

# Appropriating a new language learning approach: Processes of resemiotisation

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*The study focused on university students of English and their teachers appropriating an ecological perspective into language learning and teaching during a university course. The course involved designing and putting into practice an online language project for school children in Finland and Spain. The task was expected to pose challenges as the university students had no experience of the pedagogic approach applied. Two video-recorded wrap-up discussions and the students' final reports were selected from the data resource for closer analysis. The qualitative analysis showed how the new/ecological approach was resemiotised through multimodal (inter)actions between the participants. Experiences of complexity were collaboratively negotiated through the metaphor of 'chaos', first as problematic, then normalised and even a desired part of language teaching. The study bears implications for language teacher education shedding light on changing understandings for pedagogical thinking.*

**Keywords:** language teacher education, chaos, resemiotisation, change, multimodality

## 1 Introduction

This study examines how a socioculturally based, learner-driven approach to language teaching was introduced to and appropriated by Finnish university students, orienting to become language teachers. The students were taking a course which involved creating a learning project for school pupils (10–15-year-olds), for their English classes. The course format aimed at giving the students an opportunity of (re)considering their understandings of language learning and teaching in the technology-rich world with respect to their future careers as language teachers. To take distance to the accustomed practices of the classroom, the course designed online activities for five schools in Finland and Spain, trying to give the participants space for interaction and collaboration, essential for language learning according to the sociocultural/ecological view (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008; van Lier, 2000, 2004).

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The approach was expected to pose challenges to the students as their previous experiences stemmed primarily from the long tradition of language education taking place in the classroom, the textbook providing a central focus for learning activities. This was the case even though sociocultural perspectives had already been visible in curricula for some time (see e.g., CEFR, 2001). What was looked for in the project was to help the students to critically explore how language teaching was typically accomplished and develop their view of language learning as building semiotic awareness, being able 'to actively manipulate and shape one's environment on multiple scales of time and space' (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008, p. 667; van Lier, 2004). Considered from the ecological point of view, language learning and teaching would not be controlled processes but in times chaotic, complex and gradually emerging through collaborative action and participation. The learner would be seen as an active participant, contributing to the emergence of the learning environment for learning to take place. As the course organisers expected these emphases to produce confusion among the students considering their understandings of the nature of English learning and teaching, various efforts were made to facilitate reflection on what in this situation was deemed a 'new' approach to language education.

Situated in the context of language teacher education at the university, the study attends to change as regards students' understandings of ideas and concepts. Drawing on students' experiences (see e.g., Watson, 2012) and their accounts related to learning and teaching, the study examines how the participants are engaging in multimodal meaning-making (Norris, 2011), appropriating new ideas and concepts, making them their own (Wertsch, 1998, p. 53). The theorisation on resemiotisation (Iedema, 2001, 2003; de Saint-Georges, 2005; Scollon, 2008) is drawn on to illustrate the evolving conceptions at hand. The analysis is based on ethnographic observation throughout the course and the learning project, various documents and discussions in the online environment including the students' reflective reports on their work, as well as video-recordings of wrap up discussions on the course at the end of the project. The special emphasis is on how shared understandings are multimodally elaborated by the participants, making sense of the dynamic process that took place during the online learning activities and the project as a whole.

## **2 Examining change**

As the research interest in this study is related to the negotiation of (new) meanings that the participants on the course are engaged in, the concept of change needs to be examined first. Instead of explaining change as straightforward cause-and-effect relationships, complex systems theory, for example, considers important the interconnectedness and dynamism of elements and agents as a web-like model (Larsen-Freeman, 2002, 2013). Drawing on the concept of rhizomes (originally from Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), Honan (2004) suggests that teachers may be seen as bricoleurs, i.e., professionals constructing meaningful assemblances of classroom practices drawing on a variety of resources including policy texts aimed at guiding their work. Designing a fruitful environment for learning draws on problem-driven collaborative activities according to the ecological view (van Lier, 2000), for example, reassigning the participant roles and the focus of learning in relation to accustomed power structures and the

learnables in the language classrooms (Majlesi & Broth, 2012; Zemel & Koschmann, 2014).

