplomas from both Canadian and Chinese education systems, but there is limited opportunity for students to harness their metalinguistic and cultural repertoires in two languages (Zhang, 2015; Zhang & Heydon, 2014, 2016; Zhang et al., 2020).

Existent literature also shows that some transnational education programs focus on print-based literacy practices (Zhang, 2015). Factors such as insufficient investment in facilities and standardized tests contribute to the privileging of print-based literacies, which impacts students as new media literacies users (e.g., Zhang et al., 2020). For students with low English-language proficiency, focusing on standardized test scores and print literacy constrained possibilities for learners to make meaning through multiple

modes and to forge understandings of themselves in and through this meaning making (Zhang & Heydon, 2014). Also, teachers' pedagogical practices are inevitably affected by the expectations of these international assessments (Zhang & Heydon, 2014); for example, teachers may focus on students' test-taking skills to help them achieve high scores on IELTS or TOEFL tests (Zhang, 2015). However, studies have revealed teacher-student negotiations about better ways to learn those skills (Zhang & Heydon, 2014) and highlighted students' preference for interactive and critically oriented pedagogies employed by Canadian teachers (Zhang, 2015, 2022).

The reviewed studies point to limited knowledge about the benefits and constraints of globalizing Canadian literacy curricula into various sociocultural contexts of China and the need to understand variations of literacy curricula from the Canadian provinces that are the majority players in transnational programming in China. To address the gaps, this paper describes a study of one offshore Canadian program accredited by the Canadian province that is the largest provider of Canadian transnational education in Mainland China: BC. The study asked: How are the BC English literacy curricula implemented by teachers in a transnational education program in China?

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study used the nested pedagogical orientations of literacy education, critical multimodality, and curriculum theories. Combining these theoretical lenses enabled our exploration of the implemented English curriculum in a transnational school in China.

2.3.1 Nested Pedagogical Orientations and Critical Multimodal Literacy

Street (1984) put forward two models of literacy: autonomous and ideological. The autonomous approach posits that literacy is a neutral technical skill imposing decontextualized Western-centric conceptions of literacy on other cultures or groups (Street, 2003). The ideological model highlights literacy as a social practice and asserts that literacy learning and teaching are embedded in historical and sociocultural contexts. To respond to the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the globalized world, the New London Group (1996) coined the term multiliteracies and problematized the

positioning of literacy education as learning and teaching to read and write through paper-based, standardized, monolingual, and monocultural forms of language. They proposed four pedagogical components: situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. In situated practice, learners are immersed in meaningful practices that weave their school learning and real-world experiences. Overt instruction, rather than a process of direct knowledge transmission or rote memorization, is a meaning-making process where teachers scaffold activities so that students can consciously activate learning. Critical framing focuses on assisting students to critically analyze and evaluate the historical, sociocultural, and political relationships between knowledge systems and social practices. Transformed practice applies the knowledge students acquire from situated practice, overt instruction, and critical framing into real-world situations (Cope & Kalantzis, 2015). Cummins (2006) elaborated three pedagogical orientations—transmission, social constructivist, and transformative pedagogies—that share similarities with the New London Group’s four pedagogical components. In particular, both theoretical frameworks emphasize the pedagogical weaving of various approaches in literacy education. For instance, Cummins proposed that the three orientations are not separate but nested within each other. The pedagogical orientation of transmission lies in the inner circle, with a focus on teachers directly transmitting the information and skills prescribed in the curriculum to the students. Social constructivism, in the middle circle, focuses on students’ thinking abilities by promoting teacher-student interactions in which knowledge is co-constructed. The transformative orientation builds on knowledge transmission and knowledge co-construction; however, it focuses on supporting students’ critical literacy for a deeper understanding of the learned concepts and ideas and their social relevance. Cummins’ nested model addresses how three pedagogical orientations of literacy education can be interwoven to better support literacy learners’ meaning making and identity formation. The nested pedagogical orientations enabled this study to explore the implementation of transnational English literacy curriculum, such as whether and how teachers used specific pedagogical orientations to engage students in meaning-making practices.

With the rapid advancement of new communication technologies in the 21st-century, literacy practices have become more complex and dynamic, involving diverse media and

multimodal resources (New London Group, 1996). Kress (2010) used the term multimodality to refer to a social semiotic approach to communication in different modes of interplay. Forms of meaning include written, visual, audio, gestural, and spatial. Each mode has its affordances, namely, the potentialities and constraints of semiotic modes (Kress, 2010). However, mode choices and preferences are determined by communities and their social-representational needs. In essence, mode is dictated by what the community desires it to be.

Critical multimodal literacy combines language and multiple modes and media in the meaning-making process and supports students to construct knowledge through out-of-school literacy experiences, including their personal experiences and community-based resources (Ajayi, 2015). It differs from critical literacy in that critical literacy tends to focus on written texts and requires students to critically analyze authors' ideas and messages while reading. Critical multimodal literacy explores how teachers engage students in literacy practices with multimodal tools, incorporating literacy learners' linguistic, cultural, and semiotic repertoires, connecting with their life experiences, and expanding possibilities of acting on histories and social realities (Ajayi, 2015; Cummins, 2006; Zhang, 2022). In this study, we focused on four dimensions of critical multimodal literacy: (a) employing students' personal lives to critically evaluate social inequalities; (b) incorporating texts with students' out-of-school experiences to generate alternative understandings; (c) promoting an agentive self through the application of various resources, technologies, tools, and cultures; and (d) shaping a critical consciousness and transforming the world (Ajayi, 2015).

We adopted a critical multimodal literacy lens because the study focused on both the linguistic and semiotic repertoires of students in transnational education program. Cummins' (2006) three pedagogical orientations of literacy education guided our analysis of three teachers' pedagogical approaches in literacy education, allowing us to shed light on whether and how the teachers pedagogically supported students' use of semiotic resources in transnational education classrooms.

2.3.2 Various Conceptualizations of Curriculum

The concept of curriculum is complicated and defined variously by scholars in different countries and institutional settings (Jung & Pinar, 2015). For example, Bobbitt (1918) defined curriculum as the directed and undirected experiences that unfold individuals' abilities, while Tyler (1949) referred to curriculum as a planned learning experience oriented by the school to achieve an educational outcome. Scholars have suggested the importance of differentiating institutional, programmatic, and classroom/operational/implemented curriculum (Deng, 2009; Eisner, 2002; Westbury, 2003). Intended curriculum refers to the "aims, content, activities, and sequence" (Eisner, 2002, p. 32) that students experience in school settings with the intention of enabling students to attain high levels of academic achievement. To further the scholarly conversation about whose intended curriculum, Doyle (1992a, 1992b) and Deng (2009) assert that institutional curriculum operates at the intersection of schooling, culture, and society and responds to ever-changing sociocultural conditions and political circumstances. Institutional curriculum is often tailored to reflect new typifications of desirable values and dispositions in the changed social, cultural, economic, and political order. In contrast, programmatic curriculum is embodied in curriculum documents and materials for use in schools and classrooms. It transforms the institutional curriculum into forms such as school subjects, programs, or courses of study in specific schooling contexts. Westbury (2003) suggests that "programmatic curriculum works in stable, deliberate ways" to "incorporate[e] . . . youth into the idea and institution of the school" (n.p.). The term implemented curriculum was coined to shed light on how the intended curriculum is actualized and delivered into practice in the "real world" of schools and classrooms. It is also known as "classroom curriculum" (Westbury, 2003, n.p.) or "operational curriculum" (Eisner, 2002, p. 32).

Combining the theoretical lenses of curriculum and literacy in this study enabled us to foreground the implemented curriculum, namely, the teachers' teaching practices and dynamic interactions between teachers and learners in transnational education classrooms.

