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Learning language with technology in a hybrid university EAP course

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Abstract

Today's college campuses are offering increased alternatives to the traditional face-to-face classroom, including hybrid or blended courses that combine online and face-to-face elements. Language learning is no exception. This instrumental case study examines the affordances and constraints of integrating technology into a hybrid language classroom, following one teacher's construction of an undergraduate, hybrid English for Academic Purpose (EAP) grammar class for ten international students in their first year of study at an American university. Drawing on data from this single classroom case, findings address both the instructor's and students' perceptions of course content and delivery, knowledge expression activities, and classroom assessments. An understanding of multivoiced interpretations of hybrid learning illuminates the benefits and challenges of technology integration. Data sources include teacher, student, and focus group interviews, student pre-, mid-, and post-class surveys, document analysis of instructor lessons and course design, classroom observations, and reflective journaling over the course of the semester. Data analysis drew deeply from the phenomenological approach to data organization and interpretation. Findings were presented using textural, structural, and composite phenomenological elements. Through active collaboration with the language instructor, I document one teacher's experience in purposeful hybrid course development and design, carefully recording and describing the essence of integrating technology tools to teach and the meanings that students articulate as they engage in new learning modalities. The research found that not only did the international students display a typical range of course success, they also articulated a value for

learning how to use the technology in a new and unfamiliar learning environment. While there was some confusion on the students' part about the distinction between learning independently and completing online activities/homework, the students reported that the self-reliant nature of the hybrid format better prepared them for their future studies. This dissertation yielded empirically-based, practical implications to support the implementation of knowledge-driven, pedagogically sound hybrid learning environments.

Table of Contents

List of tables and figures

Tables

Figure

Chapter 1

Introduction

The Background

Before the advent of Internet use on college campuses, a majority of students would probably have fit into the usual mold. Most undergraduate students probably lived on campus, ate in the cafeteria, and took their classes in a classroom, in a building, on a campus with a face-to-face teacher in a live setting. Today's students may follow that same path, but now the modern student has the option to make use of some of the more recent benefits of technology in the classroom and receive a portion of their instruction partially online or completely online. Degree programs have had to make significant adjustments in their pedagogical approaches to a meet the needs of a new generation of students.

A 2002 article in the *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks* predicted that in the future 80-90 percent of all higher education courses would be blended (Young, 2002). Already by 2004 almost 46 percent of all undergraduate institutions in the US offered blended courses (Allen, Seaman, & Garrett, 2007). Many of today's students may be looking for or be offered alternatives to basic face-to-face classrooms as technology makes vast amounts of information available at the press of a button and seemingly endless online resources available to teachers and students, often free of charge.

In *The World Is Open* (2009), Bonk reports on the changing landscape of hybrid classes and students who are embracing the new opportunities that partially online courses provide. Students indicate they liked the choices offered by blended

online courses. According to the report, their key words were *flexibility*, *convenience*, and *high quality*. According to a September 2010 US Department of Education review of online learning studies:

> …interest in hybrid approaches that blend in-class and online activities is increasing. Policy-makers and practitioners want to know about the effectiveness of Internet based, interactive online learning approaches and need information about the conditions under which online learning is effective. (Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2010)

Five years later, the new US Department report (2015) states that "Across the spectrum of higher education – public and private, four-year and two-year, on-campus, online, and hybrid – innovative leaders are showcasing new models to allow more students to get an affordable, quality degree or credential" (para. 15). The report also states what most of us already know: A post-secondary credential has never been more important or more expensive. Meeting the needs of the new graduating classes is crucial to student engagement and retention. This is true for not only native-born students, but for international students as well.

While many college campuses have fully embraced the changes that technology brings, many universities are struggling to keep pace with the changes. Technology itself does not immediately provide the answer, but well-implemented technology goes a long way to helping teachers organize content within knowledge-driven, pedagogically-sound online courses (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009). It is the intersection and "multiple interactions among content, pedagogical, technological, and contextual knowledge" (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009, p. 401) that is going to

help teacher and students navigate this new online terrain. For those teachers trying to integrate technology into their curricula, it is important that they receive effective training to demonstrate how technology can be used to support specific student learning outcomes.

Digital natives and their role in the education process

Most students are constantly connected to the Internet for news about the world, friends, and family. Digital Natives are children who have grown up immersed in a computer assisted, computer mediated world (Prensky, 2001). A phone, a tablet, and a computer are basic means of communication and interaction with world that the students live in. In the larger context, the numbers of students enrolling in online courses is rising. Educational content delivery is evolving to meet the student in the computer-mediated world they live in.

Universities can play a positive role in preparing students for the jobs of today through the use of technological tools, especially ones that facilitate working collaboratively. Today's job market is filled with positions that require people to work together to complete projects collaboratively using computers (Gradel & Edson, 2009). Collaborative knowledge construction is a central tenet of the constructivist-learning environment.

To make the most out of what technology has to offer, teachers, students, and support staff will all need to be a part of the construction and integration of new technology into the learning environment. In a 2007 report entitled *Creating and connecting – research guidelines on social and educational networking*, the National School Board Association (NSBA) acknowledged that the world has changed and

educators should figure out how to use new and current technologies as educational tools, especially devices that are seen by students as essential to daily life, e.g. tablets and phones. Steven Johnson, in his book *Everything Bad is Good for You* (2005), says that because of technology, today's students have a different set of cognitive skills and habits than the previous generations. Technology is a part of who they are and how they interact with the world. Devices are essential to being social, gathering information, and learning. Changes in education have to keep pace with changes in the learners. Educators need to be aware that while technology has great potential to enhance the education process, technology can also make students feel isolated and if used carelessly, students may end up with a sense losing quality (Jackson & Helms, 2008). Intentional use of technology for critical learning demands additional skills and guidance compared to social media usage alone.

Ongoing professional development and help with instructional design are crucial to successful development of educationally valuable hybrid courses. Teachers need to be aware of what tools are at their disposal and the best ways to implement them. Administrators need to be ready to find creative ways to fund new advances in technology and to recognize the difference between temporary trends and pedagogically sound investments. Students need to be ready to provide feedback on what works and what does not work for their learning needs.

Statement of the Problem

Language instruction is no exception to new trends in instructional design and the appropriation of technology to meet the needs of the modern classroom. Technology has proven to be a powerful tool to facilitate language acquisition and

development. Students can work collaboratively to complete project-based assignments. They can watch and create videos that demonstrate competency in a particular area. They can review online work. They can listen to recorded lectures more than once to check for accuracy in understanding.

In his book *Brave New Digital Classroom* Blake (2008) cites a 1994 study by the Foreign Service Institute that states students need more than 700 hours to show a high level of fluency in a language. Just as an example, a traditional face-to-face student studying a foreign language for four semesters, three hours a week for 16 weeks per semester will spend less than 200 hours in class. Carefully chosen, purposeful design may be one way to bridge that gap. Since online classes are so new and the technological tools available to teachers and students are growing exponentially every day, now seems to be the perfect opportunity to research and make positive changes in the way hybrid courses are conceived, delivered, and improved.

According to the most recent Sloan Foundation report on the state of higher learning in US higher education, 32 percent of all students are taking a least one online or partially online course (Allen & Seaman, 2013), compared to 10 percent ten years ago (Allen & Seaman, 2013). There are certainly questions about why this change is occurring. Is it more cost effective? Is it more convenient to fit a partially online course into a busy schedule? Do international students think that courses with online coursework will be easier? How familiar are international students with online learning and do they embrace the pedagogical concepts that support online education?

This research was not focused on why students took this hybrid course, but rather focused on attitudes and perceptions about content delivery, knowledge expression activities, and hybrid language instruction. Student responses can provide insights that can help teachers develop more effective strategies when designing and implementing a hybrid language course. It is important to ask the right questions to excavate and map what is going on in hybrid classes from the international students' perspectives, as well as collaborating closely and documenting events with actual language teachers in the classroom.

For the purposes of this study, I am going to focus on the hybrid format as an instructional design choice for an English grammar course, including the teacher's journey and the students' reactions to the format and their roles in the class. My research focus resulted in the construction of the first hybrid grammar course for international students on my university's campus. There are plenty of quantitative studies that compare and contrast hybrid versus face-to-face learning environments (Adair-Hauck, Willingham-McLain, & Youngs, 1999; Chenoweth & Murday, 2003; Chenoweth, Ushida, & Murday, 2006; Gleason, 2013; Green & Youngs, 2001; Scida & Saury, 2006; Sucaromana, 2013; Ushida, 2005) and there are studies that look at student perceptions of hybrid learning strategies (Banados, 2006; Grgurovic, 2011; Kemp, 2013; Larsen, 2012; Siew et al., 2012; Stracke, 2007; Thang et al., 2013; Turner, 2015), but I have not read a qualitative account that chronicles the active construction of a hybrid course for international students and reports in a detailed and reflective way on the teacher and student reactions.

Having more than 20 years of experience teaching and working with international students, I was drawn to study this intersection of current pedagogical design in American classrooms and international student acceptance or rejection of these trends. According to the Institute of International Education (2016), international student enrollment is up from just over a half million students in 2005 to almost a full million in 2015 (www.iie.org/Services/Project-Atlas/United-States/International-Students-In-US). If almost half of all universities in the US are already offering hybrid courses (Allen, Seaman, & Garrett, 2007), then the reality is that international students have to make a decision not only about what courses to enroll in, but also what format to choose.

Classroom environments

Hybrid or blended? The focus of this study is the hybrid course. For language instruction, this type of course falls under the umbrella of online language learning (OLL). According to Blake (2011), "[t]he term online language learning (OLL) can refer to a number of learning arrangements: a Web-facilitated class, a *blended* or *hybrid* course, or a fully virtual or online course" (p. 19). The range is from a) *web-facilitated*, which uses technology as a mediational tool to facilitate instruction, to b) *blended* or *hybrid*, in which one part of the class design is placed online but one part remains face-to-face, to c) *fully online or virtual courses*, where the teachers and students interact completely online, never face-to-face as a traditional classroom.

The terms *blended* and *hybrid* are often used interchangeably. In the blended and hybrid classrooms, some of the traditional face-to-face hours are replaced with

online instruction and activities. The university in this study defines a class that is 30 – 74 percent online as *blended,* and a class that is 75 – 99 percent online as *hybrid*. However, other institutions define these categories in a variety of ways. For the purposes of this study, I am using the term hybrid. One of the possible benefits of using the hybrid format is to place some of the direct instruction online in order to have more class time for the students to construct knowledge collaboratively with the teacher and other students so they can actively demonstrate their new knowledge in class.

The flipped classroom. The flipped classroom is defined as a form of hybrid instruction where the direct instruction and purposeful activities are completed prior to face-to-face class time. The emphasis is on dedicating class time to differentiated instruction to accommodate a variety of student learning modalities (Lage, Platt, & Treglia, 2000). Often class time is used for project-based, focused lessons that allow more interaction among students and mentors while asking students to engage in critical thinking and reflective practices (Baker, 2000). What distinguished *flipped* from *hybrid* was the rationale/reasoning for moving the traditional portion of a lecture class online in order to ensure time for dialogic learning in class.

Harvard Professor of Physics Eric Mazur (1991) published an article that asked two questions: What were students actually learning from lectures and demonstrations? What would improve content delivery and assessment? He found that most of his students could recite facts and demonstrate basic understanding, but they had no sense of cross-application or deeper understanding of the core ideas. His answer was to create a series of videos and interactive problems that students could

watch and then solve on their own. As each student worked on the problems, a tool was used to keep track of student performance. At the end of the problem, the computer would send a message suggesting specific suggestions. At the end of the section, the students would receive an overall report targeted to their individual needs. Teachers could also view these reports to get a better idea of the kinds of issues that students are having.

Mazur's conclusion was "a teacher must keep the attention of the students, whether in a classroom or in front of a computer screen. The best way to achieve this is to involve students actively in the learning process" (p. 38). This idea of using technology to transfer content fulfills two of The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) indicators: "promote, support, and model creative and innovative thinking" and "design or adapt relevant learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources to promote student learning and creativity" ("Standards for Teachers," 2016). Educators created these indicators to promote and maintain instructional design that held students as the focus of the educational process.

The basic core of the flipped classroom idea is not new. Assigning reading at home to discuss later in class may be a form of flipping. Teachers have been doing this for years. The difference with the flipped model is two parts: the learning is more active and the emphasis is on enabling differentiated instruction. First, as seen in Mazur's model, students are asked to watch videos and then perform tasks based on the information in the video. After each attempt to answer questions or solve problems, students are given to help them complete the work. If the student

successfully completes the work, they can move on to the next set. If not, then they can go back and review. In doing this, the students who understand the ideas and concepts can move forward. Those who need more help are given scaffolded information to illuminate main ideas and conceptual information, often with additional practice.

In their article entitled “Inverting the classroom: A gateway to creating an inclusive learning environment” Lage, Platt, and Treglia (2000) looked at current methodologies in teaching economics. According to their findings, most instructors lectured. They cited evidence showing that the gap between the instructional methods chosen by teachers and student learning preferences “can result in the students learning less and being less interested in the subject matter” (p. 30). They looked at different categories of learning preferences: 1) “dependent, collaborative, and independent” (p. 31), 2) learning based on Myers-Briggs Type Indicators, and 3) learning based on “how students take in and process information… assimilators, convergers, divergers, and accommodators” (p. 32). Some students are visual learners. Some can deal with abstract concepts and some cannot. Some want concrete answers and others want the freedom to be creative. Some need to work their way through the process while others process information better through observation. In any case, not all students learn the same way.

In their inverted classroom, students were given a variety of learning materials: videos, presentations, written materials, samples, etc. Students were expected to view the materials and generate questions for clarification. Class time was then dominated by hands-on activities that demonstrated a range of

understanding, all based on the materials provided prior to class. The students were then grouped into pairs or small groups to discuss their findings and make small presentations to the class. Most of the questions were designed by the teacher to apply the concepts in order to ask the students to think deeply about the subject matter. The key is that different learning modalities were addressed. Students were scaffolded through the different activities using a variety of instructional means.

More and more universities are embracing the changes that technological tools can provide. As previously outlined, flipping the classroom, as coined by Baker (2000), often means providing most of the direct instruction at home in the form of videos with class time reserved for interactive activities, with the teacher serving as facilitator and coach. Barker (2013), in an article entitled "Flipped classrooms: homework in class, online lectures at home," stated that the number of universities utilizing the flipped classroom approach had doubled since 2010. The article also noted that universities have embraced the changes because this approach can ultimately cut costs. Students appreciated the approach because they had more chances to ask questions and get feedback. In the flipped classroom, students can receive more individualized attention and feedback that match their particular learning preferences.

Today's students have different schedules, work more, learn and interact differently, and need different skills than previous generations. The predominant theory behind many forms of hybrid classrooms is that the direct instruction outside of class allows the students to work at their own pace while saving reduced class time for discussions with classmates and instructors. Too often content material presented

in classes turns out to be too easy for some, too difficult for some, and just right for few. In terms of language classrooms, Jochum (2011) reports that in one hybrid Spanish classroom, the students welcomed the online portion, appreciated the learning modules, and viewed them as less stressful over time. The students believed it created a sense of community. They interacted well with each other and with the teacher in a socially-negotiated learning environment. In-class and online components of hybrid courses need to be coordinated closely and meet the needs of diverse learners.

The hybrid classroom environment allows for more student-to-student and student-to-mentor interactivity since much of the direct instruction happens outside of the classroom. That being said, there are always some students who may miss the classroom interaction with fellow classmates, may rely on the authoritative voice of a teacher, may feel disconnected to material covered, or may not appreciate the benefit of interaction with a native speaker.

Hybrid Learning Environments

Students come to class with their own identity and knowledge set. Through a learner's interaction with an adult or peer in a social context, the learner begins to construct knowledge. It is the job of the teacher and the goal of this kind of learning environment to scaffold that process for each learner. This is a negotiated process between the teacher and the learner. It requires active participation on the part of the student and asks the student and teacher to not only be aware of what the goal is, but also to work together to determine the best way to achieve that goal. This makes the learner an integral component in the process of acquiring knowledge.

This approach to teaching and learning is socially driven and negotiated through dialogic activity (Bakhtin, 1981). It is based on teachers and students actively being involved in the process of learning (Leont'ev, 1981). It is constructed working with a more knowledgeable peer as "facts are discovered through direct experience" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 61-62). Classmates are utilized in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Students learn by doing (Bruner, 1990; Dewey, 1897, 1916) and activities are designed based on pedagogically sound ideas of knowledge expression (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009). All of these approaches are used to promote student engagement, learning, and creativity in the digital age.

If properly constructed, the hybrid format can be used to create a social space where students interact with each other through cooperative, collaborative activity. The teacher can use the online space to provide feedback and scaffold student understanding in a personalized way. The teacher can use the Internet to provide real-world examples for the students to demonstrate their knowledge through appropriately-designed knowledge expression activities that inspire learning and encourage higher-order thinking skills and creativity through activities that demonstrate understanding of the main ideas.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was twofold: 1) to follow and document a teacher's journey while developing the first hybrid EAP course on campus and 2) to document and reflect on international student perceptions of content delivery, knowledge expression activities, and hybrid language instruction.

While literature that focuses on learning outcomes in hybrid courses is undoubtedly important, not enough research has been conducted that discusses the teacher's role in the development of the course and purposeful content construction that asks students to produce artifacts to demonstrate higher order thinking skills. The students' voices are also instrumental in developing a better understanding of perceived roles in the hybrid course environment. It is important to take into consideration both sides of the teaching and learning process in order to paint a full picture of this phenomenon. In an article for *The Journal of Educators Online*, Mandernach, Donnelli, and Dailey-Hebert (2006) call for a more qualitative nuanced understanding of the affordances and constraints of integrating technology into instructional design:

> The literature on success in the online or partially online classroom is dominated by correlational research that examines the relationship between student factors and student outcomes, but there is minimal insight or feedback provided by online instructors who have direct experience with student success (and failure) in the online or partially online classroom. While the correlational data on internal student characteristics provides valuable insight into student success, it is important to balance this information with the practical, external reports of those directly involved in the success or failure of online students. (p. 4)

The purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth fine-grained narrative of one teacher's journey developing a hybrid course and her international students' perceptions of that construction. A combination of the teacher's and students' voices

is crucial to the overall success of the study. Successful courses should be judged not only on whether or not the coursework met the objectives of the particular course, but also if it helped to prepare students with the skills and dispositions for the needs of the current and future job markets.

Through surveys, interviews, document analysis, and observations, I worked to discover more about what was happening when students chose a hybrid approach to learn a language. This study can be used to help future teachers design courses that engage today's students, meet their needs, and help them learn the target language. Instructional designers can study the teacher's journey and the students' reflections to learn more about the hybrid learning environment, including effective methods of delivering appropriate and meaningful content, developing knowledge expression activities in real world contexts that students find useful (Honebein, 1996), and using technology to properly assess what was taught and understood.

The role of the researcher

Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggest making a personal statement at the beginning of the study in a section called role of the researcher. Often in auto-ethnographical work, the researcher discusses an epiphany that changed or altered the story of his/her life (Bochner & Ellis, 1992; Couser, 1997; Denzin, 1989). My story has more to do with a transition over time, transitions that are still ongoing. Hopefully, by sharing my developmental story, I can help people see that we are often in the middle of a long awakening. Embracing and adapting technology is not something that happens once and you are finished. There is always something new to learn and try as developers and instructors find new ways to engage students.

My role as an educator. In terms of my role as an English language teacher and teacher trainer, in 1992 I began teaching English as a graduate student at Memphis State University, now the University of Memphis. I taught composition for international students and listening and speaking at Memphis State's English language institute. After I graduated with an MA in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in 1993, I applied to be a teaching fellow for the Soros Foundation. For the next seven years, I taught English and was a teacher trainer in the Czech Republic, Romania, and Hungary.

I left to teach in 1993, just when the world was starting to use the Internet as a part of their daily routine. I did not have ready access to technology during my stay. At that time, schools in Eastern Europe had limited access to computers and virtually no access to the Internet. When I returned to the States in 2000, I was behind the curve in terms of using technology in the teaching and learning processes. The feeling of having *missed out* played a major role in my drive to improve my understanding of instructional design and when appropriate, to integrate technological tools into the language classroom.

Upon returning to the States in 2000, I started working as a coordinator of international training programs at my current university. Having worked with international students for more than 20 years, I feel like I have a good understanding of their needs and issues. I have been on both sides of the language learning experience. As a student in high school and college, I studied Spanish for four years and French for four semesters. While in Eastern Europe. I learned a little Romanian, Czech, and Russian. I learned to speak Hungarian fluently, mainly out of the desire to

better communicate with my students and other teachers in Hungary. I have taught language classes and learned a language as an adult. Since returning to the States, I have worked to combine my passion for making my own teaching and learning process more effective and engaging with the challenge of implementing purposeful and meaningful technology tools. I have also tried to help others who have that same goal.

One illustration of how I have worked with instructional design and technology integration comes from mentoring an international Master's Degree student on her master's capstone project. The Master's student and I worked together to develop a two-week unit on passive speech that employed the flipped classroom approach. We implemented the unit in two different EAP classrooms, one of which was taught by the teacher who would later be the focus of this dissertation. The focus of the project was to gauge teacher and student reactions to a new learning environment. I discuss the pilot study in more detail in Chapter 2.

My approach to the study. It is through my own life experience as an educator and my experience working with internationals that I wanted to make sure that they had a voice in the literature. I also want to help educators working with international students. As previously mentioned, I felt like there is not proper representation in the current literature for either the teacher's journey or the students' perceptions about the hybrid format.

As I was constructing my study, I kept several key ideas in mind, which I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter. These ideas constituted my *conceptual framework* (Maxwell, 2005) for how I viewed the data collection, analysis, and

interpretive processes. In particular, I approach my study with four main ideas in mind: sociocultural theory, constructivism, knowledge expression activity design – Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK), and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards. A more detailed discussion of these ideas appears in Chapter 2.

My understanding of Sociocultural Theory (SCT) is largely based on the developmental theories attributed to Lev Vygotsky (1962, 1978, 1986) and his contemporaries, Luria and Leont'ev, and later Vološinov. The main ideas of these theories revolved around the interconnectedness of the learner, the guide, and the social process in the teaching and learning processes. A second source is Bakhtin's (1981) theory of verbal communication (meta-linguistics) and the links in the chains of verbal communication (utterance). A third source is Wertsch's (1991) descriptions of the themes in Vytgotsky's and Bakhtin's writings, which included discussions of the social and psychological aspects of learning and the mediation of human action through tools and signs. These ideas helped me not only formulate my own understanding of the teaching and learning processes as I approached the study in general, but also helped me construct the design of the study, including how I conducted my transcriptions.

My views on Constructivism are based on Dewey's (1897) and Bruner's (1990) philosophies of active learning and learning by doing. Especially in an international classroom, it is important to remember that all students have their own individual needs as a learner and as a person. It would be a shame for teachers not to use the different cultures and worldviews of the students for the betterment of the

class. Through highlighting the differences in the students, we can ask them to socially negotiate their understanding of the world they live in.

Sociocultural theory (SCT) and Constructivism remind teachers that learning is an active, social process. Constructivist theories highlight the individual's role in actively negotiating meaning as he/she interacts with physical/social/emotional inputs. SCT calls attention to the importance of situated cultural/historical systems that powerfully shape the context of teaching/learning opportunities. Knowledge expression activities prompt teachers to use the online environment to ask the students to use higher order thinking skills. Teachers who follow ISTE standards during the design and implementation phase are paying attention to the current and future needs of the students. These ideas form a conceptual framework and support system for teachers working in an online environment. I used these ideas in concert to help frame and guide my study. Each framework will be described in detail at the end of Chapter 2.

I believe that in order to truly understand an idea or be understood, you have to explain, relate, repeat, and interact. I have always said that the best way to learn is by teaching; when you have to explain an idea, you have to use your own voice. I believed that long before I had read anything about sociocultural theory. I had always worked to create an active classroom environment long before I had read anything about constructivism. I had always tried to design activities that made students think and react personally. These ideas were important to me long before I knew that they were well-established theories. This study allowed me to see how another teacher used those same ideas, but in new ways.

Flow of the study

In Chapter 2, I discuss the literature that has influenced my approach to this study. I discuss some of the books that have made me think about the modern student and current trends in instructional design with those students in mind. The next section looks at the current literature on hybrid design, both in the US and abroad. I conclude with a longer description of my conceptual framework to give the reader a deeper insight into my thinking. I situate this study into the larger body of work on hybrid classroom design.

In Chapter 3, I present the methodological design of the study. I present my rationale for the instrumental case study design and discuss my data sources. I explain why the phenomenological tools for data analysis were the most appropriate for what I wanted to accomplish. I describe the preparation for the study and the step-by-step choices I make as I progressed. This chapter includes demographic data about the teacher and students, as well as descriptions of the study and classroom settings. There is a detailed audit trail that allows the reader to see how I gathered my data through interviews, Think-Alouds, focus groups, surveys, and document analysis.

In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I present the data. Chapter 4 details the teacher's experience. Chapter 5 describes the students' attitudes and perceptions of their roles in their first hybrid course. Chapter 6 is the result of an interview with a student who dropped the course in favor of a face-to-face class. Each chapter analyzes the data using phenomenological techniques as described by Moustakas (1994).

In Chapter 7, I compare and contrast my research with findings from prior studies. I provide a composite summary of my experience in this study, combining

my own personal experience with my new understanding of the teacher and student data. I conclude with implications from the research and ideas for future research.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

The following chapter outlines some of the most important concepts and ideas that helped guide my thinking about the use of the hybrid format in instructional design. The literature review looks at how teachers and students have attempted to use technology in the teaching and learning processes. A review of literature examines two reoccurring themes in current studies of the hybrid learning environment: 1) comparison studies - success of hybrid learning environment versus more traditional face-to-face classrooms and 2) perception studies - teachers' and students' attitudes and understanding about the hybrid learning environment. I conclude with a discussion of the conceptual framework that drives this study and the ways in which its perspectives assist in the interpretation of the data findings. First, a little background on the integration of technology into the classroom.

Teaching with technology – A case study in the history of technology integration

Teaching with technology: Creating student-centered classrooms (Sandholtz, Ringstaff, & Dwyer, 1997) chronicles the authors' 10-year journey to set up the Apple Classroom of Tomorrow (ACOT). The ACOT classrooms were spread out across the country in elementary, middle, and high schools in various neighborhoods with diverse student populations. Each student was given a laptop and classes regularly used computers to complete classwork. The framers of the study based many of their pedagogical decisions on a constructivist approach to classroom design.

One of the main goals was to shift from instruction to construction. Using a constructivist approach, teaching and learning is not just a matter of transferring ideas

from teacher to student. “Instead, learning is perceived as a personal, reflective, and transformative process where ideas, experiences, and points of view are integrated and something new is created – a view where teacher work is construed as facilitating individuals’ abilities to construct knowledge” (Sandholtz et al., 1997, p. 12). In this type of learning environment, “action becomes the domain of the learners…teachers are experts, but other sources of expertise are recognized, valued, and used” (p. 13). Students were asked to find information and formulate ideas that were then shared and reviewed by peers. “Students need a sense that their work is important, that what they do matters, that other people will be interested in and care about what they discover” (p. 13). One of the goals was to create a classroom of learners and embrace differentiated instruction for students.

As the 10-year process of ACOT developed, students relied on other students as well as the teacher for instruction. Students could be a part of the information evaluation process and they reported back to the group about what they found. More capable students relished the role of being able to help slower students. “Teachers saw less advanced students blossom, unpopular students gain peer approval, and unmotivated students stay in to work at recess” (Sandholtz et al., p. 81). Teachers were guiding students in their educational process and the students had more control over how they received and processed information. As a result, student motivation was high.

“Students learned more quickly when they were anxious to learn, and their interest reinforced teachers’ efforts” (Sandholtz et al., p. 90). Teachers felt good about student development as the students reported back to the teachers. Students were part

of the learning process and not passive receivers of information. “This generation no longer wants just to be the audience; they want to be the actors. They expect, want, and need interactive information, interactive resources, interactive communications, and relevant, real-life experiences” (Jukes, McCain, & Crockett, 2010, p. 14). This pedagogical understanding that teachers are now guides and students are actively aware of and participate in their own knowledge construction drives the study. Hybrid learning helps technology share the stage with the traditional face-to-face classroom environment.

On the education spectrum – from face-to-face to fully online education

While this study does not look at fully online courses, it is important to keep in mind the current trend in the use of online courses and online modules in hybrid, or partially online, coursework. Online learning is a very broad term used to define any course that allows students to access direct instruction with the help of a computer. Allen and Seaman (2013) reported that in 2002, “less than one-half of all higher education institutions reported online education was critical to their long-term strategy” (p. 16). Today, almost 70 percent of all institutions report that some form of online education is crucial to the long-term strategy of the institution (Allen & Seaman, 2010). Clearly, universities are embracing the possibilities that online and/or partially online coursework offer. The next step is to make sure that the new technology is meeting the needs of the students.

Katz (2002) reported that students appreciated having the choice of different types of learning environments available to them. The “interactive synchronous video-conferencing approach” (p. 4) was reported to give the students a greater

feeling of control over the learning process and the students were more motivated to study. Those who chose "the Internet-type distance learning approach" (p. 7) liked the feeling of independence.

A study by Jackson and Helms (2008) looking at student perceptions of hybrid courses produced mixed results with some students stating that they had more time to interact with faculty and discuss issues in depth and some students believing that they still needed more direct instruction from the teacher. "Not enough face time with the teacher . . . some people learn better when someone is showing them the material rather than having to read it themselves" (p. 9). The study seemed to show that without proper guidance and planning, the hybrid model could suffer from the *best and worst* educational practices.

Online approaches should not be used just because they are new. They should be chosen because they work and are based on sound pedagogy. Miller (2012), an educational consultant, agrees in the potential of the hybrid approach, but warns that it must be paired with strong, engaging, relevant materials that engage the students. "Students need metacognition to connect content to objectives" (p. 2). The activities must ask students to be involved in and reflect on their own learning processes.

Teaching with technology – hybrid/blended learning environments

Technology has had an increasing role in education every year, starting with the basics, e.g. posting a syllabus on the learning management system or emailing the instructor instead of waiting for office hours, and moving up to receiving whole lectures online (Stein & Graham, 2014). In their book *Essentials for Blended Learning*, Stein and Graham (2014) lay out some clear concepts for a step-by-step

approach to creating a blended course. When asking why a teacher should blend, the most common answers are "increased access and convenience, improved learning, and decreased (or more flexible) costs" (p. 14). Increased access and convenience means that students and instructors can work from home or from multiple platforms and devices, including smartphones. Improved learning means improved instructional design, increased guidance and triggers, easier access to learning activities, individualized learning opportunities, increased engagement through social interaction, and time on task. Such an adult learning theory (Knowles, 1970) argument does rely on a certain capacity for self-directed learning. Decreased costs may come from less travel time for teachers and students.

Stein and Graham (2014) discuss "three commonly used criteria for evaluating the quality of an instructional experience" (p. 51). The three E's are effectiveness, engagement, and efficiency. For this research, I was less interested in effectiveness, "how well the students are able to achieve learning outcomes" (p. 51), or efficiency, meaning the amount of "resources invested in the development and implementation" (p. 51) of any one activity. This study focused on the engagement experience, which might also be called *buy-in*. Stein and Graham (2014) define engagement as the "emotional and mental energy that students are willing to expend during a learning experience" (p. 51).

In *Teaching Naked* (2012), Bowen points out four reasons that explicate how technology has changed the traditional definitions of education: One, "it is obvious and unstoppable" (p. xiii). Two, "technology is driving the global market" (p. xiii). Three, it has "radically altered the availability of knowledge" (p. xiii) and as a result

has changed the way that knowledge is delivered to students. Four, "technology has shifted the nature of the classroom" (p. xiii). Students come to class with hand held devices that connect them to the world they live in. They cannot imagine a world without technology.

Technology is more than just computers (Bitter & Pierson, 2002). Today's students use their phones to wake up, learn how to make eggs for breakfast, learn about today's headlines, maintain relationships with friends and family, pay bills, and share information and interests. Technology connects them to the world in a minute-to-minute basis. Students can learn any place at any time. Want to learn how to make an origami swan? Find a YouTube video. Want to learn more vocabulary? Download an app that gives you a word a day. Cannot remember the capitol of Nebraska? Just Google it.

In their book *Understanding the digital generation*, Jukes, McCain, and Crockett (2010) claim that students "have developed what we call hypertext/hyperlinked minds. Their cognitive structures process information in a parallel or simultaneous manner, not sequential like ours" (p. 19). Today's students are actually neurologically wired differently than previous generations (Small & Vorgan, 2008). Small's and Vorgan's study looks at the effects of technology and the development of the brain in children. Teachers can resist the change to a technocrat world or figure out ways to use the student's digital abilities to enhance their learning experience.

According to Jukes, McCain, and Crockett (2010), teachers are worried that their teaching methods are not connecting with today's learners. "The rapid evolution

of the brain that is occurring due to digital technology is causing many to reconsider the validity of traditional thought on cognitive development" (p. 6). They are worried about the widening gap between student understanding and teacher pedagogical choices. They believe "connecting with students is a key to effective teaching" (p. 9). "Children accept instantaneous access to information, goods, and services at the click of a mouse as normal. They expect to be able to communicate with anyone or anything at anytime or anywhere" (p. 13). These changes have led to a paradigm shift in the understanding of traditional roles in the classroom.

Today's students are interconnected with technology and have a different set of cognitive skills as a result. Technology is essential to their ability to gather information and learn. Students today are likely to be bored with the education of yesterday (Jukes, McCain, & Crockett, 2010). "It is a professional imperative that everyone involved in education put aside their own personal preferences for teaching and consider the learning preferences of the new students who have grown up in a radically different digital world" (Jukes, McCain, & Crockett, 2010, p. 48). They want to be educated interactively in relevant situations inside and outside the classroom. Hybrid courses have a unique ability to combine many of these features: flexible hours, remote logins, and modulated/differentiated learning (Grgurovic, 2011; Larsen, 2012; Siew et al., 2012).

One example would be the teacher who creates podcasts based on discrete ideas and concepts with related readings and quizzes (Turner, 2015). Students can watch or listen to the videos on their own time. Students then take a quiz or write a response to check progress. If the students are ready to continue, they can go on to the

next portion. If not, then they can get supplemental materials to help them along. Some students may move quickly while others need more help. Teachers can check progress online to see where the students are and then use that information to target specific students who have specific needs. The interactive nature of today's tools is a far cry from Skinner's programmed learners of the 1960s that were done in isolation from others in a repetitive boring format. However, for some learners, personal face-to-face encounters are still perceived to be optimal for learning.

Bowen (2012) is keen to point out that "technology is a technique, not a strategy" (p. xiv). A good teacher should not force technology into a subject, but instead should work to enhance and support best practices. The goal should be to help the student learn the subject. Technology can be used to "motivate student interaction with content" (p. xiv). Ideally, technology gives the students and teachers a powerful tool to engage students with new content.

Using technology in a hybrid class

Affordances. Bowen in *Teaching Naked* (2012) discusses technology and how it fits into the lives of today's students. Technology has the possibility of delivering a wider variety of content in a variety of ways. "Most students are more comfortable watching online videos or extracting information from online sources than from reading books" (p. 104). Many teachers prefer the live delivery of content knowledge, but "the millennial generation, for the most part, does not share that view" (p. 104). He cites Evans (2008, cited in Bowen 2012) study in which students believed that podcasts where more effective than textbooks and "more efficient than

their own notes" (p. 113). In other words, a properly designed hybrid course should be congruent with student expectations about content delivery.

Properly integrated reflective activities allow for differentiated learning and growth (ISTE). Students want learning to be real and relevant (Prensky, 2010). Bowen's (2012) admonishment for "[c]onstantly demonstrating relevance, making connections to interesting ideas and information, and inspiring study" (p. 130) becomes possible with all of the resources available to teachers via the Internet. A Blackboard, or other viable learning management platforms, can be a useful great place for teachers and students to discover and aggregate valuable resources. Teachers and students can share the work of finding meaningful and appropriate sources.

The basic premise of Prensky's book *Teaching Digital Natives* (2010) is the ability of students to connect with classmates and real world resources. He refers to the process as partnering. Students not only partner with each other, but with real experts in the field. The Internet can be an amazing resource for connecting and linking people.

In their book *Essentials for Blended Learning* (2014), Stein and Graham maintain that, in addition to increased access and convenience, teaching and learning processes can be improved when learning with technology. Faculty can work with instructional designers to create more intentional, modular coursework. This intentionality should provide a "clear path through resources, activities, and assessments with explicit guidance each step of the way" (p. 16). Teachers can load supplemental activities online that students can use on their own schedule. If the

students take advantage of those resources, then the students who needs more time and more review can have access to supplemental supports and materials.

In *Blended Learning in Higher Education*, Garrison and Vaughn (2008) state that well-designed blended learning environments are the ideal place to implement "educational transactions" that use the "collaborative constructivist process…at its core" (p. 14). Putting the direct instruction online allows more class time for "social interaction and collaboration" (p.14). If the students are working together on activities in the classroom, then the teacher can pay attention to the "cognitive presence" (p. 21) of the students as the openly display their knowledge through communication, collaboration, and practice. Cognitive presence refers to higher level of "purposeful discourse to collaboratively construct, critically reflect, and confirm understanding" (p. 21). As the authors say, "[b]lended learning is about fully engaging students in the educational process; that is, providing students with a highly interactive succession of learning experiences" (p. 25). The teacher's role is to shape and guide the cognitive learning processes.

Constraints. Although Prensky (2010) refers to all current students as digital natives because of the age they were born into, that does not mean that current students know all there is to know about using technology. First, we have to assume that some students may be new to college. If so, then they may need to be introduced to using computers to submit classwork. Some students may not have taken a hybrid class before, which means they may not be used to this style of learning. If they only know in-class teacher lectures, then this may be a shock.

There may be students who do not own a computer or do not have Internet access through wifi at home and will need to complete work in a campus computer lab or in a facility that has computers, such as a local library. This may be inconvenient to their schedules as many students who take hybrid classes have jobs and a family. I asked the students about their general feelings about technology prior to the start of the semester and report their responses in later chapters.

Assuming students have figured out the technology and are comfortable with it, the next factors are *buy in* and *motivation*. ISTE refers to *buy in* as shared vision. Do the students see the use of technology the same way as the institution and the teacher? Is the technology-mediated classroom the best vehicle for knowledge building and expression? Students have to agree that the technology chosen for the activity works for them. Technology cannot just be seen as convenient. The right technological tools have to drive the interest of the students so that they are properly motivated to participate. This burden rests on the teacher. How is the teacher using the tools to properly maintain high interest levels? Boring activities, bad content delivery, and poor design will not attract and retain students (Bowen, 2012).

Poor design may also result in time wasted (Chenowith, Ushida, & Murday, 2006). Videos that do not work or load frustrate teachers and students alike. Students cannot complete the assignments if there is no initial content delivery. Poorly designed activities that do not properly address knowledge expression will put off students and may be seen as busy work (Garrison & Vaughn, 2008). Students have to buy-in to the fact that the knowledge is gained inside and outside the classroom.

Proper design and preparation will help insure that. Well-designed and implemented online work will help insure efficient teaching and learning (Stein & Graham, 2014).

For first time hybrid teachers, they may not realize how much work is needed to design and implement a successful hybrid lesson, unit, or course (Jones, Naugle, & Kolloff, 2008). It is very time consuming to make effective videos. Videos found online may be partially on, largely off topic. Videos may be too long and need to be edited. Each video should be accompanied with subsequent activities that address the needs of different learners. Videos may need to be altered to address students with special needs, such as adding subtitles. Feedback has to be embedded in the activity or given by the teacher as soon as possible. Proper feedback is vital to student progress (Stein & Graham, 2014). Any teacher who thinks that a hybrid course is an easier form of teaching may be completely underestimating the process involved in successful implementation of a high-quality hybrid course (Adair et al., 1999; Gleason, 2013). The good news is that many of the materials developed can also be used for subsequent courses.

As with all teaching, passion has to play a role. An interested and excited teacher helps build an interesting and exciting classroom (Ushida, 2005). The teacher has to find ways to establish and build trust both in the face-to-face sessions and also online.

Students in this study were a part of a unique classroom experience. They were international students studying English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at an American Midwest University. Previous studies focused on American students

studying a foreign language at a US university or programs at international universities that are beginning to use hybrid or blended designs in their classrooms.

Current research

Many current studies about the introduction of hybrid/blended language pedagogy fall into one of two categories, namely: comparison and contrast studies between face-to-face and blended learning environments in foreign language classrooms (Adair-Hauck, Willingham-McLain, & Youngs, 1999; Chenoweth & Murday, 2003; Chenoweth, Ushida, & Murday, 2006; Gleason, 2013; Green & Youngs, 2001; Scida & Saury, 2006; Sucaromana, 2013; Ushida, 2005) and non-comparison studies that looked at student and teacher perceptions of blended learning environments (Banados, 2006; Grgurovic, 2011; Kemp, 2013; Larsen, 2012; Siew et al., 2012; Stracke, 2007; Thang et al., 2013; Turner, 2015). While the student and teacher perception studies fit more closely with my study, the comparative studies were also informative and helped me focus my thoughts and ideas. Table 1 gives a summary view of the major findings of literature related to comparative studies. I will discuss those pieces that most clearly informed my own work.

Table 1: Overview of Studies on Technology Integration - Comparative

Study	Year	Focus	Methodology	Summary
Adair-Hauck, Willingham-McLain, & Youngs	1999	Comparative study - French - Technology-Enhanced Language Learning	Mixed methods - Questionnaires and evaluations of test results	Technology was helping performance. No loss in motivation using technology. Students have more flexibility. Teachers may have more work.
Chenoweth & Murday	2003	Comparative study - French - Technology-Enhanced Language Learning	Mixed methods - Questionnaires and evaluations of test results	Test results were better for online students, but students reported missing oral practice in class. Students still like a textbook.

Chenoweth, Ushida, & Murday	2006	Comparative study - French and Spanish - Technology-Enhanced Language Learning	Mixed methods - Questionnaires and evaluations of test results	Technical issues made students frustrated and therefor were a negative for the course. Students need to be guided through the experience with structured units. Teachers needed to work much harder to make sure students were on the right path.
Gleason	2013	Blended Spanish courses - one uses ample tech and the other not as much	Ethnography triangulation and systemic functional discourse analysis	Discovery of four dilemmas - 1) teacher and student time commitment, 2) developing relationships, 3) speaking skills development, and 4) students understanding/teacher clarity
Green & Youngs	2001	Blended French and German classes - integration of web applications	Mixed methods - Questionnaires and evaluations of test results	No statistical difference between two groups. Group that worked online stated that they had more time to complete class activities
Scida & Saury	2006	Comparative study - Spanish - Technology-Enhanced Language Learning	Surveys	Online activities held the students accountable and required them to be engaged with the material
Sucaromana	2013	Compare the results of BL with F2F - Thai University studying English	Randomized control group - comparison - quantitative	Motivation - results show higher intrinsic motivation (for the sake of learning) and higher satisfaction using BL
Stracke	2007	Blended French and German classes in Germany	Phenomenological approach - student perceptions	Students drop when they do not feel supported. Students have to connect with the material or they lose motivation. Students who enjoy the connection with the computer fare better than students who rely on teacher and students interaction. Some students reported wanting to read from a textbook rather than online.
Ushida	2005	Blended French and Spanish using CALL	Mixed methods - Questionnaires and evaluations of test results	Students who only cared about their grade did the minimum. Students who had intrinsic motivation were more likely to take advantage of the blended learning environment. Teachers who made the class engaging through a variety of activities developed a positive class culture and raised engagement levels and lowered anxiety.

	Procrastination is a real issue online.

Comparative studies. The comparative studies either reported no real statistical differences between the performances of the two groups (Green & Youngs, 2001), or that test results were better for students in the blended learning environment (Chenoweth & Murday, 2003). Adair-Hauck et al. (1999) reported that technology was helping overall student performance and students liked the flexibility of the online course. Students showed no loss in motivation as measured by normed instruments. Teachers reported an increase in the amount of work needed to design online modules.

Students who did not feel supported or did not feel a connection with the material were much more likely to drop than in a more traditional class (Stracke, 2007). It is not surprising that students who felt more comfortable with technology fared better in the blended learning environment than those who felt more comfortable with face-to-face social interaction, a traditional classroom, and/or hard copy textbooks (Chenoweth & Murday, 2003; Stracke 2007).

Gleason (2013) focused on four main issues that seemed to be a common theme running through many of the other articles: 1) time commitment, 2) the development of the student-teacher and student-student relationships, 3) skill development through activity, and 4) clarity of assignment and purpose. Teachers and students reported that the blended learning environment was not a time saver. It took more time for teachers to create the activities and for students to complete them. It took more time for students and teachers to develop rapport. It required the teacher to

be more creative in coming up with activities that students enjoyed and found helpful for developing language skills, especially oral skills.

Students were often frustrated when they did not know what to do when or in what order. Teachers needed to be better guides. Gleason's (2013) purpose was to make sure that teachers did not rush into the blended learning world without being aware of the affordances and constraints of what it can offer. The study found out that teachers who followed basic rules, like those laid out in Stein and Graham's *Essentials for Blended Learning* or Garrison and Vaughn's *Blended Learning in Higher Education*, fared better.

