Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig - Journal for Language Teaching
- Ijenali yokuFundisa iLimi - IJenali yokuFundisa iiLwimi -
Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi - Tšenale ya tša Go ruta Polelo
- Buka ya Thuto ya Puo - Jenale ya Thuto ya Dipuo - Ijenali
Yekufundzisa Lulwimi - Jena?a ya u Gudisa Nyambo
- Jenala yo Dyondzisa Ririmi - Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig -
Journal for Language Teaching - Ijenali yokuFundisa iLimi
- IJenali yokuFundisa iiLwimi - Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi
- Tšenale ya tša Go ruta Polelo - Buka ya Thuto ya Puo -
Jenale ya Thuto ya Dipuo - Ijenali Yekufundzisa Lulwimi
- Jena?a ya u Gudisa Nyambo - Jenala yo Dyondzisa
Ririmi - Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig - Journal for Language
Teaching - Ijenali yokuFundisa iLimi - IJenali yokuFundisa
iiLwimi - Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi - Tšenale ya tša Go ruta
Polelo - Buka ya Thuto ya Puo - Jenale ya Thuto ya Dipuo -
Ijenali Yekufundzisa Lulwimi - Jena?a ya u Gudisa Nyambo
- Jenala yo Dyondzisa Ririmi
- Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig
- Journal for Language
Teaching - Ijenali
yokuFundisa iLimi -
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iiLwimi - Ibhuku
Lokufundisa Ulimi
- Tšenale ya tša
Go ruta Polelo -
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- Ijenali Yekufundzisa
Lulwimi - Jena?a ya u
Gudisa Nyambo - Jenala yo
Dyondzisa Ririmi - Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig
- Journal for Language Teaching - Ijenali
yokuFundisa iLimi - IJenali yokuFundisa iiLwimi -
Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi - Tšenale ya tša Go ruta
Polelo - Buka ya Thuto ya Puo - Jenale ya Thuto ya
Dipuo - Ijenali Yekufundzisa Lulwimi - Jena?a ya
u Gudisa Nyambo - Jenala yo Dyondzisa Ririmi
- Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig - Journal for Language
Teaching - Ijenali yokuFundisa iLimi - IJenali
yokuFundisa iiLwimi - Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi -
Tšenale ya tša Go ruta Polelo - Buka ya Thuto ya Puo -
Jenale ya Thuto ya Dipuo - Ijenali Yekufundzisa Lulwimi
- Jena?a ya u Gudisa Nyambo - Jenala yo Dyondzisa
Ririmi - Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig - Journal for Language
Teaching - Ijenali yokuFundisa iLimi - IJenali yokuFundisa
iiLwimi - Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi - Tšenale ya tša Go ruta
Polelo - Buka ya Thuto ya Puo - Jenale ya Thuto ya Dipuo -
Ijenali Yekufundzisa Lulwimi - Jena?a ya u Gudisa Nyambo
- Jenala yo Dyondzisa Ririmi - Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig -
Journal for Language Teaching - Ijenali yokuFundisa iLimi
- IJenali yokuFundisa iiLwimi - Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi
- Tšenale ya tša Go ruta Polelo - Buka ya Thuto ya Puo -
Jenale ya Thuto ya Dipuo - Ijenali Yekufundzisa Lulwimi
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Ririmi - - Tydskrif vir Taalonderrig - Journal for Language
Teaching - Ijenali yokuFundisa iLimi - IJenali yokuFundisa
iiLwimi - Ibhuku Lokufundisa Ulimi - Tšenale ya tša Go ruta

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Change Laboratory Workshop Methodology in Transforming Visual Literacy: A Case of Cartoons in English First Additional Language

Abstract

In-service teacher development continues to be a challenge of curriculum reform in South Africa. In spite of previous interventions that have been used, visual literacy continues to challenge many in-service teachers. Visual literacy involves the development of competencies that a person needs in order to understand a combination of linguistic, visual, audio, gestural and spatial design elements. This paper proposes that change laboratory workshop methodology can transform in-service teacher development of visual literacy. Change laboratory workshop methodology develops from Cultural Historical Activity Theory's principles of contradictions and expansive learning, and is used to implement change. This paper uses an illustrative example of a cartoon in English First Additional Language in Grade 11. Data were collected from a change laboratory workshop of nine participants who met for four sessions of two hours each. Lesson video clips and transcript and a cartoon were used for double stimulation and reflexivity. Insights from Cultural Historical Activity Theory and the Newfield Framework were used to analyse this data. The main finding of this intervention is opening of a dialogical space in which participants took initiatives to develop their visual literacy and re-configure the multi-layers of interpreting cartoons.

