STUDENT-CREATED VIDEOS AS A LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STRATEGY
FOR A HAITIAN LEARNER

by

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Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

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Dedication

This is dedicated to my family, specifically my mother and father, who have supported and inspired me every step of this journey, and to my brother, Michael, who read me my very first books.

Acknowledgements

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Abstract

STUDENT-CREATED VIDEOS AS A LANGUAGE ACQUISITION STRATEGY
FOR A HAITIAN LEARNER

Sarah-Jane Thomas, Ph.D.

George Mason University, 2017

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American schools are becoming increasingly diverse, with an estimated 17 million first-
and second-generation refugee and immigrant children residing in the United States.
English learners navigate the challenges of learning how to read, write, and speak a new
language, all while being expected to stay on grade level. Classroom teachers nationwide
are looking for engaging ways to meet the needs of their students, despite resource and
budget deficits. The purpose of this study was to explore the role that student-created
vodcasts, or video podcasts, may play in the English acquisition of a Haitian learner. This
research question morphed to focus on the perceptions and practices of this student's
middle school teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in using
vodcasting and other technologies to facilitate his English acquisition. A second research
question explored the role of sociocultural learning regarding the learner's creation of
vodcasts. Guiding bodies of research in this work included second language acquisition

research, particularly regarding identity formation involving brain-compatible teaching, sociocultural learning, and culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). Data collection occurred between January 2015 and May 2015. The student and his teacher shared their perspectives in six interviews each during the data collection process. Other data sources included 2 student-created vodcasts, 1 created in a group and 1 created by the student alone, a writing sample, and results from the previous school year of the state English as a Second Language Achievement Test (ESLAT). The teacher found that the vodcasts, in combination with other factors, helped the student reflect on his writing, particularly regarding punctuation, and that he overcame an error with comma splices immediately after recording a vodcast. The student found that the practice of vodcasting, in combination with other factors, helped him practice academic language, as required by his teacher for the assignment. The teacher allowed the student to work individually for the second vodcast assignment, and stated that the result was of much higher quality overall, particularly noting an increase in the amount of time the student spent speaking. The data indicated that vodcasting, in conjunction with other strategies supporting language acquisition, might have played a positive role in the student's progress in his ESOL class. Furthermore, according to both the student and the teacher, independent creation of the video was more effective for him than collaborative group work, which the teacher explained may have had causes rooted in the student's home culture.

Chapter One

Sampatkumar noted in 2007 that globalization is "the most compelling phenomenon that touches every country and every individual" (p. 71). This sentiment remained true a decade later, as evidenced by the sheer number of first- and second-generation immigrants in the United States. As of 2015, over 17 million of these children under the age of 18 lived in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). In some states, such as California, more than half of the population aged 16–26 were first- or second-generation immigrants, with over one third of students designated as English Learners (ELs; Hooker, McHugh, & Fix, 2014). Despite these large numbers, researchers have noted that teacher preparation programs are not always responsive to the need for the skills and understanding required to instruct culturally diverse students (King & Butler, 2015; Smith-Davis, 2004).

Working with ELs requires teachers to be skilled in helping students develop academic English in both the oral and written domains, culturally sensitive practices, and dealing with diversity (Samson & Collins, 2012). Although federal law requires professional development for any teachers and staff who work with ELs, individual states determine actual requirements for licensure. As of November 2014, 30 states did not have requirements for teacher preparation for working with ELs (Education Commission of the States, 2013). This poses a problem, as ELs around the United States might receive inequitable access to education. In general, EL students are disproportionally taught

disproportionally by underqualified teachers (López, Scanlan, & Gundrum, 2013) and, therefore, might be at a disadvantage for future academic success in the age of high-stakes, complex testing.

ELs might encounter multiple factors that are obstacles to learning English. First, they may face the challenge of learning how to read, write, and speak a new language while learning grade-level content in said language (Meskill & Mossop, 1997). With resource and budget deficits in many schools, K–12 classroom teachers nationwide are struggling to meet the needs of these students despite using innovative means (Schwartzbeck & Wolf, 2012).

Furthermore, Wren (1999) wrote of the "hidden curriculum," which he described as the imperceptible yet powerful influence of school culture, "the values and symbols that affect organizational climate" (p. 593). Regarding minority students, Vang (2006) stated that they "are being labeled and treated differently from their classmates. Although equally capable, they are receiving a second-class education" (p. 20).

The hidden curriculum is not explicit, but rather an unspoken way in which institutions and/or educators exert power over students. This hidden curriculum may take several forms regarding ELs, such as attitudes towards students' home cultures, amount of resources allotted to newcomers, and inclusion of material reflecting diverse characters. It also includes decisions about tracking students (e.g., gifted and talented or special education students) either consciously or unconsciously. This hidden curriculum presents a glass ceiling to students already challenged with learning a second culture and

language. This dissertation study was focused on the challenges faced by a Haitian EL, and strategies employed by his teacher to help him learn English.

Problem Statement

Given the growing number of Haitians in the United States, it was important to conduct research concerning this group of newcomers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (as cited in Buchanan, Albert, & Beaulieu, 2010), the number of people of Haitian background has risen significantly in the United States over the past 20 years, from an estimated 290,000 in 1990, to 548,000 in 2000, to 830,000 in 2009. In 2009, approximately two thirds resided in Florida (376,000) and New York (191,000) and had standardized state assessments available in Haitian Creole (Florida Department of Education, 2012; University of the State of New York, 2012). Some Haitian students face academic challenges because of factors such as poor and inconsistent educational support in the United States (Gibson, 2015).

Technology can be a valuable resource to differentiate instruction and teach all students, regardless of English proficiency. In 2016, Beschorner and Kruse discussed the continued need for meaningful instructional technology integration, referencing the focus of Common Core State Standards on digital literacy to prepare students to use technology to accomplish goals and solve problems. As stated by Meskill and Mossop (1997), many ELs reported that by using technology they could realize academic success they would not have otherwise achieved.

Several researchers have examined the academic achievement gaps between ELs and their peers across all content areas (Collier & Thomas, 2001; Haas, Huang, Tran, &

Yu, 2016; Jimerson, Patterson, Stein, & Babcock, 2016; Langman & Fies, 2010; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008; O'Conner, Abedi, & Tung, 2012; Ortega, 2014; Parker, O'Dwyer, & Irwin, 2014). As the number of ELs grows, this issue has gained importance within the American educational system. Lucido, Marroquin, Reynolds, and Ymbert (2008) also reported that "the increase in linguistic diversity . . . has led school districts to look for new ways to meet the linguistic and educational needs of the children of . . . newcomer groups" (p. 41). However, this has been challenging, because as Smith-Davis (2004) found, teacher preparation programs do not always include the skills and understanding required to instruct culturally diverse students. The development of teachers in this domain varies greatly by institution (King & Butler, 2015; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2008; Stoddart, Bravo, Mosqueda, & Solis, 2013).

Although adolescent immigrants are the fastest-growing segment of the secondary school population in the United States, researchers and educational institutions often overlook this group (Collier & Thomas, 2001; Gassama, 2012; Pàez, 2008, 2009; White & Gillard, 2011). Even more urgent is the situation of ELs from underrepresented areas, as is the case for many Haitian students. These students are less likely to receive as much support for their acquisition of English than more prominent ethnic groups, such as Latinos (Enander, 2009). They are at risk of having lower GPAs and graduation rates, and often are unable to pass high-stakes standardized tests (Carhill, Suarez-Orozco, & Pàez, 2008; Pàez, 2009).

Cavanagh (2004) further wrote of a language barrier existing for many Haitian immigrants that appeared to be preventing students from passing state examinations

required for graduation. When these students were unable to pass the examinations, written solely in English, they received a Certificate of Completion rather than a High School Diploma, which prevented them from enrolling in college to pursue higher education. Although these students might have had a grasp of the content on which they were tested, they were penalized for their lack of fluency in written English. Research to address solutions to these problems was necessary to help prepare all students for life beyond K–12 education.

In addition to the rapidly changing student demographics nationwide, innovative technologies are also evolving. Sox and Rubinstein-Avila (2009) discussed the pressure felt by educators to integrate technology into their daily instruction, while also balancing the different needs of learners, including ELs. In addition to different nationwide practices concerning teacher preparation in language acquisition (White & Gillard, 2011; Wiley & Lukes, 1996), many educators feel overwhelmed by the prospect of learning how to deliver technology-infused lessons to their students. Beschorner and Kruse (2016) mentioned that some teachers might be hindered by "lack of time, lack of professional development, [lack of] ability to integrate [technology] and still teach content, and [lack of] ability to integrate technology specific to . . . instruction" (p. 258).

Prensky (2012) noted that teachers' attitudes regarding technology might affect their students, who will, in turn, shape the future. Some educators need professional development on pedagogical strategies that work, such as facilitating a student-centered classroom. Such an environment empowers students and allows teachers to step into the

role of facilitators of learning, as opposed to merely transmitters of information (Jonassen & Land, 2012).

The federal government has recognized the need for purposeful integration of technology to facilitate equity and accessibility. The National Educational Technology Plan of 2015 included the statement, "When carefully designed and thoughtfully applied, technology can accelerate, amplify, and expand the impact of teaching practices" (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Technology, 2015, p. 10). Research addressing the purposeful integration of instructional technologies, such as the current study, can inform practitioners on strategies to meet the needs of all learners.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of this research was to investigate any role technology, specifically vodcasting, might play in the English acquisition of a seventh-grade male Haitian student. I examined the following research questions through the eyes of the student and his teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

Q1. What role might a teacher's use of vodcasting as an instructional strategy play in the English language acquisition of a middle school-age Haitian learner?

Q2. What role might collaborative working groups play in the English language acquisition of this student while engaging in vodcasting?

The first research question evolved from an earlier original question. The rationale for this change will be discussed in Chapter Three. My purpose in focusing on a Haitian student was two-fold. First, my parents immigrated to the United States from Haiti in the late 1960s. Second, although I was born here, I sometimes encountered

cultural dissonance and even faced stigmatization from my peers and teachers. Gelin (2002) and Kleyn (2008) described the racism and xenophobia faced by Haitian students and the struggle that many endure to maintain their cultural identity in such conditions. Therefore, I had a personal interest in the experience of Haitian students in American classrooms, navigating not only cultural but also linguistic issues. I wanted to explore possible ways to understand their challenges and provide potential solutions.

Significance of Study

With a goal similar to that of Green, Inan, and Maushak (2011), I sought to contribute "to the body of research on student-generated vodcasts by exploring a context that is severely under-represented both in the fields of instructional technology and . . . language acquisition" (pp. 1123–1124). A search of the ERIC database including the terms *education*, *technology*, and *ESOL* conducted on November 24, 2016 revealed only two peer-reviewed studies published in the previous 2 years. In neither study was vodcasting or Haitian students discussed. When I changed the latter search term to *English language learners*, there were no results. Similar searches on *p/vodcast** and *education* yielded few results.

Assumptions

Before beginning this research, I held several theoretical and methodological assumptions about the current study. Based on the research as outlined in the next chapter, I acknowledged that any student participant might have some challenges learning English. Several factors contribute to the acquisition of a new language; therefore, I believed that the process might be difficult, particularly with the additional challenge of

navigating a new culture. I also assumed, from my experience as an English teacher, that creating videos could help students overcome these challenges by helping to personalize instruction and engage students.

Regarding methodology, I assumed that the vodcasts would provide information about the student's use of academic English. Working full-time as a teacher, I was not able to visit the Haitian student's classroom because the study did not occur in my immediate area. Thus, I hoped that the vodcasts would help me see the student's progress through videos. I also believed that I would have a larger pool of participants, and originally planned to conduct a dual case study, with two teacher participants and at least one Haitian student in each classroom. However, this was not possible for reasons outlined in Chapter Three.

Finally, as a researcher, I assumed that those participating in this study would do so in good faith and that their responses would be honest. Although the design of the study did not include any potentially harmful topics, I requested that the participants choose pseudonyms to maintain anonymity. I further assumed that this study would be executed in a timely and accurate manner. In my proposal, I established a timeline to hold myself accountable for meeting various deadlines. Last, I assumed that anyone participating would do so of his or her own volition. Therefore, I made it very clear that anyone could drop out of the study at any time for any reason.

Definition of Terms

In this section, I define terms relevant to the current research that will provide the reader with necessary background knowledge.

BICS. Basic interpersonal communicative skills; conversational language, often used by students in social settings (Cummins, 1980).

CALP. Cognitive/academic language proficiency; command of the language of classroom instruction (Cummins, 1980).

English learner (EL). "An individual who was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English" and "who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English language proficiency" (U.S. Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965, p. 1540).

LEP. Limited English proficient; a governmental term indicating a student who was "not born in the United States or whose native language is other than English," those "who come from environments where a language other than English is dominant," or "individuals who are American Indian and Alaskan Native students and who come from environments where a language other than English has had a significant effect on their level of English language proficiency" (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001). This term may be regarded as pejorative. In this study, I will use the term EL.

L1. An individual's native language, mother tongue, home language, or first language (Cummins, 1980).

L2. A language beyond one's first language (Cummins, 1980). While some Haitian students might, in fact, be learning a third language (or L3, as noted by del Pilar Garcia-Mayo, 2011, p. 129), the identifier L2 is utilized in this document to reflect terminology employed in the bulk of the review of the literature.

Podcast. Internet-based radio shows or other audio programs available for download over the Internet, to be played on a computer or a portable digital music player such as the iPod® (Kim, 2011, p. 633). The name *podcast* is a portmanteau of the words *iPod* and *broadcast*.

Underserved population (in schools). Students in districts without adequate resources to meet the needs of ELs, particularly Haitian students. Examples of such resources are bilingual parent liaisons, interpreters, newcomer programs, home/school communication, and standardized tests translated into Haitian Creole, French, or both, as identified by Birman, Weinstein, Chan, and Beehler (2007).

Vodcast. Video podcasting; "vod" is an acronym for "video-on-demand" (Kim, 2011, p. 633).

Summary

As presented in this chapter, ELs often navigate a variety of challenges as they work to acquire English. Teachers in the United States receive varying levels of preparation in their pre-service programs, or through professional development in their schools or districts, about addressing ways to meet the diverse needs of these learners. Haitian students also sometimes face obstacles of racism and xenophobia because of their country of origin. In this study, I explored the experiences of a Haitian student and his teacher who used vodcasting technology as a tool for learning English. In Chapter Two, I present a conceptual framework and review supporting literature. Theories and research guiding the study came from the fields of second language acquisition (SLA); educational

technology; and identity formation, specifically culturally relevant and sustaining

pedagogy, brain-compatible teaching, and sociocultural learning.

Chapter Two

"American schools are failing because they cannot meet the complex needs of today's students" (Bronstein & Kelly, 1998, p. 1). This section provides a review of literature regarding the linguistic challenges faced by ELs. Research on SLA informed this study, with specific attention given to identity formation regarding sociocultural learning, brain-compatible teaching, and culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy. Literature on educational technologies such as podcasting and vodcasting also helped to shape the study. A visual representation of the framework used is shown in Figure 1. Conceptual framework.
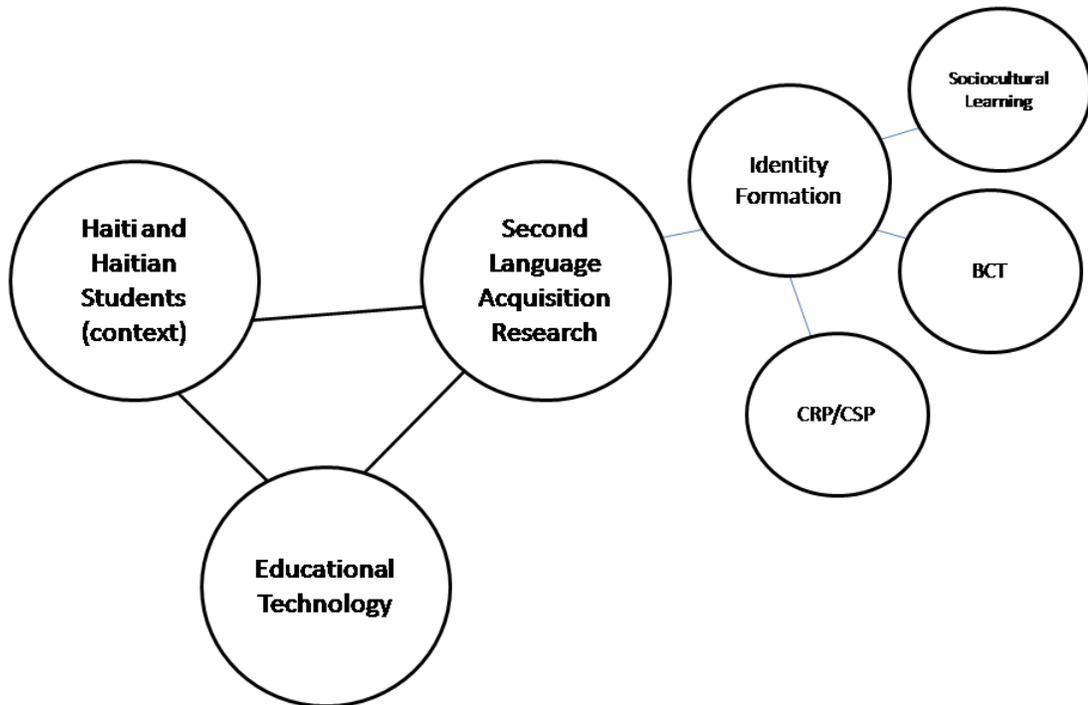
Figure 1. Conceptual framework. CRP = culturally relevant pedagogy; CSP = culturally sustaining pedagogy; BCT = brain compatible teaching.

Search Description

The research of C. Baker, Cummins, Suarez-Orozco, Ladson-Billings, W. Thomas and Collier, Ellis, and Pàez comprised the foundation of this study. I curated much of the literature presented beginning in February 2013, after I had successfully defended and revised my dissertation proposal. I last updated this section in May 2017. Search terms included *second language acquisition*, *Haiti**, *podcast**, *vodcast**, *education*, *technology*, *ESOL*, *English learners*, and other relevant terminology. To establish a context for this study, the history and culture of Haitian students immigrating to the United States must first be framed.

Haiti and Haitian Students

Five distinct waves of Haitian migration occurred in the United States before the earthquake of 2011. The first began immediately following François Duvalier's rise to power in 1957. This wave included members of the elite Haitian upper class, who were perceived as a direct threat to Duvalier's regime. The second wave took place during the beginning of Jean-Claude Duvalier's rule in 1971 and included members of the middle and lower-middle classes. The third wave ensued during the remainder of the Jean-Claude Duvalier era and attracted media attention, as the media labeled them the "Haitian boat people." The fourth wave occurred in the late 1980s and early 1990s, under the Aristide government and Aristide's exile in the United States (Stepick, Brott, Clapp, Tehoe, & Megi, 1984).

On January 12, 2010, a devastating 7.0 magnitude earthquake hit the island nation. According to C. Kenny (2012), "about 200,000 Haitians living in the United States without proper documents were granted 'temporary protected status' which allowed them to work–and send money home–without fear of deportation" (pp. 1–2). The U.S. government extended this temporary protected status through July 22, 2017 (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2015b). However, the United States did not extend full refugee status to Haitians, despite approximately 60,000 people still living in camps in Haiti as of 2016, exposed to diseases such as cholera and enduring unsafe living conditions ("Over 60,000 People," 2016).

