



Empowering English Language Learners and Immigrant Students with Digital Literacies and Service-Learning

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ABSTRACT

Dramatically changing demographics of students learning English as another language across the world and in the United States pose a significant challenge for today's school systems. For example, an estimated 1.5 billion students are learning English in the world (British Council, 2014). Recent research on service-learning and TESOL (Al Barwani, Al-Mekhlafi, & Nagaratnam, 2013; Bloom & Gascoigne, 2017; Crosby & Brockmeier, 2017a, 2017b; Perren & Wurr, 2015; Wurr, 2007, 2009) shows it has been implemented across diverse settings to help students, MATESOL teacher candidates, and TESOL teachers find their place in the world, where they have power and agency (Bourdieu, 1991), and where they can make a change. This article discusses the results of a study that examined service-learning projects implemented by MATESOL teacher candidates that focused on advocating for ELLs and immigrant students using various types of digital literacies and technology, how the digital literacies were used as a means of advocating for issues of social justice for ELLs and immigrant students, and the implications the results of the service-learning projects have for training MATESOL teacher candidates to use service-learning as a TESOL method for developing digital literacies and advocating for issues of social justice.

INTRODUCTION

Dramatically changing demographics of students learning English as another language across the world and in the United States pose a significant challenge for today's school systems. For example, one of the most diverse countries in the world, Indonesia, has 34 provinces and has Javanese, Sundanese, Malay, and Madurese as the first, second, third, and fourth largest ethnic groups, respectively. Additionally, Indonesian citizens with foreign descendants of Arabs, Chinese, and Indians also contribute to Indonesia's multicultural society. Indonesia is second after China in terms of the number of children learning English as a foreign language in elementary schools (Zein, 2017). However, although Indonesia's language policy has been successful in uniting Indonesian citizens, due to the selection of Bahasa Indonesia as a national language on the verge of Indonesia's independence to unify the nation, the present language policy in Indonesia does not pay enough attention to English as an international language. This language policy has made most Indonesians, even those who are considered highly-educated scholars, fail to implement their receptive skills of reading and listening in English as well as productive skills of writing and, even worse, speaking in English. The lack of sufficient

international language use makes communication impossible with the outside world and isolates Indonesians from the international community.

In the U.S. PK12 context, the number of English Language Learners (ELLs) in schools in the 2014-15 school year was 4.6 million, or 9.4% of the student body. What is a surprising change in these statistics is that we are starting to see more ELLs in the lower grades (16.7% were kindergarteners) than in the upper grades (7.8% were in elementary, 6.5% were in middle grades, and 4.1% were in high school). Indeed, it is critical to understand all learners in this population of ELLs as well as immigrant students in our schools, so that we can know how to most effectively help them learn not only school literacies but also be prepared for what comes beyond school, as well as advocate for them. The PK-12 teachers in the U.S. are being called upon to work with a continually growing number of culturally and linguistically diverse students enrolled in their classrooms. Consequently, these teachers “need to be aware of ways in which such diversity will affect how they develop their . . . teaching skills within their teaching context, and what this means for the belief systems and knowledge base they hold” (Gearon, 2009, p. 199). However, it is not only knowing how to teach language and content to ELLs and immigrant students in our U.S. PK12 schools and other diverse educational contexts that is an important skill for our MATESOL teacher candidates to learn. It is also important for candidates to advocate for all ELLs and immigrant students and help them to acquire the 21st century skills that are needed for school and educational success and career readiness, which includes developing digital literacies. Additionally, according to Dewey (1938), an effective democratic education is represented by the extent that it prepares students for life in the community and wider society in which the students will be a part of.

Recent research on service-learning and TESOL (Al Barwani, Al-Mekhlafi, & Nagaratnam, 2013; Bloom & Gascoigne, 2017; Crosby & Brockmeier, 2016; Perren & Wurr, 2015; Wurr, 2007, 2009) shows service-learning as a TESOL method has been implemented across all diverse educational contexts to help all students, MATESOL teacher candidates, and TESOL teachers find their place in the world, where they have power and agency (Bourdieu, 1991), and where they can make a change. Adding to the recent research on service-learning as a TESOL method -- as well as more effectively connecting theory and practice and incorporating issues of social justice in my work with MATESOL teacher candidates at my institution -- were the justifications for the implementation of an immigrant advocacy service-learning project in my online TESOL methods course on the use of technologies in the language classroom and the teaching of digital literacies to ELLs and immigrant students. Research shows that teaching for social justice and advocating for our ELLs and immigrant students can be approached from various perspectives (Thomas, 2004). The concept of equal rights, equity, and fairness is one way the teaching of social justice can be conceptualized by teachers and faculty. Conversely, inequities, oppression, marginalization, and disparities are another way of approaching the teaching of social justice. Given the different issues of social justice and how this can be defined and approached, it was important in the teacher candidates’ service-learning projects that the MATESOL teacher candidates completed for the course, that they clearly defined what social justice meant in the context of their projects.