Keywords: Visual literacy, Multimodality, cartoons, teacher education, Cultural Historical Activity Theory, change laboratory workshop

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1. Introduction

Many workshops have been organised by the Department of Basic Education as interventions that aim to bridge the gap between the intended curriculum, the implemented curriculum and the attained curriculum (Taylor, Muller & Vinjevold, 2003). All these workshops have been designed along cascade model, which involves series training of in-service teachers from national, provincial, district and cluster levels. In spite of these interventions, there is continuing evidence of low literacy in South Africa. This paper specifically focusses in visual literacy, a component of English First Additional Language (FAL). The Annual National Assessment Reports (2012, 2013 & 2014) make specific mention of Grade 9 learners struggle to interpret advertisements and cartoons. Many English FAL researchers in South Africa agree that one of the causes of underdevelopment in visual literacy is ill-preparation of teachers (Leask-Smith, 2008; Mbelani & Murray, 2009; Mbelani, 2007, 2008, 2012b, 2014; Moodley, 2013). All these reports further recommend rigorous in-service teacher development. Yet, there is no suggestion of a practice-based methodology that could complement the cascade model.

It is on the basis of this continuing evidence of low literacy that this paper argues for the potential of change laboratory workshop methodology in developing in-service teachers' visual literacy using interpretation and teaching of cartoons in Grade 11. In this paper, I will discuss the complexity of cartoons within visual literacy, Cultural Historical Activity Theory that underpins the concept of expansive learning and the change laboratory workshop methodology, and the analysis of change laboratory workshop.

2. Complexity of meaning making and teaching of cartoons within visual literacy

John Debes introduced the term "visual literacy" in 1968 and that led to the first National Conference on Visual Literacy in 1969, the forerunner of the present day International Visual Literacy Association. At the 1969 conference, visual literacy was defined as:

> a group of vision-competencies a human being can develop by seeing and at the same time having and integrating other sensory experiences. The development of these competencies is fundamental to normal human learning. When developed, they enable a visually literate person to discriminate and interpret the visible actions, objects, symbols, natural or man-made, that he encounters in his environment. Through the creative use of these competencies, he is able to communicate with others. Through the appreciative use of these competencies, he is able to comprehend and enjoy the masterworks of visual communication (International Visual Literacy Association 1969: 1).

The above definition conveys the changing nature of literacy and the increasing need for visual literacy. Visual images are everywhere, in "dance, film, fashion, hairstyles,

exhibitions, public monuments, interior designs, lighting, computer games, advertising, photography, architecture and art", to mention a few (Bamford, 2005: 1). Apart from being seen live in our surroundings, these visual images are common sights in the media. This study assumes that meaningful and critical teaching of visual literacy can take place only when the teachers' literacy transforms to accommodate visual literacy and its criticality.

In South Africa, visual literacy is part of the English curriculum in the Further Education and Training (FET) band of schooling. The National Curriculum Statement (NCS) expanded the learning outcomes of English FAL from "reading and writing to include viewing and designing" (Mbelani, 2007: 7). English FAL teaching has gone way beyond printed words to include multimodal texts with still, motion, audio and visual images. In recognition of the new trend in literacy, the NCS states that:

> The range of literacies needed for effective participation in society and the workplace in the global economy of the twenty-first century has expanded beyond listening, speaking, reading, writing and oral traditions to include various forms such as media, graphic, information, computer, cultural, and critical literacy (South Africa, 2003: 9).

In the light of this recognition, the curriculum locates literacy within the socio-cultural or ideological approach, which views literacy as a "social practice that is embedded in specific contexts, discourses and positions" (Street, 1996: 1). This approach is based on the view that all people acquire a primary literacy from home through social interaction with other members, and continuously acquire other literacies as they get involved with and participate in church, school, college or university and media, to mention a few other institutions additional to the home (Gee, 1999). Social interaction is embedded with shared values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of a group of people, often called discourses (ibid). People internalise these discourses which later become the basis for their literacy (ibid). In this paper, discourse is one of the available semiotic resources that people draw on to produce or consume media texts

Viewing literacy as a social practice calls for its criticality. Some of the most popular proponents of criticality in South Africa have common agreement that literacy without criticality cannot contribute to social transformation rather unfair social practices will be reproduced and maintained without scrutiny (Stein, 2008; Janks, 2010, 2012 & 2013; Newfield, 2011; Prinsloo, 2006; Mbelani, 2007, 2012 & 2014). As a result of this critical call another set of adjectives was included in order to have critical literacy and critical visual literacy. Even though the call for criticality in literacy has a solid justification for all nations of the world, many of in-service teachers in South Africa, particularly where this study took place, were still struggling to understand and teach critical visual literacy because they were still grappling with visual literacy.

This paper specifically focusses on meaning making and teaching of cartoons, which are pictographic depictions of events, concepts or daily life situations which are often satirical and use humorous characters (Narayan, 2016). Seymour-Ure (2008) notes

that cartoons assert opinions, are generally critical and often emotional, and are often placed alongside editorials using reasoned argument. Bahrani and Soltani (2011) argue that when interacting with the cartoons' stimuli, learners refine their own learning and understanding while simultaneously developing critical skills. Narayan (2016) further acknowledges that cartoons can be used to improve reading, vocabulary, problem solving, and critical thinking abilities of students. According to Adendorff (1991) making sense of a cartoon can be difficult because its message may be cryptic and indirect, and there may often be quite a mismatch between the literal or surface meaning of a cartoon, and deeper meanings that are not immediately apparent, yet are possible to analyse. Adendorff (1991) further acknowledges that a person requires background knowledge of the topic as well as an understanding of how cartoonists usually exaggerate a particular facial feature of the character and use this distortion for comic effect. In his 2012 book chapter, Mbelani notes that viewers (in this case teachers) can misinterpret the cartoon if they are directly affected by the background story of the cartoon.