Identities are constantly being (re)constructed in coping with change. For example, the prevailing conception of language and language learning provides ground for how the pedagogic settings, teaching practices and evaluation are configured. Language teaching is traditionally seen to best take place as a matter of one language at a time, i.e., the languages follow their own curricula and syllabi. However, considering our everyday life the world is in many ways multilingual, and languages could rather be seen in the framework of heteroglossia and languaging, emphasising language as a physically grounded, joint activity with semiotic resources (see, e.g., Blommaert, 2013; Canagarajah, 2011; Dufva, 2013, van Lier, 2004, Zheng & Newgarden, 2012). From the identity perspective, such emphases may put language teachers in a new position in pedagogic settings as pupils are given freedom to take new roles as language users with their situatedly varying repertoires (Benson, 2011; Blackledge & Creese, 2014; Dufva, 2013).

Change involves balancing between the old and new, dealing with uncertainty and pressure when facing phenomena that are only emerging when new practices are being developed. Kajamaa, Kerosuo and Engeström (2010) characterise change as complex, multidimensional and comprehensive as well as intertwined with its history and environment. Moreover, the contexts in which change occurs are often themselves changing (p. 129). Orlikowski (1996) suggests (as cited in Kajamaa, Kerosuo & Engeström, 2010) that change is locally produced, consisting of small steps and alterations. Marambe, Vermunt and Boshuizen (2012) further point out on the basis of their cross-cultural study of exchange experience in higher education that learning conceptions, orientations and strategies do not necessarily develop and change at the same pace. They suggest that 'the change process may be painstaking and involve temporal frictions between what students believe in, want and actually do to learn' (Marambe, Vermunt & Boshuizen, 2012, p. 314). Moreover, conflicts arising may involve tensions between participants and should be properly managed to make collaborative learning more effective (Curşeu, Janssen & Raab, 2012, p. 626).

In a development project, (re)negotiation of meanings or construction of mutual understandings proceeds multimodally, participants shifting positions and identities in the course of the work (see Norris, 2011) thus developing their professional vision (see Goodwin, 1994). De Saint-Georges (2005) sees such a development process advancing through landmark events, constituted across time and space. Landmark events are connected together through anticipatory discourses and the participants' actions, which gain their meaning on the basis of their positions within historical sequences of events (de Saint-Georges, 2005; Scollon & Scollon, 2004). In our case, the course organisers, the university students and the school teachers negotiate collaboratively the views on language pedagogy on the basis of their hands-on experiences.

A concept that illustrates change from the perspective of multimodal practices in the construction of shared meanings across a longer time span is resemiotisation (Iedema, 2001, 2003). Scollon (2008, p. 234) has studied resemiotisation related to farming rice. In the 30s, farmers had a general interest in growing rice ecologically while, decades later, systematic methods had been societally established to acknowledge the production of 'organic rice'. Farmers joined others, their individual **actions** were gradually recognised as 'doing the same thing', **practices**. Descriptions of their farming methods were produced in

packaging, for example, creating **narratives** of how growing rice was accomplished in a particular way by a particular group of farmers. These narratives of the farming process were then legitimised (**authorised**) institutionally through standardisation by the US government. When social actors started to identify their practices and their outcomes as authorised, they were able to provide **certification**, describing themselves as officially acknowledged organic producers. In the next phase, **metonymisation**, labels were taken into use, representing the long thread of transformation in short. **Remodalisation** was taking place when a mode was used instead another, e.g., brand colours instead of text or image). **Materialisation** was taking place when the focus of attention was moved from history and practice to the outcome, e.g., ‘organically grown rice’ becomes ‘organic rice’. The labelled object can be used as a mediational means in undertaking action or practice: eating rice as an action or participating in the practice of eating organic rice (**technologisation/reification**) (Scollon, 2008, pp. 242–243).

Similar phases can be seen in any evolving development processes – different participants are drawing on different multimodal resources, the resemiotisation of the ideas proceeds through more or less durable ways of meaning-making, e.g., talk, texts of different kinds, sketches and visual presentations among others (Iedema, 2001). In the following, the case context and the research approach of the study will be introduced.

### 3 The case context and the research approach

The case context for this study is Beehive, a language learning project that was organised for five primary schools, three from the north of Finland and two from Spain (the Spanish-Catalonian area). English was a lingua franca during the work and the school groups were participating in the context of their English classes with their English teachers. The pupils were 10–15 years of age.

