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RaPAL

Journal

The Research and Practice in Adult Literacies Network

Welcome

Research and Practice in Adult Literacies (RaPAL) is the only UK-wide organisation that focusses on the role of literacies in adult life. We promote effective and innovative practices in adult literacies teaching, learning and research; and support adult literacies practitioners and researchers. We enjoy engaging in debates that touch on English language and literacy, numeracy and digital skills across homes, communities and workplaces. Through our members, digital journals, conferences and fora, policy and advocacy work, we are active in Europe and have international links.

What we do

- Encourage collaborative and reflective research
- Publish a journal three times a year
- Create networks by organising events (including an annual conference) to contribute to national debate
- Believe in democratic practices in adult literacies
- Emphasise the importance of social context in literacies
- Critique current policy and practice where it is based on simplistic notions of literacy as skill
- Campaign for the rights of adults to have access to the full range of literacies in their lives

RaPAL Officers 2016 /2017

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Editorial Information

The editorial group for 2017-2018 includes the following researchers, practitioners and practitioner-researchers: Gwyneth Allatt, Claire Collins, Samantha Duncan, Sarah Freeman, Tara Furlong, Julie Furnivall, Sue Lownsbrough, Anne Reardon-James, Irene Schwab, Yvonne Spare, Brian Street and Rachel Stubley.

RaPAL members are involved in the compilation of the journal as editors, reviewers and referees.

We are a friendly group – open to new members and new ideas. Please contact us with any contributions (views, comments, reports and articles) and do not be put off if you are new to the field or if you have not written for a publication before. The journal is written by and for all learners, tutors/teachers and researchers who want to ask questions about this field of work. It does not matter if the questions have been asked before. We want to reflect the many voices within adult literacies work and to encourage debate.

Why not join us?

Further information can be found at our website: www.rapal.org.uk
The RaPAL Journal is also available from various subscription services: EBSCO, LMInfo and Prenax.
The RaPAL journal expresses a variety of views which do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial group. The RaPAL journal was designed by Image Printing Company, Lumsdale, Matlock, Derbyshire

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We are always keen to attract new individual and institutional members. Please join us and consider passing this to friends, colleagues and libraries / resource centres and encouraging them to join RaPAL now!

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Membership brings:

- three RaPAL journals per year
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- participation in the RaPAL JISClist

We are happy for our members to participate in the journals and conferences and the organisation and administration of RaPAL.

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To join, please complete the form on our website (rapal.org.uk/join-us). You can also use the form below and email it to membership@rapal.org.uk or post to: RaPAL Membership, c/o Jo Byrne, 8 Phillip Drive, Glen Parva, Leicester, LE2 9US, UK.
By joining, you confirm you sympathise with RaPAL's aims as stated in the Constitution.

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Institutional membership allocates two votes at our AGM; and two member participation free or discount at events

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RaPAL

Contents

Editorial

Tara Furlong, Sarah Freeman and Gwyneth Allatt

Global Literacies: UK Literacies in a Global Context was hosted in Liverpool in June 2017. Our keynotes presented national literacies campaigns: 'Transforming Lives' with Vicky Duckworth and Rob Smith, and 'Reading for Pleasure' with Genevieve Clarke. We experimented with a 'carousel' where presenters had ten-minute slots with participants before the cow mooed and everyone 'carouseled' around to the next table: great for exchanging of ideas both academic and workplace. Workshops originated from as nearby as local Merseytravel to as far away as Australia's indigenous learning provision and Eire's numeracy ones. A UNESCO project 'Learning Across the Generations' was presented by the British Association for Literacy in Development (BALID).

In the articles in this edition, two of our conference keynotes, Vicky Duckworth and Rob Smith, identify how critical literacies are in the 'Transforming Lives' project and take a *social practices* approach to social justice. They outline a research methodology of co-construction with participants. Often by explicitly generating 'an ethos of egalitarianism', 'learners' accounts revealed further education courses as pathways to overcoming problematic and painful domestic issues... their narrative was a capital for resistance against the barriers they have faced.' Schooling is frequently identified as problematic. Intertwined with identity, Duckworth and Smith argue that literacies enable learners to interact with a wider environment, economic or democratic. Family, learners' own children, are a constant motivator to improve.

Susie O'Hagan, Alex Kendall and Thomas Hopkins introduce the 'Turning Pages' project. Initiated in an offender learning context at pre- and entry level, they describe the process involved in creating carefully staged learner appropriate materials used in peer-led mentoring. O'Hagan *et al* describe how they drew on both *ideological* and *autonomous* models to maximise evaluation of the materials.

Graham Hall discusses five practical and interesting approaches to integrate students' numeracy development into vocational courses at a range of levels, with a view to increasing young people's motivation. The approaches he explains make use of naturally occurring opportunities for integrating numeracy within certain subject areas and Graham suggests how they could be adapted to other subjects and for students with different levels of ability.

Next, Sarah Telfer's article considers the use of storytelling in the literacy classroom. Sarah explores a number of theoretical perspectives on storytelling and explains its role as a literacy genre with which all literacy learners will be familiar. She suggests ways in which collaborative storytelling may be used in literacy lessons and outlines its many benefits for learners.

Following on from a keynote at the conference, Genevieve Clarke from The Reading Agency writes about the extensive use of *Reading Ahead*, originally known as *Six Book Challenge.* The programme is now accompanied by a framework which explains the surprising scope of beneficial effects of developing reading for pleasure as a skill – e.g. health, well-being, critical thinking, creativity, empathy and being more included in social and cultural participation.

Merseylearn outlines projects increasing reading for pleasure in the workplace and how this has disseminated out and increased reading involvement across the Liverpool area.

Gwyneth Allatt's work in a peer-reviewed article, 'What does it mean to be literate?' complements the other articles and all are based on the premise that what it means to be literate in the UK is perceived in different ways by students, teachers and providers. Her study of government literature on literacy provision, alongside the perceptions of the teachers and students themselves emphasises the contrast between official speak and the reality of lived experience.

We have a pair of reflections on the conference. One from a conference delegate, Amanda Derry, and one from Gwyneth Allatt as a carousel presenter.

We are delighted to be able to include four diverse articles which have originated from BALID researchers and field workers. BALID is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) promoting adult and family literacy and numeracy as a basic human right, in the context of development. BALID brings together organisations and individuals who believe that sharing experience about learning and literacy can help enrich workers and citizens in both the industrial and the developing world. It is exactly because of their broad view of literacy in all parts of the world that their presence at our Global Literacies conference was particularly poignant. Katy Newell Jones and Juliet McCaffery brought the fresh approach of intergenerational learning to their workshop as they helped emphasise the relevance of family learning in every part of the world. Their article introduces this UNESCO resource, recently published which has extensive relevance to family learning worldwide.

The next two BALID articles are further studies of literacy from a literacy in development viewpoint. Katy and Juliet, and a colleague, Ian Cheffy answer a highly relevant question from the UK's Department for International Development, 'What is the best way to make adult education effective for teaching literacy and numeracy?'

The last BALID article is an in-depth account of a BALID seminar, *Weaving Literacy Through Lifelong Learning* by Tara Furlong and Mary Anderson. Ulrike Hanemann from UIL (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning) presents a keynote on 'lifelong, lifewide, lifedeep' learning provision. Video clips from the day are included. Speakers from many countries discuss a range of programmes and their advantages and disadvantages – a fascinating insight for RaPAL readers who want to know more about how literacy is delivered in other parts of the world.

In our reviews section, Andrew Morris reviews *Developing Numeracy in Further Education* by Graham Hall and Suzanne Slaney, providing theoretical underpinnings but 80% devoted to practical examples of integrating numeracy and maths into specific vocational contexts. Liz Parkin reviews *Fostering a culture of reading and writing: Examples of dynamic literate environments* by UNESCO. Fifteen international studies identify core competencies and local innovation to illuminate global literacies learning. Finally, Tara Furlong reviews *Post Compulsory Teacher Educators* by Jim Crawley in a series edited by Ian Menter. The compact volume is a study guide and provides an entry point

for new post-compulsory teacher educators (PCE TEds) into a vibrant and committed network of peers.

This edition is a tribute to Professor Brian Street. Brian set the theme for the conference and was on the original editorial team. Brian was President of BALID. He passed away shortly before the conference. For those not familiar with his work, he developed Literacy as Social Practice, in parallel to the New Literacy Studies. His work on *ideological* versus *autonomous* models of literacy is seminal in literacies studies internationally. These theoretical frameworks underpin the constitution and philosophical perspectives of RaPAL. We are grateful to Brian. Many of the diverse articles in this edition reference his work.

Note from the Journal Coordinator

Yvonne Spare

Yvonne can be contacted on journal@rapal.org.uk

Hello fellow RaPAL members

We hope you will enjoy this latest edition of the RaPAL Journal, Global Literacies, based on our Liverpool conference earlier this year, a reminder for those who were there for a most enjoyable weekend, and a taste of the workshops and activities that took place on the day.

We have just put out a call for papers for edition 94, Impact & Innovation. We hope to include the question of whether we should be considering digital literacy as a third basic skill, considering its impact on individuals and the wider economy. We are inviting anyone with a view on this area to contact us at journal@rapal.org.uk, whether you already have an article in mind or just an idea to put forward. We are always happy to have a discussion about any suggestions for this or any future editions.

Our meeting of the editorial group in London in September was well attended and we succeeded in recruiting three new members to the team, all of whom have generously volunteered to join the editing teams this year. If this is something you feel you would like to try, whether you have experience or not, then please do not hesitate to contact me to talk about what is involved.

As you may have read, RaPAL has been invited to nominate individuals to be panel members on the next REF. We would like to encourage members to participate in the nomination process, so if this is something that you are interested in, please contact Tara, RaPAL's Chair, at webweaver@rapal.org.uk for more information.

Any comments about this or other editions or ideas for future content can be sent to journal@rapal.org.uk and don't forget that most editions contain articles by new writers. There are guidelines on our website on the Write for Us page. We are always interested to hear about what you think about your Journal. There is a feedback section on the website so that you can comment on anything you have read in this or previous editions. Follow the link to our comments space at the bottom of this page together with the password that has been circulated with this edition.

Season's greetings from all the team at RaPAL and we hope you enjoy our latest edition of the Journal.

Best wishes

Yvonne

Adult Literacy: Further Education as a space for resistance

By Vicky Duckworth and Rob Smith

Dr Vicky Duckworth is a reader in Education at Edge Hill University. Vicky's research and teaching spans over two decades, in this time she has developed a national and International reputation for research in Adult Education and Literacy. As such, Vicky has developed considerable expertise in Adult Education and Literacy and is deeply committed to challenging inequality through critical and emancipatory approaches to education, widening participation, inclusion, community action and engaging in research with a strong social justice agenda.

Dr Rob Smith is a Reader in Education at Birmingham City University. His body of work explores the impact of funding and marketisation on further education and he has researched and written extensively in collaboration with practitioners in further and higher education settings. He is strongly aligned to social justice and challenging inequality and his practice and research reflect this.

Introduction

This paper draws on the *Further Education in England: Transforming Lives & Communities* project commissioned by UCU. This research project aims to understand and provide evidence of how the further education (FE) sector is vital in transforming lives and communities in 21st century Britain. The study provides learners, teachers, family members and their communities with the opportunity to tell and share their stories, linking the distinctness of FE to the impact it has on individuals, society and the economy.

TRANSFORMING LIVES
further education: learning hope

Literacy is a vital thread that links the research and will be explored in this paper.

Adult literacy has elaborated two models of literacy: the autonomous and the ideological (Street, 1984). The former treats illiteracy as an independent variable, a deficit position that needs to be cured by a medicine of skills; the latter views literacy in terms of social and cultural practices and thus, in recognition of the range and variety of such practices, speaks of *literacies* rather than of a unitary skill. The ideological view is supported by an increasing awareness of the importance of context, and how the circumstances in which learners find themselves influence both their perceptions, understandings, and their uses of literacy (Ade-Ojo and Duckworth 2016).

In the context of the dominance of a 'skills' discourse in further education in England and the flux of continual policy interventions, adult literacy programmes in the UK have a long history, but have grown particularly in prominence during the last three decades. Together with post-compulsory education and training (PCET), adult literacy has been reshaped by national policy initiatives since the 1970s, when the government took an increasing interest in the education and training of adults, as the concept of lifelong learning fed into international policy documents (Field 2000). The late 1990s saw *'A Fresh Start – Improving Literacy and Numeracy'* produced by a working group chaired by Sir Claus Moser. The Moser Report drew on some of the evidence from a previously administered OECD survey to estimate that approximately 20 per cent of the UK population (as many as seven million people) apparently had difficulty with functional literacy and/or numeracy (DFEE, 1999).

Functional literacy and numeracy in this context was considered to be synonymous with the ability to read, write and speak in English and use mathematics at a level necessary to function at work and in society in general. The resulting strategy, *Skills for Life (SfL),* identified a number of priority groups which included people who live in disadvantaged communities (DfEE 2001). In its local implementation, the Skills for Life agenda took a more instrumental approach to adult literacy than for example, a critical pedagogy model (see Giroux 1997; Lankshear and McLaren 1993; Lankshear 1993; Shor 1992, 93, Duckworth 2013, Ade-Ojo and Duckworth 2016, Duckworth and Smith 2018), which challenges autonomous prescriptive approaches to curriculum designs that do not take into account the history or background and needs of learners. This was typified by the way the 'Core Curriculum' became a matrix for assessment and progression and thereby, a vehicle for standardisation that structured learning so it more closely aligned to the autonomous model of literacy. Arguably, because of the pre-eminence of this agenda, a dominant focus in the discourse on adult literacy in the last decade or so has been the issue of perceptions of literacy.

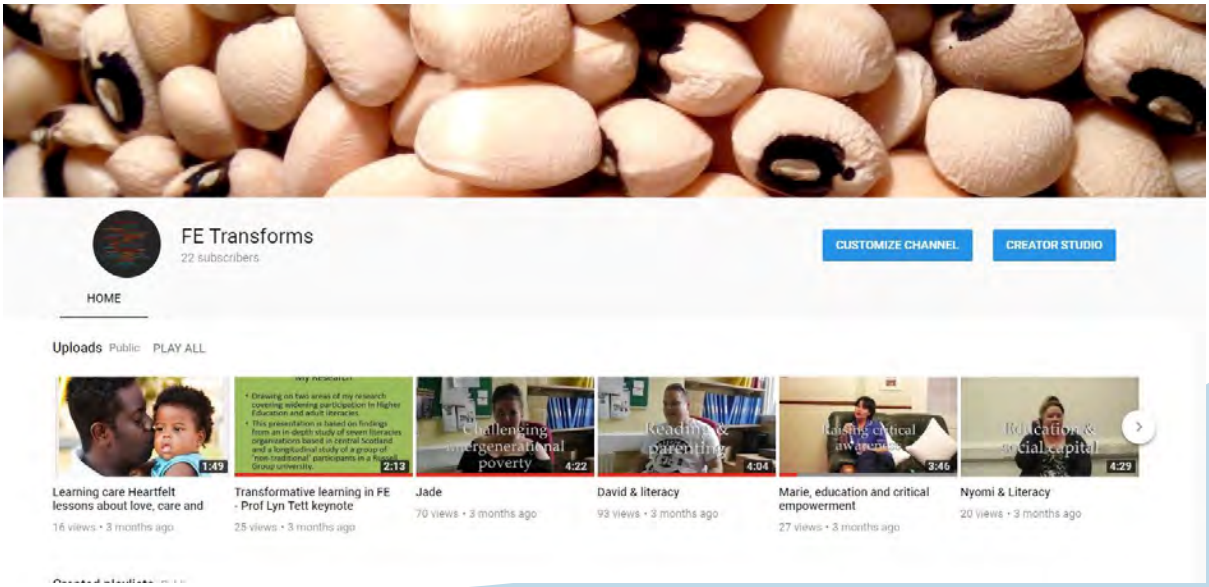
The emergent question for us in the context of the study is: how does further education influence and inform an engagement with adult literacy for often marginalised learners? In effect, the aim of this research is to track the effectiveness of a curriculum and engagement process informed by an alternative perception of literacy, critical literacy, in engaging and facilitating learners whose experiences have been impacted upon by barriers which, for example, include negative experiences of compulsory education and cultural issues where attendance in compulsory education settings was not viewed as important in the family and community context.

Finding a critical space

The research provides evidence of how further education offers a 'differential space' (Lefebvre 1991) that can subvert the prescriptive, linear spaces of compulsory education and lead to critical spaces for transformative learning (Duckworth and Smith, 2018). The study proceeds from an understanding that educational practices are positioned as ideologically imbued, driven and shaped by policy. Indeed, the model of curriculum can determine whether education is an emancipatory or oppressive process. It seeks engagement with learners through a purposeful acknowledgement of their cultural background and biography and provides critical insights into education as a socially-situated process. Transformative learning is orientated to affirming agency and as such, has a ripple effect that impacts on learners' families and their communities.

Methodology

The project draws on digital data gathering tools (video, audio, project website) and social media (twitter & YouTube) but places a strong emphasis on applying these tools as part of a model of research as social practice.



The video was used as a way of placing participants' voices and views centrally. Rather than black typography on a white background with their views and the manner and tenor of their voice being (silently) reconstituted and interpreted by a reader from a page, their words and thoughts emanate from situated images of them, usually in spaces / institutions / buildings in which they have begun

(re)constructing a positive identity as a learner. What they say, how they say it, the affective dimension of their accounts are all visible to viewers. While the videos are edited, participants are involved in editing decisions. Through this we have attempted to democratise the research process and reach towards a model in which the co-production of knowledge can take place without researchers necessarily interposing themselves between the data and the viewer. This connects to our concerns about accessibility and dissemination of project data. One of the key purposes of the project has been to communicate the vital work that further education colleges and institutes engage in across and within diverse communities.

Research Conversation

We have re-termed our interviews 'research conversations' as this tag reflects the egalitarian and reciprocal atmosphere that drives the interviewing practice. The research conversations which draw on stories, poetry, songs and images are also used as foils to represent the generative themes in the lives of the learners. For us, it is vital to be authentic and in sharing our stories engage in a dialectical relationship of trust with participants so that they are active in the co-construction of knowledge and meaning that sits at the heart of the project.

This also strongly underpins our use of video: early edits are shared with all participants and then re-edited if necessary in the light of their comments. The premise with these videos is to present individuals' stories in a powerful way which places often silenced voices on a public platform, validates the participants' experiences and subverts often negative stereotypes perpetuated by the media which, for example, demonise marginalised communities and the people they are home to.

Twitter has become a powerful way of connecting the project to the Further Education Community, Higher Education Community, activists, policy makers and beyond. It has also been drawn upon to act as a tool to develop impact in sharing findings through Phase One of the project. This has included dissemination of material, leading to further research.

Findings: Empowerment

Learners' accounts revealed further education courses as pathways to overcoming problematic and painful domestic issues; for example, abusive relationships, alcohol dependency and mental health issues. Empowerment was also linked to agency. The participants described how the telling of the narrative was empowering; their narrative was a capital for resistance against the barriers they have faced.

They described having their eyes opened to 'a whole new world' by returning to education and improving their confidence and skills in literacy.

Claire spoke of the power she experienced in simply being listened to and how she longed to return to the classroom in order to experience that empowerment once more.

Claire's account illustrates some important attributes of transformative learning environments. Central in these was the sense that participants had of not being 'judged' and of being accepted for 'who you are'. This is explained in a number of cases by prior educational experiences that featured labelling and being designated 'thick' or as coming from a particular family or estate. In contrast, learning environments which enable transformative learning to take place are founded on an ethos of egalitarianism – usually explicitly. People's background, thoughts and views are accepted and even foregrounded as important features in the curriculum and as a basis from which to move forward.

David's story

David, a participant from a traveller background, spoke about his motivations for learning as being able to read to his four-year-old daughter. Claiming literacy was also a catalyst for David to take part in our democratic processes.

> *Now I can actually read and write and sign my own name. When I go to the doctor, I can sign a note… You need education to know what's going on outside: the politics and all that. I'd never voted in my life, ever. I read the thing that came through the letterbox and I voted for the first time.*

http://transforminglives.web.ucu.org.uk/2017/09/22/david/

Jade's story

Jade is a mother who attends adult literacy classes. Being a mum motivated her and she has seen her confidence increase while studying and has learnt new literacies. Now, she has aspirations for her future and is determined to be the best possible role model for her son. Jade's story can be accessed on the project YouTube channel[1] where she tells her story of literacy and empowerment.

Jade's story and other learners' narratives expose the complexities they experience in their daily lives and how they try to make sense of them from their structural positioning as literacy learners in a society based on inequality of opportunity and choice.

http://transforminglives.web.ucu.org.uk/2017/09/22/jade/

Discussion

Literacy teaching and learning can be related to the lives of the diverse learners. However, this was not the case in a number of the participants' experiences of the secondary school curriculum. There, they often experienced marginalisation and a sense of self (identities) and capital (often informal, brought from home) being incongruent with the dominant capital attached to formal schooling (cultural, social and symbolic).

Clearly, the symbolic power embedded within the field of compulsory education, and the legitimate cultural capital embedded in and reinforced by it, led to differential access to potential opportunities and advantages. It led to education being misrecognised in terms of individual natural abilities and effort, rather than in terms of an unequal distribution of cultural, linguistic, social and economic capital among the social classes. The learners felt that they did not 'gel' with school, that their social and cultural practices were fixed and devalued. It is important to understand how this was experienced in terms of a 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1994) of school-life: in other words, it was felt in a bodily sense through repeated and institutionalised interactions, interventions and assessments. As a result, the learners carried with them and in them an emotional landscape of pain and disillusionment as they recalled their experience of navigating through the educational system

where the capital they had to exchange was rendered valueless and how the shame of struggling with linguistic capital compounded this.

