

Ethnographic Media Literacy in the Third Space

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Abstract

As Poveda, Thomson and Ferro (2018) observe, there is a momentum in ethnographic explorations of the arts in education in which *“an increasing number of researchers have turned their attention to expressive practices and artistic spaces as contexts and tools for learning, identity construction and social mobilization (p. 269).”* However, the distinction between ethnography of education and education by ethnography – i.e. an ethnographic pedagogy - is at least partly maintained within this momentum.

This research attempted an ethnographic approach to pedagogy, utilising digital media literacy for creative production, to facilitate new ways for students to critically engage with their own lived experiences in relation to their participation in formal ‘schooled’ learning. The pedagogic value of this type of ethnographic approach was assessed over two years of participatory fieldwork with three secondary schools and one further education college in the West Midlands of the United Kingdom, working with teachers in multiple curricular areas using ‘low-tech’ media literacy work with students. Our findings suggest that while there are clear benefits presented by this (digital) ethnographic pedagogy, for it to work in media literacy education there is a need for the creation of critical, dynamic ‘third spaces’ (Bhabha, 1994) for students to work in. The creation of these spaces is highly contingent on the respective classification and framing (Bernstein, 1975) of the subject curriculum.

This research developed out of a series of ethnographic interventions into digital media education, including a European Union funded project on ethnographic social documentary as a transferable pedagogic tool (McDougall, 2013) and a large scale field review of third space media literacies (Potter and McDougall, 2017, see also McDougall et al, 2018). To apply this conceptual framing to a specific pedagogic context over a longer time period, the research aimed to address the following research questions:

1. What pedagogical value is afforded by the use of ethnographic digital media making as a tool for creative production and critically reflexive media literacy?
2. How can ethnographic pedagogy, in the form of creative digital media production, enhance participation in classroom learning?
3. What is the potential for ‘low-tech’ creative production to transgress boundaries between curriculum areas and modes of literacy, learning and teaching?
4. How can ethnographic digital media making give ‘voice’ to learners and how is ‘voice’ socio-culturally framed within pedagogic and research discourses?

Keywords: Ethnography, Media Literacy, Pedagogy, Video, Third Space

Introduction

This research was structured as a multi-sited enquiry, involving working closely on media literacy pedagogy with teachers from different subject areas. A digital ethnographic approach to pedagogy was taken while making use of digital media literacy contexts for creative production. Our conceptual framework puts ethnography and pedagogy in dialogue with curricular classification (Bernstein, 1971) and the idea of the 'third space' as a rich configuration for learning and teaching (Bhabha, 1994), extending our previous work in this intersection (Potter and McDougall, 2017, McDougall et al, 2018).

Ethnographies of 'third spaces' can provide a way to conceptualise classroom learning that is grounded in anthropological theories of thinking and learning and as a result, shift the learning theories underlying classroom instruction (Bloome 2012: 23-24). They permit analysis across multiple levels of activity and can also help make visible the overlapping, interwoven, and hybrid nature of social phenomena (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez and Tejada 1999: 287). Hybridity theory recognizes the complexity of examining the everyday spaces and literacies of people (Bhabha, 1994; Soja, 1996, cited in Moje et al. 2004: 42). Hybridity in learning contexts is ubiquitous, but a focus on the hybrid nature of activity systems and practices will make visible developmental spaces that may have been previously overlooked (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Lopez and Tejada 1999: 287).

We think about pedagogy as a mode of seeing learning, as ethnography is reflexive on the paradox that *"to claim that there are multiple realities is itself to claim that one knows something about the multiplex character of reality"* (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 236). Therefore, we think pedagogy can be reflexive about epistemology, the multiplex character of knowledge and the paradoxical nature of pedagogy itself (Ranciere, 1991). Beyond using ethnography to make sense of the classroom, can we use ethnography combined with media literacy to produce schooled knowledge, as opposed to research knowledge about social practices in school? Our previous work provided evidence that creative, digital media literacy production can potentially generate such a 'turn'.

