Expansive Framing for Student Belonging: Resituating Academic Literacies in Theories of Learning and Transfer

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Abstract

Student diversity in higher education needs to be fostered by classroom-based, identity-validating frameworks that respond to differing disciplinary conventions without sacrifice of academic rigor. In this paper, I synthesize the last model of academic literacy, called academic literacies, with expansive framing in the context of first-year seminars (Lea & Street, 1998, 2006; Engel et al., 2012). The purpose is to standardize usage of academic literacies in future research that support student transition and belonging and development of authorial identities. The Meaningful Writing Project is presented as an example of extant dialogues that employ both expansive framing and a literacies approach to writing instruction.

Keywords

academic literacy, first-year writing, composition seminars, student belonging, higher education, situative

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Much of collegiate success is contingent upon student writing abilities and the affective outcomes associated with academic identity and belonging. First-year writing programs have borne the weight and criticisms of introducing students to institutional conventions while promoting the transfer of writing skills to disciplinary courses and beyond. Indeed, some scholars stated that graduates of freshman writing are unfinished, the gains in writing skill are too minute to measure most assessment processes and deliver too few benefits given the cost (e.g., Smit, 2004; Petraglia, 1995). Beaufort argues that first-year writing is worthwhile for lifelong learning if it is "taught with an eye toward transfer of learning and with an explicit acknowledgement of the context of freshman writing itself as a social practice" (p.7). Because no writing course can teach every necessary writing ability, courses must focus on the transfer of broader literacies (Hayes et al, 2017).

However, transfer of writing abilities beyond the seminar is problematic at the individual and disciplinary level. Students struggle to identify the types of secondary writing practices that remain valuable in the postsecondary context, thus complicating the transferring of prior ways of knowing. And, successful writing practices in a discipline can bear little resemblance to the generalized writing taught in first-year seminars (FYS). Discussion of transfer has shifted from content-based approaches to a more student-centered, social-participatory approaches,

One of these new approaches to first year seminars, and the focus of this paper is known as *expansive framing* (Engle et al., 2012). Expansive framing is a situative perspective on learning and transfer that features student authorship and the connection of learning to past and future contexts (Engle et al., 2012). A similar shift occurred in the literacy studies discourse with the concept of academic literacies (AL), which outlines how students could develop agency in the discursive practices in academia (Dohn et al., 2020). Rather than the focus on transfer of disciplinary or genre knowledge, some scholars prefer academic literacies for its attention to student "subjectivity and agency and the ways in which these both rub up against and challenge and subvert conventional academic genres" (Russell et al., 2006).

The utility of academic literacies was introduced as part of a fluid framework (Lea & Street, 1998; Lillis & Scott, 2007) and has since been operationalized in a multitude of ways in the literacy studies literature. Lillis (2003), in a critique of AL's usage in the literature, wrote, "'Academic literacies' has proved to be highly generative as a critical research frame, but as a design frame it has yet to be developed" (p.195). Given the similarities in the goals of both academic literacies and *expansive framing*, a symbiotic relationship may exist that remains unexplored in the literature. Deep inquiries in both Google Scholar and the university libraries system resulted in a one relevant empirical study that discussed the transfer of academic literacies using expansive framing (Dohn et al., 2020). Framing learning in first-year composition has implications for equitable learning as it promotes the transfer of writing abilities and academic identities to the second year and professional contexts.

For students with minoritized identities and first-generation students, first-year writing seminars are essential introductions to values, habits, and norms of collegiate writing and learning. However, this view in which students adopt the conventions of the institution, or academic socialization, has been critiqued as top-down and hierarchical among critical pedagogues and researchers (Lillis, 2003; Lea & Street, 2006). Rather, as demographics become more diverse, strategies that connect students' experiences and collegiate culture are increasingly necessary (Kuh, 2008; Lillis, 2003). Critical and asset-forward frameworks such as academic literacies and expansive framing, when working in unison, may provide such a thoughtfully-designed strategy. The cohesion between student identity and their institution is especially important for first-generation students and/or students with minoritized identities who may benefit from institutional assistance in academic identity and skill development.

In this paper, I introduce more rigor to the framework of academic literacies by synthesizing it with expansive framing in the context of first-year writing in seminars. It is my hope that doing so will revive and standardize its usage in future studies. What follows is, first, a reconciliation of the three models of academic literacy within appropriate theories of learning and transfer. An updated understanding of the constraints and affordances of each model allows for clearer synthesis of expansive framing and the academic literacies model. Then, I connect the extant discourses of expansive framing of collegiate writing with academic literacies studies for the purpose of providing a practical framework of learning and belonging for minoritized students.