The Newfield Framework[1] (1993) accommodates the multi-modal nature of teaching and learning of cartoons by specifically focussing on the visual (physical portrayal of characters and other visual signs and symbols), verbal (captions, conversations, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs and fonts), and contextual (socio-political or media context in which the event of the cartoon is based) elements. A focus on only one of the three elements of a cartoon could lead to misinterpretation of a cartoon because the three present a collective interpretation. The above complexity of meaning making and teaching of cartoons resonates with the intended visual literacy curriculum, which is different from the implemented and attained visual literacy curriculum. The main reason for this mismatch is that the majority of current English FAL teachers received their formal education during apartheid, which did not prepare them to teach visual literacy. Historically, visual literacy was included in English First Language (currently known as English home language), which was mainly for whites, and was not included in English Second Language (currently known as English FAL) which was mainly taught to blacks (Mbelani, 2007). The majority of teachers who participated in this study were introduced to the concept of visual literacy, specifically cartoons, and taught them for the first time in 2009 as shown in Table 1 below.

1 See Appendix 1. This is a useful framework that includes insights from critical discourse analysis and multimodality

Table 1: Teachers' demographic information

Teacher	Date of birth	Gender	Educational qualification	Years of teaching	Grades taught in the past five years	Subjects taught	First encounter with visual literacy as something to be taught
Mr Nkosi	03/03/67	M	STD 1994, BEd (Hons) 2008	15	8-12	English, History	2009
Mr Ntulo	16/01/73	M	STD	14	10-12	English, Geography	2003
Ms Vuza	03/11/67	F	STD 1988, BA 1995, BEd (Hons) 2008	23	10-12	English	2000
Ms Kalipha	26/05/60	F	STD, FDE	20	10-12	English	2009
Ms Tyani	28/09/69	F	STD, BEd	19	8-12	English, History	2009
Ms Qupha	02/02/70	F	STD, B.Mus.Ed (Hons)	18	8-12	English, Music	2009

This paper documents an intervention which aimed at introducing teachers to the ideas of visual literacy and criticality, and the challenge of using cartoons in classrooms where many learners may have less background knowledge than they may need to interpret cartoons. Specifically, the intervention aimed to raise teachers' consciousness of how their interpretation and teaching of cartoons could enable or hinder the achievement of visually literate learners; surface contradictions in teachers' sense making and teaching of cartoons; and use these contradictions as springboards for expansive learning. To achieve the three aims, this paper employs and develops the theoretical insights of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)'s expansive learning through change laboratory workshop methodology.

3. Potential of expansive learning in change laboratory workshop methodology

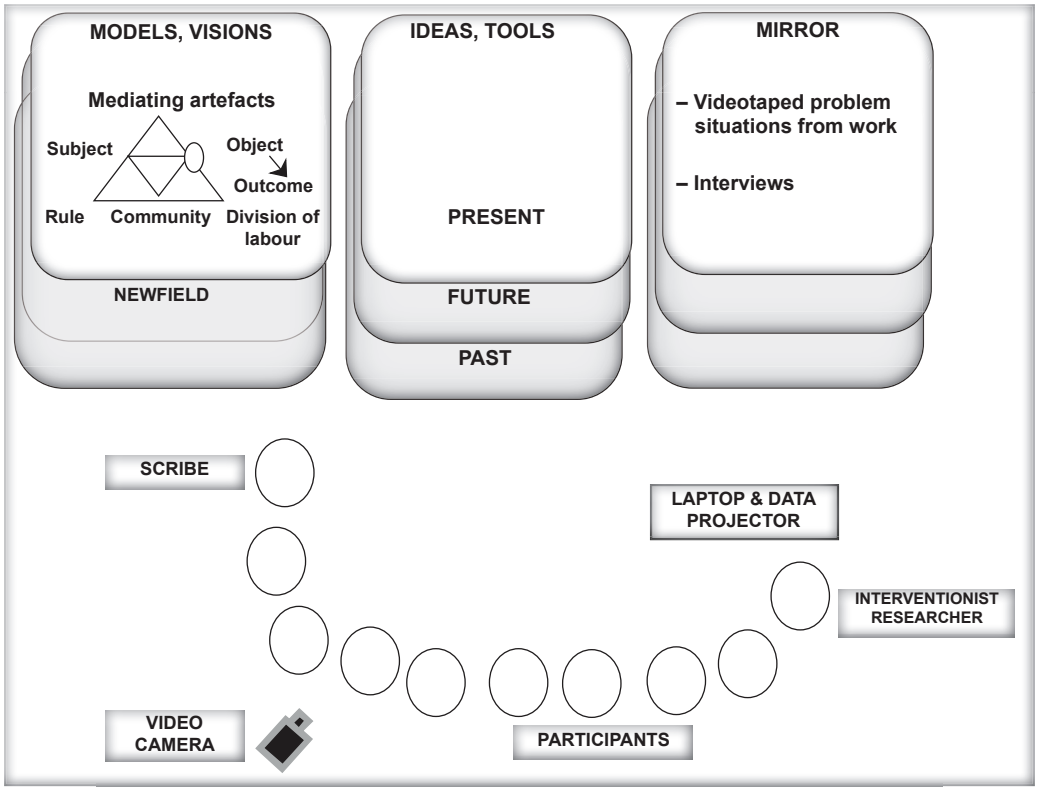
This paper applies CHAT to investigate the development of consciousness raising within teacher development of visual literacy (Daniels, Cole & Wertsch, 2007).

