Miss mek wi trai: Using Multiliteracies Pedagogy to Effect Changes in Jamaica Inner-city Grade 7 Students' English Language Development.

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Abstract

My four-month research project is the first recorded Jamaican study to explore if and how multiliteracies pedagogy (MLS) paired with sociocultural theory (SCT) can improve inner-city students' English language development (ELD) and engagement. Jamaica is a diglossic society in which we speak different variations of either Jamaican Standard English (JSE) or Patois. Typically, most upper- and middle-class Jamaicans speak English, while most members of the Jamaican lower class speak Patois; hence, social class typically dictates Jamaican language abilities. However, English is the language of the Jamaican curriculum, employment, and power. All my participants attempted to learn JSE well because of the dominant belief that better knowledge of this English will improve their access to better-paying jobs and higher education.

I conducted my research in the following sequential manner: 1) a month of classroom observation of the original English teacher's classroom; 2) two months where I taught my experiential communicative lessons inspired by multiliteracies pedagogy and sociocultural theory; 3) four student focus group interviews and one teacher interview; and, 4) document analysis of examples of students' three individual work (two after-lesson reflections and a paragraph of narrative account). All of these data collection tools ensured that I captured my participants' meaning-making and subjectivities. All my communicative activities paired grammar forms with the school's modified version of the Jamaican Grade 7 curriculum and, to further engage my participants', communicative activities based on their socio-cultural knowledge.

My research findings support and diverge from the weight of evidence in multiliteracies pedagogy and sociocultural theory. On the one hand, my research findings support the dominant narratives from multiliteracies pedagogy and sociocultural theory about students' learning, development and student engagement. These findings, which are consistent with other multiliteracies

and sociocultural based research revealed that participants became more engaged in their English learning during the experiential teaching that I conducted than they were in their original English language class. The majority of the students' writing skills also improved. On the other hand, my research deviated from the dominant themes of multiliteracies and sociocultural theory research studies, which typically show a mutual relationship between the students' emotional engagement, behavioural engagement and their learning. In my study, there was not a strong relationship between the students' emotional engagement and their behavioural engagement; there was also no relationship between the students' emotional engagement and improvement in language development. Unlike many multiliteracies studies in which most of the students are said to prefer the use of the home language, my research shows that participants would prefer to only speak in English in classes to better enhance and speed up their English learning.

I recommend that teachers incorporate multiliteracies-inspired communicative activities in their English classes, as these activities engage students and promote English learning and development. I also suggest that multiliteracies researchers implement good behavioural strategies to ensure that students are engaged cognitively, emotionally and behaviourally. Moreover, in tandem with my student participants, I encourage teachers, future researchers and the Jamaican Ministry of Education to respect the students' voices and agency, rather than merely incorporating their lived experiences in their school learning.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my family and my student participants. Completing my dissertation proves that with hard work, anyone can achieve their most ambitious dreams.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my supervisor, my committee, and my friends and family members who have supported me through this daunting yet self-invigorating process. As a black woman from the working-class, my Ph.D. journey was punctuated with instances of self-doubt and feelings of being an imposter. At times, I doubted if I had the academic language that was required to complete this journey and to write a dissertation. At those particular times, my supervisor, committee members, friends and family members encouraged me when I felt discouraged and challenged by my Ph.D. work. More specifically, the numerous discussions and conversations that I had with my supervisor and friends about my research's challenges served as a catharsis for me during the most challenging time of my research. Therefore, I acknowledge that without an army of support around me, I would not have been able to complete this Ph.D. journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose of Research

This qualitative research examines multiliteracies pedagogy's (MLS)[1] potential to improve the ability of Jamaican inner-city grade seven students' Jamaican Standard English (JSE) speaking, reading and writing skills. Most of my student participants were inner-city students, as they lived and attended school in their communities. I conducted my research in one Grade 7 class for four months. I implemented an experiential intervention to explore how the teaching of English writing, speaking and reading that has been inspired by multiliteracies pedagogy can improve inner-city students' English development and promote engagement in the English language classroom. Attention towards improving inner-city students' English language learning is vital to their personal development and socio-economic position.

In this document, the term inner-city students refers to students who live in urban communities characterized by poverty, overcrowding, poor social amenities and habitual violence. Hence, they reflect Goldstein's (2014a, 2014b) term Other people's families, as they have been othered, marginalized and oppressed by their experiences in the Jamaican education system. For a number of reasons, these students sometimes have low educational attainment. The low educational attainment contributes to and reinforces the cycle of the poor socio-economic conditions in which they live.

There are no exact figures on inner-city students' literacy rates at all rungs of the educational system; however, some statistics show that, cumulatively, less than 20 percent pass their end of high school English examinations - in the North American system, high school includes Grades 7-11 (The Jamaican Observer, 2015a). This means that with all the English language teaching that these students receive from Grades 7-11 to prepare for their end of high school exam, the region-wide

[1] I chose to use the acronym MLS as it is consistent with my 2015 coauthored article with Dr. Anne Burke.

Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC), only 20 percent of them are able to manage the demands for such exam. These figures are the lowest among any demographic of students in Jamaica. The figures are alarming because the Jamaican national average for the Grade 11 exam was 67 percent in 2016 (Jamaica Observer, 2016). More specifically to my research site, Dr. Spencer-Ernandez, a Jamaican academic specialist appointed by the Jamaican Ministry of Education (MoE) noted that some Grade 7 students who read at a Grade 1 or a Grade 2 level (Jamaican Observer, 2015). These statistics show that inner-city students' English learning difficulties are systematically lower than all the other sets of Jamaican students.

Research questions. In light of my research objectives, I explored the following questions in my study:

1. In what ways can multiliteracies pedagogy combined with sociocultural theory impact on the learning of JSE in Jamaican inner-city schools?
    a. Through the proposed intervention, in what ways can a multiliteracies approach to teaching JSE engage students?
    b. Does this engagement produce improved English language development for my participants and if so, how?

Research rationale. Inner-city students' inability to speak, write and read English language hinders their socio-economic development because English is the language of power, finance, and civility in Jamaica. English is also the language of education, which means that all subjects, examinations and reading materials are taught in English (Allsopp & Jennings, 2014; Mordecai & Mordecai, 2001). With English as the Jamaican lingua franca, inner-city students' mastery of the language will help them to access higher education and to get improved opportunities for better jobs (Franks, 2010). As Frantz Fanon (1952/1967) asserted in his famous book Black Skin, White Masks "[m]astery of language affords remarkable power" (p. 9). Hence, inner-city students' mastery of English will give them agency to shape their socio-economic future.

Reporting my findings is timely, as the Jamaican Ministry of Education is conducting ongoing conversations about how to improve English language teaching and learning with the ultimate goal of raising the Jamaican literacy rates. Moreover, in August 2016 at the 21st Biennial Society for Caribbean Linguistics conference, leading Jamaican linguists, in conversations with the Jamaican Chief Education Officer, Dr. Grace McLean, raised concerns about the alarmingly slow pace of Jamaican language and literacy policy reforms. Dr. McLean reiterated the need for more research that can clearly articulate what these reforms should look like. My findings provide valuable input into conversations about ways to improve Jamaican English teaching and learning. In my interview conducted for this present study, Mrs. Brown, the English Language Arts teacher, herself acknowledged the need for change in the Jamaican English curricula.

In this section, to show English's power in the educational system, I posit the role it plays in the students' post-secondary career. Jamaican students need to pass at least five courses in the CSEC examinations, including English and mathematics, to gain access to post-secondary education in community colleges or sixth form (Grades 12 and 13), or to get basic entry-level formal employment positions, such as customer service representatives and office assistant. In this regard, it is evident that the CSEC "determines so much of life chances for students" (Bryan, 2002, p. 34). After community college or sixth form, the students also need to pass at least three subjects in the A-Level Examinations, or the Caribbean Advance Proficiency Examinations (CAPE), to advance to university. The A-Level Examinations are modelled after the British Grade 12 exam. CAPE is similar to the A-Level examinations, but it is focused on the Caribbean context. Students who wish to pursue post-secondary education, but who have not obtained the minimum passes in their CSEC, A-Level or CAPE examinations, and do not have the money to pay to re-sit the aforementioned exams, typically apply to one of the few government-funded free vocational training centres on the island to get certified for a vocational skill. Before gaining acceptance to these vocational centres, they have to

complete a complementary Grade 9 level standardized test that examines their general knowledge, mathematics and English skills. These centres are grossly underfunded, so there are very few spaces available for new students (Jamaica Observer, 2015c). What's more, due to the mismanagement of these centres and their limited enrolment capacity, it can take several years for applicants to be contacted for their initial assessment. Anecdotal evidence and the narratives of my family members suggest that by the time applicants are notified, most of them would have already found minimum waged jobs (about $1.55 Canadian an hour) or would have lost interest in attending a vocational centre. George Davis, in a 2015 Jamaican Gleaner article, lamented that the current minimum wage, which is "barely enough to ensure comfortable hand-to-mouth living" (para. 10), ensures that workers in basic entry-level formal jobs have to "borrow weekly to survive" (para. 11). Therefore, inner-city students' English illiteracy diminishes their access to higher education and access to higher-paying jobs, continuing the cycle of poverty and illiteracy in inner-city communities. An important strategy to break this cycle of poverty and illiteracy and move inner-city students from the periphery of authorized power and privilege (Bhabha, 1994) is to improve the students' English language development, to give them access to the language of education. Improved English competency will lead to better grades and avenues to post-secondary education, which in turn may open a typical (middle-class associated) path to better employment.

The Politics of Language in Jamaica

There is no single answer to the question: why do inner-city students have such high English illiteracy rates? Still, some Jamaican educators and linguists (Bryan & Shaw, 2002; Cooper, 2003; Devonish & Carpenter, 2007a,b; Devonish, Lewis-Fokum, 2010; Low, 1998) have identified the traditional English language teaching methods as the chief problem that influences working class students'- by extension inner-city students'- English Language Arts learning. Jamaican traditional English Language Arts teaching pedagogy has been identified as: 1) creating identity conflicts in working-class students through de-legitimizing their native language; 2) using non-communicative activities that fail to capture students' interest; and 3) isolating inner-city students through the use of canon literacy (Jettka, 2010). These three factors make English learning difficult for inner-city students.

English language teaching captures the politics of language in Jamaica. It builds on middle- and upper classes' literacy forms while divorcing itself from working-class students' out-of-school knowledge. Social class differentiates literacy practices in Jamaica. Celebrated Caribbean linguist Dennis Craig noted that in Jamaica,

> "[y]oung people encounter…upward social strivings at an early age. It is a long-standing practice in many places for children who do not 'talk proper' or who 'talk bad' to be scolded into producing a 'better' kind of speech (1968, p. 374)."

Craig was testifying to the well-established practice of many Jamaicans parents, mainly from the middle- and upper-classes, who socialize their children to appreciate print literacy and to speak Jamaican Standard English (JSE). By virtue of their appreciation of print-based literacy, most Jamaican middle-and upper-classes students also perform well on standardized tests, which is consistent with the literature that highlights the correlation between class, print literacy and

standardized testing (Kearns, 2011; Lipman, 2004; McNeil, 2000; Mordecai & Mordecai, 2001).

On the opposite end of the spectrum, most working-class students are not typically socialised to speak JSE or to acquire print literacy. Instead, many working-class parents, perhaps because they are not competent with speaking in English or because they are not fully literate, encourage their children to express themselves through storytelling, Patois (their native language), dancing and drama (Nettleford, 2003). There are always exceptions to the rules. Many Jamaicans from the working-classes who attained secondary education or who have travelled to North America require their children to speak the best version of English they can muster. Some of these working-class Jamaicans also tell their children that they are speaking "badly" when they speak Patois. Patois[2] serves as "a double-edged sword" (UNESCO, 2016, p. 4): while it strengthens Jamaicans' sense of belonging and social ties, it is also basis for their marginalization. As a language associated mainly with the poor (Frank, 2010), Patois deserves special mention because it is at the core of understanding how working-class students' literacies are different from those of middle-and upper-class students.

Patois is a by-product of colonization and slavery of Africans by the British. It borrows heavily from West African languages (where most of the slaves were captured); and also consists of English, a little Portuguese, Chinese, Spanish and remnants of Amerindian/Indigenous languages (Nero, 1997; Torres, 2009). Noted Caribbean scholar Mervyn Alleyne (1988) elucidated that "African languages have played an extremely important part in the development of the mass language of Jamaica" (p. 11). Many Jamaican elites and intellectuals consider Patois a dialect used in informal communications among the poor, due to the strong African influence on the language (Frank, 2010). Patois is primarily taught orally from one generation to the next through songs, folklore, dance and daily conversations (Madden, 2009). This oral tradition in Patois "'contaminates' the scribal as subversive practice.

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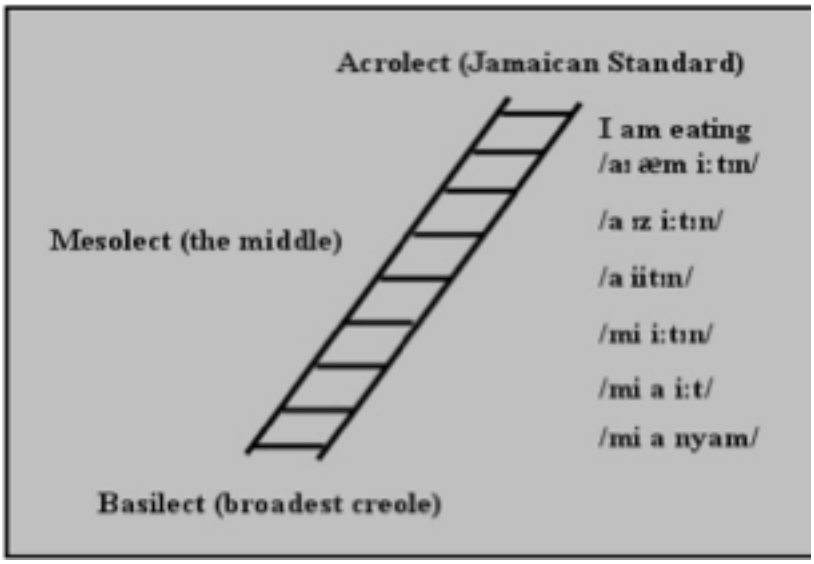
[2] In my research proposal I referred to Jamaican as Patois. However, after discussions with Jamaican educators and linguists while I was in the field, I found out that many Caribbean linguists and educators referred to Patois as Ja-maican. Hence, Jamaican is a scholastic term. Despite Bryan's (2004) and Alleyne's (1998) classifications of Patois as a bastardization of Jamaican Creole, I decided to use the term Patois instead of Jamaican because my participants refer to Jamaican as Patois.

The image of contamination…accurately renders the hierarchy of cultural prejudices in Jamaica that devalues the oral, particularly when the oral is transmitted in the vernacular" (Cooper, 1996, p.7). Due to this orality, as cited in Cooper, Patois is regarded as an illegitimate language.

Figure 1: The classification of language in Jamacia (Sebba, 1997).



As with the colonial masters, the present Jamaican powers that be deny Patois its rich history. In so doing, they characterize Patois as a subaltern language with no history or legitimate place in formal systems such as the education system (Spivak, 1988). Although there is no single accepted standardized[3] written structure for Patois, owing to its many spoken variations, denying Patois its history and status as a language, is a form of epistemic violence (Spivak, 1988). Moreover, due to the lack of standardization in Patois, many Jamaican policy-makers classify Patois

3 In 1961, Frederic Cassidy, a Jamaican linguist, developed a Jamaican orthography that did not rely on English spellings. In 1967, Cassidy and Robert Brock Le Page, a UK-born linguist published the Dictionary Jamaican Eng-lish. This was the first dictionary to spell Jamaican words using a "Jamaican" orthography.

as low culture (see the Jamaican Language Policy, for example). For simplicity, I present a linear depiction of the Jamaican language situation. In applied linguistics, the "purest" form of Patois that has little or no influence by contemporary JSE is basilect, which is found in many deep Jamaican rural and inner-city communities. Non-Jamaicans would not understand the basilect. Many upper and middle class Jamaicans view basilect speakers as uncivilized and uncultured (Cooper, 2004). More educated Jamaicans from the working-class who complete high school or who work in formalised settings speak a mesolect, a mixture of Patois and JSE (Simmons-McDonald & Robertson, 2006). Educated middle-class Jamaicans and members of the Jamaican elite typically speak the acrolect or JSE (Bryan, 2010). See Figure 1 for a pictorial depiction of the language hierarchy in Jamaica.

The above language description is only for the sake of simplicity for persons who do not have intimate knowledge of the Jamaican language situation. The language situation in Jamaica is more nuanced and complex than merely stating that middle- and upper-classes Jamaicans do not speak Patois, as attitudes to language are not static. In fact, with the rise in popularity of Jamaican in many international movies - such as Meet Joe Black, where Brad Pitt spoke Jamaican, middle-and upper-class Jamaicans translanguage[4] between English and Patois while communicating in public settings to use more pop-cultural references or seem more assertive. Contemporary Jamaican educators and linguists prefer to describe Jamaicans as diglossic because "two or more varieties of the same language [Jamaican] are used by some speakers under different conditions" (Low, 1998, p. 87). I argue that diglossia is more pronounced among middle-and upper-class Jamaicans. In fact, the Jamaican black middle-class in particular practices what Belinda Edmondson called a leisure culture, where they struggle to create a balance between "[their] origins in black-identified culture with [their] aspirations for social ascendance" (2009, p. 2). The Jamaican upper classes create a

[4] Translanguaging accepts that "speakers use their languaging, bodies, multimodal resources, tools and artefacts in dynamically entailed, interconnected and coordinated ways of meaning making" (Garcia, 2017, p. 258).

form of comfortable inbetweenness and hybridity where they are able to switch their language and identity to gain social capital. In some cases, working-class Jamaicans may fluctuate between their use of mesolect (of Patois and English) at a Parent-Teacher Association meeting, for example, or when they are speaking to a stranger who they presume is of a higher social standing. From my lived experiences[5], those cases that call upon working-class Jamaicans to do the same are few.

In showing a preference for middle-and upper-class literacy practices, English language instruction in Jamaica serves to move working-class English learners away from any connection with their home literacy. Hence, there is no power and legitimacy given to working-class students' home literacies (Carpenter & Devonish, 2010; The Jamaican Language Unit, 2005). Accordingly, the education system serves to reinforce class divisions (UNESCO, 2016, wa Thiong'o, 1986). Similar to the experiences of working-class students' experiences in wa Thiong'o's narration of the Kenyan education system, my experiences in two Jamaican high schools as a student and a teacher support the claim that working-class students' home literacies are considered illegitimate and powerless in English language learning. It also highlights the fact that the education system reinforces class divisions. I studied at a traditional high school and worked at a non-traditional one. A distinction between these types of high schools is offered below.

[5] My lived experiences were instrumental in the way that I made sense of the Jamaican teaching and learning.

Social Hierarchy of Jamaican High Schools

In theory, in Jamaica up until 2015, all Grade 6 students entering high school could have attended any school of their choice. In early 2015 the Minister of Education implemented a school zoning policy, which was said to be vital because it would serve to remedy the high number of students converging and getting into trouble with the law at the transportation centres (Jamaica Observer, 2015d). Prior to this zoning, all that students needed to do to attend a high school of their choice was to obtain the minimum entrance requirements (academic average and good behaviour) and pay the requisite school auxiliary fees (registration, extracurricular costs, and extra lessons). The Jamaican media reports that auxiliary fees can range from $ 60 Canadian to $398.84 Canadian (Jones, 2015b).

In 2016, the present government called for an abolition of auxiliary fees and promised to pay $189.45 Canadian per student to offset this cost (Government of Jamaica, 2016). Citing concerns from schools that the abolition of the auxiliary fees would prevent them from balancing their books, the Jamaican Minister of Education directed parents to make "voluntary contributions" because the government "can't pay everything" (Jamaica Observer, 2017, para. 1). Instead of allowing parents to pay what they have, most schools set a predetermined sum which leaves parents no choice but to pay if they want their children to attend these schools. Many of these fees are outside the reach of most working-class students.

Up until 2015, theoretically, since there was no zoning of Jamaican schools, a few working class students who could make it and work through the financial demands with assistance from relatives abroad, could attend high schools outside of their home zones. Since then, the majority of working-class students have been indirectly forced to attend the schools closest to, rather than outside of, their communities because they lacked the financial resources required by distant schools. Most of the high schools outside their communities are classified as traditional high schools, which

are the highest ranked in Jamaica. These schools stream students towards academic programs that are necessary to occupy positions in traditional professional careers such as banking and finance, medicine, law and public administration. Although they may fluctuate in ranking, all traditional schools share one commonality in that they offer very few technical and vocational subjects.

As of this writing, Grade 6 students need an average of 85 percent or higher on their Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT)[6] to secure a place in top-ranked traditional high schools (Brown, 2012). Historically, upper-and middle-class students obtain these scores and perform well on standardized tests because they can afford to get extra academic support. To attend regular/customary traditional high schools (which are a step lower than the prestigious schools), students need an average of 70 percent or higher (ibid.). Students from the lower middle class and working-class families typically attend these traditional high schools. Students who obtain less than a 70 % average attend non-traditional high schools. Non-traditional high schools are divided into upgraded high schools and comprehensive or technical high schools. Upgraded high schools were previously junior high schools (Grades 7-9), which were then extended to Grade 11 to fill the gap in demand for high school positions. Upgraded high schools offer fewer academic programs and more technical and vocational programs. Like upgraded high schools, comprehensive or technical high schools place more emphasis on technical and vocational subjects after Grade 9 than they do on academics. Both schools position students towards technical and vocational education, as well as for jobs in the service industry. As of 1999, the Jamaican Ministry of Education implemented a series of exams that were supposed to prevent students from achieving low scores on their GSAT exams. In theory, no schools were supposed to promote students to high school if they had not passed their GSAT (Lewis-Fokum, 2011). From conversations with the teachers at my research site, I found out that the many of the students failed the GSAT. Ingrid Brown reported in the Jamaica Observer (2012) that many students at inner-city high schools got as low as a 30 percent average in their GSAT exams. These reports paint a picture of under-performance in non-traditional schools, particularly those in inner-city communities.

6The GSAT is a standardized test that students take at the end of grade six. Unlike its predecessor, the Common Entrance Exam, it was designed to give students more equal access to all high schools in Jamaica. However, it has been criticised for its failure to do this. In March 2019, the GSAT will be replaced by the Primary Exit Profile.

My Academic and Professional Experiences with English Language Development

As a high school student from the working-class, I attended a well-regarded (at the time) traditional high school, by virtue of my test scores and my parents' ability to pay the necessary fees. While there, I struggled with and resisted learning JSE because I did not identify with it. English instruction throughout my high school centred on focus on forms (grammar) language instruction, which is a method that promotes the explicit and sequential teaching of grammar forms and is followed by activities catered to hone comprehension of these forms (Ellis, 2002a and 2002b; Long, 1991). One of the problems I experienced while learning English, and still continue to experience to this day, is my pronunciation, which is exemplified when I flatten my open vowel sounds in words like 'horn,' which I sometimes pronounce as 'haan'. Added to this, I typically mispronounce words such as 'axe' for 'ask' and 'decks' for 'desk.' Moreover, I had difficulties with English grammar because it is distinct from Patois. For example, there is no 'to be' verb in Patois and no marked distinction between subject/object.

With all these problems, as a high school student, when I tried to speak English, teachers would correct my pronunciation. The teachers also encouraged my peers and me to practice speaking JSE outside of the classroom, since they thought it would enhance our ability to develop the language. When I spoke "properly" at home and in my community, I was accused of "twanging," a term used for Jamaicans who are trying to speak American English, or I was also classified as acting "stush" another Jamaican term for people who pretend to be "cultured" and "elitist." To many working-class Jamaicans, speaking in JSE produces what Du Bois (1903) referred to as a false consciousness, where we abandon our identities to adopt the language of our former colonizers. I did not experience this false consciousness in my early years of schooling, which is between Grades 1 to 6, because all my classmates were from the working-class and the teachers readily accepted our use of Patois. I was a confident student in those years.

I did not process how studying English conflicts with working-class students' identity until I worked at an inner-city school. At the beginning of my teaching experience, I was unaware of this bias towards Patois. Therefore, I too instructed my students to speak properly, which meant that they had to speak in JSE. In essence, I told them that the only way they would be able to speak JSE is if they abandoned their native language (L1) in class and spoke only in JSE. I also expected them to successfully complete all my print-based tasks. At that moment in my teaching career, I was not aware that my students did not perform well on print-based tasks due to the orality of their L1. Hence, many of them were unable to write complex sentences and to construct simple but coherent paragraphs. I remember spending three class periods teaching my students how to write a letter as per the requirements of the Grade 7 English syllabus. In the process of writing this letter, I elicited my students' help in its construction. Even though it was a struggle, I invited them to the blackboard to write their contributions. However, at the end of the school year, when I requested of them to write the exact same letter in their exam, my students could not complete this task. I was dumbfounded as to why the students were not able to reproduce this letter in the exam, given the amount of time we had spent on it and that I had scaffolded their writing of the letter. This experience showed me that there was a need for more research to help unpack the learning struggles of these students; challenges that, in this example, would make them 'forget' something so critical to their success in the exam. This experience also informed me that scaffolding was not the only necessary ingredient to improve inner-city students' English learning; even when I had provided scaffolding to the students, later, they still could not complete the letter writing task.

Another observation that highlighted the need for more research in inner-city schools was the lack of connection to my students' socio-cultural backgrounds. Many of the classroom activities promoted by the Grade 7 curriculum and the recommended textbook had no connections to the students' out of school activities. Most of the activities used in the classroom emphasized canon

literacy. I remember from my own teaching of English that students could not relate to some of the materials that were recommended for use in my classrooms. To illustrate further, based on the stipulation of the textbook that I was using at the time, I asked my students to describe, in words, a day at the beach with their families. However, the students really struggled with these descriptions. At that time, I was oblivious to the fact that many of them did not have stable family structures and many did not take organized trips to the beach. In the end, we had an open discussion about what a day at the beach would look like. I directed my students to draw a picture of their interpretation of a day at the beach and to write a caption for their picture. More students were able to complete this task with a lot of scaffolding from me. On other occasions, when I taught according to the dictates of the recommended textbooks, I witnessed large amounts of disengagement from my students. When I assigned classroom tasks, most students either engaged in prolong chatter with their peers or fell asleep. I had to continually monitor them so that they would complete some of the tasks I outlined. I rarely gave homework because I knew they would not complete it.

After leaving this school, I later read that many inner-city students express their knowledge through storytelling, drama, and dance (Cooper, 2004; Nettleford, 2003). These sub-cultural preferences are rooted in their African language, heritage, and memory. Nettleford (2003) denoted that Caribbean languages, including Jamaican, are more than "lexicography, that they are imagery, tone, metaphysical symbolism, and possessing the properties of song/dance/movement even" (p. 14). In support of Nettleford, Cooper (2004) communicated that "to write in the creole-Anglophobe Caribbean without the rhythms and language of the street is to be cut off from the pulsating lifehood of the …community" (p. 7). I quoted these citations at length because they clearly elucidated the point that teaching students English through mainly print-based reproductive forms largely ignores the students' out of school literacy practices.

Now, I recognize that English language teaching and learning cannot be devoid of these

multimodal representations of knowing. Additionally, within the wider society, inner-city residents are highly engaged in dancing and drama as a way to prove their knowledge and to earn a living above minimum wages. Deborah Thomas (2004), a Jamaican-born anthropologist, clearly made a connection between Jamaican, dance and music by stating that "in other arenas such as dance and music, fluency in the 'vernacular' form was given higher value than fluency in the standard official form" (p. 188). Although Thomas stylized Patois as a vernacular and robbed it of its status as a language, the quote above shows the cultural and functional valence that working-class Jamaicans ascribe to Patois. Guzder and colleagues' (2013) research showed that there is merit in using inner-city students' sub-cultural multimodal affordances to improve their academic performance. At the end of Guzder and colleagues' study in which they used the creative arts in inner-city classrooms, their participants' "academic performance and learning were also significantly improved" (p. 129). More research is warranted to investigate how other multimodal socio-cultural affordances such as drama, dancing, music and gestures may help students to better learn English as Guzder and her colleagues' research did not specifically address English language learning. Hence, multimodal literacies are powerful tools for supporting and enhancing other forms of literacies and the students' psycho-cognitive development.

Finally, I observed that most of the lessons at the inner-city school where I taught, as detailed by the English language curriculum guide and syllabus, encouraged individual-based activities. The individual approach worked well with students who were highly motivated and engaged in school learning. Since my students were not highly motivated and engaged, I estimated that this individual approach worked well with only some of them. Recognising the limitations of this individualistic approach, I used to group the faster-working students and the slower-working students together. Before I left the school, when the students worked in pairs and when I monitored them consistently, over half of the class was engaged[7] and attempted to complete their tasks. Unfortunately, I left

[7] I define engagement as students' positive attitude towards school as well as their sense of belonging (Chui, Pong, Mori & Chow, 2012).

the school too early to see the long-term potential of collaborative student English learning. In recognizing the benefits of group-based learning, I used Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural theory as both conceptual and theoretical frameworks as it emphasizes interaction as a site of learning and development. Professor Hickling and colleagues' award winning Dream a World Project Cultural Therapy Programme in Inner-city Primary Schools combined a psychotherapeutic intervention and cultural theory to provide remedial academic programs to engage primary school students. In this project, Professor Hickling capitalised on the students' creative lived experiences and circling to teach students, to capture their interest in school. The changes in the students' academic achievement was measured by doing a comparative analysis using the end of year grades with which they started in 2006 and the ones they obtained during the project between 2007 to 2009. All the students in the study showed marked improvements in their academics (Jamaica Observer, 2014).

My teaching experiences confirm the need for more research informed pedagogy on critical ways to improve inner-city students' language learning and development. It is not customary for research on students' English learning to focus on Grade 7 students; rather, this type of research tends to focus on Grades 1-3 students because if students do not receive interventions in these grades they will remain struggling learners (Kennedy et al., 2012; Torgesen et al., 1999; Wagner et al., 1997). Although it is debatable, research on the critical age hypothesis (Abello-Contesse, 2009; Lightbown, 2000) has shown that it is easier for children up to age 10 to learn a new language or to receive remediation for language learning (Clarke, 2009). Given the focus on early literacy education, there is a strong body of research that highlights best practices for teaching children 10 years and under (e.g., Burns, Griffiths, Parson, Tily & VanDerHayden, 2007; Haager, Klinger, & Vaughn, 2007). Similarly, most of the Jamaican studies (see, for example, Devonish & Carpenter, 2007) that recruited the students' lived experiences, and their socio-cultural backgrounds were conducted in primary schools. However, I have chosen to go against this trend and to focus on students in higher grades for two reasons.

Reasearch Justification

First, I chose to conduct my study in a Grade 7 classroom because in Jamaica this grade forms the building blocks for high school. Students' success in Grade 7 can enhance acceptable performance in high school and, at the end of the high school examinations, the CSEC examinations. Considerably less information exists pertaining to effective intervention strategies for older struggling English language learners (ELL) (Vaughn et al., 2008). Thus, my study strengthened the knowledge about approaches to teach older struggling ELL students. In this regard, the results of my study may support recent findings in neuroplasticity studies, which show the malleability of older second language learners' brain (Li, Legault & Litcofsky, 2014).

Second, I focused on Grade 7 because the Jamaican Ministry of Education (MoE) has implemented many policies that promote standardized teaching and assessments in primary schools (grades 1 to 6). Since the implementation of these policies, there have been slight improvements in primary schools located outside of inner-city communities (Thompson, 2017). However, anecdotal evidence suggests that Grade 6 students in many inner-city communities still continue to attain low passes in their end-of-year GSAT examinations and are placed in non-traditional high schools. Consequently, in many inner-city schools, some students who are incapable of managing the English literacy expectations once they get to high school. I believe with intervention; struggling learners may be able to manage and surpass these expectations.

The critical re-envisioning that I implemented for English language teaching in Jamaican inner-city high school was essential to multiliteracies pedagogy (MLS). MLS has been formulated to help language educators rethink that language teaching is vital to providing more access to knowledge for students who have different (sub-) cultural backgrounds. Therefore, MLS places an onus on schools to recognize the cultural and linguistic diversity that students bring to school and use them as learning resources. Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) classified these cultural and

linguistic resources as students' funds of knowledge or their "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills" (p. 133). These funds of knowledge are typically omitted in Jamaican inner-city teaching and learning environments. MLS asks teachers to include these students' funds of knowledge as a way of "captur[ing] the increasingly complex range of multimodal practices required [for students] to comprehend, manage, create and communicate knowledge in our technologically sophisticated, multilingual, culturally diverse globalized societies" (Taylor, Bernhard, Garg & Cummins, 2008, p. 275). The acknowledgement of multiple literacies aligned with the work of New Literacies Studies (NLS), the scholarship that informed the New London's Group's theorizing of MLS. NLS advocates for the understanding of literacy to move beyond the acquisition of skills to a social practice that is highly influenced by one's lived experiences and cultural practices (Street, 2003). Similarly, MLS recognizes that culture influences students' cognition (Kalantzis & Cope, 2008; Lotherington, 2013). By focusing on students' socio-cultural knowledge as a way of improving cognition, MLS also connects with sociocultural theory (SCT) of second language learning (SLL), which recruits students' socially acquired experiences to learn language (Eun & Lim, 2009; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). In sum, multiliteracies proponents', such as Jim Cummins (2007), argue that students who do not possess the dominant ways of knowing are underserved in school learning where the focus is on the dominant culture's ways of viewing knowledge.

Unlike the typical, more traditional teaching at my research site, where students' use of Patois is viewed negatively, my research welcomed students' oral expressions in Patois. Incorporating students' native language in the classroom can help build self-esteem as their native language is given legitimacy in the classroom (The Jamaican Language Unit, 2015). In honouring my participants' language, I allowed them to translanguage at their leisure. Allowing students to translanguage is common in multiliteracies pedagogy research (see, for example, Giampapa, 2010; Lavoie, 2008). Various multiliteracies and sociocultural studies for second language learning studies (listed in the ensuing section) have shown that students' L1 is a useful tool to mediate their L2 (target language). In Chapter 5, I explained how translanguaing impacted on my participants' English language learning.

Overview of Content

The remainder of this document is organized in six chapters. The first chapter that follows (Chapter 2) outlines the literature review, which details three theories - multiliteracies pedagogy, new literacies studies, and sociocultural theory, for second language learning. The following chapter (Chapter 3) maps out the study's methodology, which outlines the theoretical framework that I used to analyze my findings; the beliefs that govern my approach to knowledge (epistemological worldview); and how I conducted my study. Chapter 4 starts the analysis of my findings, and it reports on my observations in the teacher's class. Chapter 5 charts a micro-level analysis of how my multiliteracies pedagogy and socio-cultural theory inspired intervention changed my students' English Language Arts learning and engagement. Chapter 6, provides a meso-level analysis of how the students' English Language Arts learning and their engagement changed in my intervention. My final chapter, Chapter 7, summaries my dissertation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

To enhance readability, the literature review is presented in three sections. In the first section I address the tenets of multiliteracies pedagogy and summarize its effectiveness in themes that are applicable to the Jamaican context. In the second, I connect multiliteracies pedagogy (MLS) to new literacies studies (NLS) and sociocultural theory (SCT) for second language learning (SLL). Finally, in the third section I demonstrate my position that while multiliteracies pedagogy is theoretically broad, it is not completely novel as it intersects with other theories and concepts.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy

Until 1994, there were numerous theories that connected literacy learning for various groups with different learning needs; nonetheless, there was no umbrella group to connect these theories together. The need for collaboration among the various literary genres was exacerbated by the growing contacts among different cultures, made possible by globalization and digital technology. This lack of a unifying body changed when the New London Group (NLG), a group of 10 scholars from various literary genres, met in New Hampshire, USA, to discuss how their work would intersect. Multiliteracies pedagogy was the resulting theoretical umbrella framework. Multiliteracies pedagogy is broad, since it draws on scholarship from discourse analysis, curriculum development, multimedia, social semiotics, multimodal literacies, critical literacy and socio-linguistics among others (NLG, 1996). With such a diverse scholastic influence, MLS has applications both inside and outside the classroom.

Using four steps, the NLG clearly delineated how educators can teach MLS to facilitate meaning making in students' designs: (1) Situated learning, which involves teachers immersing their lessons in their students' "affective and sociocultural needs and identities" (NLG, 1996, p. 85).

Situated learning stems from the perspective that in school learning, students' cognition is dependent on, and is rooted in, their cultural practices. In situated practice, teachers transfuse lessons in the students' lived experiences to engage them and enhance their learning (Paesani, 2016). (2) Overt instruction where instructors scaffold students' learning to help them understand patterns in meaning and design processes (Kalantzis, Cope & Fehring, 2002) at their zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is central to sociocultural theory as it highlights the place between the learners' own cognitive abilities and their potential development, achievable with assistance (Amin, 2013). In the ZPD, the teacher, a more knowledgeable participant, a peer, or a cultural tool, provide instructions to help students understand key concepts that are central to them successfully completing their tasks. (3) Critical framing that requires students to critically examine their new literacies within the context of social, cultural and political relevance (Taylor, Bernhard, Garg & Cummins, 2008; Yelland, Cope & Kalantzis, 2008). Consequently, critical framing permits students to create alternative reading positions for analysing and questioning texts. (4) Finally, transformed practice emphasizes students' agency because it allows students to apply the knowledge they gained in the previous stages, to make designs that are relevant to their own lives, or to correct the errors in existing designs (Kalantzis & Cope, 2008). Transformed practice affords the students opportunities to create new texts or to design ones that reflect their "truths" and life worlds. Encouraging students to redesign texts does not mean that MLS discredits all conventional forms of literacy. Rather, redesigning texts gives students from marginalized backgrounds agency, a voice and creative input in school learning (Kress, 2002).