Because of stigma in the United States, some young Haitians have historically presented themselves as members of other ethnic groups, which could lead to an underreporting in school district census data of the actual number of Haitians (M. Thomas, 1993; Wiley & Lukes, 1996). Families might also not report accurate national origin because of fear regarding immigration status (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2015a; U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2015; Von Hoffmann, 2016). These factors might pose challenges to Haitian students when adapting to a new country and culture, as well as in their process of acquiring academic English.

Second Language Acquisition

The field of SLA informs this study in several ways, particularly as it pertains to achieving academic language for school, and the teaching-learning factors and sociocultural aspects that support a student's successful pathway toward achieving proficiency. This section of the literature review is used to address those areas.

According to Brown (2000), success in acquiring a second language in school is dependent on several factors in two categories: psychological (learning, cognition, strategies, emotions) and social (cultural, sociolinguistic, pragmatic; p. 219). These various lenses, shaped by a given individual's characteristics, experiences, and background, interplay to influence success in acquiring an L2. For the purposes of this study, I focused on the cultural, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic categories as identified by Brown (2000).

Swain and Deters (2007) discussed the importance of an individual's identity formation in the SLA process, identifying four influences: "sociocultural theory of mind, situated learning, poststructural theories, and dialogism" (p. 820). According to these researchers, sociocultural theory is based on Vygotsky's work, in which he "posited a dialectic relationship between the mind and the social milieu" (p. 821). Situated learning "primarily examines cognitive mechanisms, such as in cognitive science" (p. 823), relating to the area of brain-compatible research. Finally, poststructuralism "refers to a range of theoretical approaches that focuses on the role of language in the construction of reality and identity" (p. 827). The researchers identified various poststructural influences including feminism, critical theories, and the immigrant experience.

In the current study, poststructuralism aligned most closely with the ideas of CRP as described by Ladson-Billings (1992), and the related culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) as described by Paris (2012). W. Thomas and Collier's (1999) research in language acquisition also drew from Vygotsky in several ways, including the use of scaffolding. I will explore the work of these researchers in a section later in this chapter.

Researchers have found that proficiency in English is highly predictive of overall academic achievement in both first- and second-generation immigrant students (Suarez-Orozco, Bang, & Onaga, 2010). Studying a sample of 282 students, Suarez-Orozco et al. (2010) found that only 7% of students had developed English proficiency equal to that of their native-born classmates. This discrepancy could lead to reduced comprehension of academic texts, and difficulty passing high-stakes standardized assessments.

Furthermore, researchers have widely noted that students who do not have literacy skills in their native language are less successful in SLA than those who can read and write in their L1 (Burtoff, 1985; Collier & Thomas, 2001; Dixon et al., 2012; Gonca, 2016; Guglielmi, 2012; Phoocharoensil, 2013; Stapp, 2007; Storch & Aldosari, 2010). As described by Gonca (2016), first language literacy skills have transferability in L2, whereby individuals often code-switch, or draw upon their prior linguistic skills to build upon a new language. Without this foundation, individuals might be at a disadvantage when attempting to learn academic English.

The information contained in this section pertains to the current study as it describes factors that can facilitate or impede English learning. This body of research provided information to help understand the background of the Haitian student in the study, as described in the next chapter. The following sections address theories in the field of SLA research.

Social and academic language. Upon entering American schools, ELs will encounter different registers of language. According to Cummins (1980), basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) apply to conversational language, often used

by students in social settings, while cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) aligns more with the language of classroom instruction. The more conversational BICS might be attained during a period of a few months or within as short a timeframe as 1 year (C. Baker, 2011). Recently, the terms *social language* and *academic language* have replaced BICS and CALP, respectively (Gandhi, 2017).

Of the two registers, I was more concerned with academic language because the research centered on a middle school classroom. Academic language is crucial to the understanding of academic content and passing high-stakes standardized assessments and, under optimal conditions, typically takes up to 7 years to acquire (Cummins, 1980). These conditions include socioeconomic status, proficiency in L2 social language, amount of interaction with peers, prior education in L1, and age.

Hakuta, Butler, and Witt (2000) stratified socioeconomic status by percentage of students receiving free and reduced meal services, and the average years of schooling attained by parents. They found that "students from lower socioeconomic status are the ones who on average are learning English more slowly" (p. 14). The researchers posited that although academic language could take 4–7 years to develop, this could be an underestimation because many students in their study had not been in the district for an extended amount of time.

Interaction with peers may also facilitate academic language proficiency. Carhill et al. (2008) conducted a quantitative study with 274 newcomer immigrant students ranging in age from 14–19 years. The researchers found that students who used English more frequently, even in informal settings, displayed higher academic proficiency. This

finding indicates that basic language fluency and proficiency at the social level may have a link to subsequent expanded levels of academic proficiency. Furthermore, Lockhart and Ng (1995) found that heterogeneous peer writing groups might be beneficial for ELs, as they could help learners develop a sense of meaning, audience, and purpose, all of which might positively affect motivation. These findings are relevant as they provide the background for my second research question involving sociocultural learning.

Prior education in L1 also played a role in an individual's pathway toward achieving academic levels of SLA. Students with interrupted or limited schooling tend to perform at academically lower levels than individuals with a strong educational background (Collier & Thomas, 2001). In a 2008 study of 29 adolescent Hispanic students, Fox, Kitsantas, and Flowers found a positive relationship between a learner's beliefs in his or her level of L1 academic proficiency and subsequent performance on oral English proficiency tests.

Regarding age, Cummins (1980) stated, "older learners, whose CALP [L1] is better developed, will acquire cognitive/academic L2 skills more rapidly than younger learners [under age 10]; however, this will not necessarily be the case for those aspects of L2 proficiency unrelated to CALP" (p. 180). He further reported that although older students might have had an advantage regarding syntax and morphology, younger students generally fared better in the areas of oral fluency, phonology, and listening comprehension. In other words, younger students tended to excel in BICS attainment, while older students fared better with developing CALP in their L2.

Language acquisition vs. language learning. For this study, I utilized the term *language acquisition*, as opposed to the term *language learning*. Krashen (1985) differentiated the two by implying that learning is imposed, whereas acquisition was an internally driven mechanism that highlighted the motivational aspect of a person's language development. Borko and Putnam (1996) stated that learning is "an active, constructive process that is heavily influenced by an individual's existing knowledge and beliefs" (pp. 674–675). This idea implies that learning is an intentional act; however, according to Krashen's (1985) definition, acquisition occurs more naturally, without conscious effort. Several researchers have debated Krashen's idea, identifying the need for intentional learning opportunities as well. Webb (2008) argued that incidental acquisition of vocabulary might be subject to misinterpretation without the learning of proper form. Such misinterpretations could cause anxiety and lower motivation for the acquisition of L2 (Zhao, Guo, Biales, & Olszewski, 2016).

To facilitate language acquisition, "perhaps a combination of intentional and incidental learning could definitely solve some issues that come from an only-incidental learning point of view and would enhance L2 learners' vocabulary learning experience" (Restrepo Ramos, 2015, p. 161). Similarly, Ellis (2016) described Long's (1988) focus on form (FonF) model of SLA that concerned incidental language learning within a school environment. Ellis (2016) further stated that while incidental learning is possible, the FonF paradigm makes students more likely to learn because they have made explicit connections to language structure and grammar. The FonF model relates to the current study, as the vodcasting exercise was a focus-on-form activity, as described by Ellis.

Ellis (2016), C. Baker (2011, 2014), L. Kenny (2011), and Collier and Thomas (2001) found many similarities between L1 and L2 language acquisition, including how linguistic skills develop faster in social situations, and how acquisition is facilitated during low-risk, informal experiences. In the current study, the teacher, CL, facilitated opportunities for her students to practice their L2 during group work. This also aligned with the concept of sociocultural learning.

Sociocultural learning. The area of sociocultural learning provides context to important aspects of the study as it particularly relates to Research Question 2, exploring what role collaborative groupings in vodcasting might play in the student's (Em) acquisition of English. According to Hubbard and Levy (2016), students are more likely to be engaged in learning when given opportunities to plan, create, and reflect with other students. Sociocultural learning worked best when students could participate in collaborative or cooperative learning, on "purposeful [activities]" (p. 30).

Regarding language acquisition, Lehesvuori, Viiri, and Rasku-Puttonen (2010) described how sociocultural learning provides ELs with opportunities to converse with their peers to acquire academic language proficiency while receiving feedback. These researchers characterized sociocultural learning as utilizing communication "as a tool, not only to transfer information but rather to engage students in 'talking their way' into the world" (p. 23). This theory further supported the transition away from traditional teacher-centered models in favor of student-centered models and peer learning.

Particularly regarding ELs, when moving to a model of peer learning cultural values might play a role in group dynamics. Phuong-Mai, Terlouw, Pilot, and Elliott

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(2009) discussed cooperative learning in a study of peer group dynamics in Vietnamese secondary schools. The researchers found that cooperative learning varies around the world, and suggested that educators should consider the home culture of learners when implementing the practice. Furthermore, "trust and identity are key underlying issues for anyone joining a new group" (p. 861). Some learners might prefer the ability to self-select their peer groups, "facilitated by existing friendships and affiliations" (p. 870), which could ultimately result in homogenous language groupings; however, in the present study, this was not possible for Em, as will be described in the next chapter. Implications of group work and collaboration align with the notion of brain-compatible teaching.

Brain-compatible teaching. Lucido et al. (2008) defined brain-compatible teaching as "a comprehensive approach to learning based on how the brain learns best" (p. 42), which lends itself to successful language acquisition. The authors identified several best practices, including "creating a positive, welcome learning environment with the absence of any form of threat" (p. 43). This also reflects Krashen's (1985) hypothesis of an affective filter, in which he posits that optimal conditions for learning include high motivation, high self-confidence, and low anxiety.

Lucido et al. (2008) recommended that teachers facilitate collaboration by implementing many opportunities for cooperative, structured learning using multiple intelligences activities (p. 43). Regarding multiple intelligences, Haley (2004) conducted an international action research study based on Gardner's (1983) work. At the time, Gardner had identified eight types of intelligence: kinesthetic, interpersonal,

intrapersonal, logical, musical, naturalist, verbal, and visual (as cited in Haley, 2004, p. 163). Haley administered an informal inventory to foreign- and second-language learners in Grades K–12, and participating teachers integrated the preferred learning styles of their students into their instruction. Findings indicated that students demonstrated growth in oral and written academic language, and additionally reported higher satisfaction with the course and their teachers. Haley's (2004) study provides support for the student-centered classroom, as will be explored later in this document.

Cooperative learning, the subject of the second research question, is one of "the most important components of second language learning" (Lucido et al., 2008, p. 47), providing students the opportunity to practice the target language in a low-risk setting. This approach connects with the notion of sociocultural learning as described in the previous subsection. In addition, Lucido et al. (2008) advocated allowing adequate time for students to participate in meaningful activities, and implied that students need to feel comfortable and secure in these cooperative and collaborative spaces. Teachers can help facilitate realization of these criteria by creating a classroom environment in which all students feel welcome.

Culturally relevant pedagogy with Haitian students. Ladson-Billings (1992) stated that matching school culture to student culture generally yields positive results. From this premise, she coined the term "culturally relevant pedagogy" (CRP), which she described as "a pedagogy of opposition that recognizes and celebrates African and African-American culture" with the primary goal being "to empower students and to examine critically social change" (p. 314). She also discussed the sharing of power in the

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classroom equally between teachers and students because education is an "empowering force" (p. 318). Further, Rhodes (2013) described CRP as a student-centered approach to eradicating cultural mismatches between home culture and that of the school.

This method respects the background of learners, such as Haitian students, and helps to avert the phenomenon of "not-learning," a term coined by Gao (2014) to describe a student's conscious decision to assert his or her power to reject learning. Furthermore, Au (2008) mentioned consequences for students in classrooms in which CRP is not practiced, describing possible student behaviors, and positing that in "ignoring the teacher, refusing to participate, turning in incomplete assignments, or acting out in class . . . student resistance can develop quickly if teachers signal their low regard for students' culture" (p. 70). It is, therefore, important to include CRP practices in schools and classrooms so that students know educators respect their home cultures.

According to Gay (2000), CRP practices (a) acknowledge the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, (b) build meaningfulness between home and school experiences, (c) use a wide variety of instructional strategies, (d) teach students to know and praise their own and each other's cultural heritages, and (e) incorporate multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools. Gay addressed the need to respect the cultural and individual differences of students and to embrace the skills that ELs bring with them, such as bilingualism. Using CRP acknowledges and embraces such differences, recognizing them as positive and encouraging students to share, thus adding to the richness of the classroom and learning experience.

Ballenger (1999), an American teacher of Anglo-Saxon descent, wrote about her experiences in teaching a Boston preschool class of Haitian students and her subsequent discovery of the importance of recognizing and embracing students' home cultures. She conducted observations of Haitian teachers, and noted the cultural nuances in their interactions with students. After conducting member-checks of her observations and reflecting upon her own strategies, she began to adapt elements of Haitian culture into her teaching. Examples of these changes included posing rhetorical questions to help students reflect, leveraging her students' pride in their families, and reprimanding students for exhibiting undesirable behaviors.

Paris (2012), building upon the works of Ladson-Billings, Gau, and Au, expanded the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy and introduced the idea of culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP). CSP "seeks to perpetuate and foster–to sustain–linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (p. 93). CSP pedagogy directly opposes the deficit model of some views of bilingualism, which employ terms such as *limited English proficient*. Paris (2012) critiqued the notion of relevance in CRP, implying that it was a passive approach. Instead, he suggested teachers advocate support of students' home languages and cultures, while simultaneously helping learners navigate the dominant culture.

Although CSP is relatively new, some educators utilized strategies aligning with the practice even before the term was coined. For example, Hudicourt-Barnes (2003), a Haitian-American educator and researcher, described the Cheche Konnen Project, which involved Haitian youths learning science in their L1. In this project, the name of which

means "to seek knowledge" in Haitian Creole, the researcher observed her workplace environment as a Cheche Konnen teacher. She explained that the practice of allowing students to debate topics in their native language allowed for discourse that was more congruent with the scientific method. Hudicourt-Barnes made suggestions that could be useful to teachers of Haitian students, affirming Ladson-Billings' (1992) assertion that teachers should move away from the "top-down," adult-centered initiation-response-evaluation view of pedagogy in favor of a student-centered learning environment.

One important aspect of the Cheche Konnen Project is that teaching and learning occurred in Haitian Creole. According to the Education Commission of the States (2013), 2.1% of EL students speak French/Haitian/Creole at home. Although French speakers may have originated from anywhere, including several African, Asian, and European countries, Haitian Creole is a language of its own and must be treated as such.

The Haitian context: Complex role of language for Haitian students. In addition to the stress originating from adaptation to a new way of life, Haitian immigrant youths must also overcome barriers to learning a new language. Under Haiti's Constitution of 1987, Haiti's official languages are French and Haitian Creole. All Haitians speak Creole, as it is the national language of the people; however, not all Haitians speak French. Katz (2003) described Haiti as a type of Francophone country in which French is a language of the upper classes, spoken fluently only by the highly educated and/or rich. Hebblethwaite (2011) estimated that 95% of the Haitian population is monolingual in Creole. Youssef (2002) expanded on this, stating: "monolingualism in

the Creole [sic] is normative for a population with little prospect of socioeconomic advancement" (p. 182).

Most documents in the country are written in French because there has been little interest in writing in Haitian Creole until recently. This linguistic incongruence may contribute to the country's literacy rate of 60.7% (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 2016). However, a 1979 law allowed Haitian Creole to become a medium of instruction in the classroom and established a nationwide spelling system for the language (Youssef, 2002). Although this law faced considerable resistance from members of all socioeconomic classes, Haitian Creole is now the medium of instruction in many Haitian elementary schools.

Upon entering United States schools, many Haitian students find themselves in an awkward position. Some educators in foreign language and ESOL classes have the mistaken perception that all Haitians speak French, that all Haitian students studied French in school, or that French and Creole are two varieties of the same language (Katz, 2003). As stated before, French is a high-prestige language in Haiti, and many Haitians assume that individuals must come from a higher socioeconomic background if they are fluent in the language. Thus, in an attempt to veil their socioeconomic backgrounds, Haitians who do not speak French might not address misconceptions in this regard, especially in front of other Haitian students. It is critical that American educators learn that Haitian Creole is not a bastardized version of French. Ignorance in this domain can lead to the misclassification of children into erroneously perceived levels of academic achievement.

This phenomenon is not unique to Haiti. According to Muysken and Smith (1995), "a creole language can be defined as a language that has come into existence at a point in time that can be established fairly precisely" (p. 3), and many contain elements of African, Indian, and European languages (pp. 10–11). The precise number of creole languages is unknown, but there are several creoles spoken throughout the world (A. Baker & Hengeveld, 2012). Au (2008) described her notion that Hawaiian Creole "was a language and not merely a form of broken English" (p. 66), which led her to study the history and culture behind it. While not advocating for instructor-driven use of Hawaiian Creole in the classroom, she stated that banning it was a rejection of the students and their culture.

Conversely, Haitian students who have studied in French may have difficulty reading in Haitian Creole. Therefore, to meet the needs of Haitian ELs, educational material should be translated into both French and Haitian Creole, which would also benefit Francophone students from other areas of the world such as West Africa, Asia, and Europe (M. Thomas, 1988). Translation of parental outreach materials (Katz, 2003; M. Thomas, 1993) is also necessary to help "ELL parents navigate school challenges" (Panferov, 2010, p. 111).

English language acquisition in Creole and French speakers. Learning English, Haitian children may find several similarities and differences between English and Creole. Similarities include word order, which in both languages generally follows the subject-verb-object rule, and the use of articles, which can be either definite or indefinite. However, confusion may arise concerning the system of pronoun use. In

Haitian Creole, there is only one form of the pronoun used for subject, object, and possessive, whereas in English there are multiple forms. Verb usage also differs; in Creole, there is no subject-verb agreement (Civan, 1994).

Regarding French, teachers might find it helpful to identify cognates in instruction, as many words in French and English have Latin origins and share meaning, spelling, and pronunciation (Gomez, 2010; L. Kenny, 2011; Larotta, 2011). Hammer and Monod (1976) conducted a quantitative study of 74 Anglophone tenth graders in three French classes and found rapid gains in French (the students' L2) when students received instruction highlighting phonemic and spelling differences in English and French cognates.

Uljin (1981) studied English language acquisition among 88 participants of Vietnamese origin. Students had some knowledge of French as an L2, generally acquired through schooling, but spoke Vietnamese as a native language. Uljin found that the use of cognates aided students in translation and vocabulary acquisition because French and English are lexically similar. I chose to include this study in the review of the literature because there is so little research concerning Haitian students, and this was one of the few studies in which students learned English as a third language, with French as an L2 learned in school.