Expansive learning is one of the key concepts of CHAT and refers to learning "what is not yet there" (Engeström, 2004: 4). In this paper, the interventionist researcher carefully documents the gap between teachers' current meaning making and teaching of visual literacy and the intended meaning making and teaching of visual literacy. The intended visual literacy is what is not yet there, and connotes that human beings have the potential to be transformed. Expansive learning depends on the identification and surfacing of contradictions, which is another concept of CHAT. When an activity system takes on a new element from outside (in this case the introduction of visual literacy to the curriculum), historical and accumulated structural tensions occur within and between the old and new elements (Engeström, 2001). These contradictions are viewed as springboards for expansive learning at change laboratory workshop (Engeström, 1999). Contradictions do not always present smooth intervention because participants may be relucted to discuss those (Capper & Williams, 2004). This paper examines teachers' existing engagement with visual literacy, and analyses contradictions that emerge from within or in between the six elements of the second generation of CHAT.

At change laboratory workshop participants represent different activity systems and work together towards a shared object, which in this study is interpreting and teaching of cartoons. Working towards a shared object implies that participants "enter onto territory in which we are unfamiliar and, to some significant extent therefore unqualified" (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011:134). This process is called boundary crossing and occurs when professionals "face the challenge of negotiating and combining ingredients from different contexts to achieve hybrid situations" (Engeström, Engeström & Kärkkäinen, 1995: 319). Boundary crossing can be seen as a "process of collective concept formation whose potential lies embedded in transporting ideas and instruments from seemingly unrelated domains into the domain of focal inquiry" (ibid: 320). This process is not automatic and needs to be mediated within the zone of proximal development through double stimulation and reflexivity. At a change laboratory workshop different sets of stimuli such as snippets of data and analytical frameworks are used to stimulate participants' reflection on current practice to a future envisioned activity system. That process could result in emergence of transformative agency where participants take full control for their own change. Change laboratory workshop methodology has not been applied in teaching of cartoons, and this paper extends arguments in health care, Agriculture and Environmental Education to mention a few fields of study.

Data for this paper were collected from a change laboratory workshop of four two-hour sessions, one on the first day and three on the second. Session one was workshop orientation where I shared the programme, negotiated times, and introduced the second generation CHAT as a framework to identify the shared object (purpose) of the workshop, and for double stimulation in the sessions that followed. During session two, I used lesson DVD clips and transcript as mirror data to surface contradictions. Session three was on modelling solutions. Session four was evaluation, reflection and consolidation. These four sessions were guided by the change laboratory workshop layout and processes, as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 reflects the layout of the room and seating arrangement of this cartoon change laboratory workshop which had nine attendees: myself, a research assistant, six research participants and Ms Nana[2] who volunteered to attend the workshop. The workshop processes were guided by the mirror data, model and vision, and ideas and tools planes. Mirror plane refers to the presentation of first stimuli, which in this paper were from Ms Tyani's Grade 11 cartoon lesson (DVD clips, lesson transcript and cartoon. The researcher met her prior to the change laboratory workshop to ask for her permission to use her data to mirror first stimuli, and she agreed on the basis that the workshop was for professional development.

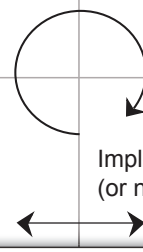


To display classroom data, I connected a data projector and a laptop which was placed on the front right hand side of the tables where I sat most of the time. The wall in front was used as a projector screen to present best practice and areas of potential growth (Daniels, 2008). The models and visions plane refers to theoretical and conceptual tools (ibid). I introduced the second generation of CHAT as an analytical tool to raise teachers' consciousness of their interpretation and teaching of cartoons.

2 All names of participating teachers and learners in this study are pseudonyms.

I also introduced the Newfield Framework as an analytical tool which encouraged re-configuration of the many layers of meaning in cartoons. The last plane, ideas and tools, refers to "reflexivity where participants could move between present, past and future activity systems" (Sannino, 2008: 237). As a way of simplifying the CHAT notions of contradictions and expansive learning, I used the following four questions to guide discussion and reflexivity after each set of mirror data was presented: What was interesting or excellent? What was not done well? What underlying factors hinder meaningful and critical teaching of cartoons in English FAL in Grades 10-12? What could be done differently to improve the lesson? The first two questions focussed participants' attention on present or visible individual actions or events of meaning making and teaching of cartoons as shown in Figure 2 (Hill, Capper, Wison, Whatman & Wong, 2007).