This project was designed as a multi-sited comparative study in order to provide a cross-contextual basis of potential pedagogic value across settings and subjects. This also allowed time for reflection and recalibration of the project throughout its lifespan (Westman, 2017: 17). At each of the four field-sites, we attempted an ethnographic shift within set curricular contexts using digital media literacy. The ethnographic shift in each case involved combining video production with an emphasis on critical student reflection and reflexivity during the production process. This ethnographic shift was multi-layered in that the researcher was a participant-observer in the research process, working with teachers and students (who also served as researchers of their own practices and environments) to implement the pedagogic approach (Westman, 2017: 178). The research was grounded in both critical ethnographic and critical pedagogic traditions in that it sought to address the material consequences of research on the participants' lives while confronting the challenge of engaging students to turn a critical gaze towards the pedagogy of the teacher and their lived experience (Lu and Horner 1998: 275, cited in Westman, 2017: 12). There was also an interest in trying to maintain a 'low-tech' approach- in order to increase transferable application in and potential impact on a range of settings and institutions

There are three areas of new knowledge from this research, of interest to ethnography and to media literacy pedagogy:

1. Investigation and testing: Identification and targeting of potential areas for ethnographic media literacy intervention in different curriculum contexts, highlighting issues that prevented sustained engagement by participants.
2. Developing a new methodology: the implementation of a low-tech pedagogic approach informed by ethnographic principles in a third space to enhance critical, reflexive and dynamic media literacy.
3. Comparative framework: Facilitating an ethnographic media literacy shift within a set curricular context to provide a basis for comparison.

Materials and Methods, Places and Spaces

Ethnography can be considered as not just a set of methods, but also a specific mode of looking, listening, and thinking about social phenomena; a distinctive analytic mentality (Hammersley, 2006). It does not claim to produce an objective or truthful account of reality as it is a process of creating and representing knowledge based on the ethnographer's own experiences. Rather, it aims to offer versions of these experiences that are grounded in the context, negotiations and inter-subjectivities through which this knowledge was produced (Pink, 2007). Ethnography takes a holistic approach to the subject of study in that the ethnographer looks at the whole social setting and all social relationships (Fetterman 2009: 19) in order to produce what Geertz (1973) calls 'thick descriptions'. These are descriptions that are layered, rich, and contextual and provide an interpretive-explanatory account of what people do in a setting, the outcome of their interactions, and the way they understand what they are doing (the meaning interactions have for them). Because ethnographic observations attempt to take an informed hologetic perspective on behaviour in settings and because the ethnographer seeks to achieve an emic understanding of interactions, ethnographic techniques can be used to provide helpful feedback to teachers about what is going on in the classroom, including interactions that are outside their normal field of view or their own behaviours that are outside the teacher's conscious awareness (Watson-Gegeo 1988: 587-88). A challenge is that, much like many other methodological terms used by social scientists, ethnography does not form part of a clear and systematic taxonomy. Consequently, it is often used in different ways and in different occasions to mark off work of one kind from that of another. Hammersley (2006) argues that ethnography must also be "conscious of value and goals (p.3)."

'Digital ethnography' has frequently been taken to describe the process of doing ethnographic research in digital environments. However, it differs from 'virtual' or 'cyber' ethnography, which can entail a wide variety of activities, including research on particular platforms, communities, fandom groups or virtual worlds. Digital ethnography is ethnography that is mediated by digital technologies. This definition also encompasses visual ethnography, but it is broader in scope since it can involve the use of digitally mediated field notes and participant involvement through tools such as blogs and wikis (Murthy 2008: 159). Pink (2007:1) observes that:

Photography, video, and hypermedia are increasingly becoming incorporated into the work of ethnographers-as cultural texts, as representations of ethnographic knowledge, and as sites of cultural production, social interaction, and individual experience that themselves constitute ethnographic fieldwork locales.

Constructing a digital ethnography *pedagogy* therefore entails clarifying what makes it 'ethnographic' and how an ethnographic approach addresses some of the given pedagogic

goals. Utilizing digital ethnography, both as a research method and as a pedagogic approach, involves connecting multiple other methodologies and disciplinary practices. As Pink (2006: 99) observes, an ethnographer with a video camera is a person with a video camera, the camera becomes part of her user identity and an aspect of the way they communicate with others. This relationship with research participants during this project was redefined and renegotiated as it moved across different settings. Throughout, the researcher was constantly reminded of how both the camera itself, and the subsequent video footage, also help to structure these relationships. The distinction between insider and outsider in research encounters is, in practice, often complex and shifting, which serves to highlight the necessity of recognizing the full axis of researcher experience and engaging with this experience in a reflexive manner (Street 2012: 40).