The project was organised as part of an elective university course for students majoring in English Philology, orienting to become teachers of English. The course aim was to familiarise them with the use of new technologies to advance language learning, on theoretical and practical level, giving them tools for their professional future as language teachers. The central method for this was designing and implementing a course for school pupils. A university lecturer together with another course organiser and a research team led the activities. The total number of participants was 130. Online work and face-to-face meetings were combined. The learning platform provided functionalities for asynchronous discussion, uploading objects, creating folders and web pages, synchronous chat as well as monitoring the activities. A desktop video conference tool was used for some activities.

The aims of language learning in this project were expressed broadly in terms of being able to communicate and act in a foreign language in a computer and web-enhanced multicultural environment. The school pupils were to gain experience in how to work and study in a multicultural and multilingual community. The use of ICT was important from the point of view of learning: to learn we need to construct meaning, and this basically happens through collaborative interactions. From a communication and collaboration perspective, the online connection was also necessary the participants being locally distributed. The university students were assigned further goals, connected with

their future careers as language professionals and teachers, e.g., design of a learning project, acquaintance with relevant approaches of guidance and tutoring, and design of learning activities and materials, all following new conceptions of language learning (see Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008; van Lier, 2000, 2004).

The flow of the work, both on the course and the online project it produced, started by an orientation phase, proceeded to the research phase and ended with the evaluation of work done. For the university students, the orientation involved getting ready to create a learning project for the schools. In the case of the pupils, the **orientation** phase started by the participants introducing themselves to the others. The first activity invited the children to click the chat tool and talk to the others. The second activity prompted them to send messages on the discussion list created for this purpose in the workspace online. In addition to personal introductions, the children were to read each other's messages and send replies, e.g., questions, thus generating more prolonged exchanges. During this phase the students examined the topics that the pupils brought up in the discussions trying to figure out what kinds of activities would be suitable next in the **research** phase. They also monitored the situation using the workspace tools such as statistics (e.g., messages sent and read), the activity monitor (e.g., following the objects the pupils were accessing in real time) and discussion list graphs (graphical information on the messages sent and answered indicating the mutual relationship of participants in terms of the number of messages exchanged). On the basis of this information, the students then made decisions on how to facilitate the discussions, for example, by sending messages with the aim of triggering mutual exchanges in interaction. During the work, the organisers, the researchers and the school teachers experienced, against expectations, an 'explosion' of interaction already at the beginning of the project. In comparison to classroom meetings face-to-face, the online activities afforded a multitude of opportunities for interactions. On the other hand, these affordances did not necessarily become available due to time and timetable constraints.

To answer the question how the university students and the course organisers were multimodally negotiating aspects of the sociocultural/ecological language teaching approach, the video recordings from two wrap-up discussions (01:29:08 and 01:27:55 minutes) were chosen for closer scrutiny. The analysis of the video was backed up by ethnographic observation on the activities during the course and the learning project as well as the accumulated documentation from the whole working process including the reflective final reports (eight texts) produced by the students.

The notion of resemiotisation was used for conceptualizing how meaning making evolves from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next (Iedema, 2003, p. 41; Scollon, 2008). During the course and the school project, the pedagogic approach was collaboratively negotiated among the participants. The discourse seemed to transform into new discourses in the course of the semiotic process (semiosis) while the course organisers were taking an active role as mentors for the students. The data selected for this study provided a window to the four-month process. Triangulation was applied in the research by authors collaboratively examining the video recordings and the other data through several cycles discussing the observations and interpretations together.

#### **4 Appropriating a new language learning approach**

In the following, the findings of the study will be discussed. Special focus in the analysis is directed to how the university students were guided to appropriate a new approach to language learning and teaching. Guidance was provided through a handbook but also wrap-up discussions where the whole working process was discussed and negotiated among the students, school teachers from the distance location as well as the course organisers and the research team. The prevailing theme throughout the course in the encounters between the participants' concerns the collaborative negotiation of new meanings for language learning and language teachers' work. During these discussions, the course organisers and the research team bring forward their agenda in helping the students to appropriate a new approach to language learning and teaching.

When planning the university course, the organisers and the research team were anticipating challenges for the university students in participating the project. Instead of drawing on the textbook-based curriculum, a problem-based approach was applied in exploring the participants' interests and designing the learning project from that framework. As a starting point for the project, a course handbook was provided. Seen from the perspective of the remodalisation process the handbook rephrased current sociocultural theorisations in simple guidebook text instead of academic genres more distant to the students. Being set as a guideline for the students and the school teachers by the course organisers, the handbook also offered authorisation for the pedagogic approach it dealt with. The ideas and principles mentioned in the handbook were referred to in various situations during the project.