According to Stepick, Brott, Clapp, Cook, and Megi (1982), "the best predictor of English proficiency was simply the years of schooling the students had received" (p. 27). Through formal schooling, students presumably learn academic language in their L1. Language skills are transferrable, as acquired competencies in an individual's L1 cross

over to their L2. Native language literacy training can thus serve a dual purpose by facilitating the acquisition of an L2 while bolstering cultural identity. Various developments in the field of educational technology also support SLA, as will be explored in the next section.

Educational Technology

Developments in the field of educational technology have helped teachers facilitate SLA for their students. New technologies are constantly emerging and evolving, many of which support language acquisition areas including sociocultural learning and brain-compatible teaching. This section is used to identify research in the field that is relevant to this study.

A qualitative study conducted in Greece featuring a random sample of 155 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at Eastern Mediterranean University was designed to analyze students' attitudes toward computers (Isman, Caglar, Dabaj, Altinay, & Altinay, 2004). The researchers utilized open-ended questionnaires to collect data during the fall semester of the 2002–2003 academic year. Because of the high student engagement with the content reported by participants, the researchers found that teacher-centered instruction was obsolete; in fact, they implied that the computer was the ultimate tool for sociocultural learning.

> Technology is the main support for the students [sic] learning development
> nowadays. With shifting from the teacher-centered instruction to child-centered
> instruction, the role, activities, attitudes, reflections [sic] of the students become
> more important concern [sic] to overlook the effectiveness of technology

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instruction. Computers are the main technology support as a tool for effective

learning and teaching process [sic]. (p. 11)

The researchers' stance provided more support for the use of technology to engage and

empower students through sociocultural learning. Over the last decade, technologies have

rapidly evolved.

Regarding technology to support English acquisition, Langman and Fies (2010)

collected data over a span of 3 days in a quantitative, single-subject design study. On Day

1, the researchers established a baseline, and on Days 2 and 3 they integrated a classroom

response system. The independent variable was the use of a classroom response system,

and the dependent variable was the amount of discourse in the classroom among the

students. The homogeneous language grouping of students yielded positive results with

respect to the quantity of student interaction, which educators may leverage to foster a

cooperative learning environment. The classroom involved in my study implemented

cooperative learning; however, the student participant was not able to participate in a

homogenous language grouping. Factors contributing to this will be discussed in the next

chapter.

Also in 2010, Perren implied that computer-assisted language learning methods

aligned with student empowerment and ownership of learning, leading to greater

engagement and enhanced motivation for language acquisition. When educators gave

students the opportunity to self-monitor and reflect on their learning, this helped to foster

a student-centered climate. Such a climate helps make students responsible for their own

learning, as discussed in Anderson (1993). There are instructional benefits to student-

centered climates. For example, learners might provide richer answers with more details, supported by their background knowledge (Krahenbuhl, 2016; E. Lee & Hannafin, 2016; Li & Guo, 2015).

The creation of podcasts and vodcasts may help support the student-centered classroom. In his analysis of educational "podagogy" (p. 471), Rosell-Aguilar (2007) supported the idea that language learning tasks should "be collaborative, interesting, rewarding, and challenging; provide opportunities to produce target language; [and] be interactive and include reporting back of the communicative outcome" (p. 488). Educational technology usage for activities in which students create to demonstrate mastery can help bridge the digital divide as students produce content as opposed to being passive consumers (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

However, certain barriers may impede implementation. For example, educators may experience what Kim (2011) described as technology shock, "the psychological reactions to unfamiliar technologies" (p. 638). Despite this, Ransdell, Kent, Gaillard-Kenney, and Long (2011), in a study of 100 participants stratified by birth year, found that older participants performed better than their younger counterparts in digitally infused learning opportunities. The researchers proposed that the variation was due to social reliance and a higher external locus of control in the older group. Ransdell et al. (2011) also found that younger students (born after 1982) might need more encouragement to participate and collaborate with classmates. The researchers also advocated for the teachers of millennial students to employ active, student-centered

models of instruction. Em, the student in the current study, may fit Ransdell et al.'s definition of a millennial, having been born in the early 2000s.

Some technological tools allow students to speak their responses, which may help ELs. As they learn a new language, they might communicate more easily without the constraints of spelling and grammar. Along these lines, podcasting and vodcasting are low-cost technology strategies geared towards the novice operator. Both strategies have several potential educational uses, such as remediation, providing feedback, and providing supplemental content, as will be explored in the next section.

Podcasting. Kim (2011) defined podcasts as "Internet-based radio shows or other audio programs available for download over the Internet, to be played through a computer or on a portable digital music player" (p. 633). She discussed the use of podcasting and blogging instruction in an ESOL teacher education program, with the goal of demonstrating how the tools can work with ELs. L. Lee (2009) previously found that L2 learners needed additional opportunities to listen to authentic output outside the classroom setting, a need that is addressed by podcasting.

Many inexpensive tools to facilitate the podcasting process are accessible to the public. For example, Audacity (Audacity Team, 2008) software is available free of charge for both Mac and PC platforms, and allows users to incorporate voice, music, and sound effects to create a recording of their choice. Another option is GarageBand (2017) software for Mac, which not only has a feature for podcasting, but also allows users to create high-quality musical selections with royalty-free loops. Once finished recording,

users have the option of saving the podcast to their computer or audio device, or sharing it with an unlimited audience via the Internet.

Podcasting has many uses in the classroom, such as sharing teachers' notes, distributing lectures directly to students' MP3 players, serving as a platform for student projects, and archiving oral histories (Rosell-Aguilar, 2007, p. 475). As noted by L. Lee (2009), "producing podcasts is less anxiety provoking than speaking in front of the class, and the process of recording podcasts not only enhances students' pronunciation but also boosts their speaking ability" (p. 427). Smythe and Neufeld (2010) studied podcasting methodology in their qualitative observation of an EL middle school classroom in which students utilized GarageBand to record their original writings to share with "little buddies" (p. 488) from a partnering third-grade classroom. The researchers noted that many students who were initially reluctant to write and revise their original stories fully embraced podcasting.

Vodcasting. Podcasting has grown to encompass video broadcasts, a process known as vodcasting. According to Piezon and Donaldson (2007), "vodcasting provides students visual cues that may enhance their understanding of course materials" (p. 2). Vodcasting has also become more accessible, as producers no longer have to buy expensive camcorders to create their videos. Inexpensive and free alternatives are now on the market, such as integrated cameras in smartphones and tablets, in conjunction with extensions, applications, and tools such as YouTube Live.

Engin (2014) studied the relationship between student-created videos and English writing proficiency in a higher education setting. She stated that, "although technology

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can *enable* learning, it does not necessarily *ensure* learning" (p. 13). This implies that technology should be integrated purposefully, or it is in jeopardy of being merely another addition to the growing list of demands imposed on teachers. Engin's conceptual framework centered on a model of peer teaching, similar to the current study's exploration of collaborative group work; however, in Engin's 2014 study, students created videos with the explicit goal of using them to teach other students. Engin found that having students summarize and explain further enabled them to practice their fluency and accuracy, and bolstered comprehension. Participants had to devote more attention to their language usage, which they reported motivated them to improve. "Very simply, by teaching the topic, the learner learns" (p. 14). Similarly, Green et al. (2011) also found that students were motivated to create higher quality vodcasts when peer feedback was introduced, further supporting the value of of sociocultural learning and brain-compatible teaching.

Summary

In this chapter, I identified a conceptual framework anchored in the research and literature of three principal areas: SLA, educational technology, and sociocultural learning. In the broad third area, sociocultural learning, I also discussed culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogy as they encompass the role that culture plays in student learning. Aspects of culture relevant to this study include a student's culture and the important role it plays in learning.

Practices such as student-centered instruction help engage learners. Integrating educational technology helps create space for student-centered instruction in which the

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teacher serves as a facilitator of learning. In addition, brain-based learning research reveals the value of challenging students to demonstrate their learning through the creation of a video. Finally, sociocultural learning sets a positive stage for opportunities for discourse, dialogue, and reflection.

Several studies referenced in this chapter indicated positive results when teachers meaningfully integrated technology into instruction. Vodcasting was the main tool used to enhance language acquisition in this study. The following chapter details the research methods used for the current qualitative study to explore the experiences and perspectives of a seventh-grade Haitian male student (Em), and those of his ESOL teacher (CL), while using the practice of vodcasting.

Chapter Three

In this study, I used qualitative methodology to explore a Haitian youth's learning experiences through vodcasting, and to consider the role that vodcasts might play in the student's acquisition of English. The research spanned a 5-month period, and was situated within an ESOL class in a public middle school located in the upper Atlantic region of the United States. I examined the research questions through a relative ontology, which according to Guthrie and McCracken (2010) "indicates that there are multiple realities" (p. 83). I interviewed both the teacher and a Haitian student in the class to help identify their perceptions, backgrounds, and beliefs, which in turn shaped their realities. While some of the findings of this study might apply to other similar situations, my intention was not to achieve generalizability. This study was important to me as a researcher, given my background of Haitian descent and interest in technology. Furthermore, for most of my career as an educator I taught technology and English Language Arts. Therefore, I had a strong professional interest in the topic.

Research Questions

Initially, the research questions guiding this study were:

Q1. What role might vodcasting play in the English acquisition process of a middle school-age Haitian learner?

Q2. What role might collaborative working groups play in the English language acquisition of this student while engaging in vodcasting?

Tracy (2012) described the process of writing questions and advised "keep[ing] in mind that research questions . . . should guide, but not dictate your research path. They will continue to morph throughout the data-gathering, analysis, and writing processes" (Research Questions/Foci, para. 2). This was the case in the current study. Initially, the student, Em, was the subject of Q1; however, during the process of data analysis, I realized that there were more data on CL's (the teacher) instructional practices and experiences. As Em was reserved in the initial interviews, his answers did not allow for a thorough analysis of the first question. In total, Em and I spoke for 69 min over our six interview sessions, although he used a significant portion of this time in Session 5 to locate and play his vodcast. CL and I, however, spoke for a total of 101 min. Her responses were detailed and provided enough information to analyze Em's learning progress in the context of decisions that she made to structure the class. Therefore, I revised Q1 to reflect CL as the subject. The new question reads:

Q1. What role might a teacher's use of vodcasting as an instructional strategy play in the English language acquisition of a middle school-age Haitian learner?

Agee (2009) stated that "a qualitative study does not begin with a hypothesis or a presumed outcome as is the case in a quantitative study . . . however, a qualitative study cannot begin without a plan" (p. 433) for ethical and practical reasons. I designed the research questions to study the progress of a Haitian learner using technology for English acquisition, and revised them as the study progressed for the reasons stated above.

Context and Setting of the Study

This study was conducted in a middle school that served a multicultural

population of students in Grades 6, 7, and 8. The school offered linguistic services such

as a dual language program and ESOL. Five percent of the students at the school received

ESOL services, currently renamed ENL, as seen in Table 1.

Table 1

School Facts at a Glance (2014–2015)

Enrollment parameter	Percentage
Ethnicity	
White	35
Hispanic	38
Asian	4
Black	22
Multiracial	1
American Indian	0
Pacific Islander	0
Gender	
Male	53
Female	47
Other Groups	
English learners	5
Students with disabilities	15
Economically disadvantaged	54
Grade	
Sixth	34
Seventh	34
Eighth	31

Note. From "[State] Schools: Enrollment data 2014–2015," by [State in which study was conducted] State Education Department, 2015.

The school had two fully equipped computer labs, as well as wireless labs, additional computers in all classrooms, and SMART boards throughout the building. The school website included an Acceptable Use Policy, which included the statement: "The purpose of the District system is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information." In addition, a web page about Internet Safety listed two resources for parents, educators, and students.

The largest segment of the student population identified as Hispanic. Em was a Haitian (Black or African American) English learner, one of only four Black or African American EL students in the school. As the data were not aggregated by country of origin, it was unclear how many of these other students might have also been Haitian. It was possible that students came from other countries; however, both the student and teacher in this study confirmed that there was at least one other Haitian student in the school. Of the Black ELs, one female student was in sixth grade, two male students (including the participant) were in seventh grade, and one male was in eighth grade.

The seventh-grade ESOL class in this study included students who had achieved various levels of proficiency in academic English. A "School Report Card" page for schools across the state aggregated the data for all students in the school by grade level for the 2014–2015 school year. During the academic year in question, 33 students took the seventh-grade state English as a Second Language Achievement Test (ESLAT). Twelve percent of students scored "Beginning," 24% scored "Intermediate," 42% scored "Advanced," and 21% scored "Proficient."

The class did not have a set curriculum to follow, but the teacher used the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2012) to guide her instruction. She could adjust the pacing, as she did twice during our interview sessions: once when students had difficulty understanding pronouns, and a second time when they struggled with using quotations appropriately. Data collection occurred during the third quarter of instruction of the school year. CL had also taught Em the prior school year. A research matrix, addressing tools for answering specific research questions, is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Research Matrix

Research Questions	Data Sources
What role might a teacher's use of vodcasting as an instructional strategy play in the English language acquisition of a middle school-age Haitian learner? What role might collaborative working groups play in the English language acquisition of this student while engaging in vodcasting?	Teacher interviews Student interviews Student-created vodcasts ESLAT scores Student written work

To answer the two research questions, I examined a variety of data sources. Given the qualitative nature of this study, data sources consisted mainly of interviews with CL and Em, as well as Em's vodcasts. Specifically, six interviews with the student and six interviews with the teacher occurred. In addition, CL provided the results of Em's ESLAT from the prior school year.

Participants. Finding participants for this research study was challenging. Initially, I planned to include multiple classrooms with at least one Haitian student in each class. Preliminary searches for appropriate participants included school districts with headquarters located within a 25-mile radius of my university, in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States (Home by School, 2011; MapQuest, 2012). I also included the school system in which I worked because I presumed that it would be easier to find participants there. Next, I identified the number of Haitian students in those counties, and investigated the services available to Haitians, as reported on school district websites. A summary of the results is included in Table 3.

Table 3

Preliminary Search Results by County

School district	Headquarters distance from University (miles)	Number of Haitian Creole speakers	Services available in Haitian Creole reported on website
A	3.64	None reported	None
B	5.96	52	None; translation options on the home page in Asian and Arabic languages, as well as Spanish
C	11.66	< 7 (Reported as "Creoles and pidgins [Other]")	None; options on EL page were English, Spanish, Amharic, and Arabic
D	15.28	6	None; translation options at the top of each page in Spanish, French, Vietnamese, and other languages

(continued)

Table 3 (continued)

School district	Headquarters distance from University (miles)	Number of Haitian Creole speakers	Services available in Haitian Creole reported on website
F	22.47	2	None; site and translated documents available in Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Korean, Spanish, Twi, Urdu, and Vietnamese
G	24.32	No data reported; however, Haitian Creole services reportedly exist	None; translation options in Spanish, French, Vietnamese, and other languages
H	34.26	86	Haitian Creole interpreters available upon request; TransAct document service available, but not functioning properly; certain documents available in Haitian Creole

School districts B and H appeared to have the highest reported numbers of students of Haitian descent. Although school district H appeared to provide more support for Haitian parents, B did not identify any supports in place. At a recent statewide meeting, school district H reported on the need for an "expanding [of] services and resources dedicated to [ELs, such as] parent workshops, special events, interpreting services, multi-lingual communications channels and a dual language assessment team" (Commission to Study the Impact of Immigrants in Maryland, 2011, p. 7). However, all attempts to solicit participants in this region were futile.

On February 3, 2013, my committee accepted the revisions to my dissertation proposal, and the data collection phase began. That same day, I submitted a research proposal to school district H, but it was ultimately declined, even after revision. In April, I contacted the director of the ESOL program of district B by email, but received no

response. The following month, I contacted another person in her office who asked me for more information regarding the research study. After I submitted the requested information, he said that he would contact me, but did not do so. Furthermore, he was unresponsive to an email I sent a month later to inquire about the status of my request.

Later that year, I connected with a school in the southeastern region of the United States. This connection was facilitated by a friend of a family member who had recently retired from teaching in that district. I corresponded with the vice principal of the school through email, beginning in January 2014, when she told me about an ESOL teacher at the school who might be interested. In April of that year, I went to meet with the vice principal and the teacher, who committed to the project. Shortly thereafter, I received approval from my institution's review board, and successfully applied to conduct research in the district.

In July, the vice principal transferred to another school. Attempts to correspond with the teacher were often unsuccessful, but eventually we arranged to meet in person in November. In addition, I contacted another nearby school as a potential second site for research and prepared a summary of the project for review by the principal of that school (see Appendix C). At the first site, the ESOL teacher reconfirmed her interest in the project and introduced me to another teacher on her team who also agreed to participate. We arranged to communicate through a video call using Skype software, but she later emailed me, asking me to postpone the study until after the winter break. She also informed me that her colleague was dropping out of the study because "she has a lot on her plate."

In December 2014, the principal of the second site introduced me to a Haitian teacher who expressed interest in the project. However, the teacher emailed me a few weeks later, stating, "I'm sorry to have to tell you that I cannot help you with the study. I really wanted to but my plate is really overflowing and I can't take on anything more." She then advised me to contact the principal to find a replacement. The principal did not respond to my email.

The following month, I contacted the teacher from the first site to reschedule a date to connect on Skype but she told me that she could no longer participate in the research study. Instead, she gave me the contact information of her school's technology teacher, who did not respond to my phone calls or emails. From February 2015 to February 2016, I directly contacted principals in the district through email regarding the study, but none of them responded. This district tested every day of the school year except 8 (Veiga, 2014), which reduced the amount of instructional time to deliver curriculum, while simultaneously raising the pressure with high-stakes assessments.

This phenomenon was not limited to this area. In October, another teacher from the same state also committed, then withdrew because she felt overwhelmed with work and personal commitments. A few months later, a principal at another school introduced me to an ESOL teacher who responded, "I am swamped with school work." Other districts declined for reasons that included not accepting research from external doctoral students, being "a very busy time as [they were within their] testing window," and not classifying students by country of origin. Several districts did not even respond. Other attempts included posting requests in forums of national language organizations and

soliciting the help of educational technology companies aligned with student creation. However, I found CL and Em through an unexpected channel.

The role of social media. April 2013 was a landmark in my professional career, when I first began using social media to connect with other teachers around the world. I created my professional Twitter account at a conference on educational technology to interact with fellow attendees. Soon thereafter, I began to learn about Twitter chats, which provided professional learning opportunities in which educators assembled on the platform at a given time to discuss a topic using a hashtag.

I became very active in my social media usage and made many connections with other teachers. At first, I would ask at the end of chats (e.g., #ellchat) if any of the participants taught middle school Haitian ELs. Then, I used hashtags frequented by teachers of ELs, such as #ESOL and #ell, which were curated by a retired educator from Florida on his "Educational Hashtags" page (Blumengarten, 2017). This process of online solicitation via social media continued for nearly 2 years. Several educators expressed interest in my project, but those who volunteered did not work directly with Haitian students, and second-hand introductions did not yield any results. Ultimately, the sole viable connection was established through another social media platform: Voxer (2017).

According to Voxer's "FAQ" page,

Voxer is a live messaging application that brings push-to-talk technology to smartphones. Our service features live and recorded voice—if you push the button to talk, you can be heard on the other end as you speak, but everything is also

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simultaneously recorded so you and the recipient(s) can play back any message later.