Scida and Saury (2006) reported that online activities held students accountable and required them to engage with the materials. Sucaromana (2013) found that students who enjoyed the blended learning environment were more intrinsically motivated to learn. Sucaromana's survey questions were based on student satisfaction of their ability to learn in the hybrid environment, including students who value creativity and independent thinking as tools for self-improvement. Students who felt the hybrid format was helping them personally and with their future careers fared better than those who did not see the benefits of the format.

Ushida (2005) noted that students who only cared about their grade more often than not did only the minimum and lacked intrinsic motivation. He added that this often rested on the teacher's ability to make the class engaging through a variety of online activities that developed a positive online culture. A positive class culture raised engagement levels and lowered anxiety. This may be true of any class, but

more so for partially online courses where social interaction may be limited. These were some of the results of the comparative studies.

Table 2 presents an overview of studies that highlight student and teacher perceptions of hybrid learning environments.

Table 2: Overview of Studies on Technology Integration - Perception

Study	Year	Focus	Methodology	Summary
Banados	2006	Blended EFL courses	Results of pilot study - implementation of Blended EFL courses in Chile	High level of satisfaction. Students need more time in the new online environment.
Grgurovic	2011	Blended Listening and speaking class	Case study	Student engaged in online activities, Students appreciated flexibility of online activities, increased individualization
Kemp	2013	Student perceptions of blended English Language class	Mixed methods - Questionnaires and evaluations of test results	Students that expected high structure felt lost in the online course. Students who embraced the flexibility fared better. Students needed increased feedback to feel more supported.
Larsen	2012	Blended intensive English program - writing course	Mixed methods - pragmatic approach	Teacher training and support are necessary for program success - individual and group support - Blended led to more individualized assistance
Matukhin, Nizkodubov, Zyubanov, Khasanshin, & Obskov	2014	Blended EAP courses	Defining pedagogical theory of blended learning for engineering students in Russia	Students need to be guided through the experience with structured units allowing for individualized learning opportunities
Siew, Wong, Noor, Mustaffa, Mahmud, & Ismail	2012	Blended approach for EAP courses - Malaysia	Qualitative approach - focus group interviews	Students want structure and variety - not the same format every time. Students appreciated interactive activities that provided feedback. Students were not happy when it appeared that the teacher used only the materials provided by the company.
Thang, Mustaffa, Won, Noor, Mahmud, Latif, & Aziz	2013	Student perceptions of blended English Language class	Qualitative - interviews	1) Appreciated immediacy of online - got feedback and made corrections 2) appreciated being able to do online homework anywhere 3)

				liked the independence and flexibility
Turner	2015	Podcast lectures full-time international post graduate students	Surveys	Podcasts - useful vs enjoyable - less intimidating than a lecture - on my own time - results - combination better

Non-comparative studies. Researchers outside the United States conducted the most perception studies that I found. Barnados (2006) looked at Chilean students enrolled in the new blended learning courses and reported a high level of satisfaction, even when students reported needing a lot more time for the online portions. Kemp's (2013) study of students in the United Arab Emirates showed that many UAE students expected highly structured courses and were lost in the online environment. Those students who embraced the flexibility fared better. Students needed more feedback in order to feel supported and engaged. This was echoed in the Matukhin, Nizkodubov, Zyubanov, Khasanshin, and Obkov (2014) study of Russian engineering students. Students needed to be guided through the blended experience through highly structured units before they could appreciate the individualized learning opportunities online. Students who felt no support in the design of the course fared worse overall.

Siew, Wong, Noor, Mustaffa, Mahmud, and Ismail (2012) found that Malaysian students were happier and more engaged when the activities online appeared to be teacher made and not provided by a commercial company. When the teacher created new and engaging activities, the students responded positively. They wanted the social interaction with the teacher more than with fellow students. Teacher feedback was key to positive course reviews. Thang, Mustaffa, Wong, Noor, Mahmud, Latif, and Aziz (2013), added to the results of the Siew et al. study, including student feelings about feedback. The students in this study appreciated

being able to do online work from anywhere. They liked the independence and flexibility that the course offered as long as they were getting feedback from the teacher. The student-teacher interaction and student-content interaction were keys to success.

Some of those ideas were also found in US university classrooms as well. Grgurovic (2011) found that American students also appreciated the flexibility of the online environment. They found value in the increased individualization as students who understood the presented material the first time could move on and those who needed more help could review and correct mistakes. That flexibility and individualization led to a higher level of overall student engagement.

Also in the US, Larsen (2012) stressed the importance of teacher training and support for success in course design and implementation. Those teachers who felt supported were, in turn, more supportive of the students. Those teachers who were aware of the tools at their disposal were able to create richer and more meaningful online modules for their students. Either teachers need to learn to create engaging course modules on their own or universities need to hire instructional designers to help faculty create engaging online courses. Instructors and students alike may need different forms of support to make the most of the online modules.

Situating the study

From the history of technology integration into instructional design and curriculum development, I received useful information about the affordances and constraints of what technology can do for the classroom and how students view their role in the overall design of the course. In my own personal teaching history, I had

not used much technology with the exception of cassette tape players for audio, VCRs for video, or transparencies with an overhead projector to display information. Since I had not integrated much technology into my instructional design, this information was helpful for me as I learned from their successes and failures and began to formulate my own approach to hybrid course design.

From reading books on the hybrid learning environment, I internalized strategies and step-by-step instructions for effective construction of the hybrid learning environment. In their books about working with students in the digital age, Prensky and Bowen discuss new ways to engage today's students. Prensky (2010) focused on the idea of partnering with technology to take advantage of what the Internet can provide. Bowen (2012) stressed that teaching and learning processes have to be aware of the distributed cognition of today's learner. There is less of a need for memorization when you can use the Internet for instant recall. Instructional design must match how students learn and navigate the world they inhabit.

From the review of current literature, I saw the importance of student support and the need for added structure to guide the students in a new environment. Teachers reported a bigger workload in a hybrid design course - both in terms of designing and implementing the course, but also in providing the needed feedback for student success. I learned that students overseas appreciated many of the aspects of the hybrid environment, as did U.S. students who appreciated the flexibility and individualization the hybrid format provided.

In conducting my research of current literature, there were studies that looked at foreign students at foreign universities and American students at American

universities, but I did not find any studies about international students at American universities. They represent a significant portion of the student body on American university campuses, but they are underrepresented in the literature. While there are teacher reports on hybrid design, I did not find studies that documented a teacher's journey with hybrid design over the course of an entire semester. This study hopes to fill that gap and provide insight into those two areas.

What I hope to bring to this study is my experience of working with and teaching international students for more than 20 years. I have been in the classroom as a teacher, but I have also designed programs for international language programs. Over the years, I have developed my own personal view of the classroom experience. My preferred classroom is active and focuses on collaboration. It asks the students to share their personal experiences as a group while individualizing the experience as much as possible. I look for tools that ask the students higher order thinking skills and I want to prepare the students for their future with real world experiences. These are all ideals that I value and they are how I view the classroom experience.

Conceptual Framework

This study approaches the subject of hybrid teaching and learning processes through several lenses, including sociocultural theory, constructivist classroom design, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), and The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) National Educational Technology Standards (NETS). These ideas helped shape and light the path of the study.

Sociocultural Theory and Education. Although John Dewey was saying as early as the late 1800s that a student's education should be based on experience gained through socially negotiated, hands-on activities (1916), most attribute sociocultural theory today to Lev Vygotsky (1962; 1986) who believed that knowledge develops out of social interaction with a more knowledgeable peer or supervising adult. In the early 1920s, in Russia, there was a circle of theorists who were looking at learning with the goal of creating a new scientific psychology in a revolutionary age (Wertsch, 1991). Sociocultural theory focuses on mediated action and *situatedness*, meaning that action cannot be separated from the situation in which it happens (Wertsch, 1991). Therefore, teaching/learning processes are rooted in historical, social, cultural, and linguistic contexts.

In this study, I was looking at the interactions that occurred in language acquisition processes in a specific cultural and institutional setting, a hybrid classroom at a land grant urban university. "Sociocultural theory offers a framework through which cognition can be investigated systematically without isolating it from social contexts or human agency" (Thorne, 2005). The sociocultural theory of mind takes into account how forms of thinking are organized, shaped, and constructed through social relationships.

In the classroom, sociocultural theory posits that learning is embedded in social events as learners interact with their peers and mentors in close social and cultural connection. It is socially negotiated and dialogically based (Bakhtin, 1981). Learning is a process, constructed through experience gained in activity (Leont'ev, 1981). Leont'ev (1981) stressed the interconnectivity of human mental reflection with

those aspects of human activity that bring it about. Students make sense of their world through interaction with it. One of the cornerstones of sociocultural theory is Vygotsky's concept of a *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD), which in its essence tracks the construction of knowledge by a learner with the help of a more knowledgeable peer or adult. Access to higher knowledge actually pulls development along, according to Vygotsky. Some have compared this acculturation process with apprenticeship learning (i.e., Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989; Rogoff, 1990). In its most basic sense, the ZPD is the learning space between what the learner could or can do on his/her own and what he/she is able to do with proper guidance from a knowledgeable other. Learners can accomplish more with assistance than they can on their own (Wells, 2000). Teachers provide *scaffolding* to bridge that knowledge gap in order to show paths to competency.

In a summary of Vygotskian learning theory, Wells (2000) had this to say about the relationship between the learner and the teacher and the role of scaffolding:

> In joint activity, participants contribute to the solution of emergent problems and difficulties according to their current ability to do so; at the same time, they provide support and assistance for each other in the interests of achieving the goals of the activity, as these emerge in the situation. (p. 5)

Student learning and development of knowledge skills occurs through student participation in the activity systems of the institutions and the people in the society that surrounds them (Wells, 2000). It is through those situated activities involving particular *concrete* individuals that learners develop specific knowledge, value systems, and skills (Wells, 2000; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Socio-cultural theorists

view learning as integration into a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) in which social actions and interactions are vital to learning as the learner is acculturated into a community of practice. The use of language as the primary mediational tool during this process of shared meaning making is key (Wells, 2000), as the learners appropriate the way language operate and gets things done in a situated culture and then reflect during their interpersonal knowing and growing routines.

In this study, following a 50/50 variation of the hybrid/blended format, the Wednesday face-to-face classes were replaced with weekly online modules. The teacher needed to determine the students' zone of proximal development early on to maintain the appropriate level of support and scaffolding required by each student, both for course content and technology use, since the format could be unfamiliar to some students. Learning involves individual and socially driven dialogic processes (Ash, 2008). Student cognitive development and growth are directly linked to social processes, so teacher-student communication and support were keys to success.

As Jaramillo (1996) described in his article on Vygtosky's contribution to the development of constructivist curricula, sociocultural theory offers a powerful educational theory about the "human phenomenon of learning… [it] provides a conceptual framework for us to explain how and why we learn" (p. 134). Piaget offered a linear, developmental view of learning as a series of steps; Vygotsky's contribution highlights the non-developmental view where each learner actively constructs knowledge through language and social interaction, involving prior experience and personal beliefs. Constructivism developed out of those ideas of social

interaction and situated learning in order to develop tasks and activities that utilize the socially-negotiated aspect of the learning environment.

Sociocultural approach to studying the use of technology in teaching. Bowen (2012) posits that much of what is asked of students in high school is identification and recitation of basic ideas and facts without much contextualization. If one of the goals of college classrooms is to ask for students to utilize higher-order cognitive skills, then in essence we are asking students to "abandon that mode of thinking and learn to think in new ways using new parts of their brain that are not yet fully developed" (p. 92). Bowen comes to the conclusion that students learn best in "a supportive environment where failure is tolerated" (p. 93). In this environment, teachers expect a lot and students are given a sense of control. Much of that control is through the use of technology. Teachers guide students through a series of online modules that students can view and review at their own pace. Teachers can scaffold learning through the learning management system used in the class.

Classroom tasks and activities based on socially constructed ideas are designed to provide interaction among peers, teachers, source materials, and cultural artifacts. In her research on sociocultural theory and second language acquisition, Roebuck (2000) looked at the difference between *task* and *activity*. Teachers need to be aware that on some level even though the students are on the same task, they are in some ways completing different activities based on their past histories and present abilities (Roebuck, 2000). Roebuck defined the *task* as the thing that the teacher wants the students to do or complete; the *activity* is what actually happens in the learning environment. Students work with the affordances and constraints of their

socioculturally-mediated environment in order to demonstrate higher-order thinking through their own point of view.

In discussing Vygotsky's ideas, Wertsch's (1991) highlights that "higher mental functioning and human action in general are mediated by tools" (p. 28). In this case, student learning is partially mediated through the use of technology. It is through dialogic interaction with the teacher in class and through mediated discussion and activities out of class that the students first resolve issues *intermentally* and then *intramentally* (first between dialogic partners and then within one's own reflective dialog within the self). Initially via discussions and project completion in conjunction with the teacher and more capable peers, and then internalized as their learning is processed *intramentally* (i.e., as an individual).

Wertsch (1991) makes a distinction between speaking to an individual and speaking to an "individual(s)–acting-with-mediational-means" (p. 12). If we look at all the personal linguistic and cultural layers involved, we would need to consider the words as they are formulated in the mind of the individual, the words as they are constructed and uttered through a first language understanding, those same words as they are constructed in an unnatural formation through second language use, and then how they are constructed via mediational tools like a wiki page. I use the term unnatural because students tend to use first language understanding when trying to speak a second language. I see this in my English language classes all the time. Students write in English, but use first language construction logic, literally translating the first language word for word.

Vygotsky (1962) was very interested in the relationship between speaking and thinking. He believed that we formulate ideas in our heads based on our genetic understanding of the world and then with the help of a more knowledgeable guide, we attempt to string together words to express a combination of our internal thoughts and the new ideas that we are receiving. For Vygotsky, a genetic approach, or a historical perspective, was necessary to include because humans shape their environments through the "mediating role of artifacts in activity" (Wells, 2000). Through the mastery of these artifacts, humans blend their biological inheritance into meaningful practices that can be handed down intergenerationally through social interactions and language.

Vološinov (1986) believed that language is not an abstract form, but derives from a concrete, lived reality. It flows forth from dynamic social use. Student output is almost certainly a mix of teacher and student. Student work was often submitted via voice board and in written form. It was very interesting and informative to compare and contrast teacher assignments to student submissions to see how students understood and interpreted the task at hand. Some did the minimum while others tried to produce higher-order, more personalized answers.

Vygotsky (1986) believed in the concept of the word as the sign that makes up the language. The word is the integral part of the development process. Vygotsky (1962) thought of the word, not as a simple symbol, but "rather an image, a picture, a mental sketch of a concept, a short tale about it – indeed, a small work of art" (p.75). He discussed the idea that while an adult and a child may agree on the referent to each word as a symbol; the meanings might not match up. The child may use the

word in ways that the adult can only guess the true meaning, although the reference is clear. The adult may use a word that a child recognizes as a concept, but has no idea of the etymology. This may be easier to do between people who speak the same language and share the same culture, but what about language learners?

Wertsch (1991) was particularly interested in the concept of the voice. He refers to Bakhtin's definition of voice as "the speaking personality, the speaking consciousness" (p. 12). Ideas formulated in the brain must be formulated in an utterance; this involves a speaker, a target audience, and a context. In particular, Wertsch makes three assertions:

- …to understand human mental action one must understand the semiotic devices used to mediate such action (p. 12- 13)
- …certain aspects of human mental functioning are fundamentally tied to communicative processes (p. 13), and
- …one can adequately understand human mental functioning only through some sort of genetic or developmental analysis (p.13)

As with most people who espouse a sociocultural approach to education, it is through communication that mental functions increase in an individual. Teachers scaffold lessons through differentiated knowledge building and expression activities. In the case of a hybrid language class, students often express their second language voice through the use of mediational tools.

Wertsch (1991) also discusses the concept of mind as mental functions shaped by mediational means. In other words, students using technological tools are not working in isolation. In many ways, the use of technological tools plays a major role

in the way students are able to express their developing knowledge base. In this study, I paid attention to not only the social aspects of cognitive development, but also the role of mediational tools in language teaching and learning.

Constructivist-based educational design. Borrowing from von Glasersfeld's (1987) view of constructivist ideas, *coming to know* is a process of adaptation and appropriation based on and constantly modified by a learner's experience of the world. Classrooms based on constructivist theories typically embrace the varied perspectives of the individual student and the ways that technology allows students to demonstrate their new socially-negotiated understanding of the concepts. Constructivist learning environments recognize multiple realities and the complexity of the world we live in. Dewey (1897) believed that education consisted of two elements: psychology and sociology. Bruner (1990) used the Latin term rebus (*by things*) to help define learning through activity. Students learn better by doing, through activity. Students should reflect on the activity in order to process the experience.

Constructivism-based educational design focuses on the learner, recognizing their individual psychological and sociological needs. One of the main tenets of constructivism is that each student is unique and brings his or her own unique perspectives to the classroom through their own culture, personal beliefs, and views on learning. To be most effective, the teacher then allows the student to use their own background or worldview, through scaffolding provided by the teacher and the social and material environment (Polman, 2004; Tabak & Baumgartner, 2004; Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976) to collaboratively construct knowledge. Constructivist theory

aligns more with an American individualistic psychology whereas sociocultural theory arose from a more collectivist consciousness. Both acknowledge the centrality of language and human interactions in learning, but sociocultural theory emphasizes the way cultural and historical realities shape human consciousness.

In a hybrid course, the main responsibility of the learning process is often placed on the students. Collaboration and group work are keys to the heart of this. That is not to say that the students are left alone with no guidance and no support. The teacher is not an outsider; a good facilitator is crucial to good knowledge construction provoked by the thoughtful organization of interactive opportunities (Polman, 2000; Polman & Pea, 2001; Tabak & Baumgartner, 2004). However, for students whose schooled experiences were limited to authoritarian top-down lectures, this self-directed more autonomous way of learning can be especially challenging. In the hybrid model of teaching and learning, the students learn to share more personal responsibility for success and failure.

Koohang (2009) stressed the role of the design in the hybrid classroom. For students to actively construct new knowledge, Koohang believed teachers need to construct assignments that ask for higher order thinking skills and ask the students for self-reflection. The students must use real world examples to socially negotiate the answer among learners. These multiple perspectives from peers and teacher, along with the student's own perspective, help the student justify his or her answer. As demonstrated in the next section, there are many ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge.

The teacher needs to design activities and tasks that encourage students to share their knowledge with each other and use each other as tools and resources. Students need to build on past experiences to make sense of new information in active and personal ways. The teacher needs to be deliberate in the construction of the online portion, in terms of knowledge building and knowledge assessment activities. They also need to model being accessible dialogic partners to support learning.

TPACK. TPACK stands for Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Appendix A). TPACK originally began in 1986 as PCK, or Pedagogical Content Knowledge, a concept developed by Lee Shulman. The original article focused on how teachers organize their classrooms and activities, plan lessons, manage their time and the students' time, and judge student understanding of content. Adding the A to TPACK sprang out of the next iteration of the teaching and learning process model, the integration of technology (T) into the classroom experience (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009).

PCK began as a way to help new teachers find strategies to better understand the teaching and learning process. Teachers not only needed to know the content knowledge (CK) well, but also the appropriate pedagogical knowledge (PK) or approaches in order to design the lesson for their particular students. It is not enough to know the content well; one also needs to know how to deliver that content and assess student understanding (Shulman, 1986). After billions of dollars on school research, it is clear that there is not one best way for all contexts.

In 2006, two professors from Michigan State University, based on ideas espoused by Shulman, proposed a conceptual framework extending the PCK base into

the realm of educational technology. Their new term, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK), was used to describe *thoughtful uses of technology* and positive integration of technology into the learning environment. Over the course of five years, they worked with K-12 teachers and university faculty to develop *rich uses of technology*. Their goal was to develop a conceptual framework of the relationship between technology and teaching in order to "inform the debate on what teachers need to know (and how they might develop it)" (Mishra & Koehler, 2006, p. 1019).

Harris, Mishra, and Koehler (2009) furthered this inquiry by highlighting learning activity types and the deficiencies of a *techno-centric* approach to technology integration. Based on their conclusions that most of the emphasis fell on how to use the technology but not on how to use it well, they recommended improving approaches to teacher professional development for those teachers trying to integrate technology into the classroom. They found that the *techno-centric* approach to teacher development has "typically given short shrift to two key domains: content and pedagogy" (p. 395). Their focus is the marriage of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge and the multiple interactions therein. Their research worked to demonstrate and repair the gap in the vision of using technology to transform education and actual classroom practice.

Harris, Mishra, and Koehler (2009) introduced a framework, including knowledge-building activities, convergent knowledge expression activities, and divergent knowledge expression activities. Matched with a compatible technology, each activity has specific features and objectives. Knowledge building activities ask students to look, listen, discuss, simulate, and produce using computer-mediated

sources. This may include such activities as web quests, virtual tours, online primary sources, songs, videos, etc. The focus is on knowledge extraction from sources.

Convergent knowledge expression activities ask students to answer, create, and review using polls, discussion boards, wikis, and other computer mediated tools. Students may be asked to respond to questions from peers, develop visual representations of events, or demonstrate knowledge. The focus is on demonstration of knowledge.

Divergent knowledge expression activities ask students to use computer-mediated tools to produce student-generated artifacts using knowledge gained from previous activities. This may mean developing an account of past events based on primary sources, creating personal artifacts like poetry, maps, and visual representations, or engaging in civic action. The goal here is for the students to use their content-related understanding to produce and demonstrate knowledge (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009).

This is a key component to this study and to all effective hybrid courses. Technology should not just be used for the sake of using technology. It should be used as a tool to help the students take in knowledge, ponder on it, and produce artifacts that demonstrate conceptual knowledge. Technology has to be paired with sound pedagogy and engaging content.

ISTE NETS*T. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) is a non-profit organization that focuses on supporting the use of technology in teaching and learning. Although primarily engaged in advocacy for teachers and

students in PK-12 classrooms, most of the standards are very applicable to higher education in general and to the focus of this study:

- Improving higher-order thinking skills, such as problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity
- Preparing students for their future in a competitive global job market
- Designing student-centered, project-based, and online learning environments
- Guiding systemic change in our schools to create digital places of learning
- Inspiring digital age professional models for working, collaborating, and decision making (www.iste.org/standards)

ISTE lists conditions necessary to effectively integrate technology into the classroom (Appendix B). These conditions include, but are not limited to, shared vision, effective planning and implementation of curriculum framework, ongoing professional support and learning, and continuous assessment of teaching and learning strategies (ISTE.org, 2009, essential conditions). The standards and conditions of ISTE are very much in line with the mission statement of the Center for Teaching and Learning at my current institution.

ISTE developed standards for students, teachers, and administrators. NETS stands for the National Education Technology Standards developed by ISTE, in conjunction with educator input. On their website, there are different goals and standards for students (NETS•S), teachers (NETS•T), administrators (NETS•A), all based on their guiding framework (www.iste.org/standards/standards/iste-standards).

For the purposes of this study, I paid close attention to the standards associated with design and implementation as written in the ISTE guide for teachers, NETS•T. There are five standards listed, but the first one is of special interest. First, teachers should "facilitate and inspire student learning" (para. 1). This includes engaging students in real world issues with authentic problems and using digital tools and resources. It also asks students to reflect using collaborative tools to make thinking visible.

According to the cognitive apprenticeship model (Rogoff, 1990), students are asked to be a part of their learning process in conversation with their peers and a more experienced mentor. Instead of just being asked to answer rote questions, students are asked to map out the process of problem solving. By making their thinking visible in a written format, the teacher is then able to scaffold the learning process and help the student along. It is through this interaction with students through feedback that the teachers are able to model and coach correct domain knowledge strategies, giving heuristic strategies that students can use to more appropriately articulate their ideas (Collins, Brown, & Holum, 1991; Linn, Clark, & Slotta, 2003).

Along with making thinking visible, the standards also ask for communication using a variety of digital formats. While the predominant platform for content delivery in the class studied was Blackboard, this university's learning management system (LMS), it was interesting to see what other means of communication the students and teachers used beyond the limits of such commercial course software. The ISTE, NETS•T standards also include digital citizenship through the ethical use of digital information sources.

Lastly, the standards ask the teachers to be engaged in constant evaluation of the effectiveness of their teaching and learning methods (ISTE, NETS•T). This study contributes to that endeavor. Hopefully, the study can be used to start meaningful conversations among language teachers at this university and others about creative and meaningful ways to infuse technology into the language classroom, especially with growing numbers of international students in higher education.

Research/Guiding Questions

Using these lenses as my guide, I approached this study. I wanted to co-construct a new view on the hybrid classroom environment by highlighting two additional facets missing in the literature – the teacher's journey and international students' perspectives. It was by working jointly with teacher and students that I now have a better understanding of and insight into what happens during the development of a hybrid course. This study was co-constructed to show both the individual voices and the collective experiences of the teacher and students through an examination of the cultural expectations of a U.S. university classroom experience. I wanted to make sure I captured the story from both sides.

Looking from the teacher's perspective, my question was "What is the essence of a language teacher's experience designing and implementing a hybrid course for the first time?" My overarching question for students was "What is the essence of international students' experiences in learning English grammar in a hybrid learning environment during their first semester abroad?" The main idea of the study was to gain a more meaningful understanding of the hybrid learning environment from both the teacher's and students' viewpoints. A phenomenological approach allowed the

data analysis to better capture the essence of these multivoiced experiences and helped me bracket my own beliefs and values as an active observer/listener.

With these ideas in mind, I studied one particular classroom to study in depth. I followed the teacher on her journey to integrate technology into the classroom to engage and motivate students to learn English grammar. I paid close attention to teacher/student interaction. I looked for teacher guidance and scaffolding. I listened to the teacher and the students throughout the semester as they processed what was happening. In the next section, I will discuss the details of the design and the methodology of the study.

Chapter 3

Methods

In this section, I discuss the design of this study and the methods I used to investigate my research questions. I provide a rationale for my choices, detail my role in the research, and lay out the process I used to collect and analyze my data. I also document my thinking and decision-making processes regarding my pathway to and possible organization of data, leaving an audit trail. Finally, I articulate my interpretive process through a narrative analysis of the data collected for this study in order to deepen understandings.

I begin with a short discussion of the role of the microanalysis in qualitative research. That is followed by a report about my pilot study and how it influenced my approach to this study. Next, I provide a description of instrumental case study, which is the principle design for my study. I explain my rationale for my choice of the phenomenological approach to analyze my data. The teacher and student data sets are briefly discussed in terms of data analysis.

The next section drills down into the finer details of this study. The first part presents basic information about the study: the setting, the teacher, the students, and the classroom itself. The second part offers further description of how I conducted the actual study, focusing on all aspects of the data collection and analysis. Finally, I describe my efforts to maintain a high level of ethics and trustworthiness and I discuss the limitations of the study.

Research Design and Rationale

Foreground. This study focused on student and teacher attitudes and perceptions of the design and implementation of hybrid pedagogy for learning language through a university-level, hybrid course that integrated multi-modal learning opportunities. The following types of data were collected: observation field notes, online student surveys, document analysis from the course materials, a collaborative Running Journal with the teacher, as well as informal and formal, individual, and group interviews. This microanalysis of classroom practice contributes to the overall understanding of the teaching and learning processes involved in designing and implementing a technology-supported, hybrid language course at the university level.

Such microanalysis has a respected history in the annals of qualitative research. Peshkin (1986) described the intertwining worlds of fundamentalist Christianity and education in one school in his book, *God's Choice*. Ayers (1989) presented the stories of six individual preschool teachers in *The Good Preschool Teacher*. Schofield (1995) studied students in a single school in *Computers and Classroom Culture*. Focusing deeply on a situated example of actual practice yields a more layered and complex deconstruction of a phenomenon than a broader study that often downplays the importance of sociocultural context in enacting pedagogical practices. Polman (2000) in his book *Designing project-based science: Connecting learners through guided inquiry* used one site for his study on the implementation of an inquiry-based program for science in one school.

This microanalysis helps to contextualize the experiences of the teacher and the students through a co-constructed, empirically-based study of this moment in time. As all ideas are fluid and change over time, it is important to try and capture individual moments in the process of implementation of new ideas, to appropriate and accentuate the findings. The next study will continue to unpack the findings in this study, as researchers continue to deepen our understanding of specific teaching and learning processes and illuminate the affordances and constraints of different methods.

Pilot study. As mentioned in Chapter 1, an influential step in my process came from my work with an international Master's Degree student on her capstone project. In order to situate myself in this study and show how I have worked with technology integration and instructional design, allow me to relay a previous experience working in a hybrid learning environment. The results of this experience had a major impact on my approach to this study.

The Master's student and I worked together to develop a two-week unit on passive speech that employed the flipped classroom approach. We implemented the unit in two different EAP classrooms, one of which was taught by the teacher who would later be the focus of this dissertation. The focus of the project was to gauge teacher and student reactions to a new learning environment.

For three weeks, we worked together to develop a series of videos to teach the concepts of passive construction and usage. When we could not find appropriate instructional videos that matched the teachers' units, we made our own instructional videos using a variety of tools, including Screen-castomatic, Educreations, Prezi,

iMovie, and others, on both desktop and iPad devices. We developed online activities to test student understanding of those concepts and then provided both oral and written feedback to the students. The oral feedback used voice board, which allowed students to practice their listening and speaking skills by listening to a recorded message and replying with a voice recording of their own. The written feedback was provided through the on-campus learning management system (LMS) called Blackboard. All feedback was confidential and sent case-by-case to each student.

In class, time was devoted to activities that utilized the Internet tools and resources as well as hand-held devices like students' phones and pads. We introduced a variety of tools to the students and asked the students to use their personal portable devices in class. Both teachers had strict rules about the use of personal devices in class, so this was a shock for many of the students. The teachers were very accommodating and allowed us two weeks with their students.

We administered three surveys (pre, mid, and post) that focused on certain key ideas (Seidman, 1991). The interview questions and survey questions that my co-researcher used focused on specific issues about the role of technology in the classroom, student buy in, motivation, effectiveness, and time management. These ideas, which we formed over the course of many conversations, were based in part from reading *Blended Learning in Higher Education* (Garrison & Vaughn, 2008) and from discussions around the kinds of activities we were creating to assess student learning.

The results of the surveys were very positive with most students reporting favorable reviews of integrating technology into their language lesson (Eloyan, 2013).

We also had a focus group interview at the end of both classes. The students had a positive response to using their phones to complete classroom activities. Soon after our unit ended, the students took their midterms. According to the findings of the pilot study, there were positive results on the midterm exam and the teacher noted that the students were very engaged in the classroom activities that involved higher technology integration (Eloyan, 2013).

We worked together to come up with questionnaires, surveys, and rubrics that would help inform the Master's student's study about ideas related to the flipped classroom design. Since I helped develop those questions and they queried issues relevant to my dissertation work, I had a good starting point for instruments for this study. Although the interview and survey questions in my study changed over time as new ideas came about through a review of the literature, field observations, and discussions with the teacher, the dialogue and activities formulated while mentoring and collaborating with this international student on her capstone project afforded me a hands-on experience with what data might yield insights.

As much as I hope the pilot project made a positive impact on the course and student achievement, it made a great impact on me. I was a little sad to end the pilot project, as I am sure we could have made a bigger impact had we had more time. One of the students stopped me in the hallway to ask me when I was coming back. I think she was sad to hear that we would not return. That moment helped me make the decision to try again for a longer study. For a microanalysis I only needed one teacher, I contacted the teacher who I thought embraced the newly integrated ideas

the most. I was happy to hear that that teacher would like to work with me to design and implement the first hybrid EAP course on campus.

Working with the Master's Degree student on her project provided invaluable, hands-on experience with creating and implementing a hybrid module. I learned how much work goes into creating course materials and how much guidance students need to complete the activities. I saw firsthand the affordances and constraints of technology use. I also knew that my experience with this process was just a first step. I wanted to find out more about how students and teachers feel about the hybrid learning environment.

Overview. This instrumental case study used the hybrid language classroom to unpack student and teacher perceptions about learning a language in a technology saturated course. I chose a qualitative design because I am interested in "insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing" (Merriam, 2009, p. 42). A qualitative case study approach explores a phenomenon in a particular real life context using a variety of data sources (Hartley, 2004; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2007; Yin, 2003a). I also draw deeply on phenomenological traditions (Moustakas, 1994) to interpret and organize my findings.

According to Merriam (2009), basic qualitative research is most often found "in applied fields of practice such as education, administration, health, social work" (p. 22) and so on. According to basic qualitative research designs, "individuals construct meaning in interaction with their social worlds" (Merriam, 2009, p.22). The researcher wants to understand that meaning through data collection that includes interviews, field notes, and document analysis. It is up to the researcher to find out

how people interpret their own experiences, how they organize their world according to those experiences, and what meaning they take away (Merriam, 2009).

For the purposes of this study, I was trying to understand "the essence and underlying structure of the phenomenon" (Merriam, 2009, p. 23). In this case, the phenomenon was international students studying English grammar using a hybrid pedagogical approach that included online learning modules. I was looking at "the beliefs, values, and attitudes" (Merriam, 2009, p. 27) students have about the learning a language in a new format. This study includes field observations for data collection, which means that I, the researcher, had direct access to the students. I interviewed the students and the teacher in order to gain a deeper understanding of their thoughts and perceptions about learning a language in a hybrid course.

Data from observation, interviews, debriefing sessions with the teacher, as well as beginning, mid, and end of the semester student attitudinal surveys was collected, transcribed, and analyzed. I also looked at classroom artifacts, web-based tools and documents (Blackboard), and assessments used by the students and teacher. During the fieldwork, I worked with the teacher to check my interpretations of the data through face-to-face meetings, phone calls, and Skype sessions. Case study data were kept in a confidential, password-protected running database that provided a chain of evidence (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yin, 2003a). Data collection and analysis was "developed together [with the participants] in an iterative process" (Hartley, 2004, p. 329). As an example, I presented findings from the surveys and Think-Alouds to the teacher and asked her for her opinions and feelings about the results.

My inquiry should be viewed as an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995), meaning that the insight and overall understanding gained through the study of the hybrid experience is more central to the goal than the study of one particular teacher or group of students. It is instrumental because there is a "need for a general understanding, and feel that we may get insight into the question by studying a particular case" (Stake, 1995, p. 3). Using Stake's (2005) definition of instrumental case study, the perception of the hybrid course employed will be "examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization" (p. 445). In general, in a case study, the overall experience is more important than the experience of any one person, yet the individual personal experiences are what shaped the findings of this study. Each study will naturally be different because of the participants, their backgrounds, interactions, and approaches to the subject. A "good instrumental case study does not depend on being able to defend the typicality" (Stake, 1995, p. 4). Each study should be viewed as a facet of the story.

Data collected from the students and teacher will be used holistically to gain a broader understanding of teacher thinking and actions to develop and deliver hybrid learning and how international university students use and work with online mediational tools to learn a language. Their stories will help form the possible conclusions, but their stories are mainly there to provide necessary and ubiquitous contextualization for the data. Stake (1995) recognizes that each case study does not reach a finite conclusion, but rather helps us tease out "…the problems of the case, the conflictual outpourings, the complex backgrounds of human concern" (p 17). Each case helps us see "the instance in a more historical light, help us recognize the

pervasive problems in human interaction" (p. 17). Each study should be added toward the construction of a more whole, more full body of research.

Understanding the nature of the teaching/learning dynamic of this one class is my main focus (Stake, 1995). The choice of this particular class was based on accessibility and convenience (Stake, 1995). The teacher was chosen because she has an interest in learning more about the hybrid approach to teaching language and was open to having a collaborative relationship with the researcher. Her instructional philosophy is guided by many of the same principles as this researcher, including an interest in using online mediational tools to scaffold language learning and a dialectic approach to student construction of knowledge. The class makes use of online mediational tools to foster engagement in student learning of the language.

Description of case study. A case study allows me to explore my subject "over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information" (Creswell, 2007, p. 73). Yin defined the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon in real life contexts where the events take place and uses multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 1984). Case study was also chosen for its "effective ways of studying educational programs" (Stake, 1995, p. xii). Case study here is used to find better general understandings and insights (Stake, 1995) about the effectiveness of teaching and learning a language in a hybrid classroom.

According to Yin (1981; 2003a), a case study is important when *how* and *why* questions drive the research. Case studies are used when the investigator is an observer and not in control of the situation (Yin, 2008). It is important to study the

phenomenon in a natural setting (Yin, 2003a) and the conclusions benefit from a collection of data that come from multiple sources (Yin, 2003a). Data collection is ongoing and naturalistic. According to Bromley (1986), the investigator gets as close as possible with direct observation in a natural setting. The researcher has access to "subjective factors (thoughts, feelings, and desires)" (Bromley, 1986, p. 23). The researcher should throw out a wide net for information, and not focus on a narrow set of possible questions and answers. The data should drive the analysis, not the researcher (Bromley, 1986). In this particular case, I was often in the classroom with the students, observing them during their lessons. I was able to speak with them informally and ask how things were going. During the individual interviews, I could listen to them describe their interest levels in particular activities or their overall feelings about the learning environment.

Bounded system. This study focused on the inner workings of a real life, bounded context (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2008) of a single classroom. Merriam (2009) stated, "A case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 40). A bounded system is used to limit the number of objectives and the amount of data to be collected in an attempt to make the study manageable (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003a). In this study, the holistic single case study (Yin, 2003a) is bounded by time and place (Creswell, 2003). According to Creswell (2007), a case study happens "over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, and documents and reports), and reports a case description and case-based themes" (p. 73).

Data analysis

Phenomenological approach. I analyzed the data using phenomenological data collection and analysis techniques looking for emerging patterns, themes, and questions (Hartley, 1994; 2004; Moustakas, 1994; Yin, 2003a). In particular, this study utilized the phenomenological approach to data collection and analysis as described by Moustakas in *Phenomenological Research Methods* (1994). This means that I did not perform an experiment or have a preconceived experimental design that might distort the data collected. In this study, I was an observer, recorder, and describer of human behavior. "The empirical phenomenological approach involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p.13). For my study, I describe one language teacher's attempt to design and implement a hybrid language course and the students' reactions. The data came from observations and conversations with the ten students and the one teacher as well as three online surveys.

Table 3: Overview of Data Sources and Process of Analysis

Data source	Source	Process of analysis
		Interview Data
Pre study interview	Teacher	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Pre study survey	Students	Developed questions, initial review, clustered into themes, removed overlap, organized narrative
Mid study interview	Teacher	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Mid study survey	Students	Developed questions, initial review, clustered into themes, removed overlap, organized narrative
Think-Alouds	Students	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Member check	Teacher	Record interview, read interview for transcription, transcribe, review, cluster into themes, organize narrative

Focus group	Students	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Final interview	Teacher	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Post study survey	Students	Developed questions, initial review, clustered into themes, removed overlap, organized narrative
Informal interviews	Teacher	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative
Journal Data		
Running Journal	Teacher and me	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative
Observational Data		
Observational notes	My notes	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative
Documents and Artifacts		
Blackboard	Teacher	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative

I also draw on phenomenological design elements because I want to collect data directly from the students and teachers as they experience a hybrid course. Additionally, I want to support transforming that experience "into consciousness" and into "a lived experience" (Merriam, 2009, p. 24). The experiences of the students and teacher are "bracketed, analyzed, and compared to identify the essences of the phenomenon" (Merriam, 2009, p. 25).

In phenomenological research, the initial phase is called the Epoche, where all judgments, biases, and assumptions are suspended in favor of allowing the experience to speak for itself. Continuing in that same mode, the next phase is bracketing, the unbiased approach to the development of the questions and the analysis of the experience through the data. A phenomenological approach requires that data be presented directly through the words of those experiencing the phenomenon. I began analysis by looking directly at the data.

Clusters of meaning. During the data analysis process, I continued to look over the data again and again, forming new assertions, questions, and insights that I

recorded and shared with the teacher (Strauss, 1987) through our Running Journal and through informal conversation. Each data source was analyzed through a horizontalization process in which discrete units, having equal value, were identified and recorded (Moustakas, 1994). These significant statements were placed together into clusters. During this process, the data started to emerge in a much different light as the themes emerged and spoke through the voices of the participants themselves.

It was important to have long *conversations* with the data to see if the emerging categories remained stable (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006) or evolved to create new perspectives on the original ideas and concepts (Merriam, 2009). These units were then "clustered into common categories, or themes, removing overlapping or repetitive statements" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 118). These themes were used to develop "textural descriptions of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 118).

Textural Descriptions. Using the statements taken from surveys, interviews, and other collected data, I created a textural description (Moustakas, 1994) that described the thoughts and perceptions of the teacher and the students about their individual experiences. These descriptions were carefully crafted into a narrative to offer an explanation into the essence of the understanding of the teacher and the students. The primary function of the textural description is to allow the participants to speak for themselves, to let their voices be heard. The textural description is the "integration, descriptively, of the invariant textural constituents and themes" (Moustakas, 1994, p.180) that emerge from the data. The next step is to arrange and interpret the data through personal reflection.

Structural description. According to Moustakas (1994), following the textural description, the researcher should include a personal reflection, which he calls a *structural* description. The structural description requires the researcher to employ *imaginative variation*, which Moustakas describes as "differentiation among the infinite multiplicities of actual and possible" (p. 35) in order to derive an essence and "present a picture of the conditions that precipitate an experience and connect with it" (p. 35). This is part of the multivoicedness of the study. It is my voice through their voices. It is a written display of the embedded nature of the intersubjectivity of the study. In each subsequent chapter, I follow this model. First, there is a textural section with quotes and then a structural section with personal observations, where I try to present a distillation of the essence of the data. It is important to co-construct a textural-structural description of each group before moving on to a final picture of the composite whole.

Composite. After the individual concentrations on the teacher's voice in Chapter 4 and the students' voices in Chapters 5 and 6, a composite description attempts to harmonize the tensions between the teacher and student voices. Chapter 7 presents this composite textural-structural description of the meanings and essences of the whole experience, "integrating all individual textural-structural descriptions into a universal description of the experience representing the group as a whole" (p. 122). According to Polkinghorne (1989), ideally the reader will come away saying, "I understand better what it is like for someone to experience that" (p. 46). According to Moustakas (1994), the composite picture should be a distillation of the all of the relevant data, involving all of the voices in the study.

I discuss the implications of what the study says about the role of technology in language teaching and learning processes. I look at the affordances and constraints of current technological tools in hybrid methodology. I listen to the participants' thoughts and feelings and place the results in the bigger picture in order to make recommendations for future implementation of hybrid pedagogy into the EAP classroom.

Analysis of teacher data. In Chapter 4, I talk about the data I collected from formal and informal interviews, a Running Journal that both Juniper, the teacher, and I contributed to, my observational notes, and from artifacts retrieved from Blackboard (Appendix C). As with all of my interviews and transcriptions, I listened to them and internalized them multiple times. I conducted the interview, I spoke the interview for transcription, I re-listened to the interview and reviewed the transcriptions for accuracy, and then I made notes from the transcriptions. Following the phenomenological approach, it was important to listen and sort the data into ideas, bracketing the ideas without judgment. "Phenomenology is committed to descriptions of experiences, not explanations" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 58). Over the course of reading and reading the transcriptions and Running Journal, I continuously reflected on the "textural portraits to arrive at their essence" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 60). Chapter 4 is the synthesis of all of these data sources: formal and informal interviews, our Running Journal, and the document analysis.

Table 4: Data Sources for Teacher

Data source	Source	Process of analysis
Interview Data		
Pre study interview	Teacher	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative

Mid study interview	Teacher	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Member check	Teacher	Recorded interview, read interview for transcription, transcribe, review, cluster into themes, organize narrative
Final interview	Teacher	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Informal interviews	Teacher	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative
Journal Data		
Running Journal	Teacher and me	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative
Observational Data		
Observational notes	My notes	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative
Documents and Artifacts		
Blackboard	Teacher	Made notes, looked for themes and ideas, added to the narrative

Interviews. To begin the process of horizontalization, I made general notes from each individual interview, looking for non-repeating ideas. On the second run through, I started to cluster the quotes together into categories. I created two different GoogleDocs during this process. The first document looked at the interviews in a linear view and the second document focused on individual ideas. For each interview, I found quotes to use in the textural analysis that would allow me to describe the qualities that were emerging. It was through this reflective process that I was able to cluster the horizons into themes and organize those themes into a coherent textural description of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Running Journal. The Running Journal was a GoogleDoc that Juniper and I both used to record notes and personal observations. In the journal, I would ask questions about certain aspects of her journey as she created the course. She used the space to document her personal experiences and her understanding of what the students were experiencing.

As with the interviews, I read the Running Journal to see what ideas emerged. On the first reading, I looked at the Journal as a completely isolated document, letting it stand on its own merit. I made notes based on that reading. I compared my notes from the interviews and the Running Journal to look for similarities and differences. As I read the Running Journal for a second time, I started to add ideas from the Running Journal to the GoogleDocs created for the interviews, combining and adding ideas when needed. In order to keep the sources clearly identified, each source color-coded. Three main ideas emerged: thoughts on technology and technology integration, views on hybrid and face-to-face, and examination of teaching and learning theories.