This article discusses the results of a study that examined service-learning projects carried out by MATESOL teacher candidates on the teaching of digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students with various types of technology, how these students’ digital literacies were used as a means of advocating for issues of social justice, and the implications the results of the service-learning projects have for training MATESOL teacher candidates to use service-learning as a

TESOL method for developing digital literacies and advocating for issues of social justice. The article includes the results of a triangulation of data collected and analyzed from the ELLs and immigrant students as well as the MATESOL teacher candidates in this course. The results show the digital literacy proficiency of the MATESOL teacher candidates and how this was used to advocate for ELLs and immigrant students. Moreover, the results of the implementation of the service-learning projects highlight how the projects empowered ELLs and immigrant students and their communities. Finally, the article concludes with a discussion of pedagogical implications the results have on implementing service-learning as a TESOL method for the purposes of developing digital literacies and advocating for issues of social justice for ELLs and immigrant students and their families in local as well as global communities.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The focus of the research on service-learning and TESOL has not generally been on the teaching of digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students. Yet, with the increase in the use of technology as a means of language learning and the language and literacy skills associated with this, it is imperative that we examine our MATESOL teacher candidates and students' digital literacies. The theoretical frame used for the study of the digital literacies of the MATESOL teaching candidates and the ELLs and immigrant students and service-learning as a TESOL method for the purpose of advocating for issues of social justice is a triangulation of research from the following three bodies of literature: 1) digital literacies, 2) service-learning and TESOL, and 3) issues of social justice and advocating for our ELLs and immigrant students.

Digital Literacies

The theoretical frame used to examine the use of digital literacies in the service-learning projects the MATESOL teacher candidates created locates the understanding of digital literacies in the idea that they are multiple and situated practices (Barton et al., 2000; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lea & Street, 2000). According to research by the New London Group (1996), multi-literacies are complex. This complexity of digital literacies highlights the importance of helping our ELLs and immigrant students to know how to negotiate them in and across diverse educational contexts. Furthermore, because of the increased expectation of digital literacy proficiency in diverse educational contexts, the reliance on highly developed academic literacy skills to learn course content, the complex nature of digital literacies, the negotiation of multiple technologies, and the corresponding digital literacies can be quite challenging for ELLs and immigrant students (Leu et al., 2012; Wolfe, 2000). Moreover, as TESOL teachers, we may think our ELLs and immigrant students are more digitally literate than they are because they are millennials or generation Z students and learned with technology from a very young age (Prensky, 2001; Scott, 2016). While our ELLs and immigrant students may have a certain level of technological savvy that surpasses our own, they may not possess the digital literacy skills needed to be successful in the classroom and beyond. A further examination of digital literacy skills in an academic context leads us to consider the work of Nicholas Carr (2008, 2010, 2017). He has argued that reading online decreases students' ability to read carefully and with discernment, the kind of critical reading required when reading academically. Other digital literacy skills required of online

readers, to name a few, are the ability to browse screens, scroll and scan for relevant information, and follow and read hyperlinks.

In addition to understanding the challenges and skills of digital literacies, it is important to consider the multiple literacy tasks ELLs and immigrant students encounter in diverse educational contexts. One of the major shifts that has occurred in research on academic literacy learning and socialization has been a move away from a skills-based deficit model of student literacies experiences to a consideration of the complexities of academic literacies practices at the university level. This shift reflects the “new” definitions of literacy mentioned above and is represented by three models of academic socialization – Study Skills, Academic Socialization, and Academic Literacies (Lea & Street, 2000). The Study Skills Model focuses on a predetermined, autonomous set of writing skills that students must learn in order to become an effective member of an academic discourse community. If students have not learned these skills, or have learned them incorrectly, the “autonomous model” suggests a ‘fix it’ approach to helping students (correctly) learn them. By contrast, the Academic Socialization Model assists students in becoming members of a community of practice by helping students discover their identities and positions in the social institutions that shape literacy and literacy learning through participation in academic literacy. The third model, Academic Literacies, “takes into account the cultural and contextual component of reading and writing practices” (p. 33) and challenges the autonomous view of literacy. More closely defined, the model assumes literacy as a social practice within various contexts, where multiple literacies are present, and the literacy tasks within these contexts are a variety of communicative practices. From this third model we can see that academic literacies are quite complex. They involve more than just the events of reading and writing; they include literacy practices (Street, 2000) and “other” literacies, as well as issues of power, consideration of literacy contexts, and students’ identities. According to this model, these characteristics of literacy play a role in its acquisition and suggest a complex process of acquisition. Because of the complex nature of academic literacies, negotiating academic contexts can be quite challenging, particularly for those new to or unfamiliar with these contexts, requiring that they learn to negotiate them in order to be successful in acquiring the academic literacies that comprise them.

Service-learning and TESOL

Research on service-learning and TESOL reveals that it has been implemented across all diverse educational contexts within TESOL to help all ELLs and immigrant students and their families, MATESOL teacher candidates, and TESOL teachers find their places in the world, where they have power and agency (Bourdieu, 1991), and where they can make changes. Research shows that service-learning linked to academic study is an effective teaching tool (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994). A survey of the service-learning literature in TESOL and teacher education shows that service-learning is defined differently in its application, for example, as a philosophy, a pedagogy, an academic course of study, and an educational experience (Butin, 2003; Medel-Reyes, 1998). For the purposes of this study, service-learning was defined as a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students (in the case of this study, MATESOL teacher candidates) work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems and, at the same time, reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves (Eyler & Giles, 1999). The content for the methods course on implementing technology

in the language classroom included these tenets of service-learning as a TESOL teaching method. MATESOL teacher candidates in the methods course, “Teaching with Technology in the Language Classroom,” were asked on the first day of the course to begin brainstorming ideas for a service-learning project that focused on a local and/or global issue related to literacy teaching and learning that technology can solve. Some examples of the issues the teaching candidates came up with included: 1) using technology to help ELLs and immigrant students with limited literacy proficiency, 2) incorporating technology in the classroom to help ELLs and immigrant students learn how to function in the larger global society – this included simulations of real-life literacy tasks and challenges, 3) expanding students’ perspectives on literacy and how it is used in multiple genres, including digital literacy genres, and 4) using technology to increase the academic literacy of international scholars.