Unlike other push-to-talk services and systems, Voxer also has integrated text, photo, and location sharing which can be sent alongside voice messaging. You can talk to individuals or groups—select up to 5 chat participants to communicate with at once (or up to 500 using Voxer Pro). (Voxer, 2017)

Throughout the years, many educators have turned to Voxer and other social media tools to build personal and professional learning networks (Krutka, Carpenter, & Trust, 2016). In September 2014, I was approached to co-moderate a popular Voxer group focused around general education topics. In January 2015, through this group, I met a principal who was interested in the current study. She introduced me to Em and CL, who were enthusiastic about participating. After I had secured the necessary consent and assent, the study commenced in January 2015 and terminated in May 2015.

Em. Em was in the seventh grade, having moved from Haiti to the United States 2 years previously. He had a keen interest in art, especially drawing, which was a frequent topic of our conversations. He also enjoyed comic books, identifying *Iron Man* (S. Lee & Lieber, 1963) as his favorite. Em, described by CL as "a very quiet boy," was indeed reserved during the initial interview sessions, although always very pleasant. However, through the weeks, we bonded over our mutual interest in cartoons and shared Haitian

ethnic background. By Session 6, Em shared quite freely about his learning preferences, as well as his experiences as a student in Haiti.

Em spoke Haitian Creole fluently and reported that he had learned French at school in Haiti, although he had since forgotten it. Em described himself as "comfortable" in terms of reading, writing, and speaking English, and in the prior school year, had tested as "Intermediate" on the state ESLAT. According to a Question and Answer document from the [State in which study was conducted] State Education Department, Office of State Assessment (2015), this meant that he showed "some independence in advancing his or her academic language skills." The [State] ESLAT specifies further that "a student at this level has yet to meet the linguistic demands necessary to demonstrate proficiency in a variety of academic contexts within this grade level."

Em stated that he enjoyed using technology, mainly for entertainment purposes. When I asked him about his favorite thing regarding computers, he responded, "Games. You can see movies and everything you want to watch." At home, Em had access to an iPad and a computer, but the latter was broken. Regarding technology access at school, he said that he enjoyed using computers for homework. He elaborated, "I use computers to do homework and then if I'm done with my homework, I can pick anything I want." We spoke briefly during his initial interview about his perceptions of creating videos in class, and he affirmed that the strategy helped him learn the content in his ESOL class. He was curious about my background, and during Session 1 asked me when I came to the United States. I told him that I was born here, and that my parents immigrated in the

1960s, after which my brother was born. He then told me about his older sister, who was in high school.

At the time of the study, Em lived with his father and had an older sister who was in high school. His teacher, CL, shared with me thus during a session: "I know his mom is back in Haiti, and I think things are hard at home financially. I've called home a few times and the father is always working." She continued that he adored his mother, but did not speak much about her since he was very private. CL felt that Em's dedicated, family centered, and respectful personality traits seemed to align with those of other Haitian students that she had taught over her 6-year career.

CL. CL had been teaching ESOL for 6 years, and had used iPads in her classroom for the previous 4 years to spark the creativity of her students. She integrated technology seamlessly and purposefully throughout her instruction, having been introduced to educational technology by a colleague. "I began with nothing, with no clue. . . . With [the Library Media Specialist's] guidance and training from the school, my principal was really supportive." She described a recent observation of another administrator who was impressed by her integration of technology into her instruction. CL was very mindful about the purposeful integration of technology, and embraced trying new strategies and tools in her classroom, often learning with her students.

The school district in this study subscribed to Google Apps for Education, "a suite of tools that can help [teachers] increase opportunities for critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity, all while supporting . . . learning objectives" (Bell, 2017). CL reported that she often used Google Docs with her students

for peer editing, and for students to share final copies with her for grading. In addition, she believed in peer and collaborative learning, and created a student-centered community in her classroom. She would often assign group projects for students to create videos together, which the class would then view, providing constructive comments.

In addition, CL sometimes saved these videos to show to future students. According to her, this motivated the student creators to give their best efforts, as they knew that others would be watching their videos. CL also used a document camera, also known as a visualizer, for instruction. This device allowed students to project their work to the front of the room so that they could provide each other with constructive criticism. This practice further supported a student-centered model, as CL took on the role of facilitator. She also felt that the broadcasting of the vodcasts to the class helped to motivate students. "I think they know that their work could be displayed so they did a little extra effort, maybe because it was right there for everyone to see."

In addition, CL uploaded class material on a wiki, "a web page that can be freely viewed by anybody. . . . the page can also be modified through the Internet access and [the] Web" (Al-Shareef & Al-Qarni, 2016). Her students were familiar with the process of accessing the wiki to share, facilitating a paperless classroom. She also reported heavy use of the Notability iPad application, in which students could record their voices and videotape themselves speaking about the content of a given document.

Toward the end of the study, CL acquired an Apple TV, which replaced the document camera for in-class peer viewing. She and the students worked together to assemble it because she was unfamiliar with the device. "They are really tech-savvy, my

ELs. . . . they really are resources for me," she told me. CL also said that her ESOL students probably knew more about utilizing technology for learning than those in other classes, because the flexibility in curriculum pacing gave her more time to teach them how to use online tools to collaborate.

Regarding CRP, CL understood the concept to mean showing respect for all the various cultures present in her classroom and utilizing content that reflected the background of her students. She elaborated by saying that it "uses their culture and things that they recognize to help them to learn English."

Like most of her students, CL's native language was Spanish. However, she was also fluent in English and had learned French in school. This skill allowed her to speak to a student in his or her L1 in most cases, which, according to her, was unusual for an ESOL teacher. She had only taught one student whose native language she did not know; however, this student had come to her already having a high level of proficiency in social English.

In terms of brain-compatible teaching, CL first heard the phrase in her graduate studies. She interpreted it to encompass the notion of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983). She stated that although she could not touch upon every learning style in the class, she used visual stimuli, manipulatives, and kinesthetic movements. At the beginning of each class, she had a mini-lesson introducing new content, but she provided students with ample time for creativity. Students also wrote nearly every day, and she promoted communication and collaboration among students through group work and class discussions.

CL said there was no such thing as a normal day in her classroom. As an ESOL teacher, she was flexible in adjusting the pacing of her class to meet the needs of her students. She followed a general routine in which the class would engage in a mini-lesson to introduce new content. The rest of class time was then a work session in which students would collaborate with their peer groups to discuss and create something. She placed a high emphasis on writing and dialogue through class discussions.

Data Collection

Data collection began in January 2015 and lasted until May. This collection process consisted of teacher and student interviews, which were audiotaped and transcribed (see Appendices A and B for interview protocols). While the Haitian student was the only learner interviewed, the teacher delivered instruction to the entire class to facilitate the creation of summative vodcasts. In addition, the teacher provided Em's ESLAT scores from 2014.

According to the Question and Answers document from the [State in which study was conducted] State Education Department, Office of State Assessment (2015), the ESLAT is given annually to all K–12 ELs in the state. The results determine a student's "growth in English language proficiency, continued eligibility, and the amount of program services in an English as a New Language (ENL) and/or Bilingual Education (BE) program the student is eligible to receive." A student is no longer eligible for ESOL services once he or she scores "Commanding/Proficient" on the test.

The ESLAT is aligned to Common Core state standards, and includes components addressing the following: (a) speaking, in which the student responds to given prompts

using spoken English; (b) listening, whereby the student listens to an audio passage and responds to multiple-choice questions about the selection; (c) reading, in which the student reads a text and responds to questions about what he or she read; and (d) writing, in which a student responds to a written prompt.

The teacher also supplied a writing sample of Em's, as well as an informal report of his progress at the end of the school year. Before interviews started, I communicated with the school's principal through Voxer and had an email interchange with CL to understand the context of the classroom and school. In the process of the interviews, I made a concerted effort to build rapport with the participants to allow each interviewee to describe his or her views in the context of the learning.

Instruments

The teacher and student interview questions were similar in nature to those in a questionnaire utilized by Gallardo del Puerto and Gamboa (2009), and were used to investigate: (a) perceptions from both participants regarding technology as a tool for English acquisition; (b) student progress with English acquisition, including vocabulary and comprehension; (c) student perception and progress in working with a collaborative group; (d) teacher and student frequency of technology use in class and for other purposes; and (e) potential problems perceived by the teacher in implementing these technologies.

Additional teacher interview questions addressed the issues of familiarity and level of comfort with CRP and brain compatible teaching, level of comfort with instructing linguistically diverse students, and perceptions surrounding learner

motivation. These questions aligned with Patton's (2002) suggestions for qualitative question content, which included themes such as experience/behavior, opinion/values, feeling, knowledge, sensory, and background/demographics.

The interviews followed a semi-structured format. Before each session, I constructed an interview guide for the day's questions, and used probes ("questions or comments that follow up on something already asked" [Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 123]) whenever appropriate. These probes helped to clarify and expand upon the interview questions.

Procedures

In the current study, I conducted six individual interviews each with both Em and CL through Skype from January to May 2015. These interviews, conducted in English, were transcribed verbatim. Interviews with CL occurred after school, generally in the evenings, while interviews with Em were conducted during the school day at the time of his ESOL class. Using an iPad, Em created two vodcasts in total: one with a group and one independently. For the first vodcast, Em collaborated in a heterogeneous linguistic group of other seventh-grade students. The second time, he worked independently. In both instances, he shared his completed vodcasts with the class for instructor and peer feedback.

Data Analysis

After the data collection phase, I analyzed the results. The participants' perceptions, actions, and reactions led to the conclusions reported in the following chapters. The first step was open coding of the participants' responses. Prior to

undertaking this step, I had hired an agency to transcribe the interviews and the vodcasts. As a check for accuracy, I also went back and transcribed roughly one third myself, and verified the remaining transcripts by reading them as I listened to the video. Once I had these transcripts, I read them each several times. I also marked where various data points addressing the research questions emerged. An example of an open code from Em's interview was "Comic books–Iron Man," and an example from CL was "build curiosity, use picture or iPads." These codes were brief summaries of the participants' responses to the questions that I asked as identified in the teacher and student interview protocols (see Appendices A and B, respectively, for interview protocols).

Next, I utilized a process of axial coding to group these open codes to make better sense of the data. At this point, themes based on the data began to emerge, such as the use of technology, collaborative group work, classroom demographics, and attitudes regarding culture. I organized these themes and various data points in a database, adding quotes from the transcripts when appropriate to support the connections.

The analysis of the vodcasts differed from that of the interview sessions. I used a process of content analysis, "an unobtrusive technique that allows researchers to analyze relatively unstructured data in view of the meanings, symbolic qualities, and expressive contents they have, and of the communicative roles they play in the lives of the data's sources" (Krippendorff, 2013, p. 49). In the current study, I analyzed both videos according to criteria including the length of the vodcast, Em's total speaking time, the topic of the vodcast, the structure of the vodcast, and miscellaneous data that might be present. The writing sample and test scores were secondary and used only to triangulate

data to support conclusions. The findings from data analysis will be discussed in Chapter Four, where I will address both research questions in the context of the research.

Ethics

To maintain ethical standards for this research study, I gained approval through George Mason University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) on June 24, 2014. Stuchbury and Fox (2009) discussed ethical issues in research, stating that they arise at both macro and micro levels. Regarding the former, the authors identified the need to collect enough data to be able to draw conclusions; regarding the latter, they identified issues such as interview methodology. They referenced principles outlined in the British Educational Research Association's ethical guidelines and the Economic and Social Research Council research ethics framework, such as "respect for persons, respect for knowledge, respect for democratic values and respect for the quality of educational research" (p. 497).

Lindorff (2010) stated that researchers might presume beneficence when they ascertain that the benefits of their study likely outweigh the risks. In this study, the risks were minimal, as the questions purposely centered on technology, language acquisition, and classroom instruction, as addressed explicitly in Section 7 of the IRB application. There were no direct benefits to participants in this study. Anticipated indirect benefits included enrichment of knowledge of technology as a tool for learning, and the possibility that the participating student would gain skills in the English language.

Being of Haitian descent and having an insider's perspective, I was careful not to ask about any potentially traumatic experiences; however, CL volunteered some helpful

information about Em's background. An area of concern in the IRB application is the special attention to the protection of children and adolescent participants. Klein and Cobra (2010) discussed the ethics of dealing with participants who are minors. According to the authors, although few states have passed laws requiring parental consent for a child's participation, failing to obtain such consent would be unethical because many children cannot successfully weigh the benefits and risks of participation in a study. To establish this dimension of research ethics, I obtained parental consent before commencing the study.

Considerations

As with any study, this research model was subject to considerations that might have affected the results. Identifying these considerations provides opportunities for further investigation, and may also reveal any possible caveats for readers. I designed the study to explore aspects of the English language acquisition process of a Haitian middle school-age student. I funded this study myself while employed full time as a classroom teacher in another area of the country; therefore, I was limited by the availability of both money and time. However, given the nature of the vodcasts, the audio and video data allowed me to observe asynchronously. Given the nature of doctoral dissertation work, the research was conducted by a single researcher (except for full transcription of interviews, which was performed by a professional third party). Thus, it took more time to conduct interviews, and there was no inherent opportunity for conferring among colleagues.

In addition, limited researcher objectivity may have colored the results. In qualitative research, there is the possibility of "multiple realities," whereby parties may interpret the same phenomenon in various ways through their individual lenses (Stake, 1995). While CL and Em's realities are shared in the following chapter, my own interpretation was a third reality that I must acknowledge. My experiences and potential biases could have affected the way I analyzed the data.

However, insider perspective also worked to my advantage, as it allowed me to build rapport with both the student and the teacher. My family immigrated to the United States in the late 1960s, which drove my passion for this topic years before I began my doctoral coursework. My mother's earlier research regarding Haitian students contributed to my interest in the topic, and I cited her as a source in Chapter Two. Em and I shared a cultural background and that helped us build a stronger connection. His teacher had described him as reserved until he felt comfortable to be himself. I found this to be true in the interviews, but by the end of the study, he was sharing freely and told me that he looked forward to our weekly sessions.

My position as an English teacher helped me build rapport with CL over similar experiences and ideas. She was already very open and cooperative, but these commonalities helped to strengthen our connection. To alleviate some potential challenges such as time constraints, I sought advice from my doctoral committee. Ultimately, I arranged to interview the student during his independent work time in class.

I used member checks to verify the accuracy of the content during data collection when something was unclear, and contacted CL after termination of the study for

additional checks to accuracy. Unfortunately, I was not able to follow up with Em because he left the district shortly after the end of the study. Furthermore, I left the bulk of data transcription to a third party, verified said transcription as a check of reliability, and used the concept of data triangulation to gain even more information.

Triangulation, which Warnes, Sheriden, Geske, and Warnes (2005) described as "a technique common to qualitative research whereby multiple sources are used to verify themes identified from data" (p. 173), helps to reinforce rigor in qualitative research (Camburn & Barnes, 2004; Patton, 2002; Warnes et al., 2005) while providing cross-validation (Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006). Patton (2002) described data triangulation in which various data sources are used in a study (p. 247). I utilized data triangulation methods as previously stated through interviews, student vodcasts, and various documents such as a student work sample and preliminary test data.

Preece (2009) found an additional benefit of data triangulation, particularly when conducting research involving minors, ELs, or people who might otherwise not be able to provide detailed answers. When members of such groups are interviewed, their responses might be incomplete and/or inaccurate, perhaps because of miscomprehension. This finding further supports the rationale for utilizing data triangulation methods because Em was sometimes reluctant to share, in addition to being both a minor and an EL. For this reason, I had originally intended to use member checking with Em to verify that the information was accurate. However, the study coincided with the end of the school year. As previously stated, Em and his family left the district that summer, and the school did

not know how to contact him. However, the test scores and writing sample provided support for what both he and CL had shared.

Conclusion

Finding participants for this study proved to be an almost impossible task. However, given the study's design, this challenge did not pose a problem regarding the authenticity of the research. The goal was to explore the experiences of a Haitian student and his teacher while they were using vodcasting to support the English acquisition process, and I will report these findings in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

The purpose of this study was to see what role, if any, the use of vodcasting technology would play in the English acquisition of a seventh-grade male Haitian student. I designed this qualitative study to explore the perceptions of this student and his ESOL teacher. Beginning in January 2015, I conducted six interviews with each participant. In addition, I examined the student's vodcasts, ESLAT scores, and one writing sample to gain more perspective regarding his progress. As stated in the last chapter, I analyzed data through a process of open and axial coding, with content analysis used for the vodcasts and the student's creative writing sample. In this chapter, I will first provide an overview of the study. Next, I will report findings, noting important relevant themes for each research question. Finally, I will conclude with a summary of the chapter and a preview of Chapter Five.

Summary of Data

In this study, data were collected primarily through interviews with both participants, as well as acquisition of copies of Em's vodcasts. Supporting information included Em's prior ESLAT scores, a sample of his writing, and a follow-up email from CL sent in September 2015, 4 months after the conclusion of the data collection phase of the study.

Interviews. Table 4

Summary of Interview Sessions with CL provides insights from the teacher's interview sessions.

Table 4

Summary of Interview Sessions with CL

Session	Date	Length (min:s)	Topics covered
1	January 27, 2015	17:18	Participant background, introduction to the project, inventory of practices currently implemented, material currently covered in class
2	February 4, 2015	8:54	Observations after students' first video (group)
3	February 19, 2015	21:39	Ways that CL integrates other resources into instruction
4	March 4, 2015	11:49	Em's progress in the class, and plans for the second video
5	March 23, 2015	15:23	Em's progress on the final video in progress (individual)
6	May 27, 2015	26:03	Em's results on state ESL test, how the video podcasting helped him learn English, and reflections on CL's journey in integrating technology
Total		101:06	

Interview sessions with CL took place between January 27 and May 27, 2015.

The six sessions totaled 1 hr 41 min 6 s. She discussed topics such as her background,

Em's progress in the class, her observations of student videos, her instructional practices,

and reflections on her journey as a teacher.

All interviews with both CL and Em occurred on Skype, except for Session 2 with CL. On that day, she was experiencing technical issues and could not connect, so we spoke by telephone. I recorded all sessions via the "Screen Recording" feature of Apple's QuickTime software. Sessions with CL took place in the evenings at approximately 7 p.m. Eastern Time, and Em's sessions took place at approximately 10 a.m., during CL's class. Table 5

Summary of Interview Sessions with Em provides a summary of topics covered

during Em's interview sessions.

Table 5

Summary of Interview Sessions with Em

Session	Date	Length (min:s)	Topics covered
1	February 5, 2015	5:57	Participant background and introduction to the project
2	February 23, 2015	7:04	Reflections on first group video
3	March 12, 2015	6:42	What Em is learning in class, technology access, and his interests
4	March 23, 2015	6:37	New vocabulary learned, and preferences regarding solo vs. collaborative learning
5	April 12, 2015	26:47	Process for making Em's second video, and comparison with that of the first video

6	May 22, 2015	16:09	L1 usage in school, experiences in Haitian schools, and other technology used in class with CL
Total		69:16	

Sessions with Em occurred between February 5 and May 22, 2015. His six sessions totaled 1 hr 9 min 16 s. Topics discussed included his background, reflections on the videos, progress in the class, and preferences for learning.