2.4 Methodology

This is an exploratory case study (Yin, 2014). Case studies have the potential to provide a better understanding of a real-world case because of the essential contextual conditions and details they gather (Yin & Davis, 2007). In this case study, we explored “how” and “what” questions (Yin, 2014) and collected multiple sources of data (i.e., interviews and classroom observation) to gain an in-depth understanding of the complexity and dynamics of the implemented literacy curricula in the transnational education program. Following ethical approval, the research team selected a program in a metropolitan city in China that is accredited by BC. Participants were English literacy teachers in this program; through interviews, they shared insights about their teaching practices. We also observed their literacy classes and collected audio recordings and photos to illuminate their implemented curriculum.

2.5 Data Analysis

We adopted the constant comparison method (e.g., Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to analyze the collected interview and classroom observation data. Themes were deductively generated from our selected literacy education theories (i.e., the nested pedagogical orientations and critical multimodality). Deductive themes include: transmission-oriented teaching practice, social constructivist teaching approach, transformative pedagogy, and multimodal meaning making. While identifying the deductive themes, we constantly compared the interviews and classroom observation data to identify common themes and subthemes in various sources of data. This process of constant comparison “stimulates thought that leads to both descriptive and explanatory categories” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 341). There is one major theme that emerged inductively from the data, namely, impacts of standardized tests on pedagogical practices. Below we embed vignettes of observed English literacy classes as narrative descriptions to show communicative events and the use of semiotic resources in the teaching and learning processes (Rogers, 2011). The vignettes focus on individual teachers’ teaching practices instead of individual students’ responses and interactions. We also incorporated quotes from teacher participants’ interviews to present their thinking around English literacy teaching in the transnational education setting.

2.6 Findings and Discussion

In this section, we present findings illustrated through data such as teachers' interview data and vignettes showing teacher-student interactions and English literacy teaching practices. The findings show that two pedagogical orientations (i.e., transmission and social constructivist) were used by English literacy teachers in the transnational education program, and that transformative pedagogy was absent in all three teachers' teaching practices.

2.6.1 Transmission-oriented Pedagogy

Classroom observation data (i.e., fieldnotes, audio transcriptions, and pictures) provide abundant evidence that all three teachers used transmission-oriented pedagogy in their literacy teaching practices. Specifically, they adopted three transmission-oriented approaches when implementing the English literacy curriculum: transmitting literacy skills, transmitting test-taking skills for standardized exams, and transmitting through multimodal designs.

2.6.1.1 Transmitting Literacy Skills Directly to the Students

Observations of Ms. Moran's English literacy classes show a teacher-centered approach, although she incorporated dialogic activities in her practices to engage students in the teaching and learning process. For example, classroom observation data show how she taught figures of speech and gave examples to engage students in a Q&A activity.

Vignette 1

Ms. Moran asks a series of questions to elicit students' understanding of similes using "like": "If you say 'She swims like a fish', what do you think someone is trying to say about that person? 'She plays like a pro?'.... 'He walks like a duck?'". After hearing her Grade 10 students' responses such as "She swims fast" and "He walks funny", she moves on with her lecturing: "The next pattern is using 'as'. You have as blank as blank, and these ones are easier to figure out because they actually tell you the adjective. 'He is as tall as a giant' – That's easy: he's very tall. Same thing with 'as fast as a rocket', 'as graceful as a swan', 'as sneaky as a fox', or 'as quiet as a mouse'. So, at the bottom of the page there, it gives you two sections. So the first section, you're going to use the 'like' comparison, and you're going to fill out how do you say that somebody runs fast? What

does someone run like if they run fast?” Ms. Moran then asked students to give examples of similes using the “like” and “as” patterns.

Ms. Moran then asked students to give examples of similes using the “like” and “as” patterns. After this session, she explained the similarities and differences between similes and metaphors and adopted the same dialogic activity. Classroom observation data shows how Ms. Moran exemplified an important feature of metaphors and used celebrities familiar to the students as an example.

One important thing to remember about metaphors: If the person is actually the word that you’re using, it’s not a metaphor. So, for example, if you were describing how good Tim is at basketball, you could say, oh, he is a pro. But if you were talking about Jeremy Lynn, that’s not a metaphor because he is a literal professional. He gets paid to play basketball. Same thing if you’re talking about Einstein – he is an actual genius; it’s not a metaphor. If you’re talking about (a student), it’s a metaphor saying she’s smart – or maybe you are a genius, I don’t know what your IQ is, but . . . does that make sense? Okay, so just because we see “is” does not mean it’s a metaphor.

In the vignette, we witness Ms. Moran transmitting skills by incorporating teacher-led Q&A and real-life examples. She initiated all the examples of similes and metaphors. Although she tried to engage students in Socratic-style questioning, there is no data showing she incorporated students’ prior knowledge, skills, and personal interests in the teaching process. Nor did she provide students with opportunities to negotiate their learning processes. Students were not co-producers of new knowledge and skills but were passively involved in teacher-centered knowledge transmission. Students’ passive learning is echoed in Ms. Moran’s interview data. When asked to describe the class and students she taught, she said, “A lot of them are not really big fans of learning English. . . . They’re a class that’s a little bit hard to motivate at times. There are some that seem to really enjoy it and some who just could not care less.”

In Ms. Smith’s case, we observed that her pedagogical practices were transmission oriented and focused on text-based literacy analysis. One of the classes started with a teacher-student conversation about an assigned reading. Ms. Smith tried to facilitate students’ comprehension of a passage about a character’s identity struggles and relationship with his mother. Two years after his father died, Michael Ngo and his mother

moved to Canada. Michael grew up in Canada, accepted Canadian culture, and rejected his Chinese self because he wanted to fit in. Michael and his mother shared different cultures, beliefs, and values, so they encountered communication gaps. Ms. Smith's "after reading" questions centered around literary analysis and students' understanding of the article. For example, to help students answer Question 1—*Michael Ngo seems to be torn between two emotions: shame for losing his Chinese heritage and impatience because he wants to be "totally Canadian." Find and record examples of these two emotions from the essay. which one do you think will triumph? Explain your reasons*—she wrote on the board: "Shame for losing his Chinese heritage" and "Impatience because he wants to be totally Canadian." Then she asked students to find three examples of each emotion. Students worked individually and quietly till the end of the class. However, the text-centered approach narrowed their literacy learning to a surface level that centered on literal comprehension of text rather than developing critical literacy (Cummins, 2006). In Ms. Smith's class, there was no explicit support of students' alternative understandings of the text. Opportunities were missed to engage students in exploring issues of power, culture, and identity (Luke, 2012; Zhang, 2023) and potential actions to effect social changes for immigrant children.

2.6.1.2 Transmitting Test-taking Skills for the Standardized Exams

Classroom observations of Ms. Moran and Mr. Johnson reveal that their teaching focused on test-taking skills. Ms. Moran prepared students for a standardized test to earn a BC graduation certificate, while Mr. Johnson imparted skills for students' upcoming mid-term exam, which he marked himself. In Ms. Moran's English literacy classes, we often heard statements like:

Pull out your last quizzes, let's go over them and we will do a little review of how to get information from articles for the quiz tomorrow, and then you will have time to work on your paragraphs for tomorrow. . . . Okay, so I have some things to hand back: some Harry Potter and yesterday's info text quiz. I'm going to hand them back; we will go over them. Then I'm going to talk about the exam a little bit, and then you will have some free time at the end of class because you will be busy with exams next week, so I will be nice.

