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“Online” Teaching: Creative pedagogy as a conduit to EAP practitioners’ agency

The Language Centre Summer Conference 2021

‘Curriculum Conversations: Agency, Collaboration and Leadership’

University of Leeds Language Centre, Leeds, UK

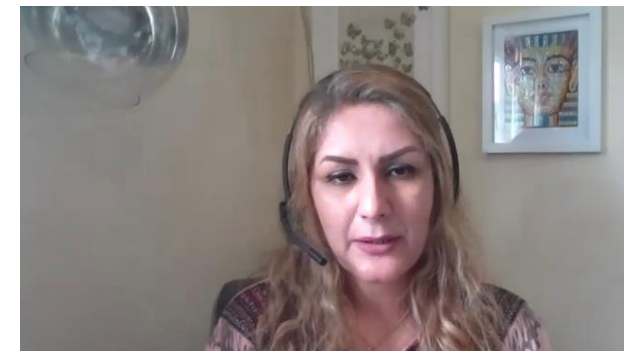
30 July 2021

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Overview

- What do we mean by 'conline'?
- Literature Review
- Research Questions
- Methodology
- The Emerged Themes
- Conclusion



Literature Review

Creativity

- ‘Research that looks at creativity with its multiple connections to those who enact it, the contexts in which it is performed (socio-cultural, linguistic, educational) and the processes which help it flourish may provide us with better overall understanding that can be translated into practical classroom pedagogy’ (Maley and Kiss, 2018, p. 294).
- ‘not simply an optional add-on to what we do but is its very essence’ (Maley and Kiss, 2018, p. 1).
- Scholarship on creativity in EAP – fragmented.
- Specific techniques studied, e.g., gaming, creative arts or object handling for the development of individual competencies (Saliés, 2002; Carson and Murphy, 2012; Bond, 2018; Richards and Pilcher, 2020).
- Focus - text-oriented (Hyland, 2018) and “pragmatic”.



Literature Review

Agency

- ‘[T]he realities of today’s marketised higher education system means that those who design and deliver EAP courses are typically not in a position to influence the bigger institutional picture’ (Hyland, 2018).
- ‘[P]ractitioners are recognized (recognize themselves) as valuable and powerful actors contributing to theory-building discourses across fields’ (Hanks, 2019).
- ‘[T]he concept remains a floating signifier carrying different personal connotations that are shaped by wider institutional and professional constraints’ (Coffey and Leung, 2020).



A socio-ecological view of teachers' agency

Creative inquiry approach

Bakhtinian polyphony (1984)

Teacher agency:

- iterational
- practical-evaluative
- projective

(Biesta, Priestley, and Robinson, 2015; Biesta and Tedder 2007; Emirbayer and Mische, 1998)

Aim: To explore EAP practitioners' creative voices in the context of COVID-19 pandemic

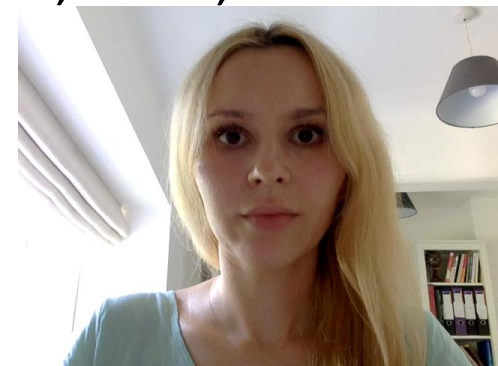
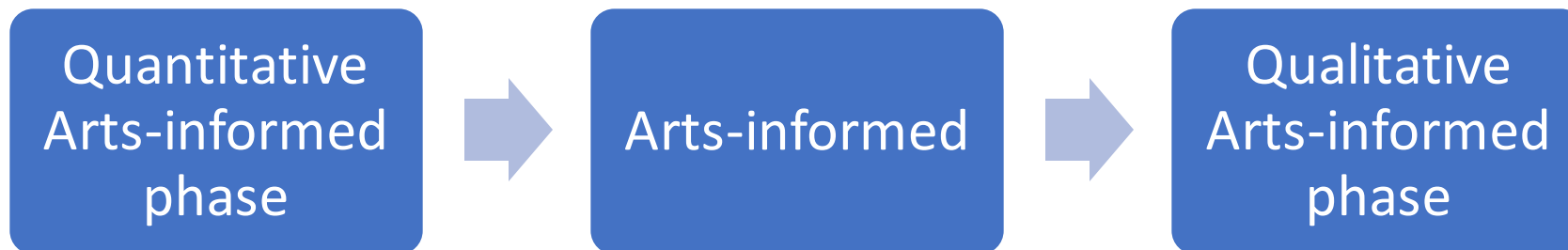
RQ: How do EAP practitioner express and facilitate creative voices in the context of COVID 19 pandemic?