Vodcasts. Prior to this study, CL had been using vodcasting as an instructional strategy with her class for the previous 4 years, ever since she received iPads in her classroom. She created groups of students with mixed levels of academic proficiency, allowing for some learner choice in the group composition. As she explained during Session 1,

> There's different levels, so we have some lower-level English-speaking kids and someone like [Em], who at least, verbally, he's proficient. So, we mix and match, you know, different levels. He usually stays with the boys, you know, they're more comfortable like that.

CL's students created vodcasts at the beginning and end of instructional units. When the videos were completed, CL projected them to the class for peer viewing and feedback. She also stated that the vodcast creation process helped students with their pronunciation, as they would record videos repeatedly until they were satisfied with the way they sounded. The students corrected their videos, usually without prompting, and CL gave students unlimited time to edit their projects into a final version.

First vodcast. During this study, Em created two vodcasts. He created the first in late January with two other seventh-grade boys, one from Peru and the other from

Argentina. When asked how he felt about the first video, Em responded, "Good . . . I liked it." The part that he reported enjoying most was when he was speaking, although he admittedly put his head down when it was shown in class. He explained that he did not want to hear his own voice. Em stated that through this video project, he learned about slavery, and he said that he liked working with a group because "if you don't know something, they could help you."

CL noted Em's strength as a team player, but also his difficulty in speaking loudly enough to be heard. She did not have access to external microphones to plug into the iPad, and reported that Em was also quiet during class sessions.

In the first vodcast, Em spoke for 10 s out of the total length of 1 min 47 s, comprising less than 10% of the video. The group members first discussed unfamiliar vocabulary that they had identified before reading the book *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969), passing around and reading from a script giving a summary of the book. Em's 2 s portion consisted of, "so that the black people can feed their families."

At the beginning of the next segment, Em began to speak, but was given a nonverbal signal by Student A, and immediately stopped as Student A took over. Here, group members identified vocabulary terms from the book, sharing their words and rationale for the choice, one after the other. Em described "old pictures because the pictures were black and white," after which his volume dropped off and it was difficult to hear what he said. One of his group members gestured for him to speak more loudly, at which point he shrugged and said, "I don't know." The group member chuckled. At the closing of the vodcast, Em's two classmates signed off by saying their names, and Em

said, "See ya." At the closing, Student A identified the team name to be "The Chimichangas." Table 6

Summary of Vodcast Analysis displays a summary of both vodcasts.

Table 6

Summary of Vodcast Analysis

Parameters	First vodcast Week of January 27	Second vodcast Week of March 23
Total length of vodcast (min:s)	1:47	2:02
Em speaking time (min:s)	0:10	1:39
Topic	Vocabulary from *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969)	Review of *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969)

Structure	1. Students read from script about summary of the book
	2. Each student said which vocabulary term they identified and why.
	3. Closing.
		Em read from script he had written
		1. Identified vocabulary terms such as:
		   a. Exposition
		   b. Rising action
		   c. Climax
		   d. Falling action
		
		2. Recommended the book to anyone who likes religious fiction
		   a. Provided rationale

Miscellaneous	00:57 Nonverbal gesture from Student A to stop talking 01:33 Nonverbal gesture from Student A to speak up 01:39 Student A chuckled when Em shrugged and said, "I don't know." 01:45 Student A and B said their names, Em said, "See ya."	Transitions, photos, sound effects, and drawing included in vodcast

Second vodcast. Em completed the individual vodcast in late March 2015,

approximately two months after the first. In Session 4, CL indicated that she wanted

students to work individually, "not a group thing, because I really want to see what they

can do on their own." She also believed that working independently would help Em

speak louder so that he could be heard on the video.

Em was still in the process of completing his vodcast on March 23. CL reported

that Em recorded his video three times because his volume was still low. She suggested

that he go to the library to record by himself, which allowed him to complete the

assignment successfully. In Em's interview, he said that CL gave him 1 week to plan the

video, but he could storyboard it in less than the allotted time. He further stated that he

preferred doing a video with his group members because he was nervous working by

himself. However, after completing the second vodcast, he said that he preferred working

alone.

This solo video differed from the group video in several ways. First, the vodcast

was longer, due in part to Em's addition of features such as video transitions,

photographs, sound effects, and others. Also, the group did not edit their video, but Em's

solo video was processed through iMovie, and even integrated a piece of his artwork.

Many of our conversations had centered around his love for drawing, and CL referred to

Em's hobby in Session 4: "I want to do something fun with the video. . . . Em, I know,

loves to draw, so maybe have them illustrate . . . then write about it, but also read what

they wrote–something fun!"

In this second video, Em spoke for a total of 1 min 39 s, nearly 10 times longer than he had in the group video. He identified story elements from *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969) such as the exposition, rising action, climax, and falling action. He also recommended the book to anyone who enjoyed religious fiction, because "the mother is always singing religious songs with the boy to give him hope and courage." In interview Session 3, approximately one month prior to the creation of the video, CL had noted Em's improvement in providing evidence for statements.

Other relevant data. In addition to the interviews and Em's vodcasts, other data were analyzed to gain information on his progress in academic English acquisition. These included Em's state ESLAT scores, a sample of Em's writing, verbal commentary from CL regarding Em's 2015 ESLAT score, and email correspondence with CL about Em's ESOL status at the beginning of the following school year. In the interviews, both participants reported noticing progress in Em's English acquisition, particularly in writing, speaking, and overall vocabulary, which the data from test scores appeared to support. CL provided a screenshot of Em's ESLAT score, which identified him as a beginner in the ESOL program as of January 30, 2014. On the second line of the score sheet, dated July 1, 2014, he had moved to the Intermediate level. In our final interview, she shared that,

> Out of 4, he got a 4 on the essay. I was so impressed. He's made some really good strides. Now we're doing creative writing. I promised them that they could write a short story after all the . . . state tests, and his is really good.

Writing. CL also provided a writing sample from Em titled "The Missing Watch." The piece appears in its entirety in Appendix D. Em referred to the story in his final interview. He wrote the story about two friends named John and Max in late May. The plot is as follows: John received a watch for his birthday, which made Max jealous because John paid the watch more attention. Max then decided to steal the watch, and paid John's brother not to tell him. John then asked Max for his help to find the watch, and Max obliged reluctantly. Max realized how sad John was, and decided to give him back the watch, but then accidentally broke it. John's brother told John that Max was the one who stole his watch, and subsequently paid him for his silence. John then went to Max's house, where the mother let him into Max's room. There, he found the broken watch, paid $20 to a repair shop to fix the watch, and confronted Max at school the next day. Max admitted that he stole the watch because he thought John liked the watch more than him, and asked for forgiveness. The two boys made up and remained best friends, and Max bought a watch of his own.

The story was very detailed and had a complex plot, demonstrating the high level of creativity Em had displayed in his drawings and editing of his individual vodcast. As CL mentioned in Session 3 in February, Em wrote in complete sentences, but occasionally struggled with punctuation. This is apparent in the second paragraph, "One day while they were walking on the side of the street, John saw beautiful watch he wanted one since then."

In the same interview, CL discussed how Em's sentences were typically 10 lines long, with ideas separated by commas instead of periods. She repeated this concern in the following session:

He writes but he still has his flaws, like he forgets periods, and I joke, "are you trying to kill me, because your sentences are like seven lines long and I can't take a breath!" So, he's still practicing, all of them, most of them don't use periods. It's across the board, I have to say, but I thought maybe by now he would have been past this because he's been here well over a year.

Em did not make this error in his story, potentially indicating that he had made progress. In addition, he showed proficiency with quotation marks, a skill that CL had also reported had been a challenge. In general, each time a character spoke, Em used quotation marks correctly to indicate what was said. He made a couple of errors in the usage, which were inconsistent. For example, on Page 2,

Max took the watch and put it in his pocket. When John came back the next thing he was did was look for the watch.

"Have you seen my watch? I put it right here before I left asked John." I don't know maybe someone took it."

John started panicking. He looked everywhere at the cafeteria but he did not find it and he told Max to check his pocket.

"You must have taken it by accident."

Of the 34 quotations in the story, there were only two errors. The first, on Page 2 in Paragraph 4, did not display a closed quotation. The second, located at the beginning

of Paragraph 6 on Page 6, was an errant quotation mark. With an accuracy of over 94% in this skill, Em was seemingly proficient by the time he wrote the story in May.

The most common errors in the piece were those of verb tenses and subject-verb agreement, such as in Paragraph 4 of Page 2: "He ask for Max's help." These types of errors may result from the transfer of Em's L1 skills in Haitian Creole, which does not have subject-verb agreement, as noted in Chapter Two (Civan, 1994). However, the amount of detail and complexity in the writing supported CL's description of Em's interest level and strong work ethic. Of another assignment, she noted, "He was actually the only one who wanted to take it home and work on it."

Speaking. Em also received a perfect score on the speaking section of the 2015 ESLAT, which led CL to believe that he would test out of the ESOL program. "That means he's definitely moving up the level. I don't know what else he got on the rest, he got a perfect score on the speaking. He's doing really well." Em's repeated iterations of his video supported CL's early statement that vodcasting helped motivate her students to work on pronunciation, because they were conscious of how they would sound to other students.

Caveat. While Em made progress in English throughout the course of the study, his success cannot be attributed entirely to the use of vodcasting. In CL's class, as well as others, Em had opportunities to practice reading, writing, and speaking academic English. Many of the findings for this study address vodcasting in general, but other factors were

also involved. Later in the chapter, I will address what did occur during vodcasting that might have provided strong contributions toward Em's growth in English proficiency.

Findings

This study centered around two research questions designed to examine the role that vodcasting might have played in the English language acquisition of a Haitian adolescent male learner. The two questions were:

Q1. What role might a teacher's use of vodcasting as an instructional strategy play in the English language acquisition of a middle school-age Haitian learner?

Q2. What role might collaborative working groups play in the English language acquisition of this student while engaging in vodcasting?

The information gained in data analysis helped to provide a more thorough understanding of the revised question. Through a process of coding, several relevant themes emerged, both for the student and for the teacher. The following section outlines findings regarding these various themes.

Question 1: The role of vodcasting. This proved to be a complex question, which resulted in several emergent themes from both Em and CL. CL spoke of themes such as SLA, specifically academic language; CRP; brain-compatible teaching, including student motivation; usage of technologies other than vodcasting for learning; and overall descriptions of the vodcasting experience. Three distinct themes emerged from the interviews with Em: SLA, particularly regarding academic language and L1 usage; use of technologies other than vodcasting for learning; and overall descriptions of the

vodcasting experience. Themes also emerged implicitly, for example, when the

participants referenced class materials indicative of CRP.

Interestingly, sometimes CL and Em would address similar topics at

approximately the same times during interviews. I will now examine the themes in the

context of the interviews and vodcasts, presented in the order they appeared in Chapter

Two. A summary of themes for this first research question is presented in Table **7**.

Table 7

Summary of Emergent Themes for Research Question 1

Session	Em	CL
1	English acquisition: Baseline for reading, writing, and speaking Use of technology at home and school	Use of technology at school Student motivation CRP Brain-compatible teaching Language (L1) English acquisition: Baseline for reading, writing, and speaking
2	English acquisition: Vocabulary Use of technology at home and school	Student motivation
3	Use of technology at school English acquisition: Vocabulary	English acquisition: Writing Use of technology at school
4	Use of technology at school English acquisition: Vocabulary	Student background English acquisition: Writing
5	Use of technology at school	English acquisition: Writing
6	Language (L1) English acquisition: Oral English acquisition: Vocabulary Use of technology at school	English acquisition: Oral English acquisition: Writing Use of technology at school Brain-compatible teaching CRP

Before beginning to examine what role vodcasting played in Em's English

acquisition, it was necessary to consider the context of the class to understand the setting

and context of this study. In CL's first interview, she described the demographics of the

class:

Most of my students are Hispanics and the class that Em is in, I have one from

Pakistan and one from Haiti, which is Em, and the rest are Hispanics. But there is

different levels. We have lower-level English-speaking kids, and someone like

Em who at least is proficient.

Both participants also described the status of the class in Session 3. According to

CL, "We are finishing up *Sounder*, that book that we began reading, so all of it is great.

The kids are supposed to read the final chapter. Then when we come back on Monday we

are going to discuss it." Em also referred to the book, saying that it was about a dog. He

enjoyed reading *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969), specifically the part of the book in which

the family members went hunting. In the first few interviews, he answered in short

phrases, but was more talkative in later sessions after we established rapport.

Later in her third interview, CL spoke of upcoming state testing:

It pretty much starts mid-April through mid-May . . . so I'll try and do something

not so heavy, so I'd say by mid-April we're in testing mode. They'll have three

state tests to do within like a month. The tests are like 3 days long.

She explained that the district utilized Common Core state standards as a

foundation for instruction, but was not bound by traditional pacing requirements in non-

ESOL classes. This allowed her to adjust the pace of the instruction to the content mastery of students. As she stated, "I've been doing mini-lessons about various grammatical points, and I'll do mini-lessons on Monday and Tuesday on metaphors and similes. We'll do that before break. We're trying to throw in a bunch of ELA skills in the lessons."

By early March, the class had finished reading *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969) and was working on writing essays about the theme. CL had been working with students in the class on using supportive evidence from the text by using quotations, a concept that was challenging for all students, including Em.

I had a graphic organizer to help them find the theme and then find evidence to support their theme. So that's what they did with their group, and then this week they wrote an essay on their own about it. And I have to say, Em, I don't know what it is, but sometimes he's so off target (he's a really smart boy) and then I have to sit with him and talk with him.

At the end of March, CL reported that the class had finished the unit on *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969), and students were preparing to film their videos about the book. This time, Em would be working independently to create his video.

After this essay, I'm thinking we'll finish up by Friday. I want to do something fun with the video. I'm wondering if I should maybe have them do like a video group report just to rate it; but an individual thing.

Findings regarding group work appear later in the chapter, in the section used to address the second research question. CL had reviewed vocabulary with students such as

climax, rising action, falling action, exposition, and resolution. She felt that this video would help students review for their upcoming ESLAT, which would begin approximately three weeks later.

CL's final interview took place over 1 month later, as the test administration delayed instruction. "The dates are just a mess because we'll have half a day in testing and the kids are basically done by the afternoon," she explained. This test was used to assess students' academic levels in reading, writing, and speaking.

Second language acquisition. In Chapter Two, I identified research and literature in the field of SLA that helped me analyze the findings. Prior to this school year, Em had scored "Intermediate" on the ESLAT and affirmed that he was "really comfortable" using English in reading, writing, and speaking. By the end of the study, CL revealed that Em had scored highly on the state ESLAT. Later, in an email on September 15, 2015, CL revealed Em's final progress, stating, "Em scored 'Proficient' in English and is no longer in [ESOL] . . . however he moved to another school district! I don't know where . . . I'm sure he'll do well wherever he goes." In our interview sessions, Em spoke mainly about his progress regarding academic language, while CL typically spoke about speaking and writing.

Academic language. Although Em mentioned academic language several times in interview sessions, he seemed reluctant to share his learning. In Session 2, I asked him, "Before the break, when you were in class, did you learn any new vocabulary words?" to which he replied, "I don't know." In Session 3, he said that he learned new vocabulary,

but did not remember what it was. Instead, he had written terms down in a journal after collaborating with group members.

In Session 4, he could provide one term with the prompting of his teacher, who was in the room during the first part of the session to get him established with the video chat. When I asked him if he had learned anything new that week, the teacher suggested the term *climax*, which he then explained, "is like part of the story." Despite his reluctance to elaborate, he was apparently able to identify the climax of *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969) in his second video, stating, "Climax: Sounder gets shot by the wagon, and the father got arrested." In this phrase, the word *climax* was an example of academic language, as it was a vocabulary term for a specific story element.

In our final session (Session 6), I asked Em what his perception was of creating videos and learning English, and he had a more elaborate and positive response.

> Yeah, I have learned. I have to say a lot of English. I have to learn new words. We give up the old words and learn new words. In the video, I used English so it helped me learn a lot. . . . you have to learn English better. Just leave the old words and use the bigger words, like more advanced words.

Em believed that he was making progress in his acquisition of academic English, but this was not necessarily a reflection of actual improvement. I will address the results of his progress as measured on the ESLAT and described by CL later in the chapter.

As Cummins (1980) stated, CALP, or academic language, aligns more with the language of classroom instruction, and under optimal conditions can take up to 7 years to attain. Em, having been in the country for only 2 years, still had some challenges with

certain vocabulary terms; however, he was highly motivated to learn, which may have played a role in his progress thus far (Carhill et al., 2008; Collier & Thomas, 2001; Cummins, 1991). He was still on a journey in learning academic English, and again, while the vodcasts may have contributed in some way, they were not the only factor contributing to his progress. For example, Em's prior educational experiences in Haiti may have also helped him learn English (Collier & Thomas, 2001).

Brain-compatible teaching. Brain-compatible teaching, defined in Chapter Two as "a comprehensive approach to learning based on how the brain learns best" (Lucido et al., 2008, p. 42), aligned with CL's definition. She explained in Session 1:

If I remember from grad school, all the different ways of learning; visual, static, musical. While I can't touch across all those learning skills, I really try and make . . . we use a lot of visuals in the class. I like the kids to see the materials, I let them read first before they can really master it, a lot of manipulation when it's fitting to try and just respect that there are different learners, not just one [kind]. Sometimes we get up and move around.

Lucido et al. (2008) provided several examples of successful implementation of brain-compatible teaching, many of which appeared in the vodcasting activity. For example, after the students finished completing their videos, they watched each other's in class. CL described the process thus: "[They] just listen to it and give positive comments, nothing like critics. . . . the video makes for a good reference." This aligns with Lucido et al.'s recommendation to create a learning environment in which students feel safe to share, as identified in Chapter Two.

Lucido et al. (2008) also mentioned allowing adequate time for students to participate in meaningful activities. When asked how long she gave the students to create their videos, CL responded,

> I give them the time. I don't like to rush them with the video. I will give them the
> time to do it over and over, until they're proud of it so that we all see it and say,
> "Great work."

I will discuss Lucido et al.'s suggestion to facilitate collaboration through many opportunities for cooperative, structured learning in the section pertaining to the second research question.

Culturally relevant pedagogy. In our first interview, I asked CL about her understanding of CRP (Ladson-Billings, 1992), to which she replied,

> For me, it's respecting all the different cultures in my classroom, and bringing in
> content that might reflect my student's Asian background or my student from
> Pakistan, or learning about different societies from Central America, just using
> their culture and things they might recognize to help them learn English.

Her definition aligned with several best practices identified by Gay (2000), such as using a wide variety of instructional strategies, teaching students to know and praise their own and each other's cultural heritages, and incorporating multicultural information, resources, and materials in all the subjects and skills routinely taught in schools (p. 29).

CL was also familiar with several aspects of Haitian culture seemingly shared by her Haitian students. She acknowledged that each Haitian student she taught was different, though most exhibited similar personality traits.