Table 1: Summary of MLS's Tenets

Tenet	Definition
Situated Learning	Immersing lessons in students' lived experiences and socio-cultural experiences.
Overt Instruction	Teachers facilitating learners' understanding of concepts.
Critical Framing	Teachers or peers helping students to deconstruct meaning present in available texts.
Situated Learning	Students produce new texts or reform pre-existing texts to reflect their lived experiences.

MLS's tenets are very constructive because they create an oasis in the classroom where students' abilities are cherished and their learning difficulties are reduced using their interests and lived experiences. Contrary to the popular standardized techniques in the Jamaican education system, in my proposed study, MLS should create more allowances for students to express their knowledge through different modes, which complement the five senses. Hence, the use of multiple modes or multimodality in school learning and assessments should provide the chance for students to make meaning by combining their culture, languages and multiple expressions of knowledge.

Multimodality. MLS and multimodality are interconnected. Multimodality denotes "the different texts of meaning, or rather the convergence of these texts, where different forms of communication work together and in contrast in order to convey meaning" (Paziuk, 2013, p. 1).

In other words, multimodality does not restrict the expression of literacy to print modes; rather, it embraces other literary modes. Multimodality caters to individuals with different learning styles, abilities and cultures, in that it views texts as "visual, spatial, and auditory as they are linguistically centered" (Healy, 2008, p. 6). Visual texts include screen formats, images, colours, shapes, and art. Spatial modes constitute drama, theatre and plays. Auditory meanings include music, sound effects and voice-overs (Kress 2002; Mills, 2009; NLG, 1996). Nevertheless, there are a few dissimilarities between the two concepts. Multiliteracies pedagogy simultaneously accounts for the use of multimodalities in communication while multimodality considers how individuals make meaning with different types of modes (Rowsell & Walsh, 2011). Hence, multiliteracies pedagogy affords the tools for promoting multimodality, and multimodality considers how individuals make meaning through modes. There is consensus among researchers (Burke, Hughes, Hardware & Thomas, 2013; Cummins, 2009; Kalantzis & Cope, 2010; Lotherington & Jenson, 2011) that coupling multiliteracies and multimodality effects positive changes in students' engagement and metacognitive abilities in school learning.

Multiliteracies Pedagogy's Applicability to my Proposed Research

In this section, I elaborate on studies that demonstrate MLS's applicability to my research context. The selected studies show that using MLS in English learning settings has the potential to increase the English literacy rates, students' school engagement, and their academic attainment (Burke & Hardware, 2015; Burke, Hughes, Hardware & Thomas, 2013; Fariza, Phuteh-Behak, Darmi & Mohamed, 2015; Lotherington, 2013; Paesani, 2016; Scull, Nolan, & Raban, 2013). The aforementioned educational issues are identified in my research site and among my participants. It must be noted that not all MLS studies effect positive changes in students' learning (Hesterman, 2010; Zammit, 2011), but the stories of classroom engagement and academic improvement (Ajayi, 2011; Giampapa, 2010; Levy 2008; Pirbhai-Illich, Turner & Austin, 2009; Walters, 2010) far outnumber the ineffective stories. Moreover, MLS offers students from minoritized backgrounds such as those in Jamaican inner-city schools, more points of reference in academic circles.

Improving students' English language development. Multiliteracies pedagogy has applicability to my study as there is a strong body of literature that shows that it is very effective in improving students' English literacy. In Ntelioglou's (2011) multiliteracies study, drama enhanced the English as a Second Language (ESL) participants' English language acquisition. In this 2011 study, the participants explained that "the drama tasks helped them to understand difficult vocabulary as they were trying to embody the written text…" (p. 609). Stein and Newfield's 2004 study revealed the transformation of Grade 10 and Grade 11 South African students who were once disengaged, resistant to learning and struggling with English language and literature, to those who then became willing and active participants in the learning process. In fact, at the end of the year, only 1 of 140 students failed the ESL examination (Stein & Newfield, 2004). Another South African study, Kajee (2011), chronicled the meaning making and engagement of 32 South African undergraduate English as an Additional Language students. In this study, semiotic resources such as gestures, students' native praise poems and PowerPoint assisted the students to "reconstruct, remake and reshape their own social identities as subjective agents of change through acts of language: written, image, gesture, digital and performed" (p. 250). Pirbhai-Illich's (2010) utilized all the four strands of multiliteracies pedagogy in her critical literacy and multiliteracies pedagogy with her First Nations participants to increase their literacy "anywhere from two to five grade levels" (Pirbhai-Illich, 2010, p. 264). Interestingly, initially Pirbhai-Illich (2010) failed to engage the students in her study, because she neglected their lived realities. It was only after she began discussing the students' lived realities and using storytelling that they became engaged in school learning. Finally, in Wood's (2004) study, multimodality facilitated onscreen learning, which aided in the development of her participants' word recognition skills. In the previously cited study, multimodality provided "multimodal experiences in learning to recognize words, which benefit[ed] all types of learners" (p. 33).

The studies listed in this section attest to multiliteracies' potential for literacy development, by requiring students to understand more than just reading flat print-based literacies (Unsworth, 2014).

Improving students' engagement. Consistent with the strong body of literature, which shows that MLS has the ability to improve student engagement (Lotherington, 2005, 2011; Lotherington & Chow, 2006), using multiliteracies-inspired activities in my study should have improved my students' engagement. For example, Vasudevan, Schultz and Bateman's (2010) study used transformative MLS to engage all students. Vasudevan et al.'s study relates the story of a Grade 5 student who metamorphosed from being "disengaged from school tasks" (p. 452) to being "... a leader in helping [his] fellow classmates to learn technology" (p. 461). Another participant grew from a shy student to one who possessed a "participatory presence" in the classroom (p. 463). Similarly, Zammit's (2011) study of working-class students who were unable to make any meaningful contribution to classroom discussions, provides hope for students who were alienated by an oppressive curriculum. Zammit's study showed that by making learning more democratic and by shifting the concepts of literacy from the written mode to one that is multimodal, students "expressed a willingness and motivation to participate in complex tasks" (p. 216). The classroom teacher also noted that as a result of the project, the students' disruptive behaviours were significantly reduced. Furthermore, the action research documented in Giampapa (2010), as part of the Multiliteracies Project, played a great role in allowing elementary students from a multi-racial and multilingual school in the Greater Toronto Area to feel that their identities were validated and accepted. Another important finding in Giampapa's study was that the students' native languages and cultures could be used in the classroom to improve their English language acquisition rather than to interrupt it as popularly thought.

Promoting social skills and collaboration. Numerous studies also show that MLS stimulates social skills and collaboration in school learning (Jacobs, 2012; Ntelioglou, Fannin, Montanera &

Cummins, 2014). These skills are greatly needed in inner-city Jamaican schools. The students in the Vasudevan, Schultz and Bateman's (2010) study collaborated to ensure their digital stories' success. Added to this, the students established a community of practice in the previously mentioned study. Evidence of this community of practice is demonstrated when one participant proclaimed that "[d] iscussing my story with my classmates was very awesome because they appreciated it and its sadness made them think a lot" (p. 173). Moreover, through the features of collaboration and problem solving in MLS, students can use their critical thinking skills as they are encouraged to take risks, pose questions, experiment, share their ideas and reflect on their experiences. This was evident in Mills' (2006) critical ethnographic study of Grade 6 students from culturally diverse backgrounds in Australia.

Building on students' talents and creativity. There is a significant body of research that speaks to multiliteracies pedagogy's ability to captivate students' talents and creativity. As identified above, many learned Jamaicans regard Patois speakers, such as inner-city students, as uncultured and unintelligent. Multiliteracies-inspired activities have the potential to highlight these students' intelligence, imagination and linguistic talent in school learning, thereby challenging the discourse of them being unintelligent. Hesterman (2013), for example, in her review of multiliteracies approaches in elementary schools revealed that when they were paired with other social constructive approaches such as the Reggio-inspired approaches, they created new learning possibilities. Hesterman (2010) also shared that by framing students' learning experiences in their funds of knowledge, the pedagogies of multiliteracies helped to "extend students' meaning making" (p. 265). Framing the students' experiences in their funds of knowledge increased their motivation to participate in class activities, and (in most cases) this intrinsic motivation propelled students to improve academically (Giampapa, 2010; Lotherington, 2013). Furthermore, although some of the teachers in Taylor's (2008) action research were hesitant to embark on an MLS project in their classrooms due to concern about "the academic value of and the space for students' home literacies in school" (p. 104), at the end of the project they noted that their students felt a "sense of pride or investment" (p.104) in the teaching and learning relationship.

Contributing Theories to Multiliteracies Pedagogy

The studies presented above show that MLS is normally paired with other theoretical frameworks in research projects. This is because, like all research studies, those using multiliteracies pedagogy are more effective when they are married to other theories. Additionally, coupling MLS to other theories/ concepts is often unavoidable, as MLS is composed of different theories. In the following sections, I will outline two theories that make significant contributions to MLS. First, I will show the connection between MLS and NLS because the two theories are often confused due to the overlap in the concepts associated with them. Then I will locate MLS with SCT for SLL, because both view as important, culture and languaging[8] as embedded in learners' socially constructed meaning making.

New literacies studies. Multiliteracies pedagogy is often discussed in connection with New Literacies Studies (NLS) because of the similarities in terminology that accompanies the frameworks (Main, 2011; Simon, 2011). Although "new" literacies studies was formulated in the 1980s, it was so called as its advocates argued for the inclusion of literary forms that were isolated by many national curricula at the time (Cope & Kalantzis, 2013; Street, 1993). Like multiliteracies pedagogy, NLS is an ideological pedagogy that rejects the traditional view that classifies literacy as a 'neutral', technical skill. Instead it embraces the idea of literacy as multifarious and susceptible to the infiltration of power struggles. Initially, NLS scholars were mainly ethnographic researchers who committed to studying literacies of working-class populations in the field. These studies were not exclusively in black communities. For example, Heath's (1983) study was phenomenal in displaying how literacy differs among children from different ethnic groups. Her study of a black working-class community, a white working-class community and a racially mixed-middle class community illustrates that each community used words differently, yet when children entered school, the language that was used resembled that of the white group. This means that the educational system in her study was designed to isolate members of the black working-class communities because their literacy practices were

[8] Languaging is a cognitive process in which learners negotiate meaning and produce language that is comprehensible to them (Swain, 2006).

not incorporated in their school learning environments. However, it appears that with increased use of standardized testing, white working-class families are also isolated by the curriculum, as Hicks' (2002) ethnographic study showed. Hicks found that students from the aforementioned background suffered discrimination by the curriculum as it is built on middle-class knowledge. Street (1984) explained that traditional language teaching and learning failed working-class students because such pedagogical structures failed to observe the literacy practices that accompany their socio-economic backgrounds. More importantly, Street's study showed that social class distinguishes students' literacy practices. Street's study highlighted that it is more convenient for educational stakeholders with power to resort to a one-size-fits-all model of literacy teaching rather than to include learners' individual and socio-cultural knowledge in school learning. The former requires less money and students' achievements are easily measureable, while the latter requires more fiscal equity and different ways of measuring students' socio-cognitive abilities.

My last point underscores NLS's connection to MLS as it views literacy as social in nature. Supporters of both theories (Lankshear, 1999; Street, 2005) advocated for students' out-ofschool knowledge to be integrated in the curriculum, which creates a platform within which all educational stakeholders can benefit from the cultural differences, localities and politics that they face. Again, this does not mean that the theories seek to deny the importance of technical skills such as reading in English learning, but rather they encourage teachers to explore these skills within the social, political and cultural realm in which learners live. Given this emphasis on socio-cultural approaches to literacy, both theories criticize the notion of children as being independent literacy learners (Hicks, 2002).

In accepting the multiplicity of literary forms, NLS discredits the dichotomy between written and standardized languages versus oral and non-standardized languages. Prior to the mid-1970s,

in the literacy crisis, written and oral cultures were positioned against each other. The great divide, as the literacy crisis is popularly termed (Goody, 1977), states that there are differences between literate and non-literate cultures. The great divide views cultures that value reading and writing as a form of conveying information as literate, while cultures that prefer other means of communication are stigmatized as being illiterate. We see this dichotomy being played out in Jamaica where Patois speakers are stereotyped as illiterate and uncivilized simply because middle- and upper-classes Jamaicans do not value their socio-cultural knowledge such as their native language. New Literacy scholars such as Gee (1996) and Hicks (2002) proclaim that there is a continuum rather than a gap between print literacy and orality. In so doing, these scholars claim that there is a need to study and appreciate other forms of communication rather than classifying them as illiterate. After all, according to these scholars, literacy is a socio-cultural construct that is shaped by political discourses and internalized by individual learners.

Sociocultural theory for second-language learning. This section discusses the interconnection between multiliteracies pedagogy, new literacies studies and sociocultural theory for second language learning, which are frameworks that stress how culture and socialization give students the cognitive tools they need for their learning. This means that teachers' failure to use students' culture — and, by extension, their out-of-school learning — limits their students' ability to excel academically. Moreover, like MLS scholars, sociocultural scholars suggest that teachers need to assist learners to understand scientific concepts. Swain, Kinnear and Steinman define scientific concepts as "conscious (and consciously applied), systemic and not bound to a context" (2011, p. 52). Therefore, students need to think about how to use these concepts in everyday speech. In this paper, I recognize grammar forms as scientific concepts. MLS scholars classified teachers' assistance of students' grasp on grammar forms as overt instruction, which is akin to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) in SCT (discussed in this section). Most of the research on SCT investigates L1

mediating L2 learning, learning in the zone of proximal development and learning through activity. The ensuing section discusses the literature pertaining to these concepts.

L1 mediating L2 learning. Theoretically, Vygotsky's SCT theory is not a theory of second language learning, but rather a psychological theory that charts how human cognitive abilities mediate their learning (Storch, 2013). Learning a second language is one such cognitive ability. Moreover, Lantolf, Thorne and Poehner (2015) denoted that language in all its forms is the most powerful cultural artefact that mediates learning. Mediation describes "the process of using signs as a means of self-control or self-regulation of mental process" (Miller, 2011, p. 308). Mediation is, therefore, a conscious process in which students control their own learning with the help of signs, artefacts, tools or symbols (Turuk, 2008). Meditation is vital for students to critically frame and transform designs since both of these processes require students to use their sociocultural knowledge to direct their production of these texts.

Although there is still controversy regarding the use of L1 in L2 classes (Meyer, 2008), there is now a plethora of studies that support L1 use in L2 classes (Afzal, 2013; Cook, 2001; Giampapa, 2010; Schweers, 1999). Sociocultural scholars, like MLS scholars and advocates of NLS, have posited that incorporating students' L1 in their second language learning not only supports language acquisition and learning, it also validates students' identity and creates inclusive classrooms (Lantolf, 1994; Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2011). In line with the previously cited sociocultural scholars, I hypothesize that my participants' English language literacy may improve afterwards if their L1 is used to mediate their L2 (output) through peer-to-peer dialogue, private speech and collaborative writing.

Research has shown how non-native students use their L1 in peer-to-peer dialogue to "provide support for a theoretical orientation toward viewing dialogue both as a means of communication

and a cognitive tool" (Swain & Lapkin, 1998, p. 333). When working in pairs or groups and using L1 to direct their L2 learning, "students may be cognitively processing at a higher level with regard to linguistic tasks than if they were limited only to communicating in the language they are trying to learn" (Morahan, 2010, p. 2). In so doing, they invoked Swain's (2000) output analysis where students are able to process input and produce new meanings through collaborative dialogues. Consequently, peer-to-peer discussions situated in students' L1 — whether with peers of weaker, stronger or similar skills — promote and strengthen learners' second language skills (Ohta, 2005; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller, 2002). Nevertheless, evidence in Mercer, Wegeriff and Dawes' (1999) Thinking Together project suggests that not all talk (even in students' L1) among learners is useful or educational because learners can mislead each other. That is why I intend to observe, through Research Question 1b, if engagement and more classroom discussion will translate into students' English language learning. Thinking Together also showed that not all students are able to communicate effectively in groups or with peers. Additionally, in Research Questions 1a, I would like to see how the students communicate and participate in groups. Thinking Together shows the need for teachers to provide scaffolding for students who are having difficulties with peer-to-peer dialogue and group work.

Finally, there is consensus among SCT scholars for SLL learning that allowing students to write in their L1 can mediate their L2. In SCT, writing denotes second order symbolism, in that symbols used in the writing system help learners make meaning. There is a growing body of research that testifies of the utility of using students' L1 writing to mediate their L2 (Stapa & Majid, 2012; Wang, 2003; Wang & Wen, 2002; van Weijen, van den Bergh, Rijlaarsdam & Sanders, 2009) on individual tasks rather than on collaborative tasks. This body of research postulates that in L2 writing, lower-proficiency learners rely more on their L1 to organize their ideas, retrieve grammatical rules and manage their writing process (Woodall, 2002). Contrary to Woodall, Wang's (2003) study of

both low- and high-proficiency learners found that the latter "switched from the L2 to L1 for problem solving and ideational thinking" (p. 366). Unfortunately, there appears to be a scarcity of literature on the use of L1 to mediate L2 in collaborative writing projects governed by SCT. Nevertheless, there is a wealth of information that postulates that collaborative writing helped students to make meaning and develop new ways of learning (Bernard & Campbell, 2005; Schwieter, 2010; Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015). In keeping with SCT theory, my intervention used group-based writing activities that recruited students' socio-cultural knowledge rather than teaching writing as a motor skill (see poster on page 140 for example). By doing this, my intervention sought to fill some of the gaps in the literature on using L1 to mediate L2 in SCT projects.

Learning in the zone of proximal development. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is needed for learners to benefit from participating in collaborative activities and to produce designs. The ZPD is a contested term as scholars confuse it with scaffolding (Foley, 1996) and Krashen's i+ 1 (Krashen, 1989). While the ZPD is similar to scaffolding and Krashen's i+1 in that all three concepts address assisted learning, the ZPD differs from scaffolding as it is geared towards learning development, whereas scaffolding connects only to the completion of tasks (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Continuing with this line of analysis, Krashen's i+1 relates to language acquisition alone (Dunn & Lantolf, 1998). These differences are more evident in Vygotsky's (1978, p. 86) perception of the ZPD as the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more able peers.

In my research, the ZPD denotes a place of learning development, whereas scaffolding connects to the assistance the students receive to complete tasks. I do not refer to Krashen's i+1 in my study. I only reference scaffolding and the zone of proximal development.

Implicit in Vygotsky's definition of the ZDP is a community of practice in which learners exchange knowledge and make meaning. This community of practice may include teachers providing overt instruction for students, or students-to-student mediated learning. While in this community of practice, learners engage in a process of imitation through sense making and rehearsal. Imitation here does not refer to the simplistic behaviourist projection of children mimicking the sounds and patterns that they hear around them (Lightbown & Spada, 1999). Instead it signals the continuous, reflective, direct language observation and usage that is internalized and then replicated by learners (Lantolf & Poehner, 2011; Holzman & Newman, 1993; Valsiner & van der Veer, 2000). Imitated knowledge is then internalised by learners, that is, learners engage in a process of "making what was once external assistance a resource that is internally available to the individual" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 200). This resource may be used immediately or stored for future youth. Hence, in the ZPD students transform the external assistance that they receive on a social scale for their own personal learning (Aimin, 2013; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Lantolf, Thorne & Poehner, 2015). Students then make new meaning of the assistance that they have received and externalize it while they are engaged with their peers. This then creates a dialogic and bi-directional sharing of knowledge in the ZPD.

According to Vygotsky, the ZPD is not solely a cognitive function. In fact, Vygotsky (1971) viewed emotions as central to internalisation and for achieving the ZPD. He termed the role that emotion play in helping learners internalise knowledge from social activity as the *perezhivanie*. In support of the Vygotskian concept of the duality of emotions and cognition, Mahn & Steiner (2002) explained that "learning remains incomplete unless the human need to connect emotionally is integrated with the need to know" (p. 54). In more recent years, researchers have become increasingly interested in the notion of the *perezhivanie* as central to student engagement and motivation (Rey, 2016). With Rey (2016), Swain (2013) recognised integration of cognitive and

emotional dimensions of learning. Following the sociocultural framework, emotions and cognition are inseparable but not the same.

Although SCT cited social activity as important for learning, this does not mean that it ignores students' individual capabilities. The Zone of Proximal Development and 'more capable other' imply that individuals in learning communities will have different levels of understanding. I projected that most of my participants' learning would improve once they worked in groups because group work would have helped them to achieve their ZPD. Learners' achieve their ZPD when students cooperatively participate in scaffolding or when they participate in meaningful activities (Macy, 2016, p. 313). Specific to my research, meaningful activities are defined as activities that the students understand. Students should be able to make sense of these activities and know how to complete them. The learners' understanding and production of knowledge in these social groups result in their individual (and collective) higher mental functioning.

Not all group work promotes learning. Wertsch and Stone (1985) noted that contrary the to popular critique of sociocultural theory, SCT scholars are not naïve to envision learning as automatic in social settings. Instead, Vygotsky thought that "interpsychological process involves small groups... and [is] explainable in terms of small-group dynamics and communicative practices" (Wertsch & Stone, 1985, p. 60). In other words, Vygotsky saw cooperative learning in small groups as essential for learning. Further to this, as I stated above, only meaningful engagements in these small groups promote learning. Consequently, it is within these small working communities, where learners can make meaning, that they are able to shape (and be shaped by) their social environments.

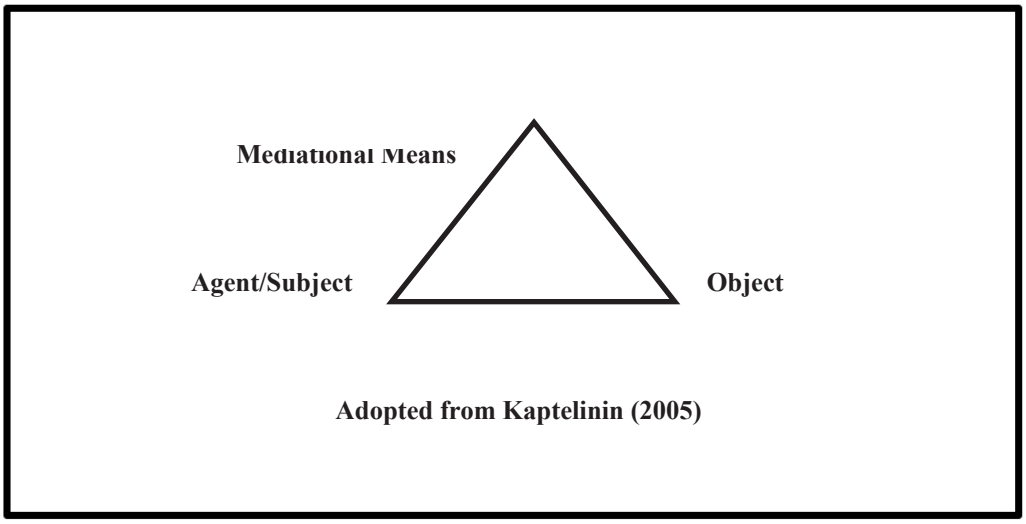
Despite the limits of small group learning in the ZPD, learning in the ZPD is collaborative and specialised to the individuals' needs. Various sociocultural scholars have noted that the ZPD is distributed (Cole & Engestrom, 1993), collaborative (Chaiklin, 2003; Rogoff, 1993; Lave & Wenger,

1991), graduated and contingent (Lantolf & Aljaafreh, 1996) and interactive (Cole & Wertsch, 1996) with individuals who have a deeper understanding of the issue under study. Fernandez et al., (2001) showed that through engaging "critically but constructively with each other's ideas…" (p. 3), the children in their study "expanded their joint Zone of Proximal Development, enabling them to achieve a better mutual understanding of the problems than they could…have done [individually]" (p. 3). Moreover, the ZPD can be achieved when working with lower proficiency students. Despite Vygotsky's preference for students to work with their more capable peers, based on the findings of their 2007 study, Watanabe and Swain showed that their Japanese participants achieved higher test results when working with lower-proficiency language learners. A possible explanation for Watanable and Swain's (2007) findings is that the higher proficiency students used their L2 — and to some extent, their L1 — more often to explain concepts to the lower-proficiency students. The ZPD was a central aspect of my study, given the collaborative nature of my study and the stress on distributed learning. Therefore, in analysing my data from the students' focus group interviews and my field notes, I was particularly keen to see if they acknowledged being able to complete more challenging tasks in groups. I was also interested to see how the students' participation changed when they worked in groups, versus when they worked individually.

Learning through activities (Activity theory). The ZPD is reliant on activity theory. Vygotsky first purported activity theory, but the theory was underdeveloped due to his untimely death and the ban on his books in the Soviet Union. Activity, to Vygotsky and his colleagues, permits higher mental functioning as it allows for the practices that contribute to learning (Hasan & Kazlauskas, 2014). As such, activity theory represents the connectivity between the mind and an act (Lantolf & Appel, 1994). In line with Marx, Spinoza, Engels and Hegel, Vygotsky based activity theory at a micro level to show how "humans develop their skills, personalities, and consciousness… transform [their] social conditions, resolve contradictions, [and] generate new cultural artifacts…"

(Sannino, Daniels & Gutierrez, 2009, p. 1). Accordingly, Vygotsky proposed that consciousness should not be measured by an observation of the brain but through the interaction between individuals engrossed in activities. To rephrase, consciousness becomes evident only through activity and social interaction. With this, Vygotsky imagined activity theory with an active subject or agent who responds to a stimulus to achieve a goal or object and who then produces knowledge through the use of language. Agents appropriate knowledge or change "their involvement in one or another activity, becoming prepared for subsequent involvement in other, related activities" (Rogoff, 1993, p. 132). Grossman, Smagorinsky and Valencia (1999) further denoted that appropriation is developed through "socially formulated, goal-directed, and tool-mediated actions" (p. 15). In addition, subjects use mediational tools to achieve their goals or objectives. The object of the activity is the "sense-maker" (Kaptelinin, 2005, p. 5), which explains the reasons and value systems that underline human activities.

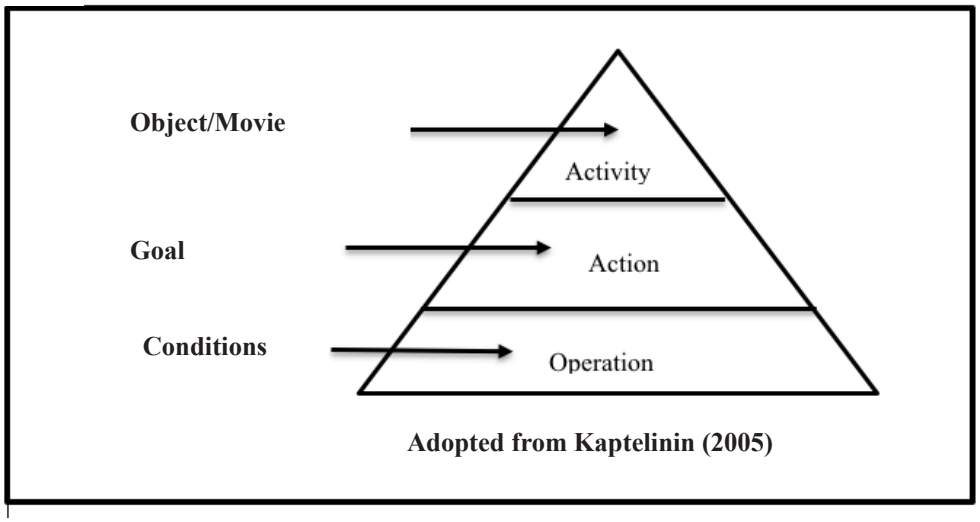
Figure 2: Vygotsky's Depiction if Activity Theory.



Leont'ev found Vygotsky's explanation of activity theory too simplistic and unidirectional. As such, he offered his own interpretation of activity theory. Vygotsky's activity theory presents a linear representation of students' engagement in designs, as it does not account for the conditions, motives and methods involved in this design process. To address the limitations in Vygotsky's approach,

Leont'ev (1981) added motive as a driving force for human activities. Connecting to Vygotsky's desire to unite emotion and cognition, Leont'ev stated that a motive can be both emotional and cognitive. Motives are initiated by actions with goals. Action occupies second place on Leont'ev's three-tiered system. Action is the basic unit of activities; also, actions are performed to complete a specific goal but may not be directly connected to the motive (Leont'ev, 1975/1978). Although motives can be described as general goals, goals follow motives; that is, you first have a motive, then you develop your goal. The final level in this tripod is operations and their circumstances. Operations are the mental processes used to execute actions. Operations are not linked to goals but more to the conditions under which the goal is realized. Operations are unplanned and unconscious and decided by their material conditions. In summarizing Leont'ev's activity theory, Minnis and John-Steiner (2001) delineated that it makes

Figure 3: Leont'ev's Decpiction of Activity Theory

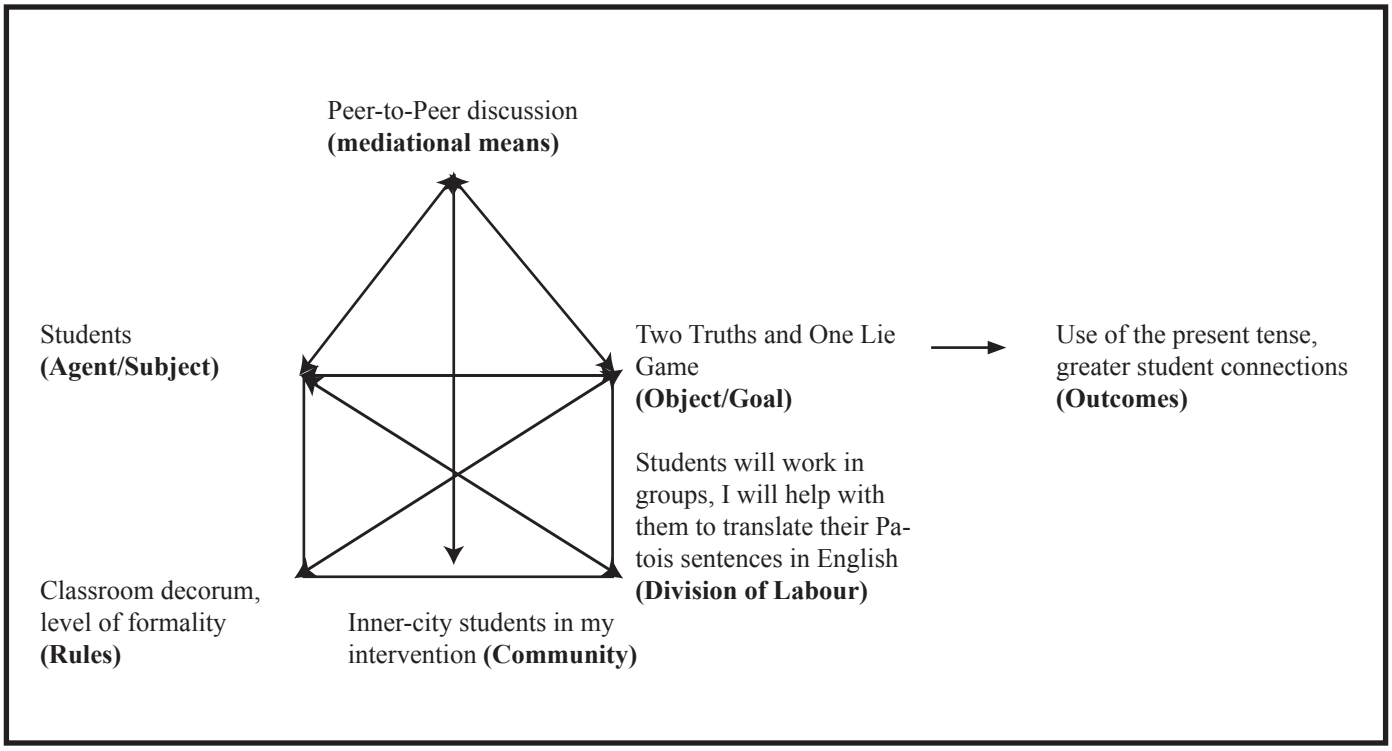


makes learning more reliant on activity rather than language, as exposed by Vygotsky.

Finish scholar Yrjo Engestrom further complicated these representations of activity theory by offering three additional components: rules, communities and division of labour, which expand the

theory to a macro-level unit of analysis. Rules direct and control the relationship between agents and objects (Engestrom, 1999, 2009). Rules also correlate with the division of labour agreed on by the different agents. Swain, Kinnear and Steinmann (2015) added that division of labour in Engestrom's model of activity theory connects with the SCT theory's Marxists roots. This third model of activity theory depicts activity systems as being built in a community that is built on dialogicality, multi-voicedness, contradictions and struggles (Daniels, 2002). Thus, Engestrom's variation of activity theory recognizes the power dynamics that influence meaning-making in social settings. Here also, externalization comes into play in the meaning-making process as individuals create cultural artefacts and project their own knowledge in social settings. Engestrom's activity theory also captures learners' challenges with and resistance to being in activity systems. Lastly, it also opens the "potential for qualitative change…in each, and every local activity of that society" (Engestrom, 1999, p. 36). Engestrom's approach also presents a better representation of the design process in which my students were engaged as it captured their struggles and input in shaping their designs. However, there is one point of interest to my study that has not been adequately explored in the literature, that is: how do researchers using this model represent learners that are not engaged, or learners that are on the periphery? Are these students classified as being resistant to learning or being unable to learn?

Figure 4: Activity Theory Depiction of Lesson 1 (See Appendices)



Conclusion

The review of literature presented above shows that MLS, NLS and SCT have made successful applications to language learning in diverse contexts. Yet, there has been no evidence of studies using those theories in Jamaica. The chapter also shows the intersectionality among these three theories. My study aims to create a fuller understanding of MLS's potential, in concert with NLS and SCT, to effect changes in English teaching and learning in my research site in Jamaica. The following chapter, Chapter 3, outlines how I implemented my study following the epistemological frames outlined in the three theories.

Chapter 3: Methodology

To enhance readability, the literature review is presented in three sections. In the first section, I address the tenets of multiliteracies pedagogy and summarize its effectiveness in themes that are applicable to the Jamaican context. In the second, I connect multiliteracies pedagogy (MLS) to new literacies studies (NLS) and sociocultural theory (SCT) for second language learning (SLL). Finally, in the third section I demonstrate my position that while multiliteracies pedagogy is theoretically broad, it is not completely novel as it intersects with other theories and concepts.

The following chapter details my theoretical framework, the rationale for choosing my research methods and my data collection tools. The first section of this chapter is focused on my theoretical framework. The theoretical frameworks that I selected for my study are sociocultural theory and Fredicks, Blumenfeld and Paris' taxonomy of student engagement. Sociocultural theory informed my design, motivation and analysis of my findings. After outlining my theoretical framework, I explain my research design. I chose qualitative research design because it aligns well with sociocultural theory. More specifically, for my research findings, I utilized a case study design as it provided rich and holistic insights into my participants' English language learning experiences and meaning-making potential. In my case study I: a) observed the teacher's lesson for one month; b) taught an intervention for two months; c) took a week-long break; d) observed the class for a week after my intervention; e) held four student focused group interviews with my participants; and f) interviewed the English teacher. I also conducted document analysis of the students' work and curricular guides. All of the above information is explained in more detail in this section.

Theoretical framework

I used two theoretical frameworks to analyse my pedagogical framework and the data that I collected in my fieldwork. The theoretical frameworks were sociocultural theory and Fredricks,

Blumenfeld & Paris' taxonomy of school engagement. On the one hand, I used these theoretical frameworks to critically analyse and explain the data that I collected. On the other hand, I used my data to elucidate a few limitations in the theoretical frameworks that I selected. I explain the theoretical frameworks in the following section.

Sociocultural Theory

The first theoretical framework that I used in my data analysis is sociocultural theory. In Chapter 5, I used sociocultural theory to provide a micro-level analysis of my students learning in my research study. Sociocultural theory is appropriate for my study because it classifies language as more than a tool for communication. In sociocultural theory (SCT), language is a form of communication as well as a psychological tool that is produced and developed by the students' home community. Language organizes, plans and mediates cognitive development. Dialoguing, in all its forms, is the most evidential kind of language acquisition because it promotes language learning, development and provides evidence for it (Brooks & Donato, 1994). My study relied on the premise that if students' English language learning is situated in their sociocultural lives, their language skills will improve. Sociocultural theory (SCT) was one of the lenses through which I analysed the data collected in my study. Using SCT as my theoretical framework helped me form a link between my literature review and the data I collected in my research. Sociocultural theory, therefore, "[had] implications for every decision made in [my] research process" (Mertens, 1998, p. 3) as it guided me in my selection of data collection tools and the research paradigms that I employed in my study.

Before I demonstrate how sociocultural theory informed my research methodology and the framing of my data, I first briefly explain what version of SCT I employed as my theoretical framework. My study employed Vygotsky's version of sociocultural theory, which is a multilayered analysis of the cultural, historical and psychological factors that affect learning. In line with the

Vygotskian point of view, I believe that knowledge is first gained in the social or inter-psychological realm between a learner and their community. Thereafter, individuals gradually internalize and appropriate knowledge to move what they learn to an intra-psychological or personal plane. Hence, cognitive and linguistic competencies are best achieved in a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) where individuals collaborate on tasks and co-produce knowledge. More specifically, SCT posits semiotic tools like language and culture as integral for cognitive development. Therefore, contrary to behaviourist- and cognitive-driven approaches, which view development as a dichotomy between the internal and external, sociocultural theory views the external as a necessity for the development of the internal. Accordingly, Lantolf and colleagues (2015) explained that learners' cognitive abilities cannot fully develop without the use of their cultural knowledge and lived experiences, and the reverse is also true; that is, learners experience difficulties navigating their social activities without higher mental functioning. In my analysis of my students' engagement and my intervention, I also identify how my students' interaction in group work influenced their English language learning. Thus, a Vygotskian approach to sociocultural theory helped me to identify the dialogic relationship between my participants' individual learning and their social world, in the classroom.