Observational data. My observational data came in two forms – notes I took during my classroom observations and an online journal that I made notes on after observations. As I saw a story begin to emerge, I reviewed my observational data to look for specific moments that would help tell the story. I did not perform the same level of analysis on this data. I mainly used the observational data to help fill in gaps or provide insight into a particular moment. I could compare my notes to Juniper's notes to gain a better perspective on events.

Document analysis. Document analysis came in the form of documents created by the teacher and loaded onto Blackboard. I reviewed each section of Blackboard, looking for items that might help tell the story. I created two Google Sheets and asked Juniper to comment on them. The first document highlighted the more informational side of the course: announcements, contact information, syllabus, and discussions. My goal was to gauge teacher-student interaction through these

sources. Over the course of the semester Juniper and I discussed her role in providing student support teacher through Blackboard. The second document listed all of the assignments that Juniper created. In the document I asked Juniper short questions and she commented on each assignment in terms of the four lenses: sociocultural, constructivist, TPACK, and ISTE. Through this dialogic process, we created a product that demonstrated the expansiveness of course design and how many individual components are needed to create a flowing and meaningful learning environment.

Analysis of student data. In Chapter 5, I present data I found from the three surveys, the individual Think-Alouds, and the student focus group interview. As with the teacher data, I conducted the interviews, I spoke the interviews for transcription, I re-listened to the interviews and reviewed the transcriptions for accuracy, and then I made notes from the transcriptions. Because the students were not native speakers of English, I tried my best to keep the transcriptions as true as possible to their original speech. I did not correct the grammar. I did put a few notes in parenthesis if needed for comprehension of meanings. Chapter 5 provides both the textural and structural analysis of the findings from the student data.

Table 5: Data Sources for Students

Surveys, Think-Alouds, and Focus Group	
Pre study survey	Developed questions, initial review, clustered into themes, removed overlap, organized narrative
Think-Alouds	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Mid study survey	Developed questions, initial review, clustered into themes, removed overlap, organized narrative
Focus group	Developed question, recorded interview, read interview aloud for transcription, transcribed, reviewed, clustered into themes, organized narrative
Post study survey	Developed questions, initial review, clustered into themes, removed overlap, organized narrative

Surveys. With the surveys, I made notes and collected quotes to use for the textural descriptions. Since the surveys were anonymous, the horizontalization process was especially helpful in that I was looking for clusters of ideas to help express the students' point of view as a collective voice not representing any one individual student. Once I started to see some clusters emerging, I made separate GoogleDocs for each one, adding supporting quotes that I would use to build the narrative through the textural descriptions. Through the pre, mid, and post course surveys, I was able to build a linear picture of student attitude over time. The questions began in a more open general fashion and became more pointed and focused over the course of the semester in order to glean new information and find out more about emerging ideas and concepts.

Think-Alouds. From the Think-Alouds, I was able to ask specific questions on an individual basis, which in theory allowed the students to answer more candidly. Some of the emerging themes of the Think-Alouds include the following topics: first weeks, feelings about the hybrid format, activities and tools, technology issues, and student motivation. I used Panopto for the Think-Alouds, which allowed me to capture a video of the student during the interview as well as the screen that the students were working on. If I asked the students to find a certain folder or tab, then I could see how easily the students performed each task. I could see what the students were doing on the screen as they narrated their actions.

For the analysis, I focused on the transcription of the interview. I used the video to help provide a better understanding of the student said in the interview. For each transcription, I collected quotes and ideas. I created a GoogleDoc for all of those

ideas. I compared those ideas to the survey results to look for bigger themes, adding quotes as necessary from the transcripts.

Focus group. The focus group interview asked the students to work collaboratively to express their opinions about the course and how they collectively viewed their experience. From the focus group transcript, I created a new GoogleDoc and added quotes and ideas that emerged from only the focus group. I then looked to see if the quotes helped support ideas from the two previous data sources or created new categories.

The surveys, Think-Alouds, and focus group all worked well together to provide different perspectives and a more complete picture of how the students felt and what they were thinking over time. From all three sources, I was able to create a better picture of the students thinking from linear and thematic standpoints. In the end, I decided that it was important to highlight the results of each data set and look at student attitudes about the hybrid format over time.

The Research and Setting

The setting. Founded in the 1960s, the University is a public, metropolitan research institution that serves approximately 17,000 students, of which more than 9,000 are undergraduate students. There are students from 48 states and 62 countries. It offers more than 50 bachelor's degree programs, 35 master's degree programs, and 15 doctoral degree programs. It is largely a commuter school, with only about 1,000 students living on campus. This University was chosen because I have worked with international students on this campus before and I am interested in current trends in

teaching and learning, especially in regards to language. I also could manage regular observations and my full-time job.

The teacher. Juniper (a pseudonym chosen by her) is a teacher at a state university in a large Midwest City in the United States. She has been teaching English to international students since 2003. She has taught at all levels, both domestically and abroad. She has two MA's: one in teaching and one in education and innovation. She taught students of all levels for three years in Asia, teaching classes in grammar, conversation, and composition. While her main focus has been on teaching English language skills, she has also taught literature, history, civics, citizenship, and health literacy.

She was chosen for this study because she was one of the teachers who let us use their classroom for the pilot project and because she expressed interest in broadening her teaching scope by developing and executing a hybrid grammar course for English language learners. She was very willing to participate in this project even though she has never taught a hybrid course before.

As noted above, during the two-week pilot study integrating technology into a hybrid EAP university class, I learned firsthand about the time and effort needed to prepare online modules and create activities to increase dialogue and engagement. Through the pilot study, I also learned that the hybrid format requires a lot of attention to details and a lot of preparation. In this study, I wanted to capture the challenges in developing and implementing new instructional strategies, both for the teacher and students.

As we all are, Juniper is on a life-long educational journey. It was very important to try to capture her evolution as a teacher working with technology. I interviewed her about her relationship with technology in and out of the classroom. This was not an intervention. I offered my assistance and gave some advice outside of class, but to be honest, she did not need much assistance or guidance. She demonstrated a willingness to learn and worked to adopt new strategies and techniques to better engage the students. Chronicling her journey helped me understand where she was coming from and what she was trying to accomplish and by what means. It also gave deeper meaning to the study to watch her as she adapted to challenges along the way. Choosing such a language teacher made sense because she too was interested in learning more about incorporating appropriate and meaningful assessment activities into the hybrid language classroom.

Participants. Initially, ten students signed up for this course (Appendix D). On the first day, eight showed up. There were six males and two females. Although this was there first semester at this university, there were five first year students and four third year juniors. Four of them were exchange students who chose to take the course because they wanted to improve their English. The rest were required to take the course.

After a week, one student dropped and two were added. All of these remaining students stayed to the end of the course. There were five males and four females, from Japan, Korea, Oman, Saudi, Indonesia, China, Spain, and France. This is the most diverse group of ESL students that I have ever seen in one class.

All identities were kept confidential in order to respect the privacy of the participants. Each student was given the freedom to create his or her own pseudonym. As I discuss in more detail in Chapter 5, none of the students had had prior experience with the hybrid format and they displayed a range of levels of comfort with technology.

Set up of target class. Regular, semester-long hybrid classes are three credit hours. Instead of the traditional face-to-face classes that meet two times a week for 75 minutes, only the Monday class was face-to-face, while the Wednesday class was completely asynchronous. Students had deadlines to complete activities assigned through Blackboard, a web-based interface used by the students for university matters ranging from purely informational, to paying fees, checking grades, communicating with faculty, and completing assignments.

The hybrid classes required the students to engage in more independent learning than in a traditional class. Students were asked to do activities based on the readings. They participate in online, asynchronous discussions. There was an emphasis for students to work together to help each other with the online assignments. There were often videos to watch and quizzes to test understanding. There were assignments and projects to complete in and out of the classroom.

In hybrid course, teachers control the pace of the class, making sections available as needed. Students cannot move past a quiz or test sections until the teacher checks for competency and completion. Students have allotted time frames to complete online work. Teachers can track login times to see how long students were actually online. Teachers often use voice threads or voice boards to give students a

chance to speak as well as listen to the teacher and other students. Teachers can give feedback to each voice submission. Students are assessed every other module through a mix of written and oral exercises. Hybrid classes are capped at 23 students because there is a significant workload outside of class, responding and monitoring the many course components.

Research Study Design

Overview. The research questions fall into two categories: the first dealing with the broader, general guiding questions about students and teacher attitudes and perceptions about the hybrid learning experience and the second drilling down to teacher and student voices, perceptions, and attitudes. The main reason for choosing a phenomenological orientation for data analysis is so I can try to create a concrete narrative of the textural and structural understanding of the "experience in the context of a particular situation" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 14). Through data collected from the students, I wanted to find out more about the essence of their experiences as international students in their first semester abroad learning English grammar in a hybrid learning environment. I used the same guiding principle for the teacher as well. I wanted to learn about the essence of her experience and about what informed her decision making process as she created her first hybrid learning environment for this group of international students.

In prior sections, I presented basic information about the methodology, including some basic rationale for how I conducted my study. The next few sections provide a more detailed descriptions and discussions of topics and ideas touched upon previously. The main idea is to provide an audit trail that highlights the empirical

nature of the study, the value of which is to deepen and illuminate the ways in which this study adds to prior research and findings.

Conceptual framework. As previously described, the guiding principles of this study draw on the following theories: a sociocultural approach to classroom instruction, a constructivist framework of curriculum design, ISTE NETS standards, and the technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge (TPACK) framework.

Sampling. The classroom chosen for the study had 10 students. For this study, I used convenience sampling with the criteria of choosing students who were relatively new to technology integration and willing to participate in the study. In choosing this classroom, I collected data from an information-rich case that dealt with issues central to the purpose of the research (Patton, 1990). Following Glaser's (1978) recommendation, the decision was based on "the calculated decision to sample a specific locale according to preconceived but reasonable initial set of dimensions (such as time, space, identity or power)" (p. 37).

Observations. I worked with the teacher to choose the appropriate classes to observe. The plan was to observe at least four classes. In the end, I observed nine classes, all of the Monday sessions and one Wednesday class meeting that was added to allow the teacher to introduce the guiding principles and expectations of the hybrid classroom. As discussed in the next chapters, some students took several weeks to figure out the mechanics and expectations of the hybrid approach. Each class was 1 hour and 15 minutes. I stayed for the whole class on each observation.

Table 6: Classroom Observation Schedule

Date - Mondays	Observe	Date - Mondays	Observe	Date - Mondays	Observe
8/19/13	✓	**9/23/13**	✓	**11/4/13**	✓

8/21/13 Wed	✓	**9/30/13**		**11/11/13**	
8/26/13		**10/7/13**		**11/18/13**	✓
9/2/13		**10/14/13**	✓	**12/2/13**	✓
9/9/13	✓	**10/21/13**		**12/9/13**	✓
9/16/13		**10/28/13**			

I made running notes during these classes and then discussed those notes with the teacher after class, normally walking and talking. The teacher introduced me as a doctoral student conducting educational research about learning language in a hybrid classroom. I would sit off to the side and make notes on a note pad.

I made videos of four of the classes with permission. I did not analyze the videos; they were helpful as a backup in case I needed to revisit a particular moment. As a data source, the videos were less valuable to me than my notes. My notes were clear and helped contextualize. In the end, I decided that I did not need to code or use the videos. The face-to-face sessions made interrelationships more visible but were less of a focus for this study than the technology components.

Observational notes. At the beginning of the semester, I worked on a description of the classroom, including the furniture and general layout of the classroom space. Written observational notes fell into one of four categories (Corsaro, 1981): Observational notes, theoretical notes, personal notes, and methodological notes. Observational notes (ON) describe what happens (classroom activity), what people say (direct quotes), and what people do (non-verbal). These were hand written or written using a laptop during classroom observation time, or captured via voice to text after class. Some of the notes were descriptive: what Juniper was wearing, her

mannerisms and facial expressions, her rapport with the students, etc. Theoretical notes (TN) were ideas and notions about what was happening and how what I saw related to the overall theory and literature. Some theoretical notes were part of the above-mentioned ongoing running Journal I shared with the teacher. Some other notes were a part of the personal notes. Personal Notes (PN) were notes to put notes in context, such as personal feelings on a given day that may affect what happened or what I wrote. I wrote my personal notes in a personal journal on Google drive after class. Methodological Notes (MN) were notes about the study itself. These included missed opportunities or thoughts for future designs. Most of these are either in my personal notes on Google Drive or are in the margins of my handwritten notes.

The idea was to take as many notes as possible. These notes were typed up within 48 hours. Notes taken from the observations were used to formulate questions for future interviews and informal discussions with the teacher. Notes were categorized and sorted according to the guiding framework.

I kept a record of events "to provide a relatively incontestable description for further analysis and ultimate reporting" (Stake, 1995, p. 62). It was important to keep my conceptual framework in mind while making notes. Each observation was compared with previous observations to provide an aggregate view of the observations to date and to prepare for the next observation. Each observation period hopefully found "good moments to reveal the unique complexity of the case" (Stake, 1995, p. 63). For each observation, I kept running observational notes on a laptop.

Collaborative data collection. As the data were collected, I spent time trying to sort the information and general constructs into "intellectual bins" (Miles &

Huberman, 1994, p. 18), which helped guide and shape the study. The framework changed as the study progressed and new themes came to light (Baxter & Jack, 2008). I worked together with the teacher, as Hartley (1994) suggested, since data collection and analysis are "developed together in an iterative process" (p. 220); this allowed the theories to develop based on empirical evidence.

Data through observations were collected, transcribed, and discussed with the teacher to enhance my understanding and make changes and adjustments when necessary (Hartley, 2004). Over the course of the semester, we discussed ideas as they emerged and those ideas informed future survey and interview questions. As an example, Juniper and I were interested in how supported the students felt when they were doing their online work, so I added some questions on this aspect to the mid-term survey. I also talked to students briefly between classes, and I made sure to ask about these arising issues during the focus group questions. According to Hartley (2004), research design is "the argument for the logical steps which will be undertaken to link the research question and issues to data collection, analysis, and interpretation in a coherent way" (p. 326). In other words, this was a constant recursive process.

Our Running Journal was very informative in that respect. In addition to having ongoing small conversations and formal interviews, we also kept in constant communication through a Google Doc. Our journal entries were dated and color-coded to make them easy to follow. Juniper would make notes after each class or significant event, recording her ups and downs, frustrations and elations. The

Running Journal gave her a space to vent and reflect; I would react to particular items or ideas, offer encouragement, and ask questions.

Recording and transcription. All interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder, my phone, Juniper's phone, or my laptop, depending on where the interview took place. Juniper could usually not come to my office as she had family responsibilities, so we talked and interviewed wherever we could – in the classroom, over the phone, online, or the way to her car. Each interview was transcribed within 48 hours of being recorded to ensure accuracy. Initially, I used voice recognition software, which allows for speech to text transcription. I listened to each interview and repeated verbally what the participant said for a first draft transcription. I would listen and speak at the same time, slowing down the playback, which is a feature of my transcription software: Express Scribe for Mac. I could slow down the play back to allow me speak at a natural rate of speech. Dragon then converted my spoken words into written text in a Word Document. After initial success and then complications with Dragon, I found other free online resources, including two Chrome Add-ons, called Voice Note II and Speechnotes. I played around with and used both. I wanted to see if one worked better than the other, but in the end they basically have the same functionality for what I would need.

In this process of listening to and verbalizing her words, I heard Juniper's voice from multiple perspectives. I first heard the words while conducting the initial interview. During transcription, I then repeated the words as they were being spoken. I then reviewed them again when they were in written form. This provided a unique opportunity for me to hear, speak, and analyze the utterances of another.

Looking at this from a sociocultural perspective, first I was interviewing the person face-to-face, using "vocalized verbal communication between persons" or "dialogic interanimations" (Vološinov, 1986, p. 95). The next step, my repeating each word for transcription falls into what Bakhtin called multivoiced. It is my voice repeating the interviewee's utterances. As often happens in my role as a teacher, I gain a better understanding of an idea or a topic when the words come out of my mouth as opposed to reading it and processing the information in my head. It is through vocalization that I process information and make sense of it. In this way, when I got ready to analyze the data, in some ways, I had already internalized the information. This may be a longer process, but it is a deeper, richer process for me.

Each audio file was stored as a .wav file on my Macintosh (Mac) computer; each transcription was stored as a Word document. All of the voice recognition, speech to text, apps that I used were not perfect; they did not always understand exactly what I said, so it was necessary to review and make corrections. I used Express Scribe, a free digital transcription application developed by NCH Swift Sound. Using an Infinity/VEC foot pedal connected to my computer by a USB cable, I played the recordings again and corrected each interview, making notes of correct punctuation and spelling as well as interviewee pauses and intonation. The rigor involved with this process only strengthened my understanding of the interviewee's responses.

Consent forms. Before conducting teacher and student interviews, I reviewed and completed informed consent forms with the teacher (Appendix E) and the students (Appendix F). These forms were necessary to protect the identities of the

participants involved in the study, including the university, the teacher, and the students. All of the students were given the option to not participate in this study, but they all agreed and signed the appropriate consent forms after reviewing them and asking any questions.

Formal interviews. The formal interview process followed Seidman's (1991) recommendations for qualitative interviews in educational studies. Seidman developed a three-interview series format focusing on particular aspects of the interviewee's viewpoint: i.e. – life history, details of experience, and reflection on the meaning. "…at the root of ...interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (Seidman, 1991, p. 3).

In the first interview on August 16, the main idea was to put Juniper's past teaching experience in context by asking questions about her teaching past. This included educational background, experience with teaching in general, and feelings about the hybrid format. Some of the questions revolved around personal choices in the teacher's life trajectory (Appendix G).

The initial 30 minute, semi-structured interview began with a set protocol of initial questions based on past experience, but allowed for new questions based on the interviewee's responses. According to Flick (2006), the semi-structured questions should be used when the "concrete issue is defined and the response is left open" (p. 150). The semi-structured nature of the interview attempts to bring out specific responses as opposed to general ones (Flick, 2006). Although the data come from the

interviewee and not the interviewer, targeted questioning frames some areas of particular interest.

The initial interview was important to see how well the pre-conceptualization of the study matched the teacher's guiding framework and philosophy of teaching. We discussed her thoughts and impressions of the hybrid classroom and its role in teaching English. The interview protocol included questions about the nature of teaching language, the use of online tools, and the role of technology in language teaching. This interview took place in the pre-observation and data collection phase. The transcription of this extensive interview helped guide further data and document collection.

It was informative to find out more about the teacher's journey using technology in the classroom. I asked about where she started, her initial attitude about integrating technology and how that attitude has changed over time. I asked what barriers the teacher has encountered when trying to integrate technology into past classes and what means and methods the teacher has employed to overcome those challenges. There were times when technology came out the winner. However, sometimes technology failed at crucial times.

It was important to ask Juniper about her technology integration and her beliefs about the impact of that technology on her students' language acquisition. What are the positive and negative implications of integration? Does technological integration match up with positive results? Does it change the way we assess successful mastery of a subject? It was very informative to find out what impact it has

had on past curriculum development and design and what ideas she had about this class. Has technology made her job easier or more complex?

In the middle phase of the study, I conducted an additional 24-minute, semi-structured interview with the teacher (Appendix H). According to Seidman (1991), the main focus of the second interview should be about process and decisions, not opinions. I asked for stories that helped illustrate issues that the teacher identified as crucial to understanding the development of a hybrid course.

The focus was on the details. This was a "short list of issue oriented questions" (Stake, 1995, p. 65) that asked for descriptions and explanations of the design and implementation of online and classroom activities to date. These questions were based on what was happening in the class and linked to the overall framework. I also checked her perception of online work. According to Yin (1984), each question should be tethered to a particular source of evidence: a response from a previous interview, a document, or an observation in class. This helped in the data collection phase and later in the analysis phase as it provided connections and links to other data. We began this interview by reviewing the initial design and overall conceptual framework. Informal follow-ups with students and teacher were a standard method of checking for the adequacy of my interpretations that arose during data collection and category formation; these are sometimes called member checks, as they are called, and increase the validity of the data.

During the Think-Alouds with the students, I made notes and wrote questions for a member check with Juniper. I will explain Think-Alouds and the rationale for using them in the next section. On December 2, I conducted a 22-minute member

check interview with Juniper during class while the students were working on a review for the final. I took that opportunity to ask her about her thoughts and feelings. I prepared notes and comments from the student interviews and surveys and I asked her to respond. I recorded her comments using her phone and then she emailed me the audio file later. I let her do most of the talking as the purpose of the *interview* was to allow her to reflect on the ideas brought out by the students. See Chapter 4 for the results of the member check.

According to Seidman (1991), the final interview (Appendix I) should ask the teacher to reflect on possible meanings. The final interview with the teacher was after the final exam on December 12. It lasted 1 hour and 14 minutes. This interview focused on the teacher's observations and insights into what happened and what the students did. I checked for alignment of my interpretations and her understanding of her students' use of mediational tools. I came up with a list of key words that arose from the literature, questions that pertain to TPACK, ISTE, and constructivist learning ideas. I asked the teacher questions such as, *Looking back at the total design of the course, talk about creativity, talk about allowing students to explore real life situations together, collaboration, task-based learning, and diverse learning preferences*. This gave the teacher a chance to make meaning out of those ideas. It asked the teacher to put the experience into language in a meaning making process (Vygotsky, 1986). We talked about student motivation, the role of the teacher in a hybrid classroom, the role of the students, the effectiveness of the hybrid format, the role of technology, and her interest in teaching another hybrid class. The questions

largely came out of past reading, the results of the past interviews, the student answers in the Think-Aloud interviews, and field observations.

Think-Alouds. Clayton Lewis (1982) used Think Aloud protocols, referred to as *Think-Alouds* in the research, while he was working for IBM. The protocol asks the participant to think aloud while performing a particular task, describing what they are doing and why. The researcher records and makes notes of everything that the users say while they are completing a task. The purpose of this research strategy is to make thinking visible. This process asks students to externalize thoughts, through social interaction, by unpacking complicated issues, ideas, and processes. Vygotsky (1978) referred to this learning process as internalization. This is when we borrow others' words to regulate cognitive function, eventually becoming private and then inner speech. It was very instructive to hear the students externalize their internal cognitive processes.

Originally, I had planned to select students to do Think-Alouds, based on decisions made in conjunction with the teacher as to which student might provide the most insight. To my surprise and joy, all of the students agreed to participate. I was sure that it was asking too much of the students, but they all came to my office to complete a Think-Aloud interview at the end of the semester (Appendix J). These Think-Aloud sessions were at the convenience of the students one afternoon after class. The Think-Aloud sessions were designed to take no more than 30 minutes of the students' time, but some students seemed to really get into the process. In the end, some of the interviews were almost 60 minutes. No student complained. They all seemed to enjoy talking and being heard.

Table 7: Think-Aloud Schedules for Students

Think Alouds	Student	Scheduled time	Actual time	Recording time	Notes
11/1/16	Joker	11 - 12			Had to reschedule
	Alistar	2 - 3	2:10 PM	32m 36s	
11/5/16	Ryan	11 - 12			Had to reschedule
	Nate	2 - 3	2:10	40m 49s	
11/6/16	Daniel	11 - 12			Had to reschedule
11/12/16	Vermouth	11 - 12	10:48	43m 43s	
11/13/16	Daniel		11:04	33m 29s	From Nov 6
11/14/16	Kate	11 - 12	10:57	55m 22s	
	Kathy	2 - 3			Had to reschedule
11/15/16	Susan	11 - 12	11:06	1hr 3m 14s	
11/18/16	Kathy		2:02	57m 39s	From Nov 14
	Gordon		3:10	20m 53s	Dropped class but wanted to participate
11/19/16	Ryan		11:08	42m 33s	From Nov 5
11/22/16	Joker		10:00	35m 30s	From Nov 1

The Think-Aloud sessions consisted of the student using my computer to walk through normal routines when completing out of class assignments. There was no preparation needed for the task. I explained and modeled the idea prior to the start. Both the screen activity and the student's voice were recorded using screen capture software and a voice recorder. In this case, I used Panopto, a Blackboard supported screen capture application that allowed me to record both the screen and the students face at the same times. All Panopto recordings were stored in a Blackboard course shell set up just for me for this study by the faculty resource center. Audio was also

recorded using my phone and stored in Evernote, which uses cloud-based storage. No one has access to those places but the researcher and the data is password protected.

In 1980, Ericsson and Simon published an article asserting that verbal reports are data and offer valuable information. Their belief fit neatly into the framework of sociocultural theory in that we learn and process information as we verbalize. It is through the utterance that we make sense of our inner thoughts and babblings.

Surveys. Students were given three surveys: a pre-, a mid-, and a post survey. I used Qualtrics to make the survey and embed it into the Blackboard site. I asked the teacher for input and suggestions. The questions for the first survey were partly demographic and partly informational. I asked them questions about their use of technology to learn, their feelings about hybrid courses in general, and their feelings about being in a hybrid course (Appendix K). Nine students completed the survey on August 21, at the beginning of the semester.

The second survey was administered on October 1, approximately half way through the semester. Nine students completed the survey. Juniper and I discussed what questions we wanted answered in person and in our Running Journal. Juniper especially wanted to know if the students felt supported both in person and online. We asked them how much time they spent on assignments and how comfortable they felt using the technology required for the course. We asked them when they were completing assignments. Juniper wanted to know if they were waiting until the last minute or using the online resources daily to their advantage. I then asked about their mid-term feelings about hybrid courses (Appendix L).

The students took the final survey on December 10 after the final. I formulated the questions based upon ideas that came up in field observations, conversations with students and the teacher, Think-Alouds, and the focus group interview. Seven students completed the survey; two students did not choose to participate. The questions were all related to the hybrid format of the course, their feelings, and their performance in the class over time. I also asked them about how they solved problems in the online portions (Appendix M). The results will be discussed in the next chapters.

Focus group interview. During the last week of class, the students met with the teacher to review for the final. All of the students agreed to meet one extra Wednesday at 11 am in a University classroom. I checked out a flip camera that ended up not working; I am still not sure why. My plan B was to use my laptop and a new teacher resource called Kaltura, which can be found on the University home page of all faculty and staff. I practiced with Kaltura in my office prior to the meeting with the students and although the audio was not great, I wanted to try to use a new tool. Once in the classroom, however, Kaltura could not locate the built-in camera on the Mac, so I scrapped that plan and went to Plan C, Panopto. I turned off the screen capture function of the program and hit record. I had my laptop sitting on a cart, normally used for an overhead projector. I mention all of this because it was a bit ironic how much trouble I had with technology on the last day of the study.

One of the students, Kathy, volunteered to be the discussion leader and one student, Susan, volunteered to take notes with me. I asked the group leader to make

notes on the board. It was a lively discussion that lasted about 45 minutes. The video is stored on the Blackboard site associated with my Panopto account.

The questions for the focus group (Appendix N) came from the overall questions of the study as well from the field observations, discussions with the teacher, and from the Think-Alouds. The questions focused on the content delivery, the types of activities they were asked to do, the forms of assessment both in class and online, the social nature of the hybrid format (or the lack thereof), and the hybrid format. The design was to collaboratively collect their thoughts and impressions of their experience dialogically as a group.

I first asked the students to fill out a spreadsheet which looked at three main ideas – content delivery, knowledge expression activities, and assessment. I asked them to think of ways that they received, practiced, and demonstrated knowledge. I wanted to get an idea of how much of that learning was online based and how much was from class. It was also to get them thinking about the ideas before they started to speak as a group – first reflect individually and then collectively. I did not want them to just agree with the first person who spoke. After that, the conversation leader, Kathy, led the group in a discussion about what they wrote and which ideas worked best for them. We also talked about how they worked together as a group and if the hybrid format helped or hurt that. We talked about their use of technology in this course, if they were more comfortable with technology now, and if technology helped them process the information. She wrote their responses on the board (Appendix O) and I took notes and as did Susan. I compared my notes with hers to see if we had heard the same things. This also served as a member check.

Almost all of the students participated in the discussion. As often happens, the students who are doing better in the class participated more and the students who may not pass did not have much to offer. Merriam (2009) explained that because the data collected "from a focus group is socially constructed within the interaction of the group, a constructivist perspective underlies this data collection procedure" (p. 93-94). Students got to hear what the other students were saying and added to the greater understanding of the issues. They did not have to agree with each other or reach the same conclusion. It was a place to get them to think about their own views (Patton, 2002).

Informal interviews. Individual interviews with all of the students throughout the semester would have been logistically difficult and may have taken the attention away from the class as the main focus of their attention and the richness of the Think-Aloud protocol. Acknowledging that some of the data should come from the students and from their experiences, I used short, natural conversations with the students as my primary method of data collection from the students themselves as well as the more structured data described above. Often the students were in groups before or after class as I was setting up and taking down the recording tools. Since all of the students agreed to participate in the study and seemed to be at ease with me, I would ask them how things were going, making that situation into an informal focus group.

The teacher often used small groups to carry out assignments and complete group work. The students usually worked in groups of two or three. When possible, I observed the teacher as she circled the room asking how things were going and what she thought she was seeing.

The questions were a lot of *how* and *why* questions to gain a deeper understanding into her and the students' perspectives on the assignment and use of online mediational tools to complete that assignment. This helped provide me a representative data sample of some of the issues involved in the learning process of students. I specifically asked them questions driven by the conceptual framework. The videos themselves showed the students working in small groups, which is impossible to transcribe as there were always multiple people talking at the same time. The videos mainly show the rapport that the teacher had with the students and the students' willingness to participate in group work.

Informal discussions with the teacher. When time permitted, I conducted a pre-brief and debrief with the teacher. The first pre-brief discussed the schedule of the class and the best vantage point for me to observe and interact, which was the corner near the front screen. In the debrief, we quickly discussed what happened, the thinking involved behind certain decisions, and followed up on past and current ideas. The main idea was to discuss perceptions of the teaching and learning that occurred during the class. I took some notes of what we said, but most of the time Juniper would answer the questions in our Running Journal on Google Drive, which was a more complete record of events.

Document analysis. During the data collection process, the teacher agreed to look over student produced documents and artifacts. I needed her insight into the documents as she was their instructor and knows their work. She was in a better position to know the representative quality of the work. In particular, we looked for evidence of emerging themes. I was especially looking for how they used online

mediational tools employed by the teacher. Juniper did much of this work on her own at home so she could also manage other responsibilities and we talked over the phone about the work. She cc'd me on emails when possible.

The main source of documents for this study was the Blackboard site itself. I looked at all of the modules and assignments that Juniper posted. Since most of the work was done online, I was able to see the work they submitted electronically and the timeliness of the submission. I wanted to have access to her feedback and corrections, more so than the documents as they were submitted by the students. Her feedback allowed me to see her thinking as well since she verbalized her thoughts and understanding to the students. With the students' and teacher's permission, I had access to almost all electronic documents as well, including emails. This allowed me to follow trains of thought and discussions that might help me with insight into the students' thought processes.

I made two Google Docs for the course documents. The purpose of these records was to see alignment with my conceptual framework. I included a spreadsheet with all of the teacher's online activities. We worked together to discuss how the activities fell in line with four frameworks: 1) TPACK - knowledge-building activities, convergent knowledge expression activities, and divergent knowledge expression activities. Each type of activity will have a code associated with it. 2) ISTE NETS•T – five standards and subsections. Each standard and subsection had a code attached. These sheets were used in each classroom observation and for each classroom activity, artifact, and document. 3) Situated Learning and/or 4) Constructivist ideas about learning activity designs.

The TPACK activities were designed to promote successful integration of computer-mediated tools in the classroom. Teachers devised the ISTE NETS•T as benchmarks for effective teaching strategies. My theory was if I could see and track these, then I would have a better understanding of the strategy employed by the teacher for an effective hybrid classroom environment. In the end, we got more out of our analysis of the Learning Management System (LMS) usage: mainly focusing on announcements and assignments.

All of the documents were analyzed using the same phenomenological data analysis approach as the interview transcriptions; notes were added for future reference during informal conversation and formal interviews with the teachers. All results from the document analysis were grouped together with the observation notes in order to keep an ongoing process of data processing.

A sociocultural approach to document analysis was very informative. It is through this lens that the researcher can see the many layers involved. First, the student has to formulate an idea. Then, the student tries to articulate that idea using words as an utterance. Ideally, the student will think in terms of the second language first, but that may not happen. Often, the first language informs the construction of ideas in the second language. “Vygotsky’s primary emphasis was on how different forms of speaking are related to different forms of thinking” (Wertsch, 1991, p. 30). Surely, this struggle between first and second language heavily informs the utterance.

A focal level to study was in the utterances, or students’ creations, to better understand the “link between sociocultural setting and individual mental functioning” (Wertsch, 1991, p. 47). In this way, we can explore the interactions between teacher

and students (the dyadic) and the discussion boards (the group). According to Wertsch (1991), “This point is as crucial for the analysis of the development of intermental actions as it is for the analysis of the development of intramental actions” (p. 47). Through this process, we can study the social system of the class and look at how that dynamic helps or hinders language acquisition. This can be achieved through studying teacher and student communications, written instructions to activities and student work, online student postings, and written submissions.

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Trustworthiness. Yin (2003a) suggested that in order to construct internal and external validity as well as reliability, the research should examine multiple sources of evidence, create a case study database, and maintain a chain of evidence (p. 25). The end result is a well-constructed narrative of events based on data collection and analysis. The more detail we provide and the more we tell a well-told tale, the more reliable we are (Creswell, 2007).

Firestone (1987) stated that even though qualitative researchers may not provide the reader with a step-by-step description of the entire process, we must give

enough evidence to establish trust with our readers so that they will know that the procedures were carried out faithfully. I have attempted to provide enough detail to show that our conclusions are derived from the data (Merriam, 2002).

As previously mentioned, this study is framed in a constructivist setting, meaning absolute objectivity is not the goal. Each story told and interview recorded is the construction of reality by the participants (Merriam, 2002), interpreted from a phenomenological stance to extricate the essence of meaning. I realize that I am also constructing meaning through my own lens of interpretation. It was important for me to analyze my own role in the overall picture of the research in order to better understand my own biases, assumptions, and understanding of the data and the data analysis process. Merriam (2002) refers to this self-analysis as reflexivity. This is reflected in the structural descriptions in each chapter.

The ultimate goal of the process was to search for patterns in the data, which were interpreted in the setting in which they occurred (Neumann, 1997). Patton and Applebaum (2003) stated that it is from those patterns that we "determine meaning, construct conclusions, and build theory" (p. 67). Yin (2003a) suggested "thinking about rival explanations" in order to "develop a case description" (p. 111 – 115) and five methods of data analysis: "pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models, and cross-case synthesis" (p. 116 – 137). In my own review of the data, I looked for patterns, building themes as I progressed. I also looked at the data in terms of discrete themes and then the data in terms of chronology.

A crucial component in the search for meaning is the notion of rival explanations. Too often in life, we make hasty generalizations and quick non-sequitur

judgment calls. In the words of Paul Simon (1968), “a man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest.” It was important for me to allow the data to emerge and not just see what I had hoped for at the beginning or reify my beliefs from before the study started. Asking onself, *Are there alternate explanations for why the data seems to point a particular direction?* can insure a more critical eye to data interpretation. Asking good questions about where the data was coming from was crucial to constructing the most plausible defensible explanation.

Reliability is usually seen in terms of replicability. For qualitative research, it is impossible to recreate all of the events that happen on any given day to make the exact same things happen for the participants to get the same results. All data will need to be contextualized to give meaning. Replication is not as important as consistency of data collection and analysis. Give the reader all they need to establish trust of the findings by creating an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) that they can use to follow the process from start to finish.

Limitations

Single site case study. One difference between quantitative and qualitative research is sample size. In quantitative research, a large sample size is necessary so statistically significant findings can be generalized to other populations. In qualitative research, large random sample size and generalizability are not the goals. Instead, the goal is depth of understanding and warrant in a community of practice.

As mentioned earlier, Polman (2000) used one site for his study and he mined that one location for a wealth of data. Even though the study was based on evidence collected from one classroom, there was enough evidence to build multiple portraits

of different aspects of the study. Each chapter was broken down into themes, using students' work and words to illustrate a particular point. There is sufficient literature to show this is a very effective method of presenting conclusions.

One of the limitations of a bounded study is that the results are limited to that moment in time. As Merriam (2009) puts it, "[r]esults... would be limited to describing the phenomenon rather than predicting future behavior" (p. 50). As each classroom is different based on the make-up of the classroom, prediction is not the goal of the study. Instead, I agree with Stake (2006) who believed the goal of this kind of study is for researchers to pass information on to readers knowing that "the reader, too, will add and subtract, invent and shape – reconstructing the knowledge in ways that leave it... More likely to be personally useful" (p. 455).

No two classrooms are the same. No two teachers are alike. The same teacher may be different in two different classrooms based on the attitudes and drive of the students. The strength of this kind of study comes from the ability of the researcher to write a compelling narrative that draws the reader in and, based on positive study conclusions, possibly inspires the reader to try to recreate a similar situation in their own classroom, avoiding pitfalls and improving outcomes through insights shared. Flyvberg (2006) addressed the notion of generalization: "Formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development; the force of a single example is underestimated" (p. 219). One case study of ten students may illuminate more than another study that polled 1,000 people because of the nature of the study that allows the voices of the actual participants to be heard.

As noted by Merriam (2009), the strength or weakness of a study may lie primarily in the researcher, who is the "primary instrument of data collection and analysis" (p. 52). Guba and Lincoln (1981) stated that ethics was one of the main concerns of case study research, "[a]n unethical case writer could so select from among available data that virtually anything he wished could be illustrated" (p. 378). As mentioned earlier, a clear audit trail, a demonstrated chain of events, and conclusions that emerge from the data should be sufficient to prove that ethical decisions were employed at every stage. Eliciting multiple overlapping voices also helped insure a 360 degree view of events.

Some have attacked qualitative study for its lack of rigor and its open bias. Shields (2007) averred that the strength of the qualitative approach is that it is particularly human. There is no attempt to simplify what is complex in nature. "[C]ase study includes paradoxes and acknowledges that there are no simple answers" (p. 53). All knowledge is bounded in some sort of contextualized understanding. As Flyvberg (2006) asserts, "universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Context dependent knowledge is more valuable" (p. 219). It is the job of a researcher to situate themselves in the study by stating the limitations, biases, and assumptions.

Even the shortest studies require hours of close observation, interviews, informal discussion and feedback, transcription, analysis, and detailed description. The rigor is built into a good design. As Ying (2003a) states, "[u]sing case studies for research purposes remains one of the most challenging of all social science

endeavors" (p. 1). It is with this knowledge that I set out to find out more about the essence of the teacher and student experiences in this study.

The next three chapters describe the results of the data analysis. Each of these chapters provide a textural analysis complete with direct quotes from the interviewees and a structural analysis in which I use my own experiences, the review of literature, and the conceptual framework to get to the essence of the related experiences. A final composite picture of the overall experience is presented in Chapter 7.

Chapter 4: The Teacher's Journey

The human scientist determines the underlying structures of an experience by interpreting the originally given descriptions of the situation in which the experience occurs. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13)

This study examined the integration and use of technology into the teaching and learning processes of a hybrid grammar course. The main question for the teacher that I wanted to answer was "What was the essence of the teacher experience designing and implementing a hybrid EAP course for the first time?" The first part of the chapter offers initial descriptions of the teacher's view on teaching and learning processes and an overview of her feelings about hybrid course design and development. The second part of the chapter looks specifically at the data from Juniper through the conceptual frameworks introduced in Chapter 2. The third part of the chapter details a chronological view of the teacher's journey as she developed her first hybrid course. The information found in this chapter came from the data sets described in Chapter 3. The format for the teacher and subsequent student chapters will follow the same format. There is an *introduction* to main ideas and questions, a *textural analysis* of the phenomenon, and then a *structural analysis*, which follows the phenomenological pattern of interweaving my own consciousness and understanding through personal reflection.

As prescribed by the phenomenological methodology, I cannot deny my own existence and role in this study. The speaker and I are not the same; we are co-present in the experience. As Moustakas (1994) stated, "My own perception is primary; it includes the perception of the other by analogy" (p. 37). Through the intersubjective nature of the study, I reported the speaker's words and experience through the filter of my own personal understanding. As Moustakas (1994) described of phenomenology,

"perception is regarded as the primary source of knowledge, the source cannot be doubted" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 52). Through the data collection and analysis process, the speaker entered my consciousness and became a part of my understanding. "[O]nly knowledge that emerged from internal perceptions and internally justified judging satisfied the demands of truth" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 46). It was my role to remain empathetic and try to record the information as faithfully as possible to maintain the original intent of the speaker and capture the essence of the experience.

From the themes and delimited horizons of the teacher's experience, I constructed a textural description of her approach to teaching and learning processes and her views on the hybrid format using direct quotations from interviews and the Running Journal. According to Moustakas, after reflecting on the textural description, the next step is to use imaginative variation to "construct a description of the structures of the experience" (p. 122). Although my own experiences with teaching and technology integration were bracketed as much as possible, it was necessary to weave the incoming information into my own personal experience to try to find a truth in the combination of the two experiences. My reflection on the interwoven consciousnesses is represented in the structural description.

The first interview set of questions focused on the teacher's hybrid design experience. I started by asking about her approach to teaching and learning processes in general. The second interview set of questions focused on this course and her journey through setting up and running her first hybrid course. The third interview set of questions specifically looked at the conceptual framework of the study.

Textural description - The teacher's approach to teaching and learning processes

Inspirational teachers. Discussing her role models, she used the words loving, kind, and strict. She believes those high expectations was part of what drove her to be a good student and teacher. She has taken those to heart in her own development as a teacher and in her teaching philosophy. She believes in clear expectations, but she does not feel comfortable as the authoritarian figure in the classroom.

Philosophy of teaching. Juniper prefers a more dialectical approach. She wants the students to be active participants in their own educational process. "...I have seen that an active classroom with fun activities and group work and an open atmosphere has led to better learning and better motivation for some students that I thought were not motivated at all" (First interview, 160 - 162). Juniper wants to guide them where they have weaknesses and support them to give them strength. She does not like hand holding, preferring them to "act like a college level adult" (First interview, 175), but because of how often students arrive underprepared culturally, emotionally, and academically, she has adjusted her approach when needed. Concerning her history of teaching students at this university, Juniper reported that many of the students often underachieve and enter at a lower level than one would expect for university level students. That being said, she has always had a positive experience in previous classes. She feels as if students get the grades they work for but often students decide early to do the minimum work possible. As a result, she has taken a firm, but fair stance with her classes.

She views herself as a constructivist. According to her definition, constructivism is where students play an active role in the classroom with the teacher as support and guide. Teachers and students work together to create an active, collaborative classroom experience. Students work with other students while the teacher provides positive reinforcement and encouragement. The teacher is not the focal point of the class or the activity. Learning is social activity. She is there to help them process the information. In her own words:

> Start with the building blocks and get more complex as you go. Um, I tend to do that with a lot of what is a buzzword in education- 'scaffolding'- which just means teacher's support, being there, holding hands, guiding them here, suggesting them for that. That's what I have done always and I think I have tended to that a lot more (here) because the students do come in underprepared, in my opinion. (First interview, 303 - 307)

She wants to give them the building blocks to advance from the basics to the more advanced. She wants to motivate them to be self-directed and knows that they will need to be more self-motivated in a hybrid class due to the nature of the format. She wants to give them the tools that they need to succeed. Learning involves language. She is there to help facilitate their experience:

> ….so I do my best to sort of guide them to where they need to be, make it as attractive as possible without devaluing it as actual education, and letting them do their thing and largely students do, um, pick up those tools that I have given them. (First interview, 178- 181)

They have to value the work that they are doing and the effort that they are making. She likes organization, and values keeping a strict set of deadlines and due dates, which the students appreciate. In the Running Journal, she noted that this is the first class where students did not complain about turning in work late, meaning that as the semester went on the students were beginning to understand the class expectations and manage their time better.

She tried hard to make sure that she had a listening, a speaking, a reading, and a writing activity each week for balance. She tried to balance individual work with pair work and group work. She would give them things to watch online for follow up in class discussions. As she commented in the third interview, “Passive listeners don’t always learn” (Member check, 88-89). She included student-to-student teaching. She likes having students “[t]eaching each other and reasoning out with each other to help them remember” (Member check, 89-90). She tried to arrange the class so the online exercises and activities would feed directly into the group work in class.

Student motivation. She believes in constant feedback and positive motivation. She gave the students her phone number and email address. Any student who emailed her would get a response in 24 hours. All student work was evaluated and commented on within 24 hours. She gave the students time to reflect and revise based on her comments. She held office hours for students to come and speak with her in person in response to student comments about wanting personal help. Interestingly, most students did not use the feedback to improve their work and no one came to visit her during her office hours.

She was very active online, often keeping track of when students were online, how often they were online, how long they were online, and how long it took them to complete activities and online work. She noted that the students who waited until the last minute had lower scores. Those same students claimed not to know that they could review their work and get a better grade, even though they were told multiple times. She created an online participation grade that could be used to boost their grade for keeping an online presence. Some students chose not to complete those activities.