Quiz reviews occupied most of Ms. Moran's literacy classes, and exam handouts were used frequently in her process of transmitting test-taking techniques. The quizzes

observed in her classes were comprehension-based passages with multiple choices and a writing task. In the following example (Figure 1), she went through Questions 1 to 5 in sequence and asked students to answer the questions.

A Cold from the Cold?

"Put a sweater on! You'll catch a cold!"

Does this sound familiar to you? I know that this was a common phrase in my house as soon as the weather got cold. My mother was convinced that bundling up in the winter was the best way to protect you from getting sick. But is there any truth to this?

Although mothers everywhere may be surprised to hear this, there is actually no scientific evidence to suggest that being cold can get you sick. Most common illnesses, like the flu, colds, or strep throat, are caused by viruses or bacteria. Viral and bacterial infections are only spread through contact with other infected people. If you do not come into contact with a virus or bacteria, then it is impossible for you to get sick with a cold or the flu—whether or not you are wearing a sweater.

So where did this idea that being cold could make you sick come from? The answer probably dates back to 1878. French scientist Louis Pasteur discovered that chickens were naturally immune to anthrax, a deadly disease caused by bacteria. Pasteur believed that the chickens' naturally high body temperatures were responsible for their immunity. He decided to test this theory by placing a chicken in cold water and then infecting it with anthrax. This chicken became sick with anthrax and died. Pasteur then ran the experiment a second time, this time warming a chicken in a blanket after taking it out of the water. This second chicken developed anthrax, but survived. Pasteur concluded that the cold was responsible for the chicken's death. His experiment with chickens then led people to believe that being cold made you more likely to become sick.

However, when a similar experiment was repeated with human beings instead of chickens, the result was very different. In the 1950's, researchers in Chicago gathered hundreds of volunteers to assess the effect of body temperature on the spread of the common cold. In the Chicago experiment, volunteers were divided into two groups: half of them were kept in a cold room for several hours and the other half were kept in a warm room. Both groups were exposed to the same type and amount of germs. The researchers discovered that members of both groups developed colds at the same rate—the cold group was not, in fact, more likely to become sick than the warm group. Several similar experiments have been conducted in the years since then—all with the same results. All of the scientific research has arrived at the same conclusion: being cold does not make it easier for you to catch a cold.

There is some evidence that people do get sick more often in cold weather, but it has nothing to do with forgetting to bundle up when it is chilly. When it is cold outside, people tend to stay inside. With so many people gathered closely together indoors, germs are spread more easily. Colder weather also often means drier air. It is usually less humid outside in the winter than it is in the summer. Turning the heat on indoors also dries out the air. There is some evidence to suggest that dry air can be more likely to make you sick. Drier air can dry out the mucus in your nose. This mucus is one of your body's natural defenses against sickness. When the mucus lining dries out, germs can invade your body much more easily. Therefore, cold weather might make it more likely for you to get sick, but the weather itself is not to blame.

Of course, just because cold weather is not responsible for colds and flu does not mean that it is completely harmless. You can still get hypothermia or frostbite—both of which can be very dangerous—from exposure to cold temperatures. Staying warm may not protect you from a stuffy nose, but it is still a good idea to bundle up when the temperatures fall.

1) According to the passage, the experiment performed by Louis Pasteur

- proved that staying warm could prevent human beings from becoming infected with anthrax
- was done to test Pasteur's theory that chickens could spread disease more quickly if they were warm
- caused people to believe that being cold caused sickness
- suggested that cold chickens were more likely to develop the flu than warm chickens

2) As used in paragraph 5, what is the best synonym for *assess*?

- prevent
- observe
- ignore
- change

3) People who live in warm tropical climates are more likely to develop a cold or the flu during the rainy season. Based on the information in the passage, this is probably because

- cold and flu germs can live longer in wet places than they can in dry places
- wet weather thickens the mucus lining in the nose, making it easier to catch colds
- rainy weather lowers the body temperature, which weakens the body's immunity
- in rainy weather, people are more likely to stay indoors

4) According to the passage, cold weather can do all of the following EXCEPT

- cause stress on your body, which makes your immune system weaker
- make people want to stay indoors, which helps germs spread between people more quickly
- lead to serious medical conditions like hypothermia and frostbite
- dry out your nasal passages, which can make you more likely to get sick

5) The main purpose of this passage is to

- disprove a commonly-held belief
- compare and contrast two different scientific experiments
- provide scientific evidence to support the author's personal opinion
- educate readers about ways to stay healthy during cold and flu season

6) In your own words, explain why people might be more likely to get sick during times of cold weather.

Figure 1: Exam passage sample in Ms. Moran's class

Such practice mediates students' engagement in literacy learning, which is reflected in Ms. Moran's classes where students followed her instructions about how to ensure their performance on the standardized test. Sometimes Ms. Moran reinforced and accentuated the test-taking techniques. For example, she told students not to copy too much information directly from the article when answering the 6th task (Figure 1) but to make personal connections with ideas to earn marks on the exam. When asking Ms. Moran about the factors that influence her English literacy teaching approach, she said:

Parents have very high expectations. One of my students had a B in English last semester. His parents made an appointment and said to me, why does he only have a B, and I explained to them, he is up here with an 84 and our class average is down here at a 62. He is very far above average. And then I said, he is capable of getting an A, I believe, but it's not easy to do so because it's a second language and it's his first time. And they said yeah, everyone told us that these are really

bad marks. I said, no, he is doing very well. And I said, honestly, in Canadian schools, nobody is going to look at his grade 10 marks. This is not the important time. They will be looking at grade 12 for entrance.

Mr. Johnson's literacy classes and pedagogical practices also centered on exams.

Classroom observation data show that he frequently mentioned the difficulty of the upcoming test, then imparted techniques to help students "attack" the exam.

It will be the most difficult English exam you've had so far. . . . You have to write two essays and answer questions in two hours. It is a little bit more challenging. Essay about this: comparative essay, we're going to do this mid-term . . . we're going to prepare for it. It's going to be good practice for your provincial exam. And the good news is, after this exam, we can talk about this exam and think about ways we can do it better. We will prepare you; you guys will be okay.

After reintroducing and reexplaining the requirement of the comparative essay in the writing exam, he taught them to organize an essay plan. In class, he gave time for students to highlight important or useful sentences from an article and asked them to share those sentences in a short Q&A activity. Mr. Johnson clarified the main ideas and examples of the article in a Word document he presented through the projector. He said:

So, I hope this (essay plan) makes you feel a little bit better about your exam. If you have this, you got 4 out of 6. And if you can write very clearly and express your ideas very well, 5 out of 6, 6 out of 6. But we should all try to get that 4. . . . Alright, how many people still feel really bad about this exam?

Transmitting test-oriented skills dominated most of Mr. Johnson's English literacy class. From the classroom observations, we recognized that his teaching often followed these four steps: (1) asking students to collect information from the assigned reading; (2) analyzing the collected information and the essay questions through Q&A activities; (3) making essay plans using Word documents presented via the projector; (4) assigning homework (e.g., completing the essay plan that didn't get finished in the classroom or writing paragraphs from the completed essay plan). Mr. Johnson considered students' English levels when he applied teaching approaches. Classroom observation data show him taking charge of two blocks of students, Blocks B and D, and we observed that he provided more academic support and taught slowly in Block D. He explained in the interview that Block B was made up of students with average or higher English-proficiency levels, whereas students in Block D either entered the offshore school a semester later or had trouble with a course previously. Mr. Johnson said, "They've had to

catch up, and therefore they couldn't join English 12 at the beginning of the year, so they have a particularly difficult task in that these students probably need the most support and most time to get prepared for their provincial, but they had the least amount of time."