Scholars who subscribe to the Vygotskian framework agree on three central tenets (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996): the use of semiotic symbols to boost mediation in human development; social sources of human development; and genetic (developmental) analysis. Sociocultural theorists recognized that learning is facilitated through mediational and symbolic tools (such as speech), symbols (for example, writing and number systems) and cultural tools (such as books, art and computers). Regardless of the type of semiotic tools, there is consensus among sociocultural scholars that the internalization of these culturally produced tools effects changes in children's learning and development. Therefore, like other sociocultural scholars, my research adopts the

premise that knowledge is socially produced.

All SCT scholars believe in the interdependence between consciousness and human experience, though not all agree on what semiotic tools mediate high mental functioning. There are different interpretations about which tools and signs lead to psycholinguistic schemes. Some SCT scholars view linguistic activities as central to cognitive development by focusing on signs, words or discursive practices (Frawley, 1987; Harre & Gillett, 1994; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Roebuck, 1998). Cultural artefacts are "objects, symbols, narratives, or images inscribed by the collective attribution of meaning" (Bartlett, 2005, p. 4). My study embraces all three meditational properties, as they are often used interchangeably in most current writings on sociocultural theory (Amin, 2013; Gutierez, 2008; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

In sociocultural theory, learning and development are not synonymous. Vygotsky (1978) recognized that learning contributes to development, which contributes to the notion of a zone of proximal development. This distinction is important for my study, as the semiotic resources used in my intervention are geared to aid students' English language development which might enhance their cognitive development. Nevertheless, I selected my data collection tools — including the interviewing of the classroom teacher and use of classroom observations and site artefacts— to provide a microgenetic framing of my students' metacognitive development while they engaged in my study. Numerous sociocultural scholars (Cole & Scribner, 1978; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015) postulated that genetic analysis formed a central feature of Vygotsky's theoretical framework. Vygotsky maintained that researchers need to trace the qualitative changes in students' behaviour while they are engaged in activities to understand their metacognitive development fully. In analysing my data, I charted what I knew of my students' life histories to understand their behaviour and the inter-mental processes that inform their learning development. Showing my students as only struggling learners would produce an incomplete depiction of them as learners because they will be continually evolving due to their grasp on the English language through semiotic and cultural tools used in my intervention.

This evolution encompasses students' multiple identities, beliefs, attitudes and out-of-school knowledge (Swain, et al., 2015). Gutierez (2008) added that Vygotsky stressed micro-genetic observations, or the observation of the co-construction of meaning since he valued collaborative learning. True to socio-cultural theory, I took note of the ways in which students made meaning through languaging during my intervention. These microgenetical observations will highlight the "processes that [may] produce the changes" (Siegler & Clowey, 1991, p. 607) in my participants' psychological development. Qualitative research methods best help me to make sense of the field notes that I made of my students' learning and microgenetic development (VanPatten & Williams, 2015).

I also used Rogoff's (1995) theorising of participation in activity systems to explain my students' different stages of participation in the classes and group work. The three main widely accepted cyclical forms of participation emerging from Rogoff's (1995) celebrated work on participation in socio-cultural environments are: (1) Apprenticeship; (2) Guided Participation; and (3) Participatory Appropriation. Rogoff (1995) posited apprenticeship as the most rudimentary form of participation in activity systems, where a newcomer participates with others in a culturally organized activity system. The newcomer has an apprenticeship and has very little working knowledge of the activity system and depends on more knowledgeable insiders to teach them how to operate in this activity system. As an individual's participation matures in this activity system, they graduate to a stage that Rogoff describes as guided participation. Guided participation differs from apprenticeship because, at this stage, the newcomer is more knowledgeable and can now mutually participate in the activity system. In the guided participation stage, there is a co-dependency between the newcomer and the more advanced participant who is at the participatory appropriation stage. Participatory appropriation comprises the final stage in this triad. When a member reaches this stage, s/he becomes

more knowledgeable and capable of scaffolding the other group members' understanding, especially that of the less knowledgeable participants. These positions are not static as members can fluctuate in these different roles where they can be both an apprentice and knowledgeable participants based on their level of expertise.

Some SCT critics (Ellis, 1997; Sawyer, 2002) view learners' dependency on activity systems as limiting their agency and individualism. However, as mentioned in my literature review sociocultural theorists, particularly more contemporary scholars such as Yrjo Engestrom, cherish individual input but argue that no learning occurs without social interaction. Citing the acceptance of individual learning development and individual cognitive abilities in SCT, in my research, I asked the students to write individual reflections in which they outlined what they learned from two lessons that I taught. I also asked them to write an individual narrative. The reflection assisted me in understanding the critical problem-solving skills that the students activated while being engaged in the activities associated with my lessons. The reflections also provided a deeper understanding of the students' metacognitive processing. The narratives helped me to understand the students better. In Chapters 5 and 6, I noted individual students' engagement in small groups, but also their individual contributions in these small groups, as well as their participation in group discussions with the whole group. Additionally, my analysis of the students' individually written pieces helped me to map their learning development in my classes, because I did not want to neglect the students' individual learning and metacognitive processes.

Another critique of SCT that I addressed in my dissertation is that it is time-consuming. Primeaux (2000) noted that a "drawback of using the social constructivist approach is that it requires a great deal of time" (p. 540). Allowing the students to become involved in the instruction process is time-consuming. Indeed, in any student-centred approach, or in any approach in which students produce and design texts, it takes time to ensure that the students adequately understand what is

required of them. In planning my lessons, I allocated more time for students to design and complete their tasks. As I demonstrated in my findings, it took an average of three class periods to teach one lesson, whereas the English teacher who used a traditional approach taught her lessons in one class period. In fact, the students took more time to complete my activities than I initially planned. In my proposal, I projected it would have taken two classes on average for students to complete the activities that I assigned to them, but instead it took three class periods. It took more time because the students worked slower than I expected. Completing a topic in my class took more time because meaningful student production takes time. Therefore, Primeaux's criticism of SCT applies to all pedagogical applications that involve student-centred learning and production.

Based on my readings and the students' different forms of engagement in my study, I realise that SCT scholars (and multiliteracies pedagogists) rarely distinguish between the different kinds of engagement in students' learning. Scholars such a Kelleen Tooley and Elaine Day in their earlier work examined Canadian primary classrooms from Kindergarten to grade 2 English as a Second Language learners' participation in a community of practice (Toohney & Day, 1999). However, learners' participation in a community of practice, denotes their learning development (Rogoff, 1994) rather than their investment in learning and their attention to tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004). In my study, participation in a community of practice is different from engagement. In most SCT literature, the term "engagement" typically means a conflation of affective and cognitive engagement (Hickey & Zuiker, 2005; Swain, 2013). As mentioned in chapter 2, SCT scholars view emotions as interconnected to intramental processing. Similarly, SCT scholars also believe in the unity of behaviour and consciousness (Shabani, 2016). Moreover, studies on the students' behavioural engagement would be rare given SCT scholars' disassociation with behaviourism and the preeminence given to behaviour in learning (Weegar & Pacis, 2012). Citing SCT's failure to describe the varying degrees of student engagement that I witnessed in my study, I adopted Fredricks, Blumenfeld and

Paris(2004) topography on student engagement, which differentiates and show the intersectionalities among students'behavioural, cognitive and emotional engagement.

Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris'Topography on Student Engagement

Before conducting my research, I did not differentiate between the different types of engagement. I expected the students to show different levels of their English language development and varying degrees of engagement; however, I did not anticipate that students would show dominant forms of engagement. However, after analysing my data, I realised that some students appeared cognitively engaged with little behavioural engagement. Other students were affectively engaged and did not appear to be cognitively engaged. Based on the data that I collected, I adopted Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris'(2003) topography of student engagement to broaden my data analysis. It is important to explain that Fredricks and colleagues'topography complements SCTas it also highlights the integration of emotional, cognitive and behavioural engagement. However, it differs from SCT as it sees these forms of engagement as being distinct.

To further my analysis of Question 1a about changes in my participants'engagement in my intervention, I borrowed Jennifer Fredricks et al.'s (2003) different engagement classification: behavioural, cognitive and emotional engagement. Fredricks et al's topography also aided in my analysis of Question 1b on whether or not the students'English language development improved in my intervention, as it helped me to interrogate whether students'cognitive engagement translated into English language development[9]. The denotation of these constructs is subjective, as it is mainly teachers or authority figures who assign students to these categories. Herein, these classifications of student engagement are subjected to biases which can further marginalise students. Nevertheless, I chose to use Fredricks'classification rather than other sociocultural classification, such as Rogoff's (1995) theorising, because based on my observations, it adequately explains students'engagement on

[9] I measured the students' engagement by analysing my research support notes, my own reflective notes on their learning and through the content analysis of their work (explained below).

different planes. To limit my biases, I triangulated my analysis of the students' engagement with transcripts from the student-focused interviews and with notes from a research support, Mrs. Walker[10] , who observed my teaching.

The students experienced different types of classroom engagement. These types of engagement are classified as the behavioural, emotional and cognitive, following the previously mentioned topography. Each student was engaged in more than one of the following areas because these types of engagement overlap:

1. ***Behavioural engagement.*** Behavioural engagement entails students' behaviours, such as listening to the teacher, obeying co-constructed school rules and not getting in trouble (Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004). Behavioural engagement extends to students' classroom attendance, students taking their learning materials to class, their interactions with their classmates and their reactions to their teacher. Behavioural engagement is important to my study because most of the students at my research site and a significant number of my participants demonstrated misbehaviour. In classifying students' behavioural engagement, I did not classify students asking me random questions or making random comments as behavioural disengagement. However, I, classified students leaving their groups and consistently disrupting their classmates as misbehaviour. To illustrate, there were students who would make random comments in our classroom discussions which sometimes did not relate to our discussions. However, I did not see these behaviours as misbehaviour as I considered them as contributions to the discussions. These comments also showed me insights into the students' thinking. However, there were others who consistently distracted their other classmates with their off-task discussions, which prevented them from completing their assigned tasks: I classified this as misbehaviour. I also classified students leaving their assigned groups to participate in tasks that did not contribute to the completion of their assigned tasks as misbehaviour. An example of the latter is students who left their groups to

[10] All names are pseudonyms.

play or argue with other students.

2. ***Emotional engagement.*** Emotional engagement regards "students' positive and negative affective reactions in the classroom as well as the students' reactions to the school and teachers" (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Friedel & Paris's, 2003, p. 7). Emotional engagement is hard to detect and interpret; however, elements of emotional engagement may include students displaying happiness, anger and appreciation in the classroom. Positive emotions create a connection to the classroom and to their classmates. Conversely, students' negative emotions create isolation and disinterest in the class and, possibly, a dislike of the teacher. Given my description of some of my participants as being emotionally disengaged from their classroom learning, elaborating on changes in their emotional engagement helped me to explore whether or not my intervention caused them to be more affectively engaged in school learning.

3. ***Cognitive engagement.*** Cognitive engagement denotes the students' thoughtful and purposeful investment in learning (Fredricks et al., 2011). Cognitive engagement might include students consistently working on assigned tasks, in addition to their voluntary participation in answering and posing questions. Cognitive engagement also may include students' self-initiated classroom tasks, such as volunteering to complete tasks on the board. On the contrary, low cognitive engagement can result in the students not completing their assigned tasks and spacing out in class. I also build on my students' analysis of their cognitive engagement to show how that translated into learning, both in groups and individually. The latter analysis also helped to see if the students' development was dependent on their displays of cognitive engagement.

My theoretical frameworks support qualitative research as they permitted me to explore the different ways in which my students were engaged in my classes. Following a Vygotskian framework, it was appropriate that I used a qualitative methodology as the said methodology

allows me to make detailed notes of the references that the students made of their lived experiences that were outside of my classes. Using detailed notes and conducting assessments with student-focused interviews, using Fredricks and colleagues' topography, limits my own biases and reduces the power imbalances that accompanied my subjective analysis of the students' types of engagement. In sum, they allowed me to provide descriptive notes about interactions with their classmates, their interaction with me, their approach to their work and their preparedness for school.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methods are most suitable to answer my research questions and to support my theoretical frameworks. Qualitative research is commonly used when researchers want to answer the "whys and hows of human behaviour, opinion, and experience" (Sitorus, 2013, p. 1). Why and how questions normally help researchers obtain particularistic information about the participants or the environments they are studying. Why and how questions also stem from the perspective that individuals play an active role in constructing meaning in their social world. Given my research questions, a qualitative research methodology allowed me to collect pertinent data that answer research questions.

Despite the common consensus on qualitative research as a tool used for examining individuals' social worlds, qualitative researchers and research methods. The varying definitions derive from the interdisciplinary nature of the research method and what qualitative researchers do (Patton & Cochran, 2002). Some researchers see qualitative research as a tool for interpreting the acts of others (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Other researchers are more concerned with how individuals make meaning using their social world (Merriam, 2009). I adopted Merriam's (2009) notion of qualitative researchers as "interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how people

make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world" (p. 13). Merriam's definition highlights my belief — and the belief of other researchers, including sociocultural theorists (Hesse-Biber, 2010, 2012) — that people's perception of the social world shapes, and is shaped by their interaction with it. In other words, qualitative researchers see social reality as subjective, socially constructed and different based on a person's lived reality. In acknowledging individuals' agency to change their social world and make meaning in it, qualitative researchers view individuals as experts, rather than passive subjects, who inform their study. The above description of qualitative research fits MLS, new literacies study (NLS) and sociocultural theory (SCT), where learners' meaningmaking is paramount to their literacy acquisition. Language researchers tend to gravitate towards qualitative research because it enables them to provide in-depth analysis of how people use and learn language.

The data collected over four-months from March to June 2016 period can be grouped into four categories: classroom observation, intervention, student focus group interviews, and teacher interviews. Also, part of my data includes copies of my students' work plus my field notes and notes from a research support (RS), Mrs. Walker, who sat in my classroom while I taught. Finally, I photocopied sections of the school's localised grade 7 to 9 English Language Arts curriculum to analyse how it frames English language teaching and learning and how it informs English teachers' pedagogy.

I analysed the data according to the sequence of events starting with my observation of the teacher in her classroom, followed by the intervention, then the interviews[11].

Case study approach. Qualitative research lends itself to different research designs such as phenomenology, ethnography, thematic analysis, discourse analysis, grounded theory and case study. I employed a case study approach because it was appropriate for collecting in-depth stories about learners' experiences in school settings. Stake (2000) and Merriam (2002) explained that the case study method is also appropriate for studying a 'bounded system' (that is, the thoughts and actions

[11] I used "chaka-chaka" Patois orthography (Cooper, 2011) to relay the information that my students shared in my four focus group interviews. I chose to use "chaka-chaka" Patois instead of Cassidy and Le Page's (1980) more standardised phonetic system because it is easier to understand as its spelling is more similar to the English orthography. I also wrote in "chaka-chaka" Patois because I am not competent in writing Patois in the Cassidy and Le Page system. Most Jamaicans, even educated ones cannot read or write Cassidy and Le Page (1980) orthography because we are not taught it in schools. Nonetheless, I recognise that using chaka-chaka Patois orthography undermines the power, rhythm and sound of the language.

of participating students of a particular education setting) to broaden the researcher's understanding of how the system functions under 'natural conditions.' Hence, case study research aims to capture in-depth details of individuals or groups under investigation, thereby assisting in the development of "general theoretical statements about regularities" (Fidel, 1984, p. 274) pertaining to the observed individual or groups. In light of this, Yin (2003) noted that "the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena" (p .2). Understanding complex social phenomena produces vast amounts of information; therefore, case study research typically employs small samples sizes.

There are two different types of case study designs: single-case design and multiple-case-study design. The single-case study design uses one individual or a group comprising similar interests or characteristics. On the other hand, a multiple-case study design uses a "replication strategy" (Zach, 2006), or the process of conducting numerous experiments on related topics. My study involved a single-case study with embedded units because all my participants constituted a case located in one inner-city Grade 7 classroom with students between the ages of 11 and 13. Using a single case study with embedded units allowed me to conduct a cross-case analysis and explore subunits (individual students) within my larger case (Gustafson, 2017). The whole class and individual students, formed the unit of analysis in my study because I wanted to find out if and how their engagement and learning changed through my intervention. The majority of my participants were from the working-class, and many of them were from families that live below the poverty line of US $1.25 per day (purchasing power parity) (UNICEF, 2013). Most of the participants had also not been exposed to other realities beyond their communities. All my participants spoke Patois as their native tongue and all of them are struggling English language learners.

My research site. I conducted my single-case design research in an inner-city school located in Kingston, the capital city in Jamaica. Kingston is home to the oldest and some of the harshest

inner-city communities. Similar to inner-city communities all around the world, Kingston's inner-city residents face dire social and economic realities, which at times might rob students of the opportunity to attend school. Inner-city students' struggles are further complicated by a school system in which their lived realities are not recognized; consequently, they are not as engaged in school learning as students in traditional high schools. They also tend to have higher attrition rates than students in other parts of the country.

My research site served as more than a centre for learning; it was also as a social system that accepted divergence, as there was there was very little enforcement of school rules. From my observations and conversations with teachers at the school, there seemed to be little learning and more socialising. In my estimation, about half of the population of the school assembled in the corridors or in other areas on the school compound even during class time. They typically congregated in groups on the playfield, listened to music on their phones (although the school rules prohibited the use of cellphones on the school grounds), gambled in empty classrooms, or played football with empty soda bottles along the corridors. Students peddled sweets and pastries. They also jumped over the school fence before the end of the school day to leave early. Towards the end of my study, other teachers also reported that some of my participants skipped classes and jumped the fence to leave the school. The school culture that the students developed and adopted appeared to promote rule-breaking rather than learning.

The school also appeared to reinforce a level of dependence on social welfare. Alarmed at the behaviour of many of the students, I asked the Vice-Principal why there were so many students outside of the classroom during school hours. He informed me that most of the students attended school in the day and participated in after-school programmes for the "free lunch that they received." The labelling of my research site as a hub of social welfare was reinforced in my initial meeting at the school on February 15, 2016, with Mrs. Robinson, the head of the language department. Mrs.

Robinson informed me that the majority of the students received government assistance and were part of a school feeding programme. Students who are on the social welfare Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH), are required to maintain at least a school attendance record of 85 percent (Jamaica Gleaner, 2016). Based on comments from the teachers, therefore, it would appear that many of the students at my research site attended school to receive lunch and financial assistance, rather than to learn.

The school was also a holding centre for students to prevent them from getting into further trouble. When I was at the school, I witnessed numerous fights between students. In my focus group interviews, the students informed me that parents and members of the students' families also participated in fights with other students on the school compound. On the same day that I met with Mrs. Robinson, I asked the Grade 11 coordinator why they did not suspend or expel the students who were loitering in the corridors and who were not attending their classes. His response was frank: "If we were to push these students out, we will be pushing them out to be gunmen and baby mothers. The problem is bigger than us." The problem was indeed bigger than the teachers at the school as, during my intervention, the Dean of Discipline resigned just a month short of the end of the school year. From observations and conversations with the teachers, they believed that despite the consistent disciplinary problems and their own frustrations, it was better to house the students at the school rather than allow them to roam their community.

A Breakdown of my Research Methods

Case study can use quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods approaches. I used a qualitative case study as any contextually based study requires qualitative data collection. More specifically, a qualitative case study can benefit from the incorporation of narratives that offer thick and rich data description. Subsequently, I used a qualitative case study akin to the established practice of indepth studies of classroom-based learning and case studies in general (Stake, 2000).

A qualitative case study design also afforded me the opportunity to describe context-specific educational praxis using non-technical language to report the socially constructed meaning of participants' experiences (Ghesquiere, Maes & Vandenberghe, 2004).

Like most research methods, through conducting case study research, I described my phenomenon using a variety of research tools (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Most of these data collection methods are observations, interviews, focus groups, document analysis and textual analysis (Patton, 2002). Since I am concerned with language development- bearing in mind my research questions, and in order to improve the validity and reliability of my findings, the case study consisted of: (a) detailed field notes of my classroom observations in the traditional English class; (b) an experimental intervention; (c) transcribed interviews with a teacher; (d) transcribed student focus group interviews; and (e) document analysis of site artefacts, including students' work. In this way, my research provided a space for my participants to exercise their agency as it articulated pivotal moments in their English language development (Hull & Katz, 2006). Dyson and Genishi (2005) further added that a case study is an effective means of data collection in language research because it can help researchers find emic and etic terms to describe language events, language practices and communicative acts. Case studies also provide researchers with the analytical language to describe classroom activities.

Classroom observations. Yin (2013) explained that observational evidence strengthens case study research as it provides information about relevant social and environmental conditions that influence participants' behaviour. Thus, observational evidence benefits a case study because it gave me the opportunity to highlight information about the phenomenon that the participants might not share. Yin, Estacion, McMahon, Quint, Melamud and Stephens (2004) noted that classroom observation is the "best methodology available for studying how teachers teach" (p. 9). The

previously listed authors explicated that teachers may not be aware of their behaviour and as such, they cannot represent it in an interview or in self-reports. In my opinion, no data collection tool can fully represent the complexity of classroom behaviour. Therefore, observation was supplementary to the tools that I used as it allowed me to input my etic perspectives, and in so doing, it may challenge the positivist stance, which exerts that researchers' opinions are not warranted in their studies. Kawulich (2005) further explained that by including their perspectives while conducting observations, researchers engage in knowledge production and meaning-making, which strengthens their data. This process of facilitating this knowledge production is integral to my research as I got the opportunity to understand my participants better as I observed their English language classes.

During my observational sessions: 1) I videotaped and took extensive descriptive notes of the students' engagement with their peers, the frequency in which they completed assigned tasks and their overall engagement in the class. Unfortunately, I accidentally deleted most of my video recorded data, so I did not use most of the videos in my analysis. The video recorded data that I had complimented my other data sources because they helped me to capture classroom engagement as well as the culture of the class. Even though no parent opposed their child being videotaped, I still ensured that I focused the camera on Mrs. Brown, the classroom teacher, when I was doing my video recording. 2) I further noted how the teacher provided feedback to the students, and whether this feedback assisted students in completing tasks, and lastly 3) I noted my comments, behaviour, thoughts, interpretations and feelings while observing the teacher's classes. Thus, to be in the classroom as an observer helped me to take note of the teaching and learning processes during the teacher's lessons. The notes from my observation helped me to understand the limitations of my study.

Limitations in my observations. Due to the extraordinary nature of class interactions, I also

have to admit that my observations will not entail all classroom interactions in Mrs. Brown's classes. They were only a portion of what I managed to note in the classroom. Hence, my observation did not reinforce the truth — rather, it brought a more contextualized and meaningful analysis of my findings and research process. Following sociocultural perspectives, my field notes were not neutral or unbiased because they were laced with my own subjectivity (Wang, 2012); hence, another observer might draw a different conclusion from these interactions.

Mrs. Brown, the teacher. I conducted one month of observations in Mrs. Brown's classroom. The classroom observation of Mrs. Brown's Grade 7 English language classes occurred three times a week, for seventy-five minutes, on Wednesday afternoons, as well as on Thursday and Friday mornings. Mrs. Brown had been working on and off at the school for five years. She obtained a three-year teacher's diploma in English and English Literature from the leading teacher's college on the island. While I was conducting my research, she was pursuing her Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) in English with an emphasis on literacy. She expressed interest in migrating to Canada to teach after she finished her degree. In 2011, the Jamaican Ministry of Education (MoE) mandated that all Jamaican teachers have at least a Bachelors of Education (B. Ed). They also gave a pay increase to persons who obtained their B.Ed. In Jamaica, B.Ed. programmes are expensive, and as such, most teachers typically earn a diploma before teaching and then obtain a B.Ed while teaching. Hence, Mrs. Brown's process of acquiring qualifications is similar to that of many other teachers in Jamaica, where, unlike most teachers in Canada, they do not need a B.Ed to start teaching. They can also teach with an undergraduate degree. Very few Jamaican teachers have a Masters of Education (M.Ed), although the numbers are increasing. This increase in the number of teachers upgrading their qualifications is related to that fact that in 2007, with the hope of improving the Jamaican education system, the MoE gave significant pay increases to teachers with an M.Ed. to make higher teaching qualifications attractive (Jamaica Teacher Association, 2006). Before 2007, most Jamaican teachers

had a bachelor's degree, without qualifications in teaching methodologies or teaching diploma. I was in a similar situation. Despite not having a B. Ed., Mrs. Brown was qualified to teach English language and literacy because those were her teachables in her diploma and her current B.Ed programme.

Field notes. Field notes accompany observation. The field notes complemented my role as an observer because I documented what I observed in Mrs. Brown's classes (and in my intervention). Regardless of the field notes' value in my research, I tried to strike a balance when taking my field notes. I adhered to Mulhall's (2003) advice to researchers that spending too much time devoted to writing field notes will reduce the "intuitive experience of being in the culture" (p. 311). I jotted down important moments in Mrs. Brown's classes. After each of my classes ended, I made cursory notes about my students' engagement and development, and I reflected on my teaching.

My experimental intervention. My intervention, which I designed and taught for two months, consisted of two major topics: story writing and types of writing. I covered these topics in 21 individual class periods. I also conducted my first activity, the Two Truths and One Lie Game, in one of Mrs. Brown's classes. The two months gave me enough time to notice progress in my participants' learning and engagement. As well, this time frame helped to accommodate school interruptions, such as sports day, Teachers' Day, a reading test and children's day activities. Prior to conducting my study, I proposed teaching 13 interrelated topics about my participants' perception of themselves, their communities, and their school, which I would have taught over 2 class periods on average. Had I stuck to my original plan, I would have taken over 26 class periods. However, the students took longer than I expected to complete my assigned tasks; therefore, I extended the class time for each sub-topic that I taught (see Table 2 below). Each lesson took an average of 2.5 class periods. All the lessons lasted 75 minutes because that was the time allotted for each class period at the school.

I designed the lessons based on the curriculum used at my research site, which was modelled from the Jamaican grade 7–9 English Language Arts curriculum. In a 2015 Jamaican Observer report, the Jamaican MoE-appointed academic coordinator explained that the language teachers at my research site remodelled the national curriculum to focus more on English literacy (Jamaica Observer, 2015). In our interview, Mrs. Brown supported this media report. I, therefore, changed my proposed lessons and aligned them with Mrs. Brown's syllabus and not the national curriculum as I originally proposed.

In my lessons, I taught my participants to read, write and speak Jamaican English (as accepted by the Jamaican oligarchy) through tasks and a variety of texts that made it possible to showcase their diverse talents and linguistic abilities. The tasks and activities in my classes allowed the students to display their knowledge in multiple ways and through multiple literacies. As you will see in my description of my lessons and in my analysis, each lesson in my intervention "creatively blend[ed] knowledge coming from their experiences (both personal and collective) with [the] school's academic knowledge" (Katsarou, 2009, p. 61). I assigned a language target to ensure that students were still being prepared to meet both the school's and the Jamaican[12] English Language Arts curricular mandates. As recommended by both the national and the school's curricular mandates, teachers should teach the students the most basic English language grammatical structures and concepts. I explicitly taught the students grammatical structures/scientific concepts such as used to, the different types of writing and the different ways of describing the community. I implicitly taught grammatical structures such as the present tense and the past tense as the students studied these in their Grade 6 classes. Students completed most of the lessons in pairs or groups. Individually, they completed two reflections and one narrative paragraph. All the individually written pieces were in English. In class, students spoke in the mesolectal version of Patois and slang. After a discussion in the second half of my second month of teaching, in which the students expressed the need to practice speaking more English during class, the students made their production in reading. Allowing students to speak in Patois as a tool helped them to reconstruct and renegotiate their identities by making meaning in their

[12] Although the students were struggling English learners, I hypothesize that if students' English lessons are immersed in the multiliteracies approach from the beginning of the school year, by the end of the year, they would have been able to meet the demands of the curriculum.

native language, theorised as translanguaging (Garcia, 2009; Garcia, 2017; Jaspers, 2018). Asking students to use Patois as a tool language opened possibilities for them to hone and reinforce their understanding of language targets.

I organised the lesson in four groups to ensure that each built on each other. I organised them as follows:

Group 1. Who am I? My first activity and my first lesson focused on self-introductions and teaming building to facilitate students' comfort with working in groups/pairs. These lessons used peer-to-peer dialogue and whole class dialoguing to acclimatize the students to share their ideas openly.

Group 2: Story building and writing. We spent six class periods on story writing. The students built a chain story about what they did during the Easter break. We corrected the grammatical mistakes in the students' stories. The students then wrote a story about their lived experiences and dramatised it in front of the class. The students further wrote a reflection based on their story writing.

Group 3. Types of writing. In groups, the students completed work on the different types of writing. We spent 15 class periods on these activities in total. Before the students began their text design for the different types of writing, I gave them notes to ensure they understood what I required of them. The students then designed texts for each type of writing. Each text design took three lessons on average.

Group 4: Revision: Letter Writing. Revised letter writing with the students. Mrs. Brown had taught letter writing in the term prior.

Table 2: Summary of my lessons

Classes	Topic	Description	Date
1	Two Truths and One Lie Game	As a form of introduction, the students listed Two Truths and One Lie about themselves. Their colleagues guessed which one was the lie.	March 18, 2016.
2	Introductions +Oral Storytelling	We made a chain story in the class about what the students did during their holiday break.	April 6, 2016
3	Story Writing (SW)	The students worked in groups to write a story of their choice.	April 7, 2016
4	Students' story presentation	We spent half of the class to finish up their stories, then the students presented their stories.	April 8, 2016
5	SW-Beginning and Events	I gave students a copy of a story that I wrote entitled "The Fight." We did reading a theatre where students nominated their classmates to read. After the reading, we discussed the how to make the beginning of our stories interesting and how to describe events in a story.	April 13, 2016

Table 2: Summary of my lessons

Classes	Topic	Description	Date
6	SW- Students' Production	I gave the students a fill in the blank version of "The Fight." In pairs, they then completed the story with events that corroborated the story. The students then dramatically performed the story for their classmates.	April 14, 2016
7	Beginning and Events (Reflection)	We had an open class discussion on the students' performance. They then completed their reflection on the activity from class 6.	April 20, 2015
8	Types of Writing- Note Taking	I elicited the students' understanding of the different types of writing. I gave notes because the students were unable to differentiate between the four common types of writing-narrative, descriptive, expository and persuasive.	April 21, 2016
9	Types of Writing in Popular Dancehall songs	We revised the different types of writing. I asked the students to give me an example of each type of writing. I placed students in groups to write a song using narrative writing.	April 22, 2016
10	Narrative Writing	The students practised their songs and then sang their songs.	April 27,2016

Table 2: Summary of my lessons

Classes	Topic	Description	Date
11	Informal Discussion with Students	The students related their experience with dating, their perception of their communities.	April 28, 2016
12	Narrative Writing- Taking about your life experience	The students wrote a paragraph or a poem about I am special because …., one thing I want some to know about me…, or my deepest fear	May 05,2016
13	Descriptive Writing (DW)- My Community	We had an open discussion about the students' community.	May 06, 2016
14	DW Community Members' Visits	We invited Delroy's grandmother, the Lower School Coordinator who is from the community and the Vice Principal who has taught in the community for over 20 years to serve as panelists for the students to get information about their community in the past.	May 11, 2016
15	DW Poster Making	In groups, the students brainstormed ideas for their posters and began drawing their posters.	May 12, 2016

Table 2: Summary of my lessons

Classes	Topic	Description	Date
16	DW- Poster Making	The students continued to work on their posters.	May 13, 2016
17	Beginning and Events (Reflection)	The students finished their poster writing and presented their posters to their classmates.	May 18, 2016
18	Expository Writing (EW)- Discussion & Student Production	I gave the students a newspaper report about the violence in their community. The students shared what they knew about the event. Students worked in groups to write a news interview relating to violence in the community.	May 19, 2016
19	EW- Student Production	Students finished and practised their news report and then performed their news report.	May 20, 2016
20	Understanding Persuasive language and Reading	I gave the students an article on the pros and cons using cellphones in school. They did a dramatic reading of the article. I solicited the students' opinions on whether or not cellphones should be used in schools. I placed students who agreed with one group and students who disagreed in the same groups.	May 25, 2016

Table 2: Summary of my lessons

Classes	Topic	Description	Date
21	Persuasive Writing (PW)	In groups, they worked on their debate scrips.	May 26, 2016
22	PW-Debating Performance	The students debated.	May 27, 2016
23	Letter Writing Revision	As a group, we wrote an informal letter on the board.	June 09, 2018

Research support with my classroom observation. For the two months of my intervention, I had a research support (RS), who had no association with the school, to observe my teaching. Using an outsider in the school to take notes in my classes limited the power struggles that might have materialized had I used a member of the school staff for the task. Mrs. Walker's observational notes aided my notes and my understanding of students' engagement and my learning in the intervention. Mrs. Walker's notes triangulated my data collection and served as a reference point for me to compare my own notes, which I wrote after I finished each class.

I asked Mrs. Walker to take notes following the rubric that I designed based on the observational protocol that I used when I observed Mrs. Brown's classes. Mrs. Walker was a nutrition major at one of the better-known universities in Kingston. To recruit Mrs. Walker, I contacted a lecturer from the University of the West Indies with whom I had email communication. Mrs. Walker was a student in this lecturer's class. I met with Mrs. Walker during the first month of my observation to explain my research to her and my observation protocol. I trained Mrs. Walker for one day prior to her conducting observations in my classes, following the training outlined in Estacion et al.'s (2004) study. Given that she was from a science background, I outlined elements of the instructions

and aspects of the classroom that she would need to include in her observations, during the training. I also created a rubric which was modelled from Estacion's et al (2004) Observation Protocol and Post-Observation Summary that delineated the number of times I interacted with individual students, students working in pairs or small groups, and/or the entire class. The rubric included space for taking notes on the number of students who were on task, or off task, and an estimate of the percentage of instructor-to-student engagement, and student-to-student engagement. Mrs. Walker submitted her notes weekly. After the first week, I met with Mrs. Walker because her notes were missing key information about the student-to-student engagement. She also neglected to note the differences in the students' individual engagement and group-based engagement. After our meeting, she began including the information about student-to-student engagement, and the students' individual engagements. Mrs. Walker amended the rubric to include her reflection of my teaching and her thoughts on the students' learning.

Limitations of Mrs. Walker's observational notes. Regardless of the benefits of observation to my study, I had to be mindful of the limitations in Mrs. Walker's observational notes. Her observations are clouded by her subjectivities that stem from her intimate knowledge of teaching and learning in Jamaica, and what the Jamaican MoE deems as a normal academic performance for Grade 7 students. In some cases, it would appear that Mrs. Walker's comments on the students' learning and engagement were influenced by her expectation of what a "normal Jamaican Grade 7 student" should be able to do. She seemed at times to compare the students' learning and abilities to that of students in more traditional schools. In my estimation, by making this comparison, she at times focused on the students' limitations rather than on their strengths.

Assessing students' progress. I chose assessment tools that highlighted elements of the students' learning development. Showing proof of my students' English language development progress through assessments strengthens my case for different approaches to teaching inner-city students.

Assessments are also necessary given the Jamaican Ministry of Education's (MoE) emphasis on having quantitative data to demonstrate the students' knowledge. Nevertheless, in alignment with multiliteracies pedagogy, I refrained from using traditional and standardized assessment forms that privilege "individualised learning output" (Kalantzis, Cope & Harvey, 2003, p. 16). Individualised learning output premise standardised tests. Standardised tests have been criticised for their bias against working-class students because they require students to produce dominant knowledge, which they normally do not have (Dye, Jennings, Lambert, Hunt & Wein, 2002).

My assessment tools were not dependent on mainly cognitive-psychological and psycholinguistic-based language assessments. Botelho, Kerekes, Jang and Peterson (2014) argued that cognitive-psychological and psycholinguistic-based assessments pertain to "decoding text through phonological, graphic, morphological, and technical spelling skills" (p. 2) while entirely neglecting the socio-cultural dimensions that students bring to school. The cognitive-psychological model is prevalent in Jamaica. I ensured that my assessment tools captured the students' perception of theirs, and their partners' contributions to the assigned tasks. It also allowed students to comment on areas they could have improved on, to better complete my assigned tasks.

In my intervention, I chose a distributed assessment as an evaluative measure to disrupt the power relationship in the traditional assessment tools. McClay and Mackey (2009) viewed distributed assessment as a "sharing and dividing of assessment responsibilities that serve to help teachers and students alike to develop metacognitive and critical awareness of the work under consideration" (p. 119). An important point to highlight from the previous assessment is that teachers and students work collaboratively when assessing the students' learning development. My version of distributive assessment entails students assessing their peers in their groups or partners in paired work.

I also asked them to assign the grade that they thought they deserved. I did not submit the grades to the teacher to add to their final marks because the students became too fixated on the grades. However, to prove the students' English language development, I analysed the actual content of the students' reflections and one individual piece of an assignment.

Interviews. Qualitative researchers have predominantly used interviews to capture their research participants' subjectivity. Unlike the positivist data collection tools such as surveys and questionnaires, which claim objective and unbiased knowledge, the interview welcomes 'bias' and subjective knowledge as strengths in research. Qualitative researchers accept subjectivity, emotions and biases as part of the participant's lived experiences and social world (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Besides the strength of including biases in their research, qualitative researchers have the onus of reporting these biases when they are apparent to ensure that their readers are aware of how these biases shaped their data.

Interviews range from structured to open-ended. Structured interviews allow for very controlled questions, giving participants very few chances of providing answers outside of the questions asked. In open-ended interviews, researchers ask very few questions and give the participants free range with how they answer the questions. With semi-structured interviews, the researcher writes a few questions and builds more questions based on the interviewee's response. In interviewing Mrs. Brown, I used the semi-structured interviewing technique because it allowed me to ask her questions pertinent to my study while giving her the flexibility to make meaning of her experiences (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Additionally, I employed semi-structured interview techniques during my four student focus group interviews. Semi-structured interviews are also powerful tools to uncover subjugated voices, that is, "oppressed groups' voices and ways of thinking that have been

devalued by dominant…forms of knowledge" (Hesse-Biber, 2012, p.138). There have been very few studies conducted in Jamaican inner-city communities that include inner-city teachers' perspectives on their teaching experience. I spoke extensively with Mrs. Brown in the staff room about the students' behaviour and their learning progress/difficulties. Therefore, our interview lasted only 25 minutes (See Appendices for Teacher Interview Questions). I also spoke to the students often after school about their learning in other subjects. I also felt very self-aware in the interviews due to my introverted personality. Due to my introverted personality, I had to make an extra effort to connect with my participants, particularly with Mrs. Brown. I made special efforts to make eye contact and to ask follow up questions which were organic.