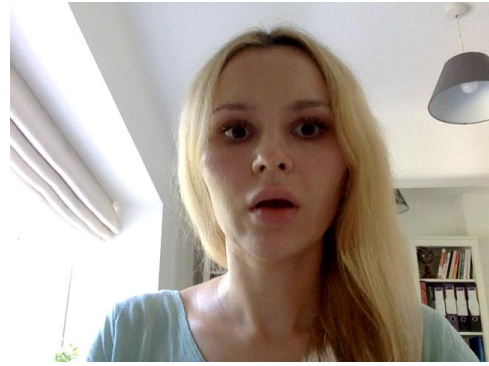


Method

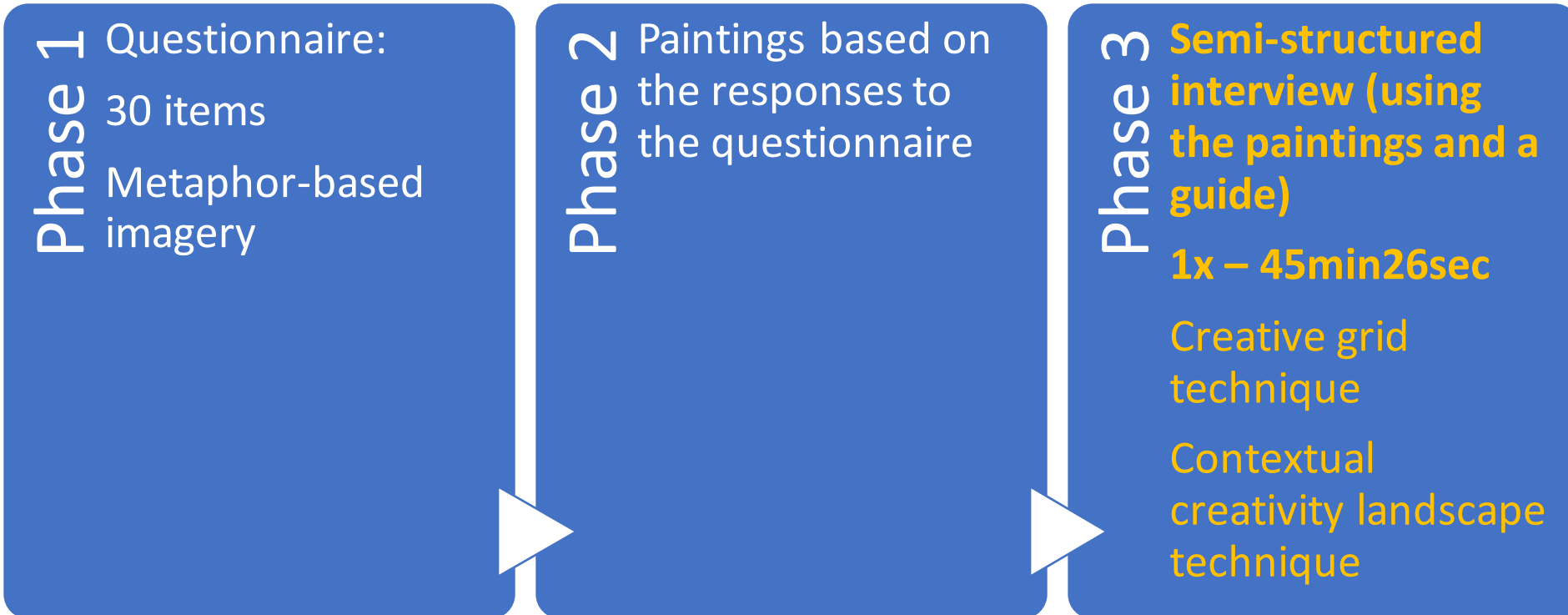
Multi-method arts-informed research approach: questionnaires and semi-structured interviews

