Changing power relationship between the “L2 self” and the target Discourse Community:

- emerging “academic L2 self”
- established “academic L2 self”

Psychological barriers to this transition

Solutions:
- theories of Positive Psychology
- practical applications to EAP pedagogy
Discourse
Community

“initiate new members”
(Swales, 1990:22)

“joining the tribe”
(Alexander, Argent & Spencer, 2008:6)

“cognitive apprenticeship”
(Adams, 2014:24)

Academic Literacies:
“academic socialisation”
(Coffin & Donohue, 2012:72)

SFL: “powerful discourses”
(Coffin & Donohue, 2012:72)

“proximity ... constructing individuals as members”
(Hyland, 2015:36)

“gatekeepers to the domain”
(Csikszentmihalyi, 1996:28)

emerging
“academic L2 self”
“Mastery” of a Domain
(Beaufort, 2007)

Genre Knowledge
Rhetorical Knowledge
Writing Process Knowledge
Discourse Community Knowledge
Subject Matter Knowledge

emerging “academic L2 self”

L2 Competence

DC
“Positioning … [is] how genre choices … construct members as individuals”, giving them “personal wriggle room” (Hyland, 2015:33)

Systemic Functional Linguistics argues that we need to raise students’ awareness of “powerful discourses” to provide “linguistic potential for them … to critique from within and renegotiate their position” (Coffin & Donohue, 2012:72)

“Mastering the old ways of doing or thinking” needs to happen before an individual can be “creative” and influence a domain from within (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996:116&155)

“Academic reputations are based on saying something new … in ways that are familiar to those we are trying to convince” (Hyland, 2015:36)

“Academic reputations are based on saying something new … in ways that are familiar to those we are trying to convince” (Hyland, 2015:36)

“Positioning … [is] how genre choices … construct members as individuals”, giving them “personal wriggle room” (Hyland, 2015:33)
Self-Efficacy

“beliefs in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”

(Bandura, 1997:3)
L2 student identity often has negative connotations in academic institutions, pointing to skills "deficits" (Costino & Hyon, 2007, p. 70).

“great potential for L2 students to internalize reductive stigma”, which can lower self-efficacy levels (Gallagher, Galindo, & Shin, 2016).

L2 students are at higher risk of academic under-achievement (de Kleine & Lawton, 2015).
Low Self-Efficacy beliefs
(e.g. Adams, 2014:17; Woodrow, 2011:520; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003)
Bandura (1989:731)

- avoidance of difficult tasks
- weak commitment to goals
- dwell on personal deficiencies and difficulty of task
- dwell on adverse consequences of failure
- reduced cognitive effort and attention to task
- victims of stress and depression
- low perseverance / give up easily

low Self-Efficacy beliefs
Self-Efficacy

“beliefs in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”

(Bandura, 1997:3)

(Maddux, 1995)
Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000):

building strengths, not just repairing damage

Learned Optimism (Seligman, 1991)

Flow Theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990)

Directed Motivational Currents (Dornyei, Ibrahim and Muir, 2015)

Mindful Learning (Langer, 1997)
Mastery of the “Academic” Self

"Mastery of a Domain" reflects the Competence of an individual.

"Academic" perspectives are based on saying something new... in ways that are familiar when scholars are trying to convince... (Ferri, 2009; 2010)

"positioning... by how genre choices... construct members as individuals... giving them "personal wriggle room" (Ferri, 2010)

"Mastering the old ways of doing or thinking" needs to happen before an individual can be "creative" and influence a domain from within... (Coulthard, 1984:142; 1992)

Systemic Functional Linguistics argues that we need to raise students' awareness of "powerful discourses" to enable "language potential" for them... to critique from within and renegotiate their position... (Coulthard, 1984; 1992)
Mastery Experiences

when students frequently “experience success in difficult learning challenges”

Flow Theory
(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990)

an **optimal state** of being attained when a person is engaged in some sort of **mental or physical activity** in which they are able to lose themselves completely, sometimes known as being “**in the zone**”