The foundations of service-learning are undergirded by democratic learning theories developed by Dewey (1938) and Freire (1970). For example, according to Dewey (1938), it is necessary for teacher candidates to have knowledge of issues of social justice to properly interpret learners’ educational abilities. Likewise, Dewey (1938) believed that substantial learning takes place not only inside the classroom but also outside of it. Given this, it is necessary to incorporate the method of service-learning within a TESOL methods course for teacher candidates to have access to the greatest amount of learning possible. Consequently, Dewey’s democratic learning theory, along with the democratic learning theory of others, like Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and theory that learning is multi-directional, provides a solid basis for situating the examination of teaching of digital literacies skills of ELLs and immigrant students for the purposes of advocating for issues of social justice through service-learning as a TESOL teaching method in their respective communities.

Issues of Social Justice and Advocating for our ELLs and immigrant students

The definition of service-learning has been extended in the literature to include issues of social justice, such as race, gender, class, age, and sexuality (see Weiner, 2015). The definition of service-learning for this study has also been extended to include issues of social justice. Given this addition, it is important to remember when engaging in teaching that focuses on the teaching of digital literacies practices for the purpose of social justice and advocating for ELLs that we provide experiences for our MATESOL teacher candidates to connect to those they are advocating for rather than merely intellectualizing the idea of advocating for our ELLs and immigrant students. Service-learning is the connection between the intellectual ideas of developing ELLs’ and immigrant students’ digital literacies practices for the purpose of social justice and advocacy.

Rationale for Implementing Service-Learning as a TESOL Teaching Method in “Teaching with Technology in the Language Classroom”

The rationale for the implementation of a service-learning project in the methods course on teaching with technology in the language classroom was for it to be used as a method of social justice to help better prepare MATESOL teacher candidates to work with ELLs and immigrant students and their families, in their classrooms and communities. Given the differing shifts that have taken place in our classrooms over the years, such as the shifting student demographics, the shifting political landscape, such as the different political events that are represented by the ELLs

and immigrant students in our classrooms, and the shifting educational landscape with the implementation of various educational reforms like No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), the knowledge and skills that MATESOL teacher candidates need to work with ELLs and immigrant students continues to increase and change.

The implementation of the digital literacies service-learning project in this course provided the MATESOL teacher candidates an opportunity to examine real-world issues related to ELLs and immigrant students and their families, such as cyber-bullying and poverty. With the implementation of a service-learning project in the course, MATESOL teacher candidates were not only focusing on the academic content of the course, but also taking what they were learning (in our course) and investigating a real-world problem related to their future teaching of ELLs and immigrant students and their families. This consideration provided an opportunity for MATESOL teacher candidates to discover what some of the significant problems are, related to teaching ELLs and immigrant students. This insight provided an opportunity for learner autonomy, investment, motivation, and engagement. The service-learning projects implemented in the online course provided the MATESOL teacher candidates an opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills they needed to work with ELLs and immigrant students and their families across diverse educational contexts and at the same time engage in their local communities and in the global communities represented in the classrooms where they proposed to implement their service-learning projects.

To help the MATESOL teacher candidates connect the course content to communities outside of the virtual classroom, I implemented a service-learning project that had a two-fold purpose, which included: 1) helping the MATESOL teacher candidates identify significant problems that ELLs and immigrant students struggle with in their learning communities. These struggles could be related to learning English and succeeding in school within the respective educational context, and 2) using the course content to develop a solution for these problems.

This article describes each step of the digital literacies service-learning project design and implementation and explains the benefits of it for future TESOL teachers working to develop the digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students for the purpose of advocacy. The study highlighted in this article focuses on four perspicuous digital literacies service-learning projects and is based on a quasi-mixed methods design. The article discusses results from an analysis of the MATESOL teacher candidates' reflections that demonstrate the impact of service-learning as a TESOL teaching method on the development of their TESOL pedagogy. Moreover, it discusses refinements for future implementation of the service-learning project, based on my ongoing evaluation of the course, and the MATESOL teacher candidates' critical reflections.

METHODOLOGY

Course Description

The past two years during the summer term at my institution (Summer 2017 and 2018), I have taught an online methods course on teaching with technology in the language classroom. This course was offered as an elective in the MATESOL Program at a Graduate School of Education in a large multicultural, multilingual urban setting on the East Coast of the U.S. The focus of the course was on different types of technology that can be implemented in the language classroom to help ELLs and immigrant students develop their language skills; the course also focused on

different types of digital literacies and how to help ELLs and immigrant students develop these literacies using technology.

During the time for this study of the course, there were twelve and thirteen MATESOL teacher candidates, respectively, who enrolled in and completed the course during the two summer sessions, totaling 25 candidates. The student demographics included domestic as well as immigrant and international students, pursuing MATESOL degrees in the PK12 track, the general TESOL track, applied linguistics, literacy, and philosophy and education. The goals for the course were for the MATESOL teacher candidates to learn the foundational tenets of service-learning (Eyler & Giles, 1999) in addition to various types of digital literacies (Kress, 2013; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008) that are part of language teaching and learning, and to explore the interconnectedness between service-learning as a TESOL teaching method and the teaching of digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students to advocate for them regarding issues of social justice, such as bullying and socio-economic status.