Important sites for negotiating new meanings for the participants to join discussions were the course sessions and the wrap-up discussions towards the end of the course. In these events, various aspects of the new approach to language learning and teaching were weighed, together reflecting on the experiences and elaborating individual and shared understandings. In other words, through the collaborative construction of new understandings, negotiations of meanings, in different phases of the course and the project, processes of resemiotisation (Scollon, 2008) were going on. Experiences from the pedagogic encounters with the pupils were exchanged, the course organisers (also research team members) offering accounts and interpretations for what was going on, or bridging the ideals and the reality in the virtual language classroom.

The events for the wrap-up discussions opened up important sites for elaborating new meanings for language learning and teaching. Figure 1 illustrates a typical discussion in the data.



**Figure 1.** Participants elaborating new understandings in wrap-up discussion 1.

The figure illustrates a wrap-up discussion with six participants: On the right, CO1 (course organiser) sits at the back and CO2 in the foreground with student P in the middle. On the left, student R is visible with a research team member (S) next to her and another student (M) at the back, opposite CO1. There is one more student (T) connected with the group by a conference phone (at the table, in the middle). The topic of the conversation was to recall together the past events and experiences about the learning project and the course and at the same time, to draw a presentation of this understanding. Multiple modes such as drawing, talk, writing, gestures and rhythm among others were in use to conceptualise what had happened, how the participants experienced different aspects of the process and what they were to make out of it. Example 1 illustrates the moment when a metaphor was being looked for to illustrate the process and one suggestion was acknowledged as suitable.

**(1) Agreeing for a metaphor for the project (Wrap-up meeting)**

- 01 P: train  
 02 R: train, that's good  
 03 CO2: [draws] yeah, okay  
 04 S: why  
 05 [-]  
 06 S: that's us  
 07 [laughter]  
 08 [-]  
 09 R: and those are the cabins  
 10 [-]  
 11 R: or, or the clubs  
 12 CO2: yeah, well, exactly

The interaction order (Scollon & Scollon 2004) among the participants was relatively equal despite the institutional roles of CO2 (the teacher of the course) and CO1, considering the collaborative work going on in the event. Some ideas were first thrown in the air, one student sketching on paper suggested a spider web, while another student (P) mentioned the train (line 1 *train*) as a metaphor to illustrate the project process. This was acknowledged by R (line 2 *train, that's good*) and CO2 (line 3 *yeah, okay*) who started drawing the train on paper while the others were looking, S formulated some meanings driven from the picture in words (line 6 *that's us*), which was again acknowledged by the others through joint laughter. R continued explaining the visualisation to the others (line 9 *and those are the cabins ... or, or the clubs*) and CO2 agreed with the interpretation (line 12 *yeah, well, exactly*). CO2 then, with a laptop, starts producing a new version of the sketch of the train on a presentation slide. Example 2 shows how the negotiation about the project continued.

## (2) Negotiating the phases of the project (wrap-up meeting 1)

- 01 R: students, the students from Spain  
 02 [laughter]  
 03 S the explosion is coming now  
 04 [laughter]  
 05 [--]  
 06 CO2: [laughter] from chaos to, maybe from a chaos to another chaos, to another  
 07 chaos, to, to organization [explaining to the participant through the phone]  
 08 R: P got this idea of train, and we as tutors are guiding the train, and in that  
 09 cabin or is that a cabin or  
 10 CO2: a carriage  
 11 R: a carriage, there is the explosion [--], the explosion

The extract shows how the participants were still examining the picture depicting the project process and explaining how they saw the visualisation represent their experiences on the important phases of past work. A moment, meaningful for the project process, was identified in the picture by R (line 01 *students, the students from Spain*) and acknowledged by joint laughter, again. This referred to pupils from the participating schools who had been logging in the online environment at the beginning of the learning project. This was characterised as a phase in the project that somehow changed its nature (line 3 *the explosion is coming now*) by S, again accompanied by joint laughter. The students had not been able to anticipate the multitude of participants at the same time and, hence, the growing number of interactions to focus on. In this sense the 'explosion' provided them new kinds of ingredients for their historical bodies (accustomed experiences and practices) related to their experiences from the school context when the number of pupils was not clearly set in advance. CO2 then synthesised the process as clearing up through cycles of chaos and (lines 6-7) thus creating a connection back to the handbook, and the ecological view of language learning emerging through complex and sometimes chaotic social (inter)action. R finally invited an explanation to be given to the student working in the distant location, T (line 11 *the explosion, explain*).