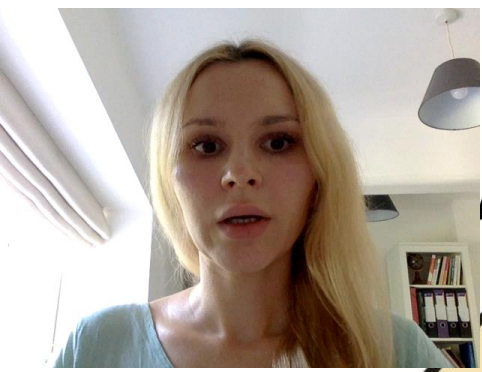
- An explanatory sequential multi-phase design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).
- To allow for ‘more comprehensive and complete understanding of phenomena to be obtained than single methods approaches’ (Cohen *et al.*, 2018, p.32).
- The aim of using the arts is ‘knowledge advancement through research, not the production of fine arts works’ (Cole and Knowles 2008, p. 66).
- Data analysis: an inductive and deductive cycle: codebook developed following guidance (Roberts *et al.*, 2019), the three coders analysed the data thematically, using axial coding (Corbin and Strauss, 2008), developing new codes as they emerge (Aurini *et al.*, 2016, p.192).





Data sample and phases



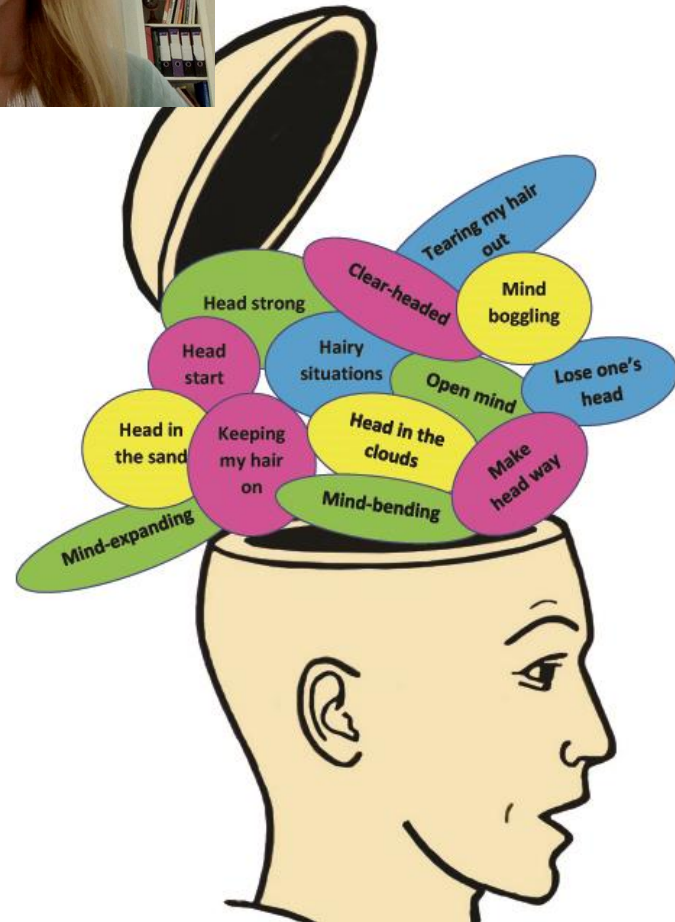


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Metaphor-based technique: metaphors
based on Way (2013)

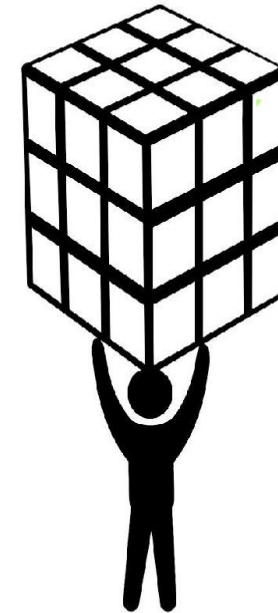
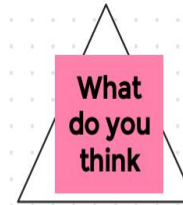
Creative inquiry

- ‘Offers an approach to research and education which can encompass people’s complex communicative, affective, experiential and political realities.’ (Bradley and Harvey, 2019, p.103).
- Decentring of language (Harvey and Vanden, 2017; Harvey and Bradley, 2017).
- ‘[T]he articulation of what was previously unarticulated, unknown, unheard and undervalued’ (Bradley and Harvey 2019, p.101).
- Metaphor-based imagery.
- Artworks (paintings).
- ‘Creative Grid’.
- Creativity Landscape (adapted from the Language Portrait technique) (Busch, 2018).