Student focus group interviews. After I completed teaching the lessons, I conducted semi-structured focus group interviews with the students. On average, I had four groups comprising of five students. The size of each interview gave students the chance to make meaningful contributions (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008) in the interviews. I intentionally grouped the students: I placed the more talkative students with less talkative ones to control the interviews so that the students would not get too boisterous. In Focus Group Interviews 1 and 4, a few students (including ones I presumed were quiet) dominated the interviews.

A total of 20 students attended the interviews. Four students were missing. When the students were misbehaving, we had in-class discussions about their learning difficulties and their career choices. These discussions limited the need for a 45-minute interview, which is the typical length of focus group interviews because I ascertained information about the students' lived experiences from these discussions. In the focus group interviews, I asked the students questions about their perception of English language learning, and levels of engagement in Mrs. Brown's classes and my intervention. Furthermore, I asked the students to make recommendations to the Ministry of Education and the school's principal on how to improve their English language learning (See Appendices for Student Focus Group Interview Questions). I taped all the interviews with two recorders (Leung & Savithiri, 2009).

Focus group interviews had a few benefits and limitations in my study. Focus groups, rather than individual interviews, benefitted the students because when they were in groups, they felt more comfortable to "explore the issues of importance to them, in their own vocabulary, generating their own questions and pursuing their own priorities" (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 1). Moreover, focus group interviews also allowed me to examine the students' interaction and their use of language. In my focus group interviews, "language is viewed not as a neutral conveyor of information, but… as a medium which people use to achieve a variety of actions" (Smithson, 2000, p.105). One limitation of focus group interviews that I witnessed during my study was that it was sometimes difficult to hear the students, as they would all talk at once. It was mainly hard to decipher what they were saying when they all spoke at once when I was transcribing.

I initially planned to host the interviews outside the school; however, we were unable to secure a location off campus. We hosted the interviews in the Grade 11 block, which was away from the students' classroom and the staff room. After the interviews, I provided refreshments for the students. Finally, I asked Mrs. Walker to take notes during the focus groups interviews.

Site artefacts. I collected artefacts of students' works during my intervention. Artefacts showcased the students' critical literacy skills — skills that might not be captured on traditional assessment tools. Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2006) describe artefacts as "objects used in the process of teaching and learning or products that result from the process of teaching and learning" (p. 344). These artefacts, especially my students' reflections and posters, also testified to my participants' abilities. Before conducting my study, I intended to get copies of the school's Grade 7 curriculum and the teachers' lesson plans. I made copies of the syllabus and conducted document analysis of the syllabus to guide my lessons. I did not ask the teacher for a copy of her lesson plans because I did not want to be intrusive.

Document analysis. I conducted document analysis to review, or portray meanings in the documents that I had selected. Document analysis strengthens case study research in various ways (Altheide, Coyle, DeVriese, & Schneider, 2008; Love, 2003; Silverman, 2009). Specific to my study, document analysis strengthened the information on the context within which my students operated, and it helped me to track changes and development in both my participants and my research context (Altheide, 1987; Bowen, 2009). I conducted both content and document analyses of my site artefacts. In my content analysis, I looked for content that addressed my research questions and hypothesis about student engagement, Jamaican English teaching, and multiliteracies pedagogy's ability to improve my participants' English language development. I also reviewed the students' reflections and paragraphs to identify changes in their written English.

Data Analysis

I analysed my data in an ongoing manner. Keeping and maintaining detailed data organised was the first step of my data analysis. While in the field and for easy retrieval of my data, I designed folders for all of my various data collection which I labelled according to its contents - site artefacts, field notes, videos and interviews. I wrote my field notes about Mrs. Brown's class and my reflective notes in a blue notebook and typed them before I left the school each day while the details were still fresh in my mind. I waited until the end of my data collection before I coded and tabulated them in themes in Microsoft Word. I waited until the end of my data collection to code and did my thematic analysis because I was very busy with designing my lessons and grading my students' work. At the end of my interviews, I transcribed and arranged them in themes to aid my data analysis. In my analysis, I triangulated my data to identify levels of (dis)congruity among them. I also scanned and saved my students reflections. I took pictures of the school grade 7 to 9 English curriculum and saved them in their respective folders once I collected them. I did not keep any hard copies of the students' work because I had to grade and return them.

I used various aspects of my data collection in my different findings chapters (Chapters 4 to 6). I included all the data sources pertaining to Mrs. Brown's teaching- teacher and student interviews, my field notes and videos of Mrs. Brown's classes - in Chapter four of my dissertation. In Chapter five, I placed all the data sources pertaining to the overall transformation of the teaching and learning in the two months of my teaching- the RS notes, my reflective notes, the teacher and student interviews and site artefacts. These provide a microlevel analysis of changes in the student-to-student interaction and their approach to English learning. In Chapter six, I used all of the data sources-interviews, site artefacts, RS notes and my reflective notes- pertaining to the changes in the students' language development

I did not apply my two theoretical frameworks in my findings chapter. I analysed my data sources in Chapters four and five using Vygotskian sociocultural theory. I analysed my data sources for Chapter six using both sociocultural theory and Fredricks, Blumenfeld & Paris' (2004) topography. I did not use Fredricks' et al. (2004) topography in analysing Chapters four and five because I was not exploring the students' different types of engagement in these chapters. The table below summaries my data analysis.

Table 3: My data analysis

Chapter	Data Sources	Theoretical frameworks	Analysis
Four	1) Interviews (teacher and student focus group), 2) my field notes & 3) videos of Mrs. Brown's class.	Sociocultural Theory	1) Coding of interviews and field notes. 2) Tabularized thematic analysis of field notes and interviews. 3) Content analysis of videos
Five	1) Interviews (teacher and student focus group), 2) site artefacts, 3) RS's notes, & 4) my reflective field notes.	Sociocultural theory	1) Coding of interviews and field notes. 2) Tabularized thematic analysis of field notes and interviews. 3) Content analysis of artefacts.
Six	1) Interviews (teacher and student focus group), 2) site artefacts, 3) RS's notes, & 4) my reflective field notes.	Sociocultural theory & Fredricks and colleague's topography	1) Interviews (teacher and student focus group), 2) site artefacts, 3) RS's notes, & 4) my reflective field notes.

Conclusion

In my methodology section, I outlined my theoretical frameworks, research methods, data collection tools and my data analysis. I also provided a rationale for my research design. My methodology was layered and involved different data collection tools to improve the reliability and validity of my study. I also designed my research to reflect a sociocultural worldview, as I believe that knowledge is socially constructed and value-laden. The following section of the paper explains the analysis of my findings.

Chapter 4: Mrs. Brown's Class

This chapter offers an overview a month of Mrs. Brown's lessons to paint a picture of the teaching and learning processes at the research site prior to my intervention. In this chapter, I provide an overview of one of Mrs. Brown's lessons, which serves as an example of her overall teaching style, and I analyze Mrs. Brown's teaching pedagogy. I also noted two instances in which Mrs. Brown's teaching deviated from her typical teaching style. In the ensuing analysis, I also comment on the students' reactions to her pedagogy, the different types of interaction in her class, and state the merits of Mrs. Brown's pedagogy. Noting the students' different forms of interaction in Mrs. Brown's class and their reactions to her teaching assisted me in my microgenetic framing of the students' English learning. This microgentic framing helped me mark the changes in my students' language development and engagement throughout my study. Finally, starting with an analysis of Mrs. Brown's teaching allowed me to identify the students' English learning problems and the effectiveness of the teacher's pedagogical approach.

The first step towards making meaning of my data was to analyze the field notes and videos from my classroom observation of Mrs. Brown's class. I will integrate a description of the classroom, analyze how Mrs. Brown taught, and elaborate on how the students reacted to the lessons. The description that I offer of the first two weeks of classes is general because I did not learn most of the students' names until towards the end of my first two weeks of my observation. Still, this generalization of these two weeks of observation is overcome by the strength of case study research because I was able to crosscheck and validate actions alongside words. This was important to do because sometimes what people say they do differs from what their performed actions. Thus, looking through the actions and words of selected students helped unveil the points of congruity and divergence in individual student and teacher actions, and their words marked through the interviews.

Before offering my observation of Mrs. Brown's teaching, I must begin with a prelude. First, my findings are not meant to be a critique of the teacher; rather, they serve as an analysis of what I observed at a moment in her teaching. Second, I recognize the influence that I might have had on my participants, particularly in the responses they gave in the focus group interviews. However, I view this influence as an exhibition of trust between the participants and me, rather than the participants' bias against Mrs. Brown, as they would have respected my method of instruction and the advice I gave them. Third, my subjectivity as a Jamaican and my intimate knowledge of the Jamaican education system — both as a former teacher and student in the Jamaican system — may have influenced the way that I analyze the data. As a sociocultural scholar, I welcome the influence of my subjective knowledge in analyzing the data because it presents a level of depth and breadth of understanding of my participants, which strengthens and offers context to the analysis. Nevertheless, I tried as much as possible to ensure that my insider knowledge and emic perspectives did not block me from gaining new information about my research context and participants by not assuming that I already knew everything about the research site and my participants. Fourth, the ideas set forth here, while empirically motivated are not meant to represent the pedagogy of all the Jamaican English teachers; rather, they are a representation of this particular English teacher's pedagogy during my observations. Finally, in reading my analysis, it is important to remember that these analyses can be read differently because of the readers' social positioning, theorizing and commitments (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995).

Analysis of the Classroom Observations

I conducted two sets of classroom observations. One set was conducted before my intervention and the other after my intervention. I conducted initial classroom observations that lasted three weeks and provided context into the teaching and learning processes in the class. These

processes included teacher-to-student interactions, student-to-student interaction, as well as the types of activities that the teacher used in the classroom.

The second period of classroom observations occurred at the end of my fourth month of data collection and lasted for a week. My second set of observations consisted only of one class observation on June 16 instead of three classes for the week of June 15, to 17, 2016. The teacher was absent on June 15, 2016. Therefore, instead of taking the role of observer, I taught that class. That very same week, the students did not show up for the class on Friday, June 17. The purpose of this second set of observations was to chart if and how the students' patterns of learning changed after my intervention. These observations were also designed to allow me to observe changes in student-to-student interaction and the students' behavioural changes. It is difficult to draw any conclusions from this period because even though I had aimed to conduct two full weeks of observations, teacher absences, missed classes and school holidays made my second set of observations (including my teaching) total of about two-and-a-half hours. Below I elaborate on the initial observation period. There were 24 students registered in the class; however, daily attendance averaged about 18 students. In our interview, Mrs. Brown attributed the students' absenteeism to the inability of the school and parents to provide lunch for the students every day. Mrs. Robinson, the head of the English department, who is in charge of leading the language teachers and supervising their teaching, confirmed that most of the students at my research site received government assistance to pay their school fees and to get their textbooks. Further, most of my participants received breakfast and lunch from the school-feeding program. Mrs. Brown informed me that this program is only offered three times per week, on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Fewer students came to class on Thursdays (17 students), and even fewer students (10–14 students) came to class on Fridays, with the anticipation that they were going to have a light school day.

In order to be less intrusive in Mrs. Brown's class, I purposely sat in one of the students'

seats on the far left row closest to the wall. Adopting a stance as a non-participant observer made the students aware of my presence in the classroom and might have gotten them accustomed to my presence in the classroom. The fact that I was a non-participant observer allowed the students to become accustomed to me as a person and as their future teacher (Liu & Maitlis, 2012). I also hoped that my presence as a non-participant would allow the students to act as "natural" as possible. Despite my need to be non-authoritative and to assume a non-authoritative presence in the class, on the first day of my observations, one student, Lance, came up to me and inquired, "Miss, a yu a tiich di class?" ([Ms., are you teaching the class?])." When I responded in the negative, he took his seat and sat next to me in between the rows. The following day, two other boys, Anthony and Jake, came to sit beside me as well. Hence, despite my desire to be a non-participant, my presence stimulated the students' interest in me and in my work, which made me a more active participant than I would have liked. Nevertheless, the students' interference of my non-participant observation —having them seated next to me — allowed me plenty of opportunities to closely observe their patterns of classroom interaction and learning during the teacher's lesson.

Overview of the Teacher's Lessons

During the three weeks of classroom teacher observations, the teacher focused on three main topics: (i) "Context Clues" was conducted over one class period, totaling 75 minutes; (ii) "The Different Types of Sentences" was conducted over two class periods, totaling 150 minutes; and (iii) "Understanding Poetry" was conducted over three class periods, totaling 225 minutes. Mrs. Brown divided "Understanding Poetry" into two sub-topics covered over three classes. The first was "Understanding Rhythm" for which one class was devoted to explicit teaching about rhythm. The second sub-topic was "Questioning Rhythm," in which students were allowed to question and

The second sub-topic was "Questioning Rhythm," in which students were allowed to question and present word rhythms. (iv) "Literary Devices" was the last topic and it was conducted over three class periods, totalling 225 minutes. Mrs. Brown focused one lesson each on simile, metaphor and personification. In one month, Mrs. Brown taught four different topics and eight sub-topics. In my observation, three class periods were insufficient to understand the scientific concepts found in these topics. Table 3 outlines the topics covered in Mrs. Brown's class.

Table 3: Breakdown of the Teacher's Lesson

Topic	Classes
Context Clues	Class 1
Types of sentences	Class 2 (Compound Sentences) Class 3 (Complex Sentences)
Understanding Poetry	Class 4 (Understanding Poetry-Rhythm) Class 5 (Understanding Poetry- Students per-formance) Class 6 (Understanding Poetry- Recap)

Topic	Classes
Literary Terms	Class 7 (Smilie) Class 8 (Metaphor) Class 9 (Personification)
Revision	Class 10

The Jamaica English language curriculum and the localised version that was constructed at my research site contain a plethora of topics to cover. For struggling (English) learners, these topics are too many (Vaughn, Wanzek, Murray & Roberts, 2012). Hence, to cover these topics, teachers like Mrs. Brown had to speed through the topics listed in the curriculum. In the focus group interviews, the students did not directly mention that they had problems with the pace of Mrs. Brown's lesson.

the students did not directly mention that they had problems with the pace of Mrs. Brown's lesson. Nevertheless, in Focus Group 4, Jake explained to me that "(Mrs. Brown) muostly giv wi lots af werk an yu giv wi less werk so wi can talk muoa an lern muoa tings" [(Mrs. Brown) mostly gives us lots of work and you give us less work so that we can talk more and learn more things)." Implicit in Jake's comments is the notion that his learning was hindered by the amount of work that he had to complete due to the dictates of the curriculum.

Classroom Behaviour

The internal structure of Mrs. Brown's English classroom mimicked a teacher-centred and authoritative approach to education in which she held command of the class and demanded respect from the students. As indicated in the following quote, in our interview, she openly shared that she was intentionally strict to ensure that the students took learning seriously.

Shawnee: How about classroom management?
Mrs. Brown: I don't have a problem with mine, cus I don't play.
Shawnee: I realize that (laughs).

Mrs. Brown: And they don't like me for that but that's just how it is. I don't, I can't tolerate indiscipline (Yeah). When I am in the class you sit and you listen and if I ask a question then you are allowed to speak or if they want to ask a question. (Shawnee: I realize that the students are very quiet in your class).

The students' comments in the focus group interviews also revealed that Mrs. Brown used a strict traditional form of classroom management. In my first student focused group interview, Mary, a very outspoken young girl chimed:

"no-bada caan talk to no-bady like dem talk to dem in a your class, no body cant walk round Ms. and dem caan get up out dem seat"	No one can talk to anyone like they did in your class and no one can walk around in Ms. Brown's class and they can't get up out of their seats."

Many other students shared the same sentiments about Mrs. Brown's classroom management.

Each day, students quietly sat in neatly formed rows. Students stood, greeted Mrs. Brown and waited for her to permit them to sit upon her entry into the classroom. After this ceremonial practice, the students quietly murmured until the teacher started writing on the board, at which time they became silent and copied the notes in their books. The teacher usually wrote quietly until she finished — occasionally she would pause to ask if she could erase a section of the board if she was giving a lot of notes. When she was finished writing the notes, she would walk to the right side of the classroom, explain the notes, direct the students to complete the assigned activities and take her seat at the front left-hand corner of the class. Focus group interviews revealed that the students were critical of Mrs. Brown's practice of making them copy notes without explaining the content to them. In the Focus Group Interview 3, Annette, who had very expressive facial features, explained: "Ms. yu see laik for instance yu wrait on di board, yur klas always ful of vibes Ms. yu always cum with yur acting and everyting, shi wrait on di board. Either shi sit dung on her phone or she walk out of the class."

Ms. you see like for instance, you write on the board, your class always full of vibes Ms., you always come with your acting and everything. She just write on the board; either she sits down on her phone or she walks out of the class."

The students in two other focus interviews also shared that Mrs. Brown's simply wrote notes without giving much explanation. In all my stay at the research site, I never saw Mrs. Brown leave her class

entirely unattended except to discipline her homeroom class, which was next door to her English class. Also, I never saw her use her phone extensively in the class.

In Jamaica, teachers are not expected use their phones in the class unless for educational purposes. They are not expected to be texting and answering calls unless in cases of an emergency. Mrs. Brown occasionally texted and answered calls in the class. Perhaps in these moments, she was communicating with her husband who worked abroad. While her phone usage might not have been educational or related to an emergency, it may still have been important.

A Typical Example of Teaching in Mrs. Brown's class

Here is an example of what a typical lesson looked like [extracted from field notes, Class 2, March 3, 2016]. I describe Mrs. Brown's class in detail, as this description will help my readers to understand the teaching pedagogy to which the students were exposed before my class. This will also help them to understand how the students' learning and engagement changed in my class. I number each step and offer explanations for each of them.

Overview of One of Mrs. Brown's classes

Topic: Type of sentences
Sub-topic: Compound sentence
Time: 75 minutes

1. Upon entry into the classroom, Mrs. Brown waited for the 19 students who were present to stand at attention before she greeted them. She then directed the students to sit. She put down her

resources on her desk and then stood at the front of the class to address the students. Mrs. Brown: "Who can tell me what a sentence is?" The students gave varied answers.

2. Mrs. Brown invited a student to write a sentence on the board. The student wrote: " I am going to school." Mrs. Brown inquired: "Do you think this sentence can be extended? Who can extend it?" Another student came to the board, attempted to write a new sentence but was directed to extend the original sentence that the first student wrote. The student wrote: "I am going to school to learn something new today." At that moment I thought, if students can write such sentences as this, why are they struggling with English learning? Are they really struggling? Based on the sentences that the students' wrote above, I assumed what I believed was the students' more advanced English abilities to changes in primary education in which students achieve the mastery of Grade 4 reading before they can advance to Grade 6 and take the school leaving examination. However, when I started my intervention (and as you can see in Chapter 6), I realized that students were indeed struggling learners because many could not write simple sentences without committing basic grammatical errors such as improper capitalization. To avoid repetition, the question, "Are the students really struggling?" will be answered in Chapter 6.

3. Mrs. Brown edited a section of the second student's sentence for it to read "I am going to school and I will learn something new today." She used this example to scaffold the students' understanding of compound sentences.

4. Mrs. Brown asked the students what comprises a sentence. Most students had blank stares on their faces. Then, after a few minutes, some students scanned through their books and came up with the answers. During the interview, Mrs. Brown commented that students easily forgot what whatever she taught them.

Table 4: Brown's Examples of Compound Sentences.

Main Clause	Coordinating conjunction	Main clause
I am going to school today	and	I am going to learn something new today.
Turn on the television	or	you will miss the news headlines.

5. Mrs. Brown asked the students to give examples of compound sentences, and students shared their examples little by little. She then asked the students to list coordinating conjunctions, but students could only give "and" and "but." Students suggested that "we" and "before" were coordinating conjunctions. When asked what type of part of speech "we" was, one student responded that it was an adjective. Mrs. Brown had to tell them the correct answer. She then asked what parts of speech are "before," "after" and "up." It was only when she said "up" that some of the students said preposition. At this moment, I recanted my earlier conclusion that the students' English abilities were higher than I had expected.

6. Mrs. Brown gave a second example of a compound sentence: "Turn on the television or you will miss the news headlines."

7. She then asked Anthony to the board to underline the main clauses; however, he could not complete the task. She also asked another student to complete the same task for which the student did the following: "*Turn on the television or you will miss the news headlines.*" From these examples, I thought either the students were not paying attention to what Mrs. Brown was teaching them or that Mrs. Brown's teaching was not effective. Mrs. Brown seemed dismayed by the students' incorrect responses, so she inquired, "What did I say is another word for main clause? A student shyly responded, "Ms. simple sentence." Only then did the third student called to the board identify the main clause in the above sentence.

8. Mrs. Brown wrote two simple sentences on the board: 1. I wrote the letter. 2. I forgot to mail it. The student who the teacher called to the board struggled, but he was able to complete the sentence. Four hands went up while the student was struggling, then the numbers gradually increased. Two boys discussed the answers between themselves.

9. Mrs. Brown gave the following definition for compound sentences: " A compound sentence combines two simple sentences by using a coordinating conjunction." She also gave another example of another compound sentences.

10. Mrs. Brown instructed the students to join ten sentences by using "and," "or," or "but" to form compound sentences. She wrote the sentences from a notebook. She then repeated the instructions orally. In my observation, these sentences appeared more complex than I expected given the students' English learning difficulties. Additionally, the sentences did not reflect or connect to the students' lived experiences. Mrs. Brown also instructed the students not to talk while they worked. Most of the students appeared on task. However, regardless of the instruction not to talk, some girls worked quietly together in a whisper that was inaudible to me. Mrs. Brown did not reprimand these students because perhaps she did not hear their whispers and they appeared to be on task.

In all four focus group interviews, most of the students stated that they preferred that Mrs. Brown explain how to complete their assigned tasks rather than just writing them on the board without much explanation. For example, in Focus Group 2, in response to the question "what are some of the things you like and some of the things that the teacher could improve on?" Pam and Trace responded:

Pam: Ms. mek mi tel yu, laik sumtimz Ms. ahm if shi wrait wurk pon di burd Ms. shi jus si daun ina di claas an deh pon har phone. (Trace: Yes, Ms.). Ms. an sumtimz iida, sumtimz an sumtimz shi explain werk to wi (Trace: Sometimes Ms.) Trace: Yes, Ms. Ms. an shi occasionally explains di werk to wi.

Pam: Ms., I would say, sometimes Ms., if she writes work on the board Ms, she just sit down in the class [at her seat] and start using her phone. (Trace: Yes, Ms.). Ms. and sometimes, either, sometimes and sometimes, she explains the work to us. (Trace: Sometimes Ms.).
Trace: Yes, and occasionally she explains what we are supposed to do.

Also, in Focus Group Interview 4, Stacy and Lackeisha stated that Mrs. Brown simply put the work on the board and walks out. I never experienced her walking out of class, except for the last class when she had to leave to discipline her homeroom class. However, after I prodded my participants in Focus Group 4 to name a positive element from Mrs. Brown's class:

Shawnee: What is it that you liked about her [Mrs. Brown's] class? …
Shawnee: [laughs] alright so you guys don't have anything that you liked? So what about when she wrote the sentences on the board, you didn't like that?
John: Yes Ms.
Lance: Yes Ms. an shi an shi an shi mek sure shi giv yu wha egxampl bifoa shi mek yu read.

Shawnee: What is it that you like about her [Mrs. Brown's] class? …
Shawnee: [laughs] alright so you guys don't have anything that you liked? So what about when she wrote the sentences on the board, you didn't like that?
John: Yes Ms.
Lance: Yes Ms. and she ensures that she give us an example before she tells us to read.

Lance's statement suggested that while Mrs. Brown might not have provided adequate explanation to the students' liking, she at least provided an example for them.

11. Mrs. Brown sat in her chair.

12. The students worked on task, went to the teacher to get their work corrected, quietly and sometimes covertly shared their work with their friends, edited their work and then got it re-corrected.

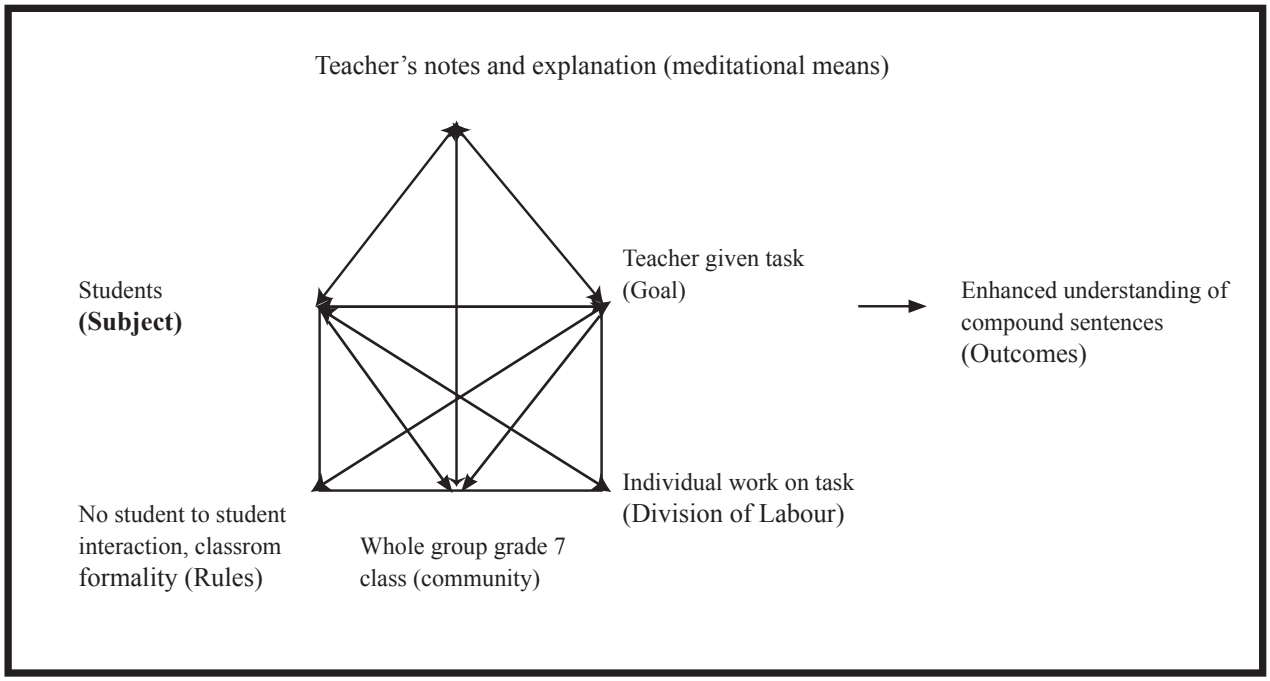
13. Mrs. Brown checked their assignment from the previous day while checking the tasks for the day. Very few students did their assignments outside of the school, as Mrs. Brown stated in the interview I had with her:

Mrs. Brown: I have given numerous assignments, and [it's] only like one or two persons give in the work. Some of them, they come " Ms. I don't have any computer. I don't have anywhere to get the work print." And we don't have a library where they can just say, ok go and research this in the library.

On several occasions, I too witnessed only one student handing in completed work that Mrs. Brown had assigned. However, although I did not ask the students to comment on whether or not Mrs. Brown graded their assignments, in their comments on her pedagogy they openly shared that she did not mark their assignments. They noted that Mrs. Brown did not grade their work even when they spent their money to print their work or to access the Internet. Many students shared that they did not have a computer and the Internet at home, so they had to go to a computer lab or to the library to do and print homework.

14. The bell rang, Mrs. Brown picked up her things, the students stood and she walked out of the class.

Figure 5: An Activity Theory Depiction of the Compound Sentence Lesson



What did Mrs. Brown Teach?

In applying Engestrom's activity theory model (Figure 6) to illustrate the teaching and learning patterns in the classroom, it is evident that the teacher mainly mediated the students' learning and the students are partially engaged subjects in the classroom.

My detailed description of Mrs. Brown's class above shows that Mrs. Brown's teaching was highly characterized by her control of the students' classroom behaviour and mirrored what is typically known as a teacher-centred method of teaching (Freire, 1970/2000). To a large extent, through her teaching, she seemed to envision the students as vessels in which she needed to deposit information. At her request, the students needed to regurgitate this information. Her teaching methods made it difficult for students to make meaning and produce knowledge in the class.

The teacher-centric transmission approach has been suggested by scholars who reference sociocultural approaches to learning such as Low (1998) for treating students as "empty vessels" waiting for the teacher to "deposit" information in their blank heads. In the example of the Class 2's outline provided above, Mrs. Brown only required the students to recall knowledge that they should have known from their previous English classes rather than asking them to make meaning of the topic under study. It also appeared that she saw it as her job to be the chief knowledge producer in the classroom; hence, she did all the corrections and designed all the activities in the classroom. Acting as the chief knowledge producer could be read as the teacher having low expectations of her students. It is safe to assume from my observational notes that due to this teacher-centric model in Mrs. Brown's class, there was little opportunity for self-determination in a way that would allow students to exhibit the "capacity to take responsibility for their own learning" (Furrer, Skinner & Pitzer, 2014, p. 103). However, with my intimate knowledge of Jamaican teaching, I assumed that Mrs. Brown was continuing a traditional approach, which she too may have experienced as a student, where students were no more than passive learners.

This teacher-centric chalk and talk approach have also been criticized for preferring individualistic student learning. The above description of Mrs. Brown's lesson demonstrates that the tasks in her classes were typically individualized, emphasized the use of correct English forms, and there was little formalized group work or pair work. Formalized group or pair work were not encouraged unless the teacher deemed it necessary for the fulfilment of her lesson's objectives. For example, Mrs. Brown did not encourage the students to sit together and share resources, such as their textbooks and dictionaries, when she assigned them tasks from these resources. Still, the students tended to work together in these instances, girls more often than boys. Beyond students sharing their resources, there was no mechanism for peer-to-peer feedback, peer-to-peer brainstorming or open-ended classroom conversations beyond any content-based discussions.

Bryan and Shaw (2002) and Evans (2001) conferred that such individualistic learning hinders students' learning engagement. Engagement, within the context of this paper, means the "psychological process; specifically, the attention, interest, investment, and effort students expend in the work of learning" (Marks, 2000, p. 155). Hence, it is beyond the superficial approach of posing questions about content analysis and questioning as a form of revision. By focusing on individualized learning, Mrs. Brown's pedagogy allowed for only the cognitive and partial engagement of the students. There was little student-to-student eye engagement, limited expressive body movements such as gestures and laughter, or even negative emotions such as expressing agitation. The lack of affective pathways in the class was also demonstrated in the students remaining silent during much of the classroom discussion. Students only spoke aloud when Mrs. Brown spoke to them. While students can feign engagement (Garrett, 2011), it appears much more difficult for students to feign disengagement, especially for the sake of my study. Hence, I do not think that the students were pretending to be disengaged because of my presence and for my benefit. The lack of student engagement and learning in Mrs. Brown's class are iterative processes. There is a no scarcity of socio-cultural and multiliteracies pedagogy literature (Rajendram, 2015) which posits student-to-student interaction as vital for meaningful student engagement and learning. Social constructivists believe that student meaning-making can only occur through socially constructed active engagement. From my observations, there were few chances for meaning-making in Mrs. Brown's class.

In spite of the critique of individual learning, a few of the students in the class appeared to prefer individual learning. One such person was Lance, a very active, comical and outspoken student who never missed a class during the tenure of my research. Although he would not readily volunteer to answer questions that the teacher asked, Lance seemed engaged in learning. He typically worked independently and was one of the first students to complete his assigned tasks. He also finished his revisions in class and would return to the teacher to get his work re-graded. Lance

even bragged about his grades to his fellow classmates. My hypothesis is that Lance loved to be the centre of attention; hence, he might have preferred individual learning where he would receive individualized attention from the teacher.

The teacher-centric model can also instil fear in students. From my observation of Mrs. Brown's class, I believed some of the students might have feared her because she did not give them many opportunities to exercise agency in the classroom. The possible fear of Mrs. Brown was evident in the students' reluctance to ask her for clarifications in areas that they did not understand. Here is an example of this reluctance from Class 6, following the students' poetry performance in Video 2. As soon as Mrs. Brown wrote the notes and tasks on the board, the students started copying them, and they attempted to complete the task given. However, when she stepped out of the classroom, perhaps to discipline her homeroom class, the students started asking me to clarify some of the terms used in the questions that were posted. One of the students wanted to find out the meaning of "moderate" as used in the following question: "Is the rhythm slow, fast-paced or moderate? Give one reason for your answer." Another student wanted to know the meaning of "pace." To facilitate the students' understanding, I asked, "When you made the rhythm the other day, was it slow or moderate?" The student began to beat the rhythm again, then responded by saying "slow." The students seemed fearful or reluctant to ask Mrs. Brown for clarifications.

From the above-cited revision class, I draw another example of the students possible fearing Mrs. Brown. After addressing punctuation and capitalisation, Mrs. Brown asked what other topics they should cover in the revision. Some students suggested "subject-verb agreement." Mrs. Brown informed them that she had already revised subject-verb agreement and would not be doing it again, despite the students' brief explanation that they only revised parts of speech. After Mrs. Brown made her decision, the students became quiet. Mrs. Brown remained resolved in her decision not to do subject-verb agreement and in so doing enacted more of an authoritative figure in the classroom.

Picture 1 exemplifies a typical classroom structure and teacher-student relationship in Mrs. Brown's class. Note that most of the students appeared on task despite Mrs. Brown's back being turned to them; hence, she could not police their behaviour. That the students diligently remained on task despite the teacher's back being turned indicates the strong teacher centric and disciplinary structures that governed this classroom.

Despite Mrs. Brown's strong teacher-centric approach, the majority of the students appeared to have a positive attitude towards English learning. This might also explain the students' attentiveness in Picture 1. In the student focus interviews, they openly shared their love of reading and learning English. When I asked the students about their recommendations regarding their English learning, they stated that they wanted to speak more English in their English classes. Mary explicitly stated that she was good at English learning.

Picture 1: Teacher-student interaction in Mrs. Brown Class

Mrs. Brown's Departure from her Teacher-Centric Approach

Despite predominantly using a teacher-centric approach, on two occasions, Mrs. Brown used a method that encouraged the students to participate. In my observations, this rupture in her traditional teaching came in Classes 5 and 6. The first half of Class 5 resembled Mrs. Brown's typical teaching approach: she wrote the notes on the board, then explained them afterwards. Her notes contained instructions for the students to define the following words using their dictionaries: "contrast, appeal, repetition and rhythm." She added more words to the list after students were unable to name any figures of speech: "simile, personification, metaphor and onomatopoeia." After the students completed their assigned tasks, the whole class then discussed the terms. Next, Mrs. Brown assigned students to groups and handed each student a copy of the poem The Creation by Cecil Alexander Francis. She then directed the students to orally identify the simile, metaphors and personification in the poem. After the students orally identified the figures of speech, Mrs. Brown directed them to read the poem aloud. With Mrs. Brown's repeated prepping, the students portrayed their personal understanding of the poem through varied pitches and tones. They appeared fairly engaged in the poem recital, perhaps because Mrs. Brown constantly drilled them to read louder and with more vigour.

Mrs. Brown instructed the students to write a poem during the remaining class time and to finish it for homework. She explained that they would present the poem in the following class. The students seemed very engaged in the poem-writing activity. Unlike the previous classes where students forgot their homework, most of the groups had their poems. Those students who did not have their poems made something up on a whim. There was excitement in the air as they practiced their poems before the presentation. The room buzzed with laughter and the negotiation of roles. The students also practiced their varied parts, such as the beating of the desk to make a rhythm and reading

alternative lines of the poem. Although they made varied levels of contribution in their presentations, all the students participated, and they presented poems that spoke to their lived realities. All of the poems expressed concerns about the imminent violence in their communities that is robbing them of their childhood, and of the poverty that is inflicting suffering on many Jamaicans. Present in those pieces were high levels of metacognitive thought and creative acumen, which could not be captured in the mechanical writing tasks that they usually completed in other English lessons. Enacting the poems also presented opportunities for students to use multimodal expressions such as drumming, gestures and speaking. Students also looked visibly happier when they were enacting their poetry (see Video 1).

Video 1: Students performance in Mrs. Brown's class.

https://www.dropbox.com/s/97hf4kx1u9zzvn5/students%20performance.mov?dl=0

This observation of Classes 5 and 6 fits the existing sociocultural theory (Bernat, 2008) and multiliteracies pedagogy (Ganapathy, 2014), theoretical constructs which suggest that students tend to be more engaged when they actively participate in a learning environment that recruits their lived

experience. Ganapathy (2014) confirmed that once students are "motivated and interested in their lessons, the learning outcomes are productive" (p. 420). Concomitantly, I was not surprised that there were changes in the students' patterns of learning once Mrs. Brown changed her teaching approach from a transmission model to one that was performance orientated and situated in the students' socio-culturally embedded creative funds of knowledge. Students tend to be more invested in learning and take ownership of their learning once it is "personally meaningful…" (Estacion et al, 2004, p.5). By engaging the students in meaning-making, Mrs. Brown also engaged the students in the process of text production.

Perhaps soliciting the students' participation in this way is her personal enactment of constructivist theory. In our interview, Mrs. Brown explained that her teaching pedagogy is greatly influenced by constructivist theory. She also shared that she offers the students alternative assessments such as projects and journals. Although my observation was just for a month, I did not see any examples of journals or the use of any project-based or alternative forms of assessment in Mrs. Brown's classroom. As explained above, some students mentioned that she also gave them computer-based assignments, but I did not observe any evidence or mention of this during my observations.

How did the Students React to Mrs. Brown's Teaching?