A digital literacies service-learning project – Engaging, Enriching, and Empowering ELLs and Immigrant Students and their Communities with Service-Learning and Digital Literacies – was implemented as the final project for the course. The project requirements included MATESOL teacher candidates designing and implementing service-learning projects using technologies and developing the digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students to solve problems specific to ELLs and immigrant students and their families. Further information about the digital literacies service-learning project – including the specific rationale for and the steps of implementation of it in the course – are discussed in the following section of the article.

PROCEDURES

Research Questions

The three primary research questions I focused this study on were:

1. What digital literacies were the MATESOL teacher candidates most proficient in? What digital literacies are they least proficient in? What digital literacies did they incorporate in their service-learning projects?
2. What advocacy issues did the MATESOL teacher candidates focus on in their service-learning projects that tied to digital literacy proficiency?
3. Finally, how did the implementation of the service-learning projects empower ELLs and immigrant students and their communities?

Answers to these research questions were gathered from a triangulation of data sources.

Digital Literacies Service-Learning Projects – An Overview

For the final project of the course, the MATESOL teacher candidates completed a service-learning project, which included a structured and purposeful reflection of the work they did with ELLs and immigrant students and their families on developing their digital literacies and using their digital literacy skills as a means of advocating for them. The following is a sampling of the service-learning projects that some of the MATESOL teacher candidates completed:

- Project 1: Combating bullying of Latino/a immigrant high school students with digital literacies using social media. The project is available at -- <https://prezi.com/view/lb8mkBrlZamb9IXxGucV/>
- Project 2: Connecting newcomer immigrant students and their families with the school community using digital storytelling. Project highlights are available at -- <https://giuliabasile6.wixsite.com/website>
- Project 3: Building bridges across digital and socio-economic divides for low income foreign language learners with digital literacies using Second Life -- and
- Project 4: Becoming members of academic communities of academic literacy practices (Lave & Wenger, 1981) with digital literacies using Cambly, a language learning application, for marginalized English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in a country in the expanding circle (Kachru, 1985).

More information about these four, perspicuous service-learning projects and the digital literacy of the ELLs and immigrant students and their families is provided in the following sections. Below is the rationale for the implementation of service-learning as a TESOL teaching method in the methods course on teaching with technology.

Rationale for Implementing Service-Learning in a Teaching with Technology Course

Generally, service-learning projects are incorporated into courses that are more theory-focused or theory-heavy, where the service-learning as a TESOL teaching method is then the natural bridge between the theory in the course and the practical application of the theory. However, it is also beneficial that a service-learning project was incorporated into a methods course on learning about different types of technology and how these can be effectively implemented into the language classroom. The following are three benefits regarding the implementation of service-learning as a TESOL teaching method in the course for the MATESOL teacher candidates.

The first benefit of implementing a service-learning project in a methods course for MATESOL teacher candidates is that it provided the candidates a practical means by which they could connect the course material, even though methods-focused, to practical applications outside of the course. Even though many of the graduate students in our MATESOL programs come to our programs with teaching experience, they still require scaffolded experiences to understand how methods for teaching – in this case, digital literacies to ELLs and immigrant students – can be applied in their own teaching. The implementation of a service-learning project assists with this application. For example, in the course highlighted in this article, many of the candidates chose real-world diverse educational contexts in which to implement their service-learning projects and real students to work with on developing their digital literacies skills. By doing so, it made the course content relevant for the MATESOL teacher candidates in an educational context that they were getting to know. They could see the results of how the practice of developing ELLs' and immigrant students' digital literacies skills was carried out within that specific context.

The second benefit of implementing a service-learning project for the purpose of developing the digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students in a methods-based course is that the MATESOL teacher candidates had opportunities throughout the course to think carefully and deeply about issues of advocacy and social justice currently affecting ELLs and immigrant students

and their families, and how these issues related to the teaching of digital literacies skills, the implementation of technology, and advocating for issues of social justice for ELLs and immigrant students and their families. The service-learning project gave the MATESOL teacher candidates opportunities to examine issues related to the teaching of digital literacies and technology from multiple angles and experiment with possible solutions to them – to see how they worked and what revisions needed to be made to further advocate for the ELLs and immigrant students and their families.

A third benefit for implementing service-learning as a TESOL teaching method in the teaching with technology methods course is the teaching of digital literacies skills for ELLs and immigrant students. The teaching of digital literacies skills may be just as important as learning English for ELLs and immigrant students in all diverse educational contexts because the learning of English frequently takes place through the medium of digital literacies. Although our ELLs and immigrant students may come to our classrooms possessing a certain proficiency level of digital literacy that surpasses our own, they may not possess the digital literacy skills needed to be successful in the classroom and beyond.

Given this three-part rationale for implementing a service-learning project focused on the teaching of digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students in a technology-focused course for MATESOL teacher candidates, the next section discusses the actual stages of implementation of the service-learning project and how this helped the MATESOL teacher candidates focus on the digital literacies of the ELLs and immigrant students they chose to work with for their service-learning projects.

Implementation of the Digital Literacies Service-Learning Project

The methods course, “Teaching with Technology in the Language Classroom,” that the MATESOL teacher candidates were enrolled in was six weeks in length and was completely online, and included a combination of synchronous and asynchronous interactions. The implementation of the service-learning project within the timeframe of the course included several benchmarks. These are as follows:

The first benchmark was for students to identify a problem and post their thoughts regarding this to Canvas (the Learning Management Software we used as the platform for our course). This benchmark was to be done in the first week of the six-week course. The guiding questions provided for the MATESOL teacher candidates at this stage of the project were:

1. What is an important problem regarding language teaching and learning for ELLs and immigrant students: 1) in your community (for example, in the neighborhood where you live), 2) in your country (for example, a national problem), or 3) the world today (for example, a global problem)?
2. How can proficiency with digital literacies solve this problem for ELLs and immigrants in the community you chose?