Access to the field sites was first obtained through the informed consent of individual subject teachers, not the school administrators or students, so the researcher's connections to other stakeholders were mediated through these teacher relationships and informed by their respective goals and motivations for wishing to take part (Westman, 2017). The researcher's background as an American citizen without prior experience attending or working in UK secondary and further education constituted a methodological problem in its own right. These were established classroom settings where the participants had greater experience of their interactional encounters (Ball 1980: 143-4). This exemplified how, frequently, an ethnographer will work in a situation in which his or her host population has greater immediate control of the research setting than the ethnographer. The success of the ethnographer's research enterprise is often more dependent on the goodwill and cooperation of research participants than is usually the case for those who persist in following a more positivist research paradigm. Because of such circumstances, the ethnographer often finds him or herself having to "go with the flow" of the socio-cultural contexts and processes of these research settings. Thus, ethnographers have to be highly flexible in their approach.

The four fieldwork sites for this project were chosen in order to offer contrasting curricular contexts. Bernstein's (1971, 1975) concepts of classification and framing helped to refine the selection of field sites throughout the project (Westman 2017, p.17-18). Classification and framing were useful concepts in both structuring and refining these selections, as well as explicating what occurred (Westman 2017, p.21-22). Any pedagogic practice at the school level is the activation of a pedagogic code which is the institutionalisation of the school's elaborated orientation through specific values of classification and framing (Bernstein 2000: 99). These operations translate power and control relations between the categories into subjects, discourses, and spaces. In this way, underlying pedagogic practice is a theory or theories of instruction (Morais 2005: 60). Classification is concerned with the organization of knowledge into the curriculum while framing is related to the transmission of knowledge through pedagogic practices. It refers to the degree of boundary maintenance between contents (Bernstein 2003, p.80). A strong subject classification refers to a curriculum that is highly differentiated and separated into traditional subjects. A weak classification refers to a curriculum that is integrated and in which the boundaries between subjects are fragile (Sadovnik 2001: 610).

Framing refers to the location of control over the rules of communication. While classification regulates the voice of a category, framing regulates the form of its legitimate message (Bernstein 1990: 100). Bernstein (2000) argued that the differences between types of educational transmission in terms of classification and framing rules related to the social class position and assumptions of students and their families. Framing is about the internal logic of pedagogic practice and regulates relations within a context (Bernstein 2000: 12). Framing refers

to the degree of control teachers, and students possess with respect to the selection, organization, pacing, and timing of the knowledge that is transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship (Figure 1). Strong framing suggests limiting options between teachers and students while weak framing implies more freedom (Bernstein 2003: 88). Strong framing also implies more visible control mechanisms and more formal control of learning.

The selection of sites followed an iterative design, with the classroom setting with the weakest classification and framing (ESOL) chosen for the pilot. One of the strengths of an ethnographic approach was that it produced thick descriptions that helped to better illuminate the “conditions of possibility” for the effectiveness of a media literacy ethnography pedagogy at the sites. It also highlighted the issues that prevented participant engagement during the project, including, for example, strong or weak subject classification and framing.

Site A was a Language Centre at a Further Education College, where a pilot study was conducted, working with two groups of students learning English as a second language (ESOL), one group aged 16-18 and the second group 18-52. As observed prior to the start of the project, a typical class period at the college usually involved the students working on a range of vocabulary and grammar exercises, supported by the use of a dictionary and occasional printed worksheets. According to the college's OFSTED report (2015): ‘Nearly two-thirds of learners are from disadvantaged areas. Approximately 56% of learners have a minority ethnic heritage. The proportion of female learners aged 16 to 18 is 46% and of adults is 52% (Ofsted, 2015).’ Each week of the pilot was centered around a particular theme chosen by the researcher in consultation with the two course teachers (eg “Being a Student”, “Britishness”). The class periods were led by the researcher and consisted of a brief initial discussion about the theme, followed by students breaking out into small groups in order to create their videos, followed by a screening and discussion period to close. Rather than attempting to use video editing software (as there were not computer labs available), students filmed multiple versions and then selected which ones they wanted to screen to the rest of the class. There was no formal curriculum structure or learning materials to incorporate, as the primary goal of the teachers here was greater student participation and engagement. All class sessions were filmed and audio-recorded and observations and questions discussed with the teachers prior to the following week's class period. Although time constraints served to encourage some students to be more creative and spontaneous (e.g. using school staff to role-play daily interactions), it was also stressful for others and as a result this intervention offered fewer opportunities for them to engage in critical reflection (Chowdhury, Hambly Odame, and Hauser 2010). Media literacy, in the form of video production, served as a productive trigger for discussion and class exploration, particularly regarding some topics (e.g. citizenship) not usually covered in the ESOL curriculum. However, it also highlighted the need to clearly explicate the purpose of the activity to students and to connect it to their perceived learning goals and needs (Westman 2017, p.172). Other key areas which emerged were trying to provide more opportunities for students to potentially shape and control their video projects through storyboarding and greater teacher participation in order to avoid the status of a ‘stand-alone’ activity.