All sets of data-student and teacher interviews, field notes and videos-indicate that there were 27 responses to Mrs. Brown's teaching: (a) dislike of her pedagogical style (12 responses) in the focus group interviews and (b) resistance to her classroom authority (15 incidents). These acts of resistance showed that students found a way to exercise their agency and signal their disapproval of Mrs. Brown's pedagogy. The students displayed these acts of disapproval and resistance in very

subtle ways, such as rolling their eyes and sharing their resources. To anyone who is unfamiliar with the Jamaican education system, these acts might not be seen as resistance and disproval, but rather they might be read as simple acts in the student-teacher relationship. Still, given Mrs. Brown's strong teacher-centric presence, and with my knowledge of the Jamaican system, I read these acts as resistance.

An example indicating dislike of Mrs. Brown's power occurred in Class 6 when I had to teach one of my activities because the teacher had to run an errand and arrived late. When the students entered the classroom, they seemed to rejoice at Mrs. Brown's absence. One student commented that the "klass a go naisa [class is going to be nicer]" because she thought Mrs. Brown would be absent for the entire class. Although most students might rejoice at the absence of their class teacher, I believe they rejoiced mainly because they felt open to a different pedagogical approach which, as I had explained earlier to them in my classroom introduction on March 02, 2016, was going to "use their lived experiences in school learning to improve their English learning." Therefore, remembering what I stated to the students in my observations, I believe they were excited at the possibility of learning or experiencing what I meant by using their "lived experiences in school learning to improve their English learning." Most students appeared disappointed when the teacher came in the class much later. I believe the students' disappointment stemmed from the fact that they believed their fun would end; consequently, it was not surprising to observe that they appeared relieved when the teacher allowed the activity to continue.

Resistance. Some students found ways to counter the teacher's power. There are several ethnographic observations that make me arrive at this conclusion. One example regards Melissa, who, after being corrected about her behaviour, typically rolled her eyes behind Mrs. Brown's back. There were also some students who openly rebelled against teacher's behavioural commands, such as Melissa, who chose to sit at the back, despite having a seat assigned to her in the middle of the class.

In addition to Melissa, there were also a few students who could not abide by the teacher's authority and were constantly distracted or would take a long time to complete tasks. John, a very active, witty student who took pleasure in discussing sexually insinuative jokes, for example, took every opportunity to request permission to leave the classroom or to talk to his classmates about off-task topics. I deduced that he discussed off-task topics because he was smiling in these discussions and did not produce any work. I also observed that there were a few students, such as Joe, who lacked the requisite cognitive skills to complete their classroom tasks, and they would distract those who were on task. At first glance, Joe appeared to be disinterested in school and more concerned with playing classroom games. However, upon examining his book, I realised that he did not understand the tasks, misspelt words and neglected the capitalisation or full stops in the sentences written on the board.

In our interview, Mrs. Brown shared that, as a result of my intervention, both John and Joe became more settled in the class. As she put it, "They kinda settled. They are not as jumpy as they used to be. Yeah. They used to be all over the place. Sometimes they would sit there and they would just stare into space or they will be talking and distracting the other students." As in other classes, there were also students who did not comply with the set rules and instructions in the classroom despite the teacher's strong presence.

Moreover, as a way to defy Mrs. Brown's authority and as a means to rupture Mrs. Brown's teacher-centric approach, some students would engage in other acts of resistance. On rare occasions, a few students, particularly the girls, pulled their chairs together to share resources such as textbooks and dictionaries, materials they rarely took to class. Students needed dictionaries whenever the teacher gave them words to define. The students also shared pens and pencils and would take turns writing their assigned tasks based on the availability of writing resources. They would also

share answers to questions once their books were graded. Moreover, they took every opportunity to become behaviourally disengaged such as participating in off-task chatter. In Picture 1, we can see two girls sitting closer together. Additionally, in my notes for Class 7, I jotted down that some students worked together in groups. Unfortunately, the video did not capture if they were sharing resources. My notes for Class 8 also explained that "students show[ed] each other their work once they [got] back their corrections." These acts support sociocultural theorists' assertion that students prefer to work in communities of practice where they share information and contribute to each other's learning engagement (Swain, Kinnear & Steinman, 2015). Hence, we see that even though it was not encouraged, to a minimal degree, the students engaged in peer-to-peer group learning.

Competition. Another response to Mrs. Brown's teaching was competition. The students would race to complete their assigned tasks and get their books graded so that they could brag to their classmates if they got a high score. It appeared that this competition improved the students' extrinsic motivation as they would hurriedly complete their assigned task just to ensure that they finished before their classmates. For example, in observing Lance's and Jake's work habits and the quality of work that they presented to Mrs. Brown, I realised that they quickly completed their work to get it graded, and in their haste, they completed many of their tasks incorrectly. They seemed less interested in completing their tasks properly and more interested in finishing their work quickly to get it graded. Hence, this competition appears to have both negative and positive consequences in the classroom.

During my second set of observations (Class 10), I observed a change in the students' behaviour: more students became unfazed by the teachers' authority. I noticed that the students started to treat me as if I had equal authority in the classroom as Mrs. Brown. This observation coincided with a time when I began to notice the students exhibiting more agency in the class. The following interactions illustrate the latter three points. During Class 10, while the teacher was

seated at the front of the class waiting for the class to settle down, John came to ask me if he could go outside to purchase a pen. I told him to ask Mrs. Brown for permission, to which he inquired if their class was not my class as well. I felt a little uncomfortable by this assertion in Mrs. Brown's presence because I did not want her to feel as if I was usurping her position. I directed him to ask Mrs. Brown, who was now looking on with curiosity. When he went to ask permission from Mrs. Brown, she sent him back to his seat. After John came to me, Annette, a highly opinionated student who wore her various attitudes on her face, came to borrow a pen from me. After a few exchanges, including my inquiry into why she did not have a pen, I lent her the pen and told her to "stop disturbing the teacher's class." Annette looked up at the teacher, twisted her mouth, and then went to her seat. Previously, no student had borrowed Mrs. Brown's resources, nor had she offered to lend them anything when they had mentioned that they did not have their resources. Additionally, towards the end of Class 10, some girls who had brought baking ingredients for Home Economics into the English class became absorbed with showing off their ingredients instead of completing their English revisions. Mrs. Brown had to reprimand them a few times before they tried to focus on their work. Perhaps, the students would not have been passing around their ingredients in the early stages of my observations (Classes 1–4). The latter example might also point to the students growing more confident in the classroom and exercising more agency in the class. As will be explained later in my intervention, my students became accustomed to walking around and talking aloud in my class without asking for permission in many cases. Many of the students knew that they were unable to take such leverages with Mrs. Brown so they resorted to small acts of exercising their agency.

Merits of Mrs. Brown's Strict Teacher-centric Approach

From my observations and based on the analysis of my field notes and student focus group interviews, there were two benefits of Mrs. Brown's strong teacher disciplinary structure. Her

pedagogy instilled good student behavioural management and it provided explicit structure for the students. Mrs. Brown's behaviour management mimicked other popular forms of Jamaican parents' disciplinary structures. In the 2015 media report, Dr. Charles-Freeman, the Executive Director for the Jamaican National Parenting Support Commission, reported that 52 percent of Jamaican parents used a manipulative-authoritative parenting style and 63 percent used a critical aggressive style of parenting (Jamaica Information Service, 2015). Anderson and Cole (2017) explored the correlation between adolescent inner-city students' aggression attending a technical high school and their parents' parenting styles. Anderson and Cole found that parents in inner-city communities believed that authoritative style of parenting with good parenting. Therefore, even at home, the students were accustomed to strong disciplinary measures. Given the students' familiarity with this form of disciplinary style, Mrs. Brown's strong presence and strictness in the classroom limited students' misbehaviour. As stated above, I rarely observed students acting rowdy in Mrs. Brown's class except on one occasion, class 4. In Class 4, Mrs. Brown put students in groups to practice reading The Creation. I did not note if Mrs. Brown left the classroom, but I noted the following: "Group work might be difficult as students get very noisy. Need to put systems in place to control unnecessary chatter." This loud chatter occurring while the students worked in groups might be why Mrs. Brown avoided using predominately group work in her class. I also recorded this observation in Class 6 during the "Two Truths and One Lie" activity: "To address disciplinary issues I have to put in stricter control. I did not want to be this strict but I realized that I will always discipline students continuously if I don't." Perhaps the students were taking advantage of their new-found freedom and were also testing the waters to see how far they could exercise such freedom. The students became more settled once Mrs. Brown entered the classroom. I have no other records of the students misbehaving in Mrs. Brown's class because she kept them isolated and she maintained a strong presence in the classroom.

In addition to implementing good behavioural management, Mrs. Brown's pedagogy also implemented a structure for the students. The students seem to have become dependent on this structure in Mrs. Brown's class. In Class 6, when I told the class that we would be doing the "Two Truths and One Lie" activity, one student asked me if he should "head up" his book, meaning, should he write the subject, date and topic of the day's lesson. His question to me signals the need for explicit guidance in the class. According to Mrs. Robinson, the head of the language department, the Jamaican Ministry of Education mandated all teachers to "head up" their boards so that a passersby can know what the students are studying. Following the ministry's instruction, Mrs. Brown's pedagogy, therefore, provided a structure for students to follow, and one that might have helped to keep them on tasks.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analysed my month observation of Mrs. Brown's class. In my analysis, I included: 1) an overview of class that Mrs. Brown taught; 2) accounts of two instances in which Mrs. Brown's teaching betrays her traditional teacher-centric approach; 3) an analysis Mrs. Brown's teaching pedagogy; 4) the students' reaction to Mrs. Brown's pedagogy; and 5) the merits of Mrs. Brown's pedagogy. The analysis of the information presented above shows that Mrs. Brown's pedagogy was teacher centric. All the decision making in the classroom rested in her hands. She also followed a mainly behaviourist and banking style teaching method in which she was the main authority on knowledge. She designed her lessons to ensure that she deposited some of her knowledge in her students. From my field notes, a few students, such as Lance, seemed to thrive in this learning environment, while many others, such as Mary, Patricia and Karen, seemed to have wanted a different, more engaging approach that permitted them more agency in the class.

Chapter 5: Micro-level Changes in the Students' English Teaching and Learning due to My Intervention

This chapter outlines my intervention and provides an overview of the lessons that I taught in my class. I first provide an overview of the administrative procedures in my class. Then, similar to my analysis of Mrs. Brown's class, I overview a typical lesson in my class. Added to this, I summarize an informal learning event and a community-based class that occurred in my class. After overviewing these classes, I present my analysis of Question 1, which creates a micro-level analysis of my intervention. This micro-level analysis included: how I recruited the students' lived experience, how I created opportunities for the students to exercise their agency; how this level of agency, in turn, allowed them to become producers of texts and highlighted their creativity and enhanced their zone of development. Given the interconnection between my research Questions 1a and 1b, I present a thematic analysis of the students' English engagement and learning in my intervention rather than organizing my analysis by these research questions. My analysis of Questions 1a and 1b provided a meso-level analysis of my students' learning. Organising my data in this manner limits repetition and ensures that my analysis is properly integrated.

My classroom intervention followed the observation of Mrs. Brown's class and lasted two months from April to May 2016. Similar to Mrs. Brown's English teaching days, I conducted my intervention on Wednesday afternoons, and Thursday and Friday mornings. I had 23 contact sessions with my student participants during the entirety of my fieldwork. Twenty-one of these sessions were in my two months of teaching, while two were in Mrs. Brown's class — one before and one after my two months of teaching. An average of 15 students were present in these classes. There were fewer students in my intervention than in Mrs. Brown's class, as students' attrition increased after April, towards the end of the year.

I taught my classes with the assistance of a Research Support (RS), Mrs. Walker who took observational notes and conducted administrative activities such as taking the class attendance. Occasionally, Mrs. Walker acted as a teacher's aide to assist the students in completing their tasks, because they had great challenges with writing sentences and paragraphs. Although Mrs. Walker's presence was a strength for my research, pedagogically, she presented a limitation. This is because she sometimes scaffolded the students' understanding of English concepts and mechanics (scientific concepts), which then offered me an advantageous support that Mrs. Brown did not have in her class.

For my intervention, in keeping with multiliteracies pedagogy and sociocultural theory, I embedded various activities in the students' interests and required them to use their own perspectives in their learning. In keeping with sociocultural theorists' recommendations, I designed my lessons so that they would be challenging enough for individual students but manageable for them to do in groups. I intentionally designed my activities to offer students opportunities to "negotiate with various composite discourses" (Katsarou, 2014, p. 60) from their personal lived experiences and creative artistic backgrounds. The students worked with and produced a variety of texts, which were embedded in their linguistic and sub-cultural background. They produced a variety of multimodal texts. Their texts included posters, songs, stories, drama pieces and role-plays. They also wrote their scripts for, and participated in, debate competitions and news reports. I ensured that the students produced texts and modelled the target grammatical and scientific concepts in all of the tests that they produced. This way, the students made meaning and produced texts in the classroom rather than completing pre-composed activities.

Although my study emphasized allowing students to produce multimodal texts, I resorted to more linear print-based texts than I anticipated. My use of extensive print-based literacy contradicts

the popular practice in MLS: as except for Pirbhai-Illich's (2010) MLS project with First Nations students that I discussed in Chapter 2. I have not seen many MLS studies that incorporated print texts readings in all their lessons. Although I digressed from the established practice in MLS, I decided to use more print-based texts than I stated in my research proposal prior to conducting my fieldwork, because the students enjoyed reading. Students also acquired scientific concepts from reading. The students shared that their love for reading was due their homeroom teacher, Mrs. Peterson's, practice of making them read during homeroom time, that is, a 30-minute time period just before their first class. My reading passages also served as templates that the students replicated in their writing, and the passages introduced the students to new vocabulary. To induce more sociocultural perspectives, I wrote all of the stories I used in the class and incorporated other reading passages that centred on the students' funds of knowledge to ensure that materials reflected the students' personal experiences. This begs the following questions: Would my intervention be less effective in improving the students' English learning if I had not used more print-based literacies? What does my use of print-based reading say about my approach to MLS and MLS's capacity to improve my participants' English learning?

Table 5 presents a tabular summary based on my and the Research Support's observation of the students' typical work and learning characteristics in order to highlight the different groups of students in my class. Showing the students' characteristics also helps readers understand my participants' approach to learning and their typical classroom behaviour. I assign a number to each group, which I place beside my participants' names when I conduct my analysis, in order to help my readers easily identify the groups to which my participants belong. All names are pseudonyms.

Table 5: Students' Learning Characteristics

Group 1: Talkative students who produced work individually	Group 2: Talkative students who produced little or no work individually	Group 3: Less talkative students who produced work individually	Group 4: Less talkative students who produced little or no work individually
Mary	Dominque	Anthony	Trace
Pam	John	Lucy	Karen
Jake	Joe	Peter	Christopher
Melisa		Kerry-Ann	Patricia
Lance		Stacy	Roy
Annette			
Shoana			
Delroy			
Luke			
Lackeisha			

The following section presents a breakdown of a typical day in my intervention.

Overview of a Typical Lesson in my Class

Date: Friday, April 08, 2016 (Class 4)

Topic: Story Writing —Students' presentation

1. Upon my entry into the class, I instructed the students to stay seated because I wanted to set a different atmosphere and to disrupt the classroom power imbalances that I had noticed in Mrs. Brown's class. Further, letting students remain seated parallels my previous teaching practice with adults who stayed seated when I entered the classroom. I greeted the students and sent them outside to use the bathroom to prevent them from always asking for permission to leave the classroom. Sending the students to the bathroom also gave me an opportunity to set up my camera, organize my materials and write the headings on the board.

2. When the students returned from the bathroom, I instructed them to settle down and join their groups that they self-selected to practise the stories they had been writing the day before. Typical of all the Friday classes, about eight students were absent on this day. Therefore, there were only three groups instead of five. Most students willingly joined other groups, but I had to force a few boys to join other groups. Even with that, two boys (Lance-1 and Trace-4) did not actively perform in the group activity. While the students practiced for about 10 minutes, the RS and I visited each group to ensure the students were on tasks and that all members were contributing.

3. After a reasonable time for practice had passed, I informed the groups that they should stated the order in which they would like to present. Jake-1 immediately volunteered to pick numbers to choose the groups. In the previous class, I had placed 10 numbered pieces of paper in a bag and asked 10 students to pick a number. The students who picked the numbers then nominated a classmate to read aloud a passage of a story I had written. From Jake's actions, it appeared that the students enjoyed choosing the numbers; also, following this activity, they consistently asked me to use this system to decide the order in which they made their presentations or read aloud. Annette-1, who got the highest grade in the 2015 English Language Arts December exam, volunteered to write the numbers for me. I then put the numbers in a bag so that we could choose the order in which the groups should present. Once Annette was finished, a member from each of

the three groups cooperatively picked their numbers.

4. After the first group's performance, the other students commented that this group had not performed their story dramatically enough, and requested that their classmates revise it. I directed the students to redo their story, and they asked for time to prepare. I gave all the students an additional 10 minutes to prepare. Group 1's second performance was much better than their first, even though they read from a paper. The groups that followed read their stories more dramatically as the groups progress. To introduce more meaning to their story, Group 2 performed in costumes and brought props such as tablets and phones (see Picture 3). They also asked the RS to narrate their story as they dramatized the events. Most of the students were laughing hysterically while the other groups presented. The stories were punctuated by recalls of ghost encounters, which are common in the Jamaican folklore. Overall, students were very engaged; however, two boys who spoke conflictingly to the class activity, and I disciplined them by making them stand until the end of the class.

Picture 2: Students preparing for their performances.

5. After the performances, we had a debriefing session where we discussed the overall effort placed in the stories. The students discussed their contribution to the story and stated areas that could have been improved in their story writing and performance. I used Group 2's story to discuss the parts of a story and wrote notes on the board. I elicited from the students their understanding of a story's composite elements. Most of the students were able to name the title, plot, setting and characters; however, no one named the theme and the time.

6. Towards the end of the class, I directed the students to copy the notes from the board. I walked around the class to ensure that the students were on task. Most of the students willingly wrote the notes, except for Joe-3. One of the students described Joe as a reluctant student who rarely does any work in any of his classes.

A summary of an informal class and a community-based class in my intervention. There was a very powerful moment in Class 16, when there were only five students in the classroom because the pull-out reading class students were called to sit a literacy exam, which was eventually postponed. Some of the other students in the regular literature class used this exam as an excuse to take a holiday from school. The five students and I, with the RS who sat at a distance to take notes, discussed their personal lived experiences. Our discussion topics included their religious beliefs and superstitions, their family conflicts, the outside perception of their community as well as their dating life and classroom conflicts caused by love triangles among classmates. This conversation helped to provide a microgentic framework of my students. At this moment, I began to see my participants as more than students but as individuals with a wide range of experiences, some of which required them to bear responsibilities beyond their age and psychological maturity.

Moreover, I invited community members to further situate the students' lived experiences in the English learning. In Classes 13 and 14, I hosted a community discussion about my participants'

community. Specifically, in Class 14, as a whole group, we discussed their communities according to the following themes: physical environment, religion, people, culture and atmosphere. In these classes, I was also surprised to learn that a few students travelled more than 40 minutes to school from the rural areas close to Kingston. Prior to conducting my research and based on my prior teaching experience at the research site, I assumed that all of the students were from the inner-city. Hence, this lesson sharpened my understanding of my participants. Class 13 served as practice for the community discussion with our guests the following day. In her reflection of Class 13, the RS commented in her notes that "[t]his lesson was practical and easily identifiable by students as they can relate to the topic. This should be an informative activity and one that will help develop their thinking and writing" [May 06, 2016]. In Class 14, we invited Delroy-1's grandmother, who lived in the community; the Vice-Principal, who taught in the community for over 30 years; and the Lower School Coordinator, who was raised in the community and attended one of the community high schools before it got merged with my research site. Since the students had practised the day before, they asked numerous probing questions to clarify misconceptions or rumours about the community. Students asked questions ranging from "What were the perceptions of the community?" to "Was it [the community] crime-ridden, scary, partisan?" Hence, these lessons induced critical framing in the classroom, and the students critiqued the regimes of truth about the community's persist violent history.

Analyzing my Teaching Pedagogy

The following section offers an analysis of the lessons I taught during the intervention. My intervention effected positive changes in my participants' learning as shown in the student interviews, my field notes and the Research Support's (RS) note. After conducting a content analysis on these data sets, my analysis revealed that my intervention: 1) used my participants' lived experiences; 2)

provided opportunities for them to exercise their voice and agency in the class; 3) allowed them to design and produce more texts; 4) it facilitated the students' creative talents; and 5) implemented group-based learning.

Recruiting my students' lived experiences. My teaching and research employed communicative task-based content learning, which allowed students to openly communicate about their lived experiences in their communities as well as their private and school lives. This approach is consistent with MLS and SCT (Hawkins, 2004; Nunn, 2001). Adopting communicative task-based learning is a departure from the mainly non-communicative individualized learning that dominated Mrs. Brown's class prior to my intervention.

I accepted the students' out-of-school and lived experiences as the key pundits for their English learning. Similar to other MLS and SCT scholars (Phuteh-Behak, Darmi & Mohamed, 2015), I used MLS to situate my intervention in students' socio-cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As shown in Class 4, in my intervention, the students' stories were punctuated by their out of school experiences. Additionally, the students' experiences and references to their lives both inside and outside of school were present in all the activities that we conducted in the classroom.

Enhancing the students' agency. By employing MLS and sociocultural-inspired communicative activities in my intervention, I shifted the position of power in my classroom and permitted the students to exercise their voice and agency. I constantly consulted with the students to provide input on the reasons they were not learning. In speaking specifically to the latter point, in Class 19, I had an open class discussion about possible reasons for the students repeating English errors despite our explicit correction of these errors. In addressing why there were no significant improvements in their English learning, the students mentioned that they found it difficult to speak

and write English because they did not practise English in their community and did not speak enough English in the classroom. At the end of the discussion, we agreed that the students would only use "Jamaican Standard" English instead of translanguaging in their news report and debate (Classes 18-22). They continued to translanguage in their discussions. That the students continue to use their L1 to mediate their L2 learning points to the Vygotskian sociocultural approach which asserts the learners' L1 organises their thinking particularly when they are performing challenging cognitive tasks.

Despite translanguaging between their native language and English throughout my study, in the student interviews and in one of my classes, the students stated that they wanted to speak only in English in my classes. This is conveyed in the following excerpt from my student Focus Interview 1:

Shawnee: So anyways the teachers, ahem, speak to you is alright? Anyway the teachers, ahm, any activities the teachers give you is ok, right? …. Peter: Yes Ms? Ms. mi wah dem giv wi acktivities, Ms. (R: activities?). Yes, Ms. one dem weh use propa Inglis ina dem.	Shawnee: So anyways the teachers, ahem, speak to you is alright? Anyway the teachers, ahm, any activities the teachers give you is ok, right? ….Peter: Yes Ms? Ms. I want them to give us activities, Ms. (Me: activities?). Yes, Ms. activities that use proper English in them.

The students' request to use proper English in my class surprised me. I, akin to other MLS and SCT scholars, I thought they would have asked for more activities that allowed them to use their L1 (Patois) in English learning. I believe the students made this request because they were mimicking popular socio-normative assertions that they can only learn English if they speak English in the class. I honoured the students' request to speak only English in their classes by scaffolding their script writing in English and allowing them to read these scripts when they were presenting. Prior to this request, I asked the students to dramatically perform as they were translanguage, and speaking was

more natural for them. Still, that they continued translanguage in my classes and interviews despite requesting to speak in English showed that their L1 was vital for them to make meaning in their English learning.

Enacting MLS and SCT helped to dismantled "feelings of disempowerment engendered by having to leave identities and languages at the [classroom] door" (Giampapa, 2010, p. 415). Students became empowered as they wrote stories that were reflective of their lived experiences because their English lessons were situated in life histories. The students also had a choice to determine the content of their stories even though they were restricted to using predominately descriptive language. Unfortunately, I did not get a copy of the students' stories to include in the appendices. Moreover, in Class 19, I informed the students that we would partake in a debate competition as a form of persuasive writing. Nevertheless, the students complained that they were not good at debating because they had little practice with it. I asked the students for suggestions as to which other persuasive activities they could use to replace the debate. They had no suggestions; hence, they agreed to the debate. These two examples illustrate that students were given an opportunity to voice their opinions and to make decisions in the classroom.

Finally, instead of using a textbook to guide the students' learning, I used the students' mistakes and learning difficulties as directions for my grammar revision. This grammar revision strategy gave the students a stronger voice in the classroom. On numerous occasions, I also wrote the students' mistakes on the board and asked them to identify errors in the sentences that I selected. In some of the classes, such as Class 4, I used the students' own work to explore English content. In other cases, such as in Class 12 and Class 14, the students generated the discussions while I merely facilitated these discussions. Moreover, I drew on the students' experiences with songwriting in Class 9 to further their understanding of the different types of writing and the wording in these types of writing.

Limits to the students' agency. On several occasions, students misused the freedom that I gave them in my class. I believe that many students misinterpreted this agency for unrepressed freedom. For example, in the students' Focus Group Interview 2, Annette shared the following:

Ms. laik ahm, ina yuh English class Ms. yuh laik yuh nuh stap children from, laik talk, an walk, walk up an dung ina di class an du wateva dem wah to do. Laik for instance me siddung rite here so an sumbady sidung rite dere so and dem cum to me and a talk to me, laik and me react back to dem you nuh stop nobady from talk or whatever, drink or do wat dem wan to du, so most people a go njoy yu class bicusyou nuh tell dem fi nuh do dis…. "	Ms. like, ahm, in your English class Ms. you like you don't stop children from, like, talking and walking in the class or to do whatever they want to learn. Like for instance, I can sit right here and someone sitting over there come over to talk to me, like, and I react to them, you do not stop anyone from talking or whatever, drink or do whatever they want to do, so most students would enjoy your class because you do not tell them not to do certain things.

Annette's comments showed that some students thought they had free reign in the class, even though I had to consistently punish and discipline students who consistently spoke out of turn. Perhaps students had this perception of my class because I did not set clear rules and responsibilities for them at the beginning of my study. Moreover, based on my understanding and reading of MLS, I wrongly assumed that once my lessons were situated in the students' experiences, and if I gave the students a space to express their voice in the classroom, they would have behaved properly. In my readings on MLS and SCT, only Fisher and Chandrapal's (2017) report on a class project on the dramatic performances and video production on the Breadwinner addressed issued of behavioural disengaged among the student participants. Outside of Fisher and Chandrapal (2017), a common theme in this literature is that once students were affectively engaged they would behave properly

in their school learning. In my estimation, this lack of account of students' behavioural issues occurred because many multiliteracies and sociocultural studies might have been conducted in classroom settings with better-behaving students. Even longitudinal reviews of multiliteracies research (Yi, 2014; & Rajendram, 2015) failed to mention student disciplinary methods as a limitation to implementing MLS in the classroom. Only one study (Pirbhai-Illich, 2010) mentioned students' misbehaviour. There were very few studies that spoke to the need for emotional literacy (Liau, Liau, Teoh & Liau, 2003). I quickly found out that I had to implement behavioural management techniques to limit students' misbehaviour (Cassetta & Sawyer, 2015). To further Cassette and Sawyer (2015), one of my more responsible students, Roy-4, explained that although I gave the students freedom in the class, I had to be strict because "dem a go wah tek it [acting out of terms] as a regular habit… wah av [me] as a weakling." That is, "… they [the students] will misbehave regularly and see me as being weak."

Students became producers and designer of texts. The students produced texts in their class even though the pace of their text production was slowed down because of their behavioural problems. The students produced new multimodal designs at the end of all the topics that we studied in the class. The students completed oral stories, dramatized stories, wrote poems, sang and danced to their music, drew posters, participated in a debate and enacted a news report. In doing so, the students enacted aural, oral, gestural and spatial literacies. They became knowledge producers and began to see themselves as being able to produce texts that could be consumed and enjoyed by others. I mounted the students' poems and posters on the classroom walls as testimony to their creativity. In allowing students to produce multimodal texts, the students' learning became a productive process in which they produced knowledge and made meaning in the class.

It appeared as if the students liked engaging in multimodal designing more than taking notes.

They became so accustomed to working on these designs that in Class 7, when we spent about 20 minutes of the class taking notes on the different types of writing, Mary-1, a very outspoken student, commented that the class was boring. Moreover, in the focus interviews, the students shared that they enjoyed my teaching because they got to produce new products in the classroom. This is captured in the following section from the Group 2 interview:

Shawnee: What about the activities that are used… what are the ones that you like? How did you feel about them?

Annette: Yes Ms. laik wen we a du di stories an we cum up and act it out an all dem tings deh, Ms. we like dem lickle things deh.

Shawnee: Alright Trace?

Trace: Ms. mi laik di song Ms.

Shawnee: What about the activities that are used… what are the ones that you like? How did you feel about them?

Annette: Yes Ms. like when we do the stories and when we come to the front of the class and act them out and everything, Ms. we like all these little things.

Shawnee: Alright Trace?

Trace: Ms. I like the songs Ms.

Some students displayed a level of complacency with their communities' reputation as being very violent. In our informal discussion in Class 11, the students shared that their communities' reputation guaranteed them a certain level of indemnity when interacting with non-inner-city residents. Some students shared how even some members of the police force showed them reverence when they visited their communities because the communities would retaliate violently if the police violated them. As such, the students did not condemn the socially immoral community practices outright, such as women being beaten and gang activities. They shared that there were many instances in which these practices were warranted.

The students' celebration of their communities' negative reputation shows that MLS and SCT do not necessarily guarantee that the students' critically analysis their lived experiences will lead transformed practice. They guarantee that they will share these experiences in their school learning, but as demonstrated in my study, students might not find their lived experiences problematic. I have conducted similar programs in Jamaica wherein the students openly shared their lived experiences, but they were not critical of the fact that they were viewed as squatters or that their community was perceived as violent. In fact, the older students (students aged 13 to 16) blamed the government for these problems. Still, I am hopeful that if I had conducted a multi-year project, their critical consciousness would have been further developed. Raising the students' consciousness was not an explicit aim of my research; however, it is an implicit aim since a central tenet of MLS is to enhance the students' critical thinking. As demonstrated in Burke and Hardware's (2015) multi-year study, discussed in Chapter 2, MLS has the potential to improve students' critical thinking.

Recruiting the students' creative arts experiences. My implementation of MLS and SCT in my intervention highlighted the students' combined creativity. In my classes, the students displayed their acting, dancing, singing, DJing, scriptwriting and drawing skills. For example, in Class 9, Dominique was well known for his DJing and songwriting skills in his class and — from what I gathered from the students — in his community as well. He was particularly drawn to the songwriting assignment. He began writing the song with his group members immediately after I put them in groups. The song he produced not only matched the lesson objectives in using descriptive language, but it was also lyrically rich. Moreover, Classes 13 —17 provided opportunities for students to use their creative art skills in the class. In these classes, the students drew beautiful and artistic posters in groups see pictures 3 and 4. Based on the students' confessions of not being able to draw, I believe many of them would not have been able to complete this task individually. This combination of creative identities changed my participants' learning from being centred on "a system of personality traits and cognitive abilities" (Glaveanu & Tanggaard, 2014, p. 12), where attention is placed on individualistic cognitive abilities.

A limitation in focusing on these individualistic creativities was that it ignored the benefits of students' co-creation. In my intervention, the students developed their creativity and creative identities through interacting with their classmates and negotiating meaning and creative elements that should be included in their tasks.

Group-based learning. In keeping with SCT, I implemented formalized group or pair work in my class. In my intervention, the students worked in groups in 13 of my 23 classes. In the other 10 classes, we had group discussions on the topic, and the students shared their perspectives on the topic of the day. In addition to group work, my participants completed three individual writing pieces. They completed two post-activity reflections individually. They also wrote one individual narrative task, which I used to understand how the students view themselves. Additionally, we had discussions with the whole class before we began our activities, which allowed me to direct and hear all the conversations in the room as well as check for the students' understanding of the assignment. Whole group discussions also helped me to model grammatical concepts to the students. Whole group discussions gave the students the opportunity to build on each other's ideas. Hence, in my classroom, the students consistently participated in a community of practice.

In the first month of the class, many of the students had mixed reactions to working in groups. The girls readily formed groups, while boys typically fussed, and I had to mediate how and with whom they worked. The boys' hesitancy to work in groups is not unique to my study, as Campbell (2008) and Morgan (2009) postulated that in general boys seem less willing to work in groups. Morgan, a non-multiliteracies scholar, noted in her master's thesis on gender-differentiated

instruction that "[b]onding to classmates comes easier for girls than for boys…." (p.28). Morgan found that girls more readily formed and participated in groups than boys. In my reading of SCT

and MLS, I have not seen any mention of the different gendered reactions to group work. In my estimation, this is because many pedagogical applications, such as MLS and SCT, stress engaging students through the use of their lived experiences rather than through their gender. There needs to be further investigation in research studies that employ MLS and SCT to explore if and how boys engage in peer groups differently than girls.

In my research, to overcome the difficulties with boys grouping, I allowed the boys to self-select their partners, especially in the first month of my study. In the first month, I allowed the boys to work with the persons that they chose even if I did not agree with some of their choices for group members. When the boys chose their group members, they typically chose their friends, which mainly led to a lot of off-task discussions. Due to this off-task chatter, I had to constantly monitor the boys' group (and to a lesser degree, the girls' group). After the second month of my study, the boys became more comfortable with working in groups, and I assigned them to groups that suited their learning needs.

During the focus group interviews, most students claimed that they enjoyed working in groups; however, few students who did not think it contributed to their English learning. In the Focus Group 1, Mary-1 stated that when she worked in groups, she felt like she was not working "come ina like [they] nuh do nothing (it appears as if they are not working)." Her devaluing of group work was quite evident, especially when the students made oral presentations. Mary-1 would speak incessantly about off-task matters, especially when she worked with Pam-1. Students such as Mary-1 and Pam-1, while they were emotionally engaged, appeared a bit complacent with the fact that they could "do English" and they did not put much effort in their role-playing and debate competition, which required speaking English. I believed they thought they were good at English grammar; hence, good at speaking English, which was not the case. They were ranked in the top 10 in the December 2015 English Language Arts examinations, and they never got more than the highest assigned grade in my classes.

An alternative explanation to Mary-1 and Pam-1's behaviour in-group work is that they might have liked working with their other group members. It was difficult to place students in groups because at various points they were not speaking to each other, so I was left with few options in designing my groups. Many of the students did not want to work with Mary-1, as they believed she was always causing arguments. Hence, I consistently placed her with Pam, with whom — except for one occasion in which they were not talking to each other — she got along with reasonably well. Allan (2016) explained that " if students have no control over how groups are formed… they might subvert the group process by disengaging… or creating alternative partnerships" (p. 87). Mary-1 and Pam-1's behavioural and cognitive disengagement in the groups might have also been due to their inability to form their own groups.

In the student Focus Interview Group 4, the students showed mixed reactions to group work. I included the entire focus group discussion because it addresses the challenges of learning in a community of practice or a group.

Shawnee: Alright the last question. Do you prefer to work in groups or do you prefer to work by yourself?

Lucy: Ms. boat of dem.

Shawnee: Both of them?

Lucy: Ms. you see if yu werk bai yuself you can av more anderstandin. If yu werk ina grup you get more a distraction

Shawnee: Distraction?

Lackeisha: No.

Shawnee: Alright, the last question. Do you prefer to work in groups or do you prefer to work by yourself?

Lucy: Ms. both of them.

Shawnee: Both of them?

Lucy: Ms., you see if you work by yourself , you can have a deeper understanding. If your in groups you are more distracted

Shawnee: Distraction?

Lackeisha: No.

Lucy: Yeah, distraction, bear naiz..

Lackeisha: (Butts in) A bicus yu nuh kno nuting and nobady ina di group caan help you. Wen yuh werk ina grup peeple can elp yu for you to anderstand).

Shawnee: Alright so you seh you prefer individual work ahm, (Lucy: Ms. both of dem) you prefer group.

Lackeisha: Ms. mi can tell yuh. Laik seh wen mi nuh kno Ms. sum of yur friends can tell yuh (Shawnee: oh ok, how about?)

Jake: Individual work Ms. (Shawnee: You prefer individual work, Why?) Ms. yu wi learn more Ms. (Lackeisha: Ms. an yu nah go chat more wen yu ina grup), Jake continues: Ms. and you chat when you ina, in a [Hisses teeth] in a group. (Shawnee: You chat more in group?)

Lackeisha: Ms. an mi luv laugh so wen anybady start laugh, (Shawnee: Yuh start laughing as well?)

Lucy: Yeah, distraction, its very noisy…

Lackeisha: (Butts in) It because you don't know anything and no one in your group can help you. When you (work in groups, someone can help you to understand).

Shawnee: Alright so you said you prefer individual work, ahm, (Lucy: Ms., both of them) you prefer group work.

Lackeisha: Ms. I can tell you. Like, when you don't know Ms. some of your friends can tell you. (Shawnee: oh ok, how about?)

Jake: Individual work, ms. (Shawnee: You prefer individual work, Why?) Ms. you will learn more Ms. (Lackeisha: Ms. and you are not going to talk more when you are in a a group), Jake continues: Ms. and you chat when you are in, in a [Hisses teeth] in a group. (Shawnee: You cant talk more in groups?)

Lackeisha: Ms. and I love to laugh so when anybody start to laugh, (Shawnee: You start laughing as well?).

From the above dialogue, Lucy-3 denoted that she only learned in groups when there was no distraction or noise. As such, according to Lucy-3, for learning to take place in groups, group interactions needed to be focused, and the group members needed to be meaningfully engaged. Lackeisha-2 added another layer to Lucy's analysis, by noting that students are unlikely to learn

if they have nothing to contribute to the group. Lucy's and Lackeisha's assertions support SCT (Murphy, Scantlebury & Milne, 2015) who believe that only meaningful interaction promotes learning. Following Murphy and colleagues' assertions, learning does not occur like osmosis in groups. Group work has to be meaningful and explicitly have a learning outcome. Added to this, learning in groups only occurs when learners recognize the problems or mistakes that they have with learning and make adjustments to remedy these problems.