LEVEL OF FOCUS	LEVEL OF FOCUS	LEVEL OF FOCUS
Invisible systems acitivity	Development proces to identify system contradictions	Designing new forms of the acitivity (eg. new rules, new tools)
Visible individuel actions, events	Identifying the obvious problem	Implementing the obvious (or new) solutions



The third question explored the past or invisible causes for things to be the way they were in terms of the present or visible actions (ibid). The last question focused on the future and engaged participants to think of ways to improve the situation (ibid). It was because of simplifying the second generation model and promoting reflexivity that the implementation of the four sessions did not strictly follow the chronological order of the seven actions of expansive learning cycle because all sessions occurred iteratively. The underlying rationale for these questions worked similarly to identifying contradictions, modelling solutions, evaluating solutions and implementing solutions.

In exploring the potential of the expansive learning cycle during this change laboratory workshop, the concept of double stimulation was applied in order to encourage participants to question, criticise, and or reject some of Ms Tyani's meaning making and teaching of the cartoon (Engeström, Meittinen, & Punamaki, 1999). In addition, participants were encouraged to analyse the contextual, cultural and historical underlying factors that enabled or constrained the teaching of visual literacy (ibid). The first stimulation occurred when participants were requested to analyse the cartoon that Ms Tyani taught (Appendix 2). The second stimulation occurred when participants analysed lesson segments of Ms Tyani's running transcript in teaching the cartoon. As a result, contradictions were surfaced and ways to overcome them were suggested. It is worth noting that moving

through expansive learning cycle during these sessions was not smooth and automatic, but depended on scaffolding, negotiation of different points of views and reflexivity as will be shown in section that follow.

4. Discussing the potential of expansive learning: critical reflexivity of a CLW

A major area of expansive learning of this change laboratory workshop was to re-configure the multi-layered nature of meaning in media texts, as shown in Extract 1.

EXTRACT 1: Ms Vuza's acknowledgement of many layers of meaning in visual texts	
1.	Ms Vuza: My first point is that teachers should treat every element of visual text as important because it is there for a purpose.
2.	Researcher: (Writing on the flip chart: "Observing all visual elements of the text"). Is that what you are saying?
3.	Ms Vuza: When you say visual signs it means you are excluding the verbal.

Ms Vuza's idea in Extract 1 resonated with the Newfield Framework (1993) three elements of visual, verbal and context. Before this extract, all participants acknowledged that Ms Tyani's teaching of visual elements of the cartoon[3] (setting and characters) was meaningful and well-thought out. However, participants reflected that the lesson ignored all verbal elements of the cartoon[4], as shown in Extract 2.

EXTRACT 2: Discussing the importance of verbal elements of the cartoon	
1.	Ms Vuza: And that [euthanized] is the key word there
2.	Researcher: It is bold together with SPCA
3.	Ms Qupha: And also some learners may not know SPCA
4.	Researcher: What do you say, Ms Tyani?
5.	Ms Tyani: Yes, I see it now. But you know when I planned that lesson it did not come to me that I should also plan for vocabulary. My focus was just on visual literacy. It didn't come into my mind. It was not even there in my planning.
6.	Researcher: For my own curiosity, would the learners known SPCA, what it stands for whilst you were teaching?
7.	Ms Vuza: Not all of them
8.	Ms Tyani: But they were just assuming what is SPCA. They associated it with the animals.

3 See Appendix 2 for the original transcript of Ms Tyani. This is a segment of Ms Tyani's lesson that relates to the whole class analysis of the cartoon. Hard copies of this transcript were given to all participants including Ms Tyani as mirror data at the workshop. A soft copy of this transcript was projected on the wall as well to focus discussion.

4 See Appendix 3 for the cartoon that Ms Tyani used. At the CL workshop, all participants were given a copy of this cartoon and allowed to unpack meaning before the transcripts were shown. Thereafter, all participants discussed their different understandings.

In Utterances 1, 2 and 3, Ms Vuza, Ms Qupha and researcher pointed to the importance of the cartoonist's choice in presenting the words "euthanized" and "SPCA" in bold font. By ignoring these verbal details as a meaning potential of this multimodal text, the lesson did not recognise that the process of production or composition is "thought out in great detail, with attention to every object, every figure and every aspect of the setting" (Day, 2001: 20). In Utterance 4, I purposefully asked Ms Tyani to reflect on her neglect of these linguistic designs of the cartoon. Yet, even as Ms Tyani acknowledged her neglect of these important verbal details of this text in Utterance 5, she limited visual literacy to only the visual elements of a text, which was a secondary contradiction between her content knowledge of visual literacy and the multimodal nature of cartoons as a tool. As a result, she did not combine the multimodal design elements of this text to give "an overall unity, balance, and a sense of rhythm that enhance [her learners'] aesthetic pleasure" (Giorgis, Johnson, Bonomo & Colbert, 1999: 152).

There was agreement amongst workshop participants that the lesson did not deepen learners' understanding of key words which anchor the visual elements of this cartoon as shown in Extract 3 below.