Interview data also show that Mr. Johnson's test-oriented teaching practices were impacted by the objectives of the BC literacy curriculum, which outlined explicit and straightforward expectations for students' writing skills and capabilities at the end of each term. For example, he shared in the interview, "Students should be reasonably able to produce given a certain amount of time. Those things, as far as paragraph writing, essay writing, critical analysis, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and terms that they should know." However, he mentioned that he was constrained by the prescribed curriculum, which influenced him in defining, understanding, and assessing students' thoughts and writing.

I find that I'm a little lacking in the understanding of defining and assessing what are clear expressions in other forms, outside of the paragraph form, outside of essay form, how do I judge someone's expression of thought, or if they've presented an idea in a different way, outside of what is being assessed in a provincial exam or some kind of exam format, how do I give the student relevant feedback and assess what they've done and given me, so I find that a bit challenging.

Mr. Johnson said he considers the BC curriculum expectations when teaching. However, he also expressed that he was in search of the "best practice" in literacy teaching, which underlined the importance of "incorporating different styles of delivering content" that he had mentioned in the interview. We elaborate on his related practices in the section on social constructivism.

2.6.1.3 Transmitting through Multimodal Designs

Classroom observation data show that Ms. Moran and Ms. Smith used transmission-oriented pedagogy in their teaching practices. Ms. Moran embedded multimodal presentations designed by students, and Ms. Smith incorporated different modes including PowerPoint presentations, paper charts, diagrams, and flow charts to scaffold students' understanding of writing elements.

We also noticed that Ms. Moran, apart from transmitting print-based literacy skills, incorporated multimodal pedagogy to meet the BC curriculum expectations. In one of her English literacy classes, she assigned group presentation work and encouraged students to choose a scene from an English book or movie. Students worked in two groups and acted out those scenes. Every member of each group participated and played a role. Ms. Moran said:

This way you can practice speaking correct English, and it will give you a way to learn how to pronounce words properly. . . . In your excellent presentations, you're going to make sure that you use proper grammar and that you pronounce words properly. You're going to have exceptional presentation skills. Those are things like looking out at the audience and speaking loudly and clearly so that we can hear you. Having some emotion, because it's boring if you just sound like this (spoke in a flat monotone).

In her interview, Ms. Moran mentioned the six prescribed learning objectives (PLOs) of the BC English literacy curriculum focusing on speaking, listening, reading, writing, viewing, and representing. When talking about why she engaged students in oral presentation, she said the reading and writing PLOs can be assessed more easily than the other aspects; therefore, presentations are a practical form of assessment. Thus, she implemented multimodal literacy pedagogy for the purpose of evaluating students' literacy skills based on the BC curriculum expectations.

Moreover, we observed that Ms. Moran promoted students' digital literacy by allowing them to use their own computers, tablets, and phones to discuss ideas for their presentations. However, it is worth noting that she required the students to use English only in the discussions and presentations, which hinders students' use of their multilingual repertoires. For example, in her instructions for group presentation, she said:

I don't want you to look up summaries or make a presentation about the movie, do something from the movie. Second, if you translate it from Chinese, you're going to lose marks because the point of this is to have proper English. Translators don't give you proper English.

Ms. Moran's English-only focus contradicts the definition of literacy she expressed in the interview: "Literacy is a person who is able to use whatever language in order to make themselves heard and communicate with others and be able to get around in the world."

Data show that Ms. Smith's literacy teaching emphasized multimodal design to promote productive learning in a scenario where students were immersed in an unfamiliar and new domain. In Ms. Smith's class, she required students to write an original composition (a 500-word story) using imagery. First, she asked students to create a character for their stories and transmitted information on how to form a character, saying, "Give us one quality that your character has. What happens in your character's formative moment?" Then, she reinforced the five features of a composition: the beginning, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution. Third, she gave students a handout with a list of sensory words (Figure 2) and asked students to pick two words from each sense column and write a sentence for each about their characters.

Sensory Details Word List				
Keep the following lists of words to help you improve your writing. Using sensory words can help you provide more details and examples in your writing. Add to this list as you learn more sensory words.				
Sight	Sound	Touch	Taste	Smell
bleary	bellow	balmy	appetizing	acid
blurred	blare	biting	<u>bitter</u>	aroma
<u>brilliant</u>	buzz	bristly	bland	aromatic
colorless	cackle	bumpy	creamy	fetid
dazzling	cheer	chilly	delectable	foul-smelling
dim	clamor	coarse	<u>delicious</u>	fragrant
<u>dingy</u>	clang	cold	flavorful	moldy
faded	crackle	<u>cool</u>	flavorless	musty
faint	creak	<u>crawly</u>	gingery	noxious
flashy	grumble	creepy	luscious	odiferous
gaudy	gurgle	cuddly	nauseating	odor
glance	hiss	dusty	palatable	odorless
gleaming	howl	feathery	peppery	old
glimpse	hush	feverish	piquant	perfumed
glistening	jabber	fluffy	refreshing	pungent
glittering	mumble	furry	ripe	putrid
gloomy	murmur	fuzzy	rotten	rancid
glossy	mutter	goopy	salty	rank
glowing	rauc	greasy	savory	reeking
grimy	rave	gritty	scrumptious	scent
hazy	roar	hairy	sharp	scented
indistinct	rumble	<u>hot</u>	sour	<u>smell</u>
misty	rustle	<u>icy</u>	spicy	<u>spicy</u>
peer	screech	limp	spoiled	steno
radiant	shriek	lumpy	stale	sweet
shadowy	shrill	moist	sugary	<u>walt</u>
shimmering	sizzle	oily	sweet	whiff
shiny	snarl	powdery	taffy	
smudged	squawk	prickly	tasteless	
sparkling	squeal	scratchy	tasty	
streaked	swish	shivery	unappetizing	
striped	thud	silky	unripe	
tarnished	thump	slimy	vinegary	
twinkling	whimper	slippery	yummy	
	yelp	spongy	zesty	
		springy		
		squashy		
		sticky		
		sweaty		
		velvety		

Figure 2: Sensory Details Word list

As students finished writing sentences, she gave them another handout to map an outline for their story (Figure 3).

Short Story – Plot Chart

10. _____
 9. _____
 8. _____
 7. _____
 6. _____
 5. _____
 4. _____
 3. _____
 2. _____
 1. _____

Climax: _____
 11. _____
 12. _____
 13. _____
 14. _____

Rising Action →

Falling Action →

Resolution: _____

Exposition
 Protagonist: _____
 Antagonist: _____
 Setting – Time: _____
 Setting – Place: _____

Internal Conflict: _____
External Conflict: _____

Themes/Symbols: _____

Figure 3: Plot Chart

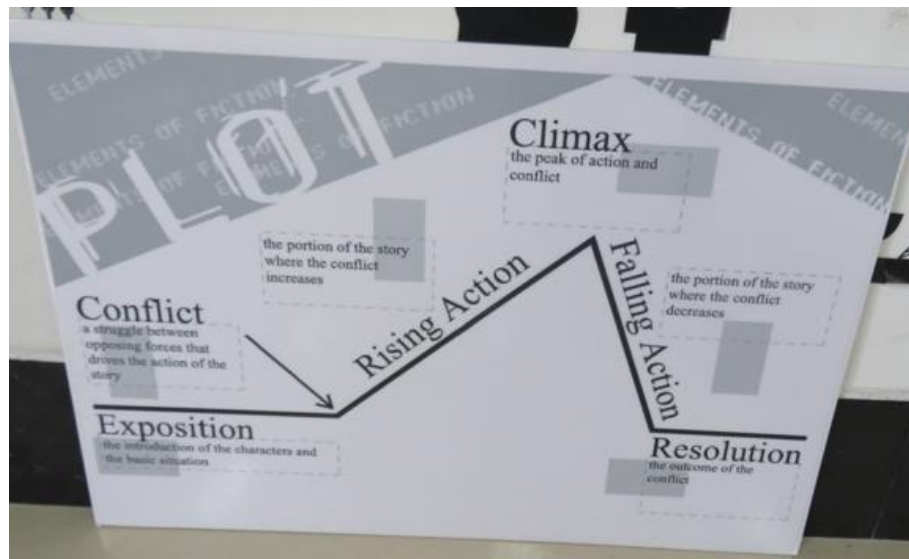


Figure 4: Plot Diagram

She scaffolded the task by requiring students to talk about their characters, write sentences using sensory words, then write an outline for a story. She also displayed a

story plot diagram at the front of the classroom (Figure 4). In the next class, Ms. Smith asked students to write their original compositions using their outline as guide.