Enhanced Zone of Proximal Development. There was evidence that my intervention enhanced most students' ZPD. For example, Delroy-1, who obtained the second-highest score on the December 2015 end-of-year exam, consistently scaffolded the writing of the students from the different groups. In Class 17, Delroy-1 assisted Roy-4's group with their descriptive paragraph that accompanied their poster (See Picture 3 and 4). Roy-4 was an astute student who rarely missed classes; however, he had great difficulties with writing simple English sentences. At the beginning of Class 17, I handed the students a copy of a story that reflected my perception of my community when I was growing up. This story was a template for them to mimic in their own writing. Roy-4 was quite keen on writing the one-paragraph description that would accompany their poster (see Picture 4), and as such his group drew a minimalist depiction of the themes discussed in Class 14. He could not wait for me to scaffold their writing. His attempt at a story was flawed and marked with errors. Delroy-1 recognising Roy-4's eagerness scaffolded his understanding of the grammar concepts — used to and the past tense— required to complete the task.

Picture 3: Delroy-1's group post of their community (class 16).

Picture 4: Roy-4's group post of their community (class 16).

In the focus group interviews, the students' English learning improved while working in groups.

Shawnee: How about the group work, did you like the group work? Did you not like the group work?

Students: Yes Ms.

John: Ee iizzia to anderstand …..

Shawnee: How about the group work, did you

like the group work? Did you not like the group work?

Students: Yes Ms.

John: Its easier to understand….

After a few exchanges with Lance and Melisa who stated that they did not like group work, because the students do not normally listen to them in groups.
Patricia supported John's claimed that: Yu can anderstand di werk wen yu du grup werk.

After a few exchanges with Lance and Melissa who stated that they did not like group work, because the students do not normally listen to them in groups.
Patricia supported John's claimed that: You can understand the work when you do group work.

To me, this signalled that they were attesting to their ZPD, which improved in their intervention. I did not ascertain from the students how much they believed their learning changed through group work. Knowledge of the students' perception of the extent to which their learning improved in groups would have deepened my analysis of how group-based learning improved my student participants' English learning.

Conclusion

In the preceding chapter, I provided an overview of a typical lesson in my class. I also described atypical lesson in my class and a community-based discussion that I had in Class 14. According to the content analysis of my reflective notes, the Research Support's field notes, and the students' focus group interviews, the activities in my multiliteracies pedagogy and sociocultural theory inspired intervention changed my participants' English learning as their learning became more student-focused. These changes, in the students' English learning occurred when I did the following: 1) recruited the students lived experiences; 2) gave them more voice and agency in the class; 3) allowed them to design and produce more texts; 4) it recruited the students' creative talents; and 5) implemented group-based learning. These changes in turn, made my participants' more engaged and interested in their English learning.

Chapter 6: Mapping My Students' Engagement and Learning

This chapter presents students' English learning engagement and learning development during the two months intervention, which was preceded by my one-month classroom observation of Mrs. Brown's teaching discussed in Chapter 4. The chapter also presents a content analysis of the different types of student participation and engagement. To show the aforementioned engagement, participation and learning development, I conduct a content analysis the data from my field notes, the research support's (RS) notes, the student focus group interviews and the students' three individually written pieces of work. By using multiliteracies pedagogy (MLS) and sociocultural theory (SCT) inspired activities in my intervention, I hypothesized that students would become more engaged in their English learning and that I would see improvement in their English language development. I also posited that the students' increased engagement and learning development would result from my use of their sociocultural knowledge and by allowing the students to work in groups during my intervention.

In recruiting the students' socio-cultural knowledge and by placing them in groups, I followed the well established evidence of MLS educational research (Healy, 2016) and SCT research (Bass-Dolivan, 2011) who recognize that students become engaged once teachers embed their lessons in students' home culture and lived experiences. In my study, engagement involves meaning-making, interest, and participation in activities. In short, MLS and SCT lead to students' engagement through situated practice, students' agency, students' meaning-making, positive teacher to student relationships, positive and meaningful student to student interactions as well as a warm classroom environment (Ganapathy, 2017; Healy, 2016; Mann, 2001; Thomas, 2002).

Criteria for Assessing the Students' Engagement

In Chapter 3, I defined and purposely differentiated between the students' different types of participation and the different kinds of engagement. I will use an example to illustrate this point. Annette obtained the highest score in the 2015 December English exam and seemed to possess one of the strongest English grammar competences in the class. Due to her aptitude and interest, she was highly cognitively engaged in my intervention. However, there were instances when she did not know how to complete some tasks and had to rely on her group mates; as such, she acted as an apprentice. One such instance was the poster making activity when she displayed cognitive engagement (and acted as a knowledgeable participant) as she worked consistently and scaffolded her other group members' paragraph writing on the one paragraph poster description. Nevertheless, she did little work on the poster drawing and enacted an apprenticeship position because in her own words, "Ms. mi nuh good at drawing [Ms. I am not good at drawing]." From this example, in the same activity, Annette was a knowledgeable participant and an apprentice; as well, she was cognitively engaged.

As explained in Chapter 3, I used Fredrick's and colleagues (2004) topography on students' engagement to deepen my analysis of my participants' engagement in my study. In sociocultural literature, emotional development in both individualistic and group settings greatly influences students' cognitive and behavioural engagement. Some sociocultural scholars suggest that emotional and intellectual development are intertwined (Kravtsova, 2009), however, based on the result of my study, I view them as different though they influence each other. Emotional engagement may promote higher mental functions and may be necessary for the learner to stay on task (Mahn & John-Steiner, 2002). In support of this claim, Mahn and John-Steiner (2004) assert that if students experience positive relationships in the classroom, their behaviour may improve and so might their cognitive development. However, in some cases as with my intervention, a student might be emotionally

engaged, but they may misbehave in the classroom, or they may be emotionally engaged but did not grow cognitively. These variations are explained below through a case study analysis of my participants.

Before my data collection, I defined English learning as improvement in the students' ability to speak, write and read Jamaican English words. This definition of English learning was broad enough to capture many elements of the students' English learning experiences. Nevertheless, while conducting my research, I realized that most students' English language skills fell drastically below the grade seven reading standards to the extent that I needed to revise the guidelines under which I charted my students' learning. Consequently, I did not ask the students to write reflections after each lesson as I had initially planned because they took longer than expected to complete the activities in my intervention. The students wrote a reflection in Class 10 after the story writing class and another one in class 20 after the descriptive writing activity[13]. Rather than giving the students another reflection, to better understand them, in Class 12, I asked them to write a short narrative. I asked them to chose one of the following: a poem explaining why they are special; a paragraph about one thing they want the world to know about them; a paragraph about their deepest fear; or, a paragraph about their career choices. In this chapter, I will analyze the students' individual work to chart changes in their English grammar, spelling and vocabulary in their two reflections and their narrative. The conditions for which the students wrote their two reflections were the same as the students were expected to share their opinions on our storytelling and descriptive writing lessons. The conditions under which the students did their narrative was similar to those under which they wrote their reflections as they were stating their opinion freely; however, they differ in that they were writing about their lived experiences rather than lessons that I taught. Due to student absences and their non-submission of their work; there are cases in which I analyze two pieces of work or a piece of work.

Analysing the students' individually written pieces is a limitation in my study in that it focuses

[13] A summary of the description of my lessons is in chapter 3.

on the students' print-based work similar to traditional English classes instead of evaluating the students' multimodal designs. However, two points of departure with the traditional English classes grading of students' work include that I am not ranking the students. Further, rather than work that has no connection to their lived experiences I am analyzing students' reflections and narratives, which are based on the students' recounts of what they learned as well as their lived experiences. Before conducting my study, I stated that I would assign scores to the students' work. I did not use these scores in grading because the students became too fixated on hurriedly completing their assigned tasks so that they can be the first to get their worked graded rather than investing time to complete the tasks properly. The RS made note of one of my discussions with the students on Class 7. She commented, "based on reflection from yesterday's hurry up work; two students got 20 marks." At one point, there was a dispute between Pam and I because she disagreed with her assigned grade arguing that it was too low. This incident is also captured in the RS notes taken on Class 20:

> "The teacher [Shawnee] spoke about the grades for the presentation. Group 1, 58%; Group 2, 75%; Group 3; 65% and Group 4, 58%, the students that got the lowest grade were disgruntled about it. The teacher told them that they could make up their grade if they do better on the debate exercise that they will be given."

Based on instances of students presenting low quality of work and their fixation with their grades, I decided instead not use these grades and to examine their individual pieces instead.

Case Study of Students

The data presented in this section focuses on eight students and maps their classroom engagement. Each student represents a category of students. I selected two students from each

category to show how, despite experiencing similar kinds of engagements in most cases, they displayed different types of participation. Using two students in this way makes my analysis more nuanced. The students who I selected are: Lance-1; Delroy-1; John-2; Joe-2; Lucy-3; Anthony-3; Peter-4 and Roy-4. I selected these students because they displayed various levels of engagement in the classroom. I begin my analysis by providing an overview of each students' characteristics and then follow with the related data and analysis.

Group 1- The rebels who learn. The students in group one were characterised as very talkative and yet produced work in the class. Overall these students showed high levels of cognitive engagement even before my intervention, however, they showed behavioural disengagement towards the end of my project. I chose Lance and Delroy from Group 1 because while they displayed similar characteristics Lance also showed an increase in his English learning capabilities through the quality of work he presented while Delroy showed a decrease in the quality of work he submitted.

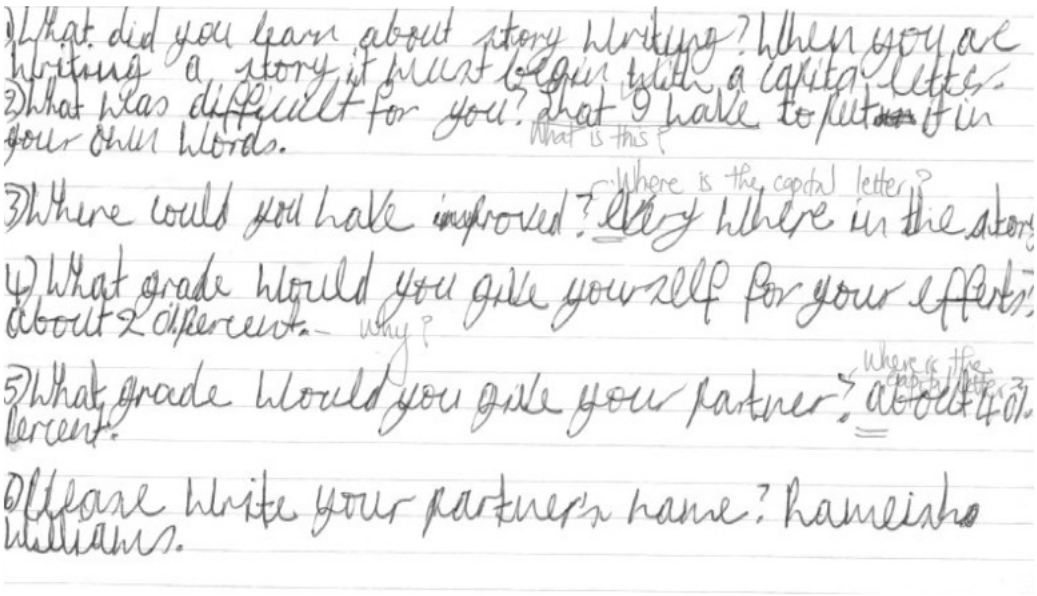
Lance. First, Lance represents a group of students whose behaviour was in constant resistance to the traditional classroom expectations: he spoke regularly, yet, when assigned, produced meaningful class work. Despite being very hyperactive and, according to Mrs. Brown he was "trying to be the class clown," Lance was cognitively engaged. Lance also represents a group of inner-city students whose socio-economic status was visibly low; he came from the most volatile part of the inner city. In fact, Mrs. Brown hypothesized that his clown-like behaviour merely masked struggles that he faced at home. Lance never brought schoolbooks and learning supplies to the class; he constantly borrowed from his classmates and would pass gas (flatulence) constantly, perhaps from eating irregularly. Even on the rare occasions that he brought food to school, it was merely flavoured sugar and water, known to Jamaicans as "bag juice", or soda with crackers. Third, Lance represents those students who, despite their home conditions, visibly demonstrated a desire to learn: he never

missed a class during both Mrs. Brown's and my classroom teaching times. On one occasion during my intervention, though it is not clear where and how he got them, Lance even brought his props (for a drama performance – Class 4) to class and encouraged his classmates to bring theirs as well.

Lance appeared extroverted on the surface, although I question if he was shy. He fed off the personal attention that his classmates and adults gave him. Despite this extroverted personality, I wonder if he was shy or not very confident as on two occasions (Class 12 and in Class 23) when we had to repeatedly beseech him to present. For example, in Class 12, after the song performance, his classmates requested him to dance. After we cajoled him to dance, he stated that he would only dance if we played music for him to which he can dance. His classmates thoroughly enjoyed his performance and he enjoyed the attention even more. His dance became more animated as his classmates cheered him on.

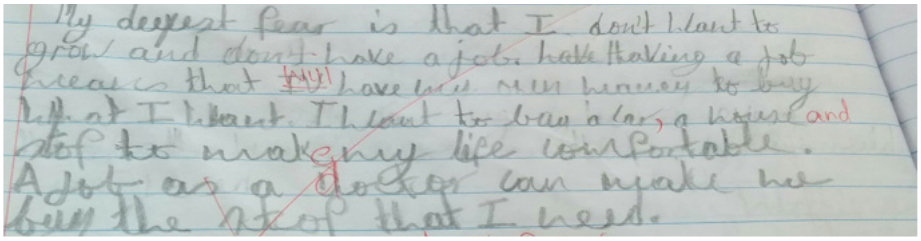
Lance was cognitively engaged throughout my study. His cognitive engagement on his individual tasks is demonstrated by the growth in his English grammar and expression in my classes. As shown below in his first reflection, Lance did not struggle with grave grammatical problems. For example, he used the present continuous tense and present tenses correctly. However, for the most part, his sentences were very brief and he did not start most of his sentences with a capital letter even though he indicated that he learnt that he should begin his story with a capital.

Figure 6: Lance's First Reflection



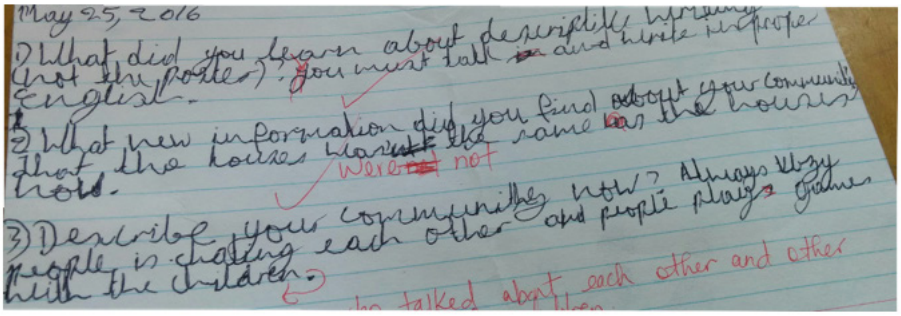
There was a stark change in Lance's narrative writing in Class 12. He was much more expressive and he wrote with much more clarity in this piece. Note that his piece is almost devoid of major grammatical problems although he still struggled with capitalisation. More importantly, Lance's ambition to be a doctor challenges the socio-normative notions of inner-city students being unambitious with no desire for higher education.

Figure 7: Lance's Narrative



In his second reflection, Lance seemed to have regressed with his grammar as he struggled with subject-verb agreement. He also continued to struggle with the use of the capitalisation. His English development struggle was similar to his other classmates. His expression, however, was better than that of his first reflection.

Figure 8: Lance's Second Reflection



Akin to his individual cognitive development, Lance also experienced cognitive engagement in groups when he selected his group members. Lance typically acted as the group leader and exhibited appropriation as a group leader. As a leader, he demanded high levels of participation from his group members. He made the major decisions in the groups such as assigning roles; also, he scaffolded his peers' understanding of how to complete assigned tasks.

Despite displaying appropriation in the groups he selected, Lance showed cognitive and behavioural disengagement when I assigned him to groups. As such his participation was non-linear and cyclical based on the persons with whom he worked. Contrary to the weight of evidence in sociocultural literature, which shows that most students are engaged in group learning (Negueruela-Azarola & Garcia, 2016). Lance seemed to have been agitated by group work and this was more

evident when he worked with the girls in Group 1 (Class 22) who also displayed dominance in group learning. When his group members did not listen to him he became uncooperative and threw a mini-tantrum. In Focus Group interview 3, Lance expressed that he had a problem with group work:

Shawnee: But Melisa and Lance prefer to work by yuh self. Why do you prefer to work by your self Melisa?

Lance:[ignoring the fact that I asked Melisa] Ms. yuh si when mi deh bai mi self mi brain can sick out (SS: laugh). (Shawnee: You can do what?) Ms. you see if mi ina grup Ms. mi ead, mi ead get chip yuh zi mi Ms.

Shawnee: What do you mean by that?

Patricia: Im ead get trigger af.

Shawnee: Trigger off?

Patricia: Mad.

Karen: Yes Ms. sumtims im ina grup and im al a fight.

Shawnee: Lance?

Karen: Yes Ms.

Lance: Ms. yuh if yuh nah, you nah du weh yuh fi du Ms, and mi done tell yuh fi du it already, and mi knu seh it gwan correct, and you nah do weh mi tell you fi do? Mi jus a go get be Ms. get mad pon dem.

Shawnee: But Melisa and Lance prefer to work by yourselves. Why do you prefer to work by yourself Melisa?

Lance: [ignoring the fact that I asked Melisa] Ms. you see when I am by myself my brain gets confused (SS: laugh). (Shawnee: You can do what?) Ms. you know when I am in a group Ms., I start feeling crazy (my translation) Ms.

Shawnee: What do you mean by that?

Patricia: He gets agitated (my translation).

Shawnee: Agitated?

Patricia: Mad.

Karen: Yes Ms. he sometimes fights when he is in groups.

Shawnee: Lance?

Karen: Yes Ms.

Lance: Ms. if they are not doing what I tell them Ms., and I know it is correct, and they don't want to do it, Ms. I just get upset with them.

Given his displayed impatience when he was working with the girls in Group 1, later, he would typically self-select to work with males (Jake, Trace and Joe) but I would sometimes assign him to a mixed group because he and his male group members engaged in too much off-task chatter. Assigning girls from group three such as Patricia to his group helped him to focus more on tasks. While he would engage in off task chatter, a day before or on the day of the presentation, he demanded that his group members complete the assigned tasks to his specifications. For example, in Class 4, on the day of the performance, he requested that they practice before the presentation. Prior to the focus group interviews, I perceived his mini-tantrums to be attributed to his perceived lack of attention. After the interviews, I realized that his mini-tantrums could be attributed to his lack of perceived control in the groups and his impatience. An instance in which he overreacted was in the last class I had with them. In the penultimate class, I had assigned students to different groups, however, on the last class only 10 students were present and I had to reassign them to different groups. I placed Lance with Pam-1 and Mary-1 in the same group because most students who were present did not want to work with him. Lance was displeased with my decision because he did not want to work with Mary and Pam. I explained to them that they needed to value everyone's ideas and cooperate towards completing the task. After I left the group, Lance turned his back to his group mates while they discussed their strategy. He later left his group to sit in his seat at the opposite end of the classroom. I followed him to his seat to ascertain the reason for his behaviour. He explained that his group members were doing foolishness and did not want to take his advice. I recommended to Lance that he speaks to his group mates so that they could come to a mutual agreement. He returned to the group but his group mates who had very strong personalities did not accommodate most of his ideas, which led to his decision to boycott the debate. Had it been earlier in my intervention, I would have demanded that all members in Lance's group perform together. I was relieved that he did not get upset and that he chose instead to walk away from the conflict. This showed that he was mediating his own conflicts based on my recommendations and constant discussion in the class. Nevertheless,

it is worth adding that at this point, I too was experiencing slight burnout and I became agitated by the students' constant disagreements with group mates and behavioural problems. However, since it was my last activity, I really wanted the students to complete their assigned task. It was during this activity that I empathized with Mrs. Brown and I began to understand why she would have resorted to using more traditional and individualised approach to English language teaching: that is, it helped to prevent burnout and problems with group work.

Lance's engagement and participation in the class, contradicts and complicates the socio-cultural literature on student engagement. Individually, he remained cognitively engaged in my class, however, he was cognitively and behaviourally engaged only when he worked with students he liked, in the way he liked. His engagement and learning development in my class, questions the power of group work (even when the work is meaningful) in promoting learning and development for students who are extroverted, the "social butterfly" in the class who want to be in control of all the decisions made in the groups. With groups of students such as Lance, teachers need to do team building activities to help them learn how to work better in groups. Also, sociocultural scholars need to discuss more strategies to behaviourally engage these students in school learning. Despite Lance's disengagement in group work, his decision to leave the group to mitigate conflict showed that he was reflecting on his behaviour and had my intervention lasted longer, I project that he would have found a way to compromise with his group mates in future conflicts.

Delroy. Similar to Lance, Delroy demonstrated high cognitive engagement and appropriation in groups particularly at the beginning of my study. Moreover, like Lance, he displayed behavioural disengagement towards the end of my intervention. However, his behavioural disengagement was mainly non-group based/individualised, whereas Lance's was mainly group-based. Delroy got the highest English score among the boys and the third highest in English in the class. He attended all

but two of my classes. At the beginning of my study, Delroy was also well mannered and fairly well behaved mainly because of his very religious grandmother's influence. His grandmother played an active role in his school learning by attending the parent-teacher meetings (PTA) and by accepting my invitation to join our community resource panel in Class 14 during my intervention. In Class 5, he was the only student who could complete the "fill in the blanks" story writing tasks on his own while all the other students struggled to complete this task. The research support note for this class confirms this:

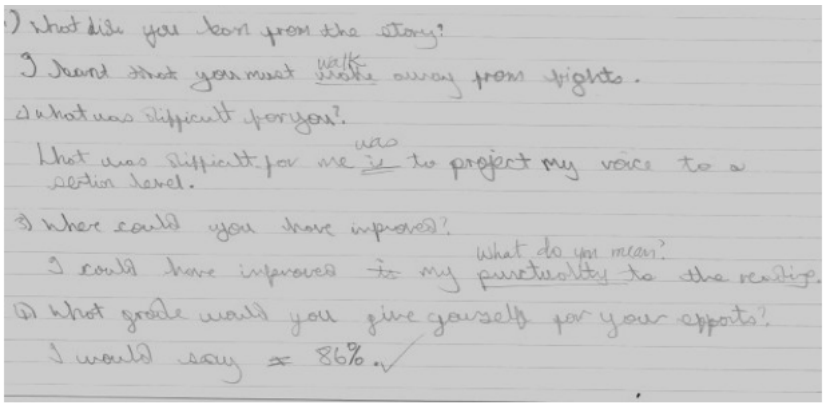
> From observing, some students were still not able to rewrite or rephrase a sentence in their own words. One pair [Delroy's pair], however, was able to finish the passage while some still struggled to understand what they were to do.

In Class 8, he was the only student who was able to differentiate among the different types of writing (Descriptive, Persuasive, Narrative and Exploratory). Moreover, in Class 8, during our open class discussion on the different types of writing, Delroy was the only student who was able to distinguish between Persuasive and Descriptive writing. Additionally, he attempted all his assigned tasks as soon as I gave them to the students.

Although Delroy displayed cognitive engagement in my intervention, the quality of his written work seemed to decrease towards the end of my intervention. I observed that the quality of his work decreased as his behavioural disengagement increased in my class and in school in general. Below is an analysis of two pieces of his individual work, which highlights the decrease in his quality of work. I also analyze his behaviour in both group work and individually to demonstrate his behavioural disengagement.

Delroy's first reflection, posted below, showed that he struggled with the simple past tense and clarity. For example, in sentence two, he wrote "What was difficult for me is to project my voice to a certain level." He even rephrased the first sentence, from "What did you learn about story writing" to "What did you learn from the story?" I interpret his action of rephrasing my question as evidence of his meta-cognitive skills where he changed the first question in order to make it more meaningful. Still, his rewording, while grammatically correct, was worded clumsily. Moreover, he wrote "is" instead of "was" in his answer for Question 2. He made another mistake in sentence one when he wrote "woke" instead of "walk away." Moreover, his answer to the third question was incomprehensible. Regardless of these grammatical errors, he was one of the 13 students who submitted their first reflection who wrote complete sentences.

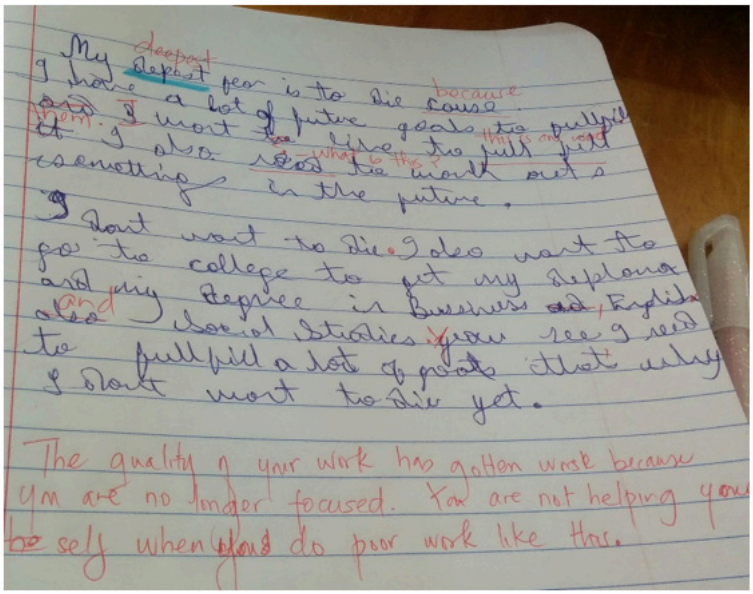
Figure 9: Delroy's First Reflection



In his second individual piece, Delroy surpassed my expectations by writing two paragraphs instead of one. He was much more expressive than in his first reflection which might be because this narrative focused on his lived experiences and thus motivated him to write more than usual. Like Lance, his reflection challenged the socio-normative perceptive of inner-city students lacking the ambition to pursue higher education. Even with his expressive writing, his first paragraph is replete with mainly spelling errors. His second paragraph was more coherent but it contained a

few punctuation errors. I was very disappointed with the quality of Delroy's work, which I thought was done hurriedly. Due to my disappointment, I concluded that the quality of his work decreased because he was unfocused. Delroy's work which I thought was done hurriedly.

Figure 10: Delroy's Narration Piece.



The quality of Delroy's work decreased because he became behaviourally disengaged from school in general. In the second month of my intervention, he began skipping his other non-English Language Arts classes, although he never skipped my classes. He also climbed over the fence to leave school before school finished (personal communication with Mrs. Peterson, his homeroom teacher). By May, which was towards the end of my intervention, Delroy sometimes left his assigned group to peep through the classroom window and to talk to other students from the other groups. He also began engaging in a few off tasks activities such as playing "Hangman" with Joe-2. I also reprimanded him for shouting out the answers during our whole group discussion in Class 12.

Unlike Lance, Delroy's, behavioural disengagement did not largely affect the quality of his group work. Delroy exhibited appropriation, he willingly assisted his group mates and his classmates and he always enacted participatory appropriation in his assigned group and the other groups. Unlike Lance, he did not initiate group conflicts and he motivated his group mates to complete their tasks on time, although on some occasions, his other classmates would distract him. In essence, through his cognitive engagement in group work, Delroy mediated his classmates' learning and created peer-to-peer zone of proximal development. Towards the end of the school year, Delroy seemed more interested in fitting in with peers, therefore, he cooperated in group-based learning and scaffolded his classmates understanding.

Including Delroy in this analysis, suggests that behavioural disengagement reduces students cognitive engagement and the quality of their work. Even with the decrease in Delroy's individual engagement, he remained cognitively engaged in his group work. Delroy's cognitive engagement in group work supports sociocultural literature discussed in Chapter 3. He, due to his need to fit in and interact with his peers, mediated his peers learning and helped them to achieve their ZPD.

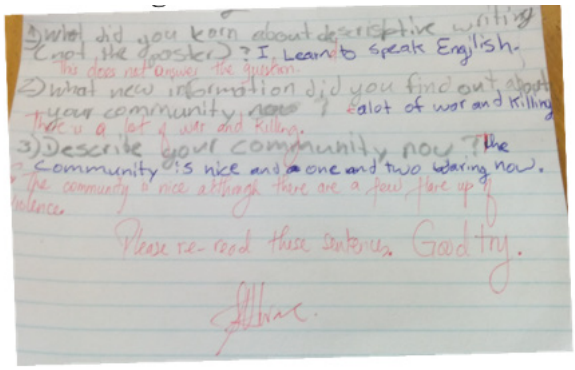
Group 2- The lovers who do not learn. The students in Group 2 were characterised by being very talkative but submitting very little work. True to this categorisation, I only have one piece of work from John and none from Joe. Therefore, my analysis in this section will be more centred on the students' individual and group engagement and participation.

John. John represents a group of students who experienced high emotional engagement but low cognitive engagement in my intervention. This does that mean that he did not learn in the class, rather it means that there was little evidence of his English development in his reflection and in our conversations. Like the students in this group, he also displayed behavioural disengagement. He

attended all but three of my classes but he completed only one of the assigned English tasks- the first reflection. Instead of completing his assigned tasks, he either stared into space or played with something or distracted his classmates by talking off task. Most of the time he appeared cognitively disengaged because he rarely participated meaningfully in the class. He always had snacks, which he sneakily ate in the class. He occupied himself by secretly eating snacks in the class, constantly used whatever excuse he could muster to leave the classroom, and he did not submit his work.

It is hard to make an assessment of John's English development because he only submitted one assignment. In John's only submitted work below, it is evident that he struggled with writing coherently and with answering the question that was asked of him. Similar to most of the students in his class, he struggled with the past tense and with writing simple sentences. However, I strongly believe that the work submitted below is not a true reflection of John's ability; rather, he hurriedly completed the task because I spoke to him about his non-submission of work.

Figure 11: John's Narrative Piece.



Similar to his individual participation, John's participation in groups was characterized by primarily apprenticeship as he made little cognitive engagement in his group. On rare instances, he acted as a guided participant. The following examples support my aforementioned points. In Class 5, the

research support noted, “John played with his pen and did not try to help his partner who attempted the activity but was struggling to complete it.” In Class 13, during our community discussion, he exhibited guided participation; further, I had to ask John to give someone else a chance to make an input as he was constantly talking.

Although John was minimally cognitively engagement in my intervention, he demonstrated high levels of emotional engagement. For instance, in Class 17, he wrote the last sentence on their group poster and said “ Ms. yuh caan seh mi nah do nutting [Ms. you can’t say I am not doing anything]. ” Akin to the aforementioned examples, in Class 22, the RS, Mrs. Walker noted of his collaborative work with Shoana-1, “Shoana did the writing and putting of information together. John did not contribute much but they got along in the group.” Hence, John exhibited emotional (and behaviour engagement) but not a cognitive engagement during this group based activity. Similarly, in Class 21, the day after my talk with him about his non-submission of his work, without requesting him to do so, John came to show me his notebook to indicate that he was taking notes. John’s gesture suggested he wanted to meet my approval, which I interpret as indicative of his need for affective engagement in the class. In the student focused interviews he noted that he liked group work because working in groups made it easier for him to understand tasks. However, based on my observations of his work style and behaviour, John’s need for attention was different from Lance’s because he did not act out or throw tantrums, he simply gave jokes and sometimes made inappropriate sexual insinuative comments. His jokes entertained the class and caused further distractions. To limit his distractive efforts on his group members, I typically paired him with Shoana and Pam who were invested in completing their assigned tasks. I also assigned Anthony-3 to his group as Anthony was typically quiet, produced work if he was monitored. Pairing John with these students ensured that his group completed their assigned tasks despite his limited contributions.

John's emotional engagement in the classroom was also demonstrated when he offered to carry my bag to the staff room after Class 21. His offer seemed unusual to the extent that Stacy- 3 who was rumored to have a crush on John, proclaimed that he "g[o]t nice." Furthermore, in Class 23, the last day of my intervention, John revealed to me that all the students were laughing at my shoes because they thought they were too big. These were shoes that I wore at the beginning of my study and I had overheard some students calling my shoes "boat" shoes without being made aware that they were making fun of me. This clarifying information from John led to an open class discussion about fashion brands and the right way to wear our shoes.

As a result of his emotional engagement, John was more attentive in the class than I thought. He surprised me on one occasion after class by reciting the advice I gave the students when they were misbehaving. Earlier in my teaching, I had advised the students to remain focused on school as a way to escape poverty. To illustrate how pertinent education is to their career in my talk, I had asked them about their career choices. After their answers, I told them about their earning potential if they have advanced degrees. A few weeks after giving the students this advice, in an after school discussion, I again discussed education and the importance of getting a career with the students when Dominique-2 reiterated his desire to be a footballer. I started to list all the eventualities that may occur to footballers when John interjected: "an dem nah go mek nuff money lik yu [and they won't make as much money as you]." I was shocked by John's repetition because I thought he and the other students did not listen to my advice. The aforementioned example shows that at times students listen more than we think.

Joe. Joe is a Group 2 student. He showed high levels of emotional engagement with little cognitive and behavioural engagement. Like John, he was emotionally engaged in my intervention. From my data (presented below), he was more emotionally engaged in my intervention than John but

less cognitively engaged than John as shown by his lack of submission of the three written pieces of work. Joe got the lowest grade on the December 2015 English end of year exam. He missed half of my classes. Joe appeared distracted or unconcerned about school learning. He was one of the students who Mrs. Brown described in the interview as "needing extra help." When he was not smiling and entertaining himself with off task activities, he was sleeping in the classroom. He also did little or no work in the classroom and always sat beside Lance-1 who was his *best friend* in the class.

Joe provided little contribution to his group based tasks and he completed none of the three reflections. Joe's participation did not advance beyond apprenticeship. In support of my latter statement, the RS, Mrs. Walker noted in Class 9, that " Joe did not do any work with his group; teacher [Shawnee] sent him outside the class and said he has to take his mother to her." He did not make much contribution to open group discussion such as when discussing topics that were part of their lived experiences. While in groups, he always joked and sketched stickmen comics in his book. Whenever I told him to stay on task, he became serious in my presence and resume joking once I left his group.

I got very concerned about Joe's lack of effort in the classroom. This led me to speak to him in the staff room after Class 9 ended. When I saw no significant improvement in his efforts, I contacted his mother and spoke with her about his school performance or lack thereof. She promised to visit one of our classes and to have a face-to-face discussion with me but she did not show up. In an effort to get his mother to come to the class, I informed Joe that unless his mother attended the class, I would not allow him to attend the classes and he would have to sit outside the classroom. During his time, he sat at the door or peered through the windows to see what we were doing in the class.

Joe's mother's non-attendance at our meeting spoke to a larger issue of parental disengagement in their children's education. It is important to note that Joe's mother's absence, plus parental disengagement in general, was not a unique case at my research site. When I told Mrs. Peterson, Joe's homeroom teacher and Mrs. Brown, Joe's English teacher that Joe's mother did not show up, they stated that they were not surprised since most parents only show up to express dissatisfaction with teachers such as when the teachers confiscated the students' cellphones or if the students accused the teachers of being disrespectful. In different instances, other teachers also shared with me that parents also attended the school to physically fight with or verbally assault other students with whom their children were in conflict. Additionally, some parents were said to recruit other family members to help them fight students at my research site. Notably, these very parents did not attend PTA meetings even though they readily attended the school to fight. Moreover, in all the focus group interviews, the students supported the teachers' accounts of the parents' behaviour.

Once I allowed Joe back into the classroom, I attempted to further cognitively engage him by making him a group leader in Class 22. Research suggests that assigning students to leadership roles can contribute to their emotional and cognitive engagement in classroom learning (Marcom & MacCallum, 2009; Shindler, 2009). Joe rejected the leadership role, which might have been due to his lack of interest in learning during my intervention or that he was afraid of such responsibility.

The above description of Joe's engagement indicates an interdependence between his individual development and the social engagement in the classroom. Due to my emphasis on group based activities, Joe's classroom engagement seemed to have been more mediated by his peer's engagement and also by his desire to be a part of the group. In so doing, unlike earlier developmental studies where students were seen as independent of their environment, Joe's engagement pattern shows that he was dependent on his social environment, hence his engagement supports sociocultural

theorists assertions that social groups influence individual students' engagement (MacCallum & Pressick-Kilborn, 2011, p. 170).

From my observations, even though he showed little cognitive engagement in my class his cognitive engagement increased over the course of time. In my interview with her, Mrs. Brown commented that Joe appeared "more settled" and "less jittery" after my intervention. Perhaps Mrs. Brown was alluding to Joe being more attentive in class and being less distracted by off task activities. It is hard for me to postulate if I would have seen changes in Joe's cognitive engaged if I had spent more time in teaching my intervention as he seemed largely cognitively isolated from his school work.

Sociocultural theory and students' non (cognitive) development. In sociocultural theory, it is not unheard of that some students will not benefit in group-based communicative tasks. Wass and Golding (2014), in their conceptual analysis of the use of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) as teaching tool, noted that not all scaffolding leads to learning and development. Wass and Golding's (2014) comments may help to explain, why despite receiving individualised and group based scaffolding, John and Joe showed limited cognitive engagement and there was little evidence of their English development in my intervention. Akin to Wass and Golding (2014), Kravtsova (2009) explains that some students might not achieve a ZPD by acknowledging that "personality is realised and manifested in all spheres of mental development" (Kravtsova, 2009, p.14). Kravtsova suggests that a student's personality — and, I might add, intramental ability—affects students' learning and development. Joe and John were not largely cognitively engaged. Upon reflection maybe the work was too challenging for them. Hence, Joe and John might have not understood or have taken advantage of the learning experience (Reiser, 2004) while they worked in groups.

