

The Interpenetration of Communicative Contexts: a study of assessor mediation of the oral language assessment interview of the SEE (LLNP) Program

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About the researcher



- ▶ More than 20 years of experience in adult education, assessment and training
- ▶ Experienced assessor using the National Reporting System (NRS), the Australian Core Skills Framework
- ▶ Assessor, assessor trainer as well as quality assurance team member in the Skills for Education and Employment Program (formerly Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program) since 2010 at TAFESA
- ▶ Part time PhD student at the University of South Australia since 2011

Brief overview of the Skills for Education and Employment Program

- ▶ Formerly known as Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program before 2013
- ▶ Funded by the Federal Government
- ▶ Contracted to Registered Training Organizations for a period of three years via tendering
- ▶ The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) is its sole benchmark document for identifying learners' learning needs and assessing their progress in the five skills areas specified by the ACSF
- ▶ Audited and verified on a regular basis

About the Pre-Training Assessment (PTA)

- ▶ A compulsory component of the SEE/LLNP Program
- ▶ Conducted by assessors who have been trained to use the ACSF
- ▶ Designed to produce a skill profile of the client in the five skill areas using the ACSF at the end of PTA and the Individual Training Plan based on the skill profile
- ▶ Usually allocated 1.5hours

Research design



- ▶ Object of the research – the assessors' mediation of the oral interview part of the PTA
- ▶ Research objective – to understand not only what but also how the mediation takes place by exposing what is at the “backstage” of the PTA (McNamara 2000)
- ▶ Research question – how assessors mediate the interactional process of the PTA in the context of the SEE/LLNP

Methodology

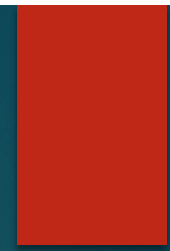