Illustrating the stories of resistance

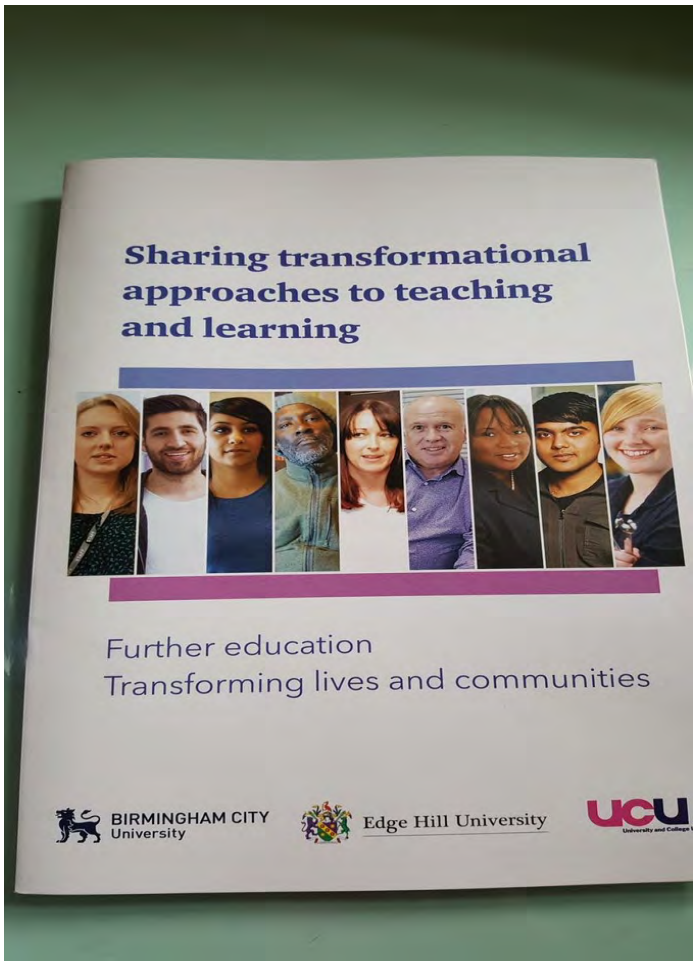
Whilst school was a site for reproducing social inequalities, further education was a site for resistance. The critical spaces offered in further education settings allowed them to develop a strong awareness of where they were positioned in terms of legitimate capital and that they were being labelled and stigmatised, for example because of struggling to read and write at school. The differential space offered by further education also enabled them to defamiliarise themselves from educational practices and spaces that tended to pathologise them and sought to render them passive. Transformative teaching and learning practices allowed the learners to question their positioning in unbalanced power relationships that had marginalised them and their practices of literacy, and to act to change them.

By revisiting their own stories of learning and not learning, rather than keeping them hidden in shame, these project participants took ownership of them. They reclaimed them as stories of success, recognising the structural inequalities they have challenged and resisted to become empowered to take agency in their lives. Jade, a single mother in her early twenties, who left school to work in unskilled jobs that paid a 'pittance to live on', moved from North Manchester after the birth of her son to her own flat in Rochdale, where she 'loved being a mother' and 'wanted so much more' for her son. David, from a gypsy community, a married man in his thirties with children, had not attended compulsory education regularly from eight and instead spent the days working with his father on manual labour. Both were labelled by school teachers as being 'thick' and 'stupid'. In their view, the deficit labelling was due to their struggle with literacy and for David it was a double deficit lens, being part of the gypsy community.

Conclusion

The relationship between struggling to read and / or write, and the ability to articulate one's rights can result in adult literacy learners being marginalised and silenced and a loss of agency. A literacy approach which derives from Freirean notions of `conscientisation' (Freire 1972), encourages critical reflection on the relationship between literacy practices and the (mis)use of power, thereby providing the scope to challenge hegemony. Evidence from the project showed this critical pedagogical approach generating a curriculum which is culturally relevant, learner-driven and socially empowering (Freire 1985; Barton et al. 2000 and 2006; Duckworth and Ade-Ojo 2016; Duckworth and Smith 2018). It facilitated the learners to generate a personal connection with the historical, social, economic and political structures privileged by the dominant ideologies. It empowered the learners, their families and communities. Empowerment here meant having the strength and will to challenge oppression and inequality, to have control over one's own life, and the motivation and self-belief to contribute to the needs of oneself and the community. A vital ingredient in this is an awareness of the structural inequalities oppressing people and, where possible, challenging and changing these conditions.

Our study brought into sharp focus how literacy and empowerment are reflected in the emotions, knowledge, and skills of the participants and act as a catalyst to their agency in political engagement, including voting for the first time and taking part in voluntary work and community activism.



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Turning Pages – Unlocking the Power of Reading in Prison and the Community

Susie O'Hagan, Alex Kendall & Thomas Hopkins

Susie O'Hagan is Head of Development for Shannon Trust and lead on the development and production of Turning Pages. Susie has been with Shannon Trust for nearly 10 years, is a qualified drama and English teacher (secondary), family mediator and counsellor. Alex Kendall is Professor of Education and Associate Dean Research in the Faculty of Health, Education and Life Sciences at Birmingham City University. Dr Thomas Hopkins is Senior Lecturer in Speech and Language Therapy at Birmingham City University

We know that if you struggle to read – as over 5 million adults do in England – it's much harder to find work, engage in society, have high self-esteem, keep in touch with friends and family and manage the everyday life skills of shopping, taking medication safely and using the internet

(2012 Skills for Life Survey OECD, 2013).

Shannon Trust has been delivering its peer led reading programme in custody for nearly 20 years and currently operates in almost every prison in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, reaching over 4200 learners in 2016.

In 2013 we began to develop Turning Pages, a brand-new reading programme specifically for adults and older learners which could be delivered by non-specialist peer mentors. We knew that the resource we had been using worked well for many of our learners and mentors but we had felt for some time that we needed a programme that had been developed with the older learner in mind, and which used age appropriate language, imagery and drew on current ideas about learning with phonics.

> ***Dave's story:***
>
> ***'I am 37 years old. I have been in jail for over 2 years. When I came to prison I could not read or write. I am also disabled due to an accident shortly before I came to prison and I am on very heavy medication.***
>
> ***Before I came to prison I lost my way due to drug abuse. I also lost contact with my two children and my family gave up on me.***
>
> ***Since taking part in the Shannon Trust reading programme (Turning Pages) I have managed to form a relationship with my family and have full contact with my children who I now regularly receive letters from. This has now kicked my depression away and***

being able to read opens a whole new world to me! I am looking forward to my release and a fresh start!

Many thanks to my mentor and Shannon Trust.'

Most of our learners are starting from a very low baseline – Pre -Entry and Entry Level – and it was almost impossible to find suitable reading books for adults to support the skills being learned with the reading programme we had been using. Developing Turning Pages enabled us to have the opportunity to commission 30 accompanying reading books to supplement the manuals and in 2015 we launched Turning Pages - a fresh, easy way for adults (and young adults) to learn to read at their own pace, one-to-one with a friend, family member or other mentor. Turning Pages is comprised of five colour coded manuals and 30 accompanying reading books.

The development process

Developing Turning Pages - the starting point

Audience	• Adult / older learners • Suitable for peer delivery • Would accommodate ESOL, learners with dyslexia & brain injuries
Method	• Synthetic phonics & recognised good practice development
Supporting reading books	• Emergent reader books relevant to client group & structured to parallel & complement the reading manuals
Progress visibility	• Integrate progress checks that motivate & demonstrate progress to learners
Scope	• Primarily reading skills but also cover some writing comprehension & spelling

The development process for Turning Pages was robust with expert authors from Skills for Life Materials (SfL) commissioned to write the academic content of the manuals, overseen by an advisory group with members from the Institute of Education, the National Offender Management Service education specialist, a Shannon Trust trustee with a specialism in dyslexia, Shannon Trust staff and an ex-mentor.

We also had user groups in three prisons (male and female) that tested the manuals in real time with learners as they were developed. The head of development for Shannon Trust, who project managed the development of Turning Pages, met with the mentor group each month to collect the written feedback from them and their learners and to discuss every aspect of the manuals from how an activity worked to layout, vocabulary used, structure and content. This input was of huge significance to the development of the reading plan as was its impact on the final product. One of the mentors was also inspired to write two of the reading books, which is no mean feat as the books only use the skills learned so far in the manuals.

Developing Turning Pages - we thought about

Font	• Verdana (with special l) until 5th manual • 12pt for mentors, 14pt for learners to manual 4, then 12pt
Layout	• Lots of white space • Blue shading • Clear boxes • Line space
Visual stress	• Off white paper
Vocabulary & language	• Wide & suitable for adults • Simple, friendly, clear
Progress	• Integrated Progress Checks • Parking pages • Always moved forward
Reading Books	• Range of topics, style, illustrations & content

How Turning Pages works

Turning Pages is based on the 44 phonemes in English starting with the initial 31 letter/sound combinations. All learners start at the beginning of the first (dark blue) manual and work though at their own pace, one-to-one with their mentor for 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week.

The manuals have been written so that anyone who can read can use them to support a non-reader, with no specialist training needed. Everything the mentor needs is held within the manuals with comprehensive introductions to each and detailed instructions for each activity on the left-hand pages – the learner completes the activity on the right-hand page.

Each manual uses a combination of 12 different activities for the learner to complete (such as Gap Fill and Spot the Words) to build reading skills and they can tackle their first reading book just 60 pages into the first manual.

As a Learner goes through the manuals they follow a general pattern of: Introduce a new skill ➡ try the skill ➡ practise the skill ➡ check the skill. The number of activities covering learning and trying a new skill depends on how complex is the skill is; however, for each new skill there are a number of opportunities to practise to allow for the learning to become embedded.

This same process is followed whether it is a new skill being covered (such as the long ā sound) or sight words (Sullivan and Brown, 2014).

How Turning Pages works:	
Starting point	• All learners start at the beginning of Manual 1
Developing skills	• Pattern Introduce skill Try skill Practise skill Check skill
Learner activities	• Interactive & always on right hand pages
Mentor instructions	• Comprehensive & on left hand pages
Reading books	• Linked to each progress check • Each book uses only skills covered so far in the manuals (with some out of level words)
Ownership	• Learners own the manuals so can keep them when finished

As Turning Pages was developed specifically for adults and for those disengaged from formal education, we've not included any testing for learners. However, there are integrated progress checks within each manual so that learners and their mentors can see that the skills covered have become embedded through the process and enables them to begin to read in real terms. With achievement comes confidence.

'I watched my learner grow and he enjoyed learning as much as I enjoyed teaching. Some days can be smoother than others and it's always important to go along at your learner's pace, no point in skipping through.

The most important thing is that the learner learns as much as they can. Learners love reaching milestones and they also love receiving certificates.'

Shannon Trust mentor

Once we had thoroughly tested and launched Turning Pages in the custodial estate, Shannon Trust engaged Birmingham City University to carry out an academic evaluation of the Reading Plan.

How effective is Turning Pages?

In 2015/16 Birmingham City University undertook a longitudinal evaluation of Turning Pages. The evaluation drew on multiple theoretical perspectives and methods to judge the effectiveness of Turning Pages. Phonological awareness and de-coding skills were assessed through the use of quantitative, standardized word and non-word reading tests undertaken over a six-month period whilst the impact of working with Turning Pages on the lives of Learners and Mentors was explored through semi-structured interviews and discussion groups.

Defining effectiveness

Defining effectiveness in relation to reading ability is not a straightforward task as definitions of what it means to read, to read effectively and to identify or be identified as a competent reader are hotly debated and highly contested within the broader field of literacy. Contemporary perspectives on adult literacy can be broadly described in terms of a central debate between two competing, polarised positions: an 'autonomous model' a perspective that understands literacy as a skills 'tool kit' that once acquired can be applied successfully across a range of different reading and writing contexts; and an alternative view, the 'social practice' model that sees literacy not as a discrete skills set but as a range of social practices embedded in specialised contexts and therefore distinctive to those contexts (Street 1984, 1985, 2001). This latter perspective argues that literacy, singular, is not a meaningful concept and that it is more accurate to think of different types and forms of 'literac***ies***' (in the plural) occurring in different aspects of our social, cultural and professional lives (Barton and Hamilton 1998, Crowther *et al*, 2001). Understanding these different (and often competing) positions is important because each has significant implications for the way reading effectiveness might be defined, described and assessed and the way in which judgements about the quality and nature of 'literateness' might be made. As such, these debates had an important bearing on the design of this evaluation as we sought to respond to each of the positions on literacy effectiveness outlined above so that the widest possible range of benefits for learners and mentors might be elicited from the study. Phase One of the evaluation viewed Turning Pages through a primarily 'autonomous lens' focusing on exploring impacts on phonological awareness and de-coding in relation to 'objective', standardised assessments of achievement whilst Phase Two used a 'social

practice lens' to explore self-reported, 'subjective' evaluations of the benefits and effects of engaging with the programme.

Securing benefits for learners

Learners made good progress through the manuals and most reached either the second manual or stage two of the first after the first three-months and after six-months, most Learners had either completed Turning Pages or had reached the final manual. The results of the longitudinal testing pointed up a number of key benefits for learners:

- Turning Pages was able to promote the word decoding skills and sight word reading of adult Learners through the application of a synthetic phonics-based approach
- Significant gains in word reading and non-word reading scores were found for all Learners involved in the Turning Pages evaluation (regardless of their initial reading ability) during the first three-months and from baseline to the final six-month period
- Learners reported an increase in reading confidence over the six-month period
- Learners reported a significant increase in their self-rated reading attainment, enjoyment and reading comprehension ability over the six-month period
- Learners who had either completed Turning Pages or were reading the final manual, read significantly more words and non-words compared to their peers and rated themselves as more able readers over the six-month period
- Findings show that after the six-month intervention, Learners were reading more for functional participation within prison and for social engagement. This also included reading materials that Learners had reported a lack of confidence reading prior to their engagement with Turning Pages, such as legal letters, books and application forms.

The qualitative study of Learners' and Mentor's experiences of Turning Pages also yielded positive results. Both Learners and Mentors placed significant value on the informal, non-institutional nature of Turning Pages and identified the adult focus of the programme, one-to-one support of mentors and the opportunity to work at their own pace as key factors in supporting successful learning. The Learner/Mentor pairing was highly valued by all parties and central to the success of the programme. The nuanced, individualized approach to support taken by Mentors (we have called this 'grounded pedagogies', see full report) in negotiation with their Learners is seen by Learners as central to their success.

Crucially, working with Turning Pages promoted reading enjoyment and provided Learners with productive opportunities to re-engage with learning, build confidence and work towards goals that were meaningful to their own lives. Significantly the phase two data also suggests that engagement with Turning Pages provided important opportunities for Learners and Mentors to exercise a degree of choice in an otherwise highly regulated environment – this fed into a re-appraisal of their existing ideas and experiences of education and opened up opportunities for thoughtful reflection on the

past, present and future encouraging and enabling participants to begin to articulate new hopes and aspirations for the future, an opportunity that desistance theorists argue is central to successful rehabilitation (Ward et al 2000); Wilson et al, 2000).

A full copy of the report can be found at http://www.shannontrust.org.uk/report .

Turning Pages is now commercially available outside of custody and the sales will be a sustainable income stream for the wider work of the charity. More information can be found at: www.turningpages.shannontrust.org.uk

You can follow us on twitter:

Twitter: @TurningPagesST @alexckendall @CSPACE_BCU

Facebook: fb.me/TurningPagesST Where we will keep you up to date and share testimonials from learners, mentors and organisations using Turning Pages.

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Five interesting ways to integrate numeracy into vocational courses

Graham Hall

Graham Hall has taught numeracy components for a range of Further Education and Higher Education courses at Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor in North Wales. He has a Master of Education degree specialising in mathematics education and lifelong learning.

Introduction

Over a number of years, my colleagues and I at Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor have been investigating interesting ways of integrating numeracy into vocational courses at various levels from GCSE to Foundation Degree. We have found that student motivation for numeracy is increased by:

- solving interesting problems which are relevant to the student's course
- producing a product, either as an artefact or as a presentation or professional document
- practical measurement, or the collection of primary data through surveys
- autonomy in the specification and design of the learning activity
- working with others as a team, developing and using the special skills of each member.

Activities incorporating a number of these features may arise naturally during course work. At Further Education level 1 or 2, students may be given the challenge of planning and running a small business enterprise, as an introduction to entrepreneurship. The business might produce craft work or food items for sale, or provide a service such as car washing. An important aspect of the project would be the careful costing of the required equipment, materials and workers' time, and the choice of appropriate customer prices for the product or service.

At a more advanced level is a project undertaken by our engineering students to develop a small wind turbine. This required accurate measurement techniques in the workshop, along with calculations for the design of the electrical components.

It is often the case, however, that the course tutor has to devise additional tasks to meet a requirement to improve student numeracy. A useful framework for introducing real world problems into mathematics teaching has been proposed by Tang, Sui, & Wang (2003) from their work with academic students in China. Our own practitioner research has focussed on ways in which this

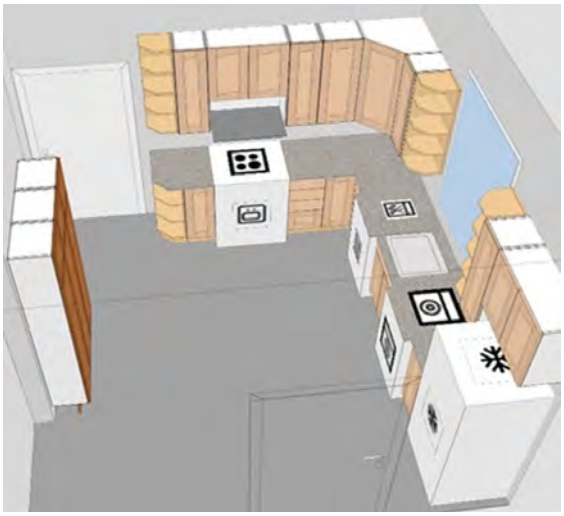
framework could be successfully adapted for embedding numeracy activities into vocational courses at further education level (Hall, 2014).

The five approaches identified by Tang et al. (2003) are: *Extension; Special Subject; Investigation Report; Paper Discussion; and Mini Scientific Research.* These represent a progression from applications set by the teacher, through increasing student involvement in the solution of real world problems, to totally independent project work designed by students themselves. Examples for each approach are given below. Further details of the mathematics involved are included in the book *Developing Numeracy in Further Education* (Hall & Slaney, 2016), where full references to resource materials are given.

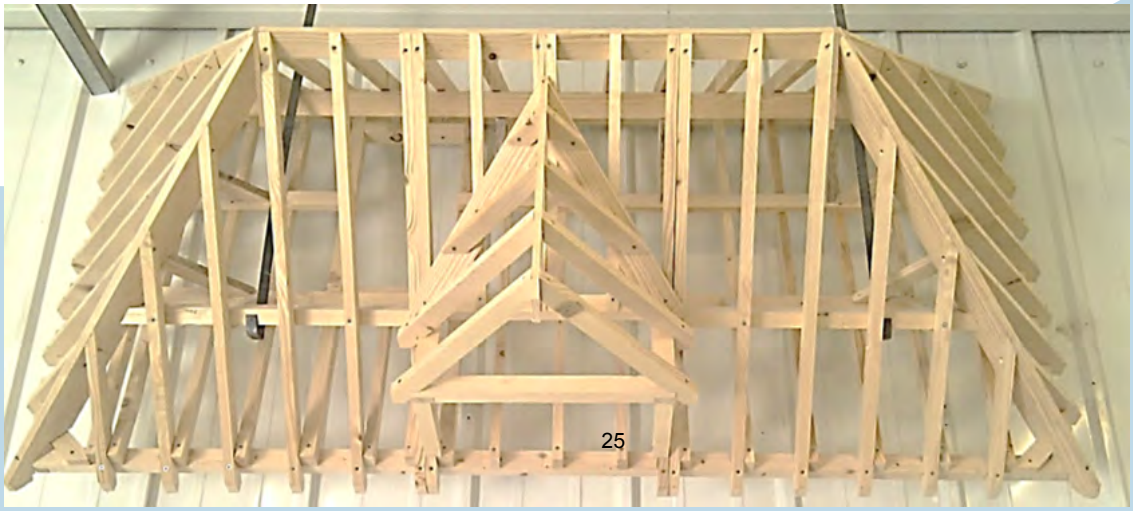
Extension

After learning a mathematical technique, students apply this to an ill-defined real-world problem. Students need to obtain their own additional data to solve the problem. The objective is to develop *skills in the practical use of numeracy* in a realistic context.

If we consider applications of shape and space, students at level 1 or 2 might be given a design for a kitchen, then asked to consult internet pages to find the costs of suitable furniture and appliances and calculate the quantities and costs of floor covering and wall tiles.



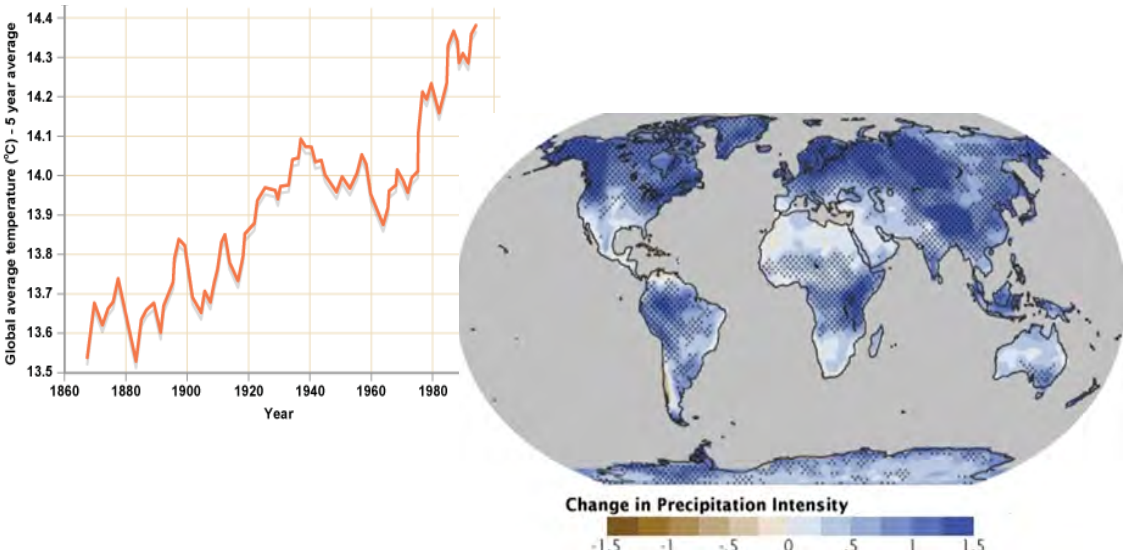
For a more advanced application, building students may learn about the construction of timber and slate roofs. After studying the roof structure, the group is given the challenge of designing a roof for a house of a specified size. Plans and elevations can be drawn by hand, or with the assistance of architectural computer aided design software.