Perspectives of Learning and Transferring Academic Literacies

Interventions for improving both the acquisition and transfer of writing abilities have long been popular topics in the US as Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and as academic literacies (AL) in the UK. The former is more concerned with the transfer of writing abilities from discipline to discipline. Academic Literacies has three models pertaining to writing and skills that support writing; it has also been associated with positive affective educational outcomes such as belonging for minoritized students in a primarily white institution (PWI, Marshall et al, 2012). Because of unclear conceptions and varying definitions in the literature (Lillis & Scott, 2007; Lillis, 2003), situating all three models within established perspectives of learning and transfer will help calibrate its usage, allowing for more purposeful operationalization in future studies of student writing in higher education.

Academic literacy has three models: basic skills, academic socialization, and academic literacies. The pluralized form, the third model, refers to the understanding that students often employ diverse and multiple literacies and sets of practices when performing in academic settings (Henderson & Hirst, 2007). Lea and Street (2006) write that the academic literacies model sees the literacy processes as "more complex, dynamic, nuanced, situated and involving both epistemological issues and social processes, including power relations among people and institutions and social identities" (p. 228). The aim of this model is that students should develop agency and situated awareness of the diversity of discursive practices in academia (Dohn et al., 2020).

In an early widely-cited text on AL, Lea and Street (1998) argued that it was difficult to define AL without being confining or prescriptive. The concept was presented for the teachers and researchers to discuss writing practices of non-traditional students in a time of expansion and inclusion (Lillis & Scott, 2007; Lea & Street, 1998). Indeed, the authors cautioned against simplifying academic literacies: "All three, we argue, are located in relations of power and authority and are not simply reducible to the skills and competences required for entry to, and success within, the academic community (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 170). Since then, academic literacy/ies—in both forms—have had multiple conceptualizations that appear similar to the forewarned reductions, with most studies referring to either skills-based courses that teach students how to write in the university or, more generally, "reading/writing/texts in academic contexts" (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p.7).

Lea and Street (2006) revisited the concept of al., providing clarification of it as a design frame by matching learning theories with each of the three models. Though the authors provided rationales for the paired learning theories, how the perspectives of learning view transfer were excluded. To prevent further confusion, a re-imagining of the pairings that include the transfer of AL is necessary. What follows is a revised presentation of the three models of academic literacy in their respective schools of thought.

Behaviorist Perspective

The study skills model focuses on surface-level writing mechanics and was paired with behaviorism. Lea and Street (2006) introduced the study skills model as "pay[ing] little attention to context and is implicitly informed by autonomous and additive theories of learning, such as behaviorism,

which are concerned with the transmission of knowledge" (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369). Studies show that basic writing courses often draw "on cultural studies and post-colonial frameworks" (Horner and Lu, 1999). And, the behaviorist view does not necessarily refer to an autonomous approach to learning, nor is it the only theory concerned with transfer. The behaviorist view maintains that learning is the process of acquiring mental associations between ideas and concepts based on stimuli while transfer is the ability to make those associations beyond the learning context (Greeno et al., 1996). The key is to teach the differences and similarities in stimuli in the learning and transfer context (Greeno et al., 1996, p. 22). Though the behaviorist/empiricist view is not associated with a model of academic literacy, discussion of this view provides principles to exclude when discussing academic literacy.

That said, in the case of the first-year seminar, this view of transfer promotes an oversimplified perspective of the similarities in genres and writing conventions between the learning context–the first-year seminar–and the transfer context–disciplinary courses. Additionally, behaviorist/empiricist views, when compared to cognitive/rationalist or situative views, are less concerned with how individual student and faculty background characteristics are factors that impact learning and transfer, which have been found to be essential considerations (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). Given the focus on minoritized students in this study and the roots of AL in critical inclusion, behaviorist/empiricist views are incompatible. Rather, the basic skills approach fits better in the cognitive perspective.