Site B was an 11-18 comprehensive secondary school specializing in Sport, Maths and Computing. The project was conducted with one class of Year 12 (aged 16-17) Media students focusing on TV Drama. The students were predicted to receive mid-range grades by the school

based on their previous exam performance and other metrics. For the school as a whole, the 2012 OFSTED report states: 'The large majority of students are of White British heritage and most speak English as their first language. A third of all students are from a wide range of minority ethnic groups and an above-average proportion of students speak English as an additional language.' The students had no previous filmmaking experience at the school. The teacher was starting his own research looking at the impact of digital media on teaching and learning and hoped to use this project as a resource. Filmmaking, storyboarding, and remixing of existing videos in order to create alternative interpretations were built into the existing course scheme of work during preliminary meetings with the teacher. Unlike the pilot study at the FE college, the teacher chose to run the class sessions with the researcher assisting groups during their filming. Students expressed an interest in using their smartphones to film and Windows Movie Maker to edit their videos, which meant a shifting of focus to other aspects of the project that might facilitate access and engagement (Westman 2017, p. 79). The class sessions consisted of students discussing topics such as TV genres and stereotypes, and then producing group videos addressing a given learning objective. Production time was tightly regimented, so students often spent less class time storyboarding in favour of more dynamic and emergent decision-making while filming.

Site C was another 11-18 secondary school, but operating under the English Academy system and designated specialist status for sport. The participants were one class of Year 12 Media students focusing on TV drama. The 2013 OFSTED report for this school states: "Average-sized community academy. Most students are White British. The number of students from an ethnic minority background is small and few speak English as an additional language (Ofsted 2013)." This school had previously participated in the aforementioned European Union project (McDougall 2013). It was agreed that students would produce videos about the school and that the researcher would visit before and after the project for screening sessions and follow-up interviews. As the project occurred during the last few weeks before summer break, the students would complete the videos in the Autumn. They therefore discussed their filming and editing decisions and future plans for revisions with the researcher through video elicitation of their drafts. The two teachers said they would normally follow a schedule of pre-production, production, and post-production, but given the timing of the project, they would instead do some brief preliminary storyboarding and mind mapping, and then proceed directly into production (Westman 2017, p. 39). Both teachers wished to facilitate more opportunities for students to present their work to different audiences, as well as trying to understand whether additional technical training could provide a greater sense of student agency.

Site D was an 11-18 Academy and a specialist Sports College where the participants were a group of Year 13 (age 17-19) English Literature students working on *Alice in Wonderland* and a Year 12 student working on *Wuthering Heights*. The 2013 Ofsted report stated that it is an: 'Average-sized community academy. Most students are White British. The number of students from an ethnic minority background is small and few speak English as an additional language.' Like the second site, the teachers involved here wanted to use this research to develop their own teaching and also wanted to include test elements as they had noted that previous students had struggled with writing, despite showing creativity in their film work. They observed that students often struggled to complete critically reflective tasks since they did not see them as relevant to their final marks (Westman 2017: 88). He was introduced via e-mail as a potential student resource:

We have an associate who will be visiting who will be doing some work with documentaries with you named Peter Westman. He has very kindly offered to help you to create, edit and perfect a documentary based on Alice in Wonderland, which you might then go on to submit as your creative coursework piece. Obviously, you will still have to do the work on this, but he will be able to steer you in directions which can guarantee success at this piece (Westman 2017:153).