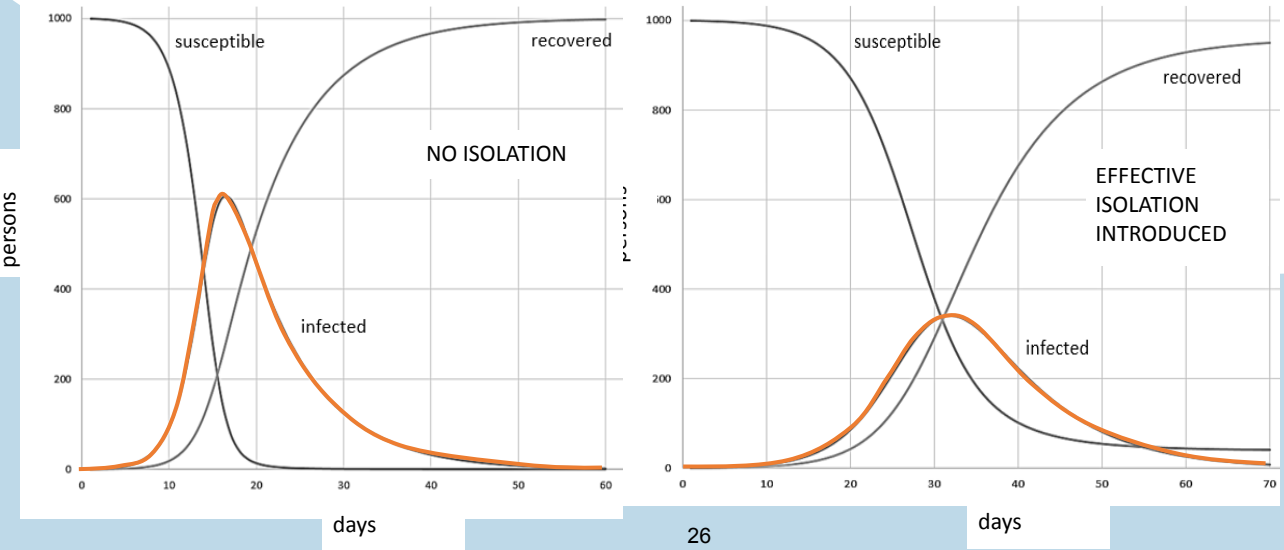
Special Subject

After studying a vocational topic, students explore the topic further using mathematical techniques. This leads to a deeper understanding, and provides evidence for critical analysis. The objective is to develop *skills in mathematical modelling*.

At levels 1 or 2, students might carry out an investigation into the extent of climate change. This might involve use of the internet to gather data on changing temperatures and rainfall patterns in different areas of the world, changes in sea level and changes in the frequency of extreme weather events such as hurricanes, floods, and droughts. Students may then make predictions of future climate conditions if trends continue.



As a more complex example, health and social care students learn about the spread and control of epidemics of diseases. To further investigate the factors involved, we use a spreadsheet to model an epidemic such as influenza. Students can explore the effects of introducing early isolation for infected persons, or the effects of different levels of vaccination in the general population.



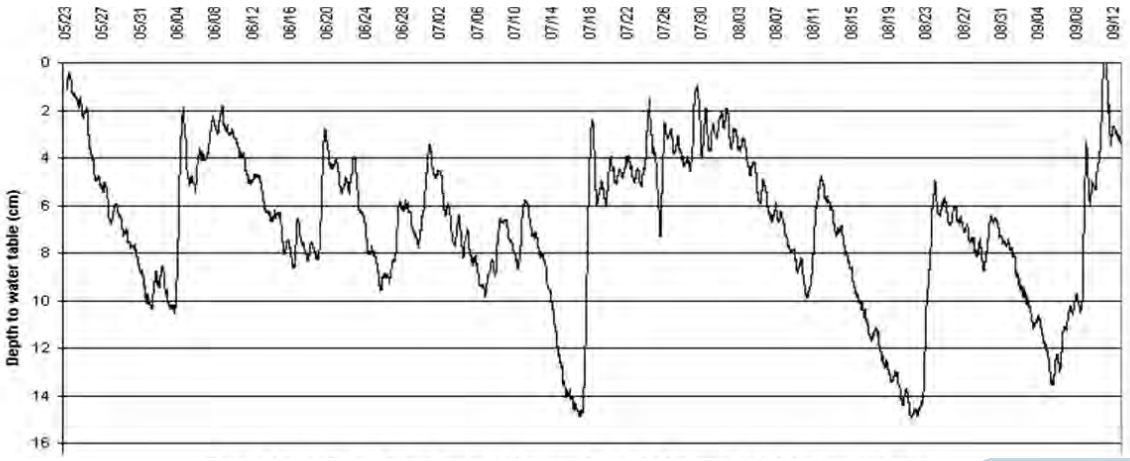
Investigation Report

Students carry out an investigation involving the collection of primary data through measurement or surveys, processing of the data, and presentation of results and conclusions. The objective is to develop *skills in data collection and analysis*.

At levels 1 and 2, students might carry out a survey of methods of travel to college. A suitable questionnaire would need to be devised, perhaps asking about distance between home and college, travel costs involved, and any changes made to travel arrangements during hours of darkness or bad weather. After analysing the results, students might be able to make recommendations to their college or the transport operator, outlining problems which were identified and improvements which might be made to the transport provision.

At advanced level, an example is a project by our geography students to monitor water levels in an area of peat bog in the Welsh mountains. This was carried out by means of an electronic water depth recorder inserted into the peat.

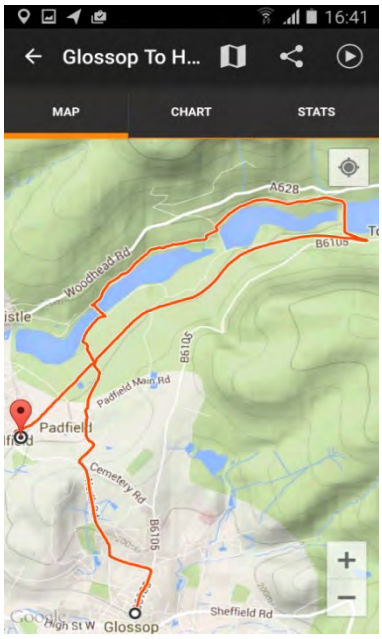
After downloading the data, students were able to plot variations in the water table over a period of several weeks. This allowed them to assess how the peat stores water after heavy rain, and regulates flooding downstream.



Paper Discussion

Students are presented with a problem which needs to be solved using an unfamiliar mathematical technique. Information about the technique is provided in the form of a worksheet, website or text book article, then students are asked to teach themselves. The objective is to develop *independent learning skills*.

At levels 1 or 2, students might carry out a project to use a mobile phone application for monitoring physical activity. Walking or cycling routes can be shown on maps using GPS data, including changes in altitude and calories burned.



Students are provided with instructions for use of the software, and teach themselves to operate the system.

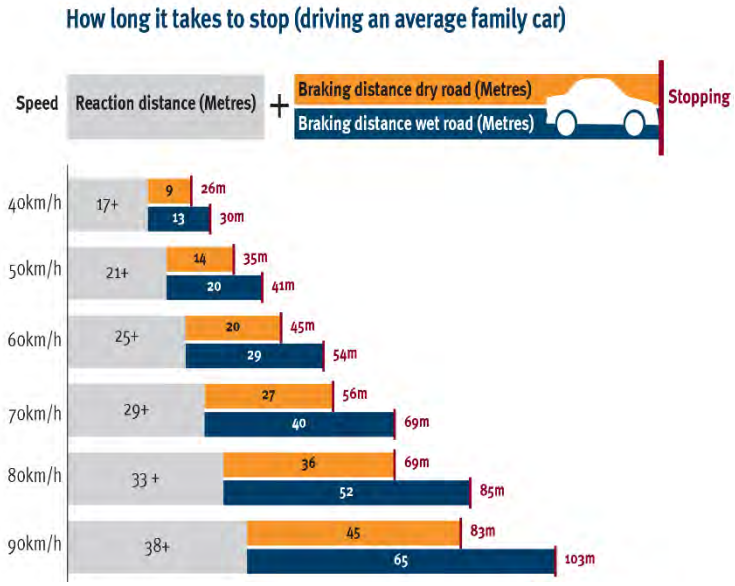
As a more advanced example, biology students might carry out a survey across a system of coastal sand dunes to explore the factors which affect the distribution of plant species. Factors of importance might include: variations in the moisture content of the sand, changes in salinity with distance from the sea, and the speed of the wind.

To make correlations between plant distribution and environmental factors, we provide the students with statistical analysis software. Rather than the teacher giving instruction, the students are asked to explore the software themselves by working through tutorial notes and running example data sets. The students then move on to analyse their own data and draw conclusions.

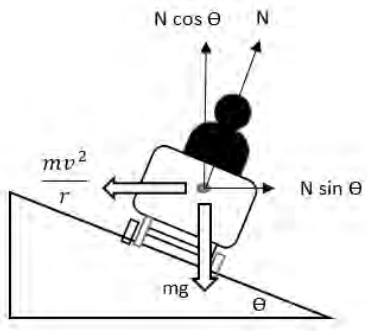
Mini Scientific Research

Students design and develop their own project to investigate a problem of genuine interest within their vocational field. Students have freedom, under the guidance of a tutor, to decide the objectives of the project and the methods to be used for collecting and analysing the data. The objective is to develop *problem solving and research skills*.

As an aspect of road safety training for young drivers, students at levels 1 or 2 might investigate the emergency stopping distances for cars under different conditions. Data is available on the internet for stopping distances in dry or wet road conditions, and with new or worn tyres. Emergency stopping distances have also been recorded for drivers under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or distracted by the use of a mobile phone.



At a more advanced level, physics students investigated the motion of the small roller coaster in the fun fair on the seafront at Barmouth. They were able to calculate the velocities and acceleration of the cars at different points around the track, and to determine the optimum banking angle as the cars travel around the tight curves of the track.



Conclusions

Less academic pupils often face difficulties in learning mathematics at school. They may see the subject as confusingly abstract, and irrelevant to their future careers or personal interests. This can lead to boredom in lessons, and examination failure then reinforces negative attitudes and loss of motivation.

When students begin vocational courses at college, we have a great opportunity for a fresh start. Numeracy activities can be embedded in a way which demonstrates the crucial importance of mathematics in almost every workplace. The practical approaches developed by Tang, Sui, & Wang (2003) can be effectively applied in a wide variety of teaching situations. Student motivation is increased, leading to improved learning in both numeracy and in the student's main vocational subject.

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The Collaborative Storyteller in the Literacy Classroom

Sarah Telfer

Sarah Telfer is an Associate Professor at the University of Bolton and a Senior Lecturer in Skills for Life and Teacher Training. Sarah completed a BA (Hons) in Drama and worked as a professional actress for seven years in film and TV, before applying these skills to teach literacy. She recently completed her Doctorate in Education and her area of special academic interest is the use of storytelling and anecdotal stories to promote engagement and interaction in the language classroom.

Introduction

Dewey (1916) suggests we 'preserve' our past experiences naturally remembering what interests us, using the past to make new meaning of the present. Collaborative storytelling in a literacy classroom promotes the sharing of learners' past experiences and individual life narratives as part of dialogic interaction, using storytelling narrative as a pedagogic tool for literacy learning. This article explores the concept of 'the collaborative storyteller' in the literacy classroom, discussing the role of story collaboration as a social approach to literacy teaching and learning.

Storytelling as a literacy genre

The National Storytelling Network (2016) defines storytelling as an ancient art and a valuable form of human expression, describing it as the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination. Storytelling in its basic literacy form can be defined as the telling or writing of stories, which can take the form of oral face-to-face storytelling, or written stories in print or online.

A story can also be defined as a set of events or series of happenings which can be true or fictitious. It can be 'a real or imagined account of events that describes experience. The terms "story" and "narrative" are often used interchangeably'. However, some research defines a story as an 'informal account of a lived experience', in comparison to 'narrative as a structured interpretation of story, which includes researcher additions and omissions' (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990; East and colleagues, 2010; Haigh and Hardy, 2011 in Drumm, 2013). Kirkpatrick et al (2007:38, cited in Drumm, 2013) propose that storytelling is 'the individual account of an event to create a memorable picture in the mind of the listener', therefore it can be suggested that storytelling lends itself well as a pedagogic tool in a literacy classroom setting.

Storytelling is a genre of literacy that all literacy learners are familiar with. In terms of its social purpose and Cope and Kalantzis (1993) highlight the integral purpose and function of stories as a social communication tool (Halliday, 1973). Stories can be viewed as valid and useful platforms to use in literacy teaching for a variety of purposes such as: encouraging class bonding thus promoting a positive learning atmosphere; stimulating learner engagement and motivation; promoting

interaction and collaboration; and building situational language context to make a pedagogic teaching point. Functional English qualifications are designed to develop literacy learners' practical skills for the modern world and to help them get the most from life and learning, and literacy learners can particularly enjoy utilising their own life stories in classroom activities linking real-life experiences to classroom contexts. Adult literacy learners especially bring 'Funds of Knowledge' (Moll et al, 1992) to collaborative storytelling.

Examples of collaborative storytelling tasks in a literacy setting might involve the use of anecdotal peer discussion or the swapping of personal anecdotal stories. Collaborative story writing activities can act as an effective form of scaffolding in offering peer support; this might involve students working in pairs or small groups to write their version of a story thus encouraging interaction and utilising speaking and listening skills, as learners communicate to write collaboratively.

Storytelling as a social process

A socio–cultural perspective on language and literacy recognises that storytelling practices are always embedded in social contexts and purposes. This applies to literacy and language in the everyday contexts of home, work and community, recognising the importance of social relationships. A socio-cultural theoretical framework views literacy teaching as a 'social practice' approach, in that it sees the practices of literacy teaching as bound up with a person's social, cultural and personal purposes, which in turn influences the learners' ways of learning. Hamilton (2010) describes adult literacy as situated in social practice which sees language learning taking place in day-to-day relationships between people in their everyday environments, such as the classroom, work or community group. She states that literacy is an elastic idea meaning different things to different people. A social practice approach encourages the contemplation of the real-life context in which literacy teaching operates, considering participants, activities, settings and domains-areas of social life (Hamilton 2010).

Storytelling by its nature is both a collaborative and social process. Goodman (2010) emphasises how learner collaboration is a key consideration in setting up storytelling activities. He refers to the spiral process of narrative learning, describing narration as a collaborative event in a social setting, where stories are exchanged, reconstructed and revisited; where the teacher acts as a facilitator and the learners compare their stories, meanwhile developing an understanding. This school of thought is part of the *Communicative Language Learning* approach in which students are seen to take charge of their own learning, and the teacher is the facilitator (Harmer, 2007). It can be argued that it is an essential element of pedagogic literacy practice to build collaborative relationships and to encourage a mutually supportive environment in which team work is valued. Storytelling activities in a literacy classroom setting can be used to promote an inclusive and co-operative atmosphere conducive to learning. This view is supported by Schwab at al (2015) who discuss the importance of collaborative and social learning in literacy tasks, incorporating a social view of learning and an approach to teaching and learning as a social process.

Social cognition and a socio-cultural approach

Vygotsky (1978) explored the concept of 'Social Cognition' and 'sociocultural approaches' to learning and development in Russia in the 1920s and 30s. His theory was based on the concept that learning activities should take place in cultural contexts, mediated by language and discussion, the role of learner collaboration being central in developing language learning. According to Vygotsky language and culture play a large part in cognitive development and in learners' perception of the world, especially if meaning and significance is attached. His social constructivist approach advocates that learners should be encouraged to collaborate with other learners to share their existing knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). It could be argued that collaborative story-telling tasks fit into this 'social practice' model, promoting personal and social skills through peer integration.

The benefits of using a social constructivist methodology such as collaborative storytelling, allow literacy learners to construct new knowledge by collaborating with other learners and pooling their existing knowledge. This supports Vygotsky's (1978) theory that learners operate at a higher level of ability in collaborative or group tasks, operating better than individually. Hargreaves (1994) asserts that collaborative practice and team work prepares learners for creative work in highly competitive markets, therefore presenting a case for the use of collaborative storytelling in preparing literacy students for employment.

Collaborative storytelling tasks which involve 'dialogic exchange' can take place during pair work or small group work activities; during such tasks learners can offer each other support, taking on the roles of interlocutor, facilitator, critical friend, or even as a collaborator in telling a story (Goodson, 2011). The aim of the collaborative storytelling process is to form new understanding and interpretations of events via a storytelling medium; using conversation, dialogue and questioning, discussion and debate. Richardson (2015) highlights the importance of substantial discussion and clarification through dialogue in the classroom, suggesting this should be a collaborative process between young people, teachers and parents. Education, he states, should develop not only participation skills but also a reservoir of shared stories which teach political knowledge and history; building collective images, sounds and icons, creating a shared sense of belonging to the classroom community.

Wiliams (2007) supports the assertion that collaborative learning tasks result in a higher level of achievement and greater sustained engagement. Storytelling activities that involve learners working collaboratively in pairs and groups might involve learners supporting each other in matching activities, group writing tasks and collaborative project work to encourage discussion, which helps to promote not only team work skills, but opportunities for student interaction and discussion to complete tasks.

It is significant therefore to consider the benefits of collaborative storytelling in promoting the cognitive engagement and motivation of literacy learners in the teaching and learning process. Sharing anecdotal stories can encourage the development of social skills, both interpersonal and personal, helping learners to bond and promoting positive behaviour. Significantly, literacy learners

are often engaged by the human-interest value of stories which suggests anecdotal stories, when implemented successfully, can result in beneficial incidental language practice. The human element of teachers and learners using anecdotal stories can evoke not just personal interest but engagement both in learning about the teacher and from learning about each other, thus resulting in a more relaxed atmosphere conducive to learning and inclusion. Collaborative storytelling allows literacy learners to express emotional, as well as cognitive responses to learning. Storytelling discourse also has a reflexive aspect through which cultural knowledge and social understanding is circulated, promoting greater integration in the classroom setting.

The sharing of personal anecdotal stories as part of collaboration

Anecdotal storytelling as a collaborative process between teacher and learners can be viewed as an important factor in successful literacy teaching and learning. The collaborative sharing of personal anecdotes between literacy learners can be used to promote socialisation and engagement, and often results in improved stories as a result. Anecdotal sharing by the teacher might involve the tutor opening a lesson by sharing an anecdotal story with the class, this acting as a model or exemplar to engage not only learners' cognitive domain, but also the affective domain by eliciting empathy, sympathy or even compassion. Wiliams (2007) suggests that collaborative tasks are more effective when teachers are collectively engaged and participating. Anecdotal collaborative storytelling takes a humanistic approach to learning as it puts emphasis on the process of learning in which learners share personal experiences, often resulting in interaction, with co-operation and emotional support being important factors in learning. The exchange of anecdotal stories can be viewed as a highly collaborative process in which students construct narrative stories and swap them, leading to meaningful change and development for individuals and groups within a learning environment (Goodson et al., 2010).

Participatory story collaboration

Spiro (2007) describes storytelling as a 'sub skill of social life' during which we exchange information about imagined events and events that have really happened, inviting audience participation and sharing ideas of ideas. Effective collaborative story activities can use learners' experiences, feelings, memories and beliefs to consolidate knowledge and understanding of literacy pedagogy. Mallows (2014) advocates a *'Participatory'* approach to teaching which draws out and builds upon the story of students' experiences to develop a shared critical understanding of the world. Bryers, Winstanley and Cooke (cited in Mallows, 2014) define a participatory classroom as one which is driven by collaborative learner exchanges, exchanges being always relevant and meaningful to the learners' lives.

The collaborative re-telling of stories by teacher and learners can be viewed as useful for consolidation of language practice and to recycle new lexis. The re-telling of stories in a group offers learners support and scaffolding in storytelling tasks, within a safe environment. Examples of activities might involve the teacher or learners retelling a story in set groups. Literacy teachers are often advised to encourage learners to work within different pairs and groups for variety, however,

it can be argued that keeping to the same groups is preferable for learners, giving them time to consolidate new knowledge together and thus resulting in improved narrative stories, as the learners can develop a communicative rapport and working relationship with each other.

Narrative learning and pedagogic encounters

The use of storytelling as a pedagogic tool in the literacy classroom can be viewed as a form of narrative learning, comparing storytelling activities to forms of narrative encounters which can enhance language and literacy skills development. Stories from the literacy learners' experiences, both social and cultural, can be used to engage interest and encourage learners to relate to each other's lives, enabling them to bring their existing knowledge, skills and creativity to the learning process, expressing their own views, and therefore emancipating learning (Freire, 1972). It is empowering for a literacy student to be able to express thoughts and feelings articulately; language learning is fundamental to literacy learners overcoming social disadvantage and is essential for them to achieve social and economic well-being. Richardson (2015) notes that stories can also have political addresses related to maintaining, challenging or changing the status quo, or the distribution of power which suggests that stories are to do with freedom, with flowering, with flourishing.

Narrative storytelling as a collaborative process is a less traditional, more learner centred approach to literacy teaching, due to the rich variety of authentic language used in real life anecdotal conversation. Teachers can use this approach to raise learners' consciousness of new language features by using storytelling activities which encourage learners to work out for themselves how real-life language works, thus, promoting autonomy in learning, as learners acquire new forms that help them to develop their own storytelling ability. The use of narrative storytelling activities and tasks can also help literacy teachers to bond with their students, offering them sudden insight into learners' lives and motivation for learning.

The use of narrative learning in storytelling is often defined as *life learning*, and is an effective approach to teaching which implements the exchange of life stories as a form of *dialogic interaction* to empower and inspire learners in literacy acquisition. There is a compelling case for the benefits of using anecdotal storytelling as a form of *narrative pedagogy* in the literacy classroom. Storytelling activities can be viewed as a series of *pedagogic encounters* between learners, which can lead to meaningful change and development for both the individual and groups of learners. Anecdotal stories used in an educational literacy context can not only be used to develop communication skills, but can also be used to develop learners' critical reflection skills. Lastly, but perhaps most importantly, collaborative storytelling can develop a learner's literacy identity and narrative capital (Goodson,2010) by promoting cultural and social literacy, understanding and empathy.

Conclusion

Learner collaboration is an important part of the storytelling process, as it promotes new understanding and interpretations of events via a storytelling medium; using learner interaction in the form of anecdotal conversation, dialogue and questioning, discussion and debate. The exchanging of oral narratives and storytelling of personal experiences is a highly social act, thus encouraging both *explicit* and *implicit* collaborative learning strategies.