(Jackson & Marsh, 1996, in Egbert, 2003)
Pedagogical Implications: Flow

**Enabling conditions:**
- **balance** between level of challenge and skills
  ("scaffolding – Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976")
- clear task goals
- task intrinsically interesting/authentic
- attention focused on task
- immediate feedback
- sense of control / autonomy

**Flow:**
- intense focus
- enjoyment
- engagement with task
- lack of self-consciousness

**Results:**
- more persistence
- fulfilment
- motivation
- more complex skills
- more complex goals

*Emotional & Physiological States* (Bandura, 1997)

*Mastery Experiences* (Bandura, 1997)
Relationship between Mastery Experiences and Self-Efficacy

- Increased self-efficacy 
- Challenging task 
  - Effort 
  - Success 
- Effort 
  - Simplify task 
  - Failure 
  - Low self-efficacy 
  - Quit
Theory of Learned Optimism  
(Seligman, 1991)

Pessimistic explanatory style:  
- permanent  
- universal  
- internal / personal causes

Optimistic explanatory style:  
- temporary  
- limited  
- external

- give up  
- passive/helpless  
- failure  
- poor health  
- depression  
- self-fulfilling

- more prudent in high-stakes situations  
- more realistic  
- sympathetic to the troubles of others

- perseverance  
- active / in control  
- success  
- better health  
- happiness  
- inspirational to others

- evade responsibility for failures  
- risky in high-stakes situations

failure / negative events
Flexible Optimism

choice

PESSIMISM
- high stakes / risky situations
- sympathetic to others’ troubles

OPTIMISM
- when cost of failure is low
- in achievement situations
- to keep up your morale
- to lead / inspire others
Pedagogical Implications: Learned Optimism

- **Verbal Persuasion** (Bandura, 1997)
  - Help students see setbacks in an “optimistic” way
  - Failure / mistakes = non-threatening and even constructive
  - More risk-taking and perseverance (Seligman, 1991)

- **Vicarious Experiences** (Bandura, 1997)
  - Inspirational material / subject matter / role models
  - Adversity can be overcome through perseverance

- **Mastery Experiences** (Bandura, 1997)
  - “Scaffolding” (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976)
  - More success = higher self-efficacy and optimism

- **Learner Autonomy / Control / Reflection**
  - Conscious use of meta-cognitive strategies when failure occurs — reflective cycle (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990)
Emotional & Physiological States (Bandura, 1997)
Directed Motivational Currents
(Dornyei, Ibrahim and Muir, 2015)

DMC = “a prolonged process of engagement in a series of tasks which are rewarding primarily because they transport the individual towards a highly valued end”

- goal / vision orientedness
  - clearly defined self-concordant end goal
- positive emotionality
- salient facilitative structure
  - “eudaimonic” experience
  - recurring behavioural routines
  - route map
- Imaginal Experiences (Maddux, 1995)
  - vision of an “ideal L2 self”
- Mastery Experiences (Bandura, 1997)
  - Emotional & Physiological States (Bandura, 1997)
Imagine it is the future and your English language ability is at the level you want it to be. Being able to use English has helped you achieve your dreams. Think about the following questions:

What are you doing?

What are you using English for?

What are you thinking?

How are you following your passions?

How are you feeling?

How has your improved English ability changed your life?

What are you saying?

What can you see / hear / feel / smell / taste?
Imagine it is the future and your English language ability is at the level you want it to be. Being able to use English has helped you achieve your dreams. Think about the following questions:

**What are you doing?**

Living in Dubai, I don’t know Arabic, so the English language helps me vastly.

**What are you using English for?**

I am dedicating more of my time to teaching and reading.

**How are you following your passions?**

I am much happier because I am pursuing my dream.

**How has your improved English ability changed your life?**

I am a teacher at the British language school in Dubai teaching young learners.

I am thinking about promoting the English language skills of the young minds.

I am feeling very satisfied because I am pursuing my dream.