The researcher then worked individually with three students who had responded to the email developing and refining their proposals on the two literature texts. This work extended across several weeks as students worked largely independently with periodic teacher feedback. The students were asked to explain and discuss their creative choices to help prepare their written commentaries. All the students had previous media experience in schools, although there was a range of production abilities. The topics and issues that emerged from student discussions were also shared with teachers and incorporated into their future lesson plans.

At site A, the location for the pilot study, the relationship of video production to the ESOL curriculum and to instruction in the further education context was a strong classification. When classification is strong, subject contents are well insulated from each other, while when the classification is weak, there is reduced insulation, and the boundaries will be blurred (Bernstein 1971: 49). A strong classification in this project meant that there was usually little to no use of video production as part of the subject curriculum normally.

The field sites were also evaluated in terms of agent classification, which describes how the pedagogic identities of the researcher and research participants were demarcated (Hoadley 2006). There was a weak agent classification at Site A since the researcher conducted the sessions as the de- facto “teacher” (Westman 2017: 22). Finally, the materials used for the courses were also analysed, with courses that used a range of texts and sources having a weak classification. The next two field sites (B and C) chosen were both Media Studies classes, which had weaker subject classification, but stronger framing than site A. The principal difference between these sites was that students at Site B did not have previous filmmaking experience in school unlike Site C. Both of these interventions were also embedded within existing schemes of work, with the researcher either present on a weekly basis (Site B) or more intermittently (Site C). The final field site, Site D, was a group of English students since English is a subject with a more mixed subject classification and the framing present at the school was neither overly strong nor weak (See Table I).

Site	Materials	Built Environment	Subject	Agents
A	Weak classification Medium framing	Strong classification	Strong classification Weak framing	Weak classification Weak framing
B	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification	Weak-Medium classification Strong framing	Strong classification Strong framing
C	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification (Weak in some previous projects)	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification Strong framing

D	Medium classification (source text plus multimodal chosen by students) Medium framing	Medium classification	Medium classification Medium framing	Medium classification Medium framing
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Table 1: Field Site Classification and Framing

Since the researcher was the primary facilitator of class sessions at Site A, the researcher was able to relinquish more control over the pacing and sequencing of lessons to students, while at Site D, the researcher was a less strongly classified agent because although he was seen to have more expertise in video production than the teachers, they still continued to supervise and control the students' work for assessment. This meant that the researcher supported students during what would have normally been independent working time. At Site B, there was a stronger classification and framing due to the teacher's concern about meeting curricular goals in light of his extended absence from the school due to illness (Westman 2017: 145). Built environment classification was also mapped to identify where student filmmaking occurred. For the first three field-sites, this happened during class-time, so a strong classification. At site D, the students spent significant time at home or at school outside of normal class hours, therefore it was weaker classification.

Ethnographic studies can be confronted by the problem of seeing everything as data, with the result being a large quantity of disconnected data (Charmaz and Mitchell 2001: 61-62). Data collected is not lost when it is being analysed, but rather an order is imposed on it. The result is more concise collections which can permit the ethnographer to discover patterns and themes in the data and to link these with other patterns and themes (cited in LeCompte and Schensul 1999: 3). Marcus (1995) states that multi-sited research will involve chains, threads, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer will establish a form of physical presence along with making an explicit connection between sites (p.105, cited in Westman 2017: 69-70). The nature of fieldwork is that the ethnographic information from the various research sites will read like a messy text with different interpretations of the data evolving and co-existing together (Manias and Street 2001: 238-40). Documentation serves as an important tool to retrace and explicate the development of the research design, emerging themes, and the systemic collection of data (Hammersley & Atkinson 2007: 152). The data generated at the different fieldsites was not only a record of this project, but also of the researcher's own feelings and involvement at each field site (Coffey 1999). For each of the school sessions, field notes were first drafted on paper, and then later entered them into Google Drive alongside additional comments which had emerged through later reflection. Audio recordings were also used to highlight potential themes to develop and verify classroom conversations.