It can be argued that the use of collaborative story tasks can also take the form of a *narrative pedagogy*, communicating teachers' personal perspectives and demonstrating ideas and examples of their own human situations; thus helping learners to reflect on and develop their own perspectives and communication tools via storytelling. Narrative learning can be considered holistic in that it generates conversations and exchanges of human experience steeped in socio-cultural, historical, political and personal perspective (Goodson, 2010).

Storytelling is a prominent feature of communicative discourse, so it can be considered that to use a communicative approach to literacy learning, which emphasises interaction between learners, with narrative learning as the ultimate goal, is to use storytelling as an effective pedagogic tool to practise realistic communication. If communicative literacy teaching is based on the premise that literacy learners need purposeful language which is useful for real-life situations, collaborative stories are used for exactly this purpose in a number of ways such as conveying information, evoking reactions and relaying experiences. Collaborative storytelling in an educational language context cannot only be used to develop communication skills by modelling certain language structures, but can also be used to develop critical thinking skills; teaching cultural sensitivity and understanding, making it an effective and productive language teaching tool in the literacy classroom. If the use of collaborative story narratives leads to a fuller understanding of language itself, collaborative storytelling makes up an important and valid part of sociolinguistics (Hymes, 1964) and the literacy classroom.

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Finding the pleasure in reading

Genevieve Clarke

Genevieve Clarke is a Programme Manager at The Reading Agency, an independent charity that inspires more people to read more, encourages them to share their enjoyment of reading and celebrates the difference that reading makes to all our lives. Genevieve coordinates the annual 'Reading Ahead' programme (formerly 'Six Book Challenge') for less confident readers which reaches at least 40,000 people each year through public libraries, adult community learning, colleges, prisons and workplaces.

Genevieve Clarke from The Reading Agency puts the case for reading for pleasure as a way of engaging and supporting individuals and communities in their learning.

> **"**The association of enjoyment and pleasure, and of self-motivated literacy practices, with successful learning, is a key finding for the future of basic skills strategies, whatever their fundamental policy drivers might be." Green and Howard (2007: p.11)

When I came across this comment by Alix Green and Ursula Howard, then Director of the National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC), in 2007, I knew it would prove useful. And so, ten years on, it continues to be. Contained in a small booklet, *Skills and social practices: making common cause,* it was a follow-up to a piece of practitioner research funded by the NRDC into the use of reading for pleasure with adult learners. Unsurprisingly this found that they enjoyed the activity and improved their skills at the same time.

Making the argument

Yet it is a sad fact that the case for making reading for pleasure an integral part of both formal and informal learning provision has to be put on a regular basis to policymakers and practitioners alike. The arguments in its favour seem pretty obvious. In other fields we accept the notion of 'practice makes perfect' without question; a musician has to spend hours with their instrument before a performance. They have to learn new combinations of notes (i.e. vocabulary), get the fingering right (i.e. fluency) and bring understanding to their playing (i.e. comprehension). Professor Steve Reder, writing in the Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning in 2009, puts it simply: 'More frequent reading and writing activities lead … to greater [reading] proficiency.'

This is not going to happen, however, without an adult learner feeling that the 'practice' relates sufficiently to their real lives, in other words to their 'social practice' whether it be their workplace, home or family. Even better if they derive some pleasure from the activity and feel motivated to continue it.

Becoming a reader

How often have we met students who say they never read? Yet many, when pushed, admit to reading the sports pages, a computer magazine or the local newspaper because they are sufficiently

interested to do so. Others are intimidated because they assume that being a 'reader' means tackling Charles Dickens.

All of which points to introducing reading to suit personal choice and interest alongside functional skills, ESOL and provision for those with learning difficulties and disabilities whatever their level of literacy. We all know that learners need to be engaged in order to be motivated. They are only going to connect to a subject if it appeals to them and it is introduced in the right manner. Song lyrics, poetry, short stories, graphic novels, are all great ways to demonstrate the power of words to tell a story, provoke a reaction or make someone laugh or cry.

Reading Ahead

At The Reading Agency we've been working for several years to promote the use of reading for pleasure to engage, motivate and support learners to make progress through programmes such as *Quick Reads* and *World Book Night*. Our annual challenge, *Reading Ahead*, is designed to incentivise people to give reading a try or to stretch themselves to read something different. A simple but powerful tool, it invites learners to pick six reads of their choice and record their reading in a small diary to get a certificate. Ten years on from its launch in 2008, the programme has reached more than 275,000 people through public libraries, colleges, adult community learning, prisons and workplaces.

The sense of achievement is huge.

'Never read six books ever,' says Paul at HMYOI Rochester. 'Now I will carry on reading for the rest of my life.'

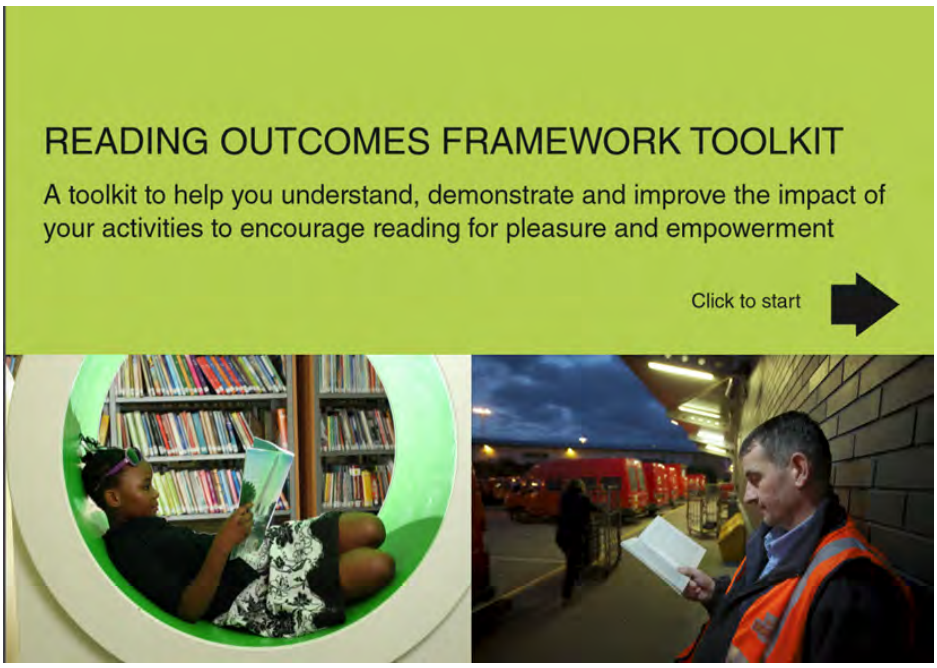
Theresa, who completed *Reading Ahead* with Derbyshire Community Adult Learning Service, comments, 'I'm now confident enough about reading to help my children with their homework. I feel so much better about myself because I can help them.'

'Staff really look forward to pushing their reading and challenging their normal reading comfort zones,' reports Sean Dixon, a trade union learning rep for USDAW, who uses *Reading Ahead* and *Quick Reads* and runs a reading group at DHL Argos in Castleford, Yorkshire.

Measuring outcomes

Since 2014, The Reading Agency has led a steering group of partners through a collaborative process to create a unique evaluation resource – the Reading Outcomes Framework Toolkit. This group has included Arts Council England, Association of Senior Children's and Education Librarians (ASCEL), BookTrust, Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), National Literacy Trust (NLT), Publishers Association, Scottish Book Trust, Scottish Libraries and Information Council (SLIC), Society of Chief Librarians (SCL) and The Reading Agency.

The framework sets out the outcomes from reading for pleasure and empowerment programmes drawn from a thorough literature review: reading engagement, health and wellbeing, intellectual, personal and social. The toolkit provides a practical resource to help organisations and projects to



evaluate the outcomes of their activities, with flexibility to accommodate the diversity and breadth of existing interventions. The toolkit also presents advice on evaluation methods and a bank of freely available questions that can be used to measure a programme's ability to achieve intended outcomes. These include questions that can be used with adults, parents and carers as well as children and young people. The aspiration is to strengthen evaluation methods across the sector, move beyond programme level evaluation towards the increased use of shared approaches to understand the impact of activities that support reading for pleasure and empowerment and to use the learning from this to shape future development and delivery.

During 2017 the toolkit has been piloted with students taking part in *Reading Ahead* at Newcastle-under-Lyme College where 172 students completed the programme this year. Responses to survey questions based on the toolkit showed a positive shift in confidence and attitudes about reading.

The toolkit also formed the context for the latest evaluation report for *Reading Ahead* which, as in previous years, shows an increase in participants' confidence in reading and that they are reading more. They also enjoy reading more, read with their children, talk about reading and use the library more to borrow books.

Case studies

Uxbridge College supported 1006 students to complete *Reading Ahead* in 2016 across courses ranging from ESOL to GCSE. Analysis by the college revealed that those who completed *Reading Ahead* had a 10% higher success rate including for GCSE English and Maths, rising to a 12.5% uplift for Functional Skills. Gavin Hughes, Director of Learning & Support Services at Uxbridge College, comments: 'We are extremely happy with the results of Reading Ahead. We know we are doing the right thing - everybody is engaged in it.'

Northampton College has been running *Reading Ahead* for the full ten years. For the sixth year running they received a gold award from The Reading Agency in 2017 for supporting 186 students to complete the programme, mainly drawn from ESOL and Supported Learning courses.

Principal Pat Brennan-Barrett says: 'The *Reading Ahead* programme has enriched our student offer - opened up new challenges and rewarded so many with the gift of literacy. It has been a revelation to see how many of our students and staff have benefited from the programme - year after year.'

Northampton College is particularly pleased to have engaged Foundation Studies students in *Reading Ahead* this year. Chrissy Gamble, Lecturer in Foundation and English, who teaches a group at Level 1, explains: 'The students in my group range from 16 - 18 years of age and most of them would have said, "Read? I don't read!" before doing *Reading Ahead*. I have taken great pride in watching the students develop their reading skills and even their ability to discuss what they have read and enjoyed. Every Functional Skills lesson now incorporates half an hour of reading.'

The Education and Training Foundation has included *Reading Ahead* case studies on its Excellence Gateway to support English teachers. Sue Southwood, Head of Maths and English, says: 'Engaging learners with the Reading Ahead programme builds the skills and knowledge that underpin both GCSE English and Functional Skills.'

Overcoming barriers

Despite these positive findings the use of reading for pleasure still tends to be the exception rather than the rule. Barriers cited range from the pressure of accreditation targets to lack of confidence on the part of tutors. It's as though teachers need to be given permission to be creative or to enthuse about their own reading interests – surely one of the main ways in which their delivery will remain fresh and engaging for learners.

Ideally, adult literacy practitioners have been encouraged to take a holistic approach to their learners, starting where they are and with what they want to do. Helping them to find reading material that will appeal to them has to be an essential part of their development as autonomous learners able to make choices about their next steps.

As we celebrate ten years of *Reading Ahead* let's heed the advice of the quote at the start of this article and make sure that the link between reading for pleasure and adult learning is here to stay.

Print materials to support *Reading Ahead 2017-18* can be purchased from The Reading Agency.

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Creating a reading culture in the workplace

By Tony Norbury and Ya Ching Darnell

Tony Norbury has worked with Merseytravel's learning team, Merseylearn, for the past twelve years as part of their Union learning project. Tony is a senior rep and his main role is to help people engage with learning through the Union Learning Representative structure.

Ya Ching Darnell works with Merseytravel's Corporate Engagement Education team. Her main role is to assist the Education Officer to promote walking, cycling, and sustainable transport to local schools as well as promote TravelSafe a project which aims to reduce anti-social behaviour on transport. Ya Ching is a Union Learning Representative, working with the Merseylearn team and other Union Learning Representatives to promote learning and encourage family learning in the workplace.

Merseytravel

Merseytravel is the executive body that provides professional, strategic and operational transport advice to the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to enable it to make informed decisions. It is also the delivery arm, making transport happen.

Merseylearn ULRs Tony Norbury and Norman Hunter giving out books at Liverpool John Lennon Airport – still looking enthusiastic at 4am!

As a public sector organisation, Merseytravel spends approximately £160million per annum on a diverse range of supplies, services and works - all aimed at facilitating and improving transport across the Merseyside region.

Merseytravel's learning and development arm is branded Merseylearn, and is a joint management and union programme supported financially by the government through the Union Learning Fund.

Merseylearn: reading across the community

Our team of Union Learning Representatives (ULRs, or 'reps'), led by the Merseylearn project workers, have been working collectively on a number of innovative projects that have encouraged and facilitated reading for pleasure amongst staff, our partner organisations and the wider community in Merseyside. It is Merseylearn's mission to support Liverpool to become the number one city for reading in England.

Encouraging people who don't normally read for pleasure is proven to add to that person's growth and academic ability, and it is recognised that reading is a major factor in gaining academic qualifications and underpins learning as a whole. Involving adults in the workplace helps disseminate reading in the home too, supporting other members of the family to read and develop their vocabulary and understanding.

Merseylearn's ULRs organise the Reading Agency's annual 'Reading Ahead Challenge' for Merseytravel staff, which invites learners to read and record six book or articles within a period of a year. Since 2009, 888 learners have completed the programme, which was formerly known as the Six Book Challenge. Our success with the Challenge has inspired the creation of a workplace book club which started last year and has grown from strength to strength, drawing in partners from our building and community. There are 35 employees involved in the Merseytravel Book Club and they chat using a dedicated internal email account.

Merseylearn has also hosted celebration events for our partner organisations, including The Reader and Liverpool City of Readers, which has led to recognition for the work we do. They have worked with us on reading projects that have enhanced reading opportunities for passengers who use public transport in the City Region. Projects include the Reading Agency's 'Summer Reading Challenge', involving Merseytravel employees' families, and 'Anytime Is Story Time' on the iconic Mersey Ferry, involving local schools.

We worked with the Liverpool City of Readers on a project called 'Moved to Read', where we shared thousands of 'Quick Read' books with public transport users on the ferries, trains, buses, taxis and even at Liverpool John Lennon Airport, enabling transport users to read for pleasure whilst on their journey. After reading the book passengers were asked to leave the book for the next person to enjoy or take it home and read to their families. We feel the more we can facilitate people who don't normally read for pleasure, the more the workplace and the city will grow together. Targeting transport users enabled us to reach social and economic groups that wouldn't usually participate in reading groups such as book clubs. The work we did with the Liverpool taxi drivers was exceptionally rewarding - we gave each cabbie copies of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol to share with their Christmas shopping customers. So many of the cabbies made sure they read it before sharing it, it was great to see. We're sure some of the books got wrapped up as Christmas presents, too!

Union Learning Representatives: developing through volunteering

Through working on these reading projects, our ULRs have gained confidence and a variety of additional skills helping them to become more active reps., They have learned how to organise events, facilitate workplace reading challenges, support book clubs, arrange city wide projects, and have become active in networking. Our URL's are making a real difference to people's lives through facilitating learning in the workplace and beyond. One of our reps has even trained as a Story Teller with The Reader in Liverpool and as a result has been able to support World Book Day events and Any Time Is Story Time events by reading stories to school children.

Other ULRs have trained with The Reader to become fully trained as experiential 'reading aloud' practitioners as part of The Reader's 'A Little Aloud' project. This allows the ULR to facilitate reading aloud groups for people who may not otherwise read because they have challenges in their lives.

Our journey

The impact of the Merseylearn project can be measured through the thousands of people with whom we have shared books and reading. Email chats from our book club participants are a great way to see the impact reading is having on them; the chat comes from every corner of Merseytravel. We've also enjoyed success with local media including interviews on local radio stations. Some of our URL's were nervous about being interviewed but their passion overcame the nerves in the end and they managed to share the message about the importance of reading.

Every time Merseylearn delivers a project, we like to promote it through social media to share the learning. Each book we shared with our transport users had a sticker in it telling people what the project was about, to cascade the information about the benefits of reading.

Merseytravel has been recognised as achieving gold standard by the Liverpool Quality Reading Mark and is the first non-school organisation to be recognised in this way.

Merseytravel's ambassador status will enable Merseylearn to work with other employers so they too can gain the Liverpool Quality Reading Mark. This will support our vision to become 'The City of Readers'. Embedding reading into every family and home in Liverpool is a lifelong journey for Merseylearn and to be awarded the Gold Liverpool Quality Reading Mark last year was such a positive achievement. Tony said, 'It was great to be given the opportunity to work alongside Ya Ching and the other Union Learning Reps to promote reading for pleasure within our workplace and the wider Liverpool City Region.'

Although we know we have already made a difference to lots of people through raising attainment levels and improving literacy and numeracy, we know we have more to do. We will continue our work to support not only this generation but many generations to come.

What does it mean to be literate? How the concept of 'literacy' is currently perceived by policy-makers, literacy teachers and adult learners.

Gwyneth Allatt

Gwyneth Allatt is a Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Huddersfield working with trainee teachers who are preparing for careers in the lifelong learning sector. After graduating with a degree in English from Lancaster University, Gwyneth worked as a college librarian before moving into education, first as an English teacher and then as a teacher educator. She is currently involved in doctoral research with a focus on adult literacy and the various ways in which the concept of literacy may be perceived and understood.

Introduction

In this article I consider the different ways in which literacy is currently perceived and defined by teachers, learners and policy-makers within adult literacy education in England. Using data from my current doctoral research I identify the perceptions of literacy that are apparent in policy documents and compare these with the views of literacy teachers and adult literacy learners. I conclude with the suggestion that, although there are some similarities in the ways in which the notion of 'literacy' is understood, teachers and learners take a much broader view of the concept than that found in current policy. I argue that teachers' and learners' views seem far more aligned with a social practice model of literacy (Street, 1995) than those of policy makers.

The term 'literacy' is used throughout the article, although the replacement of this with 'English' is preferred in policy (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011). For the purpose of my research, an 'adult' learner is understood to be nineteen years of age or older and the current policy to which I refer relates to England and Wales. Teachers and learners referred to in the article have been given pseudonyms.

Background

The various ways in which literacy has been defined and understood within policy initiatives such as 'Right to Read', 'Skills for Life' and the introduction of Functional Skills qualifications, have already been the subject of a number of analyses (Taylor, 2008a; Burgess and Hamilton, 2011; Hamilton, 2012). In many of the analyses a 'traditional' view of literacy which emphasizes the reading and writing of formal, paper-based texts has been identified. This 'traditional' view of literacy is often aligned to the autonomous model outlined by Street (1995). Within this, literacy is defined by standards and rules and is seen as fundamentally a set of cognitive and technical skills that a learner needs to acquire, with little consideration being given to the social context in which literacy is used (Bartlett, 2008; Cope and Kalantzis, 2009; St Clair, 2012, Taylor, 2008b: Crowther and Tett, 2011). Edwards et al. (2009) suggest that it is the view on which much policy-making is based.

A further common theme emerging from the analysis of education policy is the dominance of a 'deficit' model of literacy, where the emphasis is on literacy as an attribute lacking in illiterate adults. Literacy learners are often presented as embarrassed by their lack of literacy and at great pains to disguise it. They are held responsible for addressing their illiteracy in order to become more effective members of society who make a contribution to the nation's economic prosperity. (Burgess and Hamilton, 2011: Hamilton and Pitt, 2011; Crowther and Tett, 2011; Kendall and McGrath, 2014). This deficit approach is linked to discourses of employability and functionalism, in which the main focus of literacy education is helping learners to find and sustain employment. Policy for adult literacy education thus focuses on literacy as a means to economic prosperity (both of the nation as a whole and of the individual) and on targets, testing and standardisation (Hamilton, 2012).

It would appear that such ways of viewing literacy also feature in international literacy surveys and education policy. Analysis of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) conducted in the 1990s and the more recent Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), for example, identified similar discourses of functionalism in relation to perceptions of literacy, including a focus on literacy measurement and levels, economic success and productivity. (Bartlett, 2008; Black and Yasukawa, 2014). Hanemann (2015) also recognises a narrow focus on reading and writing using print-based materials in international policy, which links literacy to employment and economic progress. Meanwhile, Benavot (2015, p.279) describes the 'official' policy definitions of literacy used in some countries in Asia and the Middle East as relying on set notions of reading and writing which are restricted to printed texts and are competency-based. The author compares these definitions with the broader 'socio-cultural' views of literacy held by non-governmental organisations that include the empowerment of individuals, gender equality and community development. He also identifies social development and cultural assimilation as aspects of literacy underpinning literacy programmes in Brazil, Chile and Argentina.

The ways in which literacy is viewed in previous policies for adult literacy education seem to me, therefore, to suggest a very fixed and restricted view of what literacy is and of its purpose. This is contrasted in the literature with a social practice approach which, rather than understanding literacy as a fixed concept based on a prescribed set of technical skills, acknowledges the existence of *literacies*, that is, a range of practices which vary according to social context, each with its own set of norms and conventions. (Street, 1995; Crowther and Tett, 2011). My own research began from a curiosity about *current* policy and the view of literacy on which it is based. A survey of the literature had failed to find any analysis of current policy. Similarly, I found little consideration in previous research of the views of literacy teachers or adult literacy learners, other than Kendall and McGrath's (2014) work on teacher's definitions of reading. The lack of knowledge around teachers' and learners' perceptions is another issue which my study aims to address. In the remainder of this article I describe my approach to the research and outline the findings so far.

Methodology

The study on which this article is based compares notions of literacy presented in current policy for adult education in England with the views of teachers of adult literacy and some of their learners. Data was gathered from an initial analysis of a number of policy documents using *Wordsmith Tools 6.0* lexical analysis software followed by a more detailed study using a critical discourse analysis approach. The value of critical discourse analysis as an approach lies particularly in its ability to identify the ways in which meanings and identities are constructed through language (Tonkiss, 2004). Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis, in which discourse is understood to have three distinct facets (text, discursive practice and social practice) provided a framework for the analysis of the policy documents allowing the texts to be considered in a number of ways; linguistically, looking at features such as sentence types and structure, tense, lexical choice, use of modal verbs, coherence and persuasive techniques and also at an 'interdiscursive' level in which recurring themes are identified between different discourses. (Fairclough, 2001; Taylor, 2004).

This article also draws on qualitative data from seventeen structured telephone interviews conducted with teachers of adult literacy between 2014 and 2016. Interview participants came from a range of educational institutions involved in the delivery of adult literacy programmes, including further education colleges and training providers of different sizes, all within the counties of West and South Yorkshire. Face-to-face interviews were carried out with four of these participants in early 2017 to explore their perceptions of literacy more thoroughly. In addition, two focus groups were held with adult literacy learners; one a Functional Skills class run by a local authority training provider in a city centre and the other a group of learners taking part in a privately organised literacy development through creative writing class in a village community centre. During the course of the research, two of the teachers participating in the telephone interviews asked my questions to their own groups of learners (one group in a large inner-city college of further education and the other in a charitable organisation working with vulnerable learners) and they shared their responses with me. I have made use of this additional data in this article as it provides some valuable insights into learners' views.

