Developing a Multiliteracies Pedagogy in Mature Female English Language Learners in Iran

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An important rationale for this current study is to provide an opportunity for some Iranian women to have some exposure to learning English beyond the basics and to be able to articulate their ideas in the target language, which in this case, is English. It is hypothesized that a multiliteracies pedagogy might encourage their willingness to use the multimodal approach which includes technological tools to learn the new target language and, subsequently, lead them to have a more active role in their schooling, home life, and broader society. A large proportion of these women in society experience an existing patriarchal order that can significantly influence their English language learning and acquisition process. Therefore, this study also serves to hear the voices of these participants through semi-structured interviews in order to have learners, not only see their own language development, but also help to examine what are some of the most influential social factors which can play significant roles in mature female English Language Learners’ active or passive language class participation.

The participants of this study, although they had a limited time exposure to multimodal activities and multiliteracies, still made meaningful contributions and participated in the design elements of the workshop as producers and consumers. Admittedly, there are many digital technologies beyond those that were used in the workshops, but what matters is the needs of classes and students being shaped with the aid of educators in selecting the most appropriate pedagogical tools and resources when designing their lesson plans and activities. It is highly important to deeply understand and value the multiliteracies structure and scaffolding models in the area of English language learning. In a multiliteracies framework, technology serves as a tool to provide students, based on their interests and understanding about the world, with
several opportunities to experience learning beyond school within which deep and critical thinking is encouraged in order to strengthen the learners’ abilities to cope with the challenges they confront, not just in the classroom, but in the broader society as well.