The second benchmark for students in completing the service-learning project was for them to answer the following guiding questions:

1. What is the context or community in which your project is based? Is it a PK12 classroom? Afterschool programs? Is it an online community? Is it a linguistic enclave in a neighborhood in your hometown?
2. What is the problem your paper is addressing? Include a description of it. Why is this problem important to be addressing? Think of the issues regarding our ELLs and immigrant students, aspects of the proposed education budget (<http://www.tesol.org/news-landing-page/2017/05/25/tesol-statement-on-the-proposed-fy-2018-budget>), to name a few. Does the problem that you're addressing in your paper align with these and seek to find a solution with the use of technology?
3. What digital literacies are you incorporating in this context to solve the problem? Describe. Are you developing a new technology to solve the problem?
4. How will technology be used to solve the problem? How will the community respond to the use of technology in solving this problem?

These guiding questions were a scaffold to assist the MATESOL teacher candidates as they were thinking about and creating their projects and were to be completed in the third week of the six-week course. Teacher candidates added their answers to these questions to their original ideas posted in the first week of the course.

The third benchmark for completing the service-learning project was for the teacher candidates to implement their projects with the ELLs and immigrant students in the local and global communities. This requirement included teacher candidates working with an English language learner or immigrant student for 1-2 hours per week beginning the second week of the semester. Teacher candidates kept track of the work they did with their student using a service-learning log (see Appendix A).

The fourth benchmark for completing the service-learning project was for the teacher candidates to think about the format of their final projects, using either a traditional format (for example, a 10-20-page paper) or a remixed multimodal format (for example, a weblog, wiki, digital story, etc.). The important component of the teacher candidates' final projects was the structured and purposeful reflection on their service-learning as a TESOL teaching method. Based on the MATESOL teacher candidates' reflections, they could identify more clearly how the ELLs' and immigrant students' digital literacies helped with addressing issues of social justice, consider these issues which led to more defined efforts that the MATESOL teacher candidates could implement to improve inequalities in the areas they identified, and then engage in social change in a variety of ways. These were due in the last week of the course and are discussed in further detail in the results section of the article. (It is important to note that in 16-week courses, I give teacher candidates the option to submit a weekly reflective journal on the service-learning work they're carrying out. This journal is responded to and returned to the candidates in time for the next meeting with their students. This practice allows for them to make necessary adjustment to their work and to also see what their strengths are in the work they are doing. Because the summer course is accelerated, it is not possible to offer the reflective journal option.)

The final benchmark was for teacher candidates to present their service-learning projects to the class using one of the following options:

1. a PowerPoint Presentation (PPP) with video uploaded to a folder on Google Drive,
2. a YouTube video with link emailed to the class,
3. a presentation using Voice Thread,
4. a Glog on Glogster for the purpose of a virtual gallery walk, or

5. another medium for presenting the teacher candidates' service-learning projects – chosen by the teacher candidates.

The service-learning project presentations were also completed in the last week of the course.

The next section of the article presents the research methods used for examining the MATESOL teacher candidates' service-learning projects for the purpose of identifying the digital literacies of the ELLs and immigrant students, how these were tied to issues of social justice and advocacy, and how the implementation of the service-learning projects empowered the learners and students and their families and their communities. It also includes a discussion of the process used for analyzing the results.

Research Methods

The following paragraphs outline the rigor that went into designing, collecting, and analyzing the service-learning project data on digital literacies and advocacy for ELLs and immigrant students. This was done keeping in mind what Wurr (2013) stated regarding there being a continual call by scholars for rigor in the research that we do on service-learning. However, before discussing the specific and rigorous research methods that were used to collect the data for this study of the MATESOL teacher candidates' service-learning projects, it is important to present a developmental framework for the digital literacies service-learning projects that was used as a lens for viewing the teacher candidates' service-learning experiences. This developmental framework is described in the following paragraphs.

A Framework for Analyzing Digital Literacies and Advocacy Service-Learning Projects

A framework for analyzing the digital literacies and advocacy service-learning projects was created to examine what the MATESOL teacher candidates learned from their service-learning projects. The study design employed a process of data triangulation to establish reliability and validity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The framework was based on data collected from a triangulation of sources from the MATESOL teacher candidates. This triangulation of data sources was also used to analyze the service-learning projects. It included: 1. a pre-course survey of the MATESOL teacher candidates' digital literacies; 2. course artifacts, including the service-learning records, segments from online threaded discussions, the teacher candidates' final service-learning projects, and the candidates' service-learning project presentations); and 3. transcripts from the weekly Zoom meetings with the MATESOL teacher candidates. At the end of both courses, I collected a digital literacies and advocacy service-learning project – a total of 25 projects – from the MATESOL teacher candidates in the courses. The data sources are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

Pre-Course Digital Literacies Survey

The pre-course digital literacies survey (see Appendix B) was used to collect data about the MATESOL teacher candidates' experiences about the following: 1) working with ELLs' and immigrant students' digital literacies and technology; 2) the teacher candidates' concerns about teaching with digital literacies and technology; 3) the digital literacies and technology the teacher candidates' had incorporated in their language teaching to help promote an understanding of and appreciation of diverse languages and cultures; and 4) ideas the teacher candidates had for

incorporating digital literacies and technology in language teaching to prepare ELLs and immigrants to live and work in a global society. This instrument was a model of what the MATESOL teacher candidates could use with their ELLs and immigrant students as a needs analysis to see what digital literacies and technology the learners and students already knew (or did not know) and what their proficiencies with these literacies were.