Findings

Perceptions of literacy in policy

Current UK policy on adult literacy education proved difficult to identify. Repeated searches of the government website failed to find anything seeming to constitute a definitive and comprehensive expression of current policy in this area since 2012 and the introduction of Functional Skills qualifications for adult learners. Recent concern in policy appeared to be more with younger learners leaving school without minimum grades in English and maths (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2015). Six documents were eventually selected for analysis, however, and of these, the one which seemed to provide the most current expression of policy relating to adult literacy education was the Coalition Government's response to the Department of Business Innovation and Skills Select Committee's inquiry into adult literacy and numeracy (Department for

Business, Innovation and Skills, 2014). The document claims to explain how the Government's intentions for funding and delivering English (and maths) programmes to adults will address the Select Committee's recommendations. In doing this it provides an indication of the Government's approach to adult literacy education, which includes funding for free tuition but no campaign to raise public awareness of the literacy (and numeracy) support available. A move towards GCSEs in English (and maths) as the preferred qualifications for adults where appropriate, along with a focus on the needs of certain categories of learners, including the unemployed, prisoners, the homeless and young people aged 18 to 21, are also features of the Government's intentions. The most recent document included in the analysis was 'Implementing the Further Education and Skills Reform Programme' (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016) which includes a small section on literacy education. There appears to have been no further policy on adult literacy education since the change of government in 2015, although a consultation on changes to Functional Skills qualifications is currently underway (Department for Education, 2017).

Current policy for adult literacy education in the UK seems to maintain the 'deficit' approach to literacy identified in earlier policies by Kendall and McGrath (2014) among others, for example in describing literacy as a problem or a barrier which needs to be tackled and overcome. (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2014). Within the documents analysed, literacy is defined as 'essential' skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing which are needed for work and everyday living (ibid., p.2). Absent is any sense of reading for pleasure, creative writing or learning for its own sake. The term *operating* recurs and contributes to discourses of functionality and employability, which are even more clearly identifiable in the choice of financial and economic terminology, including *impact, drivers, returns, earnings, investment, market, Net Present Value, performance, outcomes,* and *sustainability* and in the regular repetition of the words *work, employment* and *employers*. (ibid, p.4.) A discourse of functionalism further emerges through the concerns with *personal efficacy, skills, levels, outcomes and measurement (ibid., p.2).* There is also some sense of literacy relating to broader issues in the identification of greater personal self-confidence, health and social mobility as a result of increasing literacy (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2016, p.6).

Teachers' perceptions of literacy

In the interviews teachers of adult literacy were asked why they felt an adult should be literate and what they thought a literate adult should be able to do. Their responses revealed a wide variety of views on what it means to be literate. To many of the interview participants, literacy meant not only reading and writing using print-based materials, but also doing this with a degree of critical awareness and with enjoyment:

> *I think the reason that people should be literate is so that they can function independently in everyday life but also to give them aspirations to move on and to take enjoyment in being able to read. (Clare)*

> *I suppose it's being able to read, obviously, but being able to read between the lines, what's maybe an underlying message ... being able to be critical I suppose. Knowing exactly what something is saying maybe not just in the written words but what's implied as well. (Sue)*

Speaking and listening also featured regularly amongst the teachers' responses, along with the opinion that an important aspect of literacy is the ability to communicate appropriately in a variety of social and interpersonal situations. A person's confidence to express their own opinions also featured amongst their views on what it means to be literate.

The relationship of digital communication to literacy, including texting and email, the Internet and social media, was also mentioned by most of the interview participants:

> *I think it also now includes being able to use IT and digital technology and my students also said that they felt that being literate now also meant having a degree of computer literacy. (Mary)*

> *Everything now is done online isn't it and that is a really important part of being literate. (Clare)*

The notion of functioning in everyday life was another common feature in teachers' views on what it means to be a literate adult and employability was also a recurring idea to some extent, as two participants explained:

> *If you're reading and writing up to a certain standard job-wise you stand more of a chance of being able to gain employment. (Thomas)*

> *It's to improve employment prospects ... to listen and speak in a way that's appropriate to the workplace. (William)*

Additionally, participants' responses highlighted a wider range of issues they felt were aspects of being literate, including the autonomy and independence a literate adult would experience alongside the development of personal identity and greater well-being. The term 'empowerment', in the sense of people being able to make informed decisions and to do things for themselves, also recurred frequently in the interview transcripts. In fact, the majority of interview participants offered responses relating to participation in society, arguing that without literacy an adult could be isolated and unable to play a role in their communities. Many also raised the issue of disadvantage in relation to access to services and interaction with authorities.

The increased ability to support children through their schooling was cited by a number of the literacy teachers as a further reason for an adult to be literate, as one teacher suggested:

> *... if parents are literate then their children have got more chance of being helped at home. (Clare)*

For many participants, numeracy also featured in their understanding of the concept of literacy:

> *Sometimes to be numerate means to be literate.* (Anna)

I was interested to note how the views of the teachers I spoke to compared with the participants in Kendal and McGrath's study on reading, in which they found that teachers' views on literacy were often 'aligned with dominant policy discourse' and 'curriculum documents' (2014, p.71). The data from my research did not suggest that this was the case with my research sample of literacy teachers. In fact, there was a sense with some participants of resistance to a policy discourse of functionalism and employability; notably the teacher who gave up her teaching role in a large organisation to establish her own literacy classes independently in order to escape this. Another described her 'strategic compliance' in finding space for creative writing within the CV and formal letter writing requirements of her college's literacy curriculum. Such resistance may be related to the type of organisation within which the teachers are working and this is perhaps an issue which will be pursued at a later date.

The interviews also sought teachers' views on the policy of referring to 'English' rather than 'literacy' (Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011). Although the responses received varied, with some participants feeling that there is little difference between the two terms, there was some sense at least that 'literacy' is a broader concept than 'English', with the latter involving more of the technicalities of spelling, grammar and punctuation and being more 'academic' than 'literacy'. One participant's comments were particularly interesting and suggested a preference for a social practice approach:

> *English implies a standard English for particular purposes leading to a top-down approach. I am trying to avoid this to focus on learners' own needs and purposes instead.* (Carol)

Learners' perceptions of literacy

The focus group meetings began with a general question to literacy learners about what literacy meant to them and to a large extent their responses reflected those of the teachers interviewed. All the learners mentioned reading and writing along with speaking and listening.

> *You have to learn to read and write to get on.* (Eli)

Creative writing and reading for pleasure also featured significantly in their responses (although this was not surprising as one of the focus groups took place in a creative writing class).

> *I like writing at home … creative writing.* (Alison)

Some also made a link between literacy and employment prospects, although this featured less prominently in their responses than issues relating to social inclusion and to communication, particularly the ability to communicate in a range of situations including their children's schools and within their communities. Identified alongside this was the confidence to share their own opinions and to be able to understand and consider the opinions of others:

> *Discussion, you have to let people take their turn and listen… We need to be able to listen as well as put our own discussion forward.* (Gemma)

Another learner described how her developing literacy had given her the confidence to become a 'Reading Friend' at her son's school: a role she felt allowed her to make a positive contribution in her community, while improving her own self-esteem and sense of identity. The notion of empowerment also arose:

> *I think that it's breaking down barriers you know, because you feel once you were, you feel like a little voice but once you break through that barrier and you can do it you feel so much power. (Stacey)*

Independence was another frequently recurring theme across the groups, particularly in the sense of no longer having to depend on other people for help with everyday tasks.

Learners were unanimous in the view that numeracy and literacy are closely related, with some explaining how they needed to use their literacy to help them with every day numeracy tasks and in the maths classes they were attending:

> *You can't do maths if you haven't understood the English first. It's like trying to read instructions without being able to read.* (Karen)

For most members of the focus groups, being literate allowed them to help their children with homework and to support them through school more generally. Some indicated that this was not just about helping children through their school years however. Their responses also reflected longer term aspirations relating to social mobility.

Learners linked literacy with digital technology and some group members explained how they felt that electronic texts, such as websites, blogs, ebooks, text messages and social media posts, were just as much a part of literacy as print based texts.

> *I think they're both on a par aren't they, computers and literacy.* (Zara)

Conclusions

Data from the document analysis, interviews and focus groups seems to suggest some common ground between the perceptions of literacy held by policy-makers, teachers and literacy learners. The notion of functioning in everyday life, for instance, along with a concern for employability appear to be views shared between policy and participants. However, teachers' and learners' perceptions appear to be significantly broader and more varied than the ways in which literacy is defined and conceptualised in policy. For example, the responses given in the interviews and focus group meetings present a much greater sense of literacy's relationship to social inclusion and community involvement, along with more consideration of a person's independence and individual well-being. The responses also show a concern for issues such as self-esteem, self-fulfilment and personal identity that is absent in the policy documents. The teachers and learners also gave wider ranging definitions of the concept of literacy which, unlike the policy documents with their focus on print-based reading and writing, include digital literacy, numeracy and a much greater emphasis on effective communication in a range of situations (not just the workplace). Their notions of literacy

also encompass creative writing and reading for pleasure, which are notable absences within the policy documents.

Analysis of these documents affirmed the dominant discourses of employability and functionalism found in previous policy analyses along with a fixed, skills-based view of literacy. In the policy documents, the assumption appears to be that literacy is about gaining qualifications to help people find and sustain employment with little or no consideration of adults who, rather than looking for work, may simply wish to improve their skills to be able to read with their children, help with homework, or play more of a role in their community. Overall, the focus on functionality, employability and the fixed definitions of literacy inherent in policy are in sharp contrast with the views of most of the interview and focus group participants. The ways in which the teachers and learners understand literacy seem to be generally more aligned to the social practice approach outlined earlier in this article. In contrast to the perceptions of literacy presented in policy, teachers and learners, while acknowledging literacy's centrality to employability, recognise the role that different literacies play in family and community life along with personal well-being and fulfilment.

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RaPAL Conference, Quaker Meeting Liverpool, 24 June 2017

Amanda Derry

Amanda Derry is a tutor with the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) in Manchester teaching adults how to support children in their formal and informal learning. She is also studying part-time for a PGCE at Coleg Cambria, Wrexham.

I contributed my learning story towards the RaPAL book, *Resilience: Stories of Adult Learning* after contact with Tara Furlong. I am an Adult Learning Tutor with the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) and have been a student, voluntary worker and support tutor within this organisation. Because my experiences in Adult (Community) Learning have transformed my life in every area, I'm very committed to staying in this arena and helping other students and tutors. I was very impressed with the book containing many diverse learner stories, and from what I've gathered about RaPAL (a voluntary organisation where members who work in related organisations contribute their time) it is a pro-active and worthy venture. When Tara contacted me again to let me know about the Conference I felt very keen to attend it. I went with Lindsay Cussons who is a Support Tutor for WEA and a volunteer in my Arts class.

I had the chance to meet and talk with most people who attended the conference, which was set in the spacious and welcoming Quaker Meeting House building. We had ample tea and coffee breaks, served by the very capable Jo Byrne, free stationery goodies were given out and a lovely lunch cooked by the Quaker Meeting House staff.

The morning workshop I attended was held by Merseytravel, who has a large input into reading community ventures throughout Liverpool. These workshops help primary school children, Merseytravel employees and adults who have basic skills (literacy) needs. They promote the Quick Reads service, which is a great series of books aimed at adults learning to read (and are enjoyable for experienced readers too). They are involved in the Reading Ahead project (previously the Six Book Challenge) and created the 'lending library' trees which were placed in Liverpool City Centre. Mike read out a poem from a book which they utilize for reading excerpts and it was very moving to hear the words (about the 'sea') and I could imagine learners in workshops responding to them.

I attended the marketplace carousels at lunchtime and listened to Isabel Osuna-Gatty's taster about her experiences teaching indigenous Aboriginal people in Australia's outback. I have never had any contact with Aboriginal people, but a friend of mine was a nurse who worked within these communities to help them with family planning and personal care. I felt an affinity with Isabel's subject and when I saw some of her classroom planning strategies I felt compelled to attend her workshop. Isabel had flown over from Australia and she won the Australian training award last year. I found her seminar astonishing and moving and realised the obstacles she faced in introducing her learners to literacy and an awareness of their basic rights (through the UN Declaration of Human Rights). Although I had an awareness of it, I didn't realise the extent of opposition and neglect which the Aboriginal people receive in Australia.

I also met a fascinating training and development manager, Lesley Littlewood, who works within prisons (in Learning) and realised the obstacles which many of these prisoners, including women and young offenders, face. Talking to her gave me the idea of suggesting that a female poet I know based in Liverpool visit a prison as a way of introducing poetry in literacy learning.

The overall message I gained from the day revolved around '*Transformational Learning*' which is a term I'd heard of but isn't particularly used within my work organisation. Every educational experience should be transformative - that is to have a long lasting impact on the individual and change their perspective within important areas of their lives. Of course, this isn't always the case. Some educational experiences will pass without any or little impact and others may have a negative impact (which can transform attitudes, although in a different way).

Although formal education has an important part to play in individual progress, certainly career wise, there are many ways in which it has failed the individual learner. To me, Adult (Community) Education is there to address these failures and is an opportunity for former students or those who fell out of the educational system, to allow learning to make a real difference in their lives.

As a tutor (facilitator) my role has been focussed on learner needs and differentiating those needs within the classroom. Taking an *andragogical* approach (Pappas, 2013) emphasis is placed on the adult learner to take responsibility for their own learning and to develop critical evaluation skills, owning their education process and achieving results. Learning is an opportunity for the student to really develop themselves and learn new perceptions they can apply to many scenarios in their life. The important aspect of adult education is that often the learner doesn't have to undertake a course but they choose to, so this autonomous decision automatically puts the process of learning within their control.

Transformative learning affects a person's confidence, self-esteem, creativity, motivation and much more; most if not all aspects of life can be changed through the sole experience of taking on a course. This is very exciting and I feel privileged that I have the opportunity to be part of the transformative process of learning. I want to bring education to those for whom it has been inaccessible. In the same way RaPAL members have a passion for the learning sector and ideas they are promoting, I think it is the only approach for adult learning tutors to take if they are to continually transform their own and their students' learning experiences.

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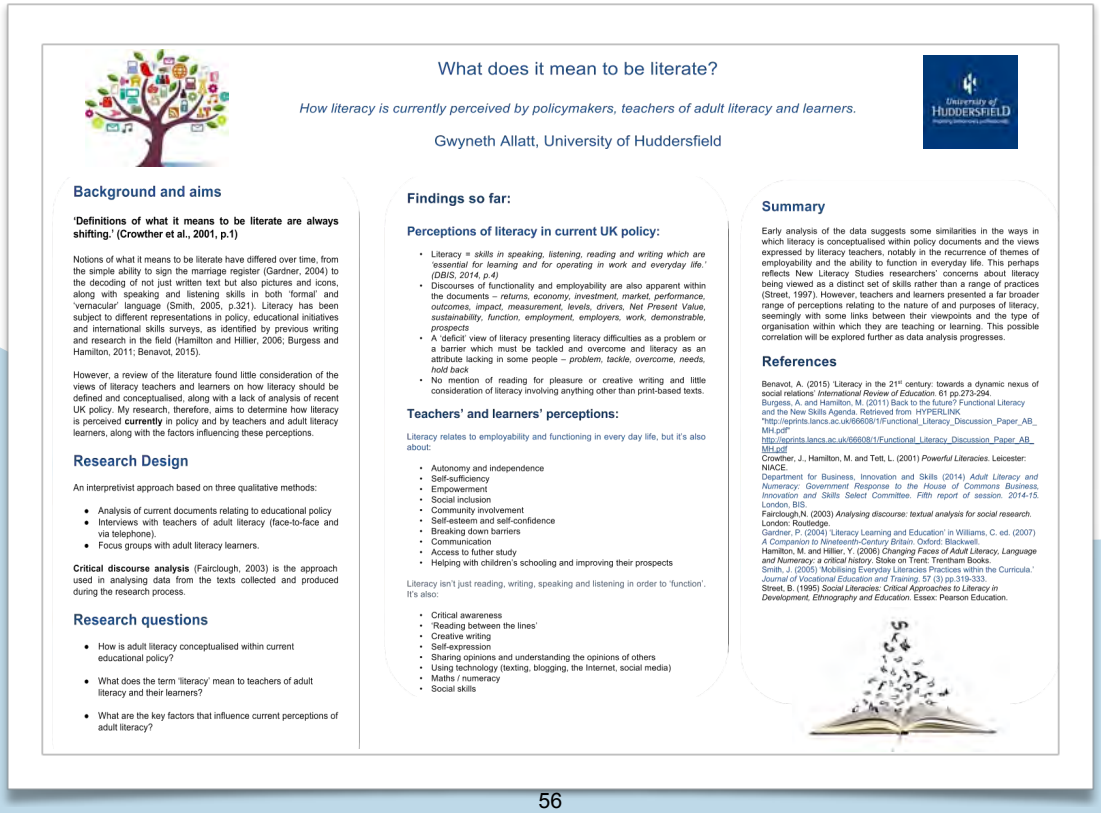
Participating in the market place carousel at the RaPAL Conference, June 2017

Gwyneth Allatt

At the RaPAL conference I was one of a number of presenters who took part in the *market place carousel*; a really useful opportunity to talk about my doctoral research on adult literacy and to gain some different perspectives on it from people with similar interests to myself but coming from a variety of fields within adult education. The idea behind the *carousel* was that short, informal and interactive presentations took place simultaneously, with a small 'audience' at each one which moved on to a different presentation every ten minutes.

I took along a research poster I had created and used this as the basis for my presentation. I use the term *presentation* a little cautiously though, as it is not really a correct description of the activity; it was much more of a two-way process than that, with lots of questions from conference delegates, who were also happy to share their own views on some of the questions raised in my research. The atmosphere in the room was busy and lively, and I felt more relaxed than if I had been giving a formal presentation. The time passed by really quickly; I could have easily have gone on a bit longer if the schedule had allowed!

As well as valuable practice in talking about my research and responding to questions about it (I will have to do this with examiners in the near future!) participating in the carousel encouraged me to look at my research in a new light. I left the conference with a few totally new avenues to explore and some different questions to ponder.



What does it mean to be literate?

How literacy is currently perceived by policymakers, teachers of adult literacy and learners.

Gwyneth Allatt, University of Huddersfield

University of Huddersfield

Background and aims

'Definitions of what it means to be literate are always shifting.' (Crowther et al., 2001, p.1)

Notions of what it means to be literate have differed over time, from the simple ability to sign the marriage register (Gardner, 2004) to the decoding of not just written text but also pictures and icons, along with speaking and listening skills in both 'formal' and 'vernacular' language (Smith, 2005, p.321). Literacy has been subject to different representations in policy, educational initiatives and international skills surveys, as identified by previous writing and research in the field (Hamilton and Hillier, 2006; Burgess and Hamilton, 2011; Benavot, 2015).

However, a review of the literature found little consideration of the views of literacy teachers and learners on how literacy should be defined and conceptualised, along with a lack of analysis of recent UK policy. My research, therefore, aims to determine how literacy is perceived **currently** in policy and by teachers and adult literacy learners, along with the factors influencing these perceptions.

Research Design

An interpretivist approach based on three qualitative methods:

- Analysis of current documents relating to educational policy
- Interviews with teachers of adult literacy (face-to-face and via telephone).
- Focus groups with adult literacy learners.

Critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003) is the approach used in analysing data from the texts collected and produced during the research process.

Research questions

- How is adult literacy conceptualised within current educational policy?
- What does the term 'literacy' mean to teachers of adult literacy and their learners?
- What are the key factors that influence current perceptions of adult literacy?

Findings so far:

Perceptions of literacy in current UK policy:

- Literacy = *skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing which are 'essential for learning and for operating in work and everyday life.' (DBIS, 2014, p.4)*
- Discourses of functionality and employability are also apparent within the documents – *returns, economy, investment, market, performance, outcomes, impact, measurement, levels, drivers, Net Present Value, sustainability, function, employment, employers, work, demonstrable, prospects*
- A 'deficit' view of literacy presenting literacy difficulties as a problem or a barrier which must be tackled and overcome and literacy as an attribute lacking in some people – *problem, tackle, overcome, needs, hold back*
- No mention of reading for pleasure or creative writing and little consideration of literacy involving anything other than print-based texts.

Teachers' and learners' perceptions:

Literacy relates to employability and functioning in every day life, but it's also about:

- Autonomy and independence
- Self-sufficiency
- Empowerment
- Social inclusion
- Community involvement
- Self-esteem and self-confidence
- Breaking down barriers
- Communication
- Access to futher study
- Helping with children's schooling and improving their prospects

Literacy isn't just reading, writing, speaking and listening in order to 'function'. It's also:

- Critical awareness
- 'Reading between the lines'
- Creative writing
- Self-expression
- Sharing opinions and understanding the opinions of others
- Using technology (texting, blogging, the Internet, social media)
- Maths / numeracy
- Social skills

Summary

Early analysis of the data suggests some similarities in the ways in which literacy is conceptualised within policy documents and the views expressed by literacy teachers, notably in the recurrence of themes of employability and the ability to function in everyday life. This perhaps reflects New Literacy Studies researchers' concerns about literacy being viewed as a distinct set of skills rather than a range of practices (Street, 1997). However, teachers and learners presented a far broader range of perceptions relating to the nature of and purposes of literacy, seemingly with some links between their viewpoints and the type of organisation within which they are teaching or learning. This possible correlation will be explored further as data analysis progresses.

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Learning together across generations: Guidelines for Literacy and Family Learning

Workshop report: RaPAL annual conference, Saturday, 24th June 2017

Katy Newell-Jones and Juliet McCaffery

British Association for Literacy in Development (BALID)

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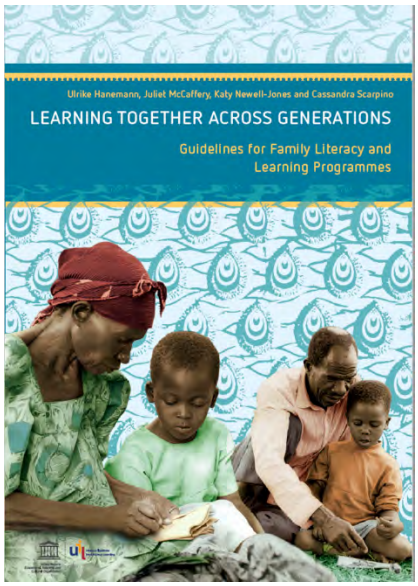


We were privileged to work with UNESCO/UIL on a recently published resource pack on intergenerational and family literacy **Learning together across generations: Guidelines for literacy and family learning** (2017). The Resource Pack was designed with resource-poor contexts in mind; however, family literacy programmes are widespread and our workshop was an opportunity to share this highly practical resource with colleagues from the RaPAL network, involved in adult literacy in the UK and in other countries.