EXTRACT 3: Participants' agreement on deepening analysis of a cartoon

1.	Ms Kalipha: This says that in whatever lesson, the teacher needs to make a point that learners understand the meaning of the text without overlooking some particular aspects, but first we must understand the text as it is.
2.	Mr Nkosi: In other words, they must be broadminded.
3.	Researcher: Also, if you remember in composing visual texts we said that each and every element that is brought into a text is there for a purpose. The person who was designing that text carefully decided on what to bring in and what not to bring in. We may conclude from our discussion that the teacher focussed more on the visual. If we come back to the Newfield Framework, the teacher focussed here [pointing to the visual part of the electronic framework] and not on the verbal.

In Utterances 1 and 2 there was agreement that overlooking some elements of a cartoon hindered the kind of meaning making which would get learners to recognise and respect this complexity in their response to cartoons. Utterance 3 summarised the discussion by applying the Newfield Framework and bringing to the participants' attention to "what is not yet there" in the teaching of cartoons. Teachers should observe "the complex interplay of words, images and other graphic elements in multimodal texts" (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996: 15). Underlying this lesson's neglect of verbal elements of the cartoon goes hand in glove with many teachers' belief that "teaching is easy and simple", a perception which is characteristic of the apprenticeship of observation (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). As a result, teachers do not thoroughly prepare their lessons and may ignore some of its most pertinent aspects, just as this lesson did with "euthanized" and "SCPA".

Furthermore, participants explored the context element of the Newfield Framework as shown in Extract 4.

EXTRACT 4: Expression of a different perspective

1. Mr Ntulo: I would have made it differently. For instance, that is a political statement.
2. Researcher: Which one?
3. Mr Ntulo: That African people are killing goats cruelly. Death is death anyway whether you euthanize them or you don't. 300 goats are going to be euthanized because for some reason there is a disease or something.
4. Researcher: They were injured when the truck that was carrying them overturned.

Mr Ntulo's statement in Utterance 1, "I would have done it differently", was a deep reflexive thought. In this statement, he opened a space for boundary crossing because the discussion of this cartoon (boundary object) enabled "communication between different activity systems by making explicit the knowledge and assumptions mobilized in the interpretation of the object" (Hoyles, Bakker, Kent, & Noss, 2007: 335). Mr Ntulo's perspective in Utterances 1 and 3 resonated within the socio-political conditions in which this cartoon was produced and consumed. He viewed this cartoon as a "powerful means of maintaining and reproducing relations of domination … (used by) men and women to fight out their social and political battles at the level of signs, meanings and representations" (Janks, 2000: 176).

Mr Ntulo juxtaposed the SPCA ideology of preventing cruelty to animals with the traditional African ideology of offering goats as sacrifices. In his discussion of the two conflicting ideologies, he demonstrated excellent understanding of the professional codes that were employed in the production of this cartoon, which include the verbal use of "euthanized" for the SPCA on the one hand, and the visual depiction of a goat about to be slaughtered with knives for the traditional practice on the other hand. These professional codes generated a preferred meaning that echoed the SPCA ideology, which implicitly evoked sympathy for the goat that was about to be slaughtered, while disapproving of the perceived cruelty to animals. The dominant reading of these professional codes was that euthanizing was a better way of killing animals. Mr Ntulo understood the dominant reading of this cartoon, but chose to read it in a way that was opposite to the preferred meaning (Hall, 1980). He argued that both euthanizing and slaughtering involved the killing of goats, as shown in part of his Utterance 3 that "Death is death anyway whether you euthanize them or you don't". The cartoon created a fragmentation that naturalised euthanizing as modest and humane, whilst slaughtering was projected as cruel, barbaric or uncivilised.

Mr Ntulo's adoption of a resistant reading perspective was a way to begin to see things in a different light and highlight the process of expansive learning through dialogue, multiple perspectives and a network of interacting activity systems, which was the main advantage of the change laboratory workshop. Mr Ntulo revealed new aspects of the contextual meaning (Bakhtin, 1986), demonstrating that this cartoon is shaped by social forces where influential social groups such as the SPCA can shape how the practices of certain people can be described (Ivanic, 1990). Mr Ntulo's argument in Utterances 1 and 3 is a manifestation of a Marxist viewpoint on the struggle for dominance within this

cartoon, which naturalises SPCA's interest as common sense for society as a whole, whilst Mr Ntulo defended African traditional practices and resisted the SPCA domination (Fiske, 1987b).

Mr Ntulo's perspective challenged other participants "to negotiate and combine ingredients from different contexts to achieve hybrid situations" (Engeström et al., 1995: 319). As a result, some workshop participants also became active readers who could decode multiple meanings through familiarity with the professional codes employed to produce this cartoon, as shown in Extract 5.

EXTRACT 5: Expansive learning through expression of a different perspective

5. Ms Qupha: Instead of letting them die of pain, they better kill them.
6. Mr Ntulo: So when African people are doing their rituals that is seen as cruelty.
7. Ms Qupha: That is …Stereotyping
8. Mr Ntulo: Yes, stereotyping. That thing came when there was a big … on TV where that cartoon came about. White people are refusing to…I think there was a ritual that was happening in KZN where they slaughtered a number of cattle and there was a talk over radios and TV of how cruel black people are by slaughtering bulls.
9. Ms Qupha: I think this depends on the community you are in. I mean whose view point, because one would analyse the cartoon in one way or the other. I mean people in Cape Town in a white school would analyse that cartoon differently from us. So, it depends on the areas.
10. Ms Vuza: In fact, I think that can be answered by "Whose voice is saying that?" When you introduce that question to the learners you will come to the specific that is from the voice of the white community. They view us blacks as practising cruelty when we kill animals making use of knives in slaughtering them. Yet, they also kill by euthanizing.
11. Ms Qupha: And even if it is not that they are euthanized, they kill them to take them to the butcheries so that we buy meat. We don't know the process but we know that the meat there comes from these animals. [Laughter]
12. Ms Kalipha: So it comes to what Mr Ntulo was saying that death is death and it does not matter how it is done.