Cognitive Perspective

Cognitive/rationalist views of learning maintain that learning is a restructuring and reorganization of concepts and skills in schemas within one's mind (Greeno et al., 1996, p.16). Transfer, then, is knowing when and how to apply an understanding of general examples and methods in the schema to new contexts, which subsequently adds to the existing schema. Lea and Street (2006) fit academic socialization within "constructivism and situated learning" (p.369), but their clarifications are more descriptive of situative learning because of its understanding of learning and transfer as the internalization and reproduction of extant academic conventions. In one study, Lea and Street (2006) examined the academic socialization of first-year law students and their learning of the disciplinary writing and thinking conventions to be a part of the legal community. This approach is more descriptive of a community of practice approach and leans more situative than cognitivist or constructivist.

The first model of academic literacies, the study skills model, with its focus on the learning and transfer of basic skills, is a cognitive design. Within this view, learning is building a schema of writing skills and transfer is knowing the contexts in which the learned schema is useful. The study skills model of academic literacy is "typically outlined in institutional programmes and courses for basic study skills based on the belief that academic literacy is a set of generic skills and that they are not linked to discipline-specific knowledge or conventions" (Dohn et al., p. 217). Inherent in this model is the expectation that students learn general., basic writing and reading skills which is then transferred, at students' discretion based on similarities in context, to a transfer setting, typically disciplinary courses. Many who view FYS as the site to learn basic writing see the seminars' roles as preparing students for more demanding writing assignments in their majors. However, it is extremely unlikely that FYS will share useful likeness with the myriad disciplinary trajectories which students pursue. The cognitive view of academic literacies relies on students to make connections between schemas and learn when it is appropriate to employ particular strategies in new contexts.

The cognitive study skills model of academic literacy is also limited in its utility because it rarely considers how student experiences and cultures are factors in how students learn. Though more applicable to academic literacy in the first-year seminar than behaviorist/empiricist views, cognitive views are individually-focused by design, and limit the ability to study how interactivity among students and faculty engender a sense of belonging for minoritized students.

Situative Perspectives

The situative perspective maintains that learning occurs as one is embedded in particular communities with sub-views on cognitive and participatory sides (Greeno et al., 1996). The cognitive side of situative perspective pertains to whether students know and are attuned to "constraints and affordances of activity systems" (Greeno et al., 1996, p.20). The participatory side of the situative perspective focuses on how students participate as nascent members of communities of practice (Greeno et al., 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1991). A revision of academic socialization as a cognitive, constructivist theory is needed. Lea and Street (2006) wrote "The academic socialization model presumes that the disciplinary discourses and genres are relatively stable and, once students have learned and understood the ground rules of a particular academic discourse, they are able to reproduce it unproblematically" (p. 369). Academic socialization is situative, and not cognitive as Lea and Street (2006) had classified it.

The academic socialization model and the academic literacies model have principles in the situative perspective, given their respective foci on social and interactive processes. In the former, students interact with the institution as recipients of its cultures. The AL model presents students and institutions as co-creators of institutional culture. As such, the socialization model is considered situative-cognitive whereas the AL model is situative-participatory (Dohn et al., 2020, p. 222). The situative perspective of learning and transfer is the best fitting for this study due to its sensitivities to power dynamics between students and institutions and this study's interest in an equitable model transferring literacies beyond first-year writing for students with minoritized identities.

Situative-Cognitive: The Academic Socialization Model

The academic socialization model positions students as the learners of academic "norms, values, and textual practices" so that they may "transfer" the knowledge by knowing how to use particular practices in specific settings (Dohn et al., 2020, p.219). This model is best suited in an introductory course to a specific discipline or in a course that aims to socialize students to general collegiate values, expectations, and habits. The situative-cognitive view is concerned with students *knowing* the material and social contexts of academic communities so that they may participate as members. For transfer to occur, the learner must learn and attune to invariant constraints and affordances between the learning situation and the transfer situation (Greeno et al., 1996, p. 24). It relies on students' ability to recognize how to quickly recognize genres and learn activities "that encourage students to become familiar with the disciplinary community where they are expected to effectively use the genres (Dohn et al., 2020, p.219). Academic socialization is reminiscent of the cognitive, study skills approach, but the valued knowledge is not how to write, but how to learn to write in different settings (Dohn et all, 2020, p.219)

This model is limited for two reasons: (1) learning is defined as attuning to institutional culture, which, for minoritized students can often be incongruous with personal values, practices, and beliefs; (2) transfer presupposes a somewhat monolithic social culture in higher education between the seminars as the learning space and disciplinary courses as the transfer space.

In their transition year, all new students must–to some extent–learn the conventions, cultures, and major events in general academia (e.g., course evaluations are used as assessments) and those that are unique to each institution (e.g., the high degree to which assessment is emphasized, as in the example of James Madison University). It becomes problematic when students do not have asset-forward introductions to academic literacy. The tacit implication being that students with minoritized identities, for whom the university culture is more foreign, must work harder to socialize to academic conventions and cultures. Without expansive framing or other avenues to present student identities and experiences as assets, these students may perceive their academic selves as separate from their personal selves. Or, in the words of Lea and Street (2006), these students must learn academic literacy to both "course switch" and "culture switch". Along the same lines with the "additional" work, the

socialization model of academic literacies may inadvertently communicate to minoritized students that their belonging on campus is contingent upon their attunement to new academic settings.

Situative-Participatory: The Academic Literacies (AL) Model

Finally, the academic literacies (AL) model encompasses the previous two models and extends to consideration of the multiple competencies that are required for successful participation in higher education (Lea & Street, 2006; Lillis & Scott, 2007). Learning academic literacies (AL) is defined as using "a network of integrated competences: reading, cooperation, experimenting, documenting and writing" (Dohn et al., 2020, p. 215) for the purposes of "meaning making, developing identity, power, and authority in the institutional nature of what counts as knowledge in any particular academic context" (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369). The AL framework was purposefully developed without prescriptive components but requires additional structure as its uses are varied in the literature (Lillis & Scott, 2007).

The AL model is similar to the socialization model described above, but the focus shifts from socialized cognition, "knowing academic practice", to participation, "doing academic practice" (Dohn et al., 2020, p. 222). In this way, students learn academic practice through attempts without first needing to develop "cognitive grasps of academic literacy concepts" (Dohn et al., 2020, p. 222). The nature of a situative-participatory approach to academic literacies enables students to act and participate in academic communities and domains that are characterized by being uncertain and challenging (Alexander, 2003), potentially preparing students for long-term learning. Transfer in this ideology is defined as "facilitating the development of patterns of participation and dispositions for future contexts" (Dohn & Markauskaite, 2020). The drawback is the lacking "high fidelity of real workplace contexts" in the academic learning context (Dohn & Markauskaite, 2020, p. 51).

The academic literacies model is an asset-forward approach for students with minoritized identities because it prioritizes the relationships of authority that exist around "what constitutes valid knowledge within a particular context" between student writing and instructor feedback (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 170). Thus, AL supports the students' "way of doing" and "ways of knowing" in a discipline or in academic genres (Dohn et al., 2020, p. 215). However, despite its popularity in the literature, Lillis and Scott (2007) in a comprehensive literature review, noted that the AL's "considerable fluidity and ambiguity" is a detriment in research because it is contingent upon researchers' ideological stances (Lillis & Scott, 2007, p. 13-14). Thus, a reorientation of AL to learning frameworks such as expansive framing, roots learners' lived experiences in theories of student learning and transfer. This next section adds additional clarification and standardization to improve the quality of research in the fields of composition and literacy studies.

Expansive Framing and the Transfer of Academic Literacies

Drawing on previous literature (Goffman, 1974; Tannen, 1993), Engle et al. (2012) defines framing as "the meta-communicative act of characterizing what is happening in a given context and how different people are participating in it" (p.217). Bounded framing is the perception of learned content as something relevant to only a short period of time, until the end of a unit or an assessment (Engel, 2012). In contrast, learning is "expansively" framed when students (1) make connections between the social aspects of the learning and transfer contexts and (2) take authorship of disciplinary content and knowledge (Engle et al., 2012). This sets up the expectation that learners will continue to apply their knowledge and experience in identified future contexts; subsequently, that expectation affects how students learn in preparation for transfer (Engle, 2006). Expansive framing (EF) is a student-centered approach that helps learners build academic identities and transfer writing ability in a way that positions their prior knowledge and individual backgrounds as an asset (Eodice, 2006; Beaufort, 2007; Engle et al., 2012).

With backing from one-on-one tutoring lessons, Engle et al (2012) built upon Engle's (2006) original principles, adding five ways expansive framing promotes transfer. First, EF creates more intercontextuality between learning and transfer contexts, setting the expectation for students to use their knowledge in new contexts. Second, the intercontextuality keeps prior content fresh and connected in future transfer contexts. Third, the combination of connections of contexts and student authorship promotes more transfer of students' knowledge and experiences, both inward from prior contexts and outward to future contexts. Fourth, student authorship instills accountability of the content. Fifth, student authorship increases likelihood of "adaptation of knowledge in transfer contexts" (Engle et al., 2012), p. 225).

What follows are two discussions of the role of EF in first-year seminars (FYSs) and the practical application of EF in such courses. The usage of EF in the FYS is ideal, given students' transitory nature while enrolled. Expansively framed literacies in FYS can address the critique that "basic" writing skills are useless due to dissimilarities to writing skills required in disciplinary courses. Additionally, there is considerable overlap between Expansive Framing (EF) and Academic Literacies (AL) that allows EF to serve as a theory of learning and pedagogical approach to AL. Compared to other contemporary situative theories of transfer (Lobato, 2012), EF is rarely used as a design or analytical framework in the higher education context, with the exception of Eodice et al's (2019) *The Meaningful Writing Project*, which is used to explain the overlap between intertextuality and intercontextuality below.

Expansive Framing as First-Year Student Support

EF is suitable for studying academic literacies (AL) in first-year seminars (FYSs) because of its focus on the student-centered classroom and because transfer is understood as "transformation of patterns of participation" (Dohn et al., 2020, p.49). A situative participatory definition of transfer requires students to resituate new practices according to student experiences and interests, making it suitable for the study of transfer to contexts beyond FYS. Beaufort (2007), in a longitudinal qualitative analysis of student development of writing from their first year to their workplace, found that the transition "required not only learning new genres and new subject matter, but also encountering a host of new rhetorical situations, new ways of thinking, and new roles as a writer" (p.8).

FYSs are the gateway in which learners weigh knowledge and practices from previous writing contexts and learn to transform them for use in future contexts. In this case, transfer is promoted because EF builds on the similarities in the social context, rather than the physical classroom or content-based ones (Engle et al., 2012). Academic literacies is the ability to make epistemological considerations within different social processes (Lea & Street, 2006), something useful in any disciplinary or workplace context. Though writing content and the classrooms may change between FYS, disciplinary courses, and professional contexts, what remains are the social contexts that require students to use and transform skills, experiences, and knowledge.

Still, expansive framing requires content and subject matter to frame. Academic literacies provides an answer to a decades-long critique that a-disciplinary first-year writing is, at best, training for a "writing major" and, at worst, a pointless compulsory exercise (Beaufort, 2007, p. 9). In some cases where freshman writing depended on the transfer of skill-based writing, knowledge of freshman writing contributed to negative transfer in the disciplinary context (Beaufort, 2007). FYSs should be understood as the course for learning how to write in different contexts. That is, learners must acquire and refine multiple literacies in first-year writing to understand how to successfully write as determined by culturally- and socially-specific writing standards (Beaufort, 2007). Academic literacies is the subject matter that, when expansively framed, promotes future examination, questions, "literacy standards of discourse communities…in other disciplines, in the work world, or in other social spheres they participate in" (Beaufort, 2007, p. 11).

First-year seminars, shaped by academic literacies, can meet students at a critical period in which they find their place in the university and their academic identities are malleable. This is especially true for minoritized students, who may feel oppression by the dominant culture of the institution though not necessarily be underrepresented in the student population. And, for students who contend with the structures of power but do not discuss them, AL is an ideological model to critically examine the teaching and learning of writing as situated within relations of power and authority (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 171). Lillis (2003) writes, "In an ever growing higher education system premised upon notions of widening access and lifelong learning, there is a need to re-examine what counts as relevant knowledge within and across academic disciplines" (p.203-204). EF, when used in a critical manner, provides the structure for doing so.

The connection of contexts and student authorship also alleviates a long-standing question in composition and literacy studies: instructors' and students' conception of the transfer context. In other words, where will students use their thinking and writing abilities after first-year writing? Instructors are more likely to assume students' intention to join academic communities of practice, but learners' "student identity might always be a transitory one, a necessary step on the path towards full participation in the professional CoPs they want to join" (Canton et al., 2018, p. 677). Students might resist AL because they are more likely to consider writing as a skill for employability or to enter a professional community of practice, rather than as a means to enter an academic community of practice. However, expansive framing's feature of connecting settings and student authorship may help reduce the contentious mismatch in learning goals between instructors' and students'(Canton et al., 2018).

Inter(con)texuality

The overlap between Bakhtin's "intertextuality" in literacy studies and "intercontextuality in learning sciences provides an opportunity for seamless inclusion of EF in first-year writing. The former is the state of texts being informed by other texts—that meaning making with one text relies on knowledge of others because no text exists by itself. This is a common ideology that instructors instill in learners in new contexts, that student writing is a part of larger academic discourse. This "linking" of texts is a gateway to the linking of learning and transfer contexts, suggesting a symbiosis between intertextuality and intercontextuality.

In Bakhtinian terms, intertextuality refers to the condition that texts are elastic because they exist among discourses of other texts (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Bloome and Bailey (1992) extended it to include any "language event" such as "a conversation, the reading of a book or diary writing" because language events are influentially juxtaposed against other language events (p.198). Intertextuality is a commonly practiced framework in writing contexts as learners situate their own writing in the larger discourses of the academic or disciplinary community. The practice of intertextuality for learners is a form of expansive framing in which students are linking their writing from context to context. Expanding the linking to encompass student knowing of writing practices, rather than just student writing, and promoting student authorship is expansive framing in the writing context.

The framing of knowing and time in EF—connections made forward to potential transfer contexts and backward from prior ones—creates strong intercontextuality (Engle, 2006). Transfer is promoted while learning occurs when both the learning and transfer context are framed and positioned against each other (Engle et al., 2012). Engle (2006) wrote, "A context has been framed when someone uses meta-communicative signals that help establish what the participants are doing together in it, when and where they are doing it, and how each person is participating in it, thus creating a "frame" in which their activities can be interpreted" (p. 456). With enough connections between contexts, an encompassing social context, or intercontextuality, "seamlessly incorporates learning and transfer contexts" (Engle et al, 2012, p.218). This is dissimilar to older theories of transfer in which physical or

content similarities between learning and transfer context prompt students to use relevant prior knowledge (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). Intercontextuality promotes transfer because students "are simply continuing to use the same relevant knowledge within the same (larger) context" (Engle et al., 2012).

Two common learning outcomes in first-year seminars (FYSs) are critical thinking and writing abilities; and FYSs are criticized for not preparing students to transfer said skills to disciplinary courses (Beaufort, 2007). The term "intertextuality" is present in the composition and writing pedagogy literature, suggesting a familiar classroom practice of framing texts against the culture, histories, and purposes of other texts. In contrast, "intercontextuality" is relatively absent in the literature. Writing pedagogy literature, however, shows theoretical groundwork for the inclusion of intercontextuality in lesson plans and future studies of writing transfer. In doing so, both intertextuality and intercontextuality can be emphasized to improve learning and transfer from FYS to disciplinary courses and professional contexts.

Support for inter(con)textuality exists in studies concerning how students frame their skill to contexts outside of the writing classroom to create intercontextual links. In a genre analysis of second-year student writing, Lillis (2003) found that students, when left to their desires, indicated that "the bringing together of different discourses is something they desire in their making of new meanings in academia" (p.205). Lillis argues that, just as faculty emphasize the existence of student writing in dialogue with texts, so, too, should they engage in a dialogue with students about their writing (i.e., "talkback", rather than feedback). I further this intertextual framing to include intercontextuality in which students identify prior and future contexts relevant to their writing and thinking skills.

An empirical example of inter(con)textuality exists in student expressions of transfer within Eodice et al.'s (2016) Meaningful Writing Project, a four-year study of the qualities that render certain writing experiences meaningful to 707 undergraduate seniors, and what that meant for their learning, at three different institutions. After analysis of 707 surveys of students and 160 of faculty and 27 interviews with students and 60 with faculty, Eodice et al. (2016) found that meaning derived from a "connection to the content of the project itself, which, in turn, mapped onto the students' sense of their past, present, and future lives" (p. 40). Many students' responses demonstrated inter(con)textuality by writing with connections across contexts, time, and texts. All three connective points demonstrated in one answer from a respondent (emphasis mine):

> "The *lab report* will help me write *technical reports* (texts) *in the future* (time), and if I decide to go to graduate school, it will help with *my dissertations/theses* (context). It taught me how to write technically, and how to write in a long form." (Eodice, 2016, p.91)

The novelty of the writing task, student agency in research and writing, and the support they received in framing content from prior and future learning contexts were key attributes of students writing projects/assignments (Eodice et al., 2016). The latter two points line up with a situative view of curricula that promotes learning and transfer, namely that "Learning activities can focus on problematic situations that are meaningful in terms of students' experience and in which concepts and methods of subject matter disciplines are embedded" (Greeno et al., 1996, p. 28).

On the subject of transfer, the authors used expansive framing as an analytical framework. Nearly 80 percent of students identified that their most meaningful writing assignment was a new experience (Eodice et al., 2016, p. 83). But the newness is only remarkable because 36 percent of students connected to prior experiences in response (Eodice et al., 2016, p. 85). The students, in describing the novelty of their writing assignments, recalled how they made personal connections to their identities and prior knowledge in fulfillment of the writing prompt. They were able to see the relevance of the writing content to students' interests and/or their or their families' identity/ies. Furthermore, the authors found that 69 percent of surveyed students indicated that their most meaningful writing was "the kind of writing they might do postgraduation, predicting a continued

exploration of identity and personal connection they discovered in their meaningful writing projects" (p. 82). Eodice et al. (2016) connected The Meaningful Writing Project, expansive framing, and learning for transfer: "the writing projects that create opportunities, allow students to connect personally in some way, and take an expansive view of learning seem most likely to result in students' meaningful experiences" (p.107).

The Meaningful Writing Project, analyzed through expansive framing, illustrates how connections to prior and future contexts improves transfer and is meaningful to students. In fact, 22 percent of the 707 sample seniors stated that they completed their most meaningful writing in the first two years of their study (Eodice et al., 2016, p. 30). This suggests that intercontextuality and writing in first-year seminars can certainly make a lasting impact on the development of students' academic and professional identities. No findings about transfer of writing can be made about racial or ethnic minorities as Eodice et al (2016) did not focus on students with minoritized identities specifically.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to recalibrate the usage of academic literacies in the literature with (1) a realignment of academic literacies (AL) with contemporary theories of learning and transfer and (2) explore a situative understanding of AL. The originators of the three models of academic literacy, Lea and Street (2006), associated them with reductive theories of learning and transfer that may have encouraged widespread use of varying conceptual understandings of the models (Lillis & Scott, 2007). A revision of the associated learning theories to the three models of academic literacy was undertaken for the purpose of improving inferential validity. Lastly, because the educational context of first-year writing is social and focused on transfer, expansive framing of academic literacies understood was chosen as a clarifying and identity-validating framework.

Lea and Street (2006) introduced academic literacies as a critical framework influenced by "a theory of learning that foregrounds power, identity, and agency in the role of language in the learning process" (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 370). It lacked characteristics as a design framework, yet its usage as such persisted in the literature (Lillis & Scott, 2007). Despite its power in making language visible (Lillis, 2003) and helping students understand the ways in which writing shapes and supports their social interaction (Lea & Street, 2006), some standardization as a design and analytical framework is needed. Conceptually, a situative participatory understanding of academic literacies is supported by both literacy/writing scholars (Beaufort, 2008) and learning scientists (Dohn et al, 2020). And, the similarities between Bakhtin's intertextuality and intercontextuality for transfer (Engle, 2006) mean that the common practice of intertextual thinking in FYSs makes for a natural build of intercontextuality in the classroom.

The implications for direct instruction of intercontextuality is improved students' understanding of the purpose of what they are learning and how it will be used in future educational and professional contexts. Framing student writing in existing texts, intertextuality, is a common practice is writing courses. Intercontextuality promotes the framing of learning in learners' existing knowledge and learning contexts. Eodice et.al. (2016), in *The Meaningful Writing Project*, showed how students made personal connections to their identities and prior knowledge in fulfillment of their self-selected most meaningful writing prompt. Intercontextuality situates writing courses as interventions for student belonging.

Future studies should explore the influence of expansive framing on the transfer of academic literacies. In particular, both short-term and longitudinal studies would respectively illustrate the near and far transfer of literacies from FYSs to disciplinary classes in the same semester and the transfer of literacies from FYSs to professional contexts. Afterall, as expressed by Flower (1994), "the meaning of a literate act will not lie solely in the resources on which it draws, the conventions in which it participates, or the context to which it responds, but in the ways writers use and even transform their knowledge and

resources to take action" (p. 37). Minoritized students' ways of knowing based on culturally-dependent resources, conventions, and contexts need not be used and/or transformed in incongruity with their institutions.

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