Example 3 illustrates how the ideas developed above (examples 1 and 2) were again retold to T who was assumed to have gained an incomplete picture of the past collaborative construction of the course process. As CO2 did not take up R's invitation immediately, P started retelling the main ideas of the brainstorming to T.



**(3) From a chaos to another chaos to organised action** (wrap-up discussion 1)

- 01 CO2: errr  
 02 P: yes, we thought that the first explosion was when the clubs started or  
 03 beehive started when people started to learning and to know each other and  
 04 there was sometimes nothing and some days a lot of going on and everyone  
 05 was a bit mixed up maybe, so that was the first thing (nodding her head)  
 06 and at that stage we didn't know what was going to happen what we or the  
 07 children do then, what the pupils are going to do, but then we have this  
 08 grouping thing and we made these clu..., no it wasn't club, no, hives  
 09 CO2 hives  
 10 P: hives  
 11 R: someone got the idea  
 12 P: four  
 13 R: yeah, we had four hives  
 14 [--]  
 15 CO2 yeah, and then here are the trails, from chaos to another chaos to organized  
 16 action [simulating the sound of a train] a chaos, a chaos ... to action  
 17 All: yeah, yeah, [laughter]

In her account to T, P elaborated the process verbalising the students' feel of uncertainty in front of the unknown (lines 4-7). CO2 finally joined the narrative (lines 15-16) producing the rhythm of the train through intonation at the same time rolling hands simulating the movement and reproducing the working process discussed with the others as advancing through stages of chaos to organised action and chaos again. In terms of resemiotisation, the account involved a narration of a sequence of events that had a little earlier been reiterated and remodalised through talk, sketching, image, synchronised body movement (rolling hands) with verbalised rhythm among others. What is important from the interaction order point of view, the actions authorised by the course organisers through their participation in the joint narration (CO1 and CO2) were re-narrated by a student to another student. Thus, it seems that the new teaching approach was becoming more of a shared resource than a mere teachers' ideal.

Example 4 illustrates how the experiences of complexity and uncertainty were later reworded by CO1 first giving more general accounts ending up with the metaphor of chaos, the concept that had already become useful in talking about the nature of the project and the participants' feelings about the new situation.

**(4) Elaborating 'chaos'** (wrap-up discussion 2)

- (1) CO1 at the beginning there was some kind of a chaos, because the overall  
 (2) picture of **what we are going to do** was somehow unclear [...] I  
 (3) don't know if we have any certain aims or targets, so it was not  
 (4) so easy to know **what we are doing, time somehow also a problem,**  
 (5) to fix timetables, and there were quite many pupils [--] the nature of  
 (6) world and the nature of work nowadays, and the nature of how we  
 (7) want to proceed in these kinds of learning projects [--] we have to  
 (8) be able to deal with, to find ways to live in the virtual **chaos**, somehow  
 (9) make sense to the **chaos** [--] I get these challenges and I try to resolve  
 (10) them here and now the best way I can, and that's probably the way  
 (11) these children [--] and if the tasks were too [--] defined too not sort of  
 (12) **chaotic**, we already have it in the school books which are nicely done  
 (13) and sort of in nicely printed material, we do not have in the real world  
 (14) [--] finding ways in that with the students, in language teaching is  
 (15) something I'm really interested in.

The example illustrates how CO1 pondered upon the experiences from the beginning of the project when everything had ‘exploded’, the school pupils and other participants joining in the activities at the same time. CO1 discussed what seemed to be particularly challenging identifying aspects such as goal-definition, time-management, ways of dealing with difficult situations and problem-solving. This was displayed in a relatively positive light and set in contrast with traditional school practices around textbook materials. CO1 also highlighted the contrast between school-related learning and ‘real-world’, chaotic, problem-solving and placed the latter to be her interest while developing teaching.