In sum, Ms. Moran's and Mr. Johnson's pedagogies centered around knowledge and skill transmission. Their teaching approaches entailed one-size-fits-all objectives based on the BC curriculum expectations to train students in written and oral expression skills and prepare them for standardized tests. Ms. Smith engaged students in multimodal literacy learning; however, her approach still focused on transmitting knowledge and skills from teacher to students.

2.6.2 Sociocultural Constructivism

Classroom observation data indicate that Mr. Johnson's and Ms. Smith's pedagogical approaches are in line with the social constructivist orientation. Both teachers incorporated teacher-student interactive activities and multiple modes to co-construct literacy knowledge and support students' cultural and semiotic repertoires. In Ms. Smith's teaching, we only observed her incorporating students' linguistic repertoires.

Mr. Johnson asked students to respond to a book they read in class. *The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor* (Garcia Márquez, 1986) is based on a true story about a man who was lost at sea for 10 days without food or water. Students were asked to create performances about what he experienced; such details are not mentioned in the book. Students could select from three main options that combined writing and performance elements: dialogue and performance, short story and dramatic reading, and movie with subtitles. To clarify how students should perform if they chose to do a video, Mr. Johnson showed a video of Jimmy Fallon singing a duet and playing both roles of a song from *Beauty and the Beast*. Classroom observation data show students' multimodal presentations. The first observed presentation included a video with subtitles. In the second presentation, we witnessed a dramatic reading of a story that a group of students wrote, with pictures displayed through a projector to support the background. In the third presentation, the modes adopted by students were the most diverse, including visual, audio, and gestural. The characters of the story were drawn on popsicle sticks, which were shown in front of a background in the video. With background sounds of water

emphasizing that the story takes place near the ocean, the students narrated the subtitles as they appeared on the screen. All presentations demonstrated meaning making in a variety of modes. The multimodal pedagogical practice actualized in Mr. Johnson's class provided students with opportunities to imagine, create, and perform, promoting creative thinking and active learning (Cummins, 2006). These practices were in response to his understanding of the BC literacy curriculum: "The idea of literacy going away from just like a numeracy or a simple understanding of text base and talking about different ways that people are able to communicate with each other and various forms of expression." They also reflect the "best practice" Mr. Johnson mentioned in the interview, in which he identified two points that influenced his pedagogy: "Number one, get other people involved so it's less teacher focused; number two, make things more kinesthetic and visual."

Classroom observations demonstrate that Ms. Smith's teaching practices interwove two pedagogical orientations: transmission and social constructivist. First, she engaged students in a dialogic activity to connect content and students' out-of-school experiences.

Vignette 2

Ms. Smith connects students' interests in pop music and their interests in writing poems: "We are going to be looking at some poetry and you guys have already written me some poems. Now you are going to be writing your own poem and presenting it to the class. First, we're going to look at 'Fireworks' by Katy Perry." Then Ms. Smith presents the lyrics and asks students to listen to the song while reading the lyrics. She also adds, "If you feel tempted to sing along, please, do not hold back." After playing the song, Ms. Smith asks the class a series of simple questions, "What's the song about?" "What is she saying about fireworks?" "A firework is beautiful. Katy Perry is saying you are a firework. What poetic device is that?", and "Why metaphor?". Then Ms. Smith presents an assignment to involve students in poem creation, lyrics appreciation, and presentations.

Second, Ms. Smith promoted active learning through multiple linguistic, cultural, and semiotic modes by involving students in poem creation, lyrics appreciation, and presentations. In this assignment, she provided students with two options: writing a free verse poem of 8 to 10 lines and illustrating poetic devices in the poem, or using their phones to pick a song that described how they were feeling that day and identifying poetic devices in the lyrics. We observed that Ms. Smith supported students' bilingual

repertoires because she allowed students to choose either an English song or a Mandarin song for their presentations. But students were required to translate the Chinese lyrics into English. We also witnessed that she encouraged students to incorporate multiple modes in their presentation. She said:

You can play the song for us, make us listen to it, and then start talking about the song. Or you can play the song after your presentation. Any more questions? . . . (student asks if they have to do PowerPoint) If it's going to help you, yes! If you want to show us a video, go for it. If you feel like singing and it will make your presentation better, go for it.

In the class, Ms. Smith gave students time to discuss and prepare. We observed that students were coming up with their own opportunities for semiotic meaning making to accompany the print literacy activity at hand when they were preparing for the presentation. For example, students were allowed to use digital devices and technologies such as PowerPoint, laptop, VPN, and Wi-Fi that helped them search for information about songs and their corresponding poetic devices. To encourage students to hone their presentation skills, she showed a video of a student delivering a poem emotionally and dynamically about his alcoholic dad and his experience of coming out as gay at 15. Classroom observation data shows students integrating multiple modes in their presentations, including PowerPoint, video, iPad, and apps, and identifying and explaining poetic devices in the lyrics such as consonance, hyperbole, metaphor, and personification.

We observed Ms. Smith's efforts to encourage students' use of their bilingual repertoires in her literacy class, which the interview data confirms. Ms. Smith spoke six languages and was fluent in four of them. Her mother tongue was IsiXhosa and she had been taught English since kindergarten. In the observed class, she encouraged students to use Chinese lyrics in the presentation. In the interview, she described herself as a "walking lesson" for students and students as "walking lessons" for her, because of the knowledge co-construction through teacher-student interactions. She said:

We often joke around about the language barrier, and they'll say something in their mother tongue and I'll say something in my mother tongue, and it's amazing how much I've learned thus far just from the kids because I don't have a

Mandarin tutor or anything like that. And they're often very interested in "How do you say this in an African language?" "Which African language?" "Your African language."

Vignette 3

Mr. Johnson and the students get into a conversation about Chinese food and what they can expect to find in Canada. He asks them how many know how to cook and what they can cook. Students share, in English, dishes they can cook. A student wants to know about food in Canada and America. Mr. Johnson asks students who have traveled what they have experienced there. Students are able to speak in English to share personal experiences and make connections. They then discuss restaurant behaviors. Again, he asks students who have experienced this to tell other students. They then talk about tax and tip and how it works.

Vignette 3 demonstrates Mr. Johnson's focus on cultural and language diversity in his English literacy teaching to encourage his students to embrace differences. In his class, he arranged a discussion about the differences between Chinese and Western cultures. He started by showing a music video of the Spice Girls, a popular female group when he was the students' age. Through discussion, Mr. Johnson exhibited the movement in the 1990s about the empowerment of women. The music video shows girls who are brave, creative, and positive and emphasizes that women can do anything and can be anyone. Then he encouraged students to share Chinese music and pop groups to explore the cultural similarities and differences. Class observation data show that students were actively involved in the classroom activity, discussing and introducing popular female groups in China. Mr. Johnson knew little about pop culture in China, so students suggested that he google the groups they mentioned. We witnessed abundant evidence of discussions and interactions among students and the teacher talking about why those groups were popular and what talents they had. At the end of the discussion, Mr. Johnson said, "This is what's going to happen a lot next year. You and a person from another country are going to talk about your culture. What do you like? What do I like? So one thing you could do to prepare yourself is just watch something from current things. Watch something from Japan, watch something from America, listen to something from Italy – you cannot know everything, but it's nice to just get some experience." In another discussion about overseas life, students were concerned that the language barrier would be a huge challenge, and Mr. Johnson reassured them that Canada is a multicultural and

multilingual country and people speak English in different ways. Moreover, Mr. Johnson encouraged students to connect their out-of-school experience to engage them in the discussion.