Textural description – The teacher's view of the hybrid format

Previous experience. She had had no previous experience with hybrid design since this was her first time teaching a hybrid course. She had taken one hybrid class, but was not impressed. The online portion was strong, but the in-class portion was wasted as the teacher only had the students do more online work in class while he largely ignored them, choosing to play with his phone instead. Not daunted by her negative experience, she still feels that the hybrid format has promise:

> …one of the theories of this is that it, it allows so much more time for the classroom, that when you don't have to do a lot of direct instruction in the classroom, then you have more time to interact with the students. (First interview, 238-240)

Joining the study. When I asked her why she agreed to be a part of this study, knowing that she would be the first and maybe only person in the EAP department to ever teach a hybrid course, she responded that it was because I asked her to and she wanted to try. We had worked together well during the pilot study where some

creative use of technology for teaching was modeled by me, so perhaps that helped her motivation as well. She wanted to learn. She wanted to improve herself and do something knew. She wanted to push herself. As she stated it, she wanted "to put more tools into [her] toolbox" (First interview, 251). Even though we had worked together on the pilot study, it had been a short month-long project, not a full semester. It was a small intervention and then the pilot study was completed and her class went back to her normal teaching strategies. Would it really work for a whole semester? She had her doubts:

> I have to be honest and say I'm not totally sure that it will be as effective for language learning as a face-to-face course purely because the opportunities that students have to speak English with a native speaker and practice with one another is cut in half essentially and from my experience with face-to-face courses, I can't say that I trust students will go out and practice with native speakers and with one another in English, um, so, that being said, I do have doubts but I am also hopeful that this will be a way to reach those students who are frustrated with the face-to-face class... (First interview, 184 - 189)

Getting started and initial doubts. Juniper hoped the hybrid format would be a new way to reach students. In our discussions, we talked about whether or not the first semester international students would format would connect with the format. Juniper had used technology sparingly in past classes, so this would be a big leap. The big question at the beginning was could she just convert her in-class materials to online materials. "Certainly a high learning curve for me" (First interview, 204).

She was afraid of students getting lost or left behind without face-to-face guidance. Even before she got a roster, she worried about her students. What if they do not come to the first class and fall behind? What if they are not familiar with Blackboard? What if they are not tech savvy? What if our assumptions about modern students do not apply to these students?

As for her own abilities, she was finally in a good place with her technology usage. She felt very comfortable with Blackboard. She was ready to expand her teaching repertoire. “When I do this this semester, I’ll be infinitely more comfortable integrating this kind of technology in the future” (First interview, 316-317). Juniper and I discussed the idea that there would be a lot of front-loading to this course. You have to stay ahead of the game. You may have to make all of the instructional videos on your own if you cannot find free resources on the web. You have to create all of the online modules. She chose to remain positive, “...plus everything I design for this semester will be available for use for future grammar courses...it will make the future easier” (First interview, 317 - 320).

Starting the online design. For her students, she hoped that the online modules would give them more freedom to work at their own pace. She hoped that would be motivated by the framework. She hoped that they would embrace the use of technology to learn. She had taught long enough to know that she would reach some students and not others. She knew that some would want more face-to-face and some would be ok with the format. Some would get a little lost and need to catch up. That had happened in her face-to-face classes as well. In her experience, “...50 percent of the time when someone drops out of my course, it is because they don't like the

homework; 25 percent is because of scheduling, and the other 25 is just laziness" (First interview, 325- 327). She expected about the same in this class. She summed up her expectation by saying:

> Maybe they'll learn it better, but at the very least, it will be a new approach to learning in English for them and since most of the time I have noticed [students] on their iPads and iPhones and computers anyway, so this will be right up their alley in terms of how they like to learn. (First interview, 330 - 332)

The first few weeks of class were a series of bumps - technical and communication issues. Students did not always report when technology did not work. Students who did not know what hybrid meant suddenly had to figure out if the format was right for them. Some students had no problems adjusting to a new format while others struggled. One student joined late and had to catch up. One student would drop in favor of a face-to-face class.

A period of adjustment. As a group, they spent the first two weeks troubleshooting different issues. By week six, seven of the nine students were on board with the hybrid format - two students were not completing any work, but did not drop. I will discuss them more in the next chapter. Juniper knew that there is always a period of adjustment in any class, but this may have taken twice as long because they were meeting half as often.

> I think with the face-to-face courses, they get, they get to where we are now in half the time because they have twice as much access to me as the teacher face to face and so by the third week, they've got it down; whereas here, by six, by

> week six, they have seen me half as many times as the face-to-face had in three, so it makes sense, logical that it takes twice as long because they haven't been with me as a person in class, um, to see what my style is and what my expectations are, as clearly as they have wanted to. (Second interview, 146- 151)

Even if she was behind with the students, she felt with the online portion, she was able to cover a lot more material. No interruptions. She prepared online lectures to preempt questions and get everything into one instructional unit. The students had access to the materials whenever they wanted it and could review if needed. She noted that even with those affordances, the learning modules took her a long time to create and set up. "I spend far more time preparing for this online course than I do for my face-to-face courses just because I think the technology, in general, that I need to use is not as familiar" (Second interview, 52- 53). Since she hadn't built up a stockpile of images, videos, podcasts, web resources, etc. to choose from to use and reuse, everything had to be created from scratch. She worried about needing permission to copy and reuse materials. She worried she would have to spend personal money to make quality materials. She worried she would create boring activities and materials. "[S]o, sometimes the presentations become a little dull" (Second interview, 56).

Communicating with students. What she really missed was the immediacy of the classroom where she could gauge if the students were *getting it* or not. If the students chose not to communicate, then the teacher had to assume they had *gotten it* and moved on. She thought that maybe some of the students did not really watch the

videos, assuming that they knew the information already. She expressed that sentiment when discussing the affordances and constraints of the hybrid format:

> I really don't know, because with the students' self-directed learning, they spend their time on what they think they need to spend time on and they don't have the benefit of me saying: actually, that's wrong, let's try again. (Second interview, 66-68)

She felt that many of them would be too embarrassed to email her and since they were meeting only once a week, she was not able to develop trust and get across the message "I'm available for you. I am here to help you. Please do ask if you have any trouble" (Second interview, 71-72). She often saw that the students would wait until Monday to ask questions and then there would not be enough time to provide the kind of support she wanted. Still, she felt like most of them were onboard with self-directed learning. The majority of them are engaged and attentive. Those who watch the videos and do the online assignments are ready for Monday's class work. She felt that she did not get to know them like students in her face-to-face classes. She knew them by material submitted and writing samples better than she did through face-to-face interaction.

Digital nationhood. She was also shocked that some of them were not tech savvy in an educational setting. "...[M]y assumption about the youth and their digital nationhood, I guess, turned out to not be correct and it's not from lack of access to computers. It's simply the lack of using them in this way" (Second interview, 173-175). Some of them never checked email. Some of them did not know that something underlined or blue was a hyperlink to a website or an assignment. Some of them may

have just been playing dumb or being lazy. As stated earlier, most of these issues were taken care of by week six.

Frustration. One word that appeared over and over again in the interviews was frustration. She was frustrated at not knowing the students better and having that trust. She was frustrated by students who would not communicate with her when they had issues. She was frustrated that the discussion boards did not work the way should she wanted it to with this group of students. She was frustrated with her own lack of creativity in designing the learning modules. “I did get bored with my own learning modules by the end” (Member check, 231 - 232). She wanted to figure out a way to make sure students were watching the videos. She felt her lack of technology knowledge may have let her down. She never felt like she had enough time - time to make truly interesting and engaging instructional materials, time to review and support, and time to individualize some of the material to make them more personalized and real to the students.

Student control. She liked giving some control to the students. She liked that students who need more help can get more help online and students who actually get it can move on. She liked the video projects and group work. She knows that students grew into the format and were comfortable with it by the end. At first, “[i]t was a different type of class but it became less different as we went along because then they started to get used to it” (Final interview, 154-155).

Progress. There were no more tech issues after week six. In the hybrid format, as a student, you may have to do some things on your own and be responsible for your own progress and self-motivation. For some students, it was a little scary at

the beginning. None of them had ever taken a hybrid course before and many had never heard of it before.

> I know that a lot of students were really wary coming into it and some of the students by the end were really proud of themselves and felt… one even student even told me she felt very confident continuing her studies independently, because of what she had done in this class and I think that's something that you get out of a hybrid course that you don't necessarily get out of the face-to-face... I think that's wonderful. She's confident enough to continue her studies independently, and that's what people who actually want to learn the language, in order to learn the language, I hope would get out of it. (Final interview, 142-153)

Looking back. She guided herself and her students through unknown terrain. She managed to instill confidence in the students and, ultimately, herself. She reported loving the level of detail and the amount of information she was able to add to Blackboard. She loved being able to use prior knowledge to help. She loved the organization. She was excited to use videos to help with direct instruction. By the end, she learned how to use the assignments to her advantage to see where support was needed.

So, did she feel like it was worth the time and effort? Would she teach another hybrid? "...[I]f I had more support and resources, I would love to... 'cause now, once I get all this stuff done for this course this semester, I will have a lot more time to tweak things better" (Second interview, 197-198).

Structural description - Designing and implementing a hybrid course

The main feelings that come from reading and listening to Juniper are best expressed in her relationships: with her students, with her own abilities, and with technology.

Students. Regarding her relationship with her students, she reported missing the human contact and one on one communication. She gauges success and forward momentum through her classroom interaction with the students. Although the students were aware of her office hours, no one came to talk to her. The bulk of her communication with her students came through asynchronous communication: emails, texts, feedback, and discussion boards. For the first few weeks, she had to focus more on technology issue resolution, answering questions about which browser works best with Blackboard or which server blocks videos. I got the feeling that she prided herself on her ability to connect with students and help them understand the content.

She had to give up some control of her own to allow them to discover the materials through module of her own creation. Instead of providing and explaining the content, she was there to show them where the content was located and how to access it. The loss of class time also meant a loss of opportunity to build kinesthetic activities into the course design. If her strength was in the use of creative activities in the classroom, then half of that time had been taken away.

Her own abilities. Over and over, she talks about her lack of creativity in modular design. She got bored with her creations and was sure that the students did too. She was not able to get the feedback that she wanted in order to make the

changes that she wanted to create more individualized and personal learning modules. Plus, she did not have the time. As a new mom, trying to balance life and work was already a major challenge. Making detailed, challenging learning modules that meet individual learning preferences and needs can be a real challenge, even when you have all the time in the world. She discussed trying her best to include and address a variety of learning preferences to engage and motivate students.

She wondered if she was connecting with the students. She made sure to find viral, or popular, videos that would connect with what they might be seeing online anyway. She did not want to load her modules with outdated information that was not relevant to her students.

Technology. In terms of her relationship with technology, she felt like she knew enough about Blackboard and web resources to take on the hybrid challenge. As always, we do not know what we do not know, so there are barriers and bumps that we cannot anticipate or predict. In this case, there were her issues with technology - e.g., embedding videos, web browser issues, campus wide technology outages or down time - and the students' issues with technology - e.g., Blackboard, clicking on hyperlinks, submitting work online, discussion boards, etc.

She used the word frustrated a lot when describing her interaction with technology. She was sure that given the chance students would find a way to cheat, so she had to work to make her assignments and quizzes cheat proof. In class, she could monitor them herself. Now she had to figure out how to monitor them online. She was frustrated that students were not always doing the work that took so long for her to put together. She was frustrated that they did not take the opportunities to review

and redo work for a better grade. After all, this is one of the main supposed benefits of having work online. She was frustrated that some students were not always watching the direct instruction videos prior to class, which meant that she needed to give a review in class, which is one of the other main supposed benefits of creating online learning modules.

She had to rework her due dates and online deadlines. To her surprise, the students seemed to view the online submission as absolute. Since there was no way to argue with the computer, she had no complaints about students submitting work online and the submission deadlines associated with online work. This actually worked to her advantage. In general, students did not take full advantage of what the online learning modules offered. If half of her time was dedicated to the creation of theses online learning modules, then that time was being wasted. That being said, she was able to track how often the students got online, how much time they spent on each activity, and what they were doing right and wrong. She was able to use the online learning modules as participation grades. The more time they spend online, the better their grades are and the more she can use that as an opportunity to see where they need help.

Textural Description – Conceptual frameworks

In this section, I look at the data according to the conceptual frameworks described in Chapter 2: constructivist learning theory, sociocultural theory/situated learning environments, TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), and ISTE NETS*T (International Society for Technology in Education – Teachers standards). Ideally, a purposeful instructional design of a thoughtful and engaging

hybrid course would weave these ideas together to form a strong strand. In addition to a discussion of Juniper's hybrid design, I will also include my beliefs as an educator and my own teaching strategies. The four views of teaching and learning are not mutually exclusive categories, so there is a lot of overlap.

Constructivist ideas and learning theory. Constructivist learning theory recognizes that all students are different and learn differently. Each student is a product of an ongoing negotiation with the world around him or her; each student is unique and ever changing. Students need to move and interact with other students and rich materials to make new meanings and to construct new knowledge. Students should be encouraged to share their worldviews and enhance the learning experience in a multi-cultural environment. Teachers should see the classroom experience as the students' journey and help them through that experience in a positive educational environment where the student is the focus. In the coding process, I focused on five aspects of the constructivist learning theory:

C1) Promotion of metacognitive awareness

C2) Collaboration

C3) Task-based/project-based learning

C4) Creativity – learner-centered

C5) Original – learner-driven

Promotion of metacognitive awareness (C1). Students need to be actively involved in their own learning process. They need to be aware of different learning preferences and they need to be aware of which ones work better for them. Some students may learn better from watching videos, while others may prefer reading.

Some students may need to outline their ideas in writing, while others may need to express themselves orally before the ideas begin to flow. Students should know what learning strategies work for them. Some students may be able to read and absorb information, while others may need to chunk information and make categories in order to process information. Juniper wanted the students to think about their own learning preferences.

At the beginning of the course, Juniper asked the students to sign an acceptance statement, to fill out a needs assessment form, and to take a quiz that displayed the students' understanding of the requirement of the course. These were all designed to promote the idea that the students are a part of the course and that the course is there to help them with their needs.

At the beginning of the semester, Juniper explained the rules of the course as described in the syllabus. The acceptance statement was a student contract that the students should sign, indicating that they understand the rules and agree to follow them. I asked Juniper if she thought they understood the weight of what they were signing, and she responded that even thought they were not pressured into signing it, she felt that they were signing it because she asked them to (Juniper assignments, Blackboard, first section). Nevertheless, it is important to ask the students to agree that the rules were explained to them and that, in principle, they agreed to follow them. This idea was echoed in Juniper's first interview: Be firm, but fair and lay out clear expectations.

The second meta-awareness activity was to ask the students to identify their needs. As a teacher, I completely agree with this approach. Students should know

themselves as a learner and they should be aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Every semester, I help with international students testing. One of the first questions I always ask students is to choose two of the following in terms of strongest and weakest: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar. Students should know how to rank those and what they need to work on. For example, I can have a flowing conversation in Hungarian, so I know that listening and speaking are my strong points. I cannot read a newspaper or write a university-level paper in Hungarian, so that would be what I need to work on. All students should be able to do this. I asked Juniper if these students were able to articulate their needs. She responded by saying, "I think all but maybe 1 or 2 people were able to articulate their needs. Those that actually had goals met them; those that did not had nothing to meet!" (Juniper's assignments, first section).

The third assignment was an online quiz called *Understanding Our Course*. It was listed in Blackboard tab called About This Course and followed sections on course description, course objectives, required materials, attendance and participation, participation assessment criteria, rules and expectations, grades, academic honesty, learning resources, special accommodations, your instructor, and digital etiquette. Students were asked to take the quiz in a single setting and were required to achieve 100 percent, even if they needed to take it more than once. Juniper noted that some students took it immediately and passed, while others took nearly a month. Her goal was for students to be very familiar with her class policies. The one student that did not reach 100 percent was Gordon, who would later drop the class.

Collaboration (C2). Juniper employed a number of chances to collaborate online as well as in class. Two examples of collaboration were the VoiceThread activities and the stop-motion videos.

VoiceThread. VoiceThread is a web-based application that allows multiple people to have conversations based on a central video, visual, document, or presentation. It invites student self-expression, collaboration, and creativity.

Constructivism believes that we are active creators of our own knowledge and to do that, we must ask questions and explore to find the answers. VoiceThread allowed students to collectively express their ideas on a particular subject and to listen to other students' responses. In doing so, the students can listen to other opinions and add to their understanding of an issue in order to gain a more complex view on the main idea. In doing so, they can reflect on their own experiences. Many of the students reported that they enjoyed using VoiceThread.

I used VoiceThread in a cross-cultural communication class to great effect. Fifteen students from two countries, The US and Russia, were asked to participate. There were four slides in each VoiceThread unit. The first slide was an issue statement that all students had to read and think about. On the next two slides, the students were asked two questions about two different aspects of the issue. The final slide asked the students to respond to ideas that were presented by another classmate. It was not enough to simply state your opinion and be finished. A key feature of constructivist education is to encourage debate and reflection on complexity. VoiceThread is a great way to ask students to be active and test their own theories

about what they know in an open forum. In this way, the students can pool their knowledge in a collaborative learning environment.

Stop-Motion Videos. Another collaborative task was the stop-motion video project. Juniper found a very creative video online that utilized stop motion animation. Stop-motion is an animation technique where objects are moved incrementally to create the illusion of movement.

The students watched the video to illustrate a particular grammar point. Then Juniper asked the students to work in groups to make their own. The students were put in groups of three and were tasked to illustrate a different grammar item. Juniper found a how-to video that explained how to make a stop-motion video. The students had to write the script and write subtitles for the movie. Each group worked on their own outside of class to make the movie. In the Think-Alouds, the students often mentioned this activity as one of their favorites.

Task-based learning, creativity, and originality (C3, C4, and C5). One of the added benefits of collaborative work with international students is the extra layer of education. Not only are they working on displaying their understanding of a particular idea, but they are using English to communicate about the process. In some ways, the product is of far less value than the process itself. Students negotiate and explain and defend their ideas as they work collaboratively on the project. The whole experience is designed to make the concepts easier to comprehend through a negotiated understanding of the main ideas and to make the students want to learn by making it fun and interesting. In addition to learning course content, these students are acquiring tools of learning and teaching that they can take into their futures.

As noted in Chapter 5, most of the students responded well when they were asked to express themselves and have an opinion. They reported that they liked being active and having fun while learning. For many of them, this was a change from past classroom experiences where the teacher spoke and the student listened. Many of them said that this was the first time that they actually liked learning grammar.

Juniper made sure that the online and in-class exercises were not fact-based, correct-answer based, listen-and-repeat type activities. In this way, she was able to reach each of them at their own level and she could scaffold that learning process so that the learner was the focus and not the content materials. Both in class and online, the students were asked to socially construct their answers through group activities, pair work, and project-based learning. She guided them through a series of activities that would help them actively demonstrate their knowledge.

Sociocultural Theory – Situated learning. Learning is embedded in social events as learners interact with their peers and with the teacher. Students talk and make meaning through activity with the help and guidance of a more knowledgeable mentor. Learning takes place through active student participation. The students learn to work together as a group where the interpersonal reflections are the key to gaining knowledge.

The codes I used for this theory were as follows:

SL 1) Students worked in pairs or groups to produce meaningful texts

SL2) Students explored real life situations together

SL 3) Students shared authentic experiences

SL4) Students had the opportunity to participate, interact, and inject their own opinions

Many of these ideas were covered in the previous section. At the beginning of the semester, Juniper wanted to establish her firm, but fair stance. She wanted them to take the class seriously, so she started with more serious activities. As she noted in her interview, she started the class off *heavy* with more work to see what the students would do and how they worked (Juniper, second interview). As time went on and she got to know them, she started catering to their individual needs, likes, and wants. She started use more humorous activities, activities that she called "not totally professional" (Juniper, second interview, 212). One example was a video called "Bat Dad" (www.youtube.com/user/TheOfficialBadDad) which is a series of short videos with a dad and his kids in which the dad pretends to be Batman and the children react. The videos were chosen because at that moment, she wanted to find a viral video, a video which was very popular at the moment. She wanted to make sure she stayed current and find things that the students might be talking about in real life anyway.

In that same vein, she chose music videos and other online materials that were currently in the news or popular. For example, one was a Katy Perry video. Some of the students actually mentioned her choices of videos, appreciating the timeliness of them. "If some… a teacher give me a video like this, I will be yeah, it's really interesting, so I have something to say and I will prefer to do it" (Ryan, Think-Alouds, 224 – 227). Through her use of viral or popular videos, the students were more interested and motivated to work. They wanted to talk about the shared experience of that video.

I asked Juniper and the students about the textbook and the supplementary online practice. The students reported appreciating the practice, which is of value as a tool for individual work. Juniper preferred activities where the students worked together. She felt like the students hated the supplementary online assignments (Juniper, second interview). In the Think-Alouds and the focus group, the students reported that some of the supplementary activities were helpful, but others encouraged completion over understanding. In the focus group interview, the students spoke openly about the best way to cheat to complete the activity. When I asked them about working in groups, they were much more positive about group experiences. Students appreciated the interaction that Juniper's class provided, both online (discussion boards, VoiceThreads, etc.) and in class work.

In her second interview, Juniper noted that the amount of online exercises that she had assigned did not equal valuable practice. They were just getting it done. So, she made a concerted effort to provide more online interaction, more group projects, and pair work that asked students to interact and share their personal stories (Juniper, second interview). She found that she had to scaffold that experience as well as some students were not sure how to answer the questions. Some students had been so trained to just give the correct answer that they did not know how to present their own experience and complete the assignment at the same time. Some students appreciated answering direct questions with set, correct answers and some wanted to be challenged with higher level, open-ended questions that required more creativity and critical thinking. Over the course of the semester, Juniper worked to try to allow for more creativity and personalization. Towards the end of the semester, she was

grading the work individually. “The students need to be able to gauge what they can do on their own” (Juniper, final interview, 119 – 120). Many of the students reported enjoying the freedom to express themselves in these ways. Juniper worked hard to create a variety of venues for the students to demonstrate their knowledge.

TPACK - Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge. The main focus of TPACK is to help teachers find easy paths to transfer activities and means of assessment from face-to-face environments to online environments. Teachers trying to integrate technology into their classrooms for the first time are often not very sophisticated (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009). Ideally, the technology should be used to support inquiry and collaboration, but many teachers use technology only to present existing information. Technology is underutilized as a pedagogical tool. TPACK is the intersection of Technology, Pedagogy, And Content Knowledge frameworks. In particular, the framework stresses knowledge-building activities (videos, virtual museums, primary source catalogs, websites, etc.) and knowledge expression activities, both convergent and divergent. Convergent knowledge expression activities “ask students to create, respond to, or complete structured representations of prior knowledge building” (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009, p. 409). Divergent knowledge expression activities ask students to participate in product-oriented activities, such as wikis, blogs, mind maps, videos, etc. As part of my data collection, I labeled all of Juniper’s online activities as either knowledge building (KB) or for convergent or divergent knowledge expression activities, I gave each one a label (Discussion Forum – DF, Conduct an interview – CI, Essay – E, Group debate – GD, etc.).

Juniper was very careful to create a variety of exercises and activities. She included a listening, speaking, reading, and writing activity every week. She used videos, journals, essays, voice boards, VoiceThreads, powerpoints, etc. As previously mentioned, she admitted that towards the end of the semester she was bored with her own work. She wanted to get more creative in her forms of presentation. She felt like if she was bored, then her students were too. The videos took such a long time to make that she did not feel she had extra time to learn a new way to present information. That is obviously a fair point for her to make and one that should be examined in a future study.

Juniper worked hard to transfer to face-to-face experiences to an online format. While she enjoyed the overall experience, she talked a lot about the amount of time online activities take. There is a lot required from the teacher to make a positive online experience. The online experience can be positive in that students can work together in a collaborative way to make a product. The online experience can also be frustrating with technical issues that prevent well-thought out design to come to a halt over compatibility issues. At one point, Juniper stated that she thought she needed three to five teachers all working together to make the course better (Juniper, final interview). The notion of a team of instructors working collaboratively to construct online units for a core course has merit perhaps.

ISTE - International Society for Technology in Education. The ISTE standards were designed to help students and teachers deal with the complexities of the digital age. There are several sets of standards for students, teachers, administrators, coaches, computer science educators, etc. They were crowd

(educator)-sourced categories to help provide guidelines for education that utilizes technology, especially in areas such as implementation, curriculum design, student-centered learning, assessment, and professional development (www.iste.org). I was particularly interested in the standards for teachers. Although this is primarily designed for K-12 education, there is a lot of cross-over to higher education. The five main areas of ISTE are 1) facilitation of creative, student-centered classrooms, 2) designing specifically for the online experience, 3), creating and supporting positive online workplaces, 4) promoting a responsible online presence, and 5) teacher professional development (PD).

I shared these ideas with Juniper at the beginning of the semester and said that I would be paying attention to these standards. Over the course of the semester, I would return to the standards to see what Juniper had included. Here are a few examples of ISTE standards that I saw in her activities.

In the VoiceThread and voice board activities, I noted that she met these guidelines: ISTE (I1) B) Facilitate and inspire students learning and creativity by engaging students in real-world issues using digital tools; (I3) B) collaborate with students and peers using digital tools and resources; (I4) B) Address the diverse needs of all learners by using learner-centered strategies, and D) Develop and model cultural understanding by engaging with peers of other cultures using digital collaborative tools.

In one exercise, the students watched a TEDTalk called “Beyond the classroom” and had an online discussion. This covered these standards: ISTE 1A) promote, support, and model creative and innovative thinking 2A) Adapt relevant

learning experiences using digital resources to promote student learning and creativity, and 2C) personalize learning activities to address students' diverse learning preferences and abilities.

One of the VoiceThreads had students discuss the effects of color on moods which met these standards: (I1) A (I1) C) promote student reflection using collaborative tools to reveal and clarify students' conceptual understanding and thinking. Many of the ISTE standards overlap with the ideas behind sociocultural theory and constructivism.

Structural Description – Conceptual frameworks

As she said in her approach to teaching and learning, Juniper knew that each student was unique in both personality and learning preference. She would need to work hard to engage them on an individual level and as a group. She wanted to reach them personally and get them to work together, in class and online. She would need to get them to use their personal backgrounds and worldviews in discussions that would enrich the class for all concerned.

Taking ideas from all of the four conceptual frameworks, she created a learning environment where the students were encouraged to share and collaborate, where students were asked to be creative. The hybrid-learning format challenged the students to take a bigger role in their own learning process. Both in class and online, the students were asked to work together to build and express knowledge through a variety of convergent and divergent activities. Students needed to work together to complete projects. Juniper asked them to engage in real-world issues using digital

tools and resources. She asked them to reflect on complex ideas in order to make their thinking visible.

In the next chapter, I will talk more about which activities worked well and which ones the students responded well too; I will also document students' critiques of the modules and activities. It was obvious in this study that students liked to be asked about their opinions. They like their voice being heard. These individual Think-Alouds were a great place for that to happen. They all agreed to come to my office to let me know what worked and what did not work. They were able to tell me what they thought about the course. To state it another way, the students appreciated the exercises and activities where they were asked to use their voices, the same way they appreciated being able to voice their opinions to me about the class. They were a part of their own educational process. They were processing their experience.

Overall, Juniper provided a very nice insight into her own thinking as she designed and implemented her first hybrid course and the first hybrid EAP grammar class at this university. I saw her frustrations and her successes. I saw how much time and energy she put into each module. The hybrid format does not make life easier for the teacher. Hopefully, it provides more opportunities to integrate new technological tools that students can use in meaningful ways to promote collaboration and creativity.

Textural – Chronology of the teacher's journey

The following data come from a review of the observational notes, four interviews with the teacher, informal and formal conversations, Running Journal, emails between the teacher and the students, and the Blackboard site for the EAP

class. The main function of this section is to detail the teacher's journey in terms of planning, delivery, and reflection. I describe her relationship with the students, with the technology, and with the process of making a hybrid class for the first time as revealed through triangulated data sources. As I reread and studied all of the materials I had collected, I was reminded of how in tune this teacher and I were in our approaches to teaching and learning and the integration of technology. Being aware of this synchrony, I was careful not to gloss any struggles and challenges in the work that emerged.

Collaboration and establishment of trust. As previously mentioned, I worked with Juniper in the past on a pilot project/capstone project in conjunction with a Master's Degree student. During the project design and implementations phases, I shared our findings and all information with Juniper, who always wanted to know what we were doing and how we were developing materials. The two weeks of lessons using technology that the master's student and I delivered were well received by the students and Juniper was impressed. Juniper let me know that she used the videos created for those lessons in the present course under study.

Juniper and I have worked together in a variety of ways: as co-creators, collaborators, and colleagues. In the pilot project, I had a very active, short-term role in her class and I was impressed that Juniper was so willing to let us into her class in such an experimental way. When the project study was over, Juniper stepped back in and took control of her class. She had no problem with collaboration or sharing roles in the design and implementation of course materials. She welcomed new ideas and new ways of thinking.

When it came time for my dissertation study, I approached her again about working together and once again she did not hesitate. I was asking her to step into unknown territory and create a completely new course, a hybrid course, which she had not created before or had much experience with. There were no guidelines for the hybrid course because they did not exist; she would have to create it from scratch. I would be there as a resource, but I would not play an active role as I did in the pilot study. My role in the study would mainly be as observer. In the Running Journal, I made a few suggestions for readings. I listed the TPACK and ISTE websites as influential to my thinking, and I let her know that they would influence my line of questions in the interviews and student questionnaires. I let her know that I would be there if she wanted any technical help or help in designing course materials, which she never asked for. We talked a lot over the course of the semester: in person before and after class, over the phone, and in the Running Journal.

Because of our previous experience working together, I think we got off to a great start. We had a shared social history as well as a shared vision of an active classroom. We both believe the idea that an active classroom leads to better learning outcomes and increased motivation: "…I have seen that an active classroom with fun activities and group work and an open atmosphere has led to better learning and better motivation…" (First interview, 150 - 151). She was very open and honest in all of our forms of communication. Juniper did not attempt to hide failures from me in an attempt to smooth out any wrinkles. I felt like she knew that I was not studying her to point out flaws and demonstrate the negative. I always felt like we knew this was a shared experiment, where we were both trying to find out what we were capable of.

She was very forthcoming in person and in writing. I appreciated her honesty and candor.

The beginning of the journey

First class, Juniper and I had no idea how many students would enroll. We had no idea if they would agree to stay once we explained to them about the format of the course. If Juniper was nervous or unsure about what was just beginning, she did not show it. On day one, she wrote in the Running Journal:

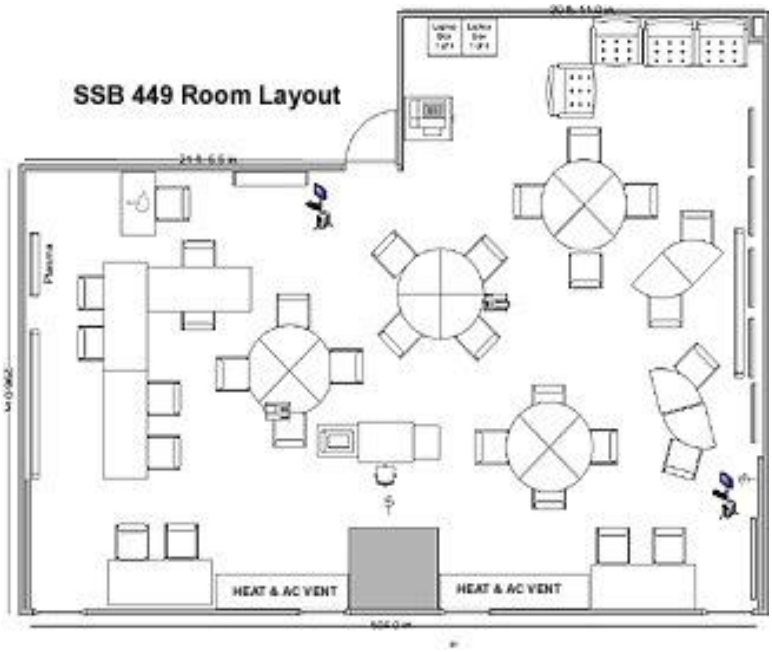
> I've got the first learning module designed and loaded… a little bummed that I'll have to design the second before getting feedback on the first. I hope the second isn't too much like the first. I'm striving to include the major learning styles in the module - music for aural learners, video for visual learners, ppt/movie lectures, reading passages, and writing assignments for the reading & writing learners. Ideally, unit-end projects will include doing / building / creating for the bodily kinesthetic. It's hard to hit that one in an online course. At least, I haven't thought of any clever ideas for it just yet. Also struggling a bit with the relevancy… not sure what kids listen to / watch these days, so not sure what things from pop culture I can use (do people still watch The Simpsons?). I'm not into sports so I'm useless there, and I don't have TV so I'm not up on the shows. Sounds like I'm the worst-ever candidate for this class. But I'm trying. (Running Journal, 122 - 132)

This is not the journal entry of someone who has not put thought and time into the preparation. She was ready for day one. I may have been more nervous than she was.

The Running Journal entry showed that she was thinking about student engagement and student motivation. She wanted to make sure that she reached all of the students and their different learning modalities. Juniper clearly references concepts from Multiple Intelligences by Howard Gardner (1983) who wrote about eight or nine distinctive learning orientations. She was even thinking about the affordances and constraints of the hybrid format in terms of kinesthetic exercises. She wanted to make sure she was current and relevant. Her self-reflection comes off as thoughtful, because she acknowledges her lack of knowledge about pop culture.

On August 19, Juniper started class by introducing herself. She had the eight students, six males and two females, sign in. They all sat around one table at one side of the classroom. Juniper was wearing grey shoes, grey pants, and a green and grey sweater that reached down to her mid-thigh. Her brown hair was in a ponytail. She self-presented as casual and approachable as an instructor.

Figure 2: Technology Enhanced Classroom – Juniper's Room



The room that we managed to secure for Juniper's class is called a - Technology Enhanced Classroom (TEC), one of 12 on campus. Each TEC has individual student workstations, moveable tables and chairs, ceiling mounted projectors, and an instructor workstation. There are also two laptop cabinets that can be opened upon request, so the student can borrow one of the 32 university owned laptops in the room. On each opposing wall, there are screens that raise and lower, as needed. When the screens are raised, there are whiteboards that teachers and students can use. For this particular class, the students sat at one large table near the south wall (right on screen shot above) of the room.

Juniper asked all of the students to introduce themselves including their countries of origin. She let them know that they would be taking a diagnostic test at the end of this class to test their English grammar proficiency. She introduced the textbook and explained that they needed to buy a new book as it came with an online supplement, which could only be accessed once using a code the student would receive with the purchase of a new textbook.

Juniper then explained about being a hybrid course; students would be required to do more independent work outside of class. She reviewed her expectations. The students would need to do work at home. Juniper then talked about the importance of the online class work to learning success. Class time would be based on the assumption of completing online/home work. She asked them to keep syllabus deadlines and that she would not accept late work. She showed them how to navigate Blackboard, course software. She added that she wanted to also have fun and promised lots of activities and games to help with understanding. She told them to be

on time, explaining that being late was disruptive to the activities. In my notes, I comment that she comes off as serious, but talks about having fun.

I could see the words of her first interview, before the class started, coming through in action. In the interview she stated that her teaching role models were firm but fair with clear expectations and boundaries. She believed in having high expectations, but let students know that she was accessible and willing to help. She describes her favorite teachers this way:

> …he was just so loving and kind, but he very firm as well. I just remember him mostly because I loved him even though he is very strict and, looking back, he had excellently clear expectations and boundaries and he held us to them with his high standards, and I think that's what every kid needs and we are sadly lacking that in a lot of schools these days. The second person is my high school English teacher who was maybe my biggest champion of all she was so positive and so energetic and just really encouraged me and others to dig deeper and do better. (First interview, 62 - 67)

I could see all of those influences in Juniper on that first day. She was clear and let the students know what her expectations were. After her introduction and explanation of expectations, she introduces me and I introduce myself and the study. I let the students know that if they agreed to participate in the study, they would need to sign a consent form. They had until the next class to think it over. I thanked the students and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

At Juniper's request, the eight students spread out around the room in order to take the paper-based diagnostic test. Only one student asked for clarification or help

that day - Joker. He seemed to be a little uncomfortable with the idea of taking a test on the first day. Joker, who spoke English at an advanced level, would ask for clarification three more times. During the diagnostic, Juniper would drink water and walk around the room, smiling at students who looked up.

The students began to finish the test. They handed them in to Juniper who reminded each one that they would have a face-to-face class on Wednesday, the only Wednesday class they would have. Most of the students did not respond. I made a note of how quiet the students were on the first day, which is not all that unexpected. I also made a note, *Will I have students to study if no one comes back?* I was clearly hoping that the students would keep coming so that I could have a study. One by one, the students finished the tests and Juniper graded each one. One of the last students, Ryan, was the only student to say bye to Juniper as he left.

In her notes after the first class, Juniper was excited by the diversity of the class. There were students from Japan, China, Korea, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, France, and Spain. She was also happy to report that all of the students passed the diagnostic, to which she responded, “I’ve never had that happen before!” (Running Journal, 109). She wondered, “Not sure if this means people who sign up for online courses are generally more self-motivated - better suited for their level of study, or what” (Running Journal, 110 - 111). This would be an interesting observation as not all of them were aware that it was a hybrid course when they signed up as discussed in student chapter.

In the Running Journal, in what may have been the only piece of advice that I offered or she needed, I reported that I had a look at what she had loaded on Blackboard.

> I guess I would make sure that they know how to navigate the site. I think all too often, students are in the 'need to know' category. They want to know which of this information do I really need to know and which is supplementary. It looks like a lot of good info, but a lot of info, nonetheless. Students LOVE to say they did not complete assignments because they were confused and did not know what to do. (Running Journal, 146 - 150).

This *what do I really need to know* issue would turn out to be a problem for many of these students. Students like to be told exactly what to do and to have clear expectations not just told to them, but also a step-by-step guide of what to do and when, particularly in online learning environments. Juniper would work on this and revisit this issue over the next few weeks. She also made a few assumptions about the technology acumen of the students. She comments:

> Class today was fantastic. I'm glad we took a Wednesday to troubleshoot and navigate through the pages. Some students were completely unaware that links in [Blackboard] could lead to documents - I think they assumed it went to a website or something and they mostly wanted to bypass the website and just complete the assignment (to print and sign the paper). That was interesting. I kind of assumed that these 'kids' would have the techno-advantage on me but most of them seemed to have no idea. The two students

> from Europe were on it, but the people from Eastern and Western Asia had no idea. (Running Journal, 218 - 224)

It is easy to assume that students who use the Internet know about using a computer to learn. There should be some easy transfer of knowledge from clicking on things online and the way Blackboard works, but that is not the case. At least half of the students reported needing help navigating Blackboard. For at least two students, during the Think-Aloud interviews they reported that their inability to figure out Blackboard in the first two weeks proved to be their undoing. Juniper was aware of this and tried to help those who reached out for help. She spoke about several of them in the Running Journal:

> In speaking with the students I learned that at least three of them were uneasy about online courses because they had never done them before. A fourth was worried because she did not know how to use the computer very well and felt unfamiliar with Blackboard. I assured her she could call or email at any time for help, and that I would be glad to meet with her to walk her through the navigation of our pages (she is new to the university this semester and new to the USA). (Running Journal, 226 - 231)

In their respective books, Marc Prensky (2001), author of *Teaching Digital Natives,* and José Antonio Bowen (2012), author of *Teaching Naked*, focus on how current methods of teaching should approach classroom design with college students in mind who are very tech savvy. Both authors discuss how to reach these students through higher-level critical thinking skills that often make use of information available through technology. The assumption with both authors is that there is a

foundation of computer literacy that students bring with them. The idea is that class content has to be integrated into social situations while asking them to think and that often happens best when students work together with the teacher and with each other.

To be fair, they may be generally correct in those assumptions if they are talking about a general range of US students but, even then, some US students do not have ready access to technology. So, if we move the focus back to a classroom of international students, how does this assumption hold up? As I discuss in more detail in Chapter 5, many of these students came from educational systems that did not focus on technology or collaborative education. Most of them had never been asked to submit work online. Many of them primarily have only experienced lectures and tests. Even though Juniper introduced the students to Blackboard and showed them where the assignments were and how to submit them, some of the students were slow to get on board. This is not a sign of anything unusual; this may be true of many American students as well.

Getting to know and use Blackboard. Juniper starts her second class by greeting everyone by name. I was impressed and I assume that the students felt good about their teacher knowing them by sight. On this particular day, the class met in a computer lab with a printer, where each student has a computer in front of them. There are four rows of computers with an aisle down the middle. There are four computers on either side of the aisle for a total of 32 computers. Most of the students sit in the front left, while the remainder of the students scatter in the second and third rows. There are two reasons for the room switch: one, Juniper wants to go through Blackboard and make sure that the students follow her while she explains the site, and

two, the students agreed to take a pre-course survey for my study. They need a computer in front on them to complete both tasks and then print them out to hand in.

In my notes, I write that Juniper is bubbly and energetic today. I think she wanted to reach them through her energy level. If the students can see that she is excited and that she cares, then they will hopefully match her energy level. I have the same feeling when I teach. If I put in the time and energy and the students can see it, then I hope they will join me and match my effort. She asks them to open Blackboard. She talks about the diagnostic test from last week. She shows them an acceptance statement that she wants them to read and print that states that they understood what she explained. She continued to discuss the purpose of the course, and showed them the assignment tab, the calendar, and then explained the syllabus again. In the syllabus, there was a section about plagiarism, cheating, respect, and following the rules of the course. If they agreed to all of that, then they should print the acceptance statement, sign it, and give it to her.

Before the end of class, Gordon would approach her with some concerns. Juniper had written in her Running Journal about one of the students who told her that "…he does not like online classes, and while he likes me and liked what we did in class today, he would prefer to switch to a fully face-to-face course. He hoped I wouldn't be offended (I wasn't)" (Running Journal, 231- 233). Gordon and many of his classmates would struggle over the next two weeks. Gordon would eventually drop the course and switch to a face-to-face class. His story is elaborated in Chapter 6.

For whatever reason, the students were not ready to embrace working through Blackboard to complete assignments. Blackboard continued to be a major hurdle for some of the students. Some of the students were bothered that they could see all of the semester's assignments and felt overwhelmed. Juniper listened to them and "decided to simply hide the assignments until the class day of which they correlated. Hopefully that will draw less anxiety." (Running Journal, 240 - 242).

As Juniper reported on August 25, "The first two assignment dates have come and gone, and only three students completed any of them. ANY of them. I feel totally disheartened by the fact that they couldn't even motivate themselves to look online!" (Running Journal, 261- 263). She had explained more than once where the assignments were located and how to complete them. She had walked them through the process, step by step. She had asked them if they understood what they needed to do and they had signed an agreement saying that they were ready and understood what they needed to do.

In the interviews, none of them talked about being overwhelmed. They talked about the total amount of homework, but they did not say that it was too much at the beginning. They did talk about the fact that they felt unsure of what to do, even after Juniper had presented and reviewed the information. This speaks to the significant challenges in online learning for students who have never been asked to work independently using technology tools.

Juniper took much of the responsibility on her own shoulders. "I have to assume that the fault is in my design of the options and in my assumptions, also, that the students are as motivated as I am" (Running Journal, 264 - 265). She thought of

herself when she designed the modules. “When I am in online courses and I see a learning module, I get on it immediately and keep working at it a little bit each day until it is finished” (Running Journal, 265- 267). She is the kind of learner who looks at the whole picture and figures out how to divide it into smaller pieces in order to get it done. If the students looked at it and saw something too big, then maybe they shut down and gave up. It became obvious that the students did not share her approach to learning. “From my current observation of the number of assignments that have actually been done, I can tell you that only three people are wired this way, or at least, have been trained this way” (Running Journal, 267- 269). Juniper knew that she would have to revisit her strategy to meet the needs of the students. She would have to compartmentalize the activities and pieces into smaller chunks. She would have to train them how to view the online modules in order to complete them in a more manageable, more easily digestible way.

> My plan from here is to restructure the learning modules so that they are arranged under folders marked “Due By…” In this way, hopefully, students will get online and complete the work accordingly, as well as be prepared for class. (Running Journal, 271 - 273)

So, she went back to her initial design and created small chunks labeled by due dates. In the student interview several students pointed out that this was a big help.

> At first, at first, it was really, uh, like a mess. I did not know how to use it. This… how to take, so for the first week I missed like two discussions cause I did not know where it was, but we… I think the professor recognized it and she put like assignments due by, like to help me, to help us, like this

> assignments are due by this date, so I think it, it is improved, so, but at first, it was difficult for me to find my… oh where's my… I did not even know there was an assignment. (Think Aloud, Susan, 491 - 496)

In the same interview, Susan remarked that she appreciated Juniper paying attention to the needs of the students. Juniper had paid attention to what was happening online and listened to the students. Many of them emailed her with questions. Susan noticed that "… she listened to what we said…and she did it for us" (Think Aloud, Susan, 519 - 520). Susan was referring to the changes that Juniper made in Blackboard to create clarify assignments and expectations.

In her Running Journal, Juniper paid attention to the plight of the students, but wanted them to get on board as fast as possible: "I have been lenient on the grading on the first week since one never knows who will actually be in the class until Week 2, but I'm going to 'lay the smack down' after this" (Running Journal, 279 - 281). At some point, the students were going to need to get on board with working online. The students were going to have to learn to be more self-sufficient and self-motivated. Even the best-laid plans will often meet with obstacles and unforeseen complications. These are some of the affordances and constraints of using technology.