Course Artifacts

The course artifacts included the service-learning records (see Appendix A) the MATESOL teacher candidates kept of the service-learning work they did with their ELLs and immigrant students. The artifacts also included segments from the online threaded discussions that the MATESOL teacher candidates led and participated in throughout the course. The artifacts also included the work the teacher candidates submitted at the different benchmarks throughout the course and that were required for completing the service-learning project. These included highlights of discussions regarding the ELLs' and immigrant students' digital literacies as well as the candidates' discussions surrounding their service-learning projects.

Transcripts from Video Recordings of Weekly Zoom Meetings

The transcripts from the video recordings of weekly Zoom meetings with the MATESOL teacher candidates provided highlights of discussions regarding the ELLs' and immigrant students' digital literacies, as well as the candidates' discussions surrounding their service-learning projects.

Data for the study was analyzed for emergent themes and patterns related to the research questions regarding the service-learning projects, including the digital literacies of the ELLs and immigrant students (Chapelle & Duff, 2003). An analysis of the content of the teacher candidates' service-learning projects was coded and categorized according to the digital literacies contained within along with the issues of social justice the MATESOL teacher candidates either used or focused on in their projects. These categorizations were connected to the research questions that were the focus of the study of the effectiveness of the service-learning projects.

Spotlight on Combating Bullying, Connecting Newcomers, Building Bridges, and Becoming Members of Academic Communities: Digital Literacies Service-Learning Advocacy Projects

For this study, I chose four out of the 25 projects on which to focus my data analysis. These perspicuous digital literacies service-learning projects highlight both the implementation of digital literacies for English language learner and immigrant student advocacy into the MATESOL teacher candidate service-learning projects. Please refer to page 45 of this article for a list of the perspicuous digital literacy projects include a summary and, in some cases, a link to the finished products.

Rationale

The rationale for choosing these four projects out of the 25 that were submitted by the teacher candidates in the course included the following: a clear focus on the use of digital literacies in the service-learning projects, a clear definition of an issue of social justice that was

connected to the use of digital literacies in the service-learning projects, and a clearly stated purpose for how the service-learning project empowers ELLs and immigrant communities with the use of digital literacies. A more detailed look at these four service-learning projects is included in the discussion of the results of the analysis of these projects which follows.

RESULTS

The research questions I focused on in this study were how the MATESOL teacher candidates used service-learning as a TESOL teaching method and digital literacies to empower the ELLs and immigrant communities where they were working. The questions were as follows:

1. What digital literacies are the MATESOL teacher candidates most proficient in? What digital literacies are they least proficient in? What digital literacies did they incorporate in their service-learning projects?
2. What advocacy issues did the MATESOL teacher candidates focus on in their service-learning projects that tied to digital literacy proficiency?
3. Finally, how did the implementation of the service-learning projects empower ELLs and immigrant students and their communities?

The answers I found to these research questions are presented in the discussion of the results below.

Overall, the results of the analysis of the service-learning projects completed by the MATESOL teacher candidates in the online methods course on teaching with technology highlight different ways digital literacies help ELLs and immigrant students become digitally literate members in their various communities.

The digital literacies the MATESOL teacher candidates self-reported being most proficient in, figured as an average from the pre-course digital literacies survey data, were using and creating PowerPoint and Prezi presentations (3.6/5.0) and creating and using social media tools (for example, MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SnapChat, etc.) (3.6/5.0). The digital literacies the teacher candidates reported being least proficient in, figured as an average of the responses given on the pre-course survey, were creating and using WebQuests in their teaching (1.4/5.0). The digital literacies the teacher candidates incorporated in their service-learning projects reflect the results of the pre-course survey. The projects focus on digital literacies that include the following: the use of social media (blogging, twitter, Facebook), gamification, digital storytelling, and E-books. Some of the service-learning projects also focus on helping ELLs, including immigrant students develop their digital literacies for closing the digital divide by teaching typing skills and social bookmarking. The most common purpose the MATESOL teacher candidates had for implementing a wide array of digital literacies in their service-learning projects was for the ELLs and immigrant students to have access to digital literacies. For example, some MATESOL teacher candidates focused their service-learning projects on the purpose of access to communities, such as newcomer communities or communities of academic literacy practices. Other MATESOL teacher candidates focused their service-learning projects on access to digital literacies resources such as English language and literacy learning resources and technologies. Finally, other MATESOL teacher candidates focused their service-learning projects on how to prepare ELLs and immigrant students with the

digital and academic literacy skills they need to be successful in school and in a job in the 21st century.

The advocacy issues that the MATESOL teacher candidates focused on in their service-learning projects that they also tied to digital literacy proficiency in their service-learning projects included combating bullying, becoming members of academic communities, and overcoming poverty and issues of socio-economic status. Projects which spotlight these issues are discussed in the following paragraphs.

In Service-Learning Project 1 – Combating bullying of Latino/a immigrant high school students using digital literacies on social media, which can be found at -- <https://prezi.com/view/lb8mkBrlZamb9IXxGucV/> - the teacher candidate who designed this project focused on creating a type of project around blogging that allows students to express themselves and their backgrounds that can help with contributing to the culture of the classroom, English acquisition, and advocating for change behind the nationalistic attitudes toward ELLs and immigrant students. We see in the results from Project 1 that the use of social media was a means of solving the increase in bullying toward immigrant high school students, to advocate for change, and to inspire advocacy from the community. The use of social media provided an opportunity for the immigrant students to translanguage by telling and sharing their stories with the school community (Flores & Garcia, 2013). Immigrant students could combat the many divides they faced within the school and community, such as the digital divide, the language barrier, and the racial divide. They became the language and cultural experts for their school communities by being given the opportunity to share their funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). The use of social media gives a voice to those who are not heard (Banks, 2007).