I've had four and I guess three were similar, but this one I had last year was more

sassy, and I guess mainstream, whereas the other three were very respectful,

almost too far . . . but all of them were very respectful and family-centered. I've

noticed that with the three of the four. The fourth one maybe was a bit different,

he came to us more sassy and more confident, but really dedicated students I have

to say. . . . I can see that they are very, very obedient, but I almost want to tell

them it's okay to lighten up a little bit.

Regarding Em, she stated, "This is now his second year here and he's joking with me and

he can take it—I guess [he is] getting more comfortable." Another Haitian student that

she had taught also took a while to "come out of his shell."

CRP strategies were also evident in the classroom. For example, the book

Sounder (Armstrong, 1969) is about a Black family living as sharecroppers in the South.

CL described the premise of the book in Session 1.

It's a short novel, *Sounder*, and it takes place in the early 1900s when

sharecropping was still around. . . . it ties into their Social Studies a bit, because

they're just finishing Reconstruction where sharecropping pretty much began

after the Civil War. They're learning about the end of the Civil War, so

Reconstruction is right around the corner in Social Studies. It's really like an ELA

unit, but I'm throwing in history for their sake and we're going to learn about

theme, about characterization, and about different narrators that authors use. So

we're going to learn, I think it's the omniscient narrator, so a couple of different

ELA elements for them.

After the class finished the book, Em said that reading it taught him about Black history. The next text that the class read, *Novio Boy: A Play* by Soto (2006), featured predominantly Latino characters. The main character, Rudy, a ninth-grade boy, was preparing for his first date. The students in CL's class were in seventh grade, and could likely relate to this experience.

One could argue that at times, CL also exhibited traits of culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012). Despite legislation pending at the state level to make schools English-only, CL made a choice to use students' native languages to help them learn and successfully navigate a dual culture.

> I know it gives a little spark . . . like this one girl, she came with no English and . . . I could say some things in French. . . . She didn't understand everything, but I could see it just made her like, "I can get something across to this woman."

She elaborated:

> I've been fortunate, I speak French, so I did have a Haitian student years ago that I could communicate with in my French. But I have never had a student who I don't speak their native language–I speak Spanish and French. The boy from Pakistan came to me already with a good amount of English, so I have to say I've been lucky. You're not supposed to be able to speak the language of every student who comes to you, but I've been lucky, I have.

CL's ability to use native language instruction with her students helped bridge gaps identified by Birman et al. (2007), Pàez (2009), and M. Thomas (1988, 1993), wherein

linguistic minority groups often lack resources and support from schools for their academic needs.

> **Writing.** In her third interview, CL spoke about Em's progress in writing.
>
> Since the beginning of the year I've been stressing about writing in complete sentences, providing evidence for whatever it is that you want to say, not just answering questions. Don't say "yes, I agree," tell me exactly why, give me details why. He was having a huge problem with using commas and periods. He still does but I see improvement. I just graded a quiz I gave them . . . and I've seen more complete sentences than the comma splices that I'm used to seeing from him. So that's a good thing.

Em was also working on breaking his sentences with periods. "He's a good writer but his sentences are about 10 lines long because he just draws commas in between."

In addition, Em was learning how to provide evidence to support statements, instead of just answering questions. In Session 4 CL described her frustration with his slow progress in this area.

> I think I'm getting through and he comes back with the second draft but there was no evidence. I wasn't seeing quotes. I showed them what a quote is, whatever you take from the text you have to put the quotation marks, and the third time around he got it. Though his quotes didn't support his themes, at least now he knows what it is.

Em displayed a desire to succeed academically. CL was proud of him for his perseverance in this area, and noted his dedication.

> Realizing when I say "you have to provide quotes from the text," he finally got it. He . . . brought it back today and none of the quotes he picked supported the theme, but I was so happy he picked quotes and put them into his paragraph. So that was huge.

Now that he understood the concept, she would work with him on deliberately picking quotes that supported the theme. In the next session, a few weeks later, CL reported that Em had made major progress, and she was very pleased because it was "something they really all have to do for the [test]."

The ESLAT took place between Sessions 5 and 6 with CL, and at the end of data collection she had preliminary test results. During Session 6, she shared that Em received a perfect score on the essay portion. She reflected on their work together over the 2 years she had been his teacher.

> Last year he was using comma splices for everything, everything was just one big long sentence. So this year I really focused on using punctuation and trying to get him out of the bad habit of using commas as periods. Then I focused a lot to teach them about the pronoun; like what is it referring to. They just use the pronouns for everything, so we worked on that a lot.

This statement aligned with Civan's (1994) description of Haitian Creole as a language with a singular pronoun, as opposed to English, which has multiple forms.

When asked specifically about the role, if any, that vodcasts played in Em's writing progress, she stated that it helped him most with punctuation, which had been a major challenge:

It helped him to realize how his sentences can't go on forever and ever. They have

to have punctuation, because when he reads [his script] I would help him

understand punctuation and tell him when to stop, pause, and then continue. So I

think that helped him to realize the importance of why I've been badgering him to

put periods. The video helped him practice more than me just telling him. I think

it really had an effect on the writing. It was interesting how he would do his first

drafts and he realizes that he would be a little out of breath because he would just

go on and on.

Therefore, presenting his written work on a vodcast might have helped him reflect upon

his style by forcing him to re-examine his punctuation in the oral reading. Although he

focused on the content, the practice brought to his attention problems in his writing, as

described in Ellis's (2016) FonF approach. In addition, being able to "feel" where

sentences should end allowed him to self-assess and make choices to correct his work, a

function of brain-compatible teaching (Lucido et al., 2008).

Em spoke very little of his writing progress in relation to vodcasting; however, he

did speak of the scripting process with his collaborative group. In the first vodcast, he

could collaborate and get feedback on his writing with group members. "We talk about

our notes, and we work together. . . . I like it." Em's experience with the collaborative

group will appear in a later section.

Usage of technology. Before examining the role that vodcasting played in Em's

English acquisition, I wanted to understand each participant's use of, and familiarity

with, technology. In Session 1, Em spoke about technology at home and school. He did

not have a cell phone but was interested in using technology to play games and watch movies, such as one based on his favorite comic, *Iron Man* (S. Lee & Lieber, 1963). He had an iPad and a laptop that he used at home, but his desktop computer was broken.

At school, he used computers to do homework, and when he was finished he had a choice of which websites to visit. In addition, he used Google Docs to plan his vodcast with teammates. He stated that his favorite device was the iPad, on which the students filmed and edited their vodcasts. The use of the device in this way is supported by the National Educational Technology Plan, which suggests that students should be producers of content, as opposed to passive consumers. Doing so may increase engagement, while simultaneously helping to bridge the digital divide (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

In her first interview, CL described how she used technology as a tool in her instruction to build curiosity in students. She had been using iPads in her classes for 4 years. All her students had access to Google Apps for Education tools (renamed G Suite in 2016) and used them for collaboration.

> We do peer editing. They share the documents with each other so they have
> access and they can edit. Then they share it with me for the final grading. . . . we
> like to save paper in the room.

At the time of Session 3, CL had just had training on Google Classroom and decided to use Google tools instead of the wiki. She specifically liked a tool called "Read and Write for Google."

> There's one app which we call Read and Write for Google. It's a little add-on to
> your website. It will read and translate the text, it will let the kids click on words

and the dictionary definitions pop up. It's phenomenal. . . . I mean if the kids were

reading a website and say someone is stuck on a paragraph, they could just quietly

click it and hear it in their own language. I think they can hear it and then they can

see the dictionary.

By Session 6, CL had received an Apple TV device, which facilitated the process

of showing class vodcasts, allowing students to mirror their iPads and display their videos

to the class. CL described the process of learning how to use the new device with her

students.

They're such a great class. We all worked together to figure it out because I didn't

know how to use it. A couple of kids helped. It was really nice. The same thing

with iMovie, I didn't know how to use it well but the kids helped me out. So that

was fun.

Her description of this process reflected the suggestion of Hudicourt-Barnes

(2003) that teachers and students should learn together. This method of inquiry and

collaboration supports the engaging practice of student-centered learning. Interestingly,

Ladson-Billings (1992) also referenced elements of the student-centered classroom in

CRP, such as the empowerment of students, and the sharing of power in the classroom

equally between teachers and students (pp. 314, 318).

CL also learned about technology integration from the school's Library Media

Specialist.

I have to give credit to the school librarian. We started together but she was

already a teacher for 20 years. When I came here, technology wasn't a thing for

me, but then she sold me on a wiki and the following year my principal got me 10 iPads. I just figured it out that there was no turning back and I loved it.

Interestingly, I had also previously connected and built a friendship with CL's school librarian on Twitter and Voxer, not knowing that they were colleagues. At the time of the study, CL did not use social media for professional learning and did not have a Facebook account. However, several months later, I received a notification that she had joined Voxer, where I had initially connected with the principal at her school. In the summer of 2017, she also created a Twitter account.

Vodcasts. Green et al. (2011) recommended vodcasting as a way for students to create meaningful artifacts of learning, and found that the practice helped ELs develop confidence by providing them with the opportunity to self-correct grammar and punctuation. In the first vodcast, students created preliminary videos about the book *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969). "The pictures were to acquire some background knowledge about the topic, about the history behind the novel that the class was reading. . . . it was mostly for background knowledge," CL stated when describing the purpose of the activity.

Students used pictures to acquire background knowledge and found new concepts and vocabulary terms to create their videos. Em described the process, stating, "It's kind of how you explain the whole story in a short video, but you don't have to explain everything, only the important parts. . . . I learned about slaves and black people." He elaborated, adding that while the recording process itself was relatively quick, he and his

classmates were given up to 1 week to plan their video, "though it doesn't take [us] a week . . . [it takes] days."

For the second video, students first planned their vodcasts using a graphic organizer and later filled in information about story elements. CL stated that the students had to write in complete sentences, and say whether they would recommend the video. "So that's going to be their finishing piece of the video. They planned [the second video] over about two days," she reported after the activity had terminated. As recommended by Lucido et al. (2008), CL provided students with as much time as they needed in each stage of the vodcasting process, which consisted of planning, recording, and editing.

The students used the iPads to record themselves and used the iMovie program to edit. The final video was 1–2 min long, including music and text. Regarding Em's individual video, CL said that he focused on volume and speaking loudly enough to be heard. She said that after the third time, Em finally "got it."

> We couldn't hear anything. I said it's part of the rubric how well we can hear you, so I told him I'm serious, it's not funny anymore. He did it three times and then the final time by himself he spoke up.

Em was also particularly proud of this vodcast and shared with me that he edited the final product by himself. He reported that he liked vodcasting, and his favorite part was when he was talking. Em's experience mirrors findings in Chapter Two regarding computer assisted language learning (Perren, 2010), a practice that facilitates self-monitoring and reflection for ELs. By vodcasting, Em could look back on his video, identify any potential issues, and re-record until he was satisfied with his final product.

This iterative process required a high level of motivation to create the best possible vodcast, and effectively made each student responsible for his or her learning. In the next section, I will examine the findings of the second research question, which concerns group dynamics and sociocultural learning.

Question 2: The role of group work. The purpose of the second research question was to see what role, if any, group work played in Em's acquisition of English during the vodcast creation process. His first video was in a heterogeneous group of students, differing by country of origin and level of academic language proficiency in English; however, he created the second vodcast individually because CL was interested in seeing what her students would be able to do by themselves. She elaborated in Session 4:

> That will be fun. I think I will throw in [unclear] because a few months ago we practiced story elements like rising action. So something academic, but fun! And if he's on his own, I'll have him speak louder so that you can hear him.

Research Question 2 aligned most closely with theories of sociocultural learning as outlined in the conceptual framework. A discussion of these theories follows in the Background section. Coding the data resulted in the emergence of three dominant themes: background, describing the process of vodcast creation in both instances; actualities, stated and observed facts about the creation of the vodcasts; and perceptions, consisting of participants' ideas, theories, and reactions to the vodcasts. Table 8

Summary of Emergent Themes for Research Question 2

Background. This first theme provides the classroom context for this study and describes potential dynamics that might have played a role in the collaborative group vodcast. To reiterate, the purpose of this study was not to generalize findings, but instead to describe the experiences of the participants, which might provide information that could be relevant to teachers and students with similar circumstances. Thus, this section describes various factors present in CL's classroom.

Table 8

Summary of Emergent Themes for Research Question 2

Session	Em	CL
1	— [a]	Background
2	Perception Background Actuality	Actuality
3	Actuality	Actuality Background
4	Actuality Perception	Background Perception
5	Actuality	Actuality
6	Background Perception	Perception

[a] No theme applicable to RQ2 emerged.

In Session 1, CL described the overall structure in her class. She had students work collaboratively most of the time and, due to the small class size, they worked in tight-knit groups.

The size of the class [12–13 students] makes it so the groups are usually three or

four per group, and they're the directors, they're the camera people, so they all just

work together to do it, and I kind of stay out of the picture.

Arguably, this stance could support greater autonomy and engagement for students,

leading to an enhanced learning experience, as similarly described by Engin (2014) and

Isman et al. (2004). CL seemingly also found this to be her experience, because as she

elaborated,

It motivates them, definitely, because all I have to say now is, "Whatever you kids

have done with this project, whatever you've discussed, we're going to be putting

it in a video." So that really motivates them to get the work done and to get as

much of it as they can because they're going to be sharing it with the whole class.

As previously mentioned, Em was grouped with two other students who spoke

Spanish as a first language. One student was from Peru, and the other was from

Argentina. Lockhart and Ng (1995) recommended heterogeneous groupings to help ELs

develop a sense of meaning, audience, and purpose. Conversely, Langman and Fies

(2010) showed dramatic increases in student interaction with homogeneous language

groupings. Furthermore, the student participants in a study by Green et al. (2011) chose

to use their native languages in homogenous groups when planning their vodcasts, while

the sole heterogeneous linguistic group used English.

Unfortunately, this was not an option for Em, as he was the only Haitian-Creole

speaker in the class. This is quite often the case for Haitian students and other linguistic

minorities in ESOL classes (Enander, 2009). In his final interview, Em addressed this,

stating that at school he speaks "mostly English but I speak Creole with my friend. We're from the same country." This friend was not a student in CL's ESOL class.

In Session 3, after Em and his group had finished the first vodcast, CL spoke about her plans for the second vodcast. She was considering having students create individual videos, but was concerned about possible challenges regarding technical execution in the recording process.

> I think it's because of the lack of time and space because I send them places so that they can have quiet, but I don't have 15 different places to send the kids. If they stay in the room and talk, they would use each other. That's why I have to do it that way so that I can have different places to send them.

CL also reported that the vodcasting process did not come without challenges. For example, she had two different models of iPads in her room: iPad 2 and iPad 3. The iMovie app was free on the newer models, but cost money for the iPad 2 devices and was, therefore, not installed. To navigate this challenge, she decided to have students record on a rotation schedule. Eventually, the school's technology department added the app on all the iPads, which increased the number of devices available to her students.

In Session 4, CL spoke about her plans for the videos, which she believed served a dual purpose. Not only did creating the vodcasts help the students learn English, but she also reused student creations from previous years in her instruction.

> I like to keep things authentic, so I could say I'm going to keep this to share with my seventh graders next year, so that maybe they could learn a little bit about the book before we read it. I've kept stuff from prior years, then I've shown my new

students and they liked that. It gives them an extra push to do a good job if they
know someone is going to see it.

In his analysis of "podagogy," Rosell-Aguilar (2007) suggested that the use of
podcasting should be a collaborative process in which students have opportunities to
practice their target language, and should "include reporting back of the communicative
outcome" (p. 488). CL's practice of playing vodcasts for other students addressed this
final component, and she found it effective for student motivation. Similarly, in a study
by Engin (2014), the student participants had the explicit goal of creating videos for a
peer-teaching model. The learners were, therefore, highly motivated to create quality
products. Such was the case in CL's class as well.

Actualities. This subsection contains details of events related to the vodcasting
process. I use the term *actualities* instead of *realities* because participants constructed
their realities from their perceptions. These perceptions are described in the remainder of
this section.

The first video served as a preview for the book *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969).
Students identified new vocabulary terms and then looked at pictures to activate
background knowledge. According to CL, Em planned and worked well with the group,
but it was difficult to hear him in the video. Both participants spoke of the class viewing
and peer feedback session in their second interviews. CL described it as an experience in
which

we watch [the vodcast] as a class. We just listen to it and give positive comments.

. . . It's just a reference tool that we can use if we want to refer back to the pictures

or the history that we're talking about.

As suggested in Lucido et al. (2008), CL promoted a culture of positivity and support in her classroom by ensuring that students' comments on each other's work were constructive.

In Session 2, when describing the group video, Em spoke twice about putting his head down, first when filming: "With the shooting that we did, I was like with my head down. I didn't want to raise my voice," then again when asked about the peer feedback process: "I don't know, I watched the video . . . when I'm starting I just put my head down."

During Session 3, CL also mentioned Em's demeanor.

He's a very low-key boy. In class I always have to get a little closer to hear him,

but he has a lot of good things to say, just low key and quiet. He talks. By quiet, I

don't mean shy, it's just that when he speaks he does it in a low voice.

She researched microphones for the iPad so that Em could be heard, but in the meantime, she advised him to "pretend that he was yelling," which resulted in what she described as an "awkward" and unnatural delivery.

It was during Session 3 that CL first mentioned the idea of individual vodcasts. Em created his video shortly thereafter. During the activity, Em had the same issue with low volume, and recorded the video twice in the classroom. The third time, CL told him

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that part of his grade would be based on how well he could be heard. She then sent him to the library to record by himself, and he was ultimately successful in completing the task. I was most interested in how both parties interpreted their experiences.

Perceptions. As defined in Chapter Two, learning is an active process that is contingent on several factors, such as prior knowledge, experiences, and convictions (Borko & Putnam, 1996, pp. 674-675). CL and Em both reflected upon the group vodcast experience in their second interview sessions. Em was reserved, but affirmed that he liked his group and the overall process. CL said that although Em was excited about creating the video, there was no noticeable change in his comfort level: "He's the same in class as he is in the video." She further stated that she often had to stand close to be able to hear him, but that seemed to make him uncomfortable. Ransdell et al. (2011) found that millennial students might be uncomfortable with group projects, which might have been the case with Em.

CL had described Em's personality as similar to that of other Haitian students whom she had taught: "Very, very obedient . . . almost too far where the teacher can do no wrong." Therefore, it was possible that some responses that Em gave in earlier sessions were those that he thought CL would want him to give, even though she was usually not present during his interviews. However, Em and I built a rapport over the weeks. "He lights up when I tell him to talk to that teacher on the computer, he loves it! I think he loves that you're from Haiti," CL told me during Session 4. As the number of sessions increased, his responses became more elaborate and candid.

In Session 4, Em spoke of his anxiety about the upcoming individual video project. What follows is an excerpt of our conversation.

Me: "Which one do you prefer, making a video yourself or with your group?"

Em: "I prefer my group."

Me: "Why?"

Em: "Because we're doing it together and you're not nervous."

Me: "Do you feel nervous making this video?"

Em: "Yeah."

This was the first time that he expressed a feeling of this sort, whereas before, he had always provided short affirmative or neutral answers. Interestingly, in the next session, which occurred after Em had created his individual video, his perspective changed.

Me: "So you already recorded it yourself?"

Em: "Yes."