The RaPAL workshop explored the role which family literacy and learning can play in empowering families and individuals to engage in learning opportunities with each other and in their communities, drawing on experience*s* in the UK and low-income countries.

The intended outcomes from the workshop were to gain:

- a greater understanding of the potential of family literacy and learning
- a range of new ideas for intergenerational activities to suit different contexts
- knowledge where to seek further information on the planning, implementation and evaluation of family literacy and learning programmes.

What is family literacy and intergenerational learning?

Family literacy and family learning are approaches to learning that focus on intergenerational interactions within families and communities which promote the development of literacy, numeracy, language and life skills. Family learning recognises the vital role that parents, grandparents and other care-givers play in their children's education and in promoting cultural learning. It further values and supports all forms of learning that happen in the home and in communities. It seeks to break down the artificial barriers between learning in different contexts: informal or non-formal settings at school or in adult literacy courses, and in informal environments in peoples' homes and community neighbourhoods. Very often the desire to help their children with school motivates parents and care-givers to re-engage in learning themselves and improve their own literacy, numeracy, language and other basic skills. Linking to this motivation, family literacy and family learning supports adults, whose own education has been limited for various reasons, to help their children with learning. Therefore, the focus of family literacy and learning is on both children's and adults' learning.

The *Learning together across generations* resource pack

The method of developing the pack was new to us. After initial meetings in Hamburg with UNESCO/UIL colleagues, representatives from 15 organisations from Nepal, Mozambique, Senegal, Palestine, South Africa, Turkey, South Korea, USA, UK, Argentina, Ireland and Uganda were invited to a three-day workshop in Hamburg. The objectives of the workshops were to present methods they had found successful in their family literacy and learning programmes, to critique a range of learning activities and to ensure that the resource pack was practical and relevant. All gave excellent and detailed presentations and many of the examples, illustrations and pictures in the pack are drawn from the workshop.

The *Learning together across the generations* resource pack is divided into three main sections. These are: the Introduction; Part 1: Guidelines; Part 2: Materials and activities

The opening part, *Introduction*, provides a well-referenced overview to family literacy and family learning, summarising the rationale, the supporting evidence, success factors, issues, challenges and barriers.

Part 1: Guidelines provides practical suggestions and examples to establishing, designing, implementing and evaluating family literacy and learning programmes (see below for more detail) as well as a checklist for providers starting such a programme.

Context, situation and learning needs

This section gives a good summary of the important things to consider when establishing a programme including why the programme might take place. These consider whether there are any community issues such as conflicts or post-conflict situations; there is also an emphasis on employment prospects and the economic level of the community. Additionally, the report stresses the importance of identifying how the programme will be funded and made sustainable. Each of these issues is considered in detail.

Cross-cutting principles

The second section considers cross-cutting principles - the importance of respecting human rights, understanding and appreciating the culture, valuing linguistic diversity and promoting multilingualism, fostering gender equality and encouraging people with disabilities to participate. Family literacy must be flexible and able to adapt to different situations.

Participants

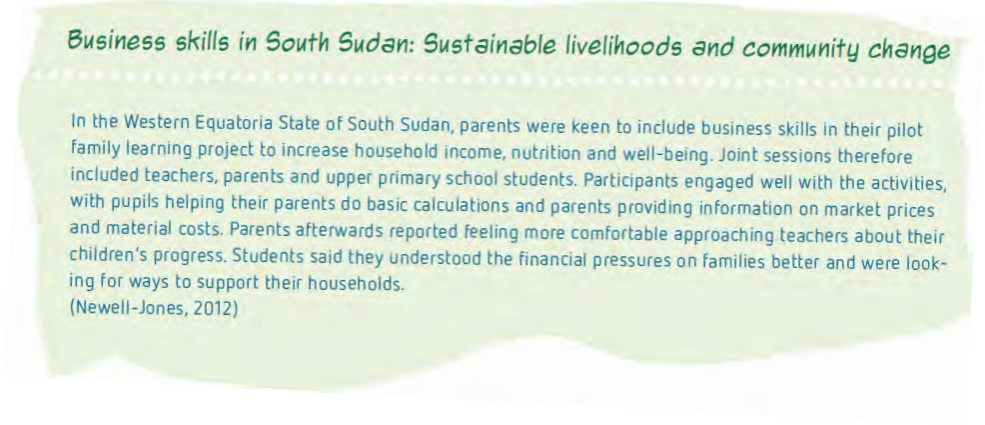
While many previous programmes focused on children and mothers or fathers, family and intergenerational learning includes both parents, grandparents, caregivers, wider family members and possibly people from the wider community. It should aim particularly at marginalized and vulnerable communities and suggest ways of connecting with hard-to-reach communities. The section also suggests how barriers to participation might be overcome. Community leaders, both religious and secular are important and need to be approached and engaged while planning the programme.

Partners and partnerships and funding

Partnerships can be made with local schools, local government and different community organisations, and also with international NGOs. It is important that the programme recognises local, regional and national priorities and does not overtly challenge them, rather they are needed to publicly endorse the programme. The programme managers should report to the partners and interested organisations in order to maintain their interest and commitment. Funding is an absolutely key issue and while different international funding organisations are listed on page 66, it is a comparatively short section. One suggestion to increase sustainability is to link with similar long-term programmes and to have more than one source of funding.

Programme aims, outcomes and indicators

The aims need to be really clear before the programme starts, as the outcomes and indicators of success should relate directly to the aims. Outcomes to be measured may also include awareness of rights and responsibilities as citizens, increased gender equality and an increase in sustainable livelihoods. Improved livelihoods were one of the outcomes in South Sudan (p.50).



Business skills in South Sudan: Sustainable livelihoods and community change

In the Western Equatoria State of South Sudan, parents were keen to include business skills in their pilot family learning project to increase household income, nutrition and well-being. Joint sessions therefore included teachers, parents and upper primary school students. Participants engaged well with the activities, with pupils helping their parents do basic calculations and parents providing information on market prices and material costs. Parents afterwards reported feeling more comfortable approaching teachers about their children's progress. Students said they understood the financial pressures on families better and were looking for ways to support their households.
(Newell-Jones, 2012)

Programme structure and management

The Resource pack identifies three different learning sessions – separate sessions for children, sessions for adults and sessions for children and adults together. Pages 54 and 55 give interesting illustrated examples of different activities which can take place in the different sessions, for example parents reading and together discussing the information they receive from the school, or preparing a shopping list with a child. It discusses which language or languages might be used in a multilingual context and notes that in five districts in Uganda six different languages are spoken. It suggests starting by using the languages most commonly used in the home.

Managing a diverse programme which may take place in different locations and with different aims in different sessions is a complicated task. Ideally managers would be required for the different elements of the programme such as outreach work, developing the content, and monitoring and supporting the facilitators, but in a small rural programme this may not be possible.

Trainers and facilitators

The success of the programme will ultimately depend on the ability of the facilitators and the quality of the teaching. This will depend on the quality of the training and the monitoring and support given to the facilitators. The section suggests key questions to consider and provides ideas.

- What skills should both the trainers and facilitators possess?
- Who will train the facilitators and what experience should they have, what language will they train in; a local, national or international language?
- How will facilitators be selected, how many hours a week work will they work, will they be paid - payment is recommended – and how long will they be contracted for?
- How often will facilitators be visited and appraised and who by?
- How will their interest and motivation be sustained?

Programme content

The focus on the context, working with the community in different situations uses a social practice model of literacy as the preferred model. However, the pack recognizes that many programmes use a standard national or regional curriculum with a standardized text book, but it acknowledges that this can be a valuable starting point and learning materials and topics can be developed locally to

supplement the formal programme. Consulting with the participants at the start of the programme and throughout is essential in order to maintain participants' interest and motivation. The pack suggests:

- Ways in which parents can help their children with homework
- How sport, art, music and practical activities relate to literacy and learning
- Understanding how people learn
- Learning about computers and other technologies.

Engaging activities, doing rather than listening, and learners contributing their own experiences are recommended. There is a list of things to remember when planning a lesson (p.74). Using local materials including street signs is also mentioned and there are pictures of two street signs (p.76).

The importance of talking to babies and children from birth is stressed so they hear language from their very earliest weeks and gradually begin to identify and repeat individual words. The ability that children have with language when they start school has been proved to be a key indicator of future success. A range of activities to undertake with young children is listed.

Monitoring, evaluation and research

Monitoring and evaluation of family learning is complex, with the focus of different programmes varying considerably. This section of the Resource Pack provides an overall framework to the process (see figure below) as well as addressing key questions for programme organisers.

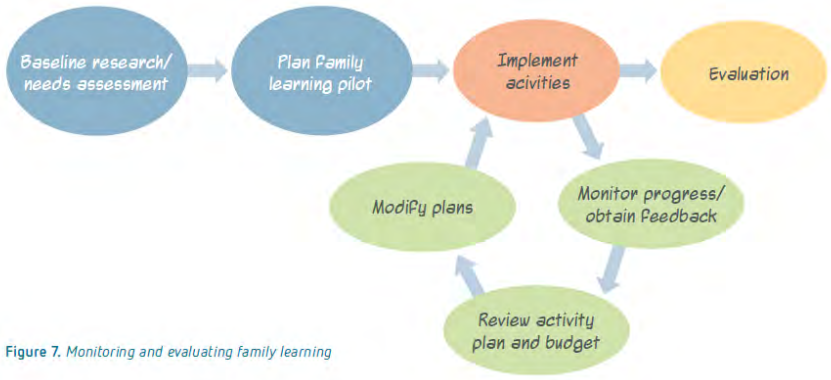


Figure 7. *Monitoring and evaluating family learning*

Figure 1. Flow chart showing the role of the mini-cycle of programme monitoring (green) in shaping programme

This section demonstrates how programme outcomes and indicators, the implementation plan and a monitoring and evaluation schedule link together to provide a coherent approach to monitoring and evaluation. Examples are provided of tools used by different family learning programmes in Ireland, Palestine and Turkey as well as suggestion as to how monitoring and evaluation data can be

used and how a research based approach to evaluation can greater enhance impact of the evaluation process.

Part 2: Materials and Activities provides examples of activities to use with family learning groups as well as guidelines of designing low-cost materials and quality criteria for effective learning materials. Examples of activities include an illustrated insert of grandparents reading stories in Nepal and a second insert describing the creation and distribution of story bags in Uganda. There are also suggestions, of games, measuring and storytelling for young children.

During the RaPAL workshop participants had an opportunity to discuss the challenges of family learning, select and try out some of the activities and assess their potential as suitable activities in their own context, making suggestions for their adaptation and sharing other learning activities they have in their own programmes.

We hope that others will explore the *Learning together across generations: guidelines for literacy and family learning* resource pack and adapt some of the activities to their own context.

Weaving literacy through lifelong learning

Tara Furlong and Mary Anderson

Tara has twenty years' experience in adult education and training in the private and public sectors in the UK and abroad, specialising in integrated English language, literacies and digital learning. She is involved in providing professional development via national organisations in the UK, and publication work; and has an established history of designing and implementing systemic curriculum quality initiatives in education providers.

Dr Mary Anderson is a linguist with a special interest in Nigeria and west Africa. She has worked for many years in language-teaching publishing, both as a commissioning editor and as a writer. More recently she has become involved with developing materials for teaching basic literacy skills in non- European languages. Mary has been a BALID committee member since 2012.

Introduction

Practitioners, researchers and students from NGOs and higher education institutes with an interest in literacy in development came together for an engaging and interactive seminar organised by the British Association for Literacy in Development (BALID) with assistance and support from UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, UCL Institute of Education Post-14 Centre and BAICE (British Association for International and Comparative Education) who funded six bursary places at the event. This was held on Friday November 18th 2016 at the Institute of Education, London.

We were grateful to Ulrike Hanemann from UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning in Hamburg who gave the key note speech and to Professor Alan Tuckett, past president of the International Council for Adult Education, for chairing the day's seminar. Alan started the proceedings by providing a brief but comprehensive overview of the trajectory of adult learning in recent decades. Adult education has come to the fore and developed into a substantial and diverse sector serving individuals, communities and economies. Adult literacies are recognised as essential to furthering these activities and people's lives (Hanemann, 2015).

Exploring the links between literacy and lifelong learning through objects and images

Alan's opening remarks were followed by round table presentations, in which participants used objects and images to trigger discussion about connections between literacy and lifelong learning. These extended traditional concepts of texts to reading images and map-reading: for example, a local enterprise created miniature 'business cards' incorporating a map, which implicates spatial processing and which is not accessible to everyone. Reading sheet music was used to represent reading for pleasure and personal development, while a community learning space was highlighted as a 'safe space' as well as an opportunity to discuss news. An interactive (paper) game which promoted storytelling activity with children was found replaying across families, homes and communities in subsequent days and weeks. Rites of passage which incorporate coding of social

boundings extended the idea of literacies into traditional community practices and ‘reading the world’. Thumb prints were used to highlight the wide-ranging stigma of being non-literate in many communities, preventing people from taking on roles which do not actually require literacy skills.

These conversations explored the boundaries between using reading and writing text as mediated by social practices (Barton, Hamilton and Ivanič, 2000; Brice Heath, 1983), and emancipatory 'reading the world' in development (Freire, 1972). Recounts of experiences, livelihoods and communities involved multiple languages, scripts and politics. They touched on multi-modality and multi-literacies (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001; Cope and Kalantzis, 2001) as objects and images moved away from making sense of traditional letters on a page. In particular, 'autonomous' models of literacy which focus on the technical skills of reading and writing were reconceptualised as 'ideological' models of literacy which emphasise contextual and social embeddedness, and implicit power negotiations (Street, 1984).

This activity enabled participants to share a wide range of perceptions of literacy and highlighted the importance of ethnographic approaches exploring learners’ literacy practices and lives. These could then inform curriculum and policy development about which practices are meaningful in local contexts.

> Lifelong learning goes hand in hand with the vision of a learning society, in which the common good of learning eclipses the marketplace good of education. It recognises that successful human societies rely more on collaboration than on competition; that the young both support and are supported by their elders.
>
> Stephen Roche, Executive Editor, International Review of Education, October 2016

Promoting lifelong learning: incorporating multi-sector approaches to literacy

In the keynote presentation, Dr Ulrike Hanemann, Senior Programme Specialist, Literacy and Basic Skills Programme at UIL ((UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning) outlined the multiple meaning perspectives and implications of literacy in lifelong learning: in policy, in programme design and in teaching and learning in global contexts. Current challenges lie in finding clarity in the multi-

dimensional examples introduced through the course of the seminar, retaining critical structures but without over-simplification. The term 'literacy' has expanded in recent decades and the analytical framework introduced attempts to theorise this 'lifelong literacy' alongside concepts of language, learning, knowledge production, critical thinking, technologies and 'multiple literacies', to name a few. These 'multiple literacies' originate in uses and applications of literacy in many different contexts in people's lives and the pervasion of text-based practices. This plurality of meaning introduces complications in terminology and understanding of exactly what is being discussed. This in turn can create tensions with policy-makers, who seek clarity in applications and would avoid confusion with terms which imply knowledge and skills more directly applicable to other sectors. Dr Hanemann emphasised that metaphorical usage associated with the term literacy, such as 'ocean literacy', could impede progress in the field, while encouraging 'learning cities' which seek to mobilise the resources of every sector to maximise inclusive learning and the benefits of sustainable individual, social and economic development (UNESCO UIL, 2016).

Literacy refers to a set of skills and practices around reading, writing and numeracy mediated by written texts as a means of communication. This can incorporate image, or symbolic representation, and is not limited to 'skill' automaticity but extends through capacity with code and tools to 'competency' in applying texts, generated through any number of technologies, to purposes and problem-solving in everyday lives. Equally, the concept of lifelong learning is based on emancipatory, humanistic and democratic values bringing real lives together with learning through the life course. It is therefore not limited to the classroom or a standard curricula or age range; rather formal, non-formal and informal modalities which include workplace, community and home environments. It is not limited to 'post-literate' readiness for learning. This paradigm involves creating learning opportunities across settings and unlocking potential through learner-centred approaches and creating enabling environments. It further involves integrating literacy and multi-sectoral approaches. This is an aspect which is advocated to progress lifelong learning policies internationally, holding the potential to address the gap which may be found between discourse and what is instituted in the education sector.

The lifelong literacy framework incorporates three dimensions: as a lifelong process, as a life-wide process, and literacy as part of lifelong learning systems, or sector-wide and cross-sector reform.

Lifelong literacy as a lifelong process

Lifelong learning recognises not only learning through the life course, but that knowledge and skills are maintained and advanced through use and lost through non-use; that demands change with time and 'upgrades' become necessary. Where once primary education or lower secondary might have been satisfactory, increasingly, higher order texts and information, use of technology and work and geographical mobility contribute to a demand for lifelong literacy. Literacy is seen as a continuum and not a binary divide between 'literate' and 'non-literate'. This has impacts on how it is measured and evaluated, and in turn on policy, making established understanding of 'literacy

rates' unviable. It becomes more meaningful to enquire how many people need to acquire what literacy skills given the contexts of their lives and the requirements they have to fulfil, which in turn changes over time.

Lifelong literacy as a life-wide process

Literacy as a life-wide process recognises many different ways and settings of learning. It addresses how people are using literacy, what the purposes are, and the creation of 'literate environments' which incorporate many opportunities to read and write as entry points or complements to systematise more effective teaching and learning. Beyond traditional literacy classes, this includes activities in local languages and indigenous values and practices where reading, writing and learning are involved. It encompasses literacy and numeracy provision which integrates vocational skills development. Literacy as social practice recognises the collective action implicit in many development initiatives, requiring awareness and integration of learners' life aspirations, existing literacy practices and barriers that may exist.

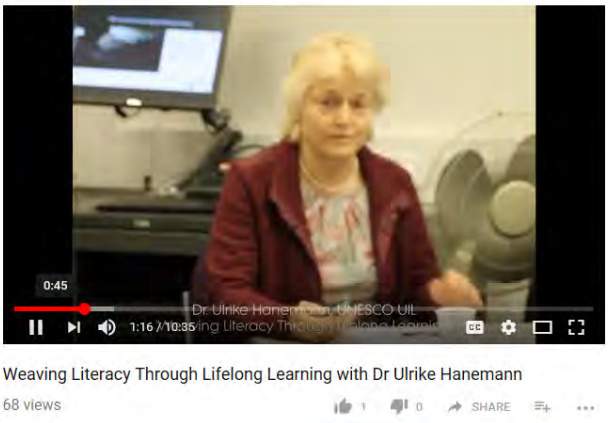
Lifelong literacy as part of lifelong learning systems

The OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) is a current example of work to meaningfully assess adult literacies across populations, similar to PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). These competency requirements are necessary to inform basic education entitlements. In turn, these basic education entitlements are evaluated and contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 4, which looks at percentages of adults and youths achieving set levels of literacy and numeracy. These levels are aligned with the formal education systems' completion of basic education and imply standardised national qualifications and curriculum frameworks, while advocating non-formal routes to support adults through recognition of prior learning and appropriate learning scenarios to engage and progress through lifelong literacy and learning. Power, resource and opportunity distribution across societies impact on national achievement and progression, requiring policies to implement support structures and remove barriers. These have cost implications. However, they can also enable faster and more effective pathways where effectively instituted, and recognise and work with the diversity of contexts across adult lives.

Literacy as part of lifelong learning systems seeks policy which integrates literacy across educational provision. This recognises literacy as part of a set of key competencies of communication, numeracy, digital skills, critical access to and processing of information, and ownership of the learning process. Policy-makers may have evaluated literacy levels through now out-dated measures, which comparative surveys frequently demonstrate to be insufficient for basic life demands. Despite contentions around the measurement of skills via comparative surveys, they have brought literacy back as a priority in policy-making, with cross-ministerial and cross-sectoral emphasis beyond departments for education. This can contribute to financial stability with under-takings for building the systems and human resource capacity as it becomes incorporated into national development

strategies. This is often rooted in sectors declaring problematic skills deficits but can equally attach to family learning practices.

Recent survey rounds identified adult literacy as a priority in 85% of respondents. These then necessarily are accompanied by an increase in measurement and evaluation of outcomes: of reading, writing, numeracy and digital skills. These factors led to a discussion of the importance of developing demand-led cultures though incentives, offers and policy measures which recognise the personal investments required to develop and maintain literacy through the life course. Initiatives should be directed towards the most disadvantaged and disconnected in order to support social equity and inclusion, and raise awareness of the need for long-term commitments in order to deliver outcomes. Dr Hanemann concludes that the challenge requires more than an excellent learning programme; it requires learners who demand it; and the multi-stakeholder processes which assure it.



Excerpt from Dr Hanemann's talk https://youtu.be/tvj_JNHuKzI

Family learning in Kenya and Uganda with Africa Education Trust (AET)

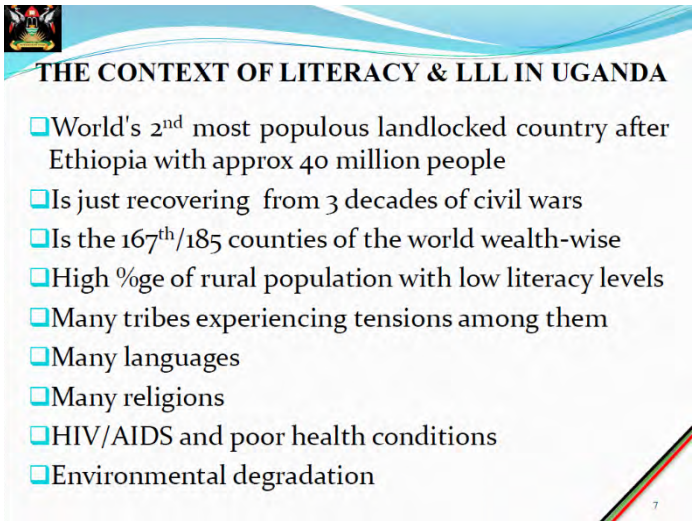
Lesley Waller presented Africa Educational Trust's cross-generational literacy projects in West Nile province, Northern Uganda and the Maasai in North Central Kenya. These involve joint classes between parents and children, in school and in home and community learning centres, raising literacy and numeracy skills in the local languages. Adults in these remote and conflict-damaged areas have disrupted or no schooling and there are few printed materials. As parents felt unable to support their children's schooling, pedagogic approaches have been developed which address both together.