Video data will inevitably be shaped by decisions made by the researcher in the field such as the type of video shot or positioning of the camera. At site A, the classes were filmed using a laptop webcam as the researcher was leading the sessions. This also made what was being filmed immediately visible to all the participants. Conversely, at site B, the smaller dimensions of the classroom and subsequent discomfort of the students in having the researcher shifting about filming in narrow aisles led to classroom filming being discontinued (Westman 2017:33). A common issue presented by the use of video is that there will often be a tremendous amount of rich data, which, as a result, may lead to an overly descriptive and therefore weak analysis. While one of the benefits of video is that it provides the ability to replay a sequence of interaction (Jordan and Henderson 1995: 39), even short clips can require a substantial amount

of time to review. Coding, labelling and categorizing segments of data is essential to make analytic sense of stories, statements, and observations. It is a pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to try and explain the data (Charmaz 2014: 111). Our approach was to highlight topics or issues that repeatedly appeared at one site or across multiple ones. After highlighting these topics and issues, the researcher then explored them through respondent validation and triangulation exercises, such as during this exchange (Westman 2017):

Researcher: If you were doing this again with another class, what would be helpful, what kind of support would you like to have?

Student 1: *If you were going to do it with a different class, make sure they don't go off-topic and that they have an actual clear brief before they go out and do something. When you get the camera, and you go off, sometimes you forget about what you've done in class and just do what's on top of your head*

Student 2: *It took a bit of work. It just depends on what you are asked to do because sometimes it can be really easy, you can do it straight away and other times you can keep trying to find it, and you can't get it right*

Researcher: What about storyboarding? I know some of you did that. Was that useful or more time consuming?

Student 3: *It was better when we came back and used the actual pictures to make the storyboard that we took. That was useful. Storyboards don't really go along with, you know, you never really have just one shot. Planning, camera editing, why that didn't work etc.*

Discussion and Findings

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The outcomes of this research demonstrated that the potential value of a digital ethnographic media literacy pedagogy is closely linked to the creation of third spaces. Furthermore the process and possibility of creating Third Spaces was shaped by the respective classification and framing of each field-site (Westman 2017: 179). While the first spaces of the participants were not accessible to the researcher, at the same time the researcher was not able fully participate in the second spaces of the school. As has been shown here, this fluid and hybrid researcher identity presented both opportunities and challenges, particularly in the context of developing relationships with the participants.

Bhabha (1994) and Moje et al. (2004) proposed that the construction of educational third spaces involve the merger of aspects of the 'first' space of students' everyday lived experience with the 'second' space of the academic discourses students encounter in school (p.41). School systems and processes can serve to 'crowd out' skills and dispositions which are evident in learners' experiences outside of school (Potter and McDougall 2017:59). Third spaces are a product of negotiation, which serve to shift power balances in classrooms as students and teachers become co-learners and co-teachers (Benson 2010:562). Developing and engaging with participants in these third spaces was a key strategy for addressing the constraints presented by this project as well as a conceptual lens. Routledge (1996:413-414) describes the third space "...as a place of the third voice; an amalgam of subject positions, of voices of expert and inexpert blended together so that it cannot necessarily be distinguished which voice dominates." Addressing the unique characteristics of this project highlighted the importance of researching in the Third Space: a differentiated space that allowed for the emergence of unique subjectivities in contrast to abstract and pre-established notions of student, teacher, and researcher (Frelin and Grannis 2014: 60).

The process of media production was a location where both material and conceptual elements coalesced as a result of the students negotiating the deployment of technologies, materials and concepts. This required them to work, rework, and rearrange the digital materials in order to communicate in the manner they intended. These production processes also involved ongoing negotiations with conceptual elements by students, teachers, and the researcher. Some of these elements were mobilized through elements grounded in broadly understood media literacy knowledge and practices, while others emerged in a more spontaneous fashion (Dezuanni 2015:23).

Classification and framing again are useful theoretical concepts for comparing educational systems, especially in multi-sited studies such as this one. Of the four field sites from the research, Third Spaces emerged at two (A and D). One of the most significant factors in facilitating their creation was the interplay of classification and framing at each site. Furthermore, these two Third Spaces were not identical in nature. One of the primary reasons for the absence of Third Spaces at sites B and C was the strong curricular framing and strong agent classification (see Table II). These elements precluded both building upon emergent learning outcomes and "in-between" spaces and limited opportunities for critical reflection and discussion. This was also due to concerns around performance management, which, as

Thomson and Gunter (2011) observe, with its panoply of targets, tests, data, and outcomes is based on an ontology/epistemology of security, certainty, and safety.