Group 3- The rebels who changed. The students in group 3 were relatively quiet and very focused on completing their tasks. The two students, Lucy and Anthony, whom I selected became

more cognitively engaged as time progressed; that is, they seemed to be the ones who benefitted the most cognitively in my intervention.

Lucy. Lucy represents students whose behaviour changed for the better during my intervention. Importantly, Lucy represents those students whose behaviour improved in my study, which resulted in their greater cognitive engagement as the intervention developed. Their cognitive and behavioural demeanour resulted in improved classroom learning and their English language development. Specifically, Lucy was an average ability student who attended all classes, sat in her assigned seat at the back of the classroom and rarely moved unless she went to give her work to Mrs. Brown. Initially, during my intervention, Lucy was a shy student who took a while to voice her opinion because she spoke in a stutter. To me, the stutter added to her shyness because she did not have the patience to wait through it. She hardly communicated in Mrs. Brown's classroom; however, she worked consistently on her assigned tasks.

Although Lucy became more talkative in my class due to the nature of the activities used in my class, she remained fairly shy. Based on these observations of her learning style, I placed her in Group 3. Lucy earned the reputation among her classmates and her teachers as being the "grandma" of the classroom because she easily got very irritated and temperamental. On the first week of my observations of Mrs. Brown's class, the grade seven coordinator, Mrs. Green, punished her and a male classmate for getting in a fight. In my own intervention, I recorded two instances in which she had conflicts with two other students. These instances were: in Class 9 when she stated that she did not want to work with Lackeisha-1 because they were in a conflict; and during Class 21, when she was in conflict with Mary-1, who herself was constantly in conflict with other students. In the Class 9 incident, after unsuccessfully trying to decipher the source of the conflict, I told Lucy and Lackeisha to leave their conflict at the classroom door, as they are children. However, in the other Class 21 incident, I separated Mary and Lucy as they were very temperamental, which would have created deeper problems if they had worked together.

Despite her temperament, Lucy kept to herself most of the times, and, in my estimation, she did this in order to avoid conflicts and to regulate her behaviour. Surprisingly, towards the end of my intervention, Lucy joined me in disciplining Mary and Pam-1 who were un-cooperative because they were not talking to each other. I also told them that they were children and they needed to act like it. At that time, Lucy chimed in, "Dem in a malice, an dem a pickney [They are not talking to each other, and they are kids]." In so doing, she reiterated a comment I had made to the class weeks prior. After we reprimanded Mary and Pam, they started working together. As time progressed, Lucy grew more confident and assured of her abilities and less involved in class conflicts. For instance, in Class 20, just as I entered the classroom, she blurted out, "Ms. mek, ___ giv mi mi pen [Ms. please tell ___ to give me my pen]." Hence, instead of quarrelling with her classmate, she asked me to mediate the conflict. Lucy displayed a significant level of behavioural maturity, which progressed throughout my study.

Furthermore, Lucy helped to console students who were in conflict. During her work on the community poster, she sympathized with Melisa-1, one of her group members, who became upset because she accused Shoana of trying to manipulate and take over their poster design. Melisa got very upset and left her group to sit at the back of the class and rest her head on the desk. When I went to cajole Melisa to re-join her group, she informed me that she preferred to sit at the back and "cool her head." Melisa's decision to "cool off" is perhaps a result of the agency that the students have in the class to take time outs when they wanted and to resolve conflicts in a manner that suited them. In fact, I allowed Melisa to sit by herself for the remainder of the class. Lucy went to comfort Melisa and told her that she understood why she was upset. Lucy informed her that she was just going with the flow and was doing what was necessary to complete the poster. Lucy's attitude indicated that she not only regulated her own behaviour but other classmates' behaviour as well.

By the end of April, Lucy worked better in groups. I typically placed her in groups with students who were more talkative but focused because I read her as being shy and focused. For example, in Class 10, I grouped her with Kerry-Ann-3, Lance-1 and Luke-1 for the narrative songwriting assignment, and in Class 15, I grouped Lucy with Shoana-1, Melisa, Kerry-Ann and Trace-4 because I knew she would be on task. Adding Lucy to these groups ensured that they did not get very talkative as she would keep them in check and redirect their attention whenever they started talking too much. As time progressed, Lucy became much more confident, which was evident in her debating performance. Consequently, the research support (RS), Mrs Walker, noted:

> Group 2 (Shoana, Lucy and Kerry-Ann). This group did well, Lucy who spoke first used Standard English and followed the instructions given by the teacher [Shawnee]. It was well put together. Teacher commented that they did a good job and took the assignment seriously (Research Support Notes, May 25, Class 20).

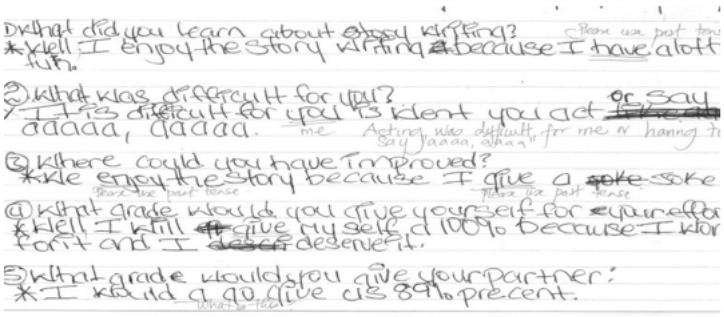
Added to her increased confidence, Lucy showed noticeable cognitive engagement during my intervention. Lucy's cognitive engagement exemplifies Rogoff's (1995 participatory appropriation in that she scaffolded her group members' understanding. Her participation also confirms Rogoff's theorizing that learners' participation in a community of practice leads to their cognitive development particularly with students who had greater working knowledge of the social conventions in their communities of practice. Mrs. Walker also captured Lucy's increase in cognitive engagement in her notes for class 24. She noted:

> Teacher [Shawnee] also assisted Lucy who made great effort in writing her sentences and including relevant information. It was also notable that Lucy's penmanship and use of language has improved…. Teacher comments were that progress was made in writing

> English since it was not something they were accustomed to and that the exposure that they have gotten can build confidence and highlighted those students that have improved, Lucy being one of them (Research Support Notes, May 27, Class 22).

The analysis of Lucy's three individually written pieces supports Mrs. Walker's observations. Her work showed a marked improvement in her written grammar and expression. Her first reflection below is marred by her misunderstanding the questions that I asked. To demonstrate, in Question 3, I asked, "Where could you have improved?" In response to this, Lucy answered, "We enjoy the story because I give a Joke." In the same sentence, she wrote the grammatically incorrect present tense "give" instead of the "gave." Additionally, in that same sentence, Lucy capitalized the first letter of the word "Joke" instead of writing "joke." Nevertheless, much to her credit, she tried to answer all the questions with complete sentences.

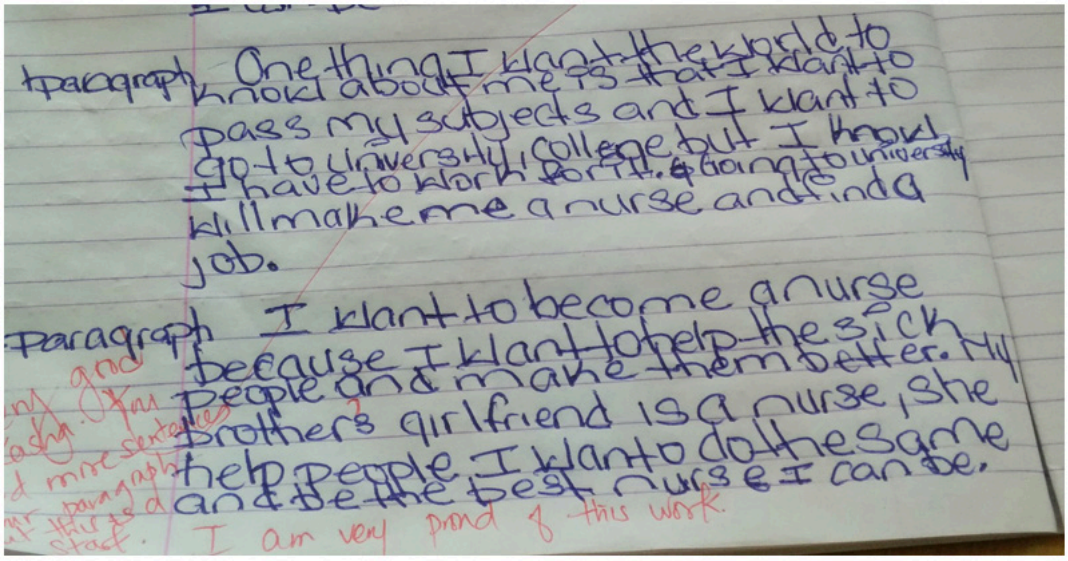
Figure 12: Lucy's First Reflection



Her second individually written piece showed significant improvement in both her written grammar and expression. She was one of the few persons who wrote two paragraphs, while all the other students struggled with writing a single coherent paragraph. Her writing was clear and articulate. While she continued to make simple grammatical mistakes such as neglecting the apostrophe in "brother girlfriend." Lucy also neglected to put the full stop between "nurse" and "she."

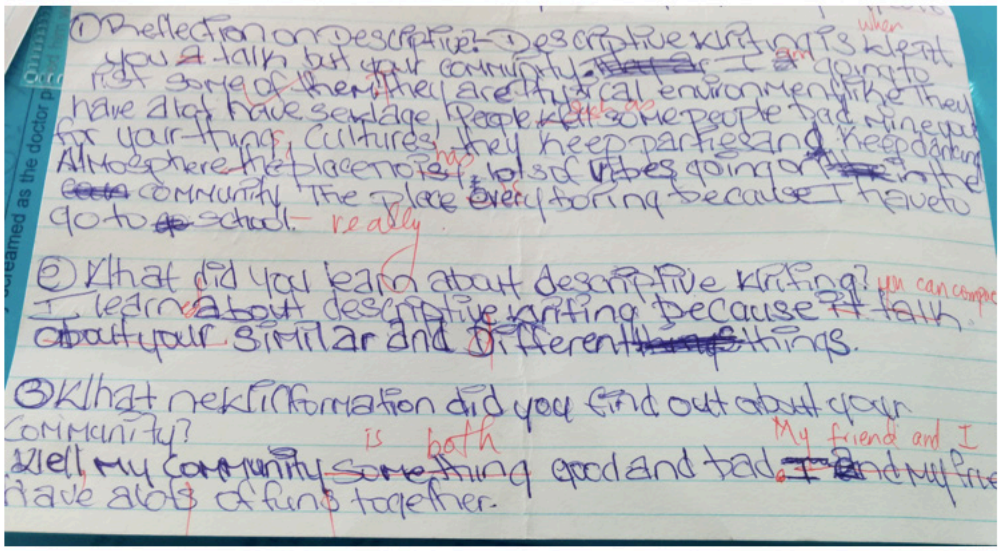
Even with these mistakes, her writing showed so much promise that I expressed in my comments how proud I was of her growth.

Figure 13: Lucy's Narrative Work



Lucy continued her expressiveness in her third piece of individually written work, although this piece contained more grammatical errors than her second one. In her response to the first question she wrote, "Descriptive writing is went you a talk but your community. I going to list some of them. they are:…" Here she supported her articulated point through the use of examples. Her use of examples in this reflection contrasted with the simple sentence answers that she gave in her first reflection. She still continued to struggle to answer questions directly, but her answers were more improved than those in her first reflection.

Figure 14: Lucy's Second Work



From the aforementioned notes, it is safe to deduce that Lucy's engagement changed from partial to mature participation in my intervention. That is to say, she developed greater problem- solving skills and gradually became more cognitively engaged as time progressed. Moreover, in the focus group interview, Lucy tried her best to speak in the best version of English to the extent that Lackeisha accused her of twanging, a term that Jamaicans typically use to refer to someone who speaks with an American accent. The following excerpt from Student Focus Group Interview 4 captures this animated conversation. Note that the student did not really answer my question directly:

Shawnee: So what about the activities that they [teachers] can use? What are some of the activities that you want them to use?

Lucy:(Attempting to answer the question) Ms. dem fi speak, wan at a taim, to av naledge and wait for tiicha to (Shawnee: to talk?) to tauk….

Shawnee: So what about the activities that they [teachers] can use? What are some of the activities that you want them to use? Lucy: (Attempting to answer the question) Ms. they should speak one at a time, to have knowledge and wait for the teacher to (Shawnee: to talk?) to talk…. Ms. and if you don't

Ms. an if yuh dont anderstan let di tiicha kno. …

Lackeisha: Mi caan tauk Inglish.

Shawnee: You cant talk in English? But dont you think if we practice we can speak in English?

Stacy: Yes Ms.

Shawnee: How about?

Lackesiha: (ignoring my question) Ms. if mi tauk ina Inglish ee soun lik mi a twang

Shawnee: How? You don't like sounding like you are twanging? You, your friends will laugh at you?

Lackeisha: Laik weh Lucy a do.

Shawnee: Lucy not twanging (SS: laugh). Lucy is trying to put her words together.

Lucy: Me?

Ms. and if they don't understand let the teacher know….

Lackeisha: I can't speak English.

Shawnee: You can't talk in English? But don't you think if we practice we can speak in English?

Stacy: Yes Ms.

Shawnee: How about?

Lackeisha: (ignoring my question). Ms. if I talk in English it sounds as if I am "twanging."

Shawnee: How? You don't like sounding like you are twanging? You, your friends will laugh at you?

Lackeisha: Like how Lucy is talking.

Shawnee: Lucy not twanging (SS: laugh). Lucy is trying to put her words together.

Lucy: Me?

Overall, Lucy's behavioural and cognitive engagement improved in my intervention.

Anthony. Like Lucy, Anthony's cognitive engagement increased as my intervention progressed. However, unlike Lucy, he showed less cognitive engagement and less growth in his English development. There were drastic improvements in Anthony's behavioural engagement. Specifically, Anthony ranked in the lower half of the class based on his December 2015 English test scores. He attended most of my classes but would rarely brought his resources to classes. Anthony was typically a quiet student who completed work in my intervention only when he was pushed to do so. From my observation, he would not incite off tasks behaviours in the class; however, like most students in the class, he would willingly participate in these off task behaviours when he thought the teacher was not observing him.

Anthony behaved relatively well and was behaviourally engaged in my intervention. I have no record of him being drastically rude or overtly misbehaving in my class. He typically sat beside Jake-1, Lance, and Joe and would sneakily partake in their mischief. When corrected he would shamefully hang his head down and answer with a low "Yes, Ms." Due to his good behaviour and quiet demeanour, I normally grouped him with Group 1 and Group 2 students in collaborative activities.

In groups, Anthony acted as a guided participant particularly towards the end of my study. He did not act as a leader nor was he non-compliant in groups. My notes for Class 18 conferred, "[f] or the first time, I saw Anthony do some work as he was using a marker to rewrite the sentences that Roy wrote." In Class 18 and other classes he typically acted as a helper rather a leader; further, he typically participated in his group when he was directed by the group leader to act.

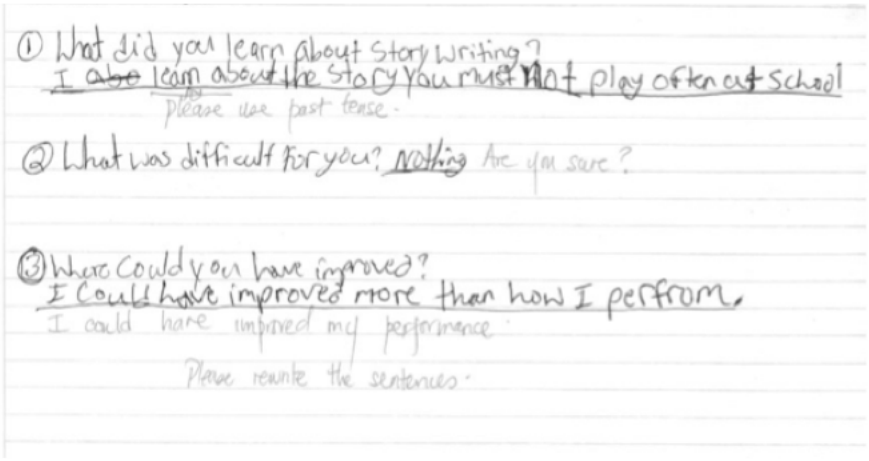
Anthony was minimally cognitively engaged in my study, never volunteered to answer questions or to complete tasks that were done by the whole class. Moreover, he only did what was minimally needed to complete his assigned tasks. Mrs Walker, the RS, noted the following for Class 20:

> "Group 3- Jake, Lance and Anthony, they used Patois in their preparation but made an effort to speak Standard English during the presentation. More work could have been done by this group; they used few information [sic] from the article in their reporting interview" (Research Support Notes, May 25, Class 20).

To me, Anthony lacked effort, which negatively impacted the quality of his individually written work and his English development. In his first reflection, like many other students in the class, it appears that he misinterpreted the first question. In the first question, he focused on answering what he learned from a story that I wrote entitled "The Fight", instead of stating what he learned about story writing in general.

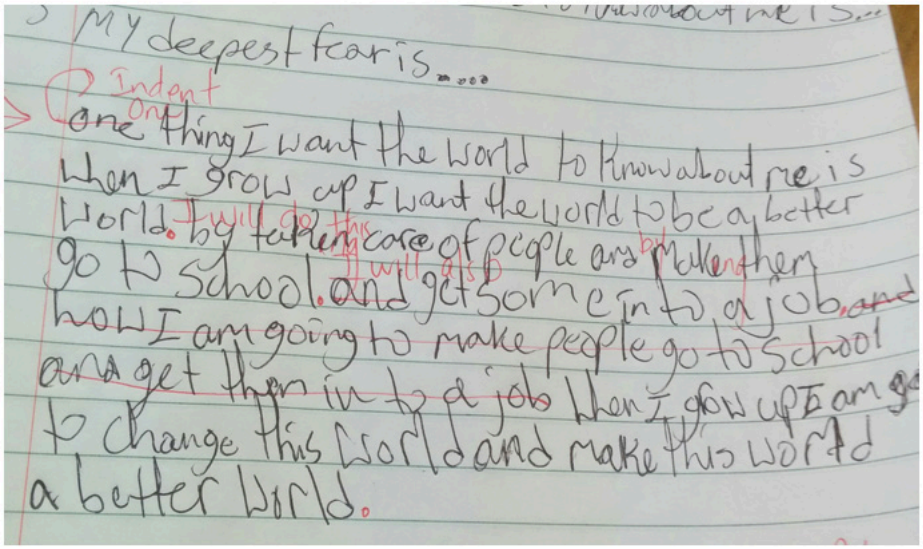
Moreover, in his first reflection, he was unable to use the past tense as demonstrated in his first sentence, "I learn about the story" instead of writing "I learned about story writing." He also needed to work on his punctuation. For example, in the first sentence, he should have placed a full stop between the words "story" and "you." In fact, his first sentence would have read better as two sentences. Moreover, his answers were unclear, particularly his answer to the third question.

Figure 15: Anthony's First Reflection



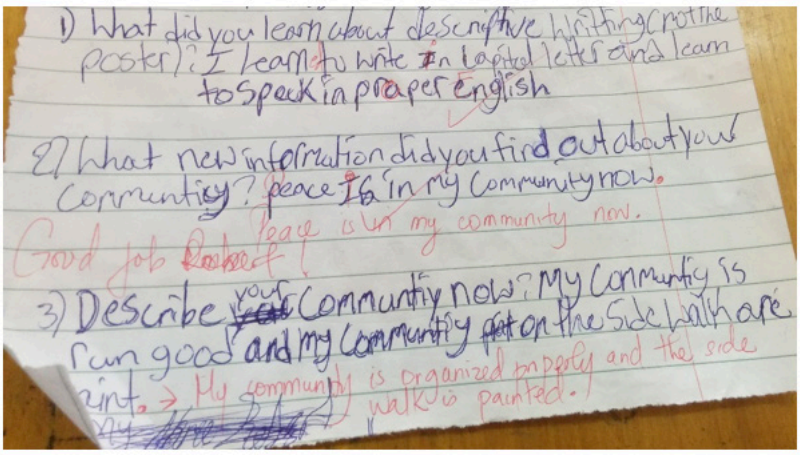
As time progressed in my intervention, Anthony tried to write more clearly and to use mored words. As evident in his paragraph on his deepest fear, he tried to write in fuller sentences. Nevertheless, Anthony continued experiencing difficulties with the future tense and with writing coherently. His second individual work was mostly incomprehensible; as such I had to erase a large portion of what he wrote. Despite this, I still could understand his main message. His one paragraph document contained a deep message about his desire to go to school and get a job. His narrative contradicts the prevailing socio-normative narrative of inner city students not valuing their education and not desiring a job.

Figure 16: Anthony's Narrative



In his second reflection, it appears that Anthony's English writing improved only slightly even though he appeared more confident with writing. His confidence in his writing is demonstrated by him being more expressive and writing longer English sentences. Still, his writing contained many basic grammatical errors such as the improper use of the capital letter and the past tense. He also continued to misinterpret questions as demonstrated in his answer to Question 1.

Figure 17: Anthony's Second Reflection



The analysis of group three students' engagement and participation in my class demonstrates evidence of the students' cognitive engagement and English development in my study. The students' growth can be attributed to their participation in group-based activities and their consistent good behaviour. The analysis of this group's English development, engagement and participation shows that behavioural engagement plays a key role in students' learning and development. It also highlights the need for more student-centred approaches to focus more on improving students' behaviour as a conduit for learning.

Group 4- Silent Lambs who do not Learn. Group four is characteristised by students who were behaviourally engaged but they demonstrated slight cognitive engagement and showed little improvement in their written English grammar. Despite their good behaviour, they produced very little (self-initiated) individual work in my intervention. I included this group because they are negative a case study; a general theme in my findings is that positive behavioural engagement correlated to positive cognitive engagement and English language development. However, as explained below, these students did not demonstrate significant cognitive engagement and improvements in their written English grammar despite behaving fairly well.

Peter. Peter represents this group because he demonstrated high levels of behavioural engagement and increased but little cognitive engagement. By the end of my study, he became fairly well behaved and cooperative. He was the tallest boy in the class, very athletic and well mannered. He attended most of my classes. Yet, similar to all the students at my research site, he could be temperamental and defensive if provoked. In the student Focus Group Interview two, he entertained hopes of transferring to a different, more reputable school whose coach had expressed interest in "buying" him because of his athletic prowess. Peter's statement seems to signal dissatisfaction with his school. He was mostly on task in groups. I have only one copy of his individually written work; for this reason, I place him in Group 4.

Peter also displayed positive behavioural engagement in the classroom even before my intervention. He did not engage in many off-task conversations but he habitually argued with students who troubled him. In Class 9, he engaged in a brief argument with another student whom he accused of troubling him. I spoke to both students in the class about their behaviour but I directed Peter to speak with me in the staffroom during his lunch break as I only heard his response to the student. After our discussion, Peter displayed more positive behavioural changes. A day after our conversation, in Class 9, he offered to carry my bag to the staffroom, which may have been indicative of his remorse for his behaviour. Additionally, on another occasion, he mediated the students' behaviour by calling their attention when I waited for them to settle down. One such example took place in Class 15 while I was waiting at the classroom door for the students to settle down, Peter exclaimed, "Di tiicha a wait fi start ar class [The teacher is waiting to start her class]." With this, the students became more settled and quieted.

Despite his positive behaviour, Peter seemed afraid to take learning risks. For example, in Class 23, at my request for him to assist in the letter writing on the board, he told me that he wanted time to think as he did not know what to do. Peter remained unyielding in his position even with my assurance that his classmates and I would scaffold his letter-writing efforts. I had not made much note of him prior to our private talk because he either remained quiet or did not complete most of his assigned tasks in Mrs. Brown's class. He typically acted as a guided participant in my intervention as he mutually engaged with his peers. For example, except for the news report and the debate presentations, he rarely acted as the lead in presentations. He preferred secondary roles such as a drummer in the song performance or as a prop in oral presentations.

On one rare instance, Peter enacted participatory appropriation. In Class 20, he enacted a participatory appropriation role when he scaffolded Lucy's understanding of grammar and

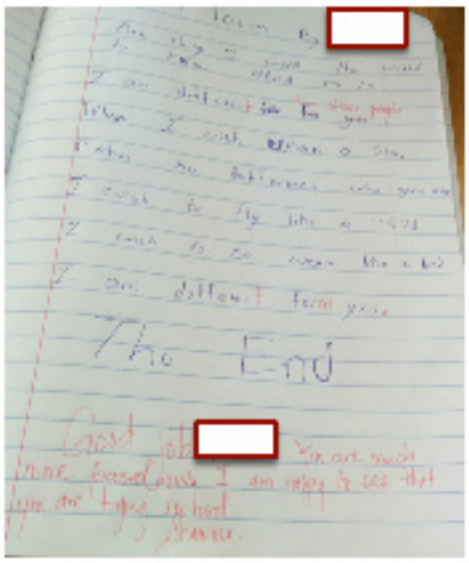
punctuation points and the ordering of the debating scripts. The RS, Mrs. Walker, noted "Lucy and Peter worked together, he gave his input and she wrote" (Research Support Notes, May 27, 2016). During the course of my study, Peter grew more confident of his English writing skills, as displayed in him scaffolding Lucy's understanding of English grammar points.

As a sign of his cognitive engagement, Peter also completed non-assigned tasks, such as taking class notes in our open group discussions. In Class 23, despite not wanting to partake in the letter writing activity, Peter copied our group-written letter in his note book without any prompts from me. To me, this indicates his interest in learning, hence, cognitive engagement to the class. Another indication of Peter's cognitive engagement in the class was his suggestion, during the focus group interview, for more English activities that would require him to speak "Jamaican Standard English."

Peter's cognitive engagement was also reflected in his poem that he wrote for his narrative piece. Unfortunately, I have no other individual work from Peter, so I cannot do a comparative analysis of his English development. Still, from observations of Peter's group engagement, I project that his written English improved in my study. In my comments on his poem, I noted that I could see improvement in his writing and that I was proud of his growth. I emphasize his growth and differentiate his cognitive engagement from John-2, Joe-2 and even Roy's participation because I think that towards the end of my study Peter became cognitively engaged and invested in learning, as evidenced in his group-based participation, while the other boys did not.

Like Lucy, Peter appeared more cognitively engaged in my study. While he was well behaved in Mrs. Brown's class, he became more responsible in my intervention, as it provided more opportunities for him to exert more agency. He also became more responsible because I did not implement very strict disciplinary interventions; hence, Peter sometimes acted as a disciplinarian in my class.

Figure 18: Peter's Poem



Roy. Like Peter, Roy displayed high levels of behavioural engagement prior to and during my intervention. Moreover, like Peter, while his cognitive engagement increased in my intervention, this increase did not result in significant improvements in his written English grammar. Unlike Peter, he submitted two pieces of work instead of one. I placed him in this group because he produced these pieces of work due to my prodding him to do so.

Roy attended all but four of my classes. Like Anthony and Peter, he placed in the lower half of the class. Additionally, like Anthony and Peter, he behaved fairly well in the class expect for when he sneakily participated in off-task behaviours. Like Peter and John, he entertained the idea of becoming a professional football player and of changing schools to fulfill his aim. He submitted two written pieces of assignments: his narrative and the second reflection.

In my study, Roy was mainly behaviourally engaged and he gradually became cognitively engaged. He appeared to be one of the best-behaved boys in the class. He would initiate non-

academic tasks such as picking up the garbage from the floor when I complained about the classroom being dirty while the other students argued about who threw the garbage on the floor and kicked the garbage from under their desks to their classmates'. He got along well with everyone in the class, and as such, I reassigned him to groups when the students from the other groups were absent. I also exchanged him with other group members when members were in conflict. I had to do the same in Class 21; I had to replace Lance-1 with Roy because Lance was in an altercation with the other students (Kerry-Ann-3 and Stacy-3) in his group.

Roy's behaviour was so exemplary that I had only recorded one instance of him misbehaving in the class. In Class 12, I observed him throwing a paper plane that he made at a student who I had asked to stand as a form of punishment. When I confronted Roy about his behaviour, he shamefully apologized and looked away. Outside of this instance, Roy was well behaved.

In groups, Roy mostly acted as a guided participant when he worked with girls from all groups and as an apprentice when he worked with boys. However, on one occasion he enacted participatory appropriation when working in a coed group of two girls and three boys. In Class 21, he assisted Lackeisha-1 and Stacy-3 in writing the debating script. However, in Classes 16 to 18, he had to provide directions for John-2 and Anthony-3 in the poster drawing. Roy's participation speaks to Rogoff's (1995) theorizing that students' participation in communities is cyclical and dependent on the persons with whom they work.

Similar to most of the students, in time, Roy became more cognitively engaged with my intervention. However, like Anthony, his cognitive engagement was mostly in groups. Additionally, akin to John, Roy became cognitively engaged after I had a private conversation with him at the end of Class 12 about the quality of his work. His cognitive engagement grew to the extent that I

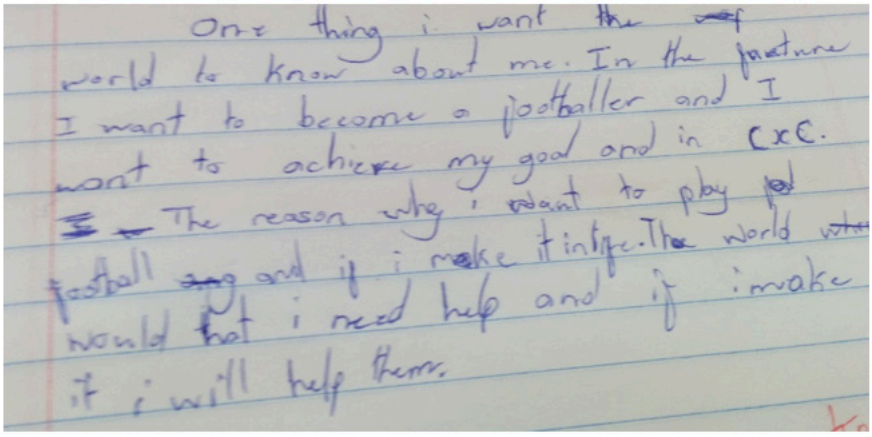
commended his group for displaying the best grammar in the poster writing activity. In subsequent classes, Roy produced work above my expectations. This was captured in the research support's notes for Class 20:

> (Group 4- Stacy, Roy and Lackeisha)- This group followed their script, included all the information from the article and gave a good performance, the only issue was that they did not speak loud enough for all to hear (Research Support Notes, May 25, Class 20).

The research support's notes showed that towards the end of my intervention Roy made a noteworthy improvement.

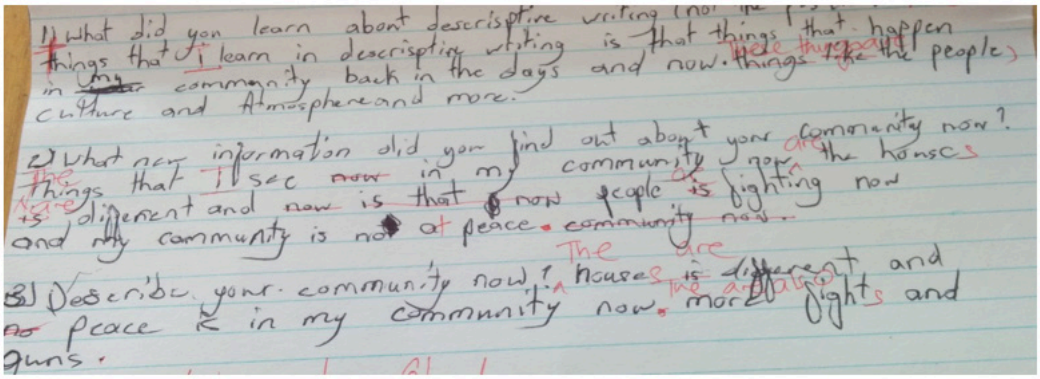
Unlike Roy's significant increase of cognitive engagement in groups, there was only a slight improvement in his English grammar. His narrative writing was so riddled with errors that I did not make any corrections on the page. Instead, I commented that his work was largely incomprehensible because he wrote in sentence clauses and his ideas were incomplete.

Figure 19: Roy's Narrative Piece



After our discussion in Class 12, Roy tried his best to produce a better quality of work, although he still struggled with very basic grammar points. His second reflection demonstrates his growth. He wrote in more complete sentences and his sentences conveyed coherent ideas. Nevertheless, he struggled with subject-verb agreement, capitalization and the past tense. He was also unable to write compound sentences. I postulate that working with students such as Delroy-1, and even Lucy-3, may have improved Roy's English written grammar, as they would have scaffolded his understanding. Additionally, with more time, Roy's written grammar might have improved even more.

Figure 20: Roy's Second Reflection



The engagement and participation of the students in Group 4 mirrors that of the students in Group 3, except for the fact that the students in Group 4 portrayed less self-regulated cognitive engagement. While these students were quiet, at particular instances they also displayed a minimal degree of behavioural disengagement. It was hard to gauge the emotional engagement of these students because they were not overtly expressive and very talkative. More research is needed to examine how the more quiet students display emotional engagement in the class.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have presented the students' English language development, participation and engagement in groups. In general, Group 1 students were behaviourally disengaged while they displayed intrinsically high levels of cognitive engagement and acted as knowledgeable participants in groups. However, Group 1 demonstrates that behavioural disengagement can impact on the quality of students' work. This group disputes common perceptions that only good behaving students learn and are cognitively engaged.

Group 2 students demonstrate that emotional engagement influences individual students' sense of belonging to the class. Additionally, Group 2 students show that emotional engagement alone does not influence cognitive engagement and in the context of my study, students' written English grammar. Group 2 students' behaviours question the sociocultural scholars' (see Chapter 2) position that emotional engagement and sense of belonging is the key to students' learning and development. Moreover, their behaviour does not support sociocultural and multiliteracies scholars' theorising of the benefits of group work because they acted mainly as an apprentice in groups while displaying little cognitive engagement in these groups. This group shows that along with emotional engagement, students also need to be interested in learning and to be cognitively able to complete assigned tasks to show signs of their learning and development.

Contrary to Group 1 students, Group 3 students show that behavioural engagement can improve students' cognitive engagement for students who are not initially intrinsically cognitively engaged. Group work also played a key role in improving Group 3 students' cognitive engagement. Hence, this group of students fits sociocultural theorists' (see Chapter 2) assertions that collaborative learning can improve students' cognitive engagement once they are meaningfully engaged in the assigned collaborative task. Group 3 students, Lucy being the most prominent example, also showed significant improvement in their written English grammar.

Finally, unlike Group 3 students, Group 4 students demonstrate that improvement in their behavioural engagement did not lead to significant cognitive engagement. While these students became more cognitively engaged during my study, they did not show significant improvement in their written grammar. To me, this group points to the importance of intramental processing in students' cognitive engagement. Based on my observations of the students' classroom interaction, I deduced that some of the students in this group did not possess the meta-cognitive abilities to complete individual tasks. Nevertheless, they support sociocultural theorists' assertion that group work increases students' meta-cognitive processes as they showed more cognitive engagement in groups. Table 3 below summarizes the changes in the students' language development, engagement and participation in throughout my study.

Table 7: Summary of the student's engagement, participation and language development in my study.

Engagement/Participation	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Appropriation	N/A	Lance	Lucy
Guided Participation	N/A	Lucy	Lance/Roy
Apprenticeship	N/A	Roy/Joe	Joe
Emotionally Engagement	Lance	Joe	Joe/Lucy
Cognitive Engagement	Lance/Lucy	Lance/Lucy	Lance/Lucy/Roy
Behavioural Engagement	Roy/Lance/Lucy/ Joe	Roy/Lance	Roy/Lucy
English Language Development	N/A	Lance	Lucy/Lance

Overall, the analysis presented above indicates that it is difficult to make a grand theory about students' learning, development, engagement and participation, as these are cyclical and dynamic. There are many individual and social factors that impacts on students' participation, learning, development and engagement in the class. Using sociocultural theory as well as Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris' topography (2004) as my theoretical frameworks allowed me to paint my students' development, engagement and participation on both a social and individual plane. In so doing, I painted the students as active agents in my intervention.

In closing, my analysis raises a few questions that can be addressed in future (mix-methods) research. These questions are: 1) What is the correlation between cognitive engagement and students' ability to complete assigned tasks? 2) Does cognitive engagement always result in learning and development? 3) Why do some behaviourally disengaged students show high levels of cognitive engagement while others do not show the same level of cognitive engagement? 4) How might a predominantly emotionally engaged student become more cognitively engaged in school learning? Answering these questions will provide a deeper insight in the intramental processes that affect student learning.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

My qualitative research explored multiliteracies pedagogy's (MLS) potential to improve Jamaican Grade 7 inner-city students' English language development. All the students were struggling English learners and Patois speakers. Many Jamaicans, particularly those from the middle and upper classes, stylise Patois (speakers) as uncivilised and illegitimate. Contrarily, most Jamaicans view English as proper and the language of civility. The politics of language deny Patois speakers' power and equitable access to education, justice and employment. Hence, since English is the language of power, inner-city students' ability to speak the English language dramatically improves their access to higher education and career opportunities in the formal employment sector.

My research tried to effect changes in my participants' English language development. It had three main objectives: 1) to use MLS combined with sociocultural theory (SCT) to improve English language teaching and learning; 2) to employ MLS and SCT to engage students in their English language development; 3) to use MLS combined with SCT to improve inner-city students' English language development. My research objectives were layered, as there is intersectionality between improving pedagogical applications, student engagement and student learning and development; that is, improved pedagogy typically leads to improvement in student engagement, student learning and their development.

To fulfil my research objectives, my four-month single case (study) research employed two theoretical frameworks and triangulated data collection tools. My two theoretical frameworks were SCT and Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris' (2004) topography on student engagement. Using SCT as a theoretical framework helped me analyse to what extent my communicative activities and group work improved the students'English language development and engagement. It also helped me analyse different stages of the students' engagement in my study. Fredricks et al.'s topography complements the SCT as it helped me analyse the different ways in which individual students were engaged in my study.