These classes were popular (20,000 participated in a Uganda project between 2009 and 2013) and motivational for parents and children alike. Resourcing included training community Parent Educators, community management committees and locally developed 'manuals' and other materials supporting family learning practices. Pre- and after- school learning environments were central to this work. In Kenya, the REFLECT approach through play, dance and local stories was

integrated to improve parental engagement with schools and resolve key societal issues and concerns, such as girls' drop-out rates. After initial alienation from schooling, some pastoral Maasai are choosing to become more settled and share these forms of ownership of their children's education.

As a result of these projects, children have better oral language, can read better in school and perform better in subjects taught in the local language. Parents' confidence and advocacy around their own roles, their children's learning and issues presenting in the schools has improved. Through informal learning, issues such as time management and discipline improve and children are more proactive in engaging with their parents in their learning. AET recognise standing challenges in engaging men in the literacy classes, multi-lingual communities, the capacity and retention of trained Parent Educators, and sustaining of the home learning communities after the end of the project.

Community literacy in Uganda with Makerere University



Dr Willy Ngaka presented on volunteer-led informal community literacy initiatives where a high level of difficulting factors (see figure) exist and where a culture of monetisation presents barriers to finding volunteers. For this reason, literacy as social practice, i.e. how reading and writing are used locally, is key to underpinning educational provision and to developing literate environments and materials. Literacy mediation is a process whereby children help their parents, for example where some can read the bible but not anything else. The initiatives have included national conferences where many tribes have joined together to celebrate their traditions and successes, the local development and publication of materials, and establishment of local libraries and other learning environments. On 5th March at 11am, there is a DEAR (Drop Everything And Read) campaign which aims to stimulate reading. A lack of infrastructure and resourcing are outstanding challenges.

Literacy and maternal health in Pakistan with Feed the Minds

Albha Bowe described two large projects with National Rural Development Program (NRDP), a partner NGO aiming to improve maternal and child health in Sindh and Narrowal, two districts with high levels of poverty. The primary objective is to make maternal health services and information available in areas where government services are limited, and to create a demand-led culture empowering women in maternal and child health. A secondary expectation is increased general knowledge across the community about general as well as maternal health and hygiene and ultimately improvements in general health indicators.

Women's health committees are set up, which draw on the local community to identify trusted and respected project partners including potential community midwives able to provide, for example, ante- and post-natal support as well as assist with deliveries. Facilitators are identified who can provide community classes to support reproductive health more broadly within the community formally and informally. These classes are delivered around information booklets in the local languages, with interactive and participatory pedagogy which encourages use of image, song, role-play and drama. These were then found to develop into cultural practices in the local communities disseminating health messages. The participants generally have a background of no schooling to a couple of years' and they greatly valued the opportunity for learning and the social elements. These social practices were key to ensuring mutual learning took place. They found the learning effective in the experience of participants and their health indicators, and in parallel developed their literacy skills. In particular, literacy and mobile digital practices were engaged in communicating with medical support in respect of following-up on queries, concerns and referrals.

> The literacy level has definitely been an issue because… the midwives are selected by the Women's Health Committees but you know you have to choose carefully: it has to be a woman of a certain age, who's respected, and sometimes that will be a person who does not have a particularly high level of literacy but she is the most appropriate person and someone who would be trusted.

Six months was recognised as not being sufficiently long enough to raise literacy levels, and post-project sustainability mechanisms. While the focus is on women, especially maternal health, this also involves a men's support group, who formally help with implementing the project practically on a day-to-day basis and informally disseminate an understanding of the project. Initial results indicate that the areas where literacy has been integrated most strongly with maternal and child health have shown better overall health outcomes.

Literacy for immigrants in the UK and Europe with Newcastle University

Professor Martha Young-Scholten introduced three projects aimed at adult immigrants who fit under the category of Low-educated Second Language and Literacy Acquisition (LESLLA). These groups are demonstrated to take three times longer to benefit from integration and vocational programmes designed to support their educational advancement. A range of studies internationally

and across different language groups have found that active, individual and relevant learning mattered most in demonstrating progress over standard fundable time periods (such as six months), where 'individualised activities are superior to group teaching when they look at what works in the classroom.' A further finding was that 'well-qualified teachers are key.' Pre-entry level ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teaching is a recognised area of shortage, for example, and the volunteers available may not have specialised in 'language experience' training appropriate to the target groups. Similarly, tailored materials may be in short supply for the 'self-paced, individualised and autonomous learning' quoted as most helpful.

The first project outlined a multi-platform learning programme which elicited immediate feedback for learners, with the aim of helping them to develop listening skills semi-independently with peers, and which culminated in speech-recognition of their scaffolded bite-size learning. This is now being extended to integrate games and move beyond word level foci. Another project looked at creating very short engaging and accessible stories (up to 300 words) for the target group, to encourage reading for pleasure. The final project discussed looks at designing free online standalone multi-lingual training, or continuing professional development, modules for teachers and trainers internationally. These included language acquisition, working with LESLLA learners, and working with bi- and multi-lingual learners. Although the current modules include mentor support, a development will attempt to remove this due to difficulties with recruiting volunteers.

Panel Discussion

Digital engagement was a consistent theme, from its integration into roadside commercial practices, to the inability to charge a phone without having to travel to the next village, to its utility in learning processes and social engagement. Professor Young-Scholten pointed out that these practices are often not recognised as literacy while Dr Ngaka illustrated the motivational elements of engaging with technology and how this might contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 4. A query which resonated with practitioners across the board was how to manage evaluation processes, from qualifications to national surveys to programme implementation, without undermining the teaching and learning processes seeking to achieve learner autonomy and improved quality performances.

Weaving Literacy Through Lifelong Learning 'shorts'

Excerpts from the Panel Discussion https://youtu.be/j1tjM5WCIzI>

Feedback

Over 75% of participants rated the day as 'excellent', with the 'ethos and atmosphere' being 'very constructive and enabling'. Many commented on the wide-ranging dialogue incorporating many and varied perspectives.

The key note presentation from Dr Hanemann was highly valued, providing structure to a complex field whilst also encouraging flexibility and creativity. Her framework for the integration of literacy and lifelong learning was identified as, 'a tangible way forward in possibly such a nebulous, complex field.'

Participants emphasised the value of the opportunities for group work, as well as appreciating the quality of the four brief case study presentations. In line with this finding, the primary request was for more time overall and for more time to exchange with others. Feedback highlighted an extended awareness of the diversity of multi-literacies and practices continua, and associated ideologies and 'cultural embeddedness' of literacies activities. Participants also appreciated better understandings of implementation factors such as community and intergenerational contexts, options in evaluation of impact, and sustainability of outcomes post-project. Learner-centeredness threaded through as a theme.

Several participants commented that they would be looking at further means to integrate literacy development into projects, ranging from participatory approaches to curriculum and resource development to amplifying literate environments drawing on local contexts.

Participants identified a range of intended actions arising from the event including:

- Think more closely about ways of developing literacy resources that are better linked to context and acknowledge cultural/symbolic/local language literacies
- Work to strengthen community involvement at all levels
- Look at how the projects we support through grant-making integrate and promote literacy approaches in their processes and how they evaluate this, particularly where literacy could open new opportunities.
- Think through how to weave literacy into implementing livelihood projects
- Think in depth about what is literacy and for whom
- Try to involve indigenous knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in literacy for lifelong learning
- Need to negotiate with participants; begin where they are and what they want to learn.

Conclusion

As Ulrike Hanemann highlighted, the diversity of literacy practices, areas of activity which incorporate increasingly higher order literacies, and cross-cutting themes is immense. Literacy is no

longer perceived as a polar have/ have not but as a continuum of knowledge and skills embedded into local contexts, and more so as integrated into three-dimensional lifelong, life-wide and systemically and politically life-deep processes of learning. These necessarily implicate forms of measurement and evaluation. Beyond the call for basic adult education as a human right and basis for economic development, lifelong literacy touched on health, community development and digital accessibility and inclusion.

Resources

Reproduced by kind permission of BALID (British Association for Literacy in Development). BALID holds occasional seminars and informal literacy discussions, some of which were recently published as a collection of papers *Informal Literacy Discussions: Theory and Practice in Literacy and Development.* More information and further resources are available on http://balid.org.uk/

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What is the best way to make adult education effective for teaching literacy and numeracy?

The Department for International Development (DFID) has supported literacy programmes for many years. These programmes have often been formal national government or regional programmes in which the teaching followed a standard curriculum and text book, but this method has sometimes been unsuccessful. In May 2017, DfID asked the British Association of Literacy in Development (BALID) to answer the question, '*What is the best way to make adult education effective for teaching literacy and numeracy?'* The majority of researchers and practitioners involved in BALID do not use a national curriculum or formal text book methods, but have focus on helping people learn the literacy and numeracy required in their community This is termed `New Literacy Studies' (NLS) which developed from Brian Street's 1984 seminal work.

The concept of NLS has been developed and utilized in different ways which include programmes based entirely on learning and teaching literacy and numeracy, and programmes in which literacy and numeracy are incorporated into different development projects. Below are two responses from members of (BALID) which take slightly different, but complementary, approaches to the question asked by DFID.

The first paper by Juliet McCaffery and Ian Cheffy identifies factors which make adult literacy and numeracy programmes effective both in the UK and in resource-poor countries. The second paper, by Katy Newell-Jones, looks at strengthening literacy and numeracy through embedding them across community based development projects.

Paper 1 – Delivering effective adult literacy programmes

Juliet McCaffery and Ian Cheffy

Juliet McCaffery, PhD, specializes in literacy, gender and equalities. She worked in the US, Brighton, London and the British Council. She is now an education consultant working in many countries in Africa and Asia. Her PhD research explored the educational experiences of English Gypsies and Irish Travellers. Recent publications include 'Developing Adult Literacy' (2007), 'Western Education: Suitable for Everyone?' and 'Education for marginalised and travelling minorities in the west' (2017). juliet.mccaffery@gmail.com

Ian Cheffy, PhD, is a literacy and education consultant with SIL International, the NGO which develops writing systems for communities speaking previously unwritten languages so that they can use their languages for their own education and development. His PhD explored the meanings of literacy for people in a language community in northern Cameroon and he is currently undertaking further research there. His most recent publication is 'Is there not a valid place for deficit discourses?' (2016). ian_cheffy@sil.org

Adult literacy is a complex area. A great deal of analysis is required to really understand why some programmes are successful and some are not. It sometimes feels as though providers think there is a magic recipe which can be guaranteed to work and that to achieve 'success' all that is required is to follow that recipe. However, each programme will be different as the people and the community

are in different circumstances, have different needs and different languages and cultures. The ability to read and communicate through text written on the page is important, but in recent years it has become even more complex with the increasing use of IT in computers, mobile phones and their various apps, like *WhatsApp*. Ironically providers also often forget that in many parts of the world this type of communication is not possible for a variety of reasons including lack of signal, electric power and / or the means to buy the necessary equipment. In this briefing paper we suggest some of the issues which are essential to consider when planning and preparing a successful programme. Some of these include intergenerational and family learning which have also been described in the recently produced UNESCO/UIL publication, *Learning Together across Generations: Guidelines for Family Literacy and Learning Programmes* .

Our combined experiences of many years teaching literacy, training facilitators, planning and evaluating programmes in countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Arabic speaking countries and South-East Asia suggest that a key principle is that programmes should not be based on what providers think potential participants ought to learn, but on identifying the felt needs of the learners and then working out how to meet those needs.

Important issues that need to be considered are the rationale for the programme, its reach and extent, whether it focusses only on literacy or is integrated into other training, as detailed below. The context, the participants' language or languages and culture are extremely important and there may be other organisations with whom to build partnerships. With these in mind we set out the considerations needed to run a successful literacy programme as follows:

1. **Rationale for the programmes**

   What are the reasons for teaching literacy to people in a particular community in a particular region in a particular country? Why do they need it, how will they use it? Is the environment literate and are there materials for them to read?

2. **National, Regional or Local Programmes**

   It can be cheaper to run a national literacy programme, commission a national curriculum in a single language and organize classes to teach it, but it is likely to be much less effective than a socio-economic contextually, culturally-relevant programme in the language of the learners.

3. **Partnerships**

   Programmes will be more effective if they are delivered in collaboration with other local, regional and government institutions and are appropriately funded and effectively managed. The literacy and numeracy programme must be viewed as supportive of the institutions and the local culture and not be seen to critique or undermine it.

4. **Context**

   Is the context rural or urban, what is the level of communications with other cities, regions and towns? What paid employment is available and what are the opportunities for self-

employment? What levels of literacy and numeracy are required to undertake the available work? Are qualifications and the ability to read or write required in the work place, to secure a job or be successfully self-employed? An assessment needs to be made as to the amount of time required to earn a living and how this would impact on time to learn. As was stated many years ago, 'People will learn what they need to learn.' It may require the providers to set aside the commitment to teaching work-related skills and to focus on what the participants want to learn and assist them to use their learning.

There has been a gradual increase in the use of ethnographic approaches to identify the learning needs of communities, including the very basic LOCAL (Locally Oriented Community Adult Literacy) approach used in a British Council/ DFID programme in Nigeria, which simply involved walking around the community and identifying the languages and their use. There is the more complex REFLECT PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) approach developed by ActionAid, and the more recent LETTER (Learning Empowerment Through Training in Ethnographic Research) developed by Rogers and Street (2012) which trained facilitators to interview different members in the community to identify what literacy and numeracy they required.

Whichever approach is used, the findings should be used to design the programme.

5. Participants

Is the programme only for adults, for young people or is it intergenerational or for anyone who wishes to attend? Will it be linked to early childhood education and if so will the different age groups be taught together or separately with separate classes for adults, separate classes for children or mixed classes for both adults and children? The different structures have different advantages.

Will attendance be time-limited or will people join at their convenience and attend for several years?

6. Language and Culture

Cultural and linguistic sensitivity is absolutely essential. Until recently this element has often been ignored with the result that either the needs of the minority cultures were not addressed, or people from these cultures felt that the literacy learning programme was designed to assimilate them into the dominant culture (which historically has often been the case). Cultures are deeply rooted in communities and the social norms and practices shape social cohesion and identity. It is now also recognised that multilingualism is an asset and should be encouraged.

Increasingly the language policy in education is for the initial teaching to be in the home language and the official, or more widely spoken language, introduced at a later stage. It should be remembered that in some communities, for example in the West Nile region of Uganda, six

languages are spoken in the same community. Our experience has led us to the conclusion that specifically focussed programmes in the learners' own language(s) are more successful than standard national programme**.**

Photo by Mary Anderson

7. Key Success Factors

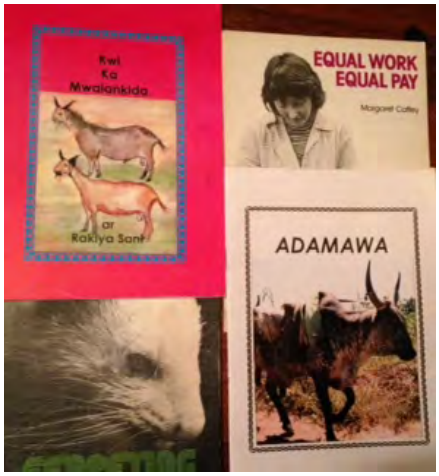
- **Programme Quality**

  This includes the curriculum, the materials and the quality of the teaching. There is sometimes a danger of too much emphasis on teaching phonics, learning the sounds and letters of the alphabet. While they may need some phonics, 'reading through the meaning' is equally, if not more important for many people. This is particularly in a language like English where the same letters vary in their sound according to the context in the sentence (e.g. read/read, lead/lead, bow/bow).

  The learning will be more effective if it is relevant, stimulating and enjoyable.

- **Relevant Materials**

  Even if a text book is used, it can and should be supplemented by local materials, including newspapers, religious texts, calendars and the reading material people have in their homes. Successful programmes often use both student and facilitator written material as these from the UK and Nigeria.



The students can either write their own stories. They do not need to be long, or they can dictate them to the facilitator; or the group can tell a story which is then written up on the board. Students really enjoy being invited to recount their experiences and seeing their words written down. Their stories can be made into small books which provide additional reading materials.

Learners reading their books

- **Good Facilitators**

  Facilitators should be both men and women and fluent in the language, or languages of the students they are teaching. It is essential that they receive high quality training which should not be just a quick two weeks. On-going training and support of facilitators during the programme is essential. Facilitators should be paid and not expected to work voluntarily.

- **Programme Outcomes and Indicators**

  The programmes should be well organised and well managed. The intended outcomes should be linked to the programme's purpose and the environment in which it takes place. If the purpose is to teach work-related skills, there may be a test at the end of the course, or courses and tests at different levels. Tests and levels would also be relevant for 'early school leavers' or those who never attended school in order to give them a sense of progression towards eligibility to work.

  Yet many adults decide to learn to read to increase their self-confidence, to help their children, to engage more fully in their local community, to improve their trading skills or to participate more fully in the religious community. These outcomes benefit the whole society and are as valuable as employment-related skills. They can be assessed through careful monitoring and recording-keeping and end-of-programme research and assessment.

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Paper 2 – Embedding adult literacy and numeracy activities into community based adult learning programmes

Katy Newell-Jones

Katy Newell-Jones was a basic skills tutor and trainer in the UK, before becoming involved in capacity building of non-governmental organisations overseas, particularly in post-conflict contexts. Her publications include 'Storytelling: a tool for peacebuilding' (2012), 'Education and rights: a toolkit for facilitators' (2013), 'Literacy and numeracy for trade' (2014) and co-authoring a UNESCO resource pack 'Learning together across the generations' (2017). Katy can be contacted on katy@kn-j.com

Introduction

This paper comes from the perspective of all community-based development projects involving elements of adult learning and considering the question as to how this adult learning element can then support the development of literacy and numeracy practices. For example, a water and sanitation project might include the development of a water committee, understanding of health and safety issues, communication within community about the maintenance of equipment, financial responsibility for repairs and management etc. Alternatively, a maternal and child health project might include patient information on childhood illnesses, anti-natal information and record keeping, information on family nutrition and health.

Limited literacy and numeracy skills are frequently seen as limiting factors to community members, especially women, being able to fully engage in community-based development projects as wide-ranging as vocational training, accessing land rights or improving maternal and child health. If information is provided in the form of handouts, posters and leaflets, or registration has an expectation of being able to manage text in a dominant language like English, Arabic or French, then there will be those within communities who cannot access this information directly. Often, the response is to explore ways of adding adult literacy and numeracy 'classes' to the project. This can be effective to some extent when it is directly linked to the community-based development project. So, adult literacy and numeracy for maternal and child health would use vocabulary from

pregnancy, childhood illnesses and family nutrition, whereas that for vocational training in car mechanics and plumbing would use vocabulary based around relevant tools and equipment, health and safety and starting a new business.

Useful though these kinds of initiatives are, they have their own challenges. The adult literacy and numeracy classes are often seen as less important and peripheral to the 'real learning'. If participation is voluntary, attendance can be a challenge. If compulsory, motivation can be a challenge. The key challenge though, is that those implementing the project learning activities would like to reduce the barrier of limited literacy and numeracy skills to their involvement in project activities.

Adult learning is a process based on multiple learning relationships. In a vocational training project, the learning relationships are between the vocational trainers and the 'trainees'. In maternal and child health, the learning relationships are between the midwifery trainer and the trainee community midwives, and also between the trainee community midwives and the community members. In most adult learning initiatives, literacy and numeracy-based activities are a key component of the learning process. Offering adult literacy and numeracy classes is primarily attempting to change one side of the learning equation. It is based on a deficit model (Aikman et al. 2016), with responsibility for bridging the gap being placed on the adult literacy and numeracy 'learner'.

Since 2004, some NGOs including Feed the Minds (Newell-Jones 2014) and Network for Africa (Newell-Jones 2015) have attempted to bridge this gap by changing the practices of everyone involved in the learning relationships and embedding literacy and numeracy into their community based development projects.

Strengthening community development projects by incorporating literacy and numeracy

Partner organisations are supported in exploring the following five questions (called the Five Point Literacy Plan) in participatory workshops and field visits to target communities. A literacy action plan is then developed to embed literacy and numeracy across the project.

1. Where are literacy and numeracy in your project?

Literacy and numeracy practices are used for reporting, monitoring and record-keeping. However, they are often used also in workshops, to disseminate information to community members, to record minutes of meetings and finances of self-help groups. By recognising these, strategies can be developed to ensure adequate support.

2. What are the literacy and numeracy practices among the various stakeholders?

This includes carrying out literacy and numeracy surveys of the ways which different stakeholders involved in the project use literacy and numeracy in their daily lives and the language(s) used. This activity helps to identify gaps as well as 'hidden' skills.

3. Is there any evidence of discrimination on the basis of literacy or numeracy ability?

Whilst some roles do require particular literacy and numeracy skills, sometimes NGOs discriminate against those with limited literacy skills and abilities, sometimes insisting that workshop participants must have a particular level of education, and often assuming that non-literate participants have little to contribute. By discussing people's attitudes, bias and discrimination can be exposed and strategies to avoid it identified.

4. How can materials and activities be adapted to suit different stakeholders?

There is a host of ways of adapting materials once we know the literacy practices of stakeholder groups. These include using pictures and images to convey key messages rather than complicated text, and selecting in which language and style to write, for example, minutes from Project Advisory Group meetings, so that they are accessible to most group members.

5. How can literacy and numeracy abilities be enhanced through the project activities?

'Literacy-friendly' approaches encourage stakeholders to use the literacy skills they have and to develop these skills further. This is not through literacy classes but through using words and numbers sensitively, for example, identifying key words relating to a topic and writing them clearly in mixed case on a blackboard, rather than long complex sentences in cursive script; using images alongside words in workshops so participants can learn some new words and recognise these when they come across them in their lives.

This approach has had considerable success in individual projects, however, has not been fully evaluated and is only available in the form of grey literature, in particular, evaluation reports to donors. The strongest impact has been where specific workshops have taken place with the whole project team to investigate the role of literacy and numeracy, understand the potential advantages of incorporating them into project activities and develop a literacy and numeracy action plan.