If we learn the English language, we can have good communication with many people around the world …

I can see the hope in the little eyes of my students, and I hear their whispers about what they want to be in the future.
Pedagogical Implications: DMCs

authenticity of students’ experiences

tangible vision of an Ideal L2 Self

students co-operate with each other

group projects with:
  • tangible outcomes linked to the real world
  • regular sub-goals and feedback
  • a mature and cohesive group

tap into identity = increased levels of intrinsic motivation
(Dornyei, Henry & Muir, 2016:44)

“social well-being” enhances motivation
(Dornyei, Henry & Muir, 2016:175:157)

“Group DMC” = high level of focus and drive
(Dornyei, Henry and Muir, 2016:175)
Emotional & Physiological States
(Bandura, 1997)

Mastery Experiences
(Bandura, 1997)
Mindful Learning
(Langer, 1997; Langer, 2000)

rote learning – no
understanding and information
has no personal relevance

“Mindless” Learning “rel[ies] on
distinctions drawn in the past … rule and
routine governed”

rigid
presentation

repetition

not transferrable
to new contexts

“overlearning”
of unquestioned
“facts”

automaticity of a skill
(chunking) can lead to:
• losing sight of individual components
• inability to fine-tune the skill
Mindfulness is "a flexible state of mind in which we are actively engaged in the present, noticing new things and sensitive to context."

Mindful Learning (Langer, 1997; Langer, 2000)
- conditional / cautious presentation
- active engagement “in the present moment"
- noticing novelty, distinctions, different contexts, multiple perspectives
- actively making connections
- playfulness & curiosity (fun!)

Mindfulness is "a flexible state of mind in which we are actively engaged in the present, noticing new things and sensitive to context."

- skills transferrable to new contexts
- comfort with uncertainty
- fine-tune skills
- mastery experiences (Bandura, 1997)
- positive affect
- creativity
- memory
- competence

Emotional & Physiological States (Bandura, 1997)
Pedagogical Implications: Mindful Learning

- be descriptive, not prescriptive (i.e. use cautious language)
- open-mindedness and flexibility
- better remembering (Langer, 1997)
- being risk comfortable – key feature of LA (Alexander, Argent & Spencer, 2008)
- look at ideas from different angles (Langer, 1997)
- when perceived as “play” = we focus / notice / engage / learn more (Langer, 1997)
- valuable use of class time (Field, 2007:33).
- active engagement in tasks (Langer, 1997)
- opens minds to alternative possibilities
- discover meaning themselves

Mastery Experiences
(Bandura, 1997)

- playfulness / curiosity
- fun / games
- “zest” and “humour” (Seligman, 2012)

Emotional & Physiological States
(Bandura, 1997)

- noticing activities

• mastery learning experiences
• emotional and physiological states
• mastery experiences
• being descriptive, not prescriptive (i.e. use cautious language)
• open-mindedness and flexibility
• better remembering (Langer, 1997)
• being risk comfortable – key feature of LA (Alexander, Argent & Spencer, 2008)
• look at ideas from different angles (Langer, 1997)
• when perceived as “play” = we focus / notice / engage / learn more (Langer, 1997)
• valuable use of class time (Field, 2007:33).
• active engagement in tasks (Langer, 1997)
• opens minds to alternative possibilities
• discover meaning themselves
Main findings

Active processing
- noticing
- conditional presentation
- viewing from different perspectives
- making new connections

Positive emotionality
- fun
- zest
- humour
- optimism
- inspirational subject matter
- eudaimonia

Learner autonomy
- active, present and choice-making
- comfortable with risk / ambiguity
- reflective – make links to own lives

(Alexander, Argent & Spencer, 2008)

Personal
- personally meaningful goals and content
- relevance to lives and passions

Challenge
- motivating & tangible goals and sub-goals
- good chance of success (scaffolding)
- boosts self-esteem

Perseverance
- viewing failure and mistakes constructively
- keeps going

Supportive environment
- group co-operation and cohesiveness
- safe to take risks / make mistakes
- good support system
Low Self-Efficacy beliefs
(e.g. Adams, 2014:17; Woodrow, 2011:520; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003)
high Self-Efficacy beliefs
Application to your context?

Thank you!

ap417@le.ac.uk

@AleksPalanac


References (2)


References (3)