In Utterances 5-8 Mr Ntulo and Ms Qupha explored the dominant perspective of this cartoon, labelling it as stereotyping when African people are projected as slaughtering animals cruelly. The realisation that this cartoon was not neutral but was produced and interpreted drawing from cultural values, ideas and beliefs, was one of the workshop highlights. Utterances 9, 10 and 11 showed participants' recognition of the likely difference in making meaning of this cartoon between white suburban Cape Town and black rural villages, because of their different interpretive conventions and cultural backgrounds (Jensen, 1995: 75). Recognising these differences in interpreting media texts was an important step of expansive learning. Yet, the workshop failed to consider that different perspectives were not motivated by urban-rural differences and race only, but that people from the same race and/or social background could have different perspectives. Utterance 12 confirmed agreement with Mr Ntulo's perspective of death and was evidence of boundary crossing.

Reflexivity in Extract 5 above created a possibility for workshop participants "to look at [themselves] through the eyes of other worlds" and "to learn something new about their own and others' practices" (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011**).** As a result of their deep reflexivity, participants re-configured the multi-layered nature of that cartoon in terms of Newfield Framework. Using reflexivity and boundary learning, the workshop participants came to understand the importance of observing all layers of meaning in visual texts. Contrary to the expansive learning opportunities that were created by Mr Ntulo's different perspective, the workshop missed the opportunity to raise participants' awareness of the dangers of their own ideologies in interpreting cartoons. As an illustration, in explaining his perspective, Mr Ntulo interpreted the cartoon on the basis of racial domination by his reference to white people and African/black people. Workshop participants supported his perspective, which reflexively expurgated the other (Janks, 2010) by bipolarising white and black South Africans. Throughout Extract 5 there is consistent use of pronouns "us" and "we", conveying identification with Africans or blacks on the one hand, and "they", "their" and "them" to refer to a white/SPCA point of view on the other. Going back to Utterance 10, Ms Vuza asked an excellent critical literacy question, "Whose voice is saying that?" Yet, when she related her classroom perspective of teaching this cartoon that echoed Mr Ntulo's opening statement, "I would have done it differently", her own stereotyping of "the white community" is not challenged. Also, Ms Qupha's statement about whites killing animals and selling meat was not challenged as untrue because South African butcheries have been owned by both black and white for a long time, even during apartheid.

At the heart of this "othering" was an experience of a struggle against racial domination that has characterised South Africa for many centuries. All workshop participants grew up and started working in apartheid South Africa, when racial domination and resistance were still rife. It is because of this lived experience that I concur with the view that, "Your readings arise from the family in which you were brought up, the places of work, the institutions you belong to, the other practices you do" (Cruz & Lewis, 1993: 270). This resulted in a tertiary contradiction between the subjects' activity system as represented by participants' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), and an advanced activity system, represented by the curriculum. On the one hand, the workshop participants relied on their past apartheid experiences to perceive, comprehend, and interpret Ms Tyani's cartoon. On the other hand, the curriculum envisaged "an active and critical approach to learning, rather than rote and uncritical learning of given truths" (South Africa, 2012: 4). Even though participants knew what CAPS required and had the skills to accomplish that, as shown by Ms Vuza's critical question in Utterance 10, the participants' past experiences became semiotic resources to make sense of this cartoon. This supports Mbelani's finding (2012) that participants were not sensitive of how their drawing on apartheid background could transfer racial othering to learners if teachers did not consciously think of the past experiences that they drew on to interpret cartoons.

The strength of the workshop was to use the four reflexive questions to stimulate participants to critically assess and modify the everyday practices of meaning making and teaching of visual literacy that they lived by and habitually took for granted (Wals et al., 2009).

6. Conclusion

This paper explored the potential of expansive learning through CLW methodology in developing in-service teachers' visual literacy using meaning making and teaching of cartoons, a component of English FAL. The CLW opened a space for participants to share and align with each other's thoughts (Mukute, 2010) and to learn about the possibility of teaching cartoons, in the context of a community which included teachers from different activity systems and an interventionist researcher. In re-configuring many layers of meaning, participants expanded their understanding of the complexity of the production and consumption of visual texts through the application of Newfield Framework. This complexity started through text or descriptive analysis, which entailed understanding the visual, verbal and spatial elements such as characters, caricature, setting and bubbles, to mention a few technical terms. Participants learned that focussing only on identifying these terms was not enough to bring about an understanding of the text. As we have seen, Ms Tyani focussed on the identification of the characters, setting and bubbles, without exploring the verbal contents. Participants also learned that visual texts are embedded within ideology, which required a level of critical analysis, such as shown in the insights of Mr Ntulo. The workshop, therefore, expanded participants' content/ subject knowledge of visual literacy.