2.6.3 Absence of Transformative Pedagogy

The data revealed insufficient evidence of transformative pedagogy in all three teachers' English literacy teaching. But in Mr. Johnson's class, we noticed that the reading materials and writing tasks he selected were oriented towards social inequalities and power. For example, he required the students to read two speeches by Barack Obama and highlight the main idea of each. He wrote on the board: What is Barack Obama's attitude towards Rosa Parks? He asked students to use the information from the speeches to create an essay plan for a comparative essay question. He then created a Word document to show the comparative essay structure to students. After students finished reading, he started the teacher-led questioning.

Vignette 4

After students finish reading, Mr. Johnson starts a round of teacher-led questioning: "Okay, so who is Rosa Parks?", "What did she do that was so important?", "Okay, what time is this? This is not now? Like 500 years ago, maybe 70 or 80 years ago. Now if we think about America, we have a bus, 80 years ago, where do Black people sit on the bus?", "Now, did Rosa Parks sit in the back?", "No. Where did she sit?", "And then what did the bus driver do? Goodbye Rosa Parks, right? Get off the bus. So goodbye, get off the bus, and then nothing else happened? What did many Black people do after this event? Does anybody know about the history? . . . When we talk about Women's Day, what did people do on Women's Day?", "Protest, a protest. Lots of people come together and they..." , "Kind of like a fight, but they share their ideas . . . same thing at that time—lots of Black people came together and they said, we want . . . what do you think they want?" Mr. Johnson keeps asking his probing questions after students' short answers to the above questions. He concludes the conversation by saying, "We are normal people; we are just like you. We should sit wherever we want . . . just like you do." Then Mr. Johnson and the students move on and compare the information in the two speeches. Students type their ideas into the template that Mr. Johnson created.

The in-class interactive conversation and discussion revealed that students reflected on white privilege and racial discrimination. Mr. Johnson co-constructed the knowledge with the students through teacher-led conversations and questioning, but he missed opportunities to engage students to critically analyze and evaluate the historical, sociocultural, and political relationships encoded in Rosa Parks' story. The pedagogical

practice combined both transmission and social constructivist orientations with the main purpose of training students to compose an essay plan as test preparation.

A similar scenario was observed in Mr. Johnson's writing class. The task requirements are shown in Figure 5.

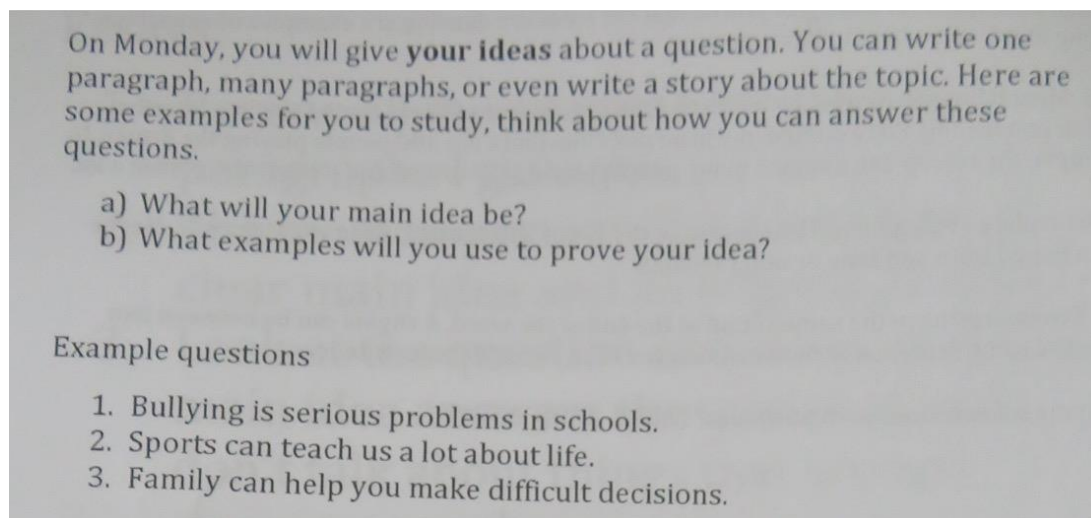


Figure 5: Task Requirement

Classroom observation data show that Mr. Johnson selected the first example—"Bullying is a serious problem in our schools"—to transmit writing techniques. He encouraged students to present their main ideas and provide examples of the effects of school bullying. He then emphasized and explained the importance of "because" in writing. Through the teacher-student interaction, students constructed the main idea, bullying is a serious problem in our school, and responded with examples using "because" to prove it: "because it greatly affects physical and mental health"; "because it can negatively influence students' futures"; "because it can destroy people's confidence." We witnessed the teacher's transmission of essay-writing skills and how he engaged students in discussing school bullying as a serious social issue. However, the focus of this class was on preparing students for the writing test. The instructions didn't connect to students' lived experiences or activate students' text-to-self connection to develop an agentive self, shape a critical consciousness, and transform the world (Ajayi, 2015).

Even though Mr. Johnson's teaching practice encouraged students to connect with their personal lives to evaluate social issues, the discussion focused only on experience sharing. For example, in Mr. Johnson's class discussion about overseas life, one of the students asked if there was racism in Canada; classmates talked about their experiences in airport security and Mr. Johnson shared his own story about racism. There were no collective reflections about the reasons for racism in Canada and what social actions could be taken to effect changes.

This section has presented the teaching practices of English literacy teachers, which correspond to three pedagogical orientations. The vignettes and interview data reveal factors that have shaped the teachers' pedagogical practices, such as meeting expectations of various examinations, parts, and the BC curriculum.

2.7 Conclusion and Significance

Two pedagogical orientations were observed in the three English literacy classes (i.e., transmission and social constructivism); however, the transformative orientation was absent in all the participant teachers' classes. Interview and classroom observation data show that teachers' understanding of literacy, the BC provincial curricular expectations, the local and global standardization accountability systems, students' varied English proficiency levels, and parental expectations affected the teachers' pedagogical orientations in the transnational literacy classes.

The teaching practices of Ms. Moran and Ms. Smith aligned with transmission-oriented pedagogy, which resembles Freire's (1970) "banking concept" of education. In teacher-centered classrooms, teachers imparted knowledge about figures of speech and reading and writing skills. The findings show that Ms. Moran centered on mere literacy, which focuses on a paper-based, official, and standardized form of language (New London Group, 1996), and transmitted skills required by the BC curriculum to the students. Her instruction incorporated dialogue between the teacher and students to impart knowledge about figures of speech. While transmitting knowledge and skills, she gave examples for students to better understand the content. However, opportunities for students to connect to their own out-of-school experiences, prior knowledge, cultural backgrounds, and

personal interests were limited. In Ms. Moran's class, students were involved in a rote learning process and transformed into "receiving objects" (Freire, 1970), passively acquiring information and knowledge from the teacher. In the interview, Ms. Moran commented that students had less interest in English learning and were hard to motivate, which was reflected in the classroom observation in which students were not engaged in the learning process. Similarly, Ms. Smith incorporated various modes to support students' writing skills. However, her text-based literacy analysis class shows her transmission-oriented pedagogical practice, in which activities were guided by teacher-dominated practice. The text analysis was superficial because the students comprehended the content of the text with limited opportunities to develop a deep understanding of societal and cultural relations encoded within. In transnational schooling contexts in which educators from different educational systems and diverse cultural and linguistic knowledges meet, the curricular emphasis should be placed on literacy learners' abilities to critically engage with differences and explore and affirm their own values from the Other's viewpoints through situated interaction and negotiation (Zhang, 2019).