Affordances and constraints of using technology to teach. Juniper listened to the students and worked to block the assignments into smaller chunks. She added easy to view due dates and only presented information and activities as they needed to be seen. She worked hard to help and support them as they learned to work on their own. She was making the appropriate steps for success. Actively listening and responding early on to student feedback is critical when moving to new pedagogies.

Juniper's concerns continued as the semester advanced. "Nobody had completed any of the preparation work from the first learning module. Some of the students said they had tried, but were unable to view the videos properly" (Running Journal, 289 - 291). Blackboard's default setting for embedded videos is a two by two inch square, with no option for a pop-out, larger window. That meant that while the students could use headphones to hear the video, they could not really understand the video lecture because they could not see the visuals as they appeared. There was no visual context for the information they were hearing. Some of the students assumed they had done something wrong or were not equipped to solve the technical issue, so they did not watch the video. There was some obvious frustration expressed on the part of the students. As a result, Juniper had to use a sizable portion of the next face-to-face class presenting the lecture they were supposed to have watched online. Because of that, she was not able to complete the activities she had planned, so she was behind and not sure that the students had gotten the material. The activities were her chance for the students to demonstrate their knowledge of the subject matter. With no activities, she would just have to hope that they were learning the material.

The second issue was that, while the students appreciated the changes that Juniper had made, some of them were still not on board.

> Students agreed that the new delivery method for assignments is much easier to follow, but they aren't doing the work. They seemed confused about what is required and asked a lot of questions to find out where they are allowed to be lazy… I reminded them that, unless otherwise specified, all assignments

> are due by 11 o'clock AM on the class day. So far, only three people turned anything in for today. (Running Journal, 299 - 306)

As a teacher, I am aware that students want to find the boundary of what is minimally acceptable and what is not, and what is the path of least resistance. Some students want to find that minimum acceptable level and hover just above that to stay afloat. There are obviously other students who do everything that is asked for and go above and beyond the call, but Juniper was not seeing those students' work yet. Students can be quite strategic in offloading responsibility for getting the work done on the teacher as an excuse for their own non-engagement and unwillingness to take responsibility for their own learning.

Juniper expressed some frustration that the students would complete the assignment to get the minimum number of points allowed, but would not go beyond that to make the activity a true success. For example, students would need to revisit ongoing, online conversations to keep them going, but students would add one sentence, which would give them participation points, and then they would not return to read others' posts. Juniper wrote, "How can I make this more attractive? They get no points unless they complete both parts of the participation requirement? There needs to be some interaction here. Language learning isn't a solitary endeavor" (Running Journal, 310 - 312). As any good teacher should do, Juniper paid attention to what was happening in order to make positive changes.

Sometimes, even the best intensions do not help. A collaborative tool that many teachers use to create collaborative spaces is called VoiceThread. I used it

successfully in a cross-cultural communication class I taught, but Juniper did not have the same positive experience that I had:

> Spent three hours on the phone with both IT and Faculty Resource Center trying to figure out why the very extremely detailed instructions for Voice Thread stopped being useful at step four. Turns out that all they needed to do was change http:// into https:// . GOOD LORD what a waste of my time! (Running Journal, 313 - 316)

As it turned out, the instructions for using VoiceThread were incorrect. She had followed the instruction to the letter, but it still did not work. To make matters worse, in her mind, the students did not seem to take to the VoiceThread activity. That was a lot of frustration and effort for what seemed like little return. In the focus group, the students actually mentioned VoiceThread as one of the tools that they really liked. They even offered advice on how to make that activity better, such as adding directed questions for required points and then using more open-ended, creative questions for extra points. One of the students even said something to the affect that a directed response followed by a more creative outlet would help them professionally, as in complete the task and then expand on the idea. We also discussed this idea in the focus group:

> M: Yeah, it would be more challenging that way
>
> J: So, if I'm hearing you correctly, transitioning from fun to academic to help you and you said that's to help you professionally
>
> G3: Yes that's it because that's the point of the class. (Focus Group, 326 - 337)

Students found value in the activity even if it was not evident to Juniper at that moment. Some of them appreciated the ability to be creative and do more. Some of them just wanted to know what the minimum requirements were. In the focus group, Ryan said he liked being asked to be creative. Vermouth said that she could not think of anything else to say, so she appreciated the direct questions. She was not as interested in being creative as she was in getting the grade.

Another issue was online quizzes. For her first quiz, Juniper set a time limit of 30 minutes. “I wanted them to be able to think about their answers and write thoughtfully, but not to be able consult the Interwebs / dictionaries / friends / books / notes” (Running Journal, 326- 328). Juniper was always trying to balance her core principles: being firm but fair, being clear and having boundaries, being an encourager who expected more of the students to follow the rules and try their best. That being said, she knows that students would always look for the easy way out when given the opportunity: “I just don’t trust these darlings as far as I can throw them because I have rather a lot of experience with teenagers” (Running Journal, 331 - 332). Some of them would cheat on an online quiz. It was bound to happen.

> **A shift in student engagement.** Ten days in, Juniper started to notice a change: Lots of online activity yesterday. LOTS. Those who did it blew through the Present Tense learning module, which is good (in terms of completion), even though it was due on Monday. Some even started the Past Tense learning module. (Running Journal, 339 - 341)

Things are changing. Students are starting to get into a rhythm. She hoped that they were actually seeing the online practice as a learning opportunity and not a

completion activity. “I have to wonder if they are treating the modules as a check-check-done sort of activity rather than a listen-practice-study-learn type thing” (Running Journal, 341- 344). At least most of the students are going online and completing the activities, which means that they understand the nature of the class. They have to be responsible for completing the learning modules at the scheduled time. For most of them, this is beginning to happen. Some of them still are not sure of what parts of the learning module is absolutely necessary to do. Do they have to do all of the activities? In her Journal, Juniper replied, “Yes, if you want participation points; no, if you don’t. You don’t HAVE to do anything unless you want to pass” (Running Journal, 348 - 350). I am sure she was a little more diplomatic in her face-to-face response.

Another issue that arose was that some students were having trouble logging into the supplemental online materials that came with the purchase of a new book. At the beginning of the semester, Juniper told the students that they would have to buy new books because they would need the one-time use code that came with it. None of the students mentioned this issue during the student interviews, so I think it may have been more of an excuse than it was a real problem.

There were also browser issues. There were compatibility issues with support for students using Safari. “…some students ignored that ‘compatibility check’ urged by their Macs and so have been missing all kinds of the animation and listening because they were using Safari” (Running Journal, 487 - 489). Kathy was one of those students who used a Mac “… we have to use Firefox and I use Safari and I can't read the video” (Think Aloud, Kathy, 154 - 155). There were also some issues with

cookies, java, and pop-ups, but those may be issues that every student using a computer had to deal with, not just students enrolled in a hybrid.

Mid semester feelings about hybrid

As much as Juniper was getting into the flow of the class and helping the students deal with a new format and new way of learning, she still had her roots in face-to-face classes. Three weeks in, Juniper comes into class with a dark blue top and black skirt, sporting her familiar ponytail. She greets the students and demonstrates a familiarity with them that seems to be at odds with how few times she has met with them. She knows them by name and by work. Students are focused in class and pay close attention to what she is saying. She works through some of the nuances of the past tense. She reviews stative verbs, verbs that express a state rather than an action (e.g. like, love, know, understand, etc.), and introduces the activity to help the students understand that these verbs are not used in continuous tenses (i.e. no –ing form). Joker, Nate, and Alistair all demonstrate a good understanding of the material through participation in a group activity dealing with stative verbs. Nate asked a question about the difference in the use of *for* or *since*. There was a good vibe in the air. Juniper wrote in the Journal that day: "Today went smoothly, I think. The students really need that one day of face to face in which they can reinforce their learning with actual work checked by the teacher. I'm glad I spoke to them…" (Running Journal, 390 - 392).

However, Juniper had already sent academic alerts out on four students by then because they had not been keeping up with online work. Two of them had not turned in any work to date. Two of them were not completing the online participation

activities so they were missing easy grades. Juniper felt like she really needed the personal contact to try to reach the students and encourage them to do better. “I have spoken to each of them personally and told them my concerns. We shall see what comes of it” (Running Journal, 406 - 408). As a result of her emails and personal encouragement, she started to see the students putting in more of an effort. “The larger part of the class body has begun doing things with plenty of time rather than waiting for the last moment. I am very pleased with the results of these ‘homework’ assignments!” (Running Journal, 412- 414). Her new success with the online portion would free up more time to do activities and less review during class time. She was great about coming up with fun activities to get the students engaged and motivated.

By her second interview, Juniper felt as if she was able to cover more information using the hybrid format.

> …it allows me to cover a lot more material in a lecture format or a presentation format than I could actually do in class. Um, because I won’t have the interruptions of student questions and, um, I, since I can prepare it all in advance I can make sure that I can get to everything that I want to get to in a single presentation… (Second interview, 43 - 46)

She could cover all of the materials that she felt were necessary. She could put them into a slide show or a video lecture or a series of videos, depending on what needed to be covered. The students could review it, if needed.

> They have basically the entire lecture that they can watch and repeat as many times as necessary and with the video format they can skip ahead and behind

> and, or with just technology in general they can skip to the point at which they need more support and that's great. (Running Journal, 53 - 56)

When I asked the students about the videos, most of them responded by talking about YouTube videos that Juniper posted. None of them talked directly about the instructional videos. I asked about content delivery methods in the focus group interview and they said lectures, video, and PowerPoint. They did not elaborate further about specific ones that they liked, but by the end of the semester it was clear that, for them, the hybrid format and the content delivery system using videos was a normal part of the course. As students often do, they preferred to concentrate on what did not work and what issues they had. Receiving direct instruction through watching videos was not one of the complaints.

When I asked Juniper about the instructional videos, she had a different perspective. "…it takes me a really long time to set them up. I spend far more time preparing for this online course than I do for my face to face courses" (Second interview, 56 - 58). Not only did she have to gather the supporting materials for the lesson, but then she had to figure out the best way to present the materials. Would a video or a PowerPoint work better? She had to rely on her own feelings about it because she was not getting the same feedback as in a face-to-face class. "I don't have the benefit of knowing what the students are immediately baffled by, so I can't focus on that to help them" (Second interview, 63 - 64). She missed that level of interaction. The direct instruction was taking place online. The activities were taking up most of the class time, so maybe she was missing some of the personal interaction because she did not feel she had time for it.

> I really don't know because with the students' self-directed learning… they, they spend time on what they think they need to spend time on and they don't have the benefit of me saying actually that's wrong, let's try again. (Second interview, 71 - 74)

As a result of the lack of face time with the students, she and the students were emailing each other more often than usual.

> I think that's a big constraint and just not being available twice a week for them to ask questions of me is also a constraint because a lot of them find it embarrassing to email me or [think it] invasive. Most of them apologize profusely when they email me multiple times even though I tell them to email me any time. I'm available for you. I am here to help you. Please do ask if you have trouble. (Second interview, 74 - 78)

For Juniper, that missing class was missing a chance to talk and let them know that she was there for them. She wanted the second class meeting to have one more chance to be supportive.

> …sometimes people, um, are great with form and practice and video, but they might need a little extra support in another way and I don't always know that until we get into the Monday class and by that point sometimes it's almost too late… (Second interview, 86 - 89)

For Juniper, that human contact made a lot of difference. It was more than just providing information to the students. It was more than grades. Without the twice a week face-to-face contact, she might not have been able to stay true to her core principles. For Juniper, it was hard to be the champion for the students and to be the

encourager without the personal contact. Students felt like a burden and apologized when they emailed her, so they might not have emailed her much or as often as she would have liked. The students may not have opened up like she was used to because of a perceived distance between them. That is not to say that the class was not a success, because the normal distribution of grades was there and the students' feedback was good. Most of the student feedback in the Think-Aloud and focus group interview was basically positive. For Juniper, one of the backbones of her teaching philosophy was teacher support, so she felt like she could have given more to the students with an extra face-to-face class day.

Course design and materials. This was Juniper's first time to design and run a hybrid course, but it was not her first experience with one. In her first interview, she described a negative experience she had herself with a *hybrid* class, though the fault in that class may have been poor instructional design in general. There was an online portion that she described as ok, but when there was a face-to-face class, the teacher "…sat at the front of the class playing on his iPhone while we did modules on the computers in the computer lab" (First interview, 242, 243). That teacher was either lazy or did not understand the possibilities of the hybrid format. I asked her why she agreed to teach this course if she had had a negative experience with the hybrid format. She replied by saying that it was because I had asked her and she was willing to try, and she was "excited to learn something new and to put more tools into my tool box" (First interview, 264 - 265). So, what tools did she choose and how did she weave the online portion in with the face-to-face classes?

At the beginning of the course, I asked her about her comfort level with technology. She replied that she enjoyed messing around with different tools and figuring them out. She was very aware that the beginning of the course is front heavy, meaning there is a lot to do at the beginning to get off to a positive start.

> I want to include things that you included in the pilot course last semester, such as videos, slide shows, recordings, all of those kinds of things and I hope as much as possible right now to direct them to sources there are already available as I sort of figure out how to develop things on my own. (First interview, 292 - 295)

I was glad to hear that the pilot had helped give some examples to think about. She was aware that there was a Center for Teaching and Learning on campus that could help her with the design and she wanted to take advantage of that. She acknowledged that a lot of her expertise was based on in-class activities. "… my bag of tricks mostly consists of activities that will be great for the face-to-face. I'm just not sure how to translate them to online practices well" (First interview, 308 - 309). The first step was to follow one of her core principles: Be clear.

In the assignments section of blackboard, Juniper divided each section into its own learning module. She even created one called getting started, which helped students with a *Where can I find _____?* section and a *What am I supposed to do?* section. These gave easy to follow instruction for everything the students would need to know if they were not able to ask her personally. For each consecutive section, she listed the learning objectives of the module, a description of the grammatical issue at hand, and then there were folders for each subsection. At the beginning of the course,

she made them all visible, but the students reported feeling overwhelmed, so she made them visible as they were expected to do them. This way, when the students logged in, they would see only what they were expected to do for that week.

In each folder, there were individual sections: introduction, instructions, and activities. The introduction was usually a set of questions to help the students get into the mind set needed for the tense. For example, for the present perfect tense, “Think for a few moments about your older relatives. Have you ever visited these older relatives on your own, without your parents accompanying you? How often do you visit them? What are their lives like? How is their health?” (Blackboard, present perfect). The instructions were usually either a video that Juniper made or something she found on the Internet or a PowerPoint. The activities were websites to visit, videos to watch, songs to listen to, and/or visuals to react to. One good example was a website she used to illustrate the present continuous tense in order to answer the question, what are they doing now? She found a great website where a dad used trick photography to present his two girls in very funny scenes. The students were asked to describe what is happening in the scene at that moment. This was an excellent way to bring students in and make them interested.

She could then follow this up in class with more activities. This was the rhythm she was trying to establish - a connection between the online work and the face-to-face classes that flowed into each other.

> The way I have set it up is the online portion is the instruction which gives them the background they need in order to play the games and do the activities in class. So, if they have prepared by watching the videos, um, they are able to

> enjoy the games cause they know what they are doing and they have a chance at winning. (Second interview, 139 - 142)

In her interview, she stated that she thought she had finally achieved the flow she was hoping for by week six.

***Online* work.** A key finding is the way the teacher and the students saw the online portion of the course and the differentiation between online work and homework. Juniper appropriated her previous face-to-face experience and department expectations to create a model for online work, which also included homework. Here, Juniper addressed her rationale for the amount of work given:

> Midterm evaluations are in. Only two students participated but the class earned 4s and 5s on every point (on a Likert scale where 4s and 5s were the good or very good). For free comments, one participant said 'Nice' and the other said 'A lot of homework in a short time.' I immediately checked out the homework I've assigned and decided not to worry about this comment, because though I do embed lots of little assignments in the learning modules (to track understanding - scores for these are based on participation rather than correctness); they take about 30 seconds to 5 minutes each. Then, I assign two practice exercises and one writing exercise for every three days. I don't think it's too much. For some reason (and I really don't know why or when I started doing this) I base the amount of work students are doing on how long it would take. I estimate it takes students up to six times as long as it takes me to do the same, and I never give them more than two hours or homework per class session in a week, instructional videos included. This is a lot less than we are

> recommended to give by the department (three hours for every contact hour based on the two-meeting schedule). (Running Journal, 673 - 685)

The real issue was how the students viewed the word *online*. A hybrid course is the combination of two parts: a face-to-face class and an online portion that should generally take the same amount of time as a face-to-face class. The students seemed to understand the concept of an online portion of the hybrid format, but they quickly equated and confused the online portion with work done at home, *homework*, and not online work to be done at home. As a result, this may be the reason why many of the students complained about the amount of homework, as opposed to online work. If the students chose not to the use the Wednesday online time, then they would have to complete that work at another time, which basically made it homework instead of online work.

When I asked the students about *online* work in the focus group, many of them quickly defined that online work as the supplement work they did for the book. They did not define online work as the work they did in connection to Blackboard. In his Think Aloud, when asked about doing online work, Daniel replied, “the online activities with the grammar, um, those, I think those are very useful” (Think Aloud, Daniel, 436 - 437). I asked him about online activities, not specifically about the supplemental activities, but that was what came to mind for him. For many of them, going to Blackboard was not an *online* activity. You had to visit a website outside of the university system or complete supplemental materials in order to be truly *online*.

It may have been difficult for students to see where class began and ended. In Juniper’s understanding, the students had a Wednesday online period to complete

some of the assignments, but many of the students chose to view that as a free period. For the students, Blackboard was a place to go to find out what you needed to complete for a grade; it was not *online*. Completing work using Blackboard was not online work. None of the students saw the online portion as a place to come together as a class.

Juniper was hoping that she could figure out ways to use technology to keep a conversation going with the students outside of class. She wanted them to see the online portion as a way to communicate. She was disappointed when the discussion boards did not provide that opportunity. “I don't know if it's specifically for this class or for the hybrid format, because they know that they're just coming to class on Monday, so they can save all the discussion for then” (Final interview, 90 - 92). Her guess was that if they were going to meet with her, then they could skip the possible online discussion and use that class time. If she was right, then they defeated the purpose of having an online connection out of class. For a variety of reasons, discussion boards did not appeal to this group of students.

Only one student ever used the discussion board to try and continue a conversation, but no one else responded. That same student said, “… the thing is if I watch a video, then it is one way conversation, right?” (Think Aloud, Susan, 324 - 325). She wanted more of a connection online, but the other students did not. Maybe Juniper did not foster that enough. The students did not buy into any sense of online community or group outside the classroom. For them, online meant using the Internet to finish an assignment. It did not mean an online presence in a group.

Types of activities. In our Running Journal, I asked Juniper what kinds of activities she included from the list of Divergent Knowledge Expression Activities (Harris, Mishra, & Koehler, 2009). This is what she shared:

- Essay - once a chapter and on every test, online or paper
- Report - with relative pronouns, I had them report on / describe the life and works of a famous person using relative pronouns, and then read their reports to their partners (omitting the person's name) to see if someone could guess who it was.
- Diary - it's SO UNCOOL to use the word diary these days so I usually go with Journal, and typically, once a chapter, online or paper
- create a picture - we use these a lot for defining concepts or games
- draw a cartoon - same as above
- knowledge web - generating ideas for essay writing
- generate Qs - part of their assignment - come prepared with Qs to ask about the material
- create a film - Headlines with you and homework assignment they are working on for Nouns, Quants, Articles, and Relative Pronouns
- do a presentation - Voice Board - got miserly work.
- do a performance - In class with verbs; nobody was into it. (Running Journal, 815 - 829)

Many of the divergent knowledge expression activities worked really well for her. In particular, the students made stop motion videos, enjoyed the work and the results were pretty amazing. As Ryan said in his interview:

> …we had to create a video and talking about the differences between cultures. So, I really had to use and to…new type of models that I wasn't used to use before, so it was also really educational when I did it. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 368-370)

One example of an online activity that did not work with this group of students was the discussion board (DB). Juniper tried to use the discussion boards several times. Although they provided her with visual work for her to grade, there was no student interaction. I asked her which ones worked and why. Her response: "For this class, it did not work as an actual discussion tool. It was great for checking responses and that was about it" (Running Journal, 919 - 920). This failure may well be connected to the perception that the peer learning inherent in discussion boards was not integral to the assignments for grading, as in individual products.

Juniper provided activities and exercises that covered a variety of learning modalities. As usual, students responded positively to exercises that spoke to their own personal learning preferences. Daniel liked the listening exercises, because "it makes me like be more focused or more to understand better the, um, person where, when I am speaking to them, um, daily." (Think Aloud, Daniel, 246 - 247). One example of this was for the past perfect lesson; Juniper used the Katy Perry video, Last Friday Night. The students were asked to watch the video and make a list of what they saw and heard. They were then to use the discussion board to write what Katy had done before she woke up. It was very current and the students seemed to appreciate that.

Another tool that the students mentioned was VoiceThread. Juniper used VoiceThread eight times over the course of the semester and the students seemed to respond well to it. Students were presented with a theme, usually in the form of a visual, and then asked several follow up questions. Even Joker, who did not do a lot of homework, participated. “There’s one video on the effects of color on the mood, and it was one of the videos that I could talk nonstop about” (Think Aloud, Joker, 96 - 99). It may have been the fact that all he had to do was talk and not write. He preferred speaking activities over writing activities. Voice Thread seemed to connect with this group of students in ways that the discussion board did not.

For each module, Juniper made sure to have a listening activity, a visual activity, a reading activity, and some kind of assessment. Most modules also required a speaking activity. I asked her about her process of creating these activities. On the plus side, she agreed that:

> …they were very detailed, so they covered all of the information, both from the book and from what I have known students in previous classes to need. They were organized. I think that they were sufficiently detailed in terms of example and explanation. (Final interview, 32 - 35)

On the negative side, she shared, “Towards the end, they were boring. I think that the fact that students could choose not to watch [the videos] was frustrating simply because they made mistakes and asked questions that had already been covered in the slides” (Final interview, 36 - 38). I am very aware of the contradictory nature of trying to design something that is consistent, but consistently different enough to be ever-changing while still being recognizable and familiar. Students like

familiarity. In the last class I taught, the students told me one of the negative things about the website was that it was *always* changing. One of the major changes that they were referring to was a change in the schedule, as in when the schedule needed to be updated. I made the changes and then posted them. They found that to be a negative. So, the trick is keeping things the same and on schedule and task while keeping students interested and engaged. Some of that comes from giving students ownership over those changes. When they are involved in making the changes, they have a better chance at seeing the rationale.

At the end of the semester

I asked Juniper if she was satisfied with the course design. “So, overall strengths were, I would say clarity, organization, detail and the material covered, wholesale. And weaknesses are technology, um, boredom towards the end. And I think I really only got four of the multiple intelligences instead of five” (Final interview, 45 - 47). While she made great strides in her knowledge of how to set up modules for a hybrid course, she still felt like she had a long way to go, especially her technical acumen. “My knowledge about technology is weak and that became an issue for some of the students” (Final interview, 39 - 40).

I asked her about the strengths and weaknesses of the hybrid format. In terms of strengths, she said that she liked that the students had to be more self-reliant and self-motivated. That is something that the students echoed as well. For the most part, they felt a sense of satisfaction that they were personally responsible for their own motivation. Juniper liked being able to dedicate more class time to practice. “I think it allows the class time to be more focused on practice, which is good” (Final interview,

57 - 58). Conversely, she would have liked for them to have more chances to speak with a native speaker who can and will correct their grammar to help them. She knows that personal friends and even the language tutors do not correct the students when they speak. As she noted, native speakers do not generally know why they say what they say. They cannot help a language learner understand the rules. That was how she saw her role with those students "…relying on the tutor or the *Friends without Borders* for their English language speaking just really isn't enough…" (Final interview, 68 - 69). *Friends without Borders* is an on campus group of American volunteers who invite international students to informal meetings where they can practice their English in a friendly environment. None of the students go through any training to be a part of the group. It is not a tutoring session; it is designed to be more social than educational.

She liked many of the activities that she planned. Now that she tried them out, she knows how she would change them for the next time. She talked a lot about changes she would make. She would work with them on group rapport. She would try to make the discussion boards work. She would try to encourage them to use the discussion boards rather than one-on-one emails. She would set hours for emails: none after 10 pm. All in all, she was proud of her work and the progress that she made with the students.

> I know that a lot of students were really wary coming into it and some of the students by the end were really proud of themselves and felt… one student even told me she felt very confident continuing her studies independently, because of what she had done in this class, and I think that's something that

> you get out of a hybrid course that you don't necessarily get out of the face-to-face, fully face-to-face format, because in that, in the face-to-face class, you rely on your teacher all the time for corrections, for troubleshooting, for telling [you] what to do and how to do it. And in the hybrid format you get to do things on your own, and or actually you have to do things on your own, and that gives them the level of f independence that they did not have before, so I love that… (Final interview, 151 - 159)

I also asked her about her own personal progress over the course of the semester. She felt like she got more efficient at producing materials by the end. “I do think that they were good for what they were and I put a lot of work into them” (Final interview, 174 - 175). While she did get more efficient, she was bothered by the sameness of the format. The students may have appreciated the familiarity of the modules, but she felt a little bored. “I guess I'm waiting for inspiration to come on how to use the screen in more creative ways” (Final interview, 185 - 186). She was amazed at how much time everything took. It was a lot of work to create all of the modules, work that she felt like she did for free.

In saying that, she brought up a very interesting point: intellectual property. She was the only one in the department who had created a hybrid class. What if others want to see, copy, use, or adapt her materials?

> …now I'm dealing with is weird ethical dilemma, because, um…I guess it’s not really ethical… because we've got this group folder on [Blackboard] where teachers can put stuff for other teachers to use and everybody wants me to put my stuff up there, and I’m like, I don’t want to (laughs), because I spent

> my entire, you know, before the semester started and then during the semester and I did all this work and I'm… I feel like I'm, I'm being, feeling stingy and that's what it is. I'm just being stingy (laughs) and I don't want to share cause I worked so hard. (Final interview, 199 - 204)

This was a real legitimate point she was making. It would not be fair for her to give away all that she worked so hard for. She stated that she would be fine with sharing and exchanging and collaborating, but she did not want to give away her hard work for free. This will need to be discussed if there is ever another hybrid EAP course offered.

Another issue that Juniper had to deal with was honesty. Students cheat. If the students are now on their own online, how do you monitor their work and their efforts? First, she talked about in-class quizzes:

> I wanted them to be able to control their own learning and to trust them to do the best that they could on the quiz, because they wanted to show what they had learned, what they were able to do, but in the end, I had to control how many questions they could see at a time, whether or not they could review their questions, which I had to take that away, because when they were sitting next to students, they were changing answers on the review portions. (Final interview, 258 - 263)

Then I asked her if that was true online as well. "…I started getting ones with duplicate answers and the exact weird mistake wrong on both…" (Final interview, 268 - 269). I am not sure if the teaching profession will ever completely rid the world of cheating. Students will always find an easier way. For Juniper, she had to work

with ways technology would allow her to control the student responses through time limits, not allowing cut and paste time, and question review.

In the end, Juniper is a conscientious, effective teacher. All good teachers want their students to learn. They want to spend as much time with their students as it takes to make sure that they are getting the message and moving in a positive direction. Juniper saw this as especially true for language learners.

> I would love that for it to be three times a week. I think they need more face-to-face contact, honestly. I think actually that the English classes should be lab classes. They should have a face-to-face portion where they practice and then the other part, like I said, project based lab with tech support. (Final interview, 511 - 514)

She felt like there needed to be more controls on Blackboard to help her determine who was doing what and how long it took. She wanted follow up questions to check for comprehension. She wanted the online portion to be more interactive.

> …if there was a way that I could set that up to where I knew that they had watched it and not just played it, but if I can set it up to be interactive to the point where on each slide, there was something the students had to click or move, you know, like move a box here or rearrange this sentence here or whatever, something that I knew that they had seen and done every page, that would be awesome, cause then I would never have problem of students coming in unprepared or, if they did, I would know exactly who it was and how long they spent. That would be amazing. (Final interview, 517 - 523)

In fact, there are tools out there, both free and paid, that allow you to do those things. Lots of people agree with Juniper and new tools are popping up every day - Zaption, EdPuzzle, Adobe Captivate, etc. Even Google Forms now allows you to add videos before a set of questions. There are lots of tools out there, but as Juniper said, “I would love that. But that's way way more tech than I have, so it requires a lot more time than I have” (Final interview, 534 - 535). Even the most dedicated teacher had a finite amount of time and energy.

Structural

I definitely found the right teacher for this study. I needed someone who would be willing to put in the time and energy, not just to set up the course and run it, but also to stay in constant contact with me in person and in writing. Juniper detailed her ups and downs, her successes and failures. She was willing to let me into her inner thoughts and feelings, which was crucial to the success of the study.

I saw a teacher who is proud of what she does and the work she does. She had confidence in her own abilities to try something new, knowing that it could all fail. She used her own negative example of her experience in a hybrid course to prove that that teacher did not know good course design. She used her past experience in face-to-face classes to make the class fun and exciting for students. She clearly wanted the students to learn and looked for ways to help facilitate that.

I also know that I had a great group of students. All of them agreed to participate in the study and they agreed for me to invade their classroom space. They all came to my office to let me interview them, even the one who dropped the course. They all agreed to take three surveys and meet for a final focus group. I think that the

students got a little English bonus, because I was asking them about their experiences and they answered in a foreign language - English. That is what all language learning is about, being able to describe your experiences and feelings in a different language and be heard and understood. They may have felt validated by the experience. No other class goes to such lengths to ask how they enjoyed their educational experience.

My main takeaway from listening to the teacher is that it was tough, but worth it. Juniper worked hard, maybe harder than she is used to. The videos she made took a long time to make. The videos she found online took time to find. The exercises and activities had to be designed to work online. There had to be a flow that weaved the classroom experience in with the modular online work. It is a lot easier to be given a book by your department and work through it exercise by exercise, page by page. Juniper designed a complete supplement to the book, in addition to the online grammar supplement that comes with the book.

In the end, as can be expected, she wanted as much time with the students as possible. She missed not having that face-to-face time with them. Some of the students felt the same way. For most of the students, they did not seem phased by the hybrid format. It was just another class. As Juniper said, they got the grades they worked for. Those who put in the time and energy got A's and those who did not work as hard received lower grades.

The hybrid format is not for those who are looking for the easy way out, not for the teacher, not for the student. For the teacher who wants to create an engaging experience, it means a lot of work. For the students, it means relying on themselves to get things done. For both, it can be a rewarding experience. Juniper felt like she had

accomplished something. She did something she had never done before. In her final interview, Juniper said that she was interested in technology in a way that she had not been before. For some of the students, they reported being more self-sufficient as a result of taking this class. They found out that they could rely on themselves to learn in ways that they had not known.

Although I did not recognize it well enough in the moment, the definition of *online* work is really interesting. The teacher and the students have very different ideas on what differentiates online work from homework. Students seem to view anything not done in the face-to-face class as homework, which means that they did not view Blackboard as an online platform. The view Blackboard as a portal which happens to be online. The student view of online work needed a uniform resource locator (URL) and the Internet site outside of Blackboard. Completing discussion board and VoiceThreads may not be online since it is embedded in Blackboard. If that is the case, then we can say there are three categories of classwork: in class/face-to-face work, work embedded and completed on the computer/Blackboard, and then online work found and completed outside of the Blackboard.

The next two chapters will present the students' voices and unpack their perceptions as individuals and a group of engaging students in a hybrid course learning.

Chapter 5: The Students' Journeys

This study examined the integration and use of technology into the teaching and learning processes of a hybrid grammar course. The main research question for the students was as follows: What is the essence of international students' experiences learning English grammar in a hybrid learning environment during their first semester abroad? The format for this chapter will follow the same format as the previous chapter. There is an *introduction* to main ideas and questions, a *textural analysis* of the phenomenon, and then a *structural analysis*.

The first part of the chapter will look at the students' journey through the results of the three student surveys probing perceptions of their first hybrid course at the beginning, middle, and end of the experience. The second part of the chapter focuses on the student interviews: first, the individual Think-Alouds, and then second, the focus group interview. Most of the questions I asked the students revolved around their understanding of the hybrid course in terms of learning modalities and styles, the use of technology, personal motivation in the hybrid setting, time management and use, and overall feelings about the effectiveness of the hybrid format.

An important idea to keep in mind is that the students were not able to answer in their own mother tongue, so there is an extra layer of internal translation that may affect the results. Having taught EFL overseas and ESL/EAP in the States for more than twenty years, I hope that I am able to use that experience to help me sort out my intersubjective understanding of their answers. Through this experience, I worked hard to get to the heart of what they intend to express, to the essences of their

experiences. It was my intent to ask them the right questions to allow them to consciously reflect on their own experience.

Textural - Survey Results

Pre-survey. The pre-survey was created in Qualtrics. I created the questions and I shared them with Juniper on August 19 in the Running Journal prior to distribution. The questions were very general and introductory. Juniper and I did not discuss making changes to the basic format or direction of the questions. The students completed the survey after receiving a brief introduction by Juniper to the hybrid course format. Juniper provided the students a link to click on in Blackboard.

I asked them about their living situations in terms of speaking English, their experiences with technology, their experiences with technology to learn, and their feelings about the hybrid format. The survey consisted of 17 questions in three sections: demographic information (courses, living arrangements, year of study), Likert-scale questions about technology and the hybrid format, and a place for them to express their thoughts and feelings about the hybrid classroom or learning a language in a hybrid format. Nine students anonymously filled out the survey. Two students dropped and two students joined after this survey was completed.

Demographic information. All of the students were either freshmen or juniors. They were all full-time students. All of the students were taking at least one other EAP class, so most of them had something to judge this course against. Most students lived on campus in dorms with people from other cultures. The one student who lived with students from the same culture reported in his interview that even though he lived with people from the same culture, they spoke English together.

Initial feelings about hybrid. When asked about the hybrid format, four students reported not knowing it was a hybrid course when they signed up. Most students took the course as a requirement. Three students took the course because it fit their schedule. Four students reported being worried about the hybrid aspect of the class. Three students said they expected it to be no different from their other classes. Most students reported being more interested because it was a hybrid.

Seven of them reported not having any prior experience with hybrid courses. In the interviews later, one student thought hybrid and online were the same thing. When we reviewed the difference between hybrid and online, she changed her answer to never participated in a hybrid course before. For eight students, this was their only hybrid or online course in their current course load. One student reported taking another online course, but in their interviews, none of them said that they were taking an online or hybrid course. This may have been confusion about the difference between hybrid and online or just a mistake. Seven of the nine students believed that hybrid courses could be an effective way to learn. One student said that studying on your own is like studying in your comfort zone:

> Its much more better because it will help us to be self sufficient and be able not to waste time in running around at the college to find our calss and will have no excuse in missing the class and its a much better way of communication and its much easier you can chill at home with a bag of chips and a drink and enjoy the class while you are in your comfort zone. (Pre-survey results, general thoughts or feelings)

One student worried about the structure of the online portion:

> I think I will get a little troble because of this course. Because I have a course just before this course, and a course after this course, I think it will be hard to find a place to take online class for me. (Pre-survey results, general thoughts or feelings)

One student worried about self-motivation:

> I fell interested that i can learn something new from the hybrid class. I'm kinda worried a bit because i don't know if i can manage my time and motivate myself. I hope that i can prepare my time for this class because i need to spend a lot of time with my core courses. (Pre-survey results, general thoughts or feelings)

One student was pretty confident: “this won't be a problem.i got this” (Pre-survey results, general thoughts or feelings). These answers are all very interesting because many of them reported that they did not really know or understand what a hybrid course was. Juniper did explain the idea at the beginning of the semester and they were encouraged to ask questions if they did not understand completely what was happening. Yet as noted earlier, students were reluctant to *bother* the instructor and none stopped by during office hours for help.

Comfort with technology. When asked about using technology in education, six students strongly agreed that they are comfortable using technology to learn. “The only way that I learned English was through Technology, more and more people learn English that way. Adding a regular classroom to it can save a lot of time and money for both the student and the university” (Pre-survey results, general thoughts and

feelings). Students indicated on the first survey that they do see a connection between technology and successful language learning.

Table 8: Pre-Survey Q11: Integrating Technology into the Learning Process Will Help Me Learn Better

Choice	Option	Number
1	Strongly disagree	0
2	Disagree	0
3	Neither agree nor disagree	2
4	Agree	5
5	Strongly agree	2
	Total	9

Seven students agreed or strongly agreed (78 percent) that using technology to learn English will help them learn English better. Five of the students agreed or strongly agreed that using technology to learn motivates them. The other four reported neither agree or disagree. No one disagreed. 88 percent of the students reported that they were self-motivated and willing to do online activities on their own to learn English. Not everyone was comfortable with technology: “I'm worried cause I'm not good at using computer yet” (Pre-survey results, general thoughts and feelings). The only student that had real apprehension dropped in the first week.

Juniper reported about this student in the Running Journal early in the semester:

> The student said that he does not like online classes, and while he likes me and liked what we did in class today, he would prefer to switch to a fully face-to-face course. He hoped I wouldn’t be offended (I was not) and asked, if he was unable to switch, could he still participate in our course. I think he was afraid that I would ‘give’ him a bad grade because he said he did not like

> online classes. I assured him he could come back if he needed to, since this course is required for him. (Running Journal, 230-235).

Although he dropped the course, Gordon agreed to speak with me about his experience. Chapter 6 reports findings from that interview.

Overall, the students' approach to the hybrid format was positive. All but one stated that they liked using technology to learn. All but two said that using technology to learn English would help the process, more than half were motivated by using technology. Eight of them (88 percent) said that self-motivation was not an issue and they could learn on their own with the help of technology. Six students (66 percent) thought the hybrid format would be exciting and more interesting than a traditional format.

Table 9: Pre-Survey Q16: Hybrid Courses Can Be an Effective Way To Learn a Language

Choice	Option	Number
1	Strongly disagree	0
2	Disagree	0
3	Neither agree nor disagree	3
4	Agree	4
5	Strongly agree	2
	Total	9

That being said, this was the beginning of the course and students had not had any real experience with the hybrid format. They were at least optimistic and ready to try something new. One of them conjectured that "this course maybe help me study better with my online course" (Pre-survey results, general thoughts and feelings). Maybe this course could actually help them be a better student in other classes as Prensky (2010) had argued: "In a partnering pedagogy, using technology is the

students' job. The teachers' job is to coach and guide the use of technology for effective learning" (p. 3). In this case, there are two reasons for the hybrid format: learning the core subject and learning how to effectively use technology to learn. This would become clearer for the students and the teacher over the course of the semester.

In general, the students were optimistic and open to the ideas of the hybrid format and its pedagogical potential. Students who were not optimistic about the format were allowed to self-select and switch to a more traditional face-to-face format. One student chose that option. Even the two students who reported either not being comfortable with using a laptop or had not used much technology to learn stayed in the course and did well. The hybrid format would not shut down their ability to learn English or stand in the way of their learning grammar. They were willing to try something new.

Mid-term surveys. The mid-survey was also created in Qualtrics. I created the questions from ideas that came from my conversations with the teacher and the students. Some of them were follow up questions, similar to the pre-survey question. Some of them were questions that the teacher was interested in knowing more about - support and feedback. I asked them about their use of time, their comfort with technology, their comfort with the teacher, their issues with technology and the hybrid format, and their feelings in general about the hybrid format for teaching. The survey consisted of 18 Likert-scale questions about technology and the hybrid format, and two multiple-choice questions. Nine students anonymously filled out the survey. They had from October 1st to 5th to complete the survey. They all completed it by October 4th.

Using technology. The first set of questions was about using technology to learn and about issues using technology. Most students did not have technology problems. Two students had issues. Five of the students liked using technology to complete assignments. Three were neutral and one disagreed. Most students felt comfortable using technology to do coursework. All students reported asking for help when they had problems with the technology.

The first survey question illustrated the fact that most of the students did not see early technology issues as problems that would prevent learning. There were two students who viewed their problems with technology as prohibiting them from learning. For most of the students, by the midpoint of the course, problems with technology were not a major issue.

Table 10: Mid-Survey Q1a: Using Technology To Learn - So Far, I Have Had No Problems Using Technology To Learn English Grammar

Choice	Option	Number
1	Strongly disagree	1
2	Disagree	1
3	Neither agree nor disagree	0
4	Agree	5
5	Strongly agree	2
	Total	9

Over half of the students (55 percent) reported by midterm that they felt comfortable using technology to do their coursework.

Table 11: Mid-Survey Q1c: Using Technology To Learn - I Feel Comfortable Using Technology To Do My Coursework

Choice	Option	Number
1	Strongly disagree	0
2	Disagree	2
3	Neither agree nor disagree	2

4	Agree	1
5	Strongly agree	4
	Total	9

Instructional videos and working alone. All but one student agreed or strongly agreed watching instructional videos and doing exercises on his/her own was an acceptable and valid way to learn English. Most of the students had no issue with watching videos to receive direct instruction or to enhance the ideas of the unit. Those same students also reported that doing online work alone was acceptable.

Table 12: Mid-Survey Q3: Watching Instructional Videos and Doing Exercises Online Is an Acceptable and Valid Way To Learn English

Choice	Option	Number
1	Strongly disagree	0
2	Disagree	1
3	Neither agree nor disagree	0
4	Agree	6
5	Strongly agree	2
	Total	9

Issues with technology. In order to find out more about specific issues that they were having, I included a survey question about using technology. I asked about using Blackboard, using a computer in general, and using technology to complete assignments. Table 13 is a summary of some of the issues they were having:

Table 13: Mid-Survey Q9: What Issues Have You Had So Far Using Technology in this Course? (Choose All That Apply)

Choice	Option	Number
1	I do not know how to log into Blackboard.	1
2	I know how to log into Blackboard, but I find it confusing. I am not sure how to use it for my courses.	2
3	I know how to log into Blackboard and I am ok with using it for my coursework, but I do not know where to find the assignments for this class.	3

4	I know how to log into Blackboard for my courses. Sometimes I have not been able to watch the videos, hear the videos, or record myself.	4
5	I don't have the right equipment to record my voice.	2
6	I need to upgrade my personal computer.	3
7	I use the computer lab to do my homework for this class.	1

They were given several options to choose from and they could choose them all. I wanted to create a range, so one of the options was *I do not know how to log into Blackboard* and one student chose that response. During the interviews, they all logged into Blackboard while I observed them. I am not sure how to interpret that answer, knowing that they all demonstrated the ability to use Blackboard. Two students said Blackboard was confusing and they did not know how to use it for their class. Three students said they did not know where to find their assignments. During their interviews, all but one student was able to show me where their assignments were and how to access them. Four students had trouble watching the videos and recording themselves. Two students said they did not have the right equipment to record their voices. None of them mentioned that during the interviews. Three students said they need better computers. Only one student reported using the computer lab to do their classwork. During their interviews, several students let me know that they had used the computer labs.

Homework. Almost all of the students reported that they did their homework in a timely manner and were ready for class. No one strongly agreed that they had enough time to do all of their homework. That seems to be at odds with what the teacher reported in the Running Journal and their answers to the previous question. They reported being ready, but not having enough time. That may be a perception issue. They can do it, but they wish they had more time. Only one student reported

doing the Wednesday work on Thursday. One reported Friday. Most students used the weekend to complete the online work, the Wednesday work.

Time management. Seven of the nine (77 percent) reported that they needed to learn how to manage their time better. Five of the nine (55 percent) disagreed that they were taking too many classes. Only one student strongly agreed that he/she had signed up for too many classes. That being said, none of the students reported not having enough time to finish all of their homework assignments for all of their classes. That would indicate that this is a time management issue and personal motivation issue, not a situation where they just don't have enough time in the week.

Teacher accessibility. The next section was about teacher accessibility. All students reported that the teacher was accessible. All students reported contacting the teacher when they had questions about their homework. The students reported that they contacted the teacher when the technology did not work, which is interesting because the teacher wrote in the Running Journal that on two occasions, some part of the technology did not allow the students to have access to the assignment and the students failed to tell the teacher until they were in class. Technically, they told the teacher in class about the online failure, but they did not contact her when they had the issue, meaning that they allowed the technology failure to be a legitimate excuse for not completing the work. Most students said that they contacted the teacher when they wanted to know more about their grades. When asked about never contacting the teacher, the main response was *strongly disagree*. They had access to their teacher and they used that option either through email or when they were in class to get information, but the focus was more in grades and assessment issues.

The students reported being very comfortable speaking with the teacher in class and out of class. According to the results, the teacher was very good about getting back to the students in less than a day. The students found the feedback useful and helpful and used it to make corrections.

Supplemental materials. The teacher asked me to find out if they were using the book and the supplemental materials. The students appreciated having a course book. Most of them used the book as a reference book to complete assignments and practice. All of the students used Blackboard and not just for information. Eight students reported using it for all of their assignments and sometimes as a means to communicate with the teacher and their classmates.

The students were aware that there were supplemental materials and links on Blackboard. Most students reported using them sometimes, but not a lot. The teacher was not sure if they were using the supplemental materials and links. She was worried that she was wasting a lot of time creating materials that were not getting used. The teacher told a story about some of the students saying that they did not know what a link was or that you needed to click on it. This may be another example of a convenient reason for not completing an assignment.