As shown above, the concept of chaos changed its nature in the course of the working process. First there was discussion about the experiences of confusion and uncertainty that the new kind of approach in the context of English language teaching had triggered. Based on the long term observation and the students’ reflection papers, it seems that in the course of the work, the students started to see a conflict between the traditional classroom and the real world: In the traditional classroom everything seemed to be in students’ words – *nicely done* and *in nicely printed materials* but in this project the aim was to avoid such pre-given structure. Rather, the emphasis was on working modes that resembled *the real world, living in chaos* or even *embrace chaos*. In summary, the concept of chaos was originally used for something problematic, later on something to be accepted and survived and, finally, a ‘normal’ state, something to look for.

## 5 Discussion and conclusion

This study set out to examine how participants, the university students in particular, tried to make sense of a language learning and teaching approach that was new to the participating students and the changes it required in their approach to teaching and guiding the activities. This involved abandoning the idea of language learning as a matter of learning the code only for seeing language learning as an active relationship with one’s environment on multiple scales of time and space (Kramsch & Whiteside, 2008, p. 667; van Lier, 2004, p. 97). It was considered important to help learners to discover and anticipate unplanned affordances and act accordingly (Kramsch, 2002, p. 26). So called wrap-up discussions allowed negotiation for meanings in relation to the new language teaching approach in different phases of the work as the more and less pedagogically experienced participants were discussing the evolving project (see Lave & Wenger, 1991; Norris, 2011). The students needed to reconsider their earlier experiences (historical bodies) as language learners and teachers: what it is that is to be taught, how the pedagogic design should be built, what the role of teaching materials is and what the responsibilities of the teacher are, for example.

Diverse chains of resemiotisation were identified in the data, reaching through time and place. The theme of chaos, for example, was first brought up without the concept itself in the students’ general observations and accounts on the evolving project, then shooting in the foreground as the sudden appearance of numerous participants in the online environment caused confusion. The term was then taken into use in the meetings and even labelled as something to strive for (*I embrace chaos* as in the words of CO1 in one of the meetings). While the negotiation for meanings in relation to the learning project proceeded, the chains of resemiotisation advanced through the following processes especially: narratives, authorisation, certification, metonymisation and remodalisation. The experiences

and understandings were together reiterated or narrated in more or less transformed way: The flow of discussion was multimodally strengthened twining together talk, embodied actions (e.g., gestures and movement), laughter, text and image among others (see Norris, 2011) thus negotiating for and acknowledging emerging shared understandings. The discourses evolved through remodalisation, i.e., transformation through the use of different modes (e.g., talk, sketching, drawing, summarizing in talk, retelling and writing). One could also see some of this process as metonymisation (representing a long thread of transformation in short) as the train image produced during one of the sessions stood for a longer-term process merging together the experiences from the learning project itself but also the theoretically informed shared interpretations.

The study bears implications for higher education, and (language) teacher education in particular, as for an insight into providing space for appropriating new concepts and approaches, i.e., contributing to change. As was shown above, active negotiation for meanings was going on in the meetings. There seemed to be a fruitful atmosphere between the university students (teachers to be) and the course organisers for collaboration (see Macfarlane, 2012). In other words, the interaction order seemed to be relatively equal even though in institutional settings some members may have more authority due to their position in the institutional hierarchy. Authorisation of ideas was taking place delicately as part of the collaborative (inter)action, not forced by the course organisers. For example, this could be seen in the student picking the teacher's synthesis and retelling it to another student thus strengthening the idea of shared meanings. This retelling by the student to another student could perhaps even be seen as certification, i.e., social actors having the right to identify one's practices and their outcomes as authorised (Scollon, 2008).

From the research methodological perspective, the concept of resemiotisation was used as an analytical tool for tracking how different kinds of activities among the future language teachers were used for negotiating and appropriating the new language learning and teaching approach. While Scollon (2008) is using the concept for making existing links between discourses and actions visible, our focus has also been on how the participants create the links between actions (course and learning project activities) and the new approach through different resemiotisation processes. This was not clearly visible in the video data but identified by the researchers on the basis of their ethnographic observation and acquaintance with the whole data resource. Remodalisation, shifting from mode to mode, is already seen beneficial when learning a language (Tapio, 2014). However, the other processes of resemiotisation seem to be beneficial as well in appropriating new pedagogical perspectives.

Demands for increased efficiency in higher education have often led to tight curricula and syllabi leaving few opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking or evaluative skills (Macfarlane, 2012, p. 725). This study also points towards the importance of giving enough space for negotiation for meanings and, thus, processes of resemiotisation. This is particularly crucial when the students' past experiences conflict with the 'agenda' they are motivated to follow.

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