This study's findings echo recent findings about literacy pedagogies in transnational education settings (Zhang, 2023): that local and global standardization accountability systems affect teachers' practices. Ms. Moran's and Mr. Johnson's grade 10 and 12 students bore the pressure of the BC provincial exams, namely grade 10 literacy assessment and grade 12 literacy assessment. These tests were developed for local students in BC and could be culturally biased for students located in transnational school settings. Classroom observation showed that Ms. Moran's focus was on imparting technical skills for standardized tests. Parental expectations joined to affect the implementation of the English literacy curriculum. Some of Mr. Johnson's classes focused on teaching students skills in comparative essay writing for the school's mid-term exam, which was a mock test of the BC provincial exams. Teaching students how to collect information, from reading articles to writing an explicit essay plan, made up most of his literacy classes. His implemented curriculum was mediated by his students' varied English proficiency levels. But as Mr. Johnson expressed in the interview, it was also affected by the BC examination expectations, which were not developed to assess transnational education students whose expectations might be different from what is

expected in the BC provincial exams. The heavy focus on exam preparation constrained the teachers' practices in English literacy classes in cross-border schooling. Ms. Moran's one-size-fits-all approach especially limited the space to engage students to employ their personal life experiences to generate alternative understandings of the learned content (Ajayi, 2015), which was developed in a different context and for a different student population.

Classroom observation data show that all three teachers encouraged students to incorporate multiple modes (e.g., written, visual, audio, and gestural resources). However, the transmission of information and skills accounted for most of the three teachers' observed classes. There were limited opportunities for students to connect with their out-of-school experiences through the use of multimodal resources, though it is one of the four dimensions of critical multimodal literacy (Ajayi, 2015). For example, multimodal presentations in Mr. Johnson's class enabled students to take control of their own learning. Students were given three presentation options and imaginative space to create a performance about what was missed in *The Story of the Shipwrecked Sailor*. This activity reflects Mr. Johnson's belief that "best practice" in literacy teaching is less teacher focused and more kinesthetic and visual. Ms. Smith also engaged students in creating multimodal presentations to mobilize their semiotic and linguistic repertoires. For example, she built on their prior knowledge and out-of-school interests (e.g., Katy Perry and her song "Fireworks"). She encouraged students to take ownership of learning by employing their preferred modes in their presentations. She also supported students' bilingual repertoires by encouraging them to use their mother tongue in class activities. Ms. Moran encouraged students to do a role-play presentation using scenes from an English book or movie. However, her English-only requirement in the students' discussions and presentations contradicted her own conceptualization of literacy: that "literacy is a person who is able to use whatever language in order to make themselves heard and communicate with others and be able to get around in the world." Her practice also differed from the essence of critical multimodal literacy, which expects teachers to engage students in literacy practices and incorporate their multilingual repertoires (Ajayi, 2015). Different from Zhang's (2023) findings in a Canadian transnational education program in Hong Kong, the multimodal productions in these literacy

classrooms did not go beyond test preparation nor engage students to initiate critical conversations or act to transform the world (Ajayi, 2015).

Besides the two pedagogical orientations that shaped teachers' literacy teaching practices, this study's findings show the absence of transformative pedagogy in all three teachers' classes. Although topics about social inequalities emerged in selected texts and observed discussions in Mr. Johnson's class, his approach encompassed transmission and social constructivist orientations and focused on imparting test-taking skills. There is no evidence in the data showing the three teachers engaging students in critical analysis of history, social culture, and power.

Sino-Canadian transnational programs transplant curricula from developed countries or adopt hybrid curricula to support students' metalinguistic and cultural repertoires and prepare them to be global citizens (Zhang, 2015, 2019). Future teachers should build on students' prior knowledge and lived experience for meaning making and identity construction in their transnational spaces. Existent studies conceptualize places as generative and agentic spatial repertoires that affect transnational students' meaning making (e.g., Canagarajah, 2018; Zhang, 2023). For example, Zhang's (2023) study on a transnational education program in Hong Kong shows that transnational students' cross-border encounters with local-global places were agentic in powerful meaning making. Students' exploration of their encounters with different places (e.g., their cross-border bodily movements, their situated lifeworlds in their home countries, and their experiences in culturally and linguistically diverse international schools) could generate alternative understanding of texts and critical meaning making that uses diverse linguistic, cultural, and semiotic resources to advocate for social equity. English literacy pedagogy should not only focus on transmitting Western-centric content and English-only knowledge prescribed in the curriculum but also on enabling students to have a critical understanding of how knowledge intersects with power, history, society, and culture (Zhang, 2022, 2023). By incorporating culturally and linguistically responsive teaching, teachers should support students' cultural and linguistic repertoires to promote their own subjectivities and encourage different perspectives when analyzing and creating texts. We also propose

the expansive use of multimodal literacies to support students' out-of-school semiotic choices in their meaning making.

This study contributes to the existing knowledge about literacy education in K–12 transnational education programs around the globe. Its findings could shed light on the future development of English literacy teaching and preservice teacher education in the transnational education field that could challenge the privileging of curricula from developed countries and decenter Western-centric knowledge transmission. As Zhang (2023) has proposed, transnational education programs and globalized curricula hold potential to nurture responsible global citizens; however, transnational education institutions and educators should create opportunities for students to investigate the entangled effects of globalization, linguistic imperialism, and standardization upon diverse students' meaning making and becoming.

Chapter 3

3 Thesis Conclusion

This chapter contains a review of the integrated article, including a summary of the findings and the implications for future researchers and educators.

3.1 A Summary of the Findings

Based on three English literacy teachers' interview data and classroom observations, this study found that two pedagogical orientations (i.e., transmission and social constructivist) were used by English literacy teachers in the transnational education program. This study also found the absence of transformative pedagogy in all three teachers' teaching practices.

The three teachers adopted three transmission-oriented approaches when implementing the English literacy curricula: transmitting literacy skills, transmitting test-taking skills for standardized exams, and transmitting through multimodal designs.

Two teachers incorporated teacher-student interactive activities and multiple modes to co-construct literacy knowledge and support students' cultural and semiotic repertoires. However, only one teacher supported students' use of their bilingual repertoire in her teaching practices.

This study found insufficient evidence of transformative pedagogy in all three teachers' English literacy teaching. Although the selected reading materials and writing tasks in one teacher's classes were oriented towards unequal social issues and power, there were missed opportunities to engage students to critically analyze and evaluate the historical, sociocultural, and political relationships. There were also few opportunities that connected students' live experiences or activated students' text-to-self connections to develop an agentive self, shaping a critical consciousness and transforming the world (Ajayi, 2015).