The change laboratory workshop community expanded participants' vision of alternative ways to teach cartoons by giving them a "sense of where they are going and how they are going to get their students there" (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005: 386). A vision creates opportunities for "teachers to consider how they will support the social purposes of education to develop an equitable society in which all citizens can develop their potential and make a contribution" (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005: 191). As a result of having a vision, understanding, tools and practice, participants developed a new set of dispositions of teaching cartoons. The workshop opened a dialogical space for participants to reflect on and learn from practice through experiencing:

> … a process through which an individual, supported by others, is engaged in a quest to overcome critical situations…the connecting factor between on-going conversations and future actions…a process through which an individual's disposition to act is prepared (Sannino, 2008: 240 - 1).

Through reflexivity, it can be concluded that expansive learning occurred at this workshop because participants resisted and intervened through criticism, questioning and rejection; they explicated new possibilities or potentials by, among other things, drawing from past positive experiences of apartheid; they envisioned new models of the activity through suggestions; they expressed the intention to act in specific ways such as encouraging active learner participation; and they took consequential action to change things.

All in all, evidence from analysis of data demonstrates that expansive learning processes using a change laboratory workshop methodology can potentially transform in-service teachers' visual literacy using meaning making and teaching of cartoons in South Africa.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Framework for understanding a cartoon (Adapted from Newfield 1993)	
Visual	1. **Physical portrayal of characters:** Facial expression and body language. Who are the characters? **2. Clothing:** What does this reveal about the characters' status, position in the society and role in current events? **3. Setting:** This can indicate where the event is taking place, or it can convey a particular satirical point. **4. Genre:** The political cartoon is a special genre or type of text. It combines visual and verbal aspects. It is recognised by its style of drawing (caricature) and reference to current events.
Verbal	**5. Words:** These are important in creating a specific meaning or conveying an interpretation or message. The words are concise, withy/clever and thought-provoking. We need to think about them. We should consider headings, captions, slogans, speech bubbles.
Context	**6. Socio-political context:** Even though the political cartoon provides many clues, it cannot be fully understood unless we know the real-life events on which the cartoon is based. **7. Media context:** The publication in which the cartoon appears can give us a clue to the attitude or position of the cartoon, or the opinion conveyed in it. We should ask ourselves, 'Who is presenting the cartoon, and to whom?'

Appendix 2: Ms Tyani's Grade 11 cartoon

Appendix 3: Ms Tyani's whole class analysis of a cartoon

1. Ms Tyani: OK. Looking on what we see in front of us…eh…what have you noticed in that cartoon? Do you think the things that we have mentioned here are there in the cartoon that I gave you? What have you identified about the things that we have already identified? What do you see?
2. Zoliswa: I see a speech bubble?
3. Ms Tyani: What it says? What it says? Someone must read it.
4. Sipho: It says that here 300 hundred had to be euthanized by SPCA.
5. Ms Tyani: Oh! Who says the words? (x3)
6. Phiwe: The mouse.
7. Ms Tyani: It's the mouse that says the words. Have you noticed that there is a speech bubble? There is the cartoonist expressing his ideas. OK. What else? Yes?
8. Nokuthula: There are characters which are the goat and the mouse.
9. Ms Tyani: Yes, the goat and the mouse. Is that all? Are there any characters that you see?
10. Nokuthula: I see people or men holding knives.
11. Ms Tyani: You see men holding knives. Mh! What else do we see? (x2)
12. Viwe: Two women at the back.
13. Ms Tyani: So as you've highlighted to me that you see people, goats or whatever. We see what we call a setting. It tells us that there is a certain place in which this conversation is taking place. We said that there the cartoon shows that there is a certain place, which determines a certain time. Where are these people? What do you think these people are? Is there anything that the cartoonist wants to reveal or to highlight? Is there anything that you think the cartoonist wants us to know? And if so what is it?
14. Viwe: The mouse is reading about 300 goats that were in an accident and thinks that is the better way of dying. I think he is trying to show how scared they are.
15. Ms Tyani: So what he wants us to know about the animals? What does he bring to us? What does the cartoonist bring to our attention? Is there anything that you think the cartoonist wants to highlight or bring to our attention about the animals? Yes?
16. Zola: Animals have a right to live.
17. Ms Tyani: They have a right to live. Mh…Yes?
18. Viwe: Animals have feelings just like us.
19. Ms Tyani: Animals have feelings just like us….MH…Yes?

20. Sipho: Because the killing of animals is not fair to animals, it is better for the animals to be killed using the (inaudible)

21. Ms Tyani: Yes, it's true that in whatever you said…maybe the cartoonist wants us to… or draws our attention to the fact that animals need to be respected as they are having a right to live. It also shows us again that human beings … they …explo…?

22. Learners: exploit.

23. Ms Tyani: The ani…?

24. Learners: Animals.

25. Ms Tyani: Again is eh… trying to tell us that if you are scared of the animals let us keep them at the SPCA. OK…?

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