Feelings about the hybrid format. At the midpoint, the reviews for the hybrid format were mixed. Although five of the students reported that they liked the hybrid format in general, there were three students who indicated that they did not like the format. Almost all of them (77 percent) said that studying grammar was suited for the hybrid format. When asked if they would recommend the hybrid EAP grammar course to a friend, four said yes, two said no, and two said neither agree nor disagree.

I followed up on this idea in the interviews, asking the students why they would or would not recommend the hybrid format to a friend.

The results of the midpoint survey were very interesting. They did not always match what I was hearing from them or seeing in class. Some students were reporting having problems and issues with technology and reporting that they felt comfortable with the teacher, but the teacher did not always know about the issues. There was a bit of a disconnect. I did not ask them any short answer questions because I knew I would be interviewing them shortly after this. I used the answers from this survey and from conversations with the teacher to formulate my questions for the Think-Alouds. I followed up on some of the interesting answers in the Think-Alouds and during the focus group interview to dig deeper into what they were really trying to say.

Post survey. The post-survey was again created in Qualtrics. I created the questions based on the results of previous surveys, interviews, and conversations with the teacher. The students completed the survey after the end of the course, by December 9th. A link was provided in emails for the students to click on to access the survey.

I used some different question types to vary the questions and answers. I asked them short answer questions about the hybrid format and then specific questions about their participation in and performance in their first hybrid class. The last two sections consisted of overview questions about the course and the instruction. The survey consisted of 21 questions in three sections. Seven students anonymously filled out the survey. Two students did not fill out the final survey. Since it was anonymous, I did not know who did and did not fill it out.

Feelings about the hybrid format. The first question was, *Now that you have finished your first hybrid course, what are your thoughts?* The results ranged from very positive to less than enthusiastic:

> I definitely liked this class, and I can say this class is the best in this semester of mine. Professors are very nice, and I learned a lot in this class. (Not only grammar but also how to take an online class, make PDF files, audio and videos.) Before I took this class, I was really nervous because I'm not good at computer technology. However, teachers and friends helped me. (Post survey, question 2)

For some, it matched their learning preference:

> I really liked this class! It does match my learning style, Indeed, I like to have some autonomy in my work and I had it with this class! Moreover, I usually don't really like to spend a lot of time on my chair listening to the teacher. I prefer to learn by my own and understand by my own and then ask my questions to the teacher if there are some specific points that I don't understand perfectly. With this kind of class, I can also plan to work when I want to and i really appreciate that! (Post survey, question 2)

Some of the responses showed the student's attitude changed over time:

> I think the hybrid class has more advantages than other classes. I really liked this class and it helped me a lot with my english. I could learn more effectively because I did not have to spend my time studying something that I already knew. I could spend more time studying the parts that I did not know about. However, at first, I really wanted to drop this class because it was too

> confusing. I really couldn't understand how I could do my homework and everything. Because of that, I missed about one or two assignments and I was very frustrated. But I got used to it and this class was very helpful to me. (Post survey, question 2)

Some students still had some reservations about the hybrid format:

> It was different! I have never fllowed a hybrid class before this one. I like face-to-face contact, so if I have the choice I prefer take course in class. But I don't regret taking this class. There are some advantages: more independence, more time, more responsability. And the teacher was really available to answer by e-mail if we had questions. (Post survey, question 2)

Not everyone liked the online portion of the hybrid format:

> …it was ok, but it doesn't match my learning style. strengths were that it gave us opportunities to mingle with the class members and helped me personally in my communication skills. there were too many homework. the class part was great but the online was not. (Post survey, question 2)

One student was glad it was over: “It’s ok but I won’t take another on unless I need to” (Post survey, question 2). One student wrote, “I thought this class was hard until I was used to studying in this class” (post survey, question 3). I understand that to say that this student found it easier once they got used to the format. This was a common theme. It got easier over time. Independently, the students used the words *flexible* and *fun* in five of the seven responses. The next most common words were *challenging* and *frustrating*.

Learning can be fun. In a recent interview on *Freakonomics*, Steven Dubner and Steve Levitt discussed learning a new language on a podcast entitled, "How to be more productive."

> Steve Levitt had this to say about learning a language:
>
> DUBNER: Talk about how you learn. Are you self-taught or not?
>
> LEVITT: I am primarily self-taught. But, you know that one thing I value very highly is enjoyment and happiness. And I'm definitely willing to sacrifice being a better German speaker in order to actually enjoy the German practice I do. So, in some ways, it's probably the exact wrong message to send to the people who are listening to this podcast, but I still think there's some truth to it. One of the things that's overlooked about learning a new skill is that the only people who ever get good are the people who keep on doing it. And most people quit, probably rightly quit, because it looks enticing from the outside, and it isn't that much fun when they actually start trying to learn a new skill. But for me, with German, I definitely have been of the mind that it has to be fun. And if it's not fun, I won't do it. (Dubner, Freakonomics, How to be more productive)

In the discussion, they recognize that to reach the student, you have to make them want to continue. As previously mentioned, Juniper created a variety of activities where the students could improve their English while having fun. She created a learning environment where the students could express themselves while learning the finer points of English grammar. That can be seen in this response:

> I would use the following adjectives: fun (I really appreciated the videos of [Juniper] and how she animated her classes), engaging (you have to work by your own and be motivated), flexible (you are your own boss!) and helpful (i learnt a lot of things). (Post survey, question 3)

Student grades. Juniper was strict, but fair, just like her mentors were. Not everyone gets an A. You have to work for it. When asked what grade they were expecting, only one student said an A. Five students chose B, and there was one C. The actual final grades were one A, four B's, three C's, and an F. I would conjecture that the F student did not take this final survey. If that is true, then one of the other students said that they would not take this kind of course again.

Clarity of expectations. The next question was about the clarity of the course objectives and class assignments. Of the seven students, two reported that everything was clear and they did not need help; four reported that if something was not clear, they asked the teacher for help; and one student reported being confused most of the time. Earlier, all of the students reported that the teacher was very accessible and got back to them right away with help and advice.

Participation and homework. When asked about their attendance and participation, the students responded that they always attended to the face-to-face classes in this course. In most classes, there are always dips in attendance, but attendance of Monday classes remained high over the whole semester. There was a slightly lower score for the participation, but it was still high. Students reported high scores on completing online work, completing work on time, and watching all of the needed videos and tutorials. This is not a comparative study, but as a teacher, the self-

reported scores are very high, indicating that the students were engaged and motivated to complete the assignments in a timely fashion. They reported being very busy and having a lot of work, but then they reported that they completed all of the work on time.

A common theme from the student is that they had a lot of homework, but when asked about the difficulty level of the course and their ability to do the work, the students responded that they had no issue with the amount of work or the amount of material covered. Juniper actually stated that she was able to cover more material with this format. Only five students answered the first question about the difficulty of the course, stating that it was difficult. In an effort to find out more about their perceptions of the overall level of difficulty and expectations in a hybrid course, I asked the following:

Table 14: Post-Survey Q6: Hybrid Courses - Overall Level of Difficulty

Questions	Range 1 - 3	Mean
This course is too difficult for first semester students.	1 - disagree 2 - not sure 3 - agree	1.8
I understood the technology required for this course.	1 - disagree 2 - not sure 3 - agree	2.57
I was able to keep up with the amount of material covered.	1 - disagree 2 - not sure 3 - agree	2.71
I was able to handle the homework load.	1 - disagree 2 - not sure 3 - agree	2.86

The students did not feel that the hybrid course format was too difficult for first semester students. In large part, they understood the technology required for the course and were able to keep up with the amount of material covered. All seven reported having no trouble handling the homework load.

I surveyed them if the online portion got harder or easier as the semester went on. Four of them stated that there was some confusion at the beginning, but then it was ok. It got easier over the course of the semester as they learned how to use the

tools and got to know the teacher's style and flow of the work. Two other students reported that there were on board by midterm. This question about the course becoming easier over time came directly from a quote from the Running Journal. I wanted to see if that was reflected in the students' responses and it was.

Workload issues. The next set of questions was about the workload. Most students felt that there was not too much reading. They reported that the reading was *not too much* or *appropriate*. Five of the seven students felt the course had the appropriate number of videos to watch, while two felt it was a lot. Four students felt there were the appropriate number of video tutorials, while three felt there were a lot. If they were behind with their work, five students reported that they email the teacher. One usually waited till class on Monday to get the answer.

Method of instruction. One survey questions asked the students to design their perfect blend in-class and online activities. For receiving new information, the preferred method was in-class lectures, followed by online tutorials and in-class question and answers. For student discussions, students reported that they were equally interested in in-class and online discussions, but Juniper complained about the lack of interest and student interaction in the discussion boards she set up. Student showed some interest in virtual classroom discussions and online chat rooms, but the students preferred direct instruction through either face-to-face or in a video tutorial. For practice, student chose from a variety of ways to absorb and practice new information, through activities or discussion. Students reported appreciating the variety of ways to receive information and practice their skills in person and online. Overall, the hybrid format seemed to appreciate the multitude of ways to practice and

demonstrate their new abilities. They reported that this class asked them to be better students overall.

Table 15: Post-Survey Q16: Did This Course Help You Become a Better Student?

Choice	Number
Yes	5
Possibly	2
No	0
Total	7

It was encouraging to see that all seven students indicated that they had learned something about themselves and how they learn through this experience.

Final thoughts. Even if the students said they did not want to take another hybrid course, they all reported that they were or possibly were better students because of the course. This was also reflected in their interviews, which I will discuss next. There were a lot of mixed reviews with students saying very contradictory things. Students unanimously reported having great access to the teacher with great response time, but there would be a comment like "it was already included, but sometime i would have liked more feedbacks from [Juniper] on my work or on the quiz we did" (Post survey, question 21). If I had to guess, then I would say there was one moment when a student felt under supported on one quiz. In general, the data documents that Juniper worked hard to connect with the students and provide support whenever possible.

Juniper worked to create a fun and engaging space for the students. Even the students who got off to a rocky start eventually found their way in the course, with Juniper's guidance and help. It is interesting to note that attendance for the face-to-face portion was extremely high. In general, students will miss a class or two, but the

hybrid format may have influenced the decision for almost 100 percent attendance on Monday classes. If they missed a class on Monday, then they would not have seen Juniper in person for two weeks. Since the reported valuing the face-to-face direct instruction, they were motivated to come. Students who rely on the teacher to give assignments and clarify issues came to class on Monday to speak with Juniper. Over time, the students got better at completing assignments on their own and became more self-reliant and self-motivated. As shown in the previous table, most students reported that this course helped make them a better student. As often happens, there were times when the message the students were conveying did not match the reports from the teacher.

Contradictions in the data abound. The students reported that the workload was manageable, but then said they had too much homework. Some of them reported having difficulty in the online portion, but in general felt very supported by the teacher. Some of them said there were too many tutorials, but wanted more tutorials to help guide them through the assignments, especially at the beginning: "More instruction about how to take this course (homework and everything) at the very beginning of the semester" (Post survey, question 21). Some said they could not figure out how to access Blackboard when they clearly could. When asked how they would give an overall grade for this particular hybrid course, three said it was very good. Two said good. One said fair and one said neither good nor bad. A good example of such mixed answers follows:

> It was really good. I really enjoyed experiencing hybrid courses. I love the different activities that we had especially making videos. All of the activities

> were really usefull. I personally think it is good to experience hybrid couse. However, I still prefer face-to-face because I can ask the teacher straight away if I don't understand about something. I don't really like communicate by emails. I think I can learn the materials better If I have face-to-face class. (Post survey, question 2)

This kind of answer was very common. I prefer face-to-face, but this was really good. This may be because of old patterns. Most of us are used to face-to-face classes. No one reported that they could not learn in the hybrid format. No one failed the class who tried and participated. There were positive reports about liking the flexibility and enjoying the online activities. I have had American students in classes who complained constantly about how much work they had to do, but still said that they got a lot of out of the course. So, this may be the same issue. The student may complain and still value the experience. I used the responses from this survey to develop the questions for the Think-Alouds, which would allow me to dig a little deeper with follow up questions to get a better understanding of the essence of what the students were thinking and feeling.

Textural - Student interviews

The Think-Alouds. The Think-Alouds have three basic sections. I asked them some demographic information first to find out information for their individual student profiles and to find out about their comfort levels with technology. I then asked them to use Blackboard to find examples of things they wanted to showcase or highlight. I also wanted to watch them use Blackboard to see how easily they navigated the site to gauge their comfort with using technology. Some of them

reported not being able to use Blackboard, but that was not the case during the Think Aloud. All of them could find their way around the site with little to no help at all. The last section was about their feelings about the affordances and constraints of the hybrid format.

For the Think-Alouds, I used Panopto recorder, a built in recording instrument supported by our university. Panopto allowed me to capture the students' faces during the interview and it allowed me to capture their movements on screen. This served a dual function: I could go back and watch the video for their facial expressions and responses to my questions, and I could observe their technical ability when navigating the Blackboard site. The students signed up to come to my office and speak with me one on one. I helped them log in and start the video and then Panopto recorded our session.

Often, I felt like the answers I was getting from the interviews were at odds with the answers in the survey. Since the surveys were anonymous, I could not single anyone out to ask about specific issues. Instead, I tried to ask follow up questions to find out what the students had to say. In this section, I am reporting on themes that came through from the answers.

After transcribing the interviews and watching the videos again, I separated the transcriptions in smaller groupings of the students' views on: orientation to Blackboard and the first few weeks of class; activities and tools; teacher support and course design; and the hybrid format. As with the previous sections, I will provide a textural analysis, using direct quotes, followed by a structural analysis, or personal reflection.

Orientation to Blackboard and the first few weeks of class. International students are offered a two-day orientation to campus. During that time, students can attend a free orientation to Blackboard, the campus' learning management system (LMS). This is what the students will need to be familiar with on day one so they can receive information from the teacher, check their syllabi, and complete assignments. After an early set back, upon learning that the students were not as computer savvy as we expect this generation to be, Juniper arranged to meet with the students on a Wednesday to give a crash course on using Blackboard for her course. In the Running Journal, Juniper noted this moment:

> Class today was fantastic. I'm glad we took a Wednesday to troubleshoot and navigate through the pages. Some students were completely unaware that links in Blackboard could lead to documents… That was interesting. I kind of assumed that these "kids" would have the techno-advantage on me but most of them seemed to have no idea. The two students from Europe were on it, but the people from Eastern and Western Asia had no idea…In speaking with the students I learned that at least three of them were uneasy about online courses because they had never done them before. A fourth was worried because she did not know how to use the computer very well and felt unfamiliar with Blackboard. I assured her she could call or email at any time for help, and that I would be glad to meet with her to walk her through the navigation of our pages. (Running Journal, 218 - 230)

Orientation. When I asked the students about the campus orientation, one student said there was no orientation to Blackboard; two students said they do not

remember an orientation to Blackboard; two students did not attend the orientation at all; and three reported that were familiar with Blackboard and did not feel that they needed the orientation. Of those three people, one said that the reason why he failed the class was because he fell behind at the beginning because he did not know how to use Blackboard. Another one is a computer major who said he could use Blackboard even though it was his first time in the US and first time using Blackboard. He struggled at the beginning as well, however. One of the students who doesn't remember an introduction to Blackboard said,

> Yeah, but I think, I don't know about other students, but I was during the orientation, I was… everything was new, so I think it was not very helpful to me. I think I learned it by myself, from my friends, how to use it, yes. (Think Aloud, Susan, 55 - 57)

Another student attended the orientation and found it easy:

> No, it was because we had a presentation during the week of orientation and it was quite clear. I mean, for me it was the problem to use a computer or something like this...it's quite intuitive. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 43-49)

Once the students spent some time in the new learning environment, they started to become accustomed to the course expectations and adjusted accordingly.

Prensky (2010) stated that today's students "do not want to be lectured to" and "want to make decisions and share control" (p. 2 - 3) and he may ultimately be right, but what if *the lecture as direct instruction* is all you know and no teacher has ever asked you for your opinion as part of the classroom experience? Many of the international students come from countries with top-down classroom expectations

with *learning* based upon recitation of key information received directly from the instructor. International students may need to overcome an instructional design barrier, but also an instructional expectation hurdle as well. Hybrid classroom teachers need to help guide the students on two fronts: using technology and using their own personal voice as part of the overall learning experience. Prensky (2010) said that students want "an education that is not just relevant, but real" (p. 3). International students may believe this idea, but it may be a steep learning curve.

Acclimation. In the interviews, the students did not talk about heightened levels of anxiety at taking some many classes in a new country, in a new language, in a new culture. They all centered their frustrations on learning how to use Blackboard and meeting the class and Juniper's expectations. Some of them blamed the technology. Some of them admitted that they overestimated their own abilities. One of the students who is getting a degree in computer science did not fully understand what a link was. "I did not know this was a link, cause I clicked on this and nothing happened and I saw this and I thought this are, were instructions, but now I know you had to click on this…" (Think Aloud, Alistair, 298 - 300). This was a real insight into the danger of assuming that all incoming students fit into the same digital native mold. He did not attend the school orientation, but he was present for Juniper's introduction. I asked him if the format was part of the problem:

> Yeah, I think it is the hybrid cause it's my first time using it and I, I do really think it's gonna take like that cause there's no other class that takes so much, so much grades at the first weeks and, uh, I did not know that we had an exam on like the first, on the second week and stuff like that and I did not even

> know how to… I did not get the idea of the class until like two weeks or something like that. (Think Aloud, Alistair, 349 - 356)

His suggestion was a sort of grace period and more face time at the beginning of the semester. I asked him how long it took to get adjusted to the format. He said three or four weeks. Juniper echoed that idea in her interview:

> ...the first two I would say were troubleshooting – how to use Blackboard, how to do the online portion – and then weeks three, four, and five were what does the teacher allow and what can I get away with... (Juniper Second Interview, 147 - 149)

When I asked her if that was about the same amount of time it takes in her other classes to get adjusted to a new class and a new teacher, she felt that it took twice as long for these students to get acclimated.

The students appear to agree with her insight. One student said, "... at first I did not check and I miss a lot of things" (Think-Alouds, Kate, 184). Another said, "I'm trying my best now to get good marks, but I think it's that what happened prev… at the beginning, cause of my lateness, it's the thing that's keeping me…" (Think-Alouds, Joker, 192 - 193). This particular student did not do any homework or turn anything in to be graded until after he failed the midterm exam. As always, Juniper was keeping up with students and exchanging emails to move them along and encourage them to turn in work. All of the students reported how accessible Juniper was and how quickly she got back to them to help. One student remembered emailing her when he could not get a video to work:

> Yeah, I mean, the first week you start to like confuse…how can I do this, but I always ask [Juniper] about it and, you know, ask the teacher and how, how can I do this. I mean, what program should be installed for opening this one. So, I ask her about it and also after that I, usually I remind my friends about it. Hey, you need to download this one for this. (Think-Alouds, Nate, 152 - 156)

Other students admitted that they had trouble at the beginning, but it was just a period of adjustment. "...yeah, actually, I have some problems at the first, but now I am comfortable with that" (Think-Alouds, Vermouth, 107). She had looked at her grades and noticed that she had missed something. Juniper was also aware of the fact that some of the students were missing assignments, so she made a decision to start labeling all of the assignments by date and creating due date folders as discussed in the last chapter. The students responded positively to the change:

> At first, at first, it was really, uh, like a mess. I did not know how to use it. This… how to take, so for the first week I missed like two discussions cause I did not know where it was, but we… I think the professor recognized it and she put like assignments due by, like to help me, to help us, like this assignments are due by this date, so I think it, it is improved, so, but at first, it was difficult for me to find my… oh where's my… I did not even know there was an assignment. (Think Aloud, Susan, 491 – 496)

Another student lays out the challenges of figuring out where to go, what to do, and what counts:

> At the beginning, they're not like this. They're not folderized cause all assignments update weekly. It's just, um, each chapter, and maybe, I kind of

> forgot what the beginning looks like, but it just maybe it's one assignment after one assignment and I just maybe got lost. I think I did this assignment, but actually when I click it, I did not do it. (Think aloud, Vermouth, 160 - 163)

A final comment on perceptions of the first weeks of a hybrid course comes from Susan:

> She did not do like that for the first week. Yeah, I think she listened to what we said, because, and she did it for us to, yes, that, that's, yeah, cause she e-mailed us, I think that you guys did not know about the assignments, oh, from now on I'm going to put this due date, due date, due date, because I really have to know what assignments I have to do. (Think Aloud, Susan, 519 - 522)

Things begin to come together. By week four, however, the issues around using Blackboard efficiently had been resolved. Juniper believed that in a regular face-to-face class, this would have been resolved in half that time. She believed that one of the constraints of the hybrid format is that you do not always have your finger on the pulse of the students. If you do not see them and they do not let you know that they are struggling, then you may make the assumption that no news is good news and you move on. By the second interview, she had gotten to know them and those that were having issues were emailing regularly:

> And now, I think everyone has figured it out and they are in the groove. They know what is expected and how things typically run, even with the variety of different thing going on, they get what they are supposed and today was very

> smooth, so I think we had some hiccups at first, but I think the last nine weeks are going to go well. (Juniper, second interview, 150 - 153)

So, was the format to blame? Were the students highly motivated but confused by the format? For all of these students, this was their first semester at this university. For most of them, it was their first time to study outside of their own country. They are all international students, so they are studying in a foreign language. Interestingly enough, only one student brought up the language issue, but when she did, she made sure that she said that the language issue was not a factor in her ability to participate in a hybrid. It was a reality in all of her classes:

> I think it doesn't apply to only this class, I think it's like all other classes, I have to be ready to open my ears. Yes, in Korea, actually, cause it's my first language, I don't… I sometimes, I can't think of other things and I can look over the window and I can still catch, I think I can still understand the lecture, but I have to really wake up and fully concentrate on the class so that I can understand what she's talking about, yes. I think that's the difference. And yeah. (Think Aloud, Susan, 480 - 485)

So, was some of the laziness and inattention to details more just a reality of being a student in this class or any class? Maybe. "Yeah, I could make time to do this, I think, yeah. So, it's me who could, I could do more...trying to understand what my mistakes and maybe it's because I am a little bit lazy" (Think Aloud, Ryan, 114-115).

When I asked Joker if he thought his bad grades were due to the format, he said, "It's me. It's a combination mostly, because I... at the beginning, I did not know how to use the system. I did not even know what was Blackboard, so that was my

major problem" (Think Aloud, Joker, 327 - 329). I asked the other students the same question. Do you think you are different in this class than you other classes? Do you think this class makes you a better or worse student? Does the hybrid format make it harder to learn? I asked Kate if she was self-motivated and she replied, "Yeah, but only in this class" (Think Aloud, Kate, 408). I asked Daniel if he was self-motivated. He said, "Yeah, well, I'm a, I think I'm a regular guy on that" (Think Aloud, Daniel, 352).

What I take from that is that they are students; they are regular students. They are like native speaking students in so many ways. They take classes. They like some of them and they don't like others. Some are hard and some are easier. Most of them seemed to be unfazed by the format. They had to learn a new system and had to learn a new teacher. There was a period of transition, but after that, it was just another one of their courses. When I asked Vermouth about her understanding of personal responsibility, she replied this way:

> J: OK, so do you have any problems with that, with self-motivation, you know, with telling yourself... did you always understand that message?
>
> V: Yeah
>
> J: OK, so from day one, you said, I know I'm going to have do more on my own
>
> V: Yes
>
> J: And you had no problem that message?
>
> V: Yeah, I know that. (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 739 - 750)

While I acknowledge that things got off to a rocky start, most of the students rolled with it and overcame their technology and personal motivation issues. One student dropped the course. Two students did not do any work for the first half of the semester. One of those students worked with the teacher to pull his grade up to a C. The other failed the course. As an experience teacher of face-to-face classes of undergraduates, these profiles are not surprising and may not be overly predictive of something unique in hybrid learning environments.

Awareness of the hybrid format. As previously mentioned, only half of the students were aware that it was a hybrid course when they enrolled. Many of them found out it was a hybrid course on the first day. Many of them did not know what they word hybrid meant. Juniper explained the concept at the beginning and helped the students understand the idea and the concept of a hybrid course. I asked Kathy about her understanding of the hybrid format and her decision to stay:

> I can, I can know, I could know because [Juniper] explained - this is a hybrid course, it means… we have to have to have some Wi-Fi networks and maybe I have never experienced, I had never experienced hybrid course before I took this class, so, yeah, when I noticed this class was hybrid course I, I thought I should have dropped this course because I don't like use laptop and I was not good at using laptop. (Think Aloud, Kathy, 316 - 320)

She did not drop; she stayed. She even got a B+ in the course. When I asked her why she stayed, she shared, “Because [Juniper]’s a very good teacher” (Think Aloud, Kathy, 322). She was not good with technology as she herself acknowledged. She did not like using a laptop. Juniper helped her every step on the way. She worked

hard and got a good grade in a format that she thought at the beginning was too much for her.

As in any course, the teacher plays a critical role in the success of a class. A good guide is essential to a positive classroom experience. Juniper created learning modules with a variety of exercises and activities that she hoped would appeal to different learning preferences. Not every student would like every activity or exercise; no group of students ever will.

Activities and tools. All students learn and process in different ways. There are different modes of thought on content delivery and knowledge acquisition. Juniper had the students work alone on some activities and work in pairs or in groups for others. As previously mentioned, she used a variety of activities and tools to reach the students.

Appreciating and designing for differentiated learning preferences. I asked all of the students how they learn best. Some said from listening and speaking. Others said from writing. Many of them talked about the online editing exercises. Some had no problems with watching videos and learning on their own while others wanted direct instruction in the classroom with the teacher. When I asked Ryan about how he learns best, he showed insight into his own learning patterns:

> I'm a mix of everything, because I know when I'm learning from something. Usually, I will write first for the class and then I will speech, I will read and speak. And so I'm speaking and writing and I'm listening to what I'm saying also. So, a kind of mix of everything. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 168 - 170)

As a self-described visual learner, Kate discussed the fact that she learned best by color-coding her reading. She actually said that she wished the different parts of Blackboard were color-coded. Susan said that she learned best when the activities were fun and engaging, and Juniper sought out current, timely videos that fun to watch. Ryan, who had never liked grammar until this class, appreciated Juniper's approach to teaching specific grammar points. He talked about the difference between grammar lessons at home and Juniper's:

> ...some English teacher asks me to, ok, for tomorrow, write me five or seven more sentences using passive without anything else and I will find it really boring. If some… a teacher give me a video like this, I will be yeah, it's really interesting, so I have something to say and I will prefer to do it. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 224 - 227)

Appropriating videos. Earlier in our conversation, Ryan distinguishes between his response to *funny* and/or *boring* videos:

> Yeah, it was a really funny video… so I think it gave me the motivation to do, to work more on it and pay more attention that I will be doing, and try to do my best, yeah. And if it's a boring video or something that isn't interesting and not catching my attention, I will say do it as quickly as possible, and that's all. And for this video, I was really interested by this video and I want to do something right. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 210 - 214)

Another participant links engagement with *fun* videos. Junipers' efforts to find relevant and creative sources for learning seems to have paid off. Nate echoed his feeling about the use of videos:

> The one that I remember is… ah, this one. There is like, we have to watch a video from YouTube and it's a stop motion video and it's music video and after that we have to describe about what, what the video is show us and comment about it. Yeah, that, that thing is really, I mean, it's fun cause the video is really good too. (Think Aloud, Nate, 267 - 270)

On the other hand, Nate also had this to say about watching videos: "The thing is if I watch a video, then it is one way conversation, right?" (Think Aloud, Nate, 324 - 325) Nate did not want to see a class comprised of videos as the sole means of communication. He wanted to talk and discuss and work with groups and partners. His feeling was that online classes were for people who did not like to talk or interact with other people. He liked videos better if they started a conversation.

Kathy liked videos that were chunked into smaller units. She would often take notes while she watched the video. "Yeah, because when I, when I'm watching the video, I'm taking notes so too long video is make me exhausted (Think Aloud, Kathy, 386 - 387). Kathy also liked answering questions after the videos, but wanted immediate feedback to make sure she was doing the right thing. She did not want to move on to the next section if she was still making mistakes. Clearly Kathy was utilizing the intended value added of being able to repeat a lesson until mastered when available online:

> I think it will be fine to know if we are strong or not and if we are sure to understand this part, to go on the other part, then if we are not good with this part, then stay on this part. (Think Aloud, Kathy, 218 - 223)

Variety. Students had a variety of exercises to do. Watching videos was only one part. The textbook came with an online practice component, which most of the students appreciated, at least at the beginning. The exercises were the same format for each lesson, with a reading, writing, listening, and editing component for each section. As time went on, students found ways around the completion portion. I will discuss this more in the focus group interview section.

Ultimately, some students were bored by the online practice: "Yeah, I like it, but if I want… if I want to get a hundred percent score, I, I type, I type exactly answers, so it's, I can't be bothered. I can't be bothered…" (Think Aloud, Kathy, 178 - 179). Alistair was frustrated by the fact that there was not a save function, so that if you had to pause or got interrupted, you had to start all over again. Many of them talked about the fact that there was no automated feedback from the online exercises. You could correct your mistakes, but you may not understand what mistake you made. Many of them would email Juniper with questions that they thought should have been answered online. Nate said, "There is like, there are writing assignments about it and we done it. We gave the teacher, the teacher, and [Juniper] sent us back the corrections. At first, she like (sic), I mean, we have to correct it" (Think Aloud, Nate, 673 - 675). Overall, the students were ok with the supplemental practice. Some of them said they hated it, but it was good practice. Towards the end, some of them saw it as a completion activity more than grammar practice.

Discussion Boards. The discussion board (DB) worked for some and not for others. "Sorry, I have never used the discussion board in this course" (Think Aloud, Joker, 58 - 59). Kathy was the only student who said she looked at the other students'

posts to read and learn from. “I usually, I usually see [Vermouth’s] answer and she's (sic) grammar’s very good. So, it's very helpful for me and [Juniper]’s answers are also helpful” (Think Aloud, Kathy, 137 - 139). Alistair said that he appreciated that the discussion board was familiar to him. He used forums in his home country, so he knew how to use the discussion board to complete work. Susan may have been the only student who appreciated the format of the discussion board:

> I think I cannot pick the best one, but I think most of this discussions are really helpful to me, because, yeah, if by doing this discussion, I can, I can check what I know, what I don't know. So, yes, I think most of this are helpful to me. (Think Aloud, Susan, 109 - 111)

The discussion board activities ranged from watching a video and reporting on it to reading and reacting to a passage. Most of the discussion board activities were individual activities.

Pair and group work in speaking activities. Juniper also asked students to work in pairs and groups. She asked them to speak to each other through tools such as voice board (VB) in Blackboard and VoiceThread. Voice board is a built-in Blackboard tool that functions as a threaded, voice-based discussion board. Voice board does not include a visual component like VoiceThread does. VoiceThread can be used an asynchronous video chat where the students use video instead of just audio. Most of the students liked using VoiceThread. Daniel had this to say about his experience with VoiceThread:

> Yeah, it was helpful, mainly because...we had to, to, to collaborate between us, each, each other, so they, they, that process, I think that was even more

> helpful than just... the exercise that we had to do, because the exercise was not very complicated… (Think Aloud, Daniel, 555 - 558)

With voice board or discussion board or VoiceThread, the main activity is often to watch something and react to it. Juniper used Katy Perry videos, BatDad (a viral video on YouTube - www.youtube.com/user/TheOfficialBadDad), stop-motion videos, videos about space and colors and variety of subjects. Juniper tried to vary the activities after the videos, asking the students to answer set questions or give their opinions. Some students appreciated the open-ended questions while others did not. "Actually, sometimes I just watch that video and I don't have too much to say. I don't know why…" (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 612 - 613). Vermouth preferred direct questions that required a set right answer. "I better do like if you have questions for that, I will answer, cause I think it's a little bit hard to just give me one thing and let me to describe. I don't know what, where to start" (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 630 - 632). She wanted to give the right answer, not her opinion. Students who are used to a single, correct answer may have trouble with assessment that values higher-order thinking skills over the right or wrong answer.

Susan had a similar experience with the pair recordings. She wanted "to speak like beautifully" (Think Aloud, Susan, 308). She did not feel like she learned from the pair work because she was speaking without thinking. She processed information better if she felt comfortable with her response. She wanted her response to be clear and correct, not rushed and imprecise. She continued,

> I prefer I write down what I am going to say, because I don't want to stop…how to say it…I just want to speak like beautifully like, yes, I don't

> want to make mistakes when I record with my partner, so I think it's just write down and just speak, so I think it's better. Yeah. (Think Aloud, Susan, 307 - 31)

She may have been more worried about losing face or being embarrassed than completing the activity. One could also argue that she wanted to be purposeful over haphazard. In class and in her interviews, she was very willing to speak openly and without preparation, but when the response was for a grade, she wanted to practice her remarks. The fact that the response would be graded removed the conversational nature of the assignment.

Students respond differently to different activities. As for the exercises that worked the best, that really varied from student to student, probably a reflection of varied learning preferences. Daniel preferred the listening exercises because they made him feel "...more focused" (Think Aloud, Daniel, 246). Kathy appreciated that fact the online exercises got more difficult as they went along. She liked doing those kinds of activities online, such as editing and listening, because doing that kind of thing in the classroom was perceived to be "a waste of time if we do that in class because we have the teacher" (Think Aloud, Kathy, 278 - 279). Many students mentioned the editing as an exercise that really helped them. Vermouth also liked the listening exercises online. Why? "It's the easiest part" (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 582) according to her.

Over and over again, a key concept came up when describing the activities that worked the best. The word was fun (or funny as some would say). Nate had this to say:

> ...Because the video was fun, yes, video was fun. Oh, actually, ah yeah. I remember one. Yeah. Recent one, it was video, watching video, conditionals practice two. We watched a video, a video clip from *Sex and the City* and it was fun. Yeah. The video was fun. (Think Aloud, Nate, 117 - 119)

Susan expressed appreciation for the challenge of making a grammar course enjoyable:

> Um, I think this is a grammar class. So, for me, grammar classes were always boring to me, but this, through this kind of video and I can, I can really enjoy learning from this video, cause it's fun, yes, yes and I can remember, I think I can remember it easily, cause it's fun, yes. (Think Aloud, Susan, 124 - 126)

She goes on to explain about the format of her previous grammar courses in South Korea:

> If it's not fun, I don't want to study it. I think him this kind of grammar class is very new to me. In Korea, I was just taking grammar class, the professor talks, and we write down notes, we just take notes and tests. It was boring and I think it was just memorizing, just memorizing. Yeah, this program is good I think. Yes. (Think Aloud, Susan, 133 - 136)

Using student creativity. One of the most creative things that Juniper did was ask the students to watch and then make a stop-motion video. The students worked in small groups. Each group was to take a series of still pictures and put them together with voice narration to explain a particular grammar concept. For the most part, all of the students really enjoyed the experience and found it very meaningful:

> Yeah. It was the most funny thing I did, yeah. The good thing is that when she asks us to do something like this, it's a topic on which we can make funny things because I like to make funny things, a video especially, and I have always a possibility to learn something formal and straight and boring again, I can also go and do it funny. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 359 - 362)

On the other hand, Joker felt that the activity did no add to the class:

> Well, there are like the stop motion videos or like the activities that, um, and talking about the culture and all that. In my opinion even though we're using the grammar, but I don't think that it's that important or that important for the class, for this course. (Think Aloud, Joker, 103- 105)

I asked Joker if he liked working in groups and he said *yes*. I asked him if he spoke English while they were preparing for the assignment. He said *yes*. I asked him if he enjoyed the process and he said *yes*. When I spoke to him about positive feedback that he had gotten from the teacher, he specifically mentioned that he got good feedback from the teacher about the video. "She told us that we did a great job and how we used the sentence and the grammar ... and she commented on my accent and my good work too" (Think Aloud, Joker, 73 - 76). I asked him if that feedback meant something to him and he added, "...it shows that I'm improving and I'm doing better now. Yeah, it's much I prefer" (Think Aloud, Joker, 79 - 80). Through careful questioning, I invited him to reframe his new learning experience as more positive than he originally indicated. He was very thoughtful, but he had very strong opinions on what learning looked like and this exercise did not match his expectation. In this

case, working with other students on a group project did not look like learning that he was familiar with.

His said his main issue was that he only had four lines in the video. It may have had more to do with him working with two females who did most of the work on the video "...even though I got a good feedback, it's mainly for the two girls who worked because they did make mostly all of the job" (Think Aloud, Joker, 114). That may have had more to do with his feelings about the project than anything else. All of the other students reported enjoyed the experience of being asked to be creative and demonstrate their abilities in non-traditional ways. Ryan talked about the importance of creativity and individuality in education:

> We had to create a video and talking about the differences between cultures. So, I really had to use and to…new type of modals that I was not used to use before, so it was also really educational when I did it. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 368-370)

Juniper incorporated a variety of strategies to keep the students interested and motivated. She knew that she had to have a presence, even if it was not in the classroom. She had to be available, even if it was not face-to-face. The students had to feel that she was there for them. The students had to feel that she cared about teaching, that she was choosing activities and assignments that were purposeful and based on sound pedagogy.

Teacher support and course design. As Juniper was planning her first lessons, she and I talked about what she would have to do to ensure success. As she mentioned in the Running Journal, since she would have less contact with students in

person, she would have to plan activities that would speak to a wide range of pedagogical approaches and ways of learning. She also knew that she would have to be accessible in a different way than with a regular class. She would only meet them once a week, so how was she going to make sure that the students knew that she was there? How would she make sure that the students felt supported when they had problems? What would be the role of feedback in this hybrid format?

Table 16: Post-Survey Q9a: Feedback From Teacher: I Receive Feedback from the Teacher in a Timely Manner (A Day Or Two)

Choice	Option	Number
1	Strongly disagree	0
2	Disagree	0
3	Neither agree nor disagree	0
4	Agree	2
5	Strongly agree	7
	Total	9

This same idea was echoed in the value of the feedback as well.

Table 17: Post-Survey Q9b: Feedback From Teacher: I Read the Feedback and then Make Corrections

Choice	Option	Number
1	Strongly disagree	0
2	Disagree	0
3	Neither agree nor disagree	0
4	Agree	3
5	Strongly agree	6
	Total	9

Teacher accessibility and feedback. When I asked the students about the accessibility of the teacher. Kathy said, “I know that (Juniper) is really available so I'm used to e-mail her if I have a problem… and I know the people in my class, so I

just have to ask her and them if I have some problems" (Think Aloud, Kathy, 302 - 304).

The preferred method of communication was email. Most of the students were ok with this. Vermouth said, "...we email a lot. I think it's ok" (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 813). Kate was surprised at how accessible the teacher was. She said in France she would never have emailed her teacher. Here, Juniper not only wanted her to email, but she also had a quick turnaround time. "I sent her e-mails and she replied so soon - just 20 min" (Think Aloud, Kate, 209). I asked Kate about a specific example of an email that helped her and she responded this way:

> ...there are so many examples, recently I asked her about, uh, how to write the essay editing, not editing, and I asked which is proper way when I write the story and, and I should use past tense or present tense and maybe I sent too long questions for, because I had three questions, but she answered very clearly and, and yeah, too clearly, so and each, she answered each question, so it's very helpful. (Think Aloud, Kate, 234 - 238)

Daniel said that the feedback helped him:

> Well, I find it, eh, I find it very useful and [Juniper] is probably the teacher that I have that gives more feedback and I receive it by email, mostly, yeah. (Think Aloud, Daniel, 193 - 194)

Ryan said that he was happy with the email because it was directed to him. He really appreciated how personal the emails were:

> ...uh, what I like with the e-mail feedback is like, it's personal. It's for you. It's not for everybody. So, it help me more to understand what I have to work,

> because she says it specifically to me. So, yeah, it's about, if I did several times the same mistake, if there is something I really don't understand… (Think Aloud, Ryan, 135-138)

Email feedback boosted Alistair's confidence to receive personalized feedback from her:

> Yeah, exactly. It helps me. Whenever I make mistakes, I just… she teach me how to fix them and she tells me what's wrong and in this case, she said that this is a perfect sample. So, it's a boost of confidence… (Think Aloud, Alistair, 160 - 162)

Susan liked how detailed her responses were:

> So it's very helpful to me, to understand better. Yes, and I think whenever I write an e-mail to her, she replies me very detailed, detailed informations. So, it's really helpful. I, whenever I have problems I send e-mail to her and she replies very fast. So yes, it's really good. (Think Aloud, Susan, 153 – 156)

Technical support. Juniper was there to help solve technical issues as well as grammatical issues. She sent emails to students who were lagging behind. As she said in the Running Journal, "I have emailed them both to encourage them to take more time with the learning modules and to practice with the videos, take notes, and re-watch sections for help" (Running Journal, 436 - 438). I asked the students if they ever felt alone. Daniel had this to say:

> I never felt alone. And I always felt supported. [Juniper] is probably the professor that, um, fast, faster respond to my questions and she's always able to, or yeah, help us. When I have some, there was a one time, I had some

> trouble and I couldn't finish my homework and I just emailed her and like in 15 or 20 minutes, she respond me. That's very. That's different with all professors. So, all professors take like one day or two days even to respond you. Yeah. (Think Aloud, Daniel, 672 - 677)

The students had stories about videos not working and Juniper would email them with a solution. Many instructors avoid technology integration because of their own sense of inadequacy about being able to guide students when computer issues arise. Students in this class had questions about the technology and the grammar. Some of them went to computers labs for help. Some of them relied on friends. Sometimes, they even helped each other, but the teacher was always there. Kate, who received a B- in the course, acknowledges the centrality of the teacher's role: "Yeah, but the most biggest support is teacher" (Think Aloud, Kate, 424). Those who took advantage of that teacher-student connection tended to do better and get better grades. The student who ignored the support, failed. "...the teacher said if you needed anything you can come to us, but then…um, well, I did not feel that much support, even though the teacher said…" (Think Aloud, Joker, 339 - 340).

Homework. This section provides further insight into the definition of homework from the students' points of view. I used the homework here as the teacher and the students described the term during the data collection process. First, I provide the teacher's rationale for homework and then the students' reactions.

As previous discussed, Juniper dedicated a lot of time and energy into the planning and execution of the activities, including the appropriate balance of the face-to-face and online portions and the amount of homework to give. Like many of her

colleagues in the EAP department, Juniper feels that homework is an essential component of the learning process. When she discussed giving homework, she stressed meaning and purpose:

> I know that in our department they say that you are supposed to give three hours of homework for every hour in class, which I mean, I am fan of homework because it shows what you can do, but I want it to be with a purpose and so if they have to do the instructions for homework and then work in class for output and then have one very meaningful assignment. It will be a lot more beneficial for the students and they won't feel so much like that are bogged down with busy work. (Second interview, Juniper, 225- 230)

Many of the students reported that much of the *work* that they had to do was contained inside the classroom itself. Some of the students reported that this hybrid class was one of the only classes that actually required homework. "[I]t takes more, more time... in my other classes, I have, I don't have a lot of homework. Most of them I don't even have homework, but in this class, yeah, I have like more…" (Think Aloud, Daniel, 371 - 375). Many of the students had reading to do and papers to write, but the students reported that they did not have *homework*. This may be how they define homework, meaning writing a paper is not homework, but using a discussion board is. They may have viewed review grammar exercises as homework, but not VoiceThread or making videos.

In Juniper's class, there was always homework, especially at the beginning. Some students dealt with the amount of homework better than others. Ryan observed that Juniper did a good job with spacing out the assignments, "...she had attention to

the fact that between Monday and Wednesdays, you had one day to do the homeworks and between Wednesday and Monday, we have more homework for Monday, than Wednesday. So, it's easy to deal with" (Think Aloud, Ryan, 331 - 335). Even if the students grumbled about the amount of homework, they saw the value in it. Daniel saw it as a replacement for the loss of the face-to-face class:

> Yeah, I mean, if it's online class, I understand that I have to do more homework, because we don't have a presential (meaning presentation or lecture), we have to use that time at home, and yeah, I think it's normal. I don't, I don't mind to do it. (Think Aloud, Daniel, 411- 413)

Nate had a love/hate relationship with the homework:

> I know the reason, but, uh, even if, like, in the deep of my heart, I just a little bit hate it, but, but I still like thinking about, like, this is useful for me cause English is not about learning something, it is about exercising something to master the English. That's what I'm thinking about. (Think Aloud, Nate, 408 - 411)

I asked Vermouth if she thought the amount of homework was fair:

> I think that's fair cause I, like, the course I have less homework it takes me a lot of time to go to that class, like, Monday through Thursday, I need to be on that class like four days. And this class, I just need to show up once a week (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 731 - 733)

Susan said it made sense:

> It makes sense, cause we don't see on Wednesday. I think it's, yes, sometimes it's really… I have to… it's too much, whenever I check my assignments due

> by some day. When do I finish it, like, but I think it makes sense, I think, yeah. (Think Aloud, Susan, 393 - 395)

Nate said it went both ways: So, the same advantage is also the same disadvantage. Lots of homework is an advantage and lots of homework is a disadvantage. (Think Aloud, Nate, 515- 516)

The students responded well to Juniper. I think the evidence shows that Juniper did a good job of getting the students to understand the rationale for the homework load. She communicated with them. She supported them. She gave them guidance while expecting a lot from them. She asked them to be creative and work together. So, if the students were on board with the teacher, were they on board with the format of the course?