Findings

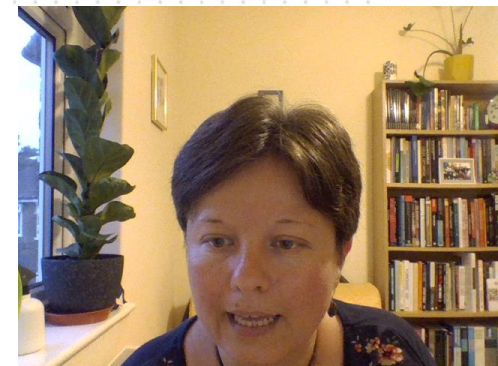
Collaboration as a polyphonous (Bakhtin, 1984) multiplicity of voices

“Just the first impression that I got from this image is that ... **just one person** is looking at the... cube; it's from ... one angle... but **we can have a look at it from a different angle**. So ... I wrote ... a "triangle for everyone" – **not just from one person but from other perspective[s].**”



Collaboration!

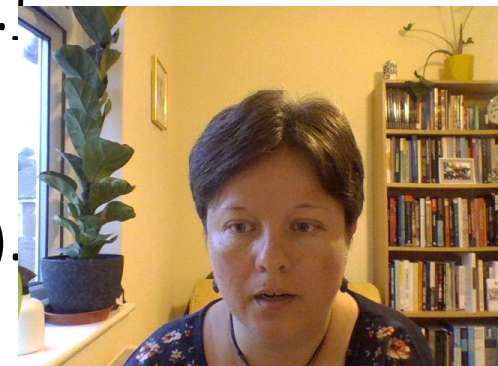
TEAM



Collaboration as co-creation

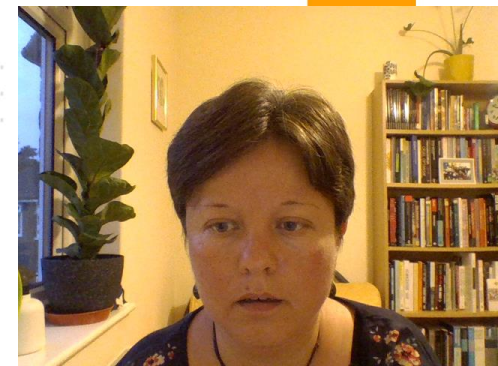
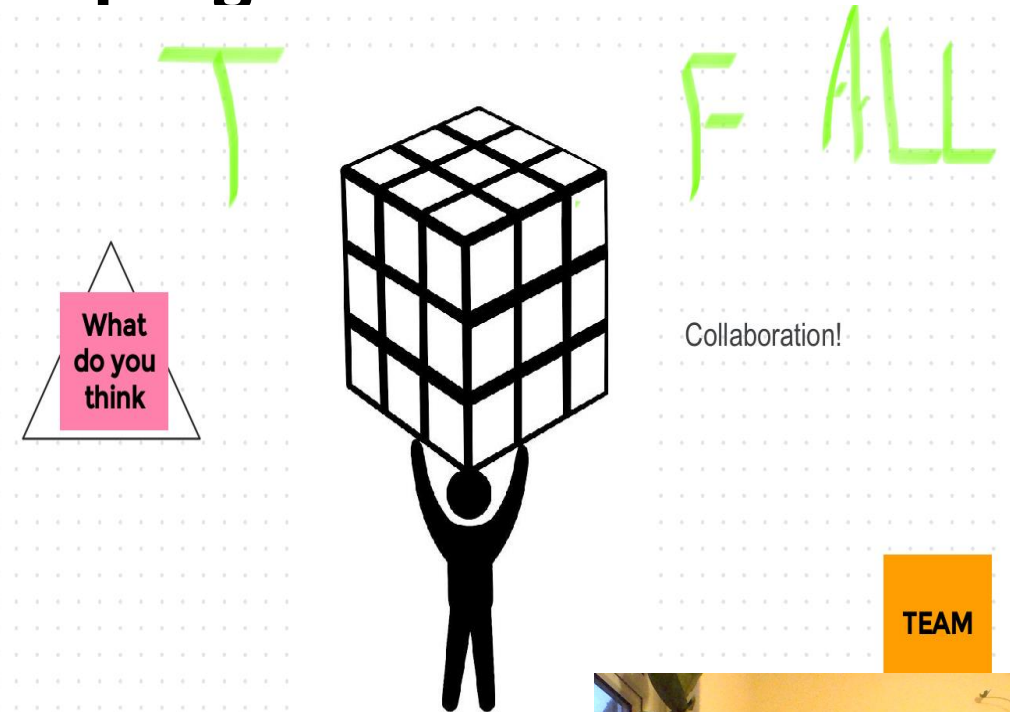
“[C]ollaboration ... is all about ... whatever I do in pedagogy. ... I can’t do anything without my student[s]. I need their perspective. I need their opinion about my lesson... I’m not saying that ... I start ... without that one...in the middle, I need to see what they think, how **they are behaving in every moment in my lesson.** ... You know, I have to shape up the way the lesson is proceeding but they are helping me to shape up this lesson as well. So, in this sense I am shaping up the lesson that is also shaped up by my student. In this sense ... collaboration matters.”