In Service-Learning Project 2 -- Connecting newcomer immigrant students and their families with the school community with digital storytelling, available at <https://giuliabasile6.wixsite.com/website> - we see in the results that digital storytelling was a help to newcomer immigrant students and their families to “learning a new land” because of the triple segregation, such as race, poverty, and language, and unsettled un-belonging they face. The use of digital storytelling provided an opportunity for the newcomers and their families to translanguage by telling and sharing their stories with the school community (Flores & Garcia, 2013). By doing this, newcomers and their families could combat the many divides they face as newcomers to a school and community, for example the digital divide, the language barrier, and the racial divide. In turn, they became the language and cultural experts for their school communities by being given the opportunity to share their funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). In the analysis of the implementation of Project 2 as well as of the other projects, the results show the immigrant students’ digital literacies were what helped facilitate them becoming members of their communities by engaging them with the use of this type of digital literacies.

The implementation of technology increases the connection between immigrant students, their families, and the schools. Students had to interview their parents about what they did for work as a way of bringing that information into the classroom. This teacher candidate reported that she thinks that this idea could be built upon using a Podcast, where students could interview a family member in the home language. Then ELLs could translate it to help them recognize their own value as multilingual speakers. The work would not only feel relevant to the student, but it would also give the teacher a much more in-depth picture of what the students’ homes and families are like. It would solve the challenge of the teacher-family language gap, and it would not require parents to ever make it to the school-building, which is often difficult given their work schedules. The topic of this project could also be changed slightly to focus less on

profession; instead students could ask questions regarding one thing that a family member does well.

In Service-Learning Project 3 – Building bridges across digital and socio-economic divides for low income foreign language learners with digital literacies in Second Life – the project provided the potential to create simulated target language spaces that offer the same or similar stimuli as real-world immersion to language learners who do not have the financial means to afford to study abroad. An idea of what this looks like is represented in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. An example of a language learning classroom setting recreated in Second Life

The point for understanding is for students who are otherwise incapable of traveling to those real-world language environments. The issue the teacher candidate hoped to solve is that of the geographical and economic barriers to language learning for these students. There are many potential language learners who want to learn, but are unable to travel to fully immerse themselves, and in some cases, depending on the size and resources of their town/city, there might not even be classes being taught for those languages within a feasible distance.

Figure 2 highlights a language lesson on students introducing themselves in the target language and in the target culture, which emphasizes the use of digital literacies.



Figure 2. A group of language learners’ avatars posing for a selfie and self-introductions in the target language

Finally, Service-Learning Project 4 – Becoming members of academic communities of academic literacy practice – effectively utilizes technology to solve language teaching and learning issues in Indonesia. The teacher candidate focused his service-learning project on aiding language learners to become members of academic communities of academic literacy practices (Lave & Wenger, 1981).

revised Final Presentation.mp4

The current language policy in Indonesia does not promote English language well enough to prepare Indonesians to engage with international community.

problem description

a majority of Indonesian people (even the highly educated ones) have very low English proficiency.

EFL

Figure 3. Presentation of the Problem of Language Learning in Indonesia

The teacher candidate incorporated Cambly, a language learning application, for marginalized EFL learners in Indonesia in the expanding circle (Kachru, 1985). Figure 4 represents how Cambly will be the solution of language learning for Indonesian students.

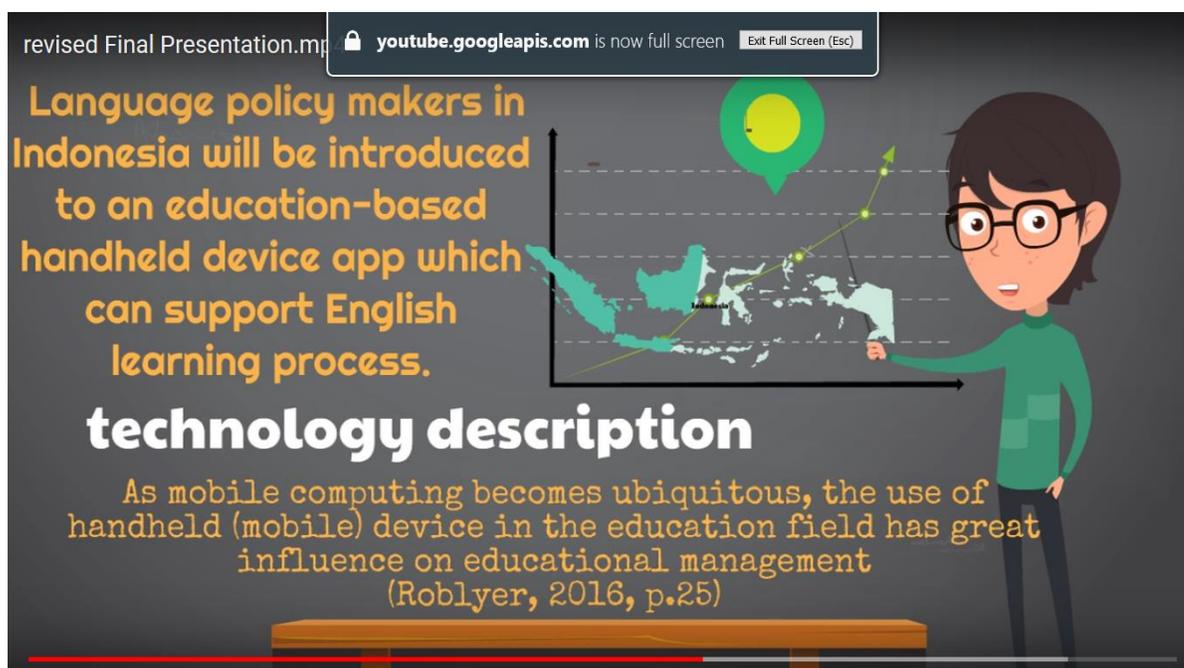


Figure 4. Presentation of Solution to Language Learning Difficulties for Indonesian Students – Cambly