Textural - The hybrid format

One of the main things I wanted to know was in terms of the hybrid format itself. Would the format or the idea of the format get in the way of student progress and achievement? How did the students view the format? Would it be so strange that they could not perform or would they treat it like any other class?

I asked the students a series of questions about this idea. Had you heard of hybrid before you took this class? Did you have any feelings about the hybrid format? What are the pros (affordance) and cons (constraints) of the hybrid format? How would you explain the hybrid format to someone else? Would you recommend the hybrid format to others? What do they need to know before they sign up? Does hybrid work for all subjects? Did this class help you as a student? Did it help you academically? Have you had to change as a student because of the format? Would

you take another hybrid class? What are your recommendations for improving the hybrid experience for future students?

Previous experience with hybrid. When I asked about prior knowledge or experience with hybrid, two students said that they had taken a hybrid class before. When we talked about it in more detail, it turned out that they were talking about fully online classes. Many students did not know the word hybrid, at least in an educational setting. A couple had a vague notion of the concept. “I just know it’s part online, part face on face, but, but, face-to-face, but I don’t know it’s called hybrid class” (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 758-759). Some had never heard of the idea. “I have no idea” (Think Aloud, Nate, 466). Fortunately, no one had a negative view of the hybrid format on day one. So, with a largely blank slate, Juniper could get started.

Final feelings about the hybrid format. The Think Aloud sessions were conducted from November 1 - 22. The first day of class was August 19th. The last day of regular class was on December 2nd. All of these answers came near the end of the class at the end of their experience with the hybrid format, so they had had almost three months in class. The response was mixed, with most students speaking well of the format. Most students treated it like any other class.

In general, the students who reported being self-motivated appreciated the course format more than those who said they were not. I thought maybe there would be a connection between the grades and those who liked the format, but that did not stay true either. I thought there might be a connection between those who felt support and those who did well, but one of the students who did not seem to appreciate the format got a B in the course. The end result is that it was just another course for the

students. The format did not seem to make that much of a difference in their interpretation of their successes or not. The hybrid format was just one more new thing that they were having to make sense of as first semester international students studying abroad for the first time.

Ryan described himself as a very self-motivated individual. “Yeah, because at least for me. All I need – my email, my class, my courses. And that’s more or less all I need to work. That’s all” (Think Aloud, Ryan, 51-52). In his assessment of the format, it matched his personality. It fit his schedule. He liked the challenge. He appreciated the creativity. He saw the class as freeing:

> This kind of class, the hybrid, because I can get bored quite easily and, during class, and I am willing to learn by my own because I think it's more efficient. So it's a good mix, because on Monday I have the teacher to explain me the all the things I don’t understand by my own. And then I have my time to decide when I will do and what I have to do, so ok, every Wednesday at 11 o’clock I have to be in class to do this, I can this on Monday night, on Tuesday night. For me, it’s a kind of free. It’s more… I feel more free like this. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 148 - 153)

Later, in the Think Aloud, he reiterates his position even more forcefully; he likes taking personal responsibility.

> Yeah, but I told you before I like to learn by my own, it’s ok, it is my responsibility and then I have to deal with it. So, for me, it's really the best way to, to work. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 313-314)

Ryan received a B in this class.

Other students were initially afraid. They reported that they were not good with technology. They were not sure about their own abilities. Kathy stayed because she like Juniper and felt supported. By the end, she was a fan. Kathy shared that she enjoyed the flexibility and the teacher's response time:

> Now, now the hybrid course is my favorite, because I, the favorite… the hybrid course, in hybrid course, I can do homework when I want to do it, whenever I want to do it, and if I have questions, uh, the professor answered me as soon as possible, um, so I think it's pro... (Think Aloud, Kathy, 330 - 332)

Kathy received a B+ in this class.

Nate liked the activities in the course, but not really the hybrid format. However, he does mention that he picked up some skills beyond learning English grammar that may help him in the future:

> You know, for my, I think that my opinion is, I'm really good with, I mean, it's good ... for me, because in the end, I learned something new and maybe it will be like downloading and learning something to edit video. It may be useful for future, who knows… (Think Aloud, Nate, 225 - 230)

At the end of the day, Nate still prefers the personal touch and live conversation:

> Yeah, uh, she's really a great teacher. And, but, uh, rather than hybrid class, I prefer like, uh, meeting with her, just life, live conversation with her... (Think Aloud, Nate, 300 - 301)

What is interesting in the next quote from Nate is that he sees class time as the only legitimate way to interact with the teacher – he has to wait from week to week to get

his questions answered and, because he is thinking and speaking in a new language, he cannot process quickly enough to communicate with a short class and fewer face-to-face meetings.

> Because like, if one week, we only spend like, how many hours, one and a half hours attendance, it's not enough to, like, you know. If only like one hour, one and half hour, you don't think about a question and then you finish, and then, ah, ok I forgot to ask about that one and then you have wait another week and then maybe another week is a different matter about the last week. (Think Aloud, Nate, 523 - 527)

Nate said that he liked to talk. He was social. He missed the interaction of class time. He thought the hybrid format was better for those who don't like to talk. He also acknowledged that other students might feel differently:

> I forgot to mention like about us, the students because for, this is only like I have been explaining, it's only from my point of view, but I will like talk about like our point of view, my opinion about it. Uh, even if I suggest about attendance, it doesn't mean that everyone will ask... (Think Aloud, Nate, 611 - 613)

Nate received a B in this class.

His theory is that students need more class time in order to think of their questions. Once one student starts to talk and ask questions, then other students will ask more questions. He has a point. The students who liked working on group projects talked about the fact that they liked hearing other points of view. Students may get less student input and fewer ideas from the other students when they only

meet once a week. They can always interact with the teacher through email, but they don't get the student-to-student interaction. Discussion boards might have provided this needed link to talk with classmates to solve problems outside of class, but as Juniper noted, these international students did not feel comfortable sharing such personal needs in an online forum. Further investigation of this idea may be a good topic for a future study.

Alistair, who was failing the class until the midterm, started to feel more comfortable with the format as the semester went along. In the beginning, he struggled with finding assignments and completing work. He emailed Juniper mid September to say that he was struggling with the class. He told her he was having trouble in a new environment. She encouraged him to complete assignments and keep going. After that, he seemed to start working and participating more. When I asked him about the hybrid class, he had this to say:

> Alistair: it's the worst class for me (note: in terms of grades)
>
> Me: And why do you think that is? Is it the hybrid or do you think it is...
>
> Alistair: Yeah, I think it is the hybrid cause it's my first time using it and I, I do really think it's gonna take like, that cause there's no other class that takes so much, so much grades at the first weeks and, uh, I did not know that we had an exam on like the first, on the second week and stuff like that and I did not even know how to… I did not get the idea of the class until like two weeks or something like that. (Think Aloud, Alistair, 349 – 356)

Alistair felt alone and under-supported. He understood the teacher was available. He knew I was there. He liked his classmates, but he felt alone, but he kept working. He

got involved and understood that he was responsible for his grade. He had to do the work. He was a computer major; he could do this. He thought about how he was used to learning on his own:

> It's easier for me to learn something on the computer because it's, I have learned a lot of things through just sitting on my computer. No one even teaching me cause I learned how to use PhotoShop. I learned how to use a lot of program by my own... (Think Aloud, Alistair, 509 - 513)

He could now see the parallel between learning PhotoShop on his own and how he had to learn in this class:

> ...you have to study for the subjects that you have because you only have one class in the week and that doesn't cover everything and that's mainly questions after you studied the learning module. And I think it saves time. You just open the learning module and just look and it goes like that, PowerPoints and the teacher speaks and the questions, have to write it down, and give it to the teacher on Monday. So, I think it's better actually like this. I'm more comfortable. (Think Aloud, Alistair, 431 – 436)

After a rough start, Alistair started completing his work, turning assignments. His grades improved and he started to feel better about the class. By the end of the class, he had raised his grade from an F to a C+.

Susan bought into the idea of the class right away. As long as she could write to the teacher and get fast, directed, detailed emails, Susan was on board. As previously mentioned, the hybrid format was very new to her, but she quickly saw the benefits and possibilities. She had always hated grammar classes at home, but this

class was different. It was fun and it motivated her to want to learn. She used the word *fun* a lot, “I can really enjoy learning from this video, cause it's fun, yes, yes and I can remember, I think I can remember it easily, cause it's fun, yes” (Think Aloud, Susan, 124 - 126). She is studying to be a teacher and wants to incorporate the ideas of this class into her teaching when she returns back to her home country. Susan got the only A in class.

Vermouth reported having no issues with the format. She joked that no class on Wednesday meant that she had a longer lunch. She got behind at the beginning and was put on academic alert. She reported herself as being self-motivated, but she needed the push. She appreciated when Juniper put the assignments into folders. She describes herself as a little lazy:

> I think I need to be more motivated (laughs) yeah. I…Actually I am a lazy person. I will do maybe sometimes just, I know this assignment is easy and don’t take my, a lot of time, maybe just ten minutes, but I will just wait until the last minute (laughs). Yeah. (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 893 - 896)

Vermouth ended the course with a C+

Negative feelings about hybrid. Susan indicted that there were no negatives, “I don't see negative. I think I love this class, yes, I love hybrid class. Yes” (Think Aloud, Susan, 447). Obviously, not all students agreed with her. Some missed the social aspect,” Yeah, I feel, um, more comfortable with other classmates cause I meet them like two, two, two times a week, so I can easier to make friends with them” (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 867 - 868).

One complaint concerns the availability of WiFi which becomes crucial to busy students who need online access at all times of the day and night. Kathy indicates that she did not rely solely on technology to complete assignments:

> ...when I don't have Wi-Fi network, I couldn't, I can't do, I can’t do anything, and of course I have Wi-Fi network in my dorm, but sometimes it's broke and when I when I type the long sentences the network isn’t, doesn't working and I have to retype, so it's never happened if I take the face-to-face class, so I think it's cons of hybrid course. (Think Aloud, Kathy, 334 - 337)

The only student to fail the class, Joker thinks the format contributed to his self-proclaimed laziness: “For me, because I'm used to going to classes and missing a class can make, make me lazy, so I do it later, I do it later, then nothing will happen” (Think Aloud, Joker, 235 - 236). Nate prefers the live contact that you have with the teacher. Daniel liked the flexibility because he was on the tennis team and traveled a lot. He could do the work when he had time, but he felt alone. When I asked him about the biggest challenge, he said,

> The biggest challenge, uh, maybe with this class it’s, um, to do all the homework on time because we have more homework than in the other classes and also to, to study, um, to study all the, the information we have, um, by ourselves. It’s been a challenge for me. (Think Aloud, Daniel, 499 - 502)

I am not sure if he was overwhelmed by the amount of homework or the travel and the homework combined. Either way, some students felt that by not having class on Wednesday, there was a gap. They did not have that face-to-face time to ask the teacher questions.

> ...I am on the tennis team, I go to a competitions. I have to travel and that's helpful because I can do it wherever, not just in the class, and the worst past, eh, the worst part, it would be, for me, the, well, not being in a presential (meaning present in or physical) class, you don't have had teacher, just once a week, and did not have a teacher who explained you the, um, subject. That's the worst part. (Think Aloud, Daniel, 309-316)

It is one more instance of the students saying that they want something – more class time – but then not taking advantage of that class time when they had it. I observed many classes where students had nothing to say and asked no questions of the teacher, but I do understand that perception is real. If the students felt like something was missing, then something was indeed missing. Daniel received a C- in the class.

I asked the students if the class made them better students. Many of the students reported that they were more willing to work on their own. They had to rely on themselves more to get the work done. When I asked if this class was helping her academically, Vermouth said this,

> Helping me be more motivated. This is much like no one tells you, you need to do that, but you tell yourself and you tell yourself and you need to do that and you need to finish that by that time… (Think Aloud, Vermouth, 1062 - 1064)

I heard that same sentiment with most of the students. I asked them to explain the hybrid format to me. I wanted to see how they described it. I also asked them if they would recommend a hybrid class to a friend. Here were some of the responses. Ryan said you had to be self-reliant and self-motivated:

> So, first one is, yeah, to be sure that you will be enough motivated to do your homework on by your own and that in class that even if you are not seeing the teacher, you have to work anyway. Otherwise, it is not working. (Think Aloud, Ryan, 389- 391)

Daniel echoed the same ideas about self-motivation:

> ...You have to be aware that it will be different for you, from you other class... you have to be aware of it cause you'll be different. I don't know if it is harder or easier and then you, I would tell him to be sure that he would be able to, to be responsible with his time or her time and be able to really self motivated and the third thing, probably, um, I don't know what it would be. Not be… be always wanting to, to do the homework, not being lazy cause you have to do more homework than in another class, so if you don't like doing homework, then probably, it's not your class. (Think Aloud, Daniel, 640 - 648)

Joker discussed the importance of not falling behind at the beginning:

> Before signing up for a hybrid class, they should be on time and they should check their Blackboard every time, every single time, and try not to miss any, any small work, or any small homeworks, or any small assignments as a part of the hybrid class. (Think Aloud, Joker, 211 - 213)

To me, all of those suggestions sound like good solid advice for any student in any class. Do your homework. Communicate with the teacher. Make sure you know what your assignments are. Come to class. Again, these are suggestions for any student. It seems that if you are motivated to work on your own and can benefit from a guided learning experience, then the hybrid format can work.

Textural - The focus group analysis

The focus group analysis was done on December 4th after the class review for the final. It was optional, but they all stayed and participated. I checked out a small camcorder from the TLC, but it did not work, so I used my laptop to record the session. I asked one of the students, Kathy, to moderate the session, asking questions I had written for her (Appendix F). I did not want to lead the focus group because I wanted to stay in the role of facilitator. I had not been in front of them all semester in an authoritarian position. I wanted them to feel at ease and discuss things amongst themselves. I was there to keep the conversation going.

The moderator agreed to ask the questions and take notes on the board. I took pictures of the board at the end of the session (Appendix G). I took notes and had another student, Susan, take notes. I also gave a sheet to all of the students to fill out while we were talking. The session lasted an hour. Most of the students actively participated. Some of them said only a few things.

The focus group did not reveal a lot of new information. They had already filled out three surveys and they had met with me in the Think Aloud interviews in my office. I told them at the beginning of the focus group interview that the main idea was for them to have a voice at the end. If did not say something in the surveys or interviews, now was the last time to voice their concerns.

The main things I heard were the videos were a great way to learn. “And on the videos, she gave us comments, she made us comments on our assignments by email. That's was great. I like this way” (Focus group, 269 - 270). “I think the videos, with the explanation. The videos were helpful to learn.” (Focus group, 272). “I like to

watch the video and then response" (Focus group, 284). "I think it was helpful for me" (Focus group, 280). I will talk more about the videos in the next chapter.

They liked the VoiceThread because it allowed them to be creative and voice their own opinions. One student wanted more directed questions because she did not always know how to respond or what the teacher was looking for. She wanted the teacher to be clear about expectations. She did not know what she was going to be graded on - her answer or her grammar.

The supplemental materials were helpful for most students. When we started to discuss why, an interesting discussion started about how to complete the assignments. I was happy that they were being so honest around me. One student said, "[S]ometimes it's just weird, right, sometimes I have to check a b and c, just hurry hurry hurry and I can do a screenshot and then go back and correct" (Focus group, 346 - 347). What he meant was that he, and most of the others, had figured out how to cheat the system. You just answered randomly the questions and then at the end the correct answers would appear. You were allowed to go back, which Juniper could monitor, and they could correct their responses in order to get them all right.

The Moderator is labeled as M. The other students were labeled G (group member) 1 – 9, according to where they were sitting. The students are discussing how to cheat the system:

M: Because you can just you just need to finish it and then we just type anything in and then hit enter and then all this is the answer this is the answer

G2: Yes, I want to get a hundred percent then and the exact answers

G1: ...then I think that it is it's just a thing that you need to

G2: ...you can screenshot your answers, the right answers, you don't have to check the answers and you still get 100

G6: I tried to do it without cheating but...

G1: It's helpful for my grades because it's always right (Focus group, 353 - 381)

In the end, the discussion turned to finishing the exercise versus getting them all correct and how that affected their grades. Some of them felt it was helpful to their overall grades while others did not think it helped enough. The students talked about the fact that the supplemental work helped them practice, but it did not help them understand. They discussed the lack of online feedback, the fact that they never knew why something was wrong. “Yeah, that's good. That's a good point. We don't understand why. We just don't know why it's wrong” (Focus group, 401). They talked about the fact that it’s not worth the effort. “....it doesn't really helpful because we never talk about it if you get it wrong you got it wrong and you don't know why” (Focus group, 459). Maybe this is an example of how cheating does not help you. The supplemental materials encouraged completion over success. It did not reward you for understanding and it did not explain your mistakes so that you could learn. The students were asked to complete exercises and they did. The problem was many of them only learned how to complete the task as fast as possible without feeling the need for comprehension. Others that were looking for comprehension and advancement of understanding were left unsupported.

The topic then shifted to the textbook. Some did not care for it and some did. Some never used the textbook and some used it all of the time. Some of them

reported that they liked having it as a reference tool while others stated that they never used it.

We then turned the discussion to the activities. They liked group work, in general: "... you can compare your answers, this makes me think" (Focus group, 707). "It helped my communication skills" (Focus group, 715). It was interesting that at that moment on the recording, one of the two students who had not said anything up to this point (45 minutes in) offered, "I like to interact with the other students" (Focus group, 721). Things were winding down. We had talked about a lot about the pros and cons of the hybrid format. I asked them my final question:

> So, would you rather be alone with your book in your room or would you rather make movies and talk with friends and do VoiceThread and all of those things? Which one helps you process the information and learn the information better? (Focus group protocol)

All of the students responded that they appreciated a dialogic, collaborative approach to language acquisition.

Structural – Surveys, Think-Alouds, and Focus Group

Being a teacher, I know that there is always a range: a range of grades, a range of student interest, a range of responses to activities and assignments, etc. A teacher, with the best of intentions, can fail. They can fail to meet the needs of the students. They can fail to make a connection with the students. They can speak, but not be heard. They can work hard on course design and not be relevant or make an impact on the students.

While most teachers are aware that students are taking multiple courses and have personal lives, they still hope to create an atmosphere where students are excited about learning and want to participate in the class. That is the ultimate goal. Teachers want to make a positive impact on students' lives. They also want validation for the effort. No one wants to waste his or her time. No teacher wants to put hours of hard work into lesson plans or a course design that are not appreciated or largely ignored.

Juniper dedicated a lot of time and energy into finding current videos and creating activities that the students would appreciate. The reality is that no matter how much time and energy Juniper puts into her design, the students leave her experience and have other classes and other life experiences. She can only try her best to make a positive imprint as they pass through on their educational journey.

This was a new format, but not so strange that the students could not figure it out or adapt as needed to make the course work for them even if the learning curve lasted a few weeks. There was a bumpy start and a much needed regrouping. Juniper handled that situation well. She monitored the activity online to see that there was something wrong. Students were not meeting deadlines and they were not active online, so she created a much easier-to-follow system and the students responded. As any good teacher would do, she gauged student need and made the necessary changes.

As they were all in the same situation, international students studying away from their home cultures for the first time, they were all sharing the same first-time experience with the hybrid format. They had no shared frame of reference and no shared understanding of how things should be. They had no preconceived notions of

what a hybrid course should look or feel like. They were all sharing the same new, although it was different for each of them. Some of them were able to adapt faster than the others, but no one had a distinct advantage. That newness may have worked in Juniper's favor. She was able to scaffold each student journey according to his or her own academic needs.

The students reported that there was a lot of work to do in the class, but they also said that it was not too difficult and they were able to finish the work. Despite the fact there was more work to do in this class that any of their other classes, they were able to do the work on time. Possibly due to only having one class a week, attendance was almost 100 percent.

Students wanted more time with the teacher, but learned to appreciate working on their own with the help of materials posted on the LMS. They learned to communicate with the teacher through activity and feedback. Students appreciated quick, detailed, and individualized feedback that they could use directly. Students reported boosts in confidence when they felt like the teacher was recognizing individual achievements in their work. Students liked having a variety of activities to complete, knowing that not all activities were designed for them. Out of the different types of activities, they could always find one that helped them personally.

Overall, I feel the evidence overwhelmingly suggests that the students were not adversely affected by the hybrid format and in fact, they valued learning how to use the technology in a new and unfamiliar learning environment. With Juniper as their guide, the students completed the course and received the grades they worked for. They overcame a slow start to finish with the normal range of grades. Juniper did

not give A's to everyone because the coursework or course load may have been difficult. She maintained high standards for her students and her students worked for the grades they received. As previously stated, many of the students believed that this format made them stronger, made them more self-reliant. Not a trivial accomplishment in it own right.

In a more meta approach to the study, the research questions asked the students to reflect on the journey as it was happening. In the first survey, I wanted to know if they were self-motivated and tech savvy, hoping to signal them of things to come. In the second survey, I asked about their workload and their ability to complete work in a timely fashion, letting them know that their voices were being heard. I wanted to see if they were more comfortable with using technology to learn. Juniper wanted to know if they felt supported. In the Think Alouds, we discussed their personal feelings in an open dialog. We had a good conversation in the focus group and they were able to externalize their final thoughts. At crucial points of their journey, they were asked to process their experience. Hopefully, my presence provided a secondary level of support.

Chapter 6: Gordon - The student who dropped

This chapter is included to make sure the student who dropped the course also has a voice. The information in this chapter comes from the Running Journal and my Think-Aloud interview with Gordon. He was gracious enough to participate even though he was no longer in the course. I felt like I needed to explore his reasons for dropping the course. As with previous chapter, I will offer *textural* and *structural* descriptions.

Textural

Background and overview. Gordon was a degree-seeking student from China, getting a degree in business. This was his first time out of China and the beginning of four years of study in a foreign language. His advisor signed him up for six classes; four of the classes were EAP classes, which he said were "easier than the academic courses" (Think Aloud, Gordon, 23). According to her entries in the Running Journal, Juniper described Gordon as shy from day one.

Gordon told Juniper that he did not really want to take the grammar class, but his advisor had signed him up for it. He was not particularly motivated to be in the class and did not interact with the other students unless it was explicitly required by the activity and then he would speak. She noticed early on that he was "reluctant to get up and introduce himself to other students" (Running Journal, 544). She said that he was "quiet…and not terribly willing to 'lose face' by asking questions" (Running Journal, 539 - 540). She remembers that he said he was unsure about enrolling in an online course "because he wasn't good at the computer" (Running Journal, 541). Juniper further stated that he "…literally did nothing for class…" (Running Journal,

479) while at the same time "…he was great at participating in class…" (Running Journal, 480), although this was just physical participation in activities, because she stated that he "never spoke in class" (Running Journal, 546) without being prompted.

In the second face-to-face meeting, Juniper started class by greeting them all by name, which I thought was a nice personal touch. She then introduced what she called an acceptance statement, a written statement that the students needed to sign at the end of that class that said they understood the purpose of the course and could navigate their way through Blackboard. This was after two sessions on the structure of the course and information on the use of Blackboard components. At the end of the presentation, the students were asked to sign the acceptance statements, stating that they agreed to not cheat or plagiarize, to show respect for each other, and to follow the rules of the class. She told them if they did not understand, they should not sign it. There were no questions. They all signed.

Also during this calls, the students also were assigned or chose partners to help each other stay on track and to have someone to go to if they had questions. The students remained quiet as Juniper walked through one of the modules, talking about recommendations for setting individual deadlines for finishing activities. I made a note of the fact that it was at this point that Gordon spoke for the first time in class. He said he was confused. Juniper told him she was there to help and would be there if he had any problems or issues. Gordon dropped the course before the September 22nd class meeting, less than a month after this discussion.

When Juniper asked him about his reasons for dropping, Gordon referred back to the fact that he had been unable to "…get a 100 percent on the first quiz (the

Understanding Our Course Quiz)" (Running Journal, 481-482). Juniper had told them it was necessary for them to get 100 on the quiz so she "…could make sure they understood the basic rules regarding late work, absences, etc." (Running Journal, 482-483). For Gordon and a couple of students, there was some confusion about the scores and whether they would be allowed to continue in the class if they did not get a 100 percent, which he had not received. Juniper was not sure if she had been clear about the purpose of the quiz; it was supposed to be a small test of understanding to make sure they were all on the same page. She explained that it was more about mutual understanding about expectations so their grades would not be affected by that one quiz. She told them not to worry too much about that score. "…so I told them that their current scores were fine and let's move on." (Running Journal, 485). Among other things, not getting 100 percent on this quiz may have been a good excuse to switch classes. Gordon did not mention this to me in our Think Aloud conversation.

In our Think Aloud discussion, I asked Gordon if he knew the class was a hybrid class before he signed up for it. He told me that he knew it was a hybrid, but was unsure of what a hybrid class was. His advisor signed him up for this class. He learned about the format on the first day: "It's one face-to-face and the other…one class is face-to-face and the other one is do online questions on the Internet" (Think Aloud, Gordon, 41 - 42). In the interviews, he claimed that he tried to do the online exercises, but did not like the format. He would get a wrong answer, but no explanation why. "Yes, and feel bad, because some, some answer I don't like, because some question is... I answer it and the answer is not, the system just give me wrong" (Think Aloud, Gordon, 52- 53). He did not like waiting until Monday to ask Juniper

what went wrong and what to do. “I have to spend four days there to answer [Juniper] question and so it’s too long for me… at Monday I already forgot the question. And even if I still remember, but I forgot which part don't I understand” (Think Aloud, Gordon, 59 - 61). He felt alone. He felt unsupported. He was frustrated.

I asked if he tried to meet Juniper in her office during her office hours and he said he had a class at the same time. I asked if he emailed Juniper and he said he preferred face-to-face contact. I asked him if he felt supported in his other EAP classes. He said *yes*. In his mind, that one class, those missing contact hours made the difference between being supported and not being supported. He also thought that he would have more *free time* since there was only one face-to-face class; instead, there was more homework. He did not see the online work as Wednesday classwork done at home; in his mind, it was just a lot of homework. He said that if Juniper “gave us less homework, I think it’s work for me, but it did not give me much more free time” (Think Aloud, Gordon, 89 - 90). For him, the amount of work that he had to do on his own, with no feedback was too much.

Since he still needed the grammar requirement, Gordon did not just drop the course, he switched to a face-to-face grammar course. Other than not appreciating the online format, he said he missed the personal contact with the teacher. Speaking about the course he transferred into, he said, “I have two class every week to study with my teacher, so I feel close to my teacher, we just like friends…” (Think Aloud, Gordon, 100 - 101). When I asked him about this idea of being friends with the teacher, he said it was a driving force for him to be a better student. “…It's important, more important than the homework and the feedback, because it’s, at class, I feel like

home in other EAP course. It made me, it can make study harder or it give me better environment to study" (Think Aloud, Gordon, 117 - 119). I asked him if this was true in his business classes as well as his EAP courses. He said no. He said business classes were better suited for the hybrid format.

> At business class, I know it's just a business class and we have to do like this. Business class it's… it tell, it teaches you some skill and some knowledge on business, on the work, but the EAP course is teach you the skill of English. It's a language class, so it should, it should teach you. It should be close, because in business class and if the, if the professor did not teach us some knowledge very clearly, I can't study on the book, but the language, if the teacher did not teach me, then I think I can't understand even though I read the book over and over. (Think Aloud, Gordon, 122 - 127)

I asked him if he was anti-hybrid format and he said *no*. He said that in his English classes, the connection to the teacher was extremely important, not so in his other classes. It is important to note here that the class that he switched to was being taught by a teacher he was familiar with. I discuss this further in the next section.

I asked him more about the hybrid format and he said that he did not appreciate the hybrid format for a small class. He had no problem with the hybrid format in a big class. "Like, I mean, in a big class, I think a hybrid class is better than the face-to-face and in a small class, I prefer face-to-face" (Think Aloud, Gordon, 157 - 158). So, the format was not the issue for him. He saw the value of the hybrid format, but in his mind, if you had the chance to bond with the teacher, you should take advantage of that. That is not a bad point to make. Why have small classes and

then not meet? For Gordon, this was also an economic discussion. Why would he pay for a class where he did not meet with the teacher? I asked him if he liked learning from watching videos. His response was:

> No, I think the teacher should teach should teach us, because we pay for it. The teacher should teach us and not, not search on Google and learn by myself. If we learn by ourselves, so why do we pay for it and study in college? (Think Aloud, Gordon, 193 – 195)

What was he paying for if he did not meet with the teacher in person? If the teacher just assigned him to watch other people's videos, then what was the teacher actually doing? I asked him if the teacher had made the video, would that have been ok? He agreed that if the teacher made the video and it was not a free video from the Internet, then that would be ok with him. I think he wanted effort for payment. He did want to pay for a course where he could not see the obvious effort of the teacher. I asked him if he preferred to learn alone or in groups. "I learn best when I work alone, but I think the teacher, the professor should teach us much enough" (Think Aloud, Gordon, 202 - 203). He would agree to do reciprocal work, but he would not be the only one putting in the effort.

There were several factors at play here that culminated with Gordon's switch to another class. He was in a class that he did not want to take. The format did not agree with his learning preference. He wanted more face time with the teacher, albeit in a passive role. He needed more personal feedback. He wanted to feel like the teacher was actively working for the money he was spending.

My previous experience with Gordon. As part of my role as International Program Coordinator for the Office of International Studies and Programs, I run a summer English Language Program designed to help international students who need an intensive English language and acculturation program before the start of the fall semester. The purpose of the course is to provide a transition period for students to get ready for the academic semester. The students meet every day, Monday through Friday, for six weeks before the start of the fall semester. The summer prior to the fall semester of this particular study, there were only six students the summer program: three students from China, two from Brazil, and one from Colombia. Gordon was one of those students.

I was one of the first people for Gordon to meet in the US. I picked Gordon up from the airport and helped him get settled into his apartment. When I met him, he seemed like a typical jet-lagged student from China, tired and confused after a long journey. Because of the one child policy in China, many of the Chinese students have had constant attention for many years and they are alone for the first time in their lives. There has to be major culture shock for many of these students, and not just the ones from China. Many of them are traveling for the first time and are away from their families for the first time. Many of them are grateful for the assistance, but unsure of themselves in a new setting.

In my summer experience with Gordon, he never really graduated from the quiet phase. That seemed to be his nature. He got along well with the other students and the other students included him in everything they did; they were a tight-knit group. The students also got along well with the teachers and the tutors.

In that particular program, there were two major changes from previous years: the program switched to a project-based learning format, where the students completed three language-based projects together in six weeks, and instead of three teachers working with the students, there were only two teachers and a group of volunteers who tutored the students in the afternoons. I mention these changes for two reasons: the students did not follow a set routine of consecutive, guided exercises based upon a text book, and the students had a lot of attention paid to them since they were a small group. In the afternoons, there was a volunteer per two students. I am speculating, but the learning environment is probably a big change from a Chinese classroom. For the whole summer, Gordon had a small group of study partners and peers. He had a lot of special attention given to him. He was probably getting more face-to-face time than ever before. It is easy to see how a change to a hybrid format would seem cold and unappealing.

In our Think-Aloud discussion, we talked about the importance of connection to his teacher, especially his language teacher. As mentioned earlier, he saw language teaching and language learning as a more intimate experience than business. “It’s a language class, so it should, it should teach you. It should be close…” (Think Aloud, Gordon, 124 - 125). In a language class, he would be lost without the teacher. Without a teacher, he “…can’t understand even though I read the book over and over” (Think Aloud, Gordon, 127). So, if the connection with the teacher was not there in the hybrid course, he would look for another teacher. As it turned out, one of his summer teachers was teaching a face-to-face grammar class that fit with his schedule. Here is a bit of our dialogue about the switch:

J: If the teacher was a stranger that you did not know… you had a connection to [the other teacher] from the summer. (Yes) Did that help you make your decision to change to the other class?

G: To change to the other class…

J: Yeah, from the hybrid course to the regular class? Was some of that because you knew [the other teacher]?

G: Yes, it will work

J: Because like you are saying, you want the personal connection, and you already have the personal connection to [the other teacher], so if she's teaching you the course.

G: Yes, I would prefer her class

J: Um, so, if you had a chance to take a hybrid class in the spring in a business class, then you may do that?

G: Yes, I will do that. (Think Aloud, Gordon, 137 - 149)

Gordon liked the teacher he had worked with in the summer. He knew her and had a connection with her. It was possible to switch classes, so he did.

Structural

Gordon wanted to be in control of his education. In the hybrid course, he may have been forced to use technology more than he was comfortable with and in a way he was not used to. He liked learning on his own, but not in an online environment. At times, Gordon felt alone and under supported. He had been completely surrounded by teachers and fellow students who could support him and now he was being asked to learn in a new and unfamiliar way.

If he needed and wanted a good start to get him going, then failing to get 100 percent on a quiz of understanding may have been an indicator to him that this would not end well. He reported trying to do the work on his own, but it did not match his learning preference, especially with a language course. He felt lost. He did not get off to the start he wanted, so he started to look for options.

That being said, the switch may have had much more to do with his connection to his summer teacher and less to do with negative feelings about the hybrid format. I asked him several times about the hybrid format and he said that he would be ok with taking the format for a core course, for a non-language course, for a large class where intimacy would not be possible.

The transition from finishing high school in China to an intimate summer course to a busy fall semester with six classes and multiple teachers to meet and befriend must have been a lot for Gordon. He needed to find a comfort zone that would allow for success. He had the choice to fight a harder fight or find an easier, more comfortable path and he chose it. I do not blame him. I think he made the more sensible choice for him.

I think Gordon's story is worth sharing because as he explained, there was not just one reason why he decided to leave. Student attitude or success in a given class is not dictated by a singular factor: an online component, the teacher's personality, or course workload. As is usually the case, the reasons for making a decision are layered, complex, and always situational. Teachers need to accept and respond to multiple learning needs, no matter the delivery system. Also, I think Gordon makes

some very interesting points that could lead to future studies, especially international student attitude about class expectations and value of personal experience.

Chapter 7: Summary and Implications

Phenomenology is concerned with wholeness, with examining entities from many sides, angles, and perspectives until a unified vision of the essences of a phenomenon or experience is achieved…Phenomenology is committed to descriptions of experiences, not explanations... (Moustakas, 1994, p. 58)

Summary of the research

In Chapter 1, I detailed the emergence on hybrid courses on college campuses. There is ample literature to support the idea that the modern student expects to use technology in their educational process. That being said, integrating technology into the classroom without sound pedagogically-driven design would be a hollow process and would not serve the teacher, the student, or the institution. New tools appear every day and teachers need help navigating the flow of new ideas; that is why ongoing professional development is crucial to educationally valuable hybrid course design. I concluded Chapter 1 with a discussion about the purpose of the study and showed how my own path led me to this point and influenced my approach.

In Chapter 2, I researched the foundations of technology integration and online learning. In particular, I focused on the reasons for the development, as well as the affordances and constraints, of the hybrid classroom. I listed books that have been influential to my understanding of hybrid learning and design. I found current hybrid research for comparative studies that looked at effectiveness in hybrid versus face-to-face language classrooms and for studies that looked at student perceptions of technology integration. The comparative studies gave me ideas to look for in my study: motivation, flexibility, technical issues, developing teacher-student relationships, and student support. The perception studies looked at student

satisfaction, student engagement, student expectations, student feedback, and content delivery. All of these issues would surface and play a role in my study as well. For the most part, my data echoes the findings of others but with some nuanced differences.

In Chapter 2, I laid out and discussed several pedagogical approaches and frameworks that can be followed to provide a strong basis for course development. All four approaches, sociocultural theory, constructivist-based educational design, TPACK, and ISTE NETS*T all work well together to ensure student-driven, teacher-led, dialogically-based classrooms where students are asked to work together and be a part of their own learning experience. I discuss how these conceptual frameworks influenced my guiding questions and then I situate the study, filling in gaps in the current literature.

In Chapter 3, I looked at my rationale for choosing my methods, including an instrumental case study design and a phenomenological approach to the data analysis. I wanted to reveal more fully the essences and meanings of the teacher's and students' experiences through first-person accounts, through intersubjective communication. It was through that back and forth of social interaction that knowledge and experience of the phenomenon became clearer (Moustakas, p. 57). I explained the phenomenological design that I used: bracketing, clusters of meaning, textural descriptions, and structural descriptions. I described the idea of the small case study and the importance of microanalysis in qualitative research. I discussed my approach to the various data sets and my role in the study and reflected on ethical

parameters to a small-scale study. I detailed the overall research design and the manner in which I carried it out.

In Chapter 4, I provided textural and structural descriptions of the teacher's journey as she developed a hybrid language course for international students. The phenomenological approach allowed me to tell her story using her words, in the textural description, and then relate my experience of her experience in the structural description. She discussed her strengths and weaknesses and the challenges that arose from the process.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I provided textural and structural descriptions of the students' perception of their first hybrid course. The phenomenological approach allowed me to tell their story using their own words, in the textural description, and then relate my understanding of their experience in the structural description. They shared their opinions and feelings about the hybrid format and gave ideas for ways to improve the experience for future students.

Comparing and distinguishing my research with findings from prior studies

After reviewing the data and my interpretations, I will now position the findings in relation to my review of the literature.

Books. Although I agree in principle with most of Prensky's (2010) claims about today's learner, the results of this study highlighted differences in personal and cultural expectations from the classroom experience. Prensky (2010) lays out what today's students want:

> Based on interviews of almost a thousand of today's students from all economic, social, intellectual, and age strata, all over the world, I have found that that they say is remarkably consistent:
>
> - They do not want to be lectured to.
> - They want to be respected, to be trusted, and to have their opinions valued and counted.
> - They want to follow their own interests and passions.
> - They want to create, using the tools of their time.
> - They want to work with their peers on group work and projects.
> - They want to make decisions and share control.
> - They want to connect with their peers and express and share their opinions, in class and around the world.
> - They want to cooperate and complete with each other.
> - They want an education that is not just relevant, but real. (p. 2 -3)

I will touch on some of the issues that arose in my discussions with the teacher and students. My study was not focused on culture or cultural differences, so I will not address each issue according to the culture of the student from which the answers came. Maybe future studies can dig deeper into each of Prensky's tenets line by line, culture by culture.

In-class lectures. While the students did not necessarily want to be lectured to all of the time or in an online or in-class manner, they did expect the direct instruction to come from the teacher and of all of the ways to receive information, in-class lecture was their preferred method. Over time, they seemed to adjust to other ways of learning and demonstrating knowledge, but they expected some form of lecture. They

may not want a lecture, but they expect it and may need significant scaffolding to see the value of the classroom without the in-class lecture. Some of the students may have watched the online videos, but still wanted to hear the information from the teacher directly, even though it was repetition of what they had already heard. Students reported that they felt most comfortable receiving information directly from the teacher face-to-face.

Creating. Many of the students reported that they valued being able to voice their own opinions in their work. Some said that gained confidence from being able to express themselves in various ways. Many of them appreciated the fact that they could use their strengths as learners in different ways with the freedom of choice. Not all students saw creativity the same way. Those who did not see the value in artistic expression found themselves relegated to more functional aspects of project work. Those students failed to see the connection between the goal of the activity and the completion of the activity. There was too much focus on learning the tools to complete the activity compared to how much of the language they were using. They did not appreciate the role of creativity in the class.

Peer work. For some students, connecting with their peers and sharing opinions was stimulating and made the activity more enjoyable. For some the format of the exchange did not work. Discussion boards did not appeal to students in this class; as a result, the students did not use it well and it did not serve its purpose. VoiceThread seemed to be a better venue for student exchange. So, choosing the right format is key.

Students also stated that did not mind making mistakes when speaking with the professor because the professor could offer constructive feedback that they could use for self-improvement. Students working with other students felt an additional level of pressure when completing peer work with classmates. Several students wanted to be perfect for fearing of losing face with classmates. Students were more reserved and less likely to give longer answers when only working with their peers. In order for voice board to work, they would need to listen to the first response, practice their answer until it was perfect, and then wait for a response. Students wanted a natural flow without mistakes, so they would practice complete answers which would take time and therefor slow the flow of the conversation.

Again, in general, I agree with the general idea of what Prensky reports and these may be good overall rules to follow, but several caveats to those guidelines arose during the data analysis. International students may say they agree with the ideas, but then have personal or cultural reservations or barriers that slow that process down.

The same can be said for the assumption that all today's students are computer savvy and ready to use computers and the Internet as learning tools. Several of the students in this class had never used a computer in education other than for word processing and making presentations. One student, a computer science major, did not know what a hyperlink was. We should not make too many assumptions about the cross-over of use of social media and the Internet in general and the use of computer in education. Students need to be trained how to use technology for educational purposes.

Peer-reviewed literature. In Chapter 2, I reviewed reports of online education and studies of hybrid learning environments (Banados, 2006; Grgurovic, 2011; Kemp, 2013; Larsen, 2012; Siew et al., 2012; Stracke, 2007; Thang et al., 2013; Turner, 2015). Some of the main themes of these studies are connected to the teacher-student connection, student attitudes about the learning environment, and effective hybrid course design.

Teacher-student connection. Jackson and Helms (2008) reported that students felt like they needed more face time with the teacher. Juniper felt like she did not get to know the students as well. In her interview, she said that because of the self-directed nature of the online class, she was not always able to know what they were having trouble with. This does not mean there is no interpersonal connection with the students. When I read student quotes to Juniper during the member check interview, she recognized the students right away through their voices in the writing. The surveys indicated that they knew Juniper was available to them and although they knew they could email, some of them missed the personal contact of class time. Some of the students reported feeling under supported.

Sandholtz, Ringstaff, and Dwyer (1997) reported that students need to feel that the work that they were doing mattered and it was not just to keep them busy. This was consistent with what the teacher and students said. Juniper said she wanted to guide them through a series of meaningful exercises, allowing them to do things on their own with the tools that she provided. In one of the surveys, a student said he/she felt like the advantage of the hybrid format was that it put the responsibility on him/her to complete the work and that he/she knew that Juniper was available to help.

Students reported that they appreciated work that was personal and their opinion was valued.

Siew et al. (2012) reported in his study that students were not happy when it appeared that the teacher was only using the materials provided by the textbook. Students want to know that the teacher is also actively engaged in the process. Gordon openly asked why he was paying for a course where the teacher was using instructional videos found online. He needed to feel that the teacher was putting in as much effort as he was. He wanted a reciprocal amount of engagement in the course from the teacher. If the teacher made the instructional videos, then that would prove they were working hard for him and he would in turn work hard for the class. Ironically, Juniper talks at length about how hybrid courses are more rather than less work for the instructor. This behind the scenes work is clearly invisible to some students who do not appreciate the expertise needed to cull millions of possible URLs into targeted curricular tools.

Stracke (2007) showed that students who felt under supported often dropped. One student dropped in favor of the more traditional face-to-face. Other students stayed in the class and learned how to work with the hybrid format. One student reported that he wanted to drop in the first weeks because it was confusing. In the end, he stayed in the course and reported feeling like the format made him a better student.

Student attitudes. Sucaromana (2013) and Ushida (2005) reported that students who were intrinsically motivated to learn fared better in the hybrid-learning environment. When I asked the students about their individual learning preferences,

those students who liked to work on their own and at their own pace felt very comfortable in the hybrid format. Juniper created an active, fun, and engaging learning environment to help promote student motivation. She noted that some of the students told her that they felt more independent as learners as a result of taking this course.

In studies by Adair-Hauck et al. (1999), Grgurovic (2011), Thang et al. (2013), and Kemp (2013), students reported enjoying the flexibility of the hybrid format and those that embraced that flexibility fared better. Many of the students in the surveys and Think-Alouds discussed the fact that they appreciated the autonomy and accepted the responsibility of the flexible schedule. Students who indicated such ownership of learning usually did better in the assessments than those who framed the independent work as onerous homework. The students did not use the Wednesday class time to do their work. Most of them reported completing the work on Friday or Saturday. On this campus, in general, students do not have class on Fridays, so for many of them, this can be a workday.

In Chenowith et al. (2006), technical issues made the students feel frustrated. Students reported having incompatibility issues with Blackboard and their chosen browser, with no sound on embedded videos, with presentations that were too small to read. Juniper also reported issues with embedding videos and Blackboard. Frustration with technology was a common theme in the data for both the teacher and the students. Many of these issues were resolved by week six. As complex technologies evolve, this problem will undoubtedly continue; the question is how to more effectively get expert support to teacher and students in a timely manner.

Effective hybrid course design. Kemp (2011) and Siew et al. (2012) discussed the role of feedback in the hybrid course. Students need increased feedback in the hybrid format. Students also appreciate interactive activities that provide feedback. The students gave very mixed reviews about the feedback. They reported that Juniper conscientious about replying to emails and answering questions about issues. They also reported in the survey that they would have liked more feedback, including on the corrections of their work. Other students said that Juniper provided informative, directed feedback that was very specific to their needs and they appreciated that.

Matukhin et al. (2014) talked about the importance of proper planning and proper student guidance. One student in the post survey stated, "I thought this class was hard until I was used to studying in this class" (Post survey, question two). That was a common theme. There was a period of adjustment and then it was just another one of their classes once they adapted to the format. Juniper helped the students get into a healthy rhythm for completing assignments online and on time.