Co-creation: “the space in between student engagement and partnership [...] a meaningful collaboration between students and staff, with students becoming more active participants in the learning process, constructing understanding and resources with academic staff.” (Bovill *et al.*, 2016, p.197).



Collaboration as work-in-progress

“I also colour coded ... ‘collaboration’, just, you know, ... just triangle was not good enough.... and then I, I combined two figures - triangular and... square ... on the left... But, you know, ... on the right ...[it] looked really empty, so I put another square ... with ... ‘Team’. And then in the middle on the right side, ‘collaboration’. Just ‘collaboration’ means I really appreciate and value the sense of collaboration and how powerful it is, **how nice it is for everyone to do anything in any context.**”



Collaboration as contextually contingent, rather than “power free” (Phillips and Nap)

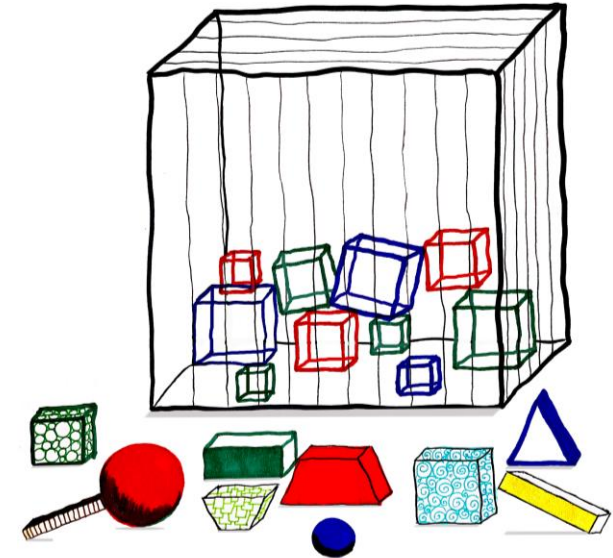
I wouldn't have this kind of image in terms of teaching... I will set up a **more equal setting** where a student take[s] the whole responsibility for their own performance because, you know, in this image, I don't think **it's helpful for creative pedagogy** ... because there is only one position at the top... I would just, you know, carve out at the top a bit more to make it more equal ... and, also to, you know, to secure maybe more ... space where another student can leg up because, you know, **the student in the middle might be feeling ... he's got no more motivation probably to climb up** ... in this setting.



Practical -Evaluative Agency and Projective Agency

'... definitely I have to say in [Eastern Asian] context, the situation is definitely, I have to say, **it's inside the big square** – every teaching material and then teaching method and the research method as well. But then in, in where I am now [UK context], the way they are approaching, we are teaching, students are **learning is totally different.**'

"So, I could see but I could see something or **not still changing** still staying in the same region so I could see. **I can see my EAP teaching context material are coming out of this big square**, uh, **shaping up** the new **something new** and then, you know... Anyway, but **at least they're not in the jail**. They are in between something new and then and then jail, uh."