The three primary forms of engagement that this topography addresses are cognitive, emotional and behavioural engagement.

My study presented findings that contributed MLS and SCT. These findings arose from my research questions and my research objectives. The first finding is that my communicative activities, which were inspired by MLS and SCT, affected positive changes in my students' English language development because they gave students a stronger voice and more agency in their own learning. The aforementioned theoretical applications framed the students' learning more group based, which allowed for more learning opportunities via a constructed their zone of proximal development. The second finding was that students were engaged in my study in various ways, for example, some students like Lance was cognitively and emotionally engaged but not behaviourally engaged. Added to this, as demonstrated by students such as John and Joe experience such emotional engagement, but this did not translate to much cognitive engagement. This finding is in contradiction to the multiliteracies studies listed in my Chapter 2, which assert that emotional engagement leads to cognitive engagement. Moreover, emotional engagement did not translate into behavioural engagement. As John demonstrated, there is a lack of correlation between emotional engagement and behavioural engagement. Moreover, as portrayed in Chapter 2, there is a common perception among multiliteracies scholars that affective engagement leads to behavioural engagement.

The third significant finding from the content analysis of the students' written work, the Research Support's notes and my reflective notes was that some students, such as Lucy, made noticeable improvements in their English language development. I was unable to measure the students' oral English improvement because my video recordings were unavailable. The students also shared that their oral and written use of English would have improved even more if they got opportunities to speak only in English. I allowed the students to tranlanguage in Patois with English.

This is their own perspective and attests to their experience, but from my observations of my students' interaction in communicative activities, there is no evidence that speaking in Jamaican Standard English will improve their English development. Perhaps allowing the students to speak only "Jamaican Standard English" in my English classes could have led to more improvements in their English language development. Still, there is a need for more research that explores the relationship between what the students' perspectives on what they need for improvement in their learning and the pedagogical instructions that they receive.

Recommendations

Towards the end of my focus group interviews, I asked my students to make recommendations for teachers, the Ministry of Education and the principal at the school. In honouring my students' voices and agency, I have listed these recommendations in this section and I expanded on these recommendations based on my findings. Including these students' voices in my research helped to balance my own understanding of the issues that impact on their English language development. I did not intend for these recommendations to be exhaustive but rather to ensure that they reflect key concerns that my student participants had.

For teachers. The chief recommendation from the students was that the teachers should use activities in their English classes rather than using primarily a chalk and talk method. The students believed that these activities ensure that they "learn more" (see Jake's comments above) while they actively engage in their various roles. They specifically requested activities that allowed them to use proper English. My research posited that replacing more passive writing tasks with activities in which the students produce new designs can cognitively and emotionally engage all the students. The students also recommended that the teachers incorporate more reading materials in their English

classes. The school's library was under renovations, and they did not have access to reading materials except for those in the class. As a side note, the students also requested that their teachers respect them and treat them as they would have treated other students outside of their communities. Many students believed that their teachers treated them with disrespect in the ways that they spoke to them and in the ways that they exacted punishment on them.

For the Jamaican Ministry of Education. In line with the students' request for more reading materials, they also requested that the Ministry of Education build a reading room where they could select books to read at their leisure. They also espoused that accessing and reading books would occupy their time wisely, which would prevent them from loitering in the corridors or wasting time, similar to how the other students at the school wasted time. Continuing with their suggestions for the Ministry of Education, the students requested that the Ministry honours its commitment to gift the school with digital tablets. They related to me that the Ministry of Education promised them these tablets in 2015; when I visited the school in 2017, the tablets had still not arrived. The students shared with me that the tablets and other forms of digital technology would aid with their learning in all their subject areas as they will be able to conduct research online beyond what the textbooks provide.

For the principal of the school. My participants were very concerned about the indiscipline at the school. They strongly believed that the indiscipline affected the school's reputation and prevented learning. They explained that if the students behaved properly, their learning would improve. The students strongly suggested that the principal implemented stronger disciplinary measures to ensure that all the students stay in school and learn. They also wanted members of the police force to be present on each block to institute law and order in the school. Ideally, helping students to mediate their own behaviours through motivational discussions and establishing student collaborative disciplinary structures for the students will reinforce good discipline in students. In the absence of the students' ability to mediate their behaviours, they need disciplinary measures and

boundaries to mediate their behaviours.

For future researchers. My research presents learning opportunities for researchers who work with struggling English learners and students with behavioural issues. My study clearly shows that struggling English learners can be engaged in recruiting their lived experiences in school learning. However, I recommend that researchers extended their analysis of student engagement even further to highlight the different forms of engagement. There appears to be a scarcity in the SCT and MLS literature about how to differentiate among different types of engagement. Differentiating among the different levels of engagement will allow researchers to deepen their analysis and explore the correlation among these forms of engagement. Future researchers can also consider asking the students to comment explicitly on if and how their engagement changed during a study. Moreover, future multiliteracies and sociocultural researchers who work with students with behavioural issues should consider implementing student-negotiated disciplinary measures in the classroom to help prevent disciplinary problems.

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APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTION OF MY LESSONS

Lesson 1

Title: Who am I?

Language Target: The be verb (present and past tense)

Description: The students played the "Two Truths and One Lie Activity" in which they write three sentences, one of which is false. The students will then take turns to guess which one of these sentences is false.

Time: 1 class

Lesson 2

Title: Yesterday I…

Language Target: Past Tense

Description: The first student began with the lead phrase: Yesterday I…". Students said for example, Yesterday I danced. Or Yesterday I played football. Student 2 must included what Student 1 said and then add something that they did. This pattern continued with the last student in the group repeating everything that was said and then added what they did yesterday,

The students repeated this activity. They took notes to aid their memories. I taught the past tense after this class because many of the students had difficulties with the past tense. I gave the students a handout for them to start thinking about story writing.

Time: 1 class

Lesson 3

Title: Story writing

Language targets: Revision of the past tense

Description: We revised the past tense by correcting the mistakes that the students commented in the activity that they completed in lesson 2. After completing this activity, I placed the students in groups for them to create a story of any topic of their choosing. The followed the prompts I provided for them in the previous lesson. The students were suppose to work on the stories for their home work. They finished their stories in class and practice their story performance. The performed their stories at the end of the class. I used group 2 performance to discuss the different parts of a story.

Time: 2 classes

Lesson 4

Title: Elements of a story- Beginning and Events

Language targets: Story beginning/ creative writing/ vocabulary building

Description: We did the word of the day. We discussed the different parts of a story. Then we discuss a story that I had pre-written for them. I gave the students a hand out out of a story that I wrote entitled the "Fight." I read the story dramatically and explain to the students that when they read they should read dramatically as words have meaning. Students volunteered to read the story for me. I then gave them another copy of the fight with some of the spaces bolted out. The students had to complete the assignment with their own words. The students presented their work in the proceeding class.

Time: 2 classes

Lesson 5

Title: Types of Writing-Note Taking.

Language targets:

Description: Two students conducted the word of the day. The students were disruptive so I engaged them in a conversation about that they would like to do in the future. I connected their career choices to the importance of learning. I gave the students notes on the types of writing. The students were disruptive so I paused the note taking to talk to them about their behaviour. In the next the class, I continued giving the students notes.

Time: 2 classes

Lesson 6

Title: Narrative Writing

Language targets: Adverbs; Figures of Speech

I placed the students in groups to write a song using mainly narrative writing. They took two class periods to complete the song. They performed the song at the end of the second class. At the end of the class, a few of the students showcased their dancing skills for us.

Time: 2 classes

Lesson 7

Title: Descriptive Writing

Language Targets: used to, adjectives

Description: We had an open class discussion on the students' perception of their communities. I used five themes (people, atmosphere, culture, physical environment, religion) to guide their discussion. I wrote new vocabulary on the board I taught the students the grammar rules for "used to" and how to use it in sentences. I selected students to write sentences on the board using "used

to." As a class we discussed the errors in the sentences that the students wrote. In the following class, the students interviewed selected members of their community/ family to find out what changes had occurred in their communities. In class three, they compared their narratives in groups and drew a collage of what their community used to look like and what it is now. They explained their collage in English.

Time: 6 classes

Lesson 8

Title: Expository Writing

Language Targets: Past participle, interrogative sentences

Description: We read a news report paper article about the war in their community. The students took turns to read the article. We then discussed the article, and compared what was written our discussion in the previous lesson. I placed the students in a group for them to develop a news report based on the information written in the newspaper article. The students completed their news report in the following class. The also dramatise their role play in the said class. Following the role plays, we discuss the quality of the students' performance.

Time: 2 classes

Lesson 9

Title: Persuasive Writing

Language Targets: Adjectives, Adverbs,

Description: I asked the students' opinion on whether or not cellphones should be allowed in school. After our discussion, we read an article about the pros and cons of allowing cellphones in class. The students took turns to read the our article. We discussed the article. I placed students in groups based on their opinions. The students took the reminder of the class to work on a debate. In the next

class only a few students were present. I regrouped the students and they debated. We discussed the students' performance.

Time: 2 classes

Title: Letter Writing (Revision)

Language Target: Descriptive language

Descriptive language: We described the elements of letter writing. I drew a template of a letter on the board. I informed the students that we are going to write a letter and asked them what to choose the type of letter that they would like to write. We decided on a letter of invitation to a party (An informal letter). Students took turn to complete the letter. The students scaffolded and collaboratively wrote all of the letter on the board.

Time: 1 class

APPENDIX B: LETTER OF CONSENT TO THE PRINCIPAL AND CHAIRMAN

Good day _____,

I am Shawnee Hardware, a 3rd year Jamaican PhD Candidate in the Department of Education at York University. My study will investigate the language achievement of grade 7 students. I will investigate the current learning practices and implement a critical pedagogy that uses the multiliteracies of students (including their culture, artistic expressions and digital skills) in language learning. In North America and Australia, this approach has been used with working class children struggling with English language learning. Upon implementing this teaching method, the students' English learning, when measured through tests and in class tasks, showed marked improvement.

My study will last four months and it will be conducted in only one grade 7 inner-city school. My intervention will include the teaching of both grammar forms modelled after the Jamaican grade 7 English curriculum and communicative activities based on students socio-cultural knowledge. In the first month, I will visit the school three times per week to observe the English teacher's classroom instruction. During my observation, I will: 1 Video tape and take extensive descriptive notes of the students' engagement with their peers, the frequency in which they completed assigned tasks and their overall engagement in the class. The video- taped data will be used only for purposes of the study to gage students' engagement in class; 2) Note how the teacher provide feedback for the students and if these feedback assisted students in completing tasks; and, 3) Journal my comments, behaviour, thoughts, interpretations and feelings while observing the teacher's class.

After the observation, I will implement a 13 lesson Jamaican grade 7 English curriculum inspired intervention (55 minutes for each lesson) during regular class time to explore a teaching strategy

that will use students' socio-cultural knowledge such as Patois as a tool for learning. Students will be expected to work in pairs or groups to complete these tasks. The lessons will be broken down in four sections that focus on: 1) The students' self-introduction and team building; 2) The student's abilities and future aspirations; 3) The students' families and communities; and, 4) The changes that the students would like to see in their communities, families and school. All of the lessons in my intervention will match a language target from the grade 7 curriculum.

I will return to the school two weeks after my intervention to observe the teaching and learning environment in the same classroom. I will also interview the classroom teacher and conduct four focus group sessions with groups comprising of six to seven students. The interview with the teacher will take between 45 to 60 minutes while the interviews with the students will last 60 minutes. The information gathered from the interview with the teacher will help me to ascertain changes in the students' English engagement and learning while the focus group interviews should provide insights into the reasons for students' difficulty with learning English.

My study has the potential to improve the participants' learning strategies, which will in turn, may positively affect their literacy rates. I know this is a priority for many Jamaican schools given the recent policy mandates from the government which places onus on principals to improve their students' literacy achievement. Moreover, recruiting my participants' cultural and artistic expression as tools for learning may lead to improvement in their self-esteem. The latter, in turn, may decrease attrition and increase students' in school engagements. There is a strong correlation between students' engagement and learning; therefore, many of my students' literacy learning may also improve. The interview will be beneficial to the teacher as it would help him/her to: make meaning of their English pedagogy and critically analyze their English teaching. The student focus group interviews may also help them understand some of the difficulties they face with English learning, which may also help

them understand their practices. Focus groups versus individual interviews benefit the students as in groups they feel more comfortable to discuss issues that are important to them in their own words.

My student participants' engagement and learning may improve with my intervention; I perceive that students who do not participate in my study may continue to experience to isolation from the English curriculum which may hinder their interest in learning English. Added to this, the topics that will be discussed during my intervention will reflect the students' everyday experiences as I will be using their sociocultural knowledge as tools for learning. Personal information may be discussed in both the interview with the teacher and the focus group with the students. There is a possible social harm, namely, further isolation and marginalization of my student participants, if the information discussed in the classroom activities and interviews be known to others. To minimize these potential risks, my research will be governed by the following ethical protocols: confidentiality, anonymisation, informed consent; and the right to respond.

Participation in my study is voluntary, hence, students can choose not to participate. Should they not consent to participate in my study, I will ask you to consider allowing them to join one of the other grade 7 English classes since they follow the same curriculum. This is ensure that they do not lag behind their classmates. Most aspect of the study will occur at your school expect for the student focus group interviews which will be conducted at a community center (to reduce any anxiety students may associated with the school). Further, participants may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Should they withdraw from the study all data generated as a consequence of their participation shall be destroyed.

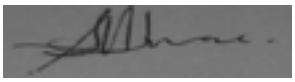
Moreover, the data collected during my study will be kept for the period of my PhD studies and will be destroyed thereafter. The soft copy of data will be stored on an encrypted and password protected

USB that will only be used to store this data. It will also be stored on my personal encrypted and password protected NVivo software at my place of dwelling. The hard copy of the data will be locked away in a filing cabinet at my home. I will be the only one who has access to the data. The measures taken above will minimize any risks to my participants' privacy in my study.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance by the York University Research Ethics Committee. In addition, it has been approved by the Jamaican Ministry of Education. Should you have any concerns or comments resulting from a students' participation in this study, feel free to contact Alison Collins-Mrakas, Senior Manager & Policy Advisor, Office of Research Ethics, York University. You can also contact Loretta Fiorini, the Graduate Program Assistant for my faculty for verification on my status as a student and the demands of the project.

If you have any questions regarding my study or would like additional information to assist with your decision about participation, please contact me. You can also contact my supervisor, Dr. Dlamini.

Yours sincerely,



Shawnee Hardware.

Please detach, complete and return to researcher

Do you give consent to participate in this study? Please circle one: ***Yes*** ***No***

By checking yes above and signing below, you agree to that the above information has been explained to you and you understand the potential benefits and possible risks of participation in the study.

PRINCIPAL'S SIGNATURE	**DATE**
RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE	**DATE**

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF CONSENT TO THE PRINCIPAL AND CHAIRMAN

Good day _____,

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conduction as part of my Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of Education at York University under the supervision of Dr. Nombuso Dlamini. I will like to provide you with more information about this project and what your involvement would entail if you decide to take part.

I will investigate the current learning practices and implement a critical pedagogy that uses the multiliteracies of students (including their culture, artistic expressions and digital skills) in language learning. In North America and Australia, this approach has been used with working class children struggling with English language learning. Upon implementing this teaching method, the students' English learning, when measured through tests and in class tasks, showed marked improvement.

My study will last four months. My intervention will include the teaching of both grammar forms modelled after the Jamaican grade 7 English curriculum and communicative activities based on students socio-cultural knowledge. It will be conducted in only one grade 7 inner-city school in your class. In the first month, I will visit your class three times per week to observe your teaching instruction. During this time, I will be making detailed observations of your classroom's proceedings. I will also video-tape your lessons. The video- taped data will be used only for purposes of the study to gage students' engagement in class. After my observation, I will implement a 13 lesson Jamaican grade 7 English curriculum inspired intervention (55 minutes for each lesson) during regular class time to explore a teaching strategy that will use students' socio-cultural knowledge such as Patois as a tool for learning. Students will be expected to work in pairs or groups to complete these tasks. At the

end of the intervention, I will have four groups comprising of six to seven students for 60 minutes at a community center. After two weeks break from the intervention, I will come back to your class to do two more weeks of observations and I will interview you for 45 to 60 minutes to ascertain changes in the students' English engagement and learning.

Participation in my study is voluntary. The interview will take place at your school. You may decline to answer any of the interview questions if you so desire. Further, you may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Should you withdraw from the study all data generated as a consequence of your participation shall be destroyed. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded to facilitate information collection, and later transcribed for analysis. Shortly after the interview has been completed, I will send you a copy of the transcript to give you an opportunity to check for the accuracy of our conversation and to clarify any points you wish.

All information shared will be kept completely confidential. Your name will not appear in my dissertation or report of findings; however, with your permission anonymous quotations may be used. Moreover, the data collected during my study will be kept for the period of my PhD studies and will be destroyed thereafter. The soft copy of data will be stored on an encrypted and password protected USB that will only be used to store this data. It will also be stored on my personal encrypted and password protected NVivo software at my place of dwelling. The hard copy of the data will be locked away in a filing cabinet at my home. I will be the only one who has access to the data. The measures taken above will minimize any risks to participants' privacy.

My study has the potential to improve the participants' learning strategies, which will in turn, may positively affect their literacy rates. I know this is a priority for many Jamaican schools given the recent policy mandates from the government which places onus on principals to improve their

students' literacy achievement. Moreover, recruiting my participants' cultural and artistic expression as tools for learning may lead to improvement in their self-esteem. The latter, in turn, may decrease attrition and increase students' in school engagements. There is a strong correlation between students' engagement and learning; therefore, many of my students' literacy learning may also improve. The interview will be beneficial to you as it would help you to: make meaning of your English pedagogy and critically analyze your English teaching. The student focus group interviews may also help them understand some of the difficulties they face with English learning, which may also help them understand their practices. Focus groups versus individual interviews benefit the students as in groups they feel more comfortable to discuss issues that are important to them in their own words.

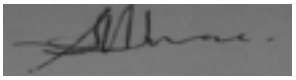
My student participants' engagement and learning may improve with my intervention; I perceive that if students do not participate in my study may continue to experience to isolation from the English curriculum which may hinder their interest in learning English. Added to this, the topics that will be discussed during my intervention will reflect the students' everyday experiences as I will be using their sociocultural knowledge as tools for learning. Moreover, personal information may be discussed in both the interview with you and the focus group with the students. There is a possible social harm, namely, further isolation and marginalization of my student participants, if the information discussed in the classroom activities and interviews be known to others. To minimize these potential risks, my research will be governed by the following ethical protocols: confidentiality, anonymisation, informed consent; and the right to respond.

If you have any questions regarding my study or would like additional information to assist with your decision about participation, please contact me.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance by the York University Research Ethics Committee. In addition, it has been approved by the Jamaican Ministry of Education. Should you have any concerns or comments resulting from a students' participation in this study, feel free to contact Alison Collins-Mrakas, Senior Manager & Policy Advisor, Office of Research Ethics, York University.

Please contact me if you have any queries pertaining to the information contained in this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Shawnee Hardware.

Please detach, complete and return to researcher

Do you give consent to participate in this study? Please circle one: ***Yes*** ***No***

By checking yes above and signing below, you agree to that the above information has been explained to you and you understand the potential benefits and possible risks of participation in the study.

TEACHER'S SIGNATURE	**DATE**
RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE	**DATE**

APPENDIX D: LETTER OF CONSENT TO PARTICIPANTS' PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Dear Parent (s) or Guardians (s):

I am writing to ask your permission for your child to participate in a research study that I (Shawnee Hardware) am conducting. I am a student in Department of Education at York University which is based in Toronto, Canada.

The purpose of my study is to explore different ways of helping inner-city students' to improve their English reading, writing and speaking. My study will include the teaching of both grammar based on the Jamaican grade 7 English curriculum and communicative activities based on students socio-cultural knowledge. The study will be conducted only at this school. For the first month of my study, I will conduct classroom observations of the teacher's lesson. I will video-tape and take notes of his/her interaction with the students as well as the interaction among students. The video-taped data will be used only for purposes of the study to gage students' engagement in class. These tapes will not be shared with anyone else. In the next two months, I will teach 13 lessons based on the grammar points in the grade 7 English curriculum for 55 minutes and use activities such as dance, drama, photo-story, song and role plays to assist students to learn English better. Children who participate in my research will study English in their classroom during their regular English class time. Therefore, their other subjects will not be disrupted. Students will work in groups or with a partner to complete their English classwork. My study uses group work or pair work because when students work with their classmates they normally learn better.

The activities used in my study are also created to get students more interested in learning English. These activities build on things that students do out of school to get them to talk more in their English classes and learn English in a more interesting way. My study will allow children to take a more active part in their English classes. When children play a more active part in their English learning, they will most likely study harder and improve their grades. As you know, getting good grades in English is important for Jamaican students to continue their education after high school or to get more than basic entry level job.

I will also interview the students in four groups with six or seven students in each group for 60 minutes. To ensure that the students will be comfortable to speak with me, these interviews will be conducted at the community center. The interviews will be recorded to ensure that I can later listen to what the students say in case I miss something in my notes. I will also have a student researcher to help me take notes and ensure that the students feel comfortable. Transportation will be provided to take students to and from the focus group interview site. Refreshment will also be provided for the students when they take part in the focus group interviews. After two weeks, will go back to the class to do more observations for two weeks and I will also conduct a 45 to 60 minutes interview with the teacher to find out if there are any changes in the students' learning and engagement in the classroom. My study has the potential to improve the participants' learning strategies, which will in turn, may positively affect their literacy rates. I know this is a priority for many Jamaican schools given the recent policy mandates from the government which places onus on principals to improve their students' literacy achievement. Moreover, recruiting my participants' cultural and artistic expression as tools for learning may lead to improvement in their self-esteem. The latter, in turn, may decrease attrition and increase students' in school engagements. There is a strong correlation between students' engagement and learning; therefore, many of my students' literacy learning may also improve. The interview will be beneficial to the teacher as it would help him/her to: make meaning of their English

pedagogy and critically analyze their English teaching. The student focus group interviews may also help them understand some of the difficulties they face with English learning, which may also help them understand their practices. Focus groups versus individual interviews benefit the students as in groups they feel more comfortable to discuss issues that are important to them in their own words.

My participants' engagement and learning may improve with my intervention; I perceive that if students do not participate in my study may continue to experience to isolation from the English curriculum which may hinder their interest in learning English. Added to this, the topics that will be discussed during my intervention will reflect the students' everyday experiences as I will be using their sociocultural knowledge as tools for learning. Moreover, personal information may be discussed in both the interview with the teacher and the focus group with the students. There is a possible social harm, namely, further isolation and marginalization of my student participants, if the information discussed in the classroom activities and interviews be known to others. To minimize these potential risks, my research will be governed by the following ethical protocols: Confidentiality: As much a possible I will ensure that my participant's identities are well concealed; 2) Anonymisation: Anonymity parallels confidentiality as it guarantees that my participants can voice their opinions and give testimony to their teaching realities without their real identities be known; 3) Informed consent: My participants will have the right to deny consent and to withdraw from my study at any point without prejudice. I will invite parents to an information session to inform them about my study and explain the importance of the study for improving their children English learning; and 4) The right to respond: To limit any unreal portrayal of participants' experiences, I will member check aspects of my findings with the specific participants to which they pertain.

Although students will benefit from the research, parents must give permission for them to participate in it. Students who do not consent to participate in the study will be asked to join one of the other

grade 7 English classes to ensure that they do not lag behind in their English learning. Additionally, students can withdraw from my study at any time if they are uncomfortable. Should they withdraw from the study all data generated as a consequence of their participation shall be destroyed. I will also video record when I teaching in the class. If you give your student permission to take part in the study, but do not want him/her to be video recorded, I will ensure that they are not included in the video-taping. I will not share information collected in my study about students' names, addresses, school, class, families, and communities. I will also share parts of the information about your child with you that I collect in my study before I publish them.

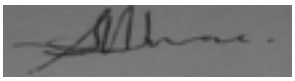
Moreover, the data collected during my study will be kept for the period of my PhD studies and will be destroyed thereafter. The soft copy of data will be stored on an encrypted and password protected USB that will only be used to store this data. It will also be stored on my personal encrypted and password protected NVivo software at my place of dwelling. The hard copy of the data will be locked away in a filing cabinet at my home. I will be the only one who has access to the data. The measures taken above will minimize any risks to the participants' privacy.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance by the York University Research Ethics Committee. In addition, it has been approved by the Jamaican Ministry of Education. Should you have any concerns or comments resulting from a students' participation in this study, feel free to contact Alison Collins-Mrakas, Senior Manager & Policy Advisor, Office of Research Ethics, York University. Similarly, you can contact Loretta Fiorini, the Graduate Program Assistant for my faculty for verification on my status as a student and the demands of the project.

I would appreciate if you would permit your child to participate in my study, as I believe it would help your child to read, write and speak English better. Please complete the attached permission form, whether or not you give permission for your child to participate, and return it to the school.

Thank you very much for your interest and support of my project.

Yours sincerely,



Shawnee Hardware.

Complete and return to school

Please detach, complete and return to researcher

Students name: _____

Relationship to the Student: _____

Do you give consent to participate in this study? Please circle one: ***Yes*** ***No***

Do you consent to being recorded? Please circle one: ***Yes*** ***No***

By checking yes above and signing below, you agree to that the above information has been explained to you and you understand the potential benefits and possible risks of participation in the study.

_____ _____

PARENTS/GUARDIANS' SIGNATURE **DATE**

_____ _____

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE **DATE**

APPENDIX E: STUDENT RESEARCHER'S LETTER OF CONSENT

Dear _____,

This letter is an invitation to consider participating in a study I am conduction as part of my Doctor of Philosophy degree in the Department of Graduate Studies at York University under the supervision of Dr. Nombuso Dlamini. I will investigate the current learning practices and implement a critical pedagogy that uses the multiliteracies of students (including their culture, artistic expressions and digital skills) in language learning. In North America and Australia, this approach has been used with working class children struggling with English language learning. Upon implementing this teaching method, the students' English learning, when measured through tests and in class tasks, showed marked improvement.

My study will last four months and it will be conducted in only one grade 7 inner-city school. My study will include the teaching of both grammar based on the Jamaican grade 7 English curriculum and communicative activities based on students socio-cultural knowledge. In the first month, I will visit the school three times per week to observe the English teachers' classroom instruction. During my observation, I will: 1 Video tape and take extensive descriptive notes of the students' engagement with their peers, the frequency in which they completed assigned tasks and their overall engagement in the class. The video- taped data will be used only for purposes of the study to gage students' engagement in class; 2) Note how the teacher provide feedback for the students and if these feedback assisted students in completing tasks; and, 3) Journal my comments, behaviour, thoughts, interpretations and feelings while observing the teacher's class.

After the observation, I will implement a 13 lesson Jamaican grade 7 English curriculum inspired intervention (55 minutes for each lesson) during regular class time to explore a teaching strategy that will use students' socio-cultural knowledge such as Patois as a tool for learning. Students will be expected to work in pairs or groups to complete these tasks. The lessons will be broken down in four sections that focus on: 1) The students' self-introduction and team building; 2) The student's abilities and future aspirations; 3) The students' families and communities; and, 4) The changes that the students would like to see in their communities, families and school. All of the lessons in my intervention will match a language target from the grade 7 curriculum.

I will return to the school two weeks after my intervention to observe the teaching and learning environment in the same classroom. I will also interview the classroom teacher and conduct four focus group sessions with groups comprising of six to seven students. The interview with the teacher will take between 45 to 60 minutes while the interviews with the students will last 60 minutes. The information gathered from the interview with the teacher will help me to ascertain changes in the students' English engagement and learning while the focus group interviews should provide insights into the reasons for students' difficulty with learning English.

My study has the potential to improve the participants' learning strategies, which will in turn, may positively affect their literacy rates. I know this is a priority for many Jamaican schools given the recent policy mandates from the government which places onus on principals to improve their students' literacy achievement. Moreover, recruiting my participants' cultural and artistic expression as tools for learning may lead to improvement in their self-esteem. The latter, in turn, may decrease attrition and increase students' in school engagements. There is a strong correlation between students' engagement and learning; therefore, many of my students' literacy learning may also improve. The interview will be beneficial to the teacher as it would help him/her to: make meaning of their English

pedagogy and critically analyze their English teaching. The student focus group interviews may also help them understand some of the difficulties they face with English learning, which may also help them understand their practices. Focus groups versus individual interviews benefit the students as in groups they feel more comfortable to discuss issues that are important to them in their own words.

My participants' engagement and learning may improve with my intervention; I perceive that if students do not participate in my study may continue to experience to isolation from the English curriculum which may hinder their interest in learning English. Added to this, the topics that will be discussed during my intervention will reflect the students' everyday experiences as I will be using their sociocultural knowledge as tools for learning. Moreover, personal information may be discussed in both the interview with the teacher and the focus group with the students. There is a possible social harm, namely, further isolation and marginalization of my student participants, if the information discussed in the classroom activities and interviews be known to others. To minimize these potential risks, my research will be governed by the following ethical protocols: confidentiality, anonymisation, informed consent; and the right to respond.

Moreover, the data collected during my study will be kept for the period of my PhD studies and will be destroyed thereafter. The soft copy of data will be stored on an encrypted and password protected USB that will only be used to store this data. It will also be stored on my personal encrypted and password protected NVivo software at my place of dwelling. The hard copy of the data will be locked away in a filing cabinet at my home. I will be the only one who has access to the data. The measures taken above will minimize any risks to my participants' privacy in my study.

If you decide to participate in my study, you will assist with my classroom observation and my student focus group interviews. These tasks are vital for the successful completion of my research. Transportation and refreshment will be provided each time you visit the school. I will provide training

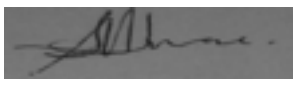
before you embark on both tasks. We will also have a brief meeting after the first observation and then weekly meetings thereafter to clarify any questions or comments that you may have. We will have only one meeting at the beginning and another at the end of the focus group.

Participation in my study is voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. The observations will take place at _____ high school while the interviews will take place at ___ community center. My observation will be video recorded and my focus group will be tape recorded as such there might be instances in which you might also be recorded or taped. You have the option of not being recorded or taped if you are uncomfortable with these data collection tools.

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance by the York University Research Ethics Committee. In addition, it has been approved by the Jamaican Ministry of Education. Should you have any concerns or comments resulting from a students' participation in this study, feel free to contact Alison Collins-Mrakas, Senior Manager & Policy Advisor, Office of Research Ethics, York University .You can contact Loretta Fiorini, the Graduate Program Assistant for my faculty for verification on my status as a student and the demands of the project.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please contact me. You can also contact my supervisor.

Yours sincerely,



Shawnee Hardware.

Complete and return to Researcher

Please detach, complete and return to researcher

Do you give consent to participate in this study? Please circle one: ***Yes*** ***No***

Do you consent to being recorded? Please circle one: ***Yes*** ***No***

By checking yes above and signing below, you agree to that the above information has been explained to you and you understand the potential benefits and possible risks of participation in the study.

_____ _____

STUDENT RESEARCHERS' SIGNATURE **DATE**

_____ _____

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE **DATE**

APPENDIX F: ASSENT FORM FOR STUDENTS

Dear student,

I am Shawnee Hardware, a PhD student at York University in Canada. I am writing to ask you if you want to take part in my study. My study will only be done at your class and your school. In my study I will try to see if I help you to get better grades in English Language Arts. I will use activities like dance, drama, photo-story, song and role plays to assist you to learn English better. I will use the grammar points in English grade 7 curriculum to ensure that you are learning as much as other students in different schools. I provided you with some information about my study and how it will be done so that you understand what it is about. My study has four steps. They are:

Step 1: I will come to your class for one month to observe how your teacher is teaching you. I will also observe how you participate in the class. While I am doing my observations, I will take notes and video tape the class to help me to remember what I see. These notes and the video-recordings will not be shared with anyone else. They are just for me to see how much the teacher talks to you, how often you talk to him/her and how often you talk to your classmates. I also want to see how well you understand the activities that the teacher gives to you.

Step 2: After I finish making my observations, for two months I will teach you thirteen lessons with grammar points from the grade 7 English curriculum. Each lesson will be for 55 minutes just like your regular English classes. All the lessons will be in your regular English class time as well. During this time, I will ask someone else to take notes of my teaching so that I can see how well you participated in the class and if my teaching helped you to learn English better.

Step 3: After the lessons are finished, I will interview you in groups for 60 minutes. There will be four groups with six to seven students in each group. In interviews are good for my study, as they will help me to understand some of the problems that you have with learning English and ways to help you learn English better. The interview will be done at a community center to ensure that you feel comfortable as I know you might feel uncomfortable doing the interview at your school. I will provide transportation to go to the community center and give you refreshments while you are there.

Step 4: After two weeks, I come back to your class for two weeks to observe if there are any changes in your behavior and learning in your original English class. I will also interview your teacher 45 to 60 minutes to see if he/she sees any changes in your English learning. Talking to your teacher will help both of us as he/she will share information about his/her teaching that he/she might not be able to share with anyone else.

Since my study may help you to learn English better, I think that if you do not take part in the study you might miss the chance to learn English using activities that you do out of school. I also believe that using activities such as speaking Patois, dancing and drama might help to boost your interest in learning English since you use these activities when you are having fun.

My study can cause a few difficulties for my participants. If people find out the topics and personal information that we discuss in my study, everyone who takes part in my study might be judged. To ensure that my participants are not judged, I will ensure that I do not use any of their names and the name of the school. I will also ensure that all the information is kept private and not shared with anyone. Also, before I publish what I found out in my study, I will ask you first if the information that I wrote about you is correct.

I cannot conduct my study with you in it without you telling me it is ok to do so. Even if you say yes to take part in my study, you can choose not to take part in sections that you feel uncomfortable such as the video-taping. Also, if you say no, then you will join another grade 7 English class to ensure that do not miss any English lesson. I also have to ask your parents or guardians for permission for you to take part in my study after I explain everything about my study to them. You can also leave my study at any time you feel like and all the information that I collect about you will be destroyed.

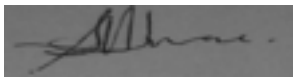
All the information collected during my study will be kept until I finish my PhD. The information will be destroyed after I finish this degree. All the information collected during my study will be stored on password protected USB drive. I will also save it on a special program on my computer which will also require a password. I will be the only one who will have the USB and my computer so all the information will be safe. I will type and print all my notes and information from the interviews and save them in a locked cabinet at my house.

I am happy to let you know that my study has been approved by the York University Research Ethics Committee. This committee ensures the researchers conduct their research in a way to respects their participants' views and privacy. It also ensures that researchers get the participants permissions before they include them in their study. If you or your parents have any questions or concerns, you can contact Alison Collins-Mrakas, Senior Manager & Policy Advisor, Office of Research Ethics, York University. You can also contact Loretta Fiorini, the Graduate Program Assistant for my faculty to find out if I am a student at York University and the purpose of my research.

If you have any general questions and would to talk to me more about my study, you can contact me. You can also contact my supervisor, Dr. Dlamini.

Thank you very much for your interest and support of my project.

Yours sincerely,



Shawnee Hardware.

Please sign and return to researcher

Do you understand what you need to do in the study?	***Yes***	***No***
Do you agree to take part in this study? Please circle one:	***Yes***	***No***
Do you agree to being video-recorded? Please circle one:	***Yes***	***No***

By checking yes above and signing below, you agree to that the above information has been explained to you and you understand the potential benefits and possible risks of participation in the study.

_____ _____

PLEASE SIGN HERE **DATE**

_____ _____

RESEARCHER'S SIGNATURE **DATE**

APPENDIX G: TEACHER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Teacher training

a. What was your educational and professional preparation for this job?
b. How would you describe your teaching training?
c. Did you specialize in English Language Arts in Teachers' College? If no, what did you specialize in?

Teaching Experience

a. How long have you been teaching at this school?
b. Have you always been teaching this class?
c. On average, how many students do you teach?
d. How often do you teach English Language Arts?
e. Do you believe there is a noticeable difference between this grade 7 and the others? If yes, what are these differences? If no, why do you believe there are no differences?
f. Describe a successful approach that you have used in your English Language class?
g. What would you say are the most pressing challenges with teaching your students?

Teaching Pedagogy and Techniques

a. How would you describe your teaching pedagogy?
b. What strategies have you employed to ensure that your students are engaged?
c. What is your philosophy of teaching, assessments and classroom management?
d. What procedures do you use to assess your students' progress besides tests?

My Intervention

a. What is your understanding of teaching frameworks such as multiliteracies pedagogy, socio-cultural theory and new literacies studies?
b. How do you accommodate for the students out of school knowledge in your class?
c. In your class, do you include students' knowledge of their family and community relations?
d. In your opinion, would it be easy for you to implement the activities I used in my intervention given dictates of the grade 7 curriculum?
e. Did you see any noticeable difference between students' levels on engagement after my study was completed?

Thank you very much for your time.

APPENDIX H: STUDENT FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTION

Socio-Demographic Questions

What do you normally do for fun?

How long have you been doing that?

With whom do you normally do these activities?

How did you get engaged in these activities?

Your community

What whom do you live?

Are your family members/guardians from this community?

How long have you been living this community?

How would you describe your community?

What do you think people think about your community?

Your school

Why you did choose to attend this school?

Was this you your first choice?

Did you have family members that attended this school?

Do you have many friends from your grade six friends at this school?

English teaching

What did you think about English teaching?

Do you normally discuss your English tasks with your classmates?

Do you normally complete tasks in your English class?

Does the teacher normally help you to complete your English tasks?

Do you complete a lot of your English homework?

English Learning

Is English learning difficult or easy for you to learn? Why is this so?

Does the teacher normally talk about your community and the things you do outside of school in your English class? How does this make you feel? Does this help you study English more?

Recommendations

Do you have any suggestions for ways in which teachers can get you more interested in learning English? Why or Why not?

]What would you like to see in your English learning?