Miller (2012) stated that it is important to build a course with strong, relevant, purposeful materials that engage the students and get them actively involved in their own education. He stressed that "students need metacognition to connect content to objectives" (p. 2). As demonstrated in Chapter 4, Juniper set up strategies that asked the students to think about the course while they were taking the course. In a meta way, my surveys and interviews with them also helped the students be aware of their own journey and reflect on their experience. Both Juniper and I were asking them to reflect on their learning experience as it was happening.

Siew et al. (2016) and Ushida (2005) found that students wanted equal amounts of familiarity, structure, and variety. Teachers who made the class engaging through a variety of activities developed a positive class culture and raised engagement levels and lowered anxiety. Juniper recognized this and was very aware of the issue. In the member check interview, she admitted, "I did get bored with my own learning modules by the end" (231 – 232). This is a real skill for teachers to learn. How do you maintain a familiar structure for the students while keeping the lessons fresh and new? Larsen (2012) talked about the need for ongoing teacher training and support for teachers.

In the next section, I will summarize what I have discovered about the teacher's and students' experience and its relevance to the review of literature and to future hybrid course design. I will discuss implications for teacher, students, and the hybrid design for international students. I will close with ideas for possible research to further the discussion.

Composite summary of experiences

Teacher. Through Juniper's journey, I learned that designing a hybrid course is time-consuming, but ultimately a rewarding process. Through her struggles with technology, with her students, and with her own limitations, she learned a lot about herself and what she was capable of. She challenged herself to learn more about effective technology integration.

Juniper missed the contact hours of a fully face-to-face course. She felt like the lack of personal contact may have been one of the reasons why a couple of the students had trouble. Juniper liked giving the students more control in the online

portions. She may have experienced a lot of frustration, but as she said at the end, she had no regrets.

Course design. Hybrid course design can be time consuming and front heavy, meaning there is a lot of work to do at the beginning to get off to a good start. The hybrid design allowed her to cover more material. It allowed the students to review materials and skip ahead when needed.

A teacher new to hybrid design should seek out assistance. Many college campuses now have instructional designers who can work with teachers to facilitate hybrid course development. A teacher designing a hybrid course for the first time may not be familiar with all of the tools available to them. They also may not know how to translate their face-to-face lessons into a suitable online format. It is important to be aware of how students learn and encourage a form of learning that makes the students feel connected to the teacher, the materials, and to the other students. Following ISTE standards and TPACK recommendations will be helpful to any new teacher. Teacher should create constructivist-learning environments that employ collaborative tools that promote student engagement and cooperative learning. They also need to understand the sociocultural nature of all learning environments and adjust strategies to meet the needs of diverse individuals.

Students can get lost in an online environment; proper design and appropriate guidance are key. Students need to know right away that they have more responsibility for their own education. In this study, there was an extra layer in that all of these students were from other countries; they were alone for the first time,

studying in a foreign country for the first time, studying in a foreign language for the first time, and taking their first hybrid class.

Student support. Juniper learned the importance of getting off to a good start to ensure student success. Students may not be as tech savvy as they need to be to succeed in a hybrid course, so more teacher support is needed in the hybrid format, especially with technical issues. Students may not understand how and where to get help with technical issues. Juniper reported being frustrated that students were not communicating their technical issues with her. Some of the students felt under supported in the first few weeks and cited problems at the beginning of the course as the reason for their bad grades.

Juniper had to work to establish trust and let the students know that she was available. These international students were not used to being able to contact the teacher so easily and frequently. Many of them apologized in every email. She responded to every email in a timely fashion, so much so that some of the students thought they could email her whenever they wanted, even after 10 pm. Juniper had to learn to balance being helpful while establishing rules for when it was ok to expect her to reply.

Students. These students traveled a long way from home to get a good education. They expect high quality at an affordable price. Since most of them were not familiar with the hybrid format, there was a need for a lot of adjustment. Those students who were able to see the positive aspects of what the hybrid format has to offer benefitted from the experience more than those who could not understand a new

format. It is crucial for the teacher to help them ease into a new way of learning and support them.

The students in this course had the extra benefit of this study as a scaffold for understanding. Juniper and I both explained the purpose of the course at the beginning. Through the surveys, Think-Alouds, and focus group interview, I was able to explain some of the reasoning behind the hybrid approach as I listened carefully to their perceptions and helped them process their experiences. In turn, they were able to voice their concerns and opinions to not just Juniper, but also to me as well. In that way, they had two people who were looking out for their well-being.

What I observed was a supportive teacher in a well-designed learning environment. The students all had some problem or issue at the beginning of the course, some more than others. Most of the issues were resolved by week six, which Juniper estimated was twice as long as issues take to resolve in a traditional face-to-face course. After week six, the course was just another course that the students were taking. There was a normal distribution of grades, with those who put in more effort getting the better grades. The students were very positive overall about the hybrid format, with many of them saying that they felt more in control of their own education and more responsible as students. An added bonus was that some of the students acknowledged that they learned a lot about technology tools and how to be more self-directed learners. These outcomes would be missed if only content test scores were monitored as indicators of success.

Implications

Teachers creating hybrid courses for international students need to be aware that students may not have used technology in their educational process other than word processing, emailing, and creating presentations. That is not to say that they cannot do the work; they can. Some of the students were not used to having daily or weekly work. They were used to writing papers and taking cumulative knowledge tests after authoritative lectures from professors. Teachers should make sure to provide clear expectations and due dates in easy to navigate modules.

Teachers need to make sure that the online design is set up in manageable chunks that do not overwhelm the students. Students will need to know where to go and what to do if they feel alone in the online environment. Teachers will need to provide directed feedback with increased individualization of activities and support.

Teacher using the hybrid format need to be aware of how students see online work versus homework versus supplemental work. Many of the students in this study saw online work as the supplemental work that came with the textbook. They did not see their interaction with Blackboard as online work. To the students, online work is any work that is not on Blackboard; online work is work found on the Internet. It is important for them to see the hybrid course as online work and integral to the learning goals of the course.

Students who take a hybrid course also need to view the online class as the actual class time and not just a free block of time. For example, instead of attending their course, in a face-to-face mode on Wednesdays from 11:00 am to 12:15 pm, the students could use that time to complete the required alterative learning activities that

they often framed as *homework*. Students generally viewed the online coursework as work that they could complete at any time, the idea of which is not completely wrong. The problem comes when the work is done without thought to the overall design of the course – last minute completion for a grade versus understanding of the current concepts in order to move on to higher-level concepts. In order to preserve the rhythm of the course, it is important to keep a positive flow between the face-to-face meeting and the online coursework in a timely manner. If not, then teachers may see the students completing all of the online work in the last few minutes before the face-to-face meeting. Students need to view the online coursework as equal in value to what they do in the face-to-face portion. The two sections should have equal value and be coordinated. Otherwise, the students may rely on whatever grade they get out of the face-to-face points.

Falling behind in class work can have more dramatic consequences in a hybrid learning environment. Although the students' attendance in the face-to-face portion was excellent, they needed to view the online component as a viable option to receive the direct instruction that then can be built upon in the face-to-face portion. Students need to be reoriented to new ideas about how to receive direct instruction rather than waiting for an in-class lecture. Students who do not take advantage of the online instruction will fall behind in a very different way because class time in the hybrid format should be dedicated to knowledge expression activities and not a review of past material.

Students need to understand the nature of collaborative, cooperative work. They need to learn how to respond to other students in an online environment.

Teachers will have to work with students to see the value of sharing opinions in an online environment. Teachers have to work to create creative and meaningful experiences that students ask students to be active. Teachers will need to make sure the students feel supported both in terms of their academic needs and in terms of help with the technological aspects of the hybrid format. Teachers will need to help students demonstrate online competency.

Methodological footnote. In pursuing a phenomenological approach to the data analysis, I developed a technique for transcription that allowed me to create a co-constructed, multi-voiced understanding of the data. I began this conversation in Chapter 3, noting how my conceptual framework influenced my methodological approach to dealing with the data. After initial data collection, I wanted to stay true to the multi-voiced nature of the conceptual framework, which focused on the ideas of constant conversations, multiple levels of understanding, and active co-construction of knowledge. The transcription process was instrumental in carrying out these ideas.

Speech to Text. During transcription, I decided to use *speech to text*, which I thought at the time might speed up the process. *Speech to text* is voice recognition software that allows the user to dictate using the computer. While the accuracy is getting better, it still has a long way to go to being perfect. Many *speech to text* programs and apps are unusable by non-native speakers as the program does not understand foreign accents. It is also ideal for straight dictation of new copy, less ideal for transcription work because, among other things, speaking while someone else is talking and actually saying punctuation slow down the process. It turned out to be a longer, but richer process.

Constant conversations. Because of the imperfect nature of the voice recognition software and the form and function of *speech to text* itself, it is necessary to perform the transcription more than once. I would listen to the teacher and speak the words at the same time, using *speech to text* to create transcripts of the interviews. I then had to go back and listen again to correct the errors that occur in the *speech to text* process because I did not always speak clearly, or I did not understand what was being said. I would then return to the transcript to add punctuation and make notes for pauses, speed, tone, etc. To be the most fair to the speaker, I would listen again one more time, reading along with the transcript to make sure I had accurately captured and contextualized their voice. In the end, I listened to each interview multiple times, each time hearing and learning something new.

Multiple levels. I heard the voices of the teacher and students from multiple perspectives on multiple layers and levels. I heard their voices passively when I conducted the interview. I heard their voices actively when I spoke them for dictation. I heard them again when I reviewed the transcriptions and again when I began the horizontalization and clustering process. I could see the intersections and interanimations of their voices. This is one reason why the phenomenological process made so much sense as I was clustering the textural components and forming a structural understanding of the meanings and essences that emerged. I had multiple conversations with the data at both the intermental, among the voices, and intramental, conversations with myself, levels (Wertsch, 1991). The purpose of the study was allow their voices to be heard and make the teacher's and students' thinking visible in order to unpack the complexity of the issues being raised.

Active co-construction. Another major goal of this study was to co-construct the analysis through an iterative process with the participants. One of the main tenets of the sociocultural and constructivist theories of learning is that knowledge is co-constructed in a dialectic approach for a more nuanced, better overall understanding. By focusing deeply on this situated example of one classroom, I was able to use multiple sources of evidence to co-create an empirically-based, composite understanding of the essence of this moment in time. The process of co-construction is personal, reflective, and transformative.

I would like to see more researchers use this multi-layered approach to data analysis. Using *speech to text* allows the researcher to researcher to have active conversations with the voices in the study. According to Constructivist theory, the researcher/learner should be an active learner and learn by doing/speaking. According to Sociocultural theory, the researcher/learner should be interconnected with the guide/data through a social process in a particular place and time. This heightened meta-awareness of the role of researcher can only strengthen the study and make the researcher take a more active, conscious role in the co-construction process.

Ideas for future research. Further phenomenological studies are needed in the area of hybrid learning. During the course of this research, I read several studies about student perceptions of effective hybrid design. These studies focused on the planning phase, designing for collaboration, and student attitudes; more are needed.

Planning for success. I would like to design a study to find out the best way to avoid any drop off in trust between the teachers and students. This means finding a way to help teachers and students overcome the technology gap that some may have.

The study should focus on ways to promote a great start when using technology to learn using a hybrid format. One suggestion could be to look at ways of improving student participation in discussion and voice boards. Another is to more carefully scaffold learning about how to use the technology before the start of the cass. Maybe student evaluations of the teacher and student success on content assessments could identify *master* or award winning hybrid instructors who could be interviewed and observed to develop concrete guidelines for best practices.

Designing for collaboration. I would like to study ways to promote collaboration online. Ideally, new faculty who want to use a constructivist approach to hybrid design could use this kind of study to inform their decisions. I hope the present study also offers rich insight into successful planning and delivery of hybrid learning. A future study would also look at different technology tools that can be embedded into Blackboard.

Should we take into account a person's culture when designing for the hybrid learning environment? This study was not specifically focused on the individual cultures and backgrounds of the students. Maybe future studies can look at particular cultures to see if there are any general patterns. For the course design, we could also look at ways to better incorporate different cultures into the community of the classroom. Are there ways that certain cultures appreciate inclusion and peer or teacher feedback and support?

Student attitudes. I am also very curious about personality types and success or failure in a hybrid course. It could be said that more outgoing students are more likely to engage with someone in an online setting, but it may be true that online

environments work better for introverted students. Is there a personality type that is not suited for the online environment?

The combination of this study with these three proposed studies would improve on the overall understanding of hybrid design and give a broader phenomenological perspective on the issue. Trend lines all indicate that the movement to hybrid courses continues to increase dramatically, yet few studies have unpacked in a detailed way the challenges, knowledge and experience of those beginning the journey to create and deliver effective curriculum. This study contributes some important understandings of the process from both the teacher's and students' perspectives.

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Appendix A: TPACK knowledge expression activities

From: Harris, J., Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. (2009). Teachers' technological pedagogical content knowledge and learning activity types: Curriculum-based technology integration reframed. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, *41*(4), 393-416.

Table 2: Convergent Knowledge Expression Activity Types

Activity	Activity Description	Compatible Technologies
Answer Questions	Students respond to questions posed by the teacher, peers, or the textbook	Discussion boards, wikis, white-boards, quiz and polling software, textbooks
Create a Timeline	Students develop a visual representation of sequential events	Data mapping software, timeline software, concept mapping software
Create a Map	Students label existing maps or produce their own	Cartographic software, Google-Maps, drawing software
Complete Charts/ Tables	Students fill in teacher-created charts and tables or create their own	Excel or other data process-ing software, concept mapping software
Complete a Review Activity	Students engage in some format of question and answer to review course content	Courseware, quiz and polling software, wikis
Take a Test	Students demonstrate their knowledge through a traditional form of assessment	Quiz software, survey software

Note: Based on Harris & Hofer, 2006; in press.

Table 3: Divergent Knowledge Expression Activity Types

Activity	Activity Description	Compatible Technologies
Written Knowledge Expression		
Write an Essay	Students compose a structured written response to a prompt	Word processing, wikis, blogs, concept mapping software
Write a Report	Students author a paper from a teacher or student derived topic	Word processing, wikis, blogs, concept mapping software
Generate an Historical Narrative	Using historical documents and sec-ondary source information, students develop their own story of the past	Primary sources, timeline software, concept mapping software, word processors
Craft a Poem	Students create poetry connected with course content/ideas	Word processing software, wikis, blogs
Create a Diary	Students write from a first-hand per-spective about an event from the past	Word processing, concept map-ping, primary and secondary sources (paper based and virtual)
Visual Knowledge Expression		
Create an Illustrated Map	Students use pictures, symbols and graphics to highlight key features in creating an illustrated map	Cartographic software, graphics editing software, clip art, stock art, GoogleMaps
Create a Picture/Mural	Students create a physical or virtual mural	Multimedia editing and graphics tools
Draw a Cartoon	Students create a drawing or carica-ture of a content-based concept	Drawing/painting software, hand-held drawing tools

Conceptual Knowledge Expression		
Develop a Knowledge Web	Using teacher- or student-created webs, students organize information in a visual/spatial manner	Concept mapping software, wikis, brainstorming aids, interactive whiteboards
Generate Questions	Students develop questions related to content/concepts	Word processing, wikis, Google Docs
Develop a Metaphor	Students devise a metaphorical representation of a content-based topic/idea	Image banks, graphics editors, multimedia authoring tools
Product-Oriented Knowledge Expression		
Produce an Artifact	Students create a 3D or virtual artifact	CAD/CAM software, virtual reality creation software
Build a Model	Students develop a mental or physical representation of a course concept/process	Modeling, simulation construction, graphics software, multimedia production tools
Design an Exhibit	Students synthesize and describe key elements of a topic in a physical or virtual exhibit	Presentation software, word processing, Web authoring tools, graphics tools
Create a Newspaper/News Magazine	Students synthesize and present information in the form of a print-based or electronic periodical	Desktop publishing software, word processing, wikis

Activity	Activity Description	Compatible Technologies
Product-Oriented Knowledge Expression (Continued)		
Create a Game	Students develop a game, in paper or digital form, to help themselves and other students learn content	Word processors, imaging tools, Web authoring software, specialized game-making software
Create a Film	Using some combination of still images, motion video, music and narration, students produce their own movie	Multimedia recording and editing tools and software
Participatory Knowledge Expression		
Do a Presentation	In oral or multimedia format, students share their understanding with others	Presentation software, multimedia authoring tools, video and audio editing suites
Engage in Historical Role Play	Students portray historical figures	Presentation software, multimedia capture/editing software
Do a Performance	Students develop a live or recorded performance (oral, music, drama, etc.)	Word processing, storyboarding software, video/audio editing tools
Engage in Civic Action	Students write to government representatives or engage in some other form of civic action	Word processing, Web site design, blogs, wikis, e-mail

Note: Based on Harris & Hofer, 2006; in press

Appendix B: ISTE NETS*T Standards

From: https://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/20-14_ISTE_Standards-T_PDF.pdf

1. Facilitate and inspire student learning and creativity Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments.
    a. Promote, support, and model creative and innovative thinking and inventiveness
    b. Engage students in exploring real-world issues and solving authentic problems using digital tools and resources
    c. Promote student reflection using collaborative tools to reveal and clarify students' conceptual understanding and thinking, planning, and creative processes
    d. Model collaborative knowledge construction by engaging in learning with students, colleagues, and others in face-to-face and virtual environments
2. Design and develop digital age learning experiences and assessments Teachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessments incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the Standards•S.
    a. Design or adapt relevant learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources to promote student learning and creativity
    b. Develop technology-enriched learning environments that enable all students to pursue their individual curiosities and become active participants in setting their own educational goals, managing their own learning, and assessing their own progress
    c. Customize and personalize learning activities to address students' diverse learning styles, working strategies, and abilities using digital tools and resources
    d. Provide students with multiple and varied formative and summative assessments aligned with content and technology standards, and use resulting data to inform learning and teaching
3. Model digital age work and learning Teachers exhibit knowledge, skills, and work processes representative of an innovative professional in a global and digital society.
    a. Demonstrate fluency in technology systems and the transfer of current knowledge to new technologies and situations
    b. Collaborate with students, peers, parents, and community members using digital tools and resources to support student success and innovation ISTE Standards Teachers International Society for Technology in Education Effective teachers model and apply the ISTE Standards for Students (Standards•S) as they design, implement, and assess learning experiences to engage students and improve learning; enrich professional practice; and provide positive models for students, colleagues, and the community. All teachers should meet the following standards and performance indicators.
    c. Communicate relevant information and ideas effectively to students, parents, and peers using a variety of digital age media and formats
    d. Model and facilitate effective use of current and emerging digital tools to locate, analyze, evaluate, and use information resources to support research and learning
4. Promote and model digital citizenship and responsibility Teachers understand local and global societal issues and responsibilities in an evolving digital culture and exhibit legal and ethical behavior in their professional practices.
    a. Advocate, model, and teach safe, legal, and ethical use of digital information and technology, including respect for copyright, intellectual property, and the appropriate documentation of sources
    b. Address the diverse needs of all learners by using learner-centered strategies providing equitable access to appropriate digital tools and resources
    c. Promote and model digital etiquette and responsible social interactions related to the use of technology and information
    d. Develop and model cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with colleagues and students of other cultures using digital age communication and collaboration tools iste.org/standards.

5. Engage in professional growth and leadership Teachers continuously improve their professional practice, model lifelong learning, and exhibit leadership in their school and professional community by promoting and demonstrating the effective use of digital tools and resources.

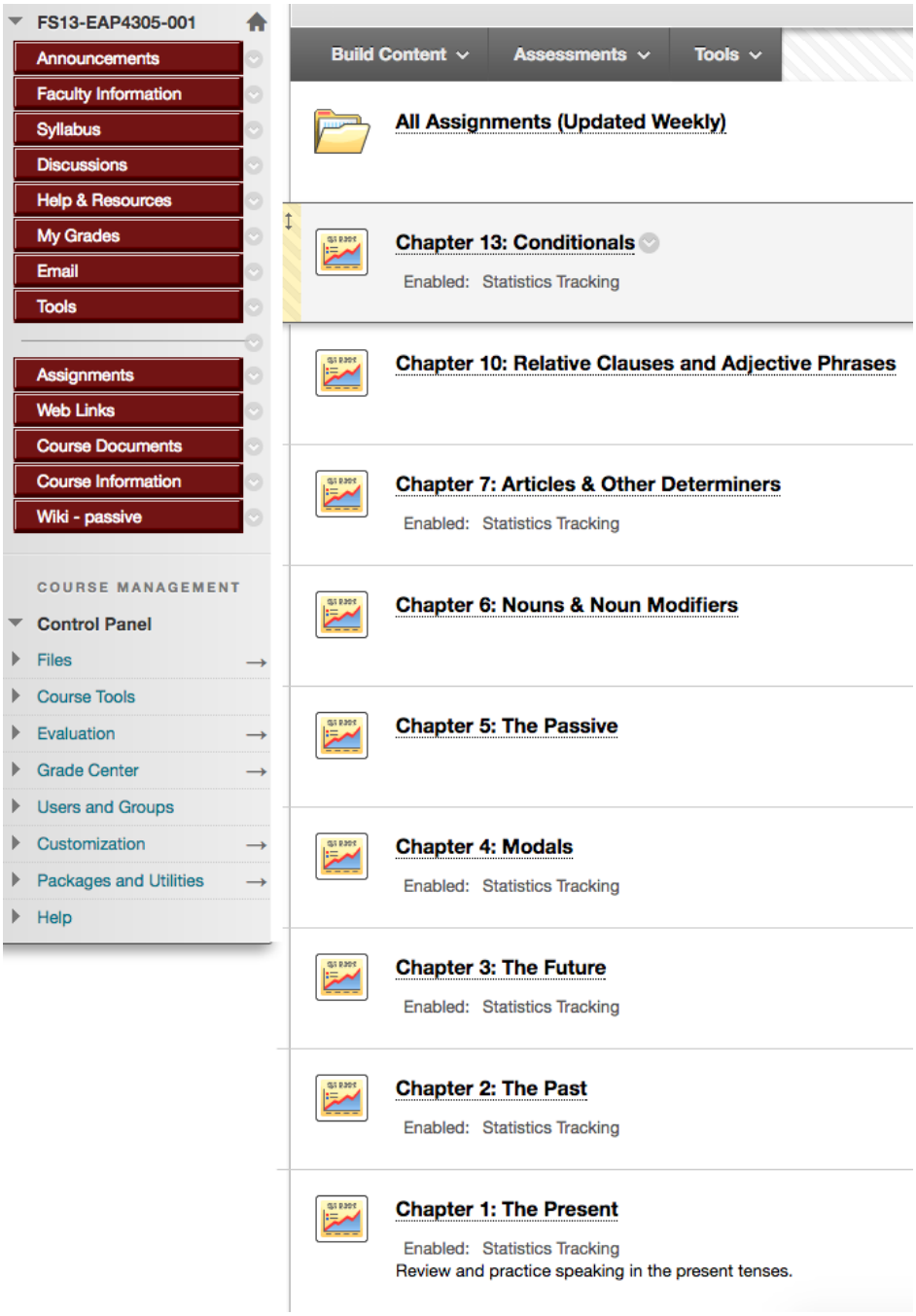
a. Participate in local and global learning communities to explore creative applications of technology to improve student learning

b. Exhibit leadership by demonstrating a vision of technology infusion, participating in shared decision making and community building, and developing the leadership and technology skills of others

c. Evaluate and reflect on current research and professional practice on a regular basis to make effective use of existing and emerging digital tools and resources in support of student learning

d. Contribute to the effectiveness, vitality, and self-renewal of the teaching profession and of their school and community

Appendix C: Blackboard design



Appendix D: Student information

Name	Country	Year of study	Degree seeking?	Grade	Academic trouble?
Kathy	Japan	Senior - first year in US	Yes, Business Admin	B+	
Susan	South Korea	Freshman - first year in US	No, 1 year exchange	A	
Joker	Oman	Junior - first year in US	Yes, Accounting	F	Early alert
Alistar	Saudi Arabia	Freshman - first year in US	Yes, MIS	C+	Early alert
Nate	Indonesia	Freshman - first year in US	Yes, Mechanical Engineering	B	
Vermouth	China	Freshman - third year in US*	Yes, Computer Science	C+	
Daniel	Spain	Freshman - first year in US	Yes, Business Admin	C-	
Kate	France	Freshman - first year in US	No, 1 year exchange	B-	
Ryan	France	Third-year	No, 1 semester exchange	B-	
Gordon	China	Freshman - first year in US	Yes, Business		dropped
***Vermouth was an exchange student in Minnesota for two years prior**					

Appendix E: Teacher consent form

Division of Educational Psychology, Research, and Evaluation

UM – St. Louis College of Education
One University Blvd.
St. Louis, Missouri 63121-4499
Telephone: 314-516-6818
Fax: 314-516-5784
E-mail: enochj@umsl.edu

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities
Learning language with technology in a hybrid university EAP course

Participant _____HSC Approval Number _____

Principal Investigator Jerol Enoch PI's Phone Number 314-560-xxxx

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1. Study: You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jerol Enoch under the supervision of Dr. Virginia Navarro. You are being asked to participate because you are teaching and facilitating a hybrid language course at a university. The purpose of this research is to find out more about student and teacher perceptions about teaching, activities, and assessments in hybrid language courses.

2. Role: You will participate normally in your language course as teacher and facilitator. There will be three sets of interviews conducted: pre-course, mid-course, and post-course. Each interview may take up to 30 - 45 minutes. The pre-course interview will include questions about you, your role in a hybrid language course, your journey as an educator, your attitude towards technology as a tool in language learning, your expectations about this hybrid course, and other follow up questions about teaching and learning a language in a hybrid classroom environment.

   The mid-course interview will ask questions about the progress of the students, the direction of the class, your impressions about the class to that point, and other follow up questions about teaching and learning a language in a hybrid classroom environment. I will ask you to help me identify possible students for more in-depth interviews.

   The post-course interview will ask questions about the progress of the students, the results of the class, your impressions about the class, and other follow up questions about teaching and learning a language in a hybrid classroom environment.

   You will keep a Running Journal of your experience in the course.

   With your permission, all interviews will be recorded. Your answers will be kept private and used only for the purposes of this study. In any report made public, we will not include direct information that will make it possible to identify you.

3. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation may increase your language learning and contribute to knowledge about hybrid language teaching and learning processes.

5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer.

6. By agreeing to participate, you understand and agree that your data may be shared with other researchers and educators in the form of presentations and/or publications. In all cases, your identity will not be revealed. In rare instances, a researcher's study must undergo an audit or program evaluation by an oversight agency (such as the Office for Human Research Protection). That agency would be required to maintain the confidentiality of your data. In addition, all data will be stored on a password-protected computer and/or in a locked office.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Jerol Enoch 314-516-xxxx or Virginia Navarro 314-516-xxxx. You may also ask questions or state concerns regarding your rights as a research participant to the Office of Research Administration, at 516-5897.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant's Signature	Date	Participant's Printed Name
Signature of Investigator or Designee	Date	Investigator/Designee Printed

Appendix F: Student consent form

A Division of Educational Psychology, Research, and Evaluation

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Fax: 314-516-5784
E-mail: enochj@umsl.edu

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities
Learning language with technology in a hybrid university EAP course

Participant _____HSC Approval Number _____

Principal Investigator Jerol Enoch PI's Phone Number 314-560-XXXX

---

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Jerol Enoch under the supervision of Dr. Virginia Navarro. The purpose of this research is to find out more about student and teacher perceptions about teaching, activities, and assessments in hybrid language courses. You are being asked to participate because you are enrolled in a hybrid language course at a university.

2. You will participate normally in your language course. Additionally, you will be asked to fill out three short surveys: one prior, one during, and one after the study unit. These surveys should take about 10 minutes of your time for a total of 30-40 minutes.

3. You are invited to participate in two interviews. One private interview and one group interview. The private and group interview should take about 30 – 45 minutes.

The hybrid class will not be altered or changed because of this study. You are enrolled in a regular hybrid course where research is being conducted. The researcher may ask you questions during class time. A few select students may be asked to participate in more in-depth interviews. In addition, the researcher will ask all participating students to stay an additional 15-20 minutes on the last class day for a focus group interview. There is no preparation necessary and participation is not mandatory.

This is a single class study. All students in this class are being asked to participate in the program so we can get a better understanding of student attitudes towards hybrid language learning classrooms.

4. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.

5. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation may increase your language learning and contribute to knowledge about hybrid language teaching and learning processes.

6. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

7. By agreeing to participate, you understand and agree that your data may be shared with other researchers and educators in the form of presentations and/or publications. In all cases, your identity will not be revealed. In rare instances, a researcher's study must undergo an audit or program evaluation by an oversight agency (such as the Office for Human Research Protection). That agency would be required to maintain the confidentiality of your data. In addition, all data will be stored on a password-protected computer and/or in a locked office.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Jerol Enoch 314-516-xxxx or Virginia Navarro 314-516-xxxx. You may also ask questions or state concerns regarding your rights as a research participant to the Office of Research Administration, at 516-5897.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

Participant's Signature	Date	Participant's Printed Name
Signature of Investigator or Designee	Date	Investigator/Designee Printed Name

Appendix G: Initial interview protocol - teacher

Life history

1) How long have you been teaching? Where?
2) How did you decide you wanted to become a teacher?
3) How did you start teaching English?
4) Can you describe some of your experiences teaching English both overseas and at home?
5) What have your experiences been like here at this campus?
6) How would you describe yourself as a teacher?
7) What are your thoughts and impressions of "hybrid" classrooms?
8) How much experience have you had with them?
9) This is the first time that a hybrid course is being offered in EAP on this campus.
    a. How did you become a part of this study?
    b. 5 being the highest On a scale of 1 – 5, how would you describe yourself technologically?
    c. How are you preparing yourself for this new course?
    d. What teaching tools are you bringing with you?
10) What is your philosophy of teaching and how do you think you have to adapt that to a hybrid format?
11) If you had to guess, what do you think will happen this semester?

Appendix H: Second interview protocol - teacher

Mid way – reflections on the journey so far

1) How do you think things are going?
2) Talk about the affordances and constraints of using technology
3) Talk about student feedback – what is your impression of their feelings about this class? Feeling about hybrid format?
4) Do you feel that you got student buy in?
5) Talk about the flow of the hybrid with the online portion
6) How is this different from preparing for a face-to-face class?
7) What changes/adaptations have you had to make?
    a. What worked/didn't work
8) Anything you would have done differently?
9) What kinds of exercises have worked/not worked?
10) Any student resistance?

Appendix I: Final interview protocol - teacher

Final interview – post – with teacher

1) So, looking back, what were the strengths and weaknesses of what you designed?
2) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the hybrid format in general?
3) What worked and you would like to strengthen?
4) What didn't work, but you would like to figure out how to improve?
5) What didn't work and you would leave out?
6) What are you surprised didn't work as well as you would have though?
7) What do you think the students came away with the whole thing?

Looking back in two ways - considering change over time - from beginning to end of the course

Your own reflection on your personal experience

Your understanding of the students' experience

Terms to consider

Content delivery

Knowledge expression activities

assessment in general

assessment via technology

Constructivism

Addressing real world issues

Reflection

digital resources

active participation

diverse learning styles/preferences

fluency in technology

effective use of technology in general

effective use of technology to promote communication

effective use of technology to promote collaboration

Voiceboard vs voicethread

2) Compared to face to face class
time

textbook

online materials

social

content delivery

processing content

demonstration of content

assessment

3) Reactions to student surveys

ViewI really liked this class! It does match my learning style, Indeed, I like to have some autonomy in my work and I had it with this class! Moreover, I usually don't really like to spend a lot of time on my chair listening to the teacher. I prefer to learn by my own and understand by my own and then ask my questions to the teacher if there are some specific points that I don't understand perfectly. With this kind of class, I can also plan to work when I want to and i really appreciate that!

ViewIt's ok but I won't take another on unless I need to.

ViewIt was really good. I really enjoyed experiencing hybrid courses. I love the different activities that we had especially making videos. All of the activities were really usefull. I personally think it is good to experience hybrid couse. However, I still prefer face-to-face because I can ask the teacher straight away if I don't understand about something. I don't really like communicate by emails. I think I can learn the materials better If I have face-to-face class.

Viewit was ok, but it doesn't match my learning style. strengths were that it gave us opportunities to mingle with the class members and helped me personally in my communication skills. there were too many homework. the class part was great but the online wasn't

ViewIt was different! I have never fllowed a hybrid class before this one. I like face to face contact, so if I have the choice I prefer take course in class. But I don't regret taking this class. There are some advantages: more independence, more time, more responsability. And the teacher was really available to answer by e-mail if we had questions.

ViewI think the hybrid class has more advantages than other classes. I really liked this class and it helped me a lot with my english. I could learn more effectively because I didn't have to spend my time studying something that I already knew. I could spend more time studying the parts that I didn't know about. However, at first, I really wanted to drop this class because it was too confusing. I really couldn't understand how I could do my homework and everything. Because of that, I missed about one or two assignments and I was very frustrated. But I got used to it and this class was very helpful to me.

ViewI definitely liked this class, and I can say this class is the best in this semester of mine. Professors are very nice, and I learned a lot in this class. (Not only grammar but also how to take an online class, make PDF files, audio and videos.) Before I took this class, I was really nervous because I'm not good at computer technology. However, teachers and friends helped me.

If you could design the perfect course, what would it look like? What format would it use? Are there elements of the hybrid format that would be included?

Appendix J: Think Aloud protocol - students

Demographic Information

1) Name
2) Country
3) What year
4) Course load
5) How many EAP courses and how many regular
6) degree
7) type of student (degree seeking or exchange)

Think alouds

In this section, for the purposes of this study and to better understand what you think, please talk out loud about what you are doing and why. Answer questions like:
How well do I know how to do this? How often do I use this? Have I ever had problems with this?
How did I learn how to do this? If I am had problems, how did I solve them?
How important was this for me as a student?

I may ask you questions while you work, but this is a chance for you to explain how you work with these online tools. Remember to talk out loud about what you are doing and past experience with it.

Open a browser and go to MyGatweway. Please open the announcements. Please open the syllabus. Please open the discussion board. Please look at some teacher feedback. Please open the last learning module. Please open your grades.

1) How much time does this class take for you?
2) How much time do your other classes require to do homework?
3) What class has the most homework?
4) Did you know this class was a hybrid class?
5) Is this your first hybrid class?
6) What did you know about hybrid classes before you started?
7) What do you think about it now?
8) better?
9) Have you had to change as a student because of the hybrid format? How?
10) What has been the biggest challenge?
11) Do you feel supported when you have problems?
12) Will you take another hybrid class? In any subject?

Appendix K: Pre- survey protocol – students

Q1 Year of study
- ❍ Freshman
- ❍ Sophomore
- ❍ Junior
- ❍ Senior
- ❍ Graduate

Q2 Student Status
- ❍ Part-time
- ❍ Full-time

Q3 Number of courses taken this semester - please enter the number of classes

EAP classes
Core subject classes
Electives

Q4 Where do you live?
- ❍ On campus - in dorms - single
- ❍ On campus - in dorms - with roommates from same culture
- ❍ On campus - in dorms - with roommates from other cultures
- ❍ Off campus - alone
- ❍ Off campus - with family
- ❍ Off campus - with friends
- ❍ Off campus - with roommates from other cultures

Q5 Work status
- ❍ I work full time and I take some classes on campus.
- ❍ I am a full time student. I do not have a job on or off campus.
- ❍ I am a full time student. I work part time on campus.
- ❍ I am a full time student. I work part time off campus.

Q6 Age
- ❍ 18 - 20
- ❍ 21- 23
- ❍ 24- 27
- ❍ 28 - 30
- ❍ 30+

Q7 Gender
- ❍ Male
- ❍ Female

Q8 What is your primary reason for choosing this hybrid course? Choose all that apply
- ❑ Convenience - not having to come to campus for Wednesday class
- ❑ Flexibility of being able to complete assignments anyplace/anytime
- ❑ It is a required course
- ❑ It was the only available option that fit into my schedule
- ❑ I chose the subject, not the method of instruction
- ❑ I have a disability that makes travel difficult
- ❑ I did not know that this was a hybrid class

Q9 Now that I know that this is a hybrid course, I feel/I am ... (choose all that apply)

- ❑ excited. I am ready to try something new
- ❑ more interested
- ❑ confused
- ❑ worried
- ❑ the same as I feel about other classes

Q10 Using technology to learn

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am comfortable using technology to learn - computers, iPads, iPhones, MyGateway	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q11 Using technology to learn English

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Integrating technology into the learning process will help me learn English better	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q12 Using technology to motivate

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Using technology to learn English motivates me. It makes we want to learn English better.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q13 Self-motivation

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am self-motivated. I am ready to spend time doing on-line activities to improve my English.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q14 Hybrid history

	Yes	No
Have you ever participated in a hybrid course?	❍	❍

Q15 Are you taking any other hybrid or on-line courses in any other subjects this semester?

- ❍ Yes - one or more other hybrid courses
- ❍ Yes - one or more other on-line courses
- ❍ No, this is my only hybrid or on-line course

Q16 Feelings about hybrid courses

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Hybrid courses can be an effective way to learn a language	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q17 Please write any thoughts or feelings about hybrid courses or learning a language in a hybrid course. This is a chance for us to learn what you think about hybrid courses before we begin the semester.

Appendix L: Mid- survey protocol – students

Q1 Using technology

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
So far, I have not had problems using technology to learn English	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I like using technology to complete assignments	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel comfortable using technology to do my coursework	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I ask for help when I have problems using technology	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q2 If you have had problems, what best describes the problems? Choose all that apply.

- ❑ I do not know how to log into MyGateway
- ❑ I know how to log into my MyGateway, but I find it confusing. I am not sure how to use it for my courses.
- ❑ I know how to log into MyGateway and I am OK with using it for my coursework, but I do not know where to find the assignments for this class.
- ❑ I know how to log into and use MyGateway for my courses. Sometimes, I have not been able to watch the videos, hear the videos, or record myself for assignments.
- ❑ I don't have the right equipment to record my voice.
- ❑ I need to upgrade my personal computer.
- ❑ I use the computer labs to do my work for this class.

Q3 Online learning

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think watching instructional videos and doing exercises on my own is an acceptable and valid way to learn English	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q4 Ready for class

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have watched the videos, done the quizzes, and been ready for class each day	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q5 Personal time

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have enough to time watch the videos, do the quizzes, and complete homework	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I need to learn how to manage my time	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I may be taking too many classes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I general, I have enough time to finish all of my coursework for all of my classes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Click to write Statement 5	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q6 In general, I complete the online assignments... (choose one)

❍ On Wednesday
❍ by Thursday
❍ by Friday
❍ by Saturday
❍ on Sunday
❍ On Monday morning

Q7 Teacher accessibility - I can talk to my teacher

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I think the teacher is accessible.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I contact the teacher when I have questions about homework.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I contact the teacher when the technology does not work.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I contact the teacher to talk about my grades.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I have never tried to contact the teacher.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q8 Comfort level with teacher

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel comfortable asking my teacher for help in class.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel comfortable asking my teacher for help out of class, by email or by phone.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q9 Feedback from teacher

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I receive feedback from the teacher in a timely manner (not more than a day or two).	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find the feedback useful and helpful.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I read the feedback and then make corrections.	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q10 Course book

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I never use the course book	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I use the course book for self-practice and help	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I read the course book to help me complete my homework	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q11 MyGateway

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I never use MyGateway	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I use MyGateway only for information	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I do all of my coursework using MyGateway	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I use MyGateway to complete coursework and stay in touch my teacher and classmates	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q12 Supplemental materials

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am aware that there are supplemental grammar materials and links on MyGateway, but I never use them	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am aware that there are supplemental grammar materials and links on MyGateway and I use them sometimes	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am aware that there are supplemental grammar materials and links on MyGateway and I use them a lot	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I am not aware that there are supplemental grammar materials and links on MyGateway	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q13 Hybrid courses

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I like hybrid courses, in general	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I like hybrid courses for certain subjects, but not English	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I do not like hybrid courses, in general	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would recommend hybrid EAP courses to my friends	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q14 In the next few weeks, I would like to schedule time to talk to you about using technology to learn English. Please think about your schedule and when you might have time. Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix M: Post- survey protocol – students

To the students of this class: Thank you for participating in this course and this study. Please give your most honest and thorough response to the questions below. Make sure you read the instructions for each question carefully. Have a great winter break. Happy Holidays.

Q1 Now that you have finished your first hybrid course, what are your thoughts and impressions of the hybrid format? For example, I loved it. I can't wait to take another one. OR It was OK, but it doesn't match my learning style OR I regret taking this course. Write as much as you can. At least one sentence. :) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the hybrid format?

Q2 In terms of your personal learning style, what adjectives would you use to tell your friends about a hybrid course? For example, fun, hard, easy, time consuming, flexible, engaging, frustrating, challenging, etc. Write at least three adjective. For me, this class was...

Q3 Expected grade in this course
- ❍ A
- ❍ B
- ❍ C
- ❍ D
- ❍ F

Q4 How was your class attendance and participation? Move the slider to the appropriate answer - 1 is never and 5 is always
_____ How often did you go to the face to face class?
_____ Did you actively participate in the face to face classes?

Q5 Hybrid portion - online. Move the slider to the appropriate answer - 1 is never and 5 is always
_____ I completed my online assignments on MyGateway
_____ I completed my homework
_____ I completed my online work on time
_____ I watched all of the videos and online tutorials
_____ I had a difficult time using MyGateway to complete online classwork

Q6 Hybrid courses. Move the slider to the appropriate answer. 1 is disagree - 3 is agree
_____ This course is too difficult for first semester students
_____ I understood the technology required for this course
_____ I was able to keep up the amount of material covered
_____ I was able to handle the homework load

II. General Evaluation of the Course

Q7 How clear were the course objectives and class assignments?
- ❍ Very clear. No need for help.
- ❍ If it was not clear, I asked the teacher to help and then I was OK
- ❍ I tried to figure it out on my own. I did my best.
- ❍ I was confused most of the time.

Q8 Did the online portion of the class get harder or easier as the semester went on?
- ❍ It was always hard
- ❍ I was only confused at the very beginning and then it was OK.
- ❍ I was OK with the online portion after the first month.
- ❍ I was OK with the online portion by the midterm.
- ❍ I just now understand.

Q9 Rate the amount of reading you were asked to do.
- ❍ Not much
- ❍ Appropriate
- ❍ A lot
- ❍ Too much

Q10 Rate the amount of videos watching you were asked to do.
- ❍ Not many
- ❍ Appropriate
- ❍ A lot
- ❍ Too many

Q11 Rate the amount of online tutorials you were asked to watch
- ❍ Not many
- ❍ Appropriate
- ❍ A lot
- ❍ Too many

Q12 When you had trouble with an assignment or a learning module, how did you find help?
- ❍ I emailed the teacher
- ❍ I waited until Monday to ask the teacher
- ❍ I asked a friend
- ❍ I used the online resources in MyGateway and sometimes the book
- ❍ I found videos or other tutorials online to help me

Q13 What overall rating would you give the hybrid course format?
- ❍ Very Bad
- ❍ Bad
- ❍ Poor
- ❍ Neither Good nor Bad
- ❍ Fair
- ❍ Good
- ❍ Very Good

III. General Evaluation of the Instruction

Q14 I prefer to get my instruction from...Think of this as a percentage. What percentage lecture do you expect/want from a course? 10% - 50% - 100%? Put numbers in the box that add up to 100. All of the answers should add up to 100.

_____ In class lecture
_____ In class question and answers
_____ In class discussion
_____ Online tutorials
_____ Online discussion boards
_____ Virtual classroom discussions
_____ Online chat

Q15 The online materials

_____ The learning modules were easy to find and use
_____ The learning modules had a nice variety of educational activities
_____ The learning modules were well-constructed and engaging
_____ The learning modules had a familiar pattern that was easy to follow

Q16 Did this course help you become a better student?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ Possibly
- ❍ No

Q17 In the future, it would be more helpful if the course included...

Appendix N: Focus Group Protocol – students

A) Three things
1) How the information/grammar was presented to you? - content delivery
2) What kinds of activities were used to help you understand and work with the information/grammar? - knowledge expression activities
3) How were you tested on your new knowledge? - assessment

Not good or bad - just a list
1) First, on your own paper, based on what you remember, make a list of ways that the grammar was presented to you
2) Next, on your own paper, based on what you remember, make a list of activities that were used
3) Last, on your own paper, based on what you remember, make a list of the ways you were tested on the information

Now as a class, talk about which ones worked for you and which ones didn't

B) From the same list that you just created.
1) Either in class or online, can you think of an example or examples where:
a) you were asked to be creative and use your own ideas?
b) you were asked to use real issues or problems from your own life?
c) you were asked to reflect on your own life experiences?
d) you were asked to work together to create a product?
2) Which of these was the most effective way to communicate your ideas with others?
3) Which of these was the most effective way to learn the subject material?
4) Did using technology help you learn the subject material better?

C) Social
1) Was this class more or less interactive than your other classes?
2) Were you asked to work together more or less than other classes?
3) In general, how does working together help you learn or prevent you from learning?
4) Does working together on projects help you learn more?

D) Technology
1) Are you better at using technological tools as a result of this class? Which ones and how are you better at using them now? What do you <u>know</u> now that you didn't know before? What do you <u>use</u> now that you didn't use before?
2) Are you better able to process the information using technology? Same as regular class?

Appendix O: White board notes from Focus Group interview