Iterational Agency: Practitioners as 'transformative intellectuals'

(Kumaradivelu, 2003)

"They've got every reason and every right, erm..., to grow up academically in EAP teaching."

"... it's **entirely up to the individual tutor**: how... what technology I am using, what kind of, you know, delivery teaching method I have. Yeah, in this sense, that could be kind of creative pedagogy in ... in, in that **each tutor has its own method**, but the **teaching material itself were uh ... organized by program leader**."



Third space co-construction

- Creativity appears as a paradigm situated in this ‘third space’ (Bhabha, 1994, p. 37) with the student through co-construction, rather than a tool of learning:

‘I can’t do anything without my student’

- The ‘third space’ in our study seem to promote a certain *sense of equality* through collaboration:

‘in this sense I am shaping up the lesson that is also shaped up by my student’

- Not a personal-professional attribute (Coffey and Leung, 2020)
- Enfolds more common features of creative acts, e.g. ‘preparation, incubation, illuminati verification’ creative process (Wallas, 2014)





Transformative intellectuals

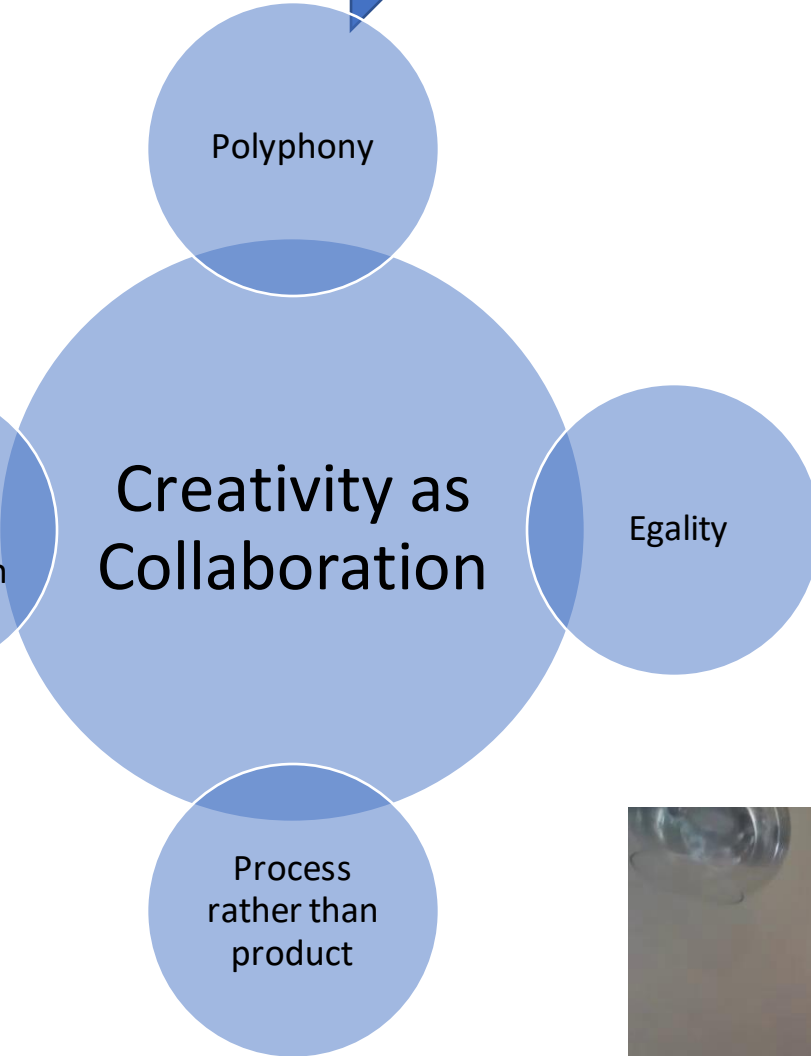
- Iterational agency

Individual and collective initiatives

- Practical-evaluative agency

Conceptualise new roles and responsibilities for themselves

- Projective agency





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