Below are two 'snapshots' of the impact taken from community development projects in Rwanda. The first is from a vocational training and agricultural extension project in Rwanda, funded by DFID in partnership with Network for Africa, UK and ASPIRE, Rwanda. The second is from a land rights project, funded by Big Lottery, in partnership with Feed the Minds, UK and Human Rights First Rwanda (HRFRA). Rwanda. Evidence is also available, but not included here, from Feed the Minds on the impact of incorporating literacy and numeracy into the training of community midwives and community women, which indicates that the uptake of anti-natal guidance is higher in communities where literacy and numeracy were incorporated than when anti-natal guidance was delivered in a more traditional manner.

Agricultural extension – Network for Africa / ASPIRE

The project in Rutunga is an agricultural extension and vocational training project working with rural women farmers to increase their income through improving farming practice and working in cooperatives. Literacy classes used to take place, however, the women did not attend, despite saying they wanted to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

After introducing the Five Point Literacy approach, women leaders from Unity Cooperative and ASPIRE staff participated in the dissemination sessions. The sessions demonstrated how participatory approaches and literacy and numeracy could be incorporated into a session with community women to enhance the impact of the session.

Throughout the session key words were written on the board by the facilitator and some of the women. Gradually less confident women came to the board to contribute, whilst others took their own notes.

A short story and pictures were used to raise issues around cross-infection and health. The story presented a situation without solutions, so acted as a stimulus for the women to discuss and share their knowledge.

The wording on two fertiliser sacks was used to help the women identify key information about weight, expiry dates, type of fertiliser, country of origin etc. Prior to this they had not realised that they were able to find out so much from the packaging.

Pictorial maps of crops grown across Rwanda were handed out to women in groups which stimulated discussions about alternative crops that they could grow locally.

Incorporating Literacy into Land Rights in Rwanda (20012-2015)

Initially, Human Rights First Rwanda (HRFRA) was not aware of the significance of literacy in their work. The team assumed a large proportion of their beneficiaries were non-literate, however, they had no plans to adapt their approach to take this into account.

The project set up included two weeks of literacy workshops with the project team which workshops included assessing the literacy and numeracy practices of the various stakeholders, the languages they used and the challenges this posed to meeting the project outcomes. The team learnt how to simplify 'legalese' into straightforward sentences (see table) and considered the literacy levels of the paralegals when designing the log book for their cases.

Organic Law determining the use and management of land in Rwanda. (14.07/2007 Law no. 08/2005) Article 3:

Original text	Adapted text
Land is part of the public domain of all Rwandans: ancestors, present and future generations. With exceptions of the rights given to people, the state has supreme powers to manage all the national land, and this is done in public interest aimed at sustainable development, economic development and social welfare, in accordance with procedures provided for by the law. In that regard, it is the state that guarantees the right to own and use the land. The state also has rights to expropriation due to public interest, settlement and general land management through procedures provided by law and prior to appropriate compensation.	Land is for the benefit of all Rwandans: past, present and future. The state has overall powers to manage all the national land, ***except when people own the title deeds***. If there is a public interest, the state can use its overall powers to take control of the land. This must be done ***following the law and giving compensation in advance***.

This approach, of taking literacy and numeracy into account during the initial stages of the project, has had a profound effect at organisational and implementation levels.

At the organisational level HRFRA has

- understood the role of literacy/numeracy in land rights awareness raising and registration
- recognised their own complex literacy/numeracy practices and the different literacy/ numeracy practices of different stakeholders
- gained skills in a range of literacy/numeracy techniques
- recognised the role of language, Kinyarwanda, French and English in formal and community communications
- identified the literacy/numeracy skills and abilities which are required in potential paralegals and those which can be developed
- gained skills in text simplification and incorporated these into legal rights documentation
- incorporated awareness of literacy/numeracy into the production of community resources.

At the implementation/impact level

- HRFRA has produced a 'simple' land rights handbook in Kinyarwanda with cartoons and straightforward text which other NGOs involved in land rights work are using. The result is that NGOs staff, paralegals and community members understand the law more clearly and are able to be active in the process of claiming their land rights, rather than having to rely on those who can understand legalese. This has helped to demystify the process and increase the confidence of local women to engage in the process.
- The paralegals are able to keep records in a useful format which has supported the securing of land rights and fed into the monitoring and evaluation processes.
- The paralegals have reported increases in literacy and the use of these literacy skills in other areas of their lives, including supporting their children at school, managing their income generation activities more effectively and being able to access local services including health more effectively.

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Fostering a culture of reading and writing: Examples of dynamic literate environments

UNESCO: September 2017

http://www.uil.unesco.org/literacy-and-basic-skills/fostering-culture-reading-and-writing-examples-dynamic-literate

Reviewed by Liz Parkin

Liz Parkin is a former Family Literacy Coordinator and Adult Literacy Tutor, Waterford, Ireland.

This publication, launched to mark International Literacy Day 2017, has, as its frontispiece, an image of a young man and a little boy looking at a picture book together. From their facial expressions and hand positions they both look to be engaged in the process. 'Charming', one might think, and pass on. But, combined with the adjective 'dynamic' (powerful) in the title, the image takes on extra significance.

This publication from UNESCO (one of a series) brings reports from 15 countries, of a wide range of environments. They are all responding to local needs, whether these be keeping local language or customs alive or providing functional literacy for rural women in Daska Markaz in Pakistan.

A rickshaw library may not be suitable for the weather in UK or Ireland, but it might draw the attention of children as it went past them as they were on their way to school or football …. and maybe take them to a love of reading. There's an idea … we have rickshaws in Dublin now. However, in Pakistan it is the equivalent of using a bus.

There are many common threads running through these locally tailored projects – one of which is the commitment of the practitioners. This is one of the factors that makes reading about the projects that are profiled so inspiring and encouraging. Knowing that one is part of a world-wide network can help keep one going through the difficulties associated with getting projects up and running and then finding ongoing backing. I would urge you to at least glance through and choose one or two to read about in detail.

The reports are listed by country in four continental areas and are laid out in the same format, so it is easy to get to grips with each of them. If you are interested in, for example, what is happening in a prison, or in a particular part of the world, or finding ways to inspire hard-to-reach groups, you will find some ideas here. Each report also gives the website of the project so you can follow up on what is written here.

One sentence that jumped out at me in the section about Riecken libraries in Honduras was 'Building a literate environment in these places is helping to develop literate and civically active people'. (p. 123) It's not all about jobs!

As with the other projects there are several core underpinning competencies: planning, partnership (principally with libraries), commitment and particularly training and expertise. I was struck by the emphasis on these last two. In Ireland, outside the field of Adult Literacy, there is not a lot of recognition of the skills involved in such work, so maybe that is why it jumped out at me, but, reading these reports it is clear how important it is to develop and recognise the importance of expertise.

Many practitioners are aware of the interest some learners have in local history. This is developed in several of these projects, such as in 'My Grandparents' Stories, My Pictures' in Nepal, where grandparents' stories are recorded and preserved. 'Elders from five communities in Nepal were selected for the project because of their extensive knowledge of historical events and endangered cultural practices.' (p. 58)

In Switzerland the family literacy project 'Tell Me a Story' works with families of migrants and enables parents to work in their first language to develop love of stories. 'The premise of the work is that knowing their native language greatly supports children in learning the language of the home country. In this way, "Schenk mir eine Geschichte", plays an important role in addressing the educational needs of underserved populations in Switzerland.' (p.84)

Might this encourage us to follow some of the pointers in Liz Lochhead's poem 'Kidspoem/ Bairnsang', in which she highlights the difference between the Scots of home and the English of school, to entice people who don't naturally use Standard English into loving stories/books/ learning.

If you only have time to read about one project, I would recommend that you look at 'Free Minds' (p 99), but first, just take a moment to think about this name for what's happening in a prison …..

If you have a few minutes to spare, look at freemindsbookclub.org/poetry-blog

In his poem "1,000 Reasons", posted on August 28th DC writes:

> 'Ignorance is a reason to learn.
>
> Ambition. Dream. Goals.
>
> All reasons to yearn.'

Powerful! Don't be constrained though, by my interests. Do take a look for yourself.

Post Compulsory Teacher Educators

By Jim Crawley, Series edited by Ian Menter

Cost: £20.00
Publisher: Routledge
Pages: 80
ISBN 978-1910391860
Reviewed by Tara Furlong

Tara has twenty years' experience in adult education and training in the private and public sectors in the UK and abroad, specialising in integrated English language, literacies and digital learning. She has an ongoing interest in the relationship between multi-modal and contextualised, versus abstracted learning; and its mirror in social and literate practices and language across life spheres. She can be contacted on tara.furlong@designingfutures.uk

This tiny volume comprises eight papers dedicated to teacher educators in the post-compulsory education (PCE) sector, introduced and concluded by Jim Crawley. Accessibility is promoted through each chapter commencing with two to four bullet points on 'critical issues' before a compact paper. Each chapter is succinctly summarised and concluded with brief 'reflections on critical issues'. Many chapters introduce sections with 'critical questions' which are subsequently explored, and full references are provided. Contributing authors are well-rooted in PCE nationally and committed to grounded discussion of the impact of the history of PCE teacher education, its context and rapidly changing policy influences. This volume provides an entry point for new PCE teacher educators (TEds) into a vibrant and committed network of peers.

In introducing the 'invisible educators', Jim Crawley scopes the size and queries the invisibility of a distinctive sector embedded in developing local communities. The low research profile and 'scholarly silence' of PCE TEds are located between 'critical thinking and the controls of managerialism' (3). In Chapter 2, exploring the 'even more' quality of PCE TEds, Carol Azumah Dennis and colleagues identify self-study as an underpinning feature of their scholarship and critical reflection, such that PCE TEd's '*are* what we teach' (10) with little to no institutional research space allocated. Dennis *et al* explain how 'Teacher educators are required to stand reflexively outside themselves in order to articulate their understanding of their own professionalism' (13). They argue that this embodied nature of teacher education in particular is a demand placed on PCE TEds by their trainees and which is not common to FE teachers or HE lecturers: they require pedagogies to be made explicit across distinct contexts as well as 'enacted and embodied' (15).

In Chapter 3, Kevin Orr explores the expansive profile of PCE as a sector, including HE in FE and PCE's overwhelmingly part-time nature. Orr discusses possible social and economic impacts of continuous policy change and funding cuts, such as a regionalisation agenda, on such diverse and at times opaque educational provision tailored to local economies and local populations. In contrast, Chapter 4 sees Lynn Machin outline 75 years of reports and legislation working towards the professionalisation of the sector in recognition of its social and economic importance, and the strength of a teaching workforce who *aren't* primarily teachers.

Vicky Duckworth argues for practitioner research and communities of practice as tools for the empowerment of TEds in building their own identities and becoming generators of knowledge in local contexts. Chapter 5 brings into sharp relief the learners who present in PCE, the impact of their lives on learning, and the role of TEds' values, pedagogy and commitment in seeing them through. Denise Robinson and Nena Skrbic focus on modelling in Chapter 6. In this, they identify that a high 'level of auto-awareness can engender a feeling of vulnerability' in case study analysis at one FE college, and that 'invisibility' in practice can reflect incomplete frames of reference. The study reinforced the need for integrated research practices, a range of TEd-mediated strategies and values-based teaching.

In Chapter 7, Rebecca Eliahoo reviews global phenomena and suggests PCE TEds follow suit in taking 'their professional development into their own hands' (57). Jim Crawley concludes with cross-cutting themes such as embeddedness in context and championing the unique profiling of the sector; how developing connections and communities of practice underpins innovation; the role of PCE TEds in democratic social justice and their agility and flexibility in constant 'becoming' in an ever-shifting often undefined space.

This is an excellent almost-pocket-sized reference on the current state of play in post compulsory teacher education, which addresses developing 'professional identities and responsibilities' (Ian Menter, vii) from the inside out. The volume outlines the distinctive characteristics of the sector and how we might work to these, in order to promote social justice.

Developing Numeracy in Further Education

By Graham Hall and Suzanne Slaney

Publisher: Lulu
Pages: 464
ISBN 978-1326806552
£26.00
Reviewed by Andrew Morris

Andrew Morris was formerly a college director and now works on a freelance basis, including at the UCL Institute of Education. He is Chair of the Coalition for Evidence-Based Education and the Education Media Centre and Co-organiser of the Learning & Skills Research Network. He can be contacted on a.j.morris@ucl.ac.uk

This beautifully illustrated book is an exemplary resource made for teachers by teachers. Based on a long running project at Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor in North Wales, it draws on reflection and research as well as the experience of implementation and development. The authors have taught numeracy across a wide range of vocational areas and have used this experience to investigate innovative approaches and to inspire colleagues to do likewise.

The book opens with a run-down of the findings of research on numeracy teaching, then sets out views and evidence about recurring issues – overcoming students' legacy of failure at school, embedding topics in vocational contexts, differentiating learners' needs, using technology, deciding who is best placed to teach the subject. Practical suggestions are made about ways to approach these challenges in imaginative ways through two initial examples: re-roofing a house and planning a holiday in Europe.

The bulk of the book (365 pages out of a total of 457 – 80%) is given over to practical examples of how to embed numeracy in specific vocational contexts. These range from hill farming and garden design to house rewiring and yacht racing. The various branches of numeracy are dealt with in a fascinating array of realistic contexts. Geometry appears in the design of a serpentine brick wall and of a Delta diesel engine. Graphs feature in a survey of Welsh language speaking and analysis of mortality against Body Mass Index. Statistics are covered in the length of hospital stays and the size of grains in deposits in the river valleys of Wales. Clear advice is given to the teacher about the mathematical topic in hand as well as on how to bring it alive for the learner.

The very existence of the book serves as inspiration of a more general kind. It is the result of a sustained project that has spread across a college, with nine teachers in addition to authors acknowledged for their contributions. The book has been self-published in a clear and attractive layout, demonstrating just what can be achieved by local research and development by practitioners.

News from the sector

Tara Furlong

Tara is the Chair of RaPAL and can be contacted on webweaver@rapal.org.uk

Adult English and maths in vocational and professional learning

There is quite a bit of activity trying to work this out at the moment. What's going on? We'd love to hear from you!

Education and Training Foundation Training Needs Analysis

This is an opportunity for teachers, trainers, leaders and institutions across the Further Education (FE) and Training sector to register training needs. The Training Need Analysis is being conducted by the ETF, in partnership with the Association of Colleges (AoC), Association of Employer and Learning Providers (AELP) and HOLEX. More here http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/news/first-cross-sector-opportunity-teachers-trainers-leaders-say-major-sector-led-systematic-training-needs-analysis/

Education and Training Foundation's Shaping Success

This campaign for English and maths is a suite of new courses, tips and tools for teachers and trainers across the Further Education (FE) and Training sector. It is in response to Department for Education (DfE) research earlier this year showing students at FE colleges are making less progress in maths and English than any other part of the post-16 education system. Bursaries are available. More here http://www.et-foundation.co.uk/news/education-training-foundation-launches-maths-english-shaping-success-campaign/

Lancaster Literacy Research Centre

Dr Julia Gillen, Reader in Digital Literacies in the Department of Linguistics and English Language, will be Director of the Lancaster Literacy Research Centre from January 2018. Julia is also a member of the Centre for Technology Enhanced Learning and the Centre for Mobilities Research.

The Literacy Research Centre was set up in May 2002, with significant funding from the then Department for Education and Science and the ESF as part of a national research and development centre. It built upon on work at Lancaster by David Barton, Mary Hamilton and Roz Ivanič going back to the mid 1980s and is well known for its contributions to a distinctive ‘social practice’ approach to literacy. RaPAL's early years were based in the centre.

Brian Street Memorial Lecture

March 6th 2018, UEA

This half day event will begin with lunch from 12, and is free of charge

Register here http://bit.ly/2AOqyuP

Brian helped to establish the UEA Literacy and Development Group and to hold our first literacy conference here in 2003. As Visiting Professor, he contributed recently to the establishment of our UNESCO Chair programme. We are delighted to welcome Prof. David Barton and Prof. Mary Hamilton.

An Appreciation of Brian Street's Contribution to the Development of Literacy Studies

David Barton and Mary Hamilton, Lancaster University

In this paper we point to Brian's academic contribution to social science, in particular covering two themes which interested him over the years and which are continuing to develop. The first is academic literacies, where his work changes how we view academic writing and how to support students. The second theme is the impact on policy and practice of a social practice view of literacy. The inroads he made into educational policy and practice through a new framing of literacy are an important legacy for the future. We also include our personal recollections covering 35 years where our work intersected with Brian's. Central to his academic contribution are his personal qualities of generosity and openness, of believing in dialogue, of patiently explaining, and challenging others, and of getting ideas over to multiple audiences.

Anna Robinson-Pant, Alan Rogers, Sheila Aikman, Nitya Rao, Catherine Jere and Bryan Maddox, School of Education and Lifelong Learning and the School of International Development, University of East Anglia. For any queries, please contact: edu.support@uea.ac.uk.

Festival of Learning

Closing 5th Jan: nominations for the best stories of adult learning to showcase projects, individuals, tutors and employers who have used learning to transform their lives and the lives of others. More here http://www.festivaloflearning.org.uk/2018-nominations

Save the date! Friday, 23rd March 2018 at Bolton University

Collaboration and Connections

A call for practitioner workshops is out now – please see the flyer opposite. If you know anyone who might be interested, the flyer is also available electronically on https://rapal.org.uk/events/conferences/conference-2018/

RaPAL CONFERENCE 2018

COLLABORATION & CONNECTIONS

CALL FOR PAPERS & WORKSHOPS

DEADLINE 31ST JANUARY 2018

A 'makers faire' celebrating our teaching and learning practices, Collaboration and Connections looks at how we use our English and maths to negotiate and build lives, and the role of educator research in making sense of managing it all. This conference seeks contributions of practitioner research projects showcasing English and maths andragogy and the research practices which underpin our work.

Conference Details

Friday 23 March 2018
Time 9-5pm

University of Bolton
Senate House

www.rapal.org.uk

WRITING GUIDELINES

Why not write something for the RaPAL Journal?

We invite contributions from anyone involved in the field of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL education to write and share ideas, practice and research with RaPAL readers. This can be writing from learners, ideas linking research and practice, comments about teaching, training or observations about policy. Our journal is now produced online and so we welcome articles, reviews, reports, commentaries, images or video that will stimulate interest and discussion.

The journal is published three times a year and represents an independent space, which allows critical reflection and comment linking research with practice in the field of adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL nationally and internationally.

The RaPAL network includes learners, managers, practitioners, researchers, tutors, teacher trainers, and librarians in adult, further and higher education in the UK. It also has an international membership that covers Ireland. Canada, USA, New Zealand, Australia, South America, Europe and Africa.

Guidelines for contributors
All contributions should be written in an accessible way for a wide and international readership.

- Writing should be readable, avoiding jargon. Where acronyms are used these should be clearly explained.
- Ethical guidelines should be followed particularly when writing about individuals or groups. Permission must be gained from those being represented and they should be represented fairly.
- We are interested in linking research and practice; you may have something you wish to contribute but are not sure it will fit. If this is the case, please contact the editors to discuss this.
- Writing should encourage debate and reflection, challenging dominant and taken for granted assumption about literacy, numeracy and ESOL.

We want to encourage new writers as well as those with experience and to cover a range of topics. We aim to have three different kinds of articles in the journal plus a reviews section; these are slightly different in length and focus. We welcome illustration and graphics for any of the sections and now have the facility to embed audio and video files into the journal. The journal has a different theme for each edition but we welcome general contributions too.

Below you will see more details about the different themes and topics:

1. **Ideas for teaching**
This section is for descriptive and reflective pieces on teaching and learning. It is a good place to have a first go at writing for publication and can be based on experiences of learners and teachers in a range of settings. Pieces can be up to 1,000 words long.

2. **Developing Research and Practice**
This section covers a range of contributions from research and practice. In terms of research this could be experience of practitioner research, of taking part in research projects, commenting on research findings or of trying out ideas from research in practice. In terms of practice this could be about trying out new ideas and pushing back boundaries. Contributions should include reflection and critique. Pieces for this section should be between 1,000 - 2,000 words long including references.

3. **Research and Practice: multi-disciplinary perspectives**
This section is for more sustained analytical pieces about research, practice or policy. The pieces will be up to 4,000 words long including references and will have refereed journal status. Although articles in this section are more theoretically and analytically developed they should nevertheless be clearly written for a general readership. Both empirical work and theoretical perspectives should be accessible and clearly explained. Writing for this section should:

- Relate to the practices of learning and teaching adult literacy, numeracy or ESOL
- Link to research by describing and analysing new research findings relating this and any critical discussion to existing research studies
- Provide critical informed analysis of the topic including reference to theoretical underpinning
- Write coherently and accessibly avoiding impenetrable language and assumed meanings. The piece should have a clear structure and layout using the Harvard referencing system and notes where applicable. All terminology should be explained, particularly for an international readership.

Reviews
Reviews and reports of books, articles and materials (including online materials) should be between 50 to 800 words long. They should clearly state the name of the piece being reviewed, the author, year of publication, name and location of publisher and cost. You should also include your name, a short 2 to 3 line biography and your contact details. You can write the review based on your experience of using the book, article or materials in your role as practitioner, teacher trainer, and researcher or as a student.

Submitting your work
1. If you are responding to a call for articles via the RaPAL email list or directly by an editor you will have been given the email address of the editor(s) for submitting your work, together with a deadline date and the theme of the journal.
2. If you are submitting a piece of work that you would like RaPAL to consider for publication that has not been written as a result of a call for articles, please send it to journal@rapal.org.uk in the first instance. The journal coordinator will then let you know what the next steps will be.
3. All contributions should have the name of the author(s), a title and contact email address and telephone number. You should also include a short 2 to 3 line biography. Sections, sub-sections and any images should be clearly indicated or labelled (further guidance on image size is on the website www.rapal.org.uk.
4. All referencing should follow the Harvard system.
5. Articles should be word processed in a sans serif font, double-spaced with clearly numbered pages.
6. The article should be sent to journal@rapal.org.uk

What happens next?
1. Editors are appointed for each edition of the journal. They review all contributions and will offer feedback, constructive comment and suggestions for developing the piece as appropriate.
2. Articles submitted for the third category 'Research and Practice: multi-disciplinary perspectives' will be peer-reviewed by an experienced academic, research or practitioner in the field in addition to being edited.
3. The editor(s) will let you know whether your article has been accepted and will send you a final copy before publication.

If you have any questions, please contact the journal coordinator by emailing journal@rapal.org.uk