Site	Materials	Built Environment	Media Literacy	Agents	Third Space
A	Weak classification Medium framing	Strong classification	Strong classification Weak framing	Weak classification	Yes
B	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification	Weak-Medium classification Strong framing	Strong classification	No
C	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification (Weak in some previous projects)	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification	No
D	Medium classification (source text plus multimodal chosen by students) Medium framing	Medium classification	Medium classification Medium framing	Medium classification	Yes

Table II: Creation of Third Spaces at Field Sites

By strong agent classification, this meant that the researcher was less uninvolved with the media production work by the student. His invitation into sites B and C as a “safe outsider” is consistent with this (p.27) in that the researcher developed and used tools to collect data, then disseminated the findings to some extent before departing. In contrast, having a weaker agent classification, in assuming more of the role of the teacher, permitted the creation of a participative connection at A and D (Westman 2017: 181). This participative connection is an essential component for external researchers to develop and to utilize in order to negotiate diverging meanings and perspectives with their research participants (Wenger 1998, p.114). It permits the opportunity to work more closely with them to try and trace and analyze the choices they made as they negotiated their respective texts (Bennett, Kendall, and McDougall 2011: 232). Cultural hybridity allowed for a fluidity of identities and positionality as researcher, teacher, and learner, and afforded the agency to perform the margins (Mehta 2009, p.307).

The third space at Site A helped students to connect their personal knowledge that was often marginalized when encountering formal English language instruction. This was especially evident with adult learners who had often arrived with defined professional identities that had been obscured by their language limitations. However, at the same time, due to the resources available at Site A, there was less possibility to continue to develop this type of media literacy pedagogy in the future. In contrast, at Site D, a teacher mentioned during an early conversation that he would use any materials from this project as part of his professional development file. He also planned on having a future class make their own videos following their exams based on what he learned. This kind of forethought shows that he had a clear outcome expectation accompanied by a high level of perceived control over the outcome (Westman 2017: 182).

The demands imposed by assessment and evaluation at the field-sites limited the opportunities for students to be critically reflexive, even in classes where students had more media literacy experience and therefore needed less time to familiarize themselves with technical aspects of filming. If we are to encourage students to be critically reflexive learners and to facilitate ethnographic inquiry which will enable them to read the textualised stories of their lives (Kehler and Grieg 2005: 367), it requires the elicitation of critical voice alongside and in examination of pedagogic voice. This means the development of emergent spaces with productive possibilities and for students to believe that they have the ability to affect real change if there is to be a move from reflection to reflexivity. The key lesson from the fieldwork interventions is that students' self-efficacy with respect to video production will not necessarily be the same as their "schooled" self-efficacy. It is not possible to project with certainty individual student's identities and how they might shift by the introduction of a digital ethnographic pedagogy.

The third spaces created (and not created) also shaped the type of student voice that emerged from their production work. Pedagogic voice is the voice in which teachers and students follow the tacit categories and rules that govern expression in school environments (Westman 2017: 158). Pedagogic voice is the status quo in schools, with critical voice needing to be actively sought out and developed by teachers and researchers. The classification and framing of video within the subject curriculum will influence the ability and desire of students to speak with a particular type of voice. If students believe that their voice will be heard in a safe (or non-assessed) manner, or that by exercising their voice, they can bring about desired changes, they may choose to utilize critical voice. In contrast, in uncertain conditions where there is the potential for embarrassment and at best, the maintenance of the status quo, they will be more likely to exercise pedagogic voice (Westman 2017, p.160).

The absence of a formal course curriculum to follow at site A permitted an easier move into a Third Space, as the thematic weekly topics were broad and connections to their lived experiences encouraged (e.g. Life as a Student, What does it mean to be British?). As a result, a more critical voice emerged. However, this criticality had to be accompanied by a participative connection with students to develop the bonds of trust which allowed them to believe that they could be fairly heard. Here, it can be argued that being seen as an outsider, and therefore not able to affect their future exam marks or further course enrollments, was advantageous to a certain extent (Westman 2017). At site D, students produced their videos in pedagogic voice for assessment by external markers, but engaged in critical voice during the process of creation as

again, the researcher was seen as a helping and nonjudgmental resource. In general, the self-efficacy of project participants was closely linked to their perceived knowledge of the subject of their videos and their production abilities as well as their perceived support network, of which the researcher formed a part.