Me: "That's good. Were you nervous this time or were you not nervous, because I remember last time you told me that you were feeling a bit nervous?"

Em: "Yeah, but this time I wasn't nervous because I was alone."

Me: "Are you all going to watch the videos in class when you're done?"

Em: "Yeah, I think so."

Me: "I would love to hear about that as well. I'm sure that's going to be a good experience with your friends."

Em: "Yes."

Em seemed to be excited about the class screening of his individual video, which was very different from putting his head down during the viewing of the first vodcast.

By Session 6, Em had apparently settled on his learning preferences, stating that he preferred to work alone. When I asked him why, he said,

> Because I'm by myself. I really have a voice problem. No one can hear me when I'm speaking. But when I'm alone I just speak really loudly. So this is the first video I made that I am really loud because I was by myself.

He still acknowledged the power of collaboration in that group members can help one another, but maintained that he preferred working independently, particularly when creating videos.

CL also changed her perspective on the experience, stating that before the second project, she had only used group projects with her students, and was surprised by how well Em did with the individual project. She still loved group work, because she felt that students learned from one another and could collaborate, but stated that it did not work for Em.

> I'm guessing before I met Em I really was all for the group, but I see how with him it didn't help him at all. He really did a great job in his independent one. So I think I prefer the group because it is dynamic and the kids can bounce ideas off each other. Sometimes they would help each other pronounce the word, but it really doesn't work for all of them! Em did not benefit from the group work.

Similarly, Phuong-Mai et al. (2009) found that many factors came into play regarding learner culture and group work, including the way leadership is treated in a student's country of origin. CL reflected thus:

> I think with the group he got lost in the shuffle and he's not one to insist that he gets to talk in the video, and the other two boys were very happy to do the talking. So with the individual it was all him. . . . It was good for me to realize that you can't take a cookie-cutter approach with the project.

Conclusion

Since the conclusion of the data collection phase, CL's district has changed its ESOL program. She informed me of the changes in two emails sent in September and October 2015. At that time, the state required a co-teaching model, and had changed the name of the service to English as a New Language (ENL). In addition, Em had moved to another school district, so she was no longer in touch with him or his family.

The purpose of this chapter was to present the findings in the qualitative study involving CL and Em. Data collected were categorized according to the research question they addressed. In the final chapter, I will extrapolate these findings and their implications, suggest possible directions for future research, and offer concluding thoughts.

Chapter Five

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role vodcasting might play in the English acquisition process of a Haitian seventh-grade male student. Furthermore, I was interested in the role collaborative group work would have regarding the student's progress in acquiring English. Vodcasting is an educational technology strategy that has not yet been widely researched, particularly as a tool to facilitate SLA. However, vodcasting is not a stand-alone solution; it is a strategy that might assist in conjunction with other factors that support language acquisition. Research regarding vodcasting pertaining to the English acquisition of Haitian students is currently nonexistent. Therefore, I wanted to contribute to the pool of research to help other Haitian students and students of Haitian descent.

In this final chapter, I will first discuss implications regarding vodcasting as a tool for SLA. Then, I will explore how the political climate in the United States may have affected the study. Finally, I will suggest areas for future research, primarily in the following three areas: educational technology and ELs, student-created content for learning, and the role of social media regarding personalized learning networks for educators.

Extrapolation of Findings

This section will be used to unpack the findings and themes identified in the previous chapter. Several themes emerged in relation to the two research questions:

Q1. What role might a teacher's use of vodcasting as an instructional strategy play in the English language acquisition of a middle school-age Haitian learner?

Q2. What role might collaborative working groups play in the English language acquisition of this student while engaging in vodcasting?

The role of vodcasting in Em's English acquisition. According to the data, CL's use of vodcasting might have contributed most to Em's growth in his acquisition of academic language, as well as his improved usage of punctuation. In Chapter Two, I identified several theories and research studies in the field of SLA, many of which provided a context in which to unpack the findings of the current study. C. Baker (2011) stated that social language proficiency could be attained in as little as 1 year. Having lived in the United States for 2 years, Em displayed a high level of proficiency in social English, and scored "Advanced" on the ESOL standardized test.

As a seventh-grade student, he was presumably 12 or 13 years of age, and had come to the United States 2 years prior to the commencement of the study. This leads me to believe that he was 10 or 11 years old when he moved to the U.S., which is a critical age with respect to language acquisition. Cummins (1980) identified 10 years of age as the line that divided "older learners" and "younger learners," the former group having an advantage regarding academic language, and the latter with social language. Presumably, the older learners would be more likely than the younger group to be able to build on skills in their L1. Immigrating to the United States at the age of 10 or 11, with the added benefit of prior schooling in Haiti, Em potentially had a dual advantage with both social and academic language, a hypothesis further supported by his test scores.

According to his ESLAT results, Em raised his level of academic proficiency in English during the 2014–2015 school year. After the Spring 2015 test, he had improved to the point where he was no longer eligible for language services. He was enrolled in the ESOL program, and was therefore exempted from taking the state English Language Arts examination. According to Cummins (1980), academic language proficiency takes up to 7 years to attain, so it would have been interesting to see how Em performed on the state ELA test the following school year. At the end of the 2016 school year, Em would have been in the United States for 3 years. Unfortunately, this type of follow-up was not possible as he left the district and CL was unsure of his whereabouts; however, both participants indicated that the vodcasting process helped Em, particularly in the areas of academic language and writing.

Academic language. The first vodcast occurred prior to the class reading *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969). In this video, students created preview videos by skimming through the book and identifying photos, vocabulary terms, and key concepts. Researchers such as Lord (2008), Perren (2010), and White and Gillard (2011) have recommended vodcasting to introduce vocabulary and improve comprehension. In this first video, it was difficult to determine exactly how much vocabulary Em had learned, as he spoke for only 10 s about "old pictures." However, in the second individual video, Em identified and provided examples of various vocabulary terms used in class. CL also mentioned working explicitly on these terms with students.

Em indicated that vodcasting helped him to learn academic language more easily because he had to use more advanced terms in his video. This sentiment echoes the

recommendations of Restrepo Ramos (2015), who believed ELs should be provided with a blend of intentional and incidental learning. This practice was also indicative of FonF, as described by Ellis (2016), in that the vodcasts allowed students to create their own video and focus on meaning. The subsequent class discussion allowed learners to make intentional connections to their usage of language. In addition, vodcasting allowed students to practice English while simultaneously engaging their creativity.

Writing. Among other factors, vodcasting may have contributed to the overall improvement in Em's writing. CL emphasized writing in her classroom and students practiced the skill almost every day. In her interview sessions, she discussed Em's progress with writing in complete sentences and using proper punctuation. She described how Em would often write long sentences, using commas where periods should have been; however, in later sessions, she stated that because Em read his compositions aloud, he was forced to reflect on his writing style, and he was able to make a connection with proper punctuation. For example, in his short story "The Missing Watch," he used periods accurately throughout the writing sample. Furthermore, CL reported in our final interview that he earned a perfect score on the writing portion of the ESLAT.

Culture. Although not explicitly emphasized in the main research questions guiding the study, students' home cultures played a role in CL's classroom. She employed a variety of culturally relevant, and even culturally sustaining, practices at the core of her teaching methods. For example, during the study, CL's students read two books featuring people of color as protagonists: *Sounder* (Armstrong, 1969) and *Novio Boy: A Play* (Soto, 2006). *Sounder* was the focus of both the first and second vodcast in

the study. As CL stated during Session 3, in ESOL there was no set curriculum, and there was flexibility for her to adjust the pacing and bring in extra resources. Although she taught using Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts, she was not bound to the state curriculum. Neither *Sounder* nor *Novio Boy: A Play* appear on the state curriculum map for the academic year in which the study took place.

In addition, CL identified cultural similarities among the Haitian students she taught, while recognizing the individual personality traits and background that each student possessed. At times, teachers may find it difficult to recognize the interplay of the personality traits and cultural attributes of their students, which could potentially lead to stereotyping; however, CL recognized the strong influences of national culture, while also knowing each of her students as individuals. These traits align with Gay's (2000) discussion of CRP, including the need to respect the differences of students, both culturally and individually. Furthermore, Gay advocated for the treatment of language and culture from an additive standpoint, regarding them positively.

CL spoke three languages, English, French, and Spanish, which she stated was unusual for an ESOL teacher. In an interview, she mentioned speaking Spanish as an L1 and learning French in school. She did not disclose whether she spoke Haitian Creole, but because the language shares many commonalities and cognates with French (Bonenfant, 2011), she would likely have been able to communicate to some degree with Haitian families even if they did not speak French. In addition, her own language acquisition process may have provided her with insight, clarity, and empathy regarding how best to

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help the learners in her classroom. This was yet another factor that might have contributed to a classroom climate in which Em felt comfortable sharing his learning.

The role of collaboration in Em's English acquisition while vodcasting.
Collaboration may have played a very complex, multilayered role in Em's English acquisition while he engaged in the vodcasting process. Over the years, researchers have regarded collaboration and sociocultural learning as some best practices for English acquisition. Hubbard and Levy (2016), for example, noted collaboration as a strategy for engagement. Smythe and Neufeld (2010) also stated that through teamwork and the creation of dynamic content, collaborative podcasts could reach students who were initially reluctant to write and revise their original stories.

CL had used the vodcasting strategy with students for 4 years, and positioned herself as a facilitator of learning, which allowed her to structure the class around inquiry and peer collaboration. This collaboration was yet another factor that may have contributed to Em's acquisition of English. Collaboration took many forms, ranging from participation in small groups, such as Em's first vodcasting group with two other students, to participation in large groups, including the whole class. Furthermore, CL told her students that the vodcasts might be shared with her classes in future years, which she found motivated students to provide their highest quality work.

Em first created a vodcast in a heterogeneous peer group, with two other students with varying levels of academic language proficiency who both spoke Spanish as a native language. In their 2011 study, Green et al. found that students preferred to use their native language when in homogenous language groups; however, because Em was the only

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Haitian student in his class, this was not possible. In this video, which was over 1 min 30 s long, Em would have spoken for roughly 30 s had there been an even division of screen time among the group members. However, Em spoke for less than 10 s.

There could be many explanations for Em's limited participation in the first video. Perhaps it could be attributed to the fact that millennial students tend to be reluctant to collaborate with classmates, in line with Ransdell et al.'s (2011) findings. Perhaps it was cultural, for as Phuong-Mai et al. (2009) found, students of various backgrounds may have different attitudes regarding group work. In situations of cultural mismatch, group work might be counterproductive, which appeared to be the case in Em's experience. Interestingly, CL remarked in Session 6 that most of the Haitian students she had taught were quiet and reserved. In retrospect, I wish that I had asked her more about the group work experiences of these former students. I also regret missing the opportunity to ask Em what factors may have inhibited him from speaking in the group video.

In his individual vodcast, Em spoke more and utilized academic vocabulary. This vodcast was approximately two minutes in length, and he shared various story elements, as well as his recommendations of the text. The video also featured more artistic elements such as Em's drawing, and editing complete with transitions and music. He spoke for most of the time, and I, as a viewer, could gain perspective into what he had learned.

Although this was an individual project, elements of sociocultural learning were still present. For example, when the videos were in their final form, they were shown in the class for instructor and peer feedback. CL emphasized that the class's role was to

provide only constructive suggestions and to refrain from harsh criticism, which aligned with Lucido et al.'s (2008) suggestion to foster a welcoming classroom climate in which students feel free to share.

In this case, there appeared to be a dichotomy in sociocultural learning regarding small-group and whole-group collaboration. Em appeared to be more motivated by the whole-group collaboration, particularly concerning the second video. In early interview sessions, he mentioned putting his head down and not wanting to hear his voice, which indicated that he might have been uncomfortable with the group video. However, he appeared optimistic regarding the second video, stating that he was less nervous working by himself, and affirming that the class viewing might be a positive experience.

Em displayed many traits of introversion as defined by Saleh, Sofwan, and Mujiyanto (2017), such as being "quiet, reserved, [and] shy" (p. 175). Not unlike the introverted Student A in their study, he "felt good, satisfied of working alone . . . very quiet, yet could work well in [his] cooperation with [his] partners" (p. 180). By the final sessions, both Em and CL recognized that Em worked well independently, particularly in vodcast creation; however, Em also noted that there were benefits to working with a group. For example, Em said that other students could help him when he was stuck.

In a blog post titled "5 Classroom Strategies That Help Introverts and Extroverts Do Their Best Work," Higgin (2017) suggested various strategies to help introverts and extroverts thrive in classroom settings. The author suggested "creat[ing] flow between social and reflective activities" (Section 5). The final vodcast was a mix that worked well for Em, as it allowed him to work independently and put his learning on display while

still receiving the feedback of his peers. This mirrored Higgin's recommendations to first allow students to reflect on their work, and then receive social feedback from their peers. In addition, Higgin suggested embracing the backchannel, "a digital space where [students] can question, comment, and discuss," which can "provide a more comfortable space for quiet . . . students to speak up" (Section 4). CL described student utilization of Google tools in her classroom, which can be used to this end.

Political climate in the United States. Many schools and districts understandably take precautionary measures to protect their students from harassment and choose to err on the side of caution. Several districts that I contacted declined to participate in the study, stating that they did not classify their students by country of origin. The Chief Executive Officer of district H released a public statement on the matter:

> I am deeply troubled by the fear and uncertainty that exists in so many of our school communities as a result of the actions of the Department of Homeland Security. We urge federal authorities to see schools and other public gathering places as areas where no enforcement activities should take place and ask them to strongly consider the devastating impacts of their actions on the academic, social and emotional well-being of all of our students.
>
>   To our . . . students and families: We stand with you.
>
>   All of us . . . will continue to provide a high-quality education to all, regardless of their immigration status. We urge parents and guardians to continue to send their children to school so they can learn in a safe and supportive

environment. As always, we will continue to work closely with the Office of the

County Executive and our community partners to keep our school communities

aware of the supports available to them. (2016)

The necessity to protect student privacy was evident during the study, most

notably in the search for participants. Complicating the situation was the political climate

in the United States at the time of the research, particularly regarding actions of the

Department of Homeland Security. According to their website, "The Department of

Homeland Security (DHS) engages in immigration enforcement actions to prevent

unlawful entry into the United States and to apprehend and repatriate aliens who have

violated or failed to comply with U.S. immigration laws" (U.S. Department of Homeland

Security [DHS], 2015a).

One of the subgroups of the DHS, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

(ICE), detains and deports undocumented people living in the United States. "ICE

conducted more removals in FY 2016 than in FY 2015 due to a combination of increased

state and local cooperation through PEP [CBP's Project Execution Plan] and increased

border interdictions by CBP [U.S. Customs and Border Protection]" (ICE, 2017).

According to Von Hoffmann, author of a 2016 article in *The Atlantic*, ICE has targeted

schools in various areas, including Detroit and Atlanta. Although the Family Educational

Rights and Privacy Act (2002) legally protects students under the age of 18, their parents

and/or other family members do not have this same protection. The political climate

regarding immigrants during the time of this study contributed to a stressful environment

for many families. Thus, schools had to employ preventive methods to protect the privacy

of students. This contributed to the difficulty of finding participants; however, as an educator, I understand and support this stance wholeheartedly.

Even in cases of school or district approval, an overwhelming majority of the teachers contacted found themselves inundated with a heavy workload and dropped out of the study after initially agreeing to participate. A large part of the issue was the burden and frequency of high-stakes standardized testing. In one district, three teachers from two different schools agreed to participate in the study throughout the year; however, each of them later declined, some stating the need to prepare their students for testing, and some demonstrating reluctance to take a risk on an unknown instructional strategy. Having been a classroom teacher for over 10 years, I could certainly empathize.

Implications

Several implications arose during the analysis of the data. These addressed intersectionality, technology, and best practice. They will be addressed in the following subsections.

Intersectionality. In both CRP and CSP, students' home cultures are considered a resource that should be celebrated. CL embraced the cultural background of her students to facilitate the English acquisition process, and integrated technology in a way that aligned with her philosophy. Perhaps her own experiences with learning multiple languages helped her to develop this talent; regardless, as noted in Chapter One, teacher preparation programs might benefit from the inclusion of standardized course offerings in culture and technology to explore ways to personalize instruction.

As discussed in Chapter Two, many factors can play a role in the dynamics of collaborative group work, such as power dynamics in students' home cultures and the languages spoken in the group (Phuong-Mai et al., 2009). In the current study, Em was the only student in his class who spoke Haitian Creole as a native language. He was paired in a group with two other students who spoke Spanish as an L1, a language Em did not speak. At the time, I did not think to ask Em how much his group members collaborated in Spanish, and whether he felt included. In addition, I missed the opportunity to ask CL if she believed culture played a role in Em's small group contribution. Regardless, CL had the skill to recognize Em's learning preferences, and was able to personalize her instruction accordingly.

Although Em's background was similar to that of other Haitian students CL had taught, there was likely a large degree of variability based on potential factors. Collins (2015) discussed intersectionality as being comprised of an individual's characteristics such as "race, class, gender, sexuality, age, ability, nation, ethnicity, and similar categories of analysis . . . [which] are best understood in relational terms rather than in isolation from one another" (p. 14). Em's intersectionality as a young, Black Haitian male in an American school, among other demographic characteristics, could also be unpacked through a lens of critical sociocultural theory.

Critical sociocultural theory was introduced by Lewis, Enciso, and Moje (2007), and added a lens of "identity, agency and power" (p. 9) to existing sociocultural research, as outlined in Chapter Two. In one such study, Tatum and Gue (2012) discussed a program to retheorize writing for Black adolescent males in the United States in order to

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engage and empower these students. In this 5-week program, 12 adolescent males wrote short pieces, and received feedback from "Brother Authors" (p. 128), similar to the structure in CL's class. In addition, the student authors received explicit instruction and mentoring from adult Black male authors, and worked on "anchoring their writings into the four salient characteristics or platforms that emerged from the historical analysis of African American writers: (a) defining self, (b) becoming resilient, (c) engaging others, and (d) building capacity" (p. 128).

To provide context, Tatum and Gue (2012) cited an earlier study by Hogue (2003) showing that texts written by African American authors "(a) provided a way for the African American community to maintain itself and (b) combined art with racial progress as they protested the devalued characteristics of writings by African Americans in the United States" (Hogue, 2003, as quoted in Tatum & Gue, 2012, p. 127). Although Em is Haitian and not African American, it is possible that his intersectionality as a Black adolescent male attending a United States public school could have led to similar feelings and experiences. In accordance with my IRB submission, I was careful to stay away from any topics that might lead to distress; however, a lens of critical sociocultural theory might be beneficial when exploring the experiences of Black male youth and other students of color.

Technology. As noted in Chapters Three and Four, CL had been using iPads in her classroom for 4 years before the study, and had been recognized by school administrators as having skill in this area. She had worked closely with her school librarian to learn about instructional technology strategies, and alongside her students

learned how to leverage the technology in the classroom. Furthermore, she knew how to integrate it seamlessly and purposefully into her instruction, as opposed to simply using technology for technology's sake. Joseph (2013) discussed the need for

> teaching and textbooks to become less mechanical and more interactive. For minority youth, many of whom are concentrated in urban areas, [lack of achievement is] exacerbated by under-resourced schools that purchase "drill and practice" software that emphasizes rote memorization and also by a crucial lack of attention to the students' cultural backgrounds. (p. 2)

Many teachers feel too overwhelmed and unprepared to integrate technology in their classroom, as previously stated in the Problem Statement Section in Chapter One (Beschorner & Kruse, 2016). Furthermore, digital equity does not always refer to the availability of devices; sometimes schools have technology available, but may use it in passive ways. Such use may include "drill and practice" as mentioned above, copying words from online dictionaries, or other situations in which the teacher's use of technology serves only as a direct replacement of traditional instruction.