3.2 The Implication of the Study

The findings of this study contribute to the existing knowledge about literacy education in K-12 transnational education programs around the globe, especially to teachers' English education experience in a global schooling context (Zhang, 2015). We suggest that policymakers respond to educators' needs and challenges in globalized schooling contexts and provide in-service and pre-service teachers with the professional development of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Pedagogically, the findings suggested that future teachers should build on students' prior knowledge and lived experience in their transnational spaces for meaning making and identity construction. The focus of English literacy pedagogy should not only focus on transmitting Western-centric content and English-only knowledge prescribed in the curriculum but also on supporting students' linguistic, cultural, and semiotic repertoires (Ajayi, 2015). For future researchers and scholars, we hope this study could construct their understanding of the implementation of the English literacy curriculum and spark their interest in exploring various aspects of cross-border teaching and learning.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Original and Most Recent Ethics Approvals



**Western
Research**

Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
NMREB Amendment Approval Notice

Research Ethics

Principal Investigator: Dr. Zheng Zhang
Department & Institution: Education, Western University

NMREB File Number: 108476
Study Title: A multiple case study of literacy curricula in Canadian transnational education programs in China

NMREB Revision Approval Date: February 15, 2017
NMREB Expiry Date: November 15, 2017

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Instruments	Interview Questions (Principal or School Administrator) English	2017/02/04
Instruments	Interview Questions (Student) English	2017/02/04
Instruments	Interview Questions (Teachers) English	2017/02/04
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Parents - English	2017/02/03
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Principal and School Administrator - English	2017/02/03
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Teachers - English	2017/02/03
Revised Letter of Information & Consent	Written and Oral Consent (Canadian and Chinese Policy Makers) - English	2017/02/03
Revised Western University Protocol	Received February 5, 2017.	

The Western University Non-Medical Science Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the amendment to the above named study, as of the NMREB Amendment Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Ethics O
EO: Erik

Western University, Research, Support Services Bldg., Rm. 5150
London, ON, Canada N6G 1G9 t. 519.661.3036 f. 519.850.2466 www.uwo.ca/research/ethics



Date: 20 November 2023
To: Dr. Zheng Zhang
Project ID: 108476
Study Title: A multiple case study of literacy curricula in Canadian transnational education programs in China
Application Type: NMREB Amendment Form
Review Type: Delegated
Full Board Reporting Date: 01/Dec/2023
Date Approval Issued: 20/Nov/2023 14:13
REB Approval Expiry Date: 24/Oct/2024

Dear Dr. Zheng Zhang,

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the WREM application form for the amendment, as of the date noted above.

Documents Approved:

Document Name	Document Type	Document Date	Document Version
108476 Revised Romeo Protocol clean version Nov. 8 2023	Protocol	08/Nov/2023	1

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario. Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB. The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Note: This correspondence includes an electronic signature (validation and approval via an online system that is compliant with all regulations).

Appendix B: Questions for Educators

Overarching structure, philosophy, and key planning texts (Intended and Hidden Curricula)

1. How long have you worked at this school? Have you worked in other Canadian schools?
2. Please describe your class (e.g., classroom make-up, size, its role in the Canadian offshore program, students' academic levels, and students' Mandarin or English proficiency levels).
3. Please describe the types of families and students you serve (e.g., ethnic groups, socio-economic status of the family, students above/below the cut-off level of high school entrance examination, and reasons that they chose the Canadian offshore program).
4. What's your understanding of the philosophy/approach of your school with respect to literacy? (institutional curriculum)
5. What's the rationale to combine the two at your school? How do these English curricula relate? (programmatic curriculum)
6. What is taught using a Canadian provincial English literacy curriculum (reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and representing [multimodal literacy], critical literacy) and what is taught using the Chinese curriculum (Chinese and Canadian provincial/international programmatic curriculum)?

Opportunities for Students and Educators in the Canadian Offshore Program (Operational Curricula)

7. What major literacy education philosophies/theories (Sociocultural theory [connecting individual and cultural experience of the reader with the text], literacy conventions (literacy devices), critical theory/pedagogy/literacy, multimodal

literacies, new literacies) inform your own approach of literacy education in general? (teacher's belief)

8. How would your approach of literacy education be influenced by your literacy learning experience? (teacher identity)
9. How would your approach of literacy education be influenced by your life experience? (teacher identity: inter-cultural marriage, being global, immigrant, social activism, social equity, environment protection, gender issues, experience with linguistic and cultural diversity)
10. How would your approach of literacy education be influenced by your teacher education in teacher's college? (teacher identity: teacher education)
11. How are information and technology literacy, critical literacy (to promote social change), and multimodal literacies (if any) related to China's Canada's, your school's, and your own philosophy or approach of literacy?
12. What specific literacy teaching approaches and resources (e.g., technological devices) are you using in your classes? What conditions that the school provides that enable your literacy teaching approaches and use of resources? What conditions do you think the school can provide to enable literacy teaching approaches and use of resources?
13. How is academic literacy (if any) (e.g., print-based; written and oral) related to China's Canada's, your school's, and your own philosophy or approach of literacy?
14. What do you hope to provide to your students in the Canadian offshore program vis-à-vis literacy and their identity options in your preparation for literacy teaching?
15. What accommodations do you intend to make for the Canadian/international literacy curricula to better fit the student population at your school situated in China?

16. What are some of the major ways, if any, your organization attempts to connect English and Mandarin curricula to enable students' "full linguistic potential"?
17. What types of literacy learning opportunities (particularly those related to new literacies, multimodal literacy, and critical literacy) does your organization attempt to provide for students in the Canadian offshore program?
18. What major influences (e.g., school's mission statement, parental expectations, students' outside of school literacy practices etc.) inform your literacy education approach in general?
19. What specific texts/documents/policies do you take into consideration in your organization's (curricular) planning in general?

Opportunities for Students and Educators in the Canadian Offshore Program (Hidden, and Null Curricula)

20. Are there literacy learning opportunities you would like to provide but cannot at this time? If yes, what are they? (constraints) What might be missing or not taught or provided in the Canadian offshore program?
21. What would be needed for the creation of optimum literacy-related learning opportunities?
22. What is your role as an educator in providing these opportunities and deciding how and what to teach within your school? [definition of literacy, material selection, genre choices, assessment design, language choices]?
23. What supports/professional development opportunities are provided to educators in the provision of literacy-related learning opportunities (particularly those related to different types of literacy) particularly for students enrolled in the Canadian Offshore Program?
24. What are your suggestions for teacher education for Canadian offshore schools?

25. In what ways, if any, is your organization's Canadian offshore program different or similar to those offered in the Canadian/Chinese public high schools with respect to: philosophy/approach, literacy learning opportunities, and identity options available to students, educators, anything else you consider to be pertinent?
26. What are your thoughts regarding Canadian offshore programs in China or less developed regions? (particularly in relation to literacy learning opportunities and the identity options available for students)?
27. What are your thoughts regarding critique of offshore Canadian schools as promoting educational inequality, linguistic imperialism of English, and Western-centralism?

Curriculum Vitae

Name:	Rong Hai
Post-secondary Education and Degrees:	<p>Sichuan International Studies University (Chengdu Institute) Chengdu, Sichuan, China 2007-2011 B.A.</p> <p>University of Windsor Windsor, Ontario, Canada 2014-2016 M.Ed.</p> <p>The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2020-2023 M.A.</p>
Honours and Awards:	<p>AER Graduate Scholarship for Literacy Studies in Education 2020-2021, 2021-2022</p> <p>Western Entrance Scholarship 2020-2022</p>
Related Work Experience	<p>ESL teacher of Grade 10 and 11 Dulwich College, Zhuhai Campus 2019-2020</p>

Conference Presentations

Zhang, Z., & Hai, R. (2023). *Variations of critical literacies practices in a secondary transnational education program*. Paper presented at the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) 2023 Conference, Toronto, Ontario.

Hai, R. (2023). *Implementation of English literacy curriculum in Sino-Canadian transnational education program*. TESOL 2023 Graduate Student Research Forum, Portland, Oregon. [Accepted as paper presentation, but didn't attend because of COVID].