Students need to be provided with clear learning goals and the support to connect restricted and elaborated codes during media literacy work. This can mean weakening the framing so that students are able to reflect on emergent learning outcomes and potentially exercise critical voice. Participants will need to be convinced of the value of this type of approach so that they feel they are still able to address specified learning goals while embracing emergent possibilities. This also emphasizes the importance of the participative connection. These third spaces that occurred at A and D were safe spaces where researchers could encounter participants while not positioning ourselves on an inauthentic trajectory of participation. This process suggests alternative subject positions for students, teachers, and researchers, with teacher acting as “critical agent”, which characterized by:

Vision, commitment, faith, skills, and relationships to conceptualize and plan the project and bring it to fruition in the face of potentially considerable difficulties and that itself critical in their appraisal and identify ways things can be improved in the future (Woods, 2012: 10-11).

Critical agents are self-critical in their appraisal and try to identify ways in which things could be improved in the future. In their practice, teachers must maintain a balance between structure and openness, instruction, and discovery. Critical-agent teachers occupy a different role than traditional key research participants though since they provide not only a wide range of information, but also their own considered evaluation. They secure additional resources if needed, initiate enthusiasm, manage the tempo of the event and above all, ensure sufficient time (Nias, 1989, cited in Woods, 1993). Teachers at site B were uncertain whether new camera equipment and computers would be available in the future, which meant they had low outcome expectations and a low level of perceived control over these outcomes. The teacher at site C had expressed an interest in technical training in video production for herself and the class, but we were not able to deliver this due to a lack of funding, which likely reinforced these beliefs. Therefore, in both of these settings, the time-limited nature of the project and the relationship with the researcher precluded them acting as critical agents.

Site	Materials	Built Environment	Subject	Agents	Types of Voice
A	Weak classification Medium framing	Strong classification	Strong classification Weak framing	Weak classification	Pedagogic Critical
B	Medium classification Strong framing	Strong classification	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification	Pedagogic

C	Weak classification Strong framing	Strong classification (weak in some previous projects)	Strong classification Strong framing	Strong classification	Consumer Pedagogic Critical (outside of project)
D	Medium classification (source text plus multimodal chosen by students) Medium framing	Medium classification	Medium classification Medium framing	Medium classification	Pedagogic

Table III: Type of Student Voice

Returning to our key research questions, we have provided some empirical findings to suggest that, whilst third space theory can provide a framework how to reach marginalized students, in particular as a way of connecting knowledge and discourses which are often marginalised in school settings to conventional academic discourses and knowledge (Moje et al. 2004, p.43-44), it also can provide a framework in the other direction, addressing our own marginality as researchers.

Successful outcomes related to ‘engagement’ for marginalized students will involve social or academic transformation as a result of critically reflective teaching and learning (Freire, 1970, cited in Pane 2009: 67). In a similar vein, successful learning outcomes for researchers working in an ethnographic mode will involve transformations through the creation of third spaces by a participative connection between researchers and participants. This participative connection was created by being engaged in the students’ media literacy practices at sites A and D, but this was impeded by the strong curricular framing and agent classification at B and C.

Within the third spaces at sites A and D, neither researchers’ nor participants’ states of understanding were privileged as we were able to engage in learning towards a mutuality of meaning based on these experiences (Wallace 2004:908). The third space at the Language Centre helped students to connect their personal knowledge that was often marginalized to that of formal English language instruction. This was especially evident with adult learners who had often arrived with defined professional identities that had been obscured by their language limitations. However, as a stand-alone initiative, it had limited pedagogic value outside the context of the project itself. It was more representative of Potter’s warning about video production being treated as an off-timetable activity that is not later revisited (2012:180).

This research has shown that media literacy learning spaces can be third spaces if they are charged with creative, productive possibilities, combined with an ethnographic turn in pedagogy and making use of ‘low tech’ digital media. To offer a more precise and nuanced conceptual framing for third space ethnography in classrooms, we have put the theory of curricular and institutional classification to work. The challenge presented by this for teachers is to harness fully the potential benefits of these spaces by embracing their emergent outcomes and working

to connect them to broader concerns existing in students' first and second spaces (Bennett, Kendall, and McDougall 2011:232). Utilizing a digital ethnographic pedagogy in combination with attention to classification, we have found, requires us to avoid either an overly weak or strong classification, in order to generate trust in the third space between 'schooled' knowledge and students' agentic media literacies.

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