However, this was not the case for CL. For example, her integration of podcasting was a constant staple of her class, and helped students such as Em reflect upon their own academic writing by reading it aloud. As mentioned earlier, she did have flexibility in curriculum as an ESOL teacher and was, therefore, not bound by traditional pacing requirements; however, perhaps even more importantly, CL exemplified traits of a "Learner" (International Society for Technology in Education [ISTE], 2017, Standard 1).

Best practice. In many standards for educators, such as those recommended by the ISTE, educators are encouraged to be Learners who "stay current with research that supports improved student learning outcomes, including findings from the learning sciences" (ISTE, 2017, Standard 1c). Staying informed of such best practices helps teachers shape their instruction to meet the needs of their learners; however, as CL noted in this study, not every strategy works for every learner. Just as we teach our students to be critical learners, educators must also be critical of the application of new strategies with their students.

Education is not one-size-fits-all; ISTE recommends that "educators design authentic, *learner-driven activities* and environments that recognize and *accommodate learner variability*" (italics added for emphasis; ISTE, 2017, Standard 5: Designer). In the current study, CL integrated learner-driven activities involving collaboration at various levels throughout her instruction; however, being a critical consumer of best practices, she realized that Em was not benefitting from small group interaction. Instead, she accommodated his learning preferences by allowing him to create an individual video while keeping the whole group collaboration component intact.

Recommendations for Future Research

Conducting this qualitative study was an enriching and enlightening experience. Prior to beginning my studies at George Mason University, I knew that I wanted to conduct research focusing on Haitian students. Throughout my coursework, I became very interested in the interplay between culture and identity in the learning experience. I hope to continue to explore this after I finish my studies here.

Supporting Haitian students. In Chapter One, I wrote about the small amount of literature available regarding support for Haitian students. As support, I cited the work done in this area by my mother nearly 25 years ago, which first inspired me as a child, and continues to do so as an adult and researcher. Unfortunately, not much has changed, as evidenced in Table 3

Preliminary Search Results by County. Many school districts still have no language support for Haitian students, even on their websites, which are widely used for parent communication. It was hard to gain entry into many of these districts; therefore, I cannot report what systems are in place there to meet the needs of Haitian learners. One recommendation for future research is to explore further how technology, when integrated purposefully, can help to meet the needs of this group. As a continuation of the work of Langman and Fies (2010), another recommendation may be to examine the experience of a Haitian EL in a homogenous linguistic group with other Haitian students. Furthermore, future researchers may choose to explore vodcasting as a tool for other EL groups.

Personalization and culture. In this study, CL used strategies to personalize Em's learning using vodcasts. Specifically, she accommodated his learning preferences and interests by allowing him to work independently. In his second vodcast, Em spoke for most of the video, and even integrated his passion and skill for visual arts into his product in a way that was intentional and relevant to his learning. Both participants stated that the second vodcast was a more beneficial experience for Em's language learning than the first. Furthermore, CL recognized how Em's Haitian cultural background may have influenced his learning preference to work independently.

Recently, personalization has gained momentum in education and has been identified as a best practice by several researchers (Klašnja-Milićević, Vesin, Ivanović,

Budimac, & Jain, 2017; Kühl & Zander, 2017; Papazoi, Papanikolaou, Gouli, & Grigoriadou, 2017). According to Deng, Huang, and Chung (2017), "personalized learning is . . . a new learning approach [that takes] individual parameters such as learning preferences, abilities, skills and knowledge into account" (p. 716), and thereby changes content delivery with the goal of meeting the specific needs of each learner. While personalization should take into consideration the factors identified by Deng et al. (2017), future researchers might explore what role, if any, culturally relevant and/or sustaining pedagogy could play. This might be explored through a lens of intentionally bolstering identity as a pedagogical strategy.

This exploration may include personalizing instruction to embrace and bolster a learner's home language or culture. Notably, Em came from a school in which he was forbidden to speak Haitian Creole, his L1. When he came to the United States, he was unable to speak his L1 in class because he was the only student who spoke the language. Furthermore, English-only legislation was pending at the state level. Future researchers may build upon the work of Au (2008) and examine the psychological effects of having one's home language banned in schools.

Often, conversations around CRP are centered at the group level, such as offering books that reflect all types of characters, and celebrating cultures throughout the year, as opposed to relegating them to a week or month. These discussions are necessary; however, the field could benefit from research with a lens on personalization. In doing so, the school could help to meet the needs of the whole child through culturally sustaining pedagogy.

The student-centered classroom. Loosely aligned with personalization, CL

integrated a variety of strategies indicative of the student-centered classroom. The

vodcast assignment allowed students to create artifacts to demonstrate their learning. This

aligned with the recommendations of the National Educational Technology Plan (U.S.

Department of Education, 2015) to have students create, as opposed to passively

consume, content. Furthermore, CL stepped into the role of facilitator of learning,

allowing students to work in peer groups and provide feedback on the vodcasts.

When I enrolled at George Mason University in 2007, I was a first-grade teacher

with 4 years of classroom experience. The following year, I moved to a technology

liaison position at a K–8 school, which ignited my love for educational technology. Over

the years, I learned more about integrating technology and sought to provide the best

learning opportunities to my students, preparing them to be citizens of the world. I was

proud to learn alongside these bright young people who blogged with partners from New

Zealand, completed analytical essays with other classes nationwide, filmed and edited

short films, and created online portfolios that propelled them towards college and career

readiness. For this reason, I was excited to connect with CL, who also embraced the

philosophy that classrooms should be student-driven. Notably, while CL's school

followed the Common Core State Standards, as an ESOL teacher she was released from

any pacing mandates. This allowed her to integrate the flexibility, time, and creativity

that was necessary to help her students learn English. She had the professional freedom

that many of her counterparts around the country lacked, which prevented some of them

from participating in this study. Further research on the student-centered classroom, particularly in regard to ELs, may help support them in their acquisition of English.

Connection and peer-to-peer learning. Connection and peer-to-peer learning also played an important role in this study. The second research question specifically addressed sociocultural learning and the dynamics of group work. In the last interview sessions, both CL and Em said that the individual video assignment appeared to be more beneficial to Em's learning. For example, recording this second vodcast helped him make a connection between punctuation and taking a breath. It would be unlikely that he would have made this connection in the first video, as his speaking time was very limited. Although Em demonstrated that he learned more effectively while working independently, there was an aspect of sociocultural learning still present in the class viewing activity and subsequent peer feedback. In Session 6, Em appeared excited to show his final product to the class. In addition, CL informed students that their work might be shared with future classes, which, as she explained, motivated them to submit higher-quality work.

As described in previous chapters, Em and I bonded over our shared cultural heritage, interest in art, and love of cartoons. A large part of our early conversations consisted of references to *SpongeBob SquarePants* (SpongeBob SquarePants, 1999–) and *Iron Man* (S. Lee & Lieber, 1963). This early foundation may have helped him feel more at ease being candid during the later sessions.

A final aspect of connection and peer-to-peer learning appeared in CL's collaboration with her school's librarian for her own growth and professional learning in

technology integration. As previously stated, I met this librarian in my own journey online.

Once I learned how to use social media to fuel my own professional learning, I gained many classroom strategies through connection and collaboration with other educators around the world. In fact, one major development that altered the course of my career was my creation of a grassroots organization called EduMatch in September 2014. This project was born organically out of a conversation on Voxer with a friend when I realized the need to help educators with similar interests connect to learn and grow together. In 2.5 years, EduMatch has grown to a network of over 25,000 educators worldwide, with a weekly podcast, an international guest blog, and two published anthologies in which international educators shared best practices that they utilized in their classrooms. The librarian at CL's school has been an EduMatch member since 2016.

The mission of the Edcamp Foundation (2017) is "to build and support communities of empowered educators by promoting free, participant-driven, un-conferences to maximize personalized professional learning experiences and peer networks." EdCamps began in 2010 in Philadelphia, and have been gaining momentum ever since. According to the website, over 700 EdCamps have occurred around the world, including Edcamp Voice, a biannual Edcamp which I co-founded, held entirely on the Voxer platform. CL's school librarian has participated in this event since its inception in December 2015.

Imagine a world in which every teacher has access to millions of other educators readily available to collaborate and find new resources and strategies to support EL and

mainstream students. She or he would only have to push a button to connect with other professionals anywhere in the world. These teachers could connect their classes with an infinite number of other learners globally, perhaps even in the students' home countries. Learners could collaborate with one another across limitations of time and space. There is no need to imagine it; the time is now. I am excited to see what the future will hold in this area.

Summary

In this study, I first intended to explore the role vodcasting might play in the English acquisition process of a middle school-age Haitian learner, and what role collaborative working groups might play in that process while engaging in vodcasting. In Chapter Two, I identified my conceptual framework and explored literature in SLA research, particularly regarding identity formation, which included sociocultural learning, brain-compatible teaching, and culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy. In addition, I included literature concerning educational technology, such as podcasting and vodcasting.

Data collection for this study occurred from January to May 2015 with two participants: CL, a middle school ESOL teacher, and Em, an adolescent male Haitian student in her class. I collected data through interviews, vodcasts, test scores, and a student writing sample. Interview data were analyzed through open and axial coding, while analyses of vodcasts and the writing sample occurred through content analysis. During data collection, the first research question morphed to examine the teacher's use of vodcasting as an instructional strategy.

Major findings of the study were that vodcasting might have benefitted Em primarily in academic language use, as he was required to utilize vocabulary terms as a feature of the assignment, and writing, as reading his work aloud forced him to use kinesthetic cues such as breathing to reinforce punctuation skills. More surprisingly, I found that the sociocultural aspect was more complex than I had initially believed, in that there were several dynamics present. These included small group dynamics, possibly influenced by Em's home culture, and whole class dynamics. In addition, CL's facilitation of a student-centered classroom model allowed her to personalize the vodcasting assignment for Em, allowing him to work independently, which apparently was more productive than the group video. Recommendations for future research include personalization of instruction regarding culture, the student-centered classroom, and peer-to-peer learning.

Appendix A

Teacher Interview Protocol

Pseudonym: _____ Date: _____

(Session 1)

1. How long have you been teaching? _____years _____months

2. How do you traditionally engage learners in your classroom?

3. How familiar are you with using instructional technology?

   a. What types of instructional technology, if any, have you used in the past?

      i. What were the results?

   b. Have you ever tried vodcasting as an instructional tool?

      i. What were the results?

4. What are your initial reactions to the idea of using technology as a tool for English language acquisition?

5. Which learning scenarios do you feel can be enhanced by technology?

6. What learning scenarios would you like to coordinate/experience using technology?

   a. Do you foresee any challenges incorporating this technology?

7. What does "culturally relevant pedagogy" mean to you?

8. What does "brain compatible teaching" mean to you?

9. What successes and challenges have you had instructing linguistically diverse students?

(Subsequent Sessions)

1. Have you noticed any overall developments this week by using vodcasting as a tool for English language acquisition?

    a. If so, what are they?

2. How have students responded this week to the vodcasting process?

    a. Academically?

    b. Behaviorally?

3. What technologies, other than vodcasting, have you implemented this week to help students acquire English?

4. How are students responding this week to the model of heterogeneous collaborative grouping?

    a. Any successes?

    b. Any challenges?

5. Have you observed any benefits or challenges in using technology for language acquisition?

6. Have you observed any change in the level of engagement of your students, while using the vodcasting technique?

    If so, please elaborate.

Appendix B

Student Interview Protocol

Pseudonym: _____ Date: _____

(Session 1)

1. Were you born in the United States?

    a. If not, how long have you been living here? _____years _____months

2. How comfortable are you with the English language?

    a. reading?

    b. writing?

    c. speaking?

3. On a scale of one to ten, how much does technology interest you?

    a. Why?

4. What kind of technology, if any, do you use on a regular basis?

    a. in your personal life?

    b. in school?

5. How familiar are you with vodcasting?

        i. (if experienced) How have you used it in the past?

        ii. How effective has it been?

6. How would you feel about creating a vodcasting project?

7. What kinds of technology, if any, would you like to use to learn in school?

(Subsequent Sessions)

1. What new English vocabulary have you learned this week?

2. On a scale of one to ten, how much did the vodcasting project interest you this week?

    a. Why?

3. Thinking back only to this week, how effective has vodcasting been in helping you to learn English?

        i. Why?

4. What other kinds of technology did you use this week to help you learn English?

5. What was your experience working in groups on the vodcasting project?

    a. Any successes?

    b. Any challenges?

6. What worked well in your project this week?

7. What didn't work so well?

    Do you have any suggestions for what may make the project better?

Summary of Project

Summary: Using Technology to Facilitate Language Acquisition of English Language Learners
Doctoral Dissertation
Student Researcher: Sarah-Jane Thomas sthomasgmu@gmail.com 703.303.5799

Purpose	The purpose of the proposed research is to study how to facilitate language acquisition through technology, including student-created vodcasts.
Research Questions	Q1. In what ways does vodcasting facilitate English acquisition and learning among English learners of Haitian descent? Q2. In what ways does the collaborative creation of a group vodcast support culturally relevant pedagogy while facilitating English acquisition and learning?
Who?	Middle school students, specifically Haitian English Language Learners

	Middle level educators in content areas including English, ESOL, and/or Technology
What?	Students will create a vodcast component in the target language (English) to supplement class discussion, and finally share their completed podcasts with the class for instructor and peer feedback. The researcher will also conduct interviews with students and teachers via Google Hangouts on Air.
When?	SY 2014–2015 for one instructional unit (approx. 8 weeks for teachers, 5 weeks for students)
Where?	Online via Google Hangouts and/or Skype.
Researcher Needs	WIDA and unit test scores of Haitian ELs Consent/assent forms

Thank you for your time and assistance!

"The Missing Watch"

John and Max are best friends since fourth grade.They are really close friends and they share everything together even their darkest secrets.

They sit next to each other every day at school.

John is living with his mother Helene, father Johnny,

brother Jack, and cousin Steffane.

One day while they were walking on the side of the street, John saw beautiful watch he wanted one since then.

"John why don't you ask your mother?"

John listen to his best friend and begged his mother to buy him the watch. His mother said "I will buy you one on your birthday."

But lucky for him his birthday was after the next day. His birthday was January 20th after then at his birthday his mother bought him the watch. He liked it so much he wore it every day at school. Four weeks later, the only thing he talked about was the watch. Max got really jealous, because John liked the watch more than him. Now he wants to get rid of the watch.

The next day while they were at lunch, John took off the watch and put it on the lunch table and go buy a soda.

"This is my chance to end this."

Max took the watch and put it in his pocket. When John came back the next thing he was did was look for the watch.

"Have you seen my watch? I put it right here before I left asked John."I don't know maybe someone took it."

John started panicking. He looked everywhere at the cafeteria but he did not find it and he told Max to check his pocket.

"You must have taken it by accident."

"I don't think so, since you left I was only watching the guys outside playing soccer. You have to believe me. I'm your best friend."

All of a sudden John began thinking about his mother who spent $100 on a watch that he only wore for four weeks. Now start the real panicking.

After Max took the watch he paid John's brother Jack $50 to not tell John. The next day John went to the lost and found but he did not found the watch. He went to the main office and he spoke to the woman who makes the announcements to help him find the watch but he never did find it. He thought about his mom would say when he gave her this tragic news.

After a lot of thinking John decided not to tell his parents about the missing watch. He decided to search for it. He ask for Max's help.

"What, come on it's just a watch. If you explain to your parents what happen I' m sure they will understand."

"If you don't want to help me I will do it alone."complained John.

"Find I will help you find it."

And then both of them started looking for evidence. When John got home his cousin Steffane told him "Why don't you check the school's security cameras?"

John listened to his cousin and went to check the school's security cameras. Just when they were about to show John what really happened, Max showed up and said "Come quick I need to show you something."

"What is it?"

"I brought you your favorite donut with sprinkles."

"Thanks Max but I'm not really in the mood for donuts."

Max felt bad for his friend being sad all the time.

He was going to give John back the watch. When Max got home there's another big problem. He lost it for real.

After Max found out that he lost the watch for real he began panicking.

"How could I lose the watch I put it right here before I left?"

Max looked everywhere in the house. He asked his mother "Did you see a watch in my room mother."

"Yes I put it on the top of the closet you can go get it be careful."

"Max used a chair to reach on top of the closet. While he is pushing the watch forward with a stick the watch fell down and it broke. "Oh my god what have I done? John is never going to forgive me."

After that John went to his house and he ask his brother "Did you see any evidence about the watch?"

"Yes I did, I know who took your watch. It's Max."

"What then why didn't you say anything."

"Because Max paid me $50."

The next day John went to Max's house but he wasn't there. John ask Max's mother if he could go into Max's room."Sure." when John went into Max's room he saw a box when he looked inside he saw his broken watch. "Oh my god, I cannot believe this."

He took the box and he went to a repair shop he paid $20 to fix the watch. After that he said that he will never talk to Max again.

Tomorrow at school Max came and he sit next to John "Why, why did you do it?" Max did not respond because he didn't know what John was talking about."What are you talking about?"

"I know you are the one who stole my watch."

"What, how do you know?"

"I went to your house yesterday and I saw my watch broken. So I paid to fix it."

"I am so sorry, I was just jealous, I thought you liked the watch more than me. I was going to give it back to you but it broke. I was going to fix but when I got home the box was gone."

"Are you crazy I could never like a watch more than you."

"So do you forgive me."

"I forgive you."

And then John forgives Max because Max explained why he did what he did. They stayed best friends. And then at the end Max got himself a watch too now they both are wearing a watch.

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Biography

Sarah Thomas is a Regional Technology Coordinator in Prince George's County Public Schools. Sarah is also a Google Certified Innovator, Google Education Trainer, and founder of the EduMatch project, which promotes connection and collaboration among teachers around the world. Through EduMatch, Sarah has published two collaborative books, *EduMatch Snapshot in Education* (2016) and *The #EduMatch Teacher's Recipe Guide* (2017).

Sarah holds a Master's degree from Howard University in the field of Curriculum and Instruction. She is currently a doctoral candidate at George Mason University, with a major in Education. Her upcoming dissertation, "Student-Created Videos as a Language Acquisition Strategy for a Haitian Learner," is rooted heavily in student-created artifacts.

Sarah was designated an ASCD Emerging Leader in 2016, and was named Prince George's County Public Schools Outstanding Educator Using Technology in 2015. She is also a winner of the 2014 Digital Innovation in Learning Award in the "Sharing is Caring" category, and was named by the National School Board Association as one of the "20 to Watch" in 2015. She was part of the Technical Working Group that refreshed the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards for Educators in 2016–2017, and in 2017 she won the ISTE "Making IT Happen" Award.