The use of Cambly is an effective way to introduce ideas on language policy, which leads to the maintenance of Indonesia's national culture and identity while enriching Indonesians' linguistic repertoire. At the same time, various ethnic groups in Indonesia would be able to maintain their local languages while learning and using Bahasa Indonesia and English to compete successfully in globalization.

In summary, overall results from the four service-learning projects that were analyzed for this study show that not only will it make language education accessible to a wider number of people, but, with its more gamified nature, it should prove to be more motivating than normal massive online courses. With more research suggesting that virtual world education is proving to be very effective at eliciting student participation, something that is crucial to improving language skills, this course design might even be more useful for many students than traditional face-to-face classrooms.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The implementation of the digital literacies service-learning project helped ELLs and immigrant students find their place in the world and provided them with the power and agency they needed to make changes in their communities.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

One of the limitations of the study of the MATESOL teacher candidates' digital literacies service-learning projects is the limited amount of time the candidates had to implement their projects. As previously noted, the online course was accelerated, six weeks in length. Consequently, students in the course had limited time to learn about digital literacies and service-learning and how to design a service-learning project that they could implement. However, because of the limited class time, students did not have time to fully implement their projects within the English language learner and immigrant student communities they had chosen. Consequently, the implementation of the MATESOL teacher candidates' digital literacies service-learning advocacy projects with ELLs and in immigrant communities is a direction for future research and is discussed in more detail in the next section.

A second limitation to the study of the teacher candidates' service-learning projects is that the data collection did not occur over an extended amount of time. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, because of the accelerated nature of the six-week course, the teacher candidates did not have an extended opportunity to spend completing their service-learning with their ELLs and immigrant students. It is believed that an extended engagement with the digital literacies of ELLs and immigrant students would increase the reliability and validity of the data collected (Stake, 2000). Consequently, it is necessary for the teacher candidates to have a sustained amount of time to implement their service-learning work.

A third limitation to the study is the limited amount of student-generated data. The MATESOL teacher candidates did not have an adequate amount of time to collect samples of the digital literacies of the ELLs and immigrant students they worked with for their service-learning projects. As previously discussed in the Methods sections of this article, the triangulation of data sources for the study were generated primarily by the teacher candidates. For the candidates to have gathered data from the students they were working with, this would have required an extended engagement with them (such as, more than 6 weeks). Moreover, it would have provided a much more holistic picture of the students' digital literacies, the implementation of the service-learning projects, and the advocacy component of the projects. However, again, the time limitation did not allow for this data capture. Consequently, in the future, it is necessary to build extended engagement with the students into the study design, and an opportunity for teacher candidates to gather and submit a relevant number of samples of student-generated data.

Finally, because the online course was six weeks in length and the MATESOL teacher candidates did not have an adequate amount of time to fully implement their service-learning advocacy projects with ELLs and in the immigrant communities, a direction for future research is to follow-up with the candidates on the implementation of their projects. The following are some guiding questions that can be used to assist with the complete implementation: 1) What is your process for implementation? 2) Did your ELLs and immigrant communities have access to the technologies they needed to create their digital stories, for example? 3) Did the learners and students have the digital literacy proficiency they needed to complete this service-learning project? 4) What results do you see from the implementation of the service-learning advocacy projects? 5) Do the results show improvement in the digital literacies of the ELLs and immigrant students and positive change within the immigrant communities?

Using service-learning as a TESOL teaching method is a means of MATESOL teacher candidates to incorporate social justice in their teaching and advocate for their ELL, immigrant,

and newcomer students. Incorporating service-learning as a TESOL teaching method in an MATESOL Program is an opportunity for MATESOL teacher candidates to examine the teaching positions they would hold in schools and how they could help their students. Service-learning as a TESOL teaching method is a means for them to be agents of change in their classrooms, schools, and communities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Service-Learning Record

Your Name _____

Service-Learning Record

Please chart your visits to the agency or agencies where you are working with ELLs or immigrant students. You may volunteer at one or more sites, and you may help the same or different students.

Date	Agency Name & Location	Time Began-Time Ended (for example, 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm)	Student Information (Provide whatever information that you can glean, for example, First Name of Student, Grade in School, Home Language, English Proficiency Level)	Work Accomplished with ELL or immigrant student

Appendix B. Pre-Course Digital Literacies Survey

Select questions from the pre-course digital literacies survey --

3. What experiences have you had working with ESL/EFL/ELL/ENL students, their digital literacies, and technology?
4. What are some of your concerns about working with digital literacies, technology and ESL/EFL/ELL/ENL students?
5. What digital literacies have you promoted in your teaching? What technology have you used in your classroom to help promote an understanding of and appreciation of diverse languages and cultures?
6. How can we incorporate digital literacies and technology into our language classes to prepare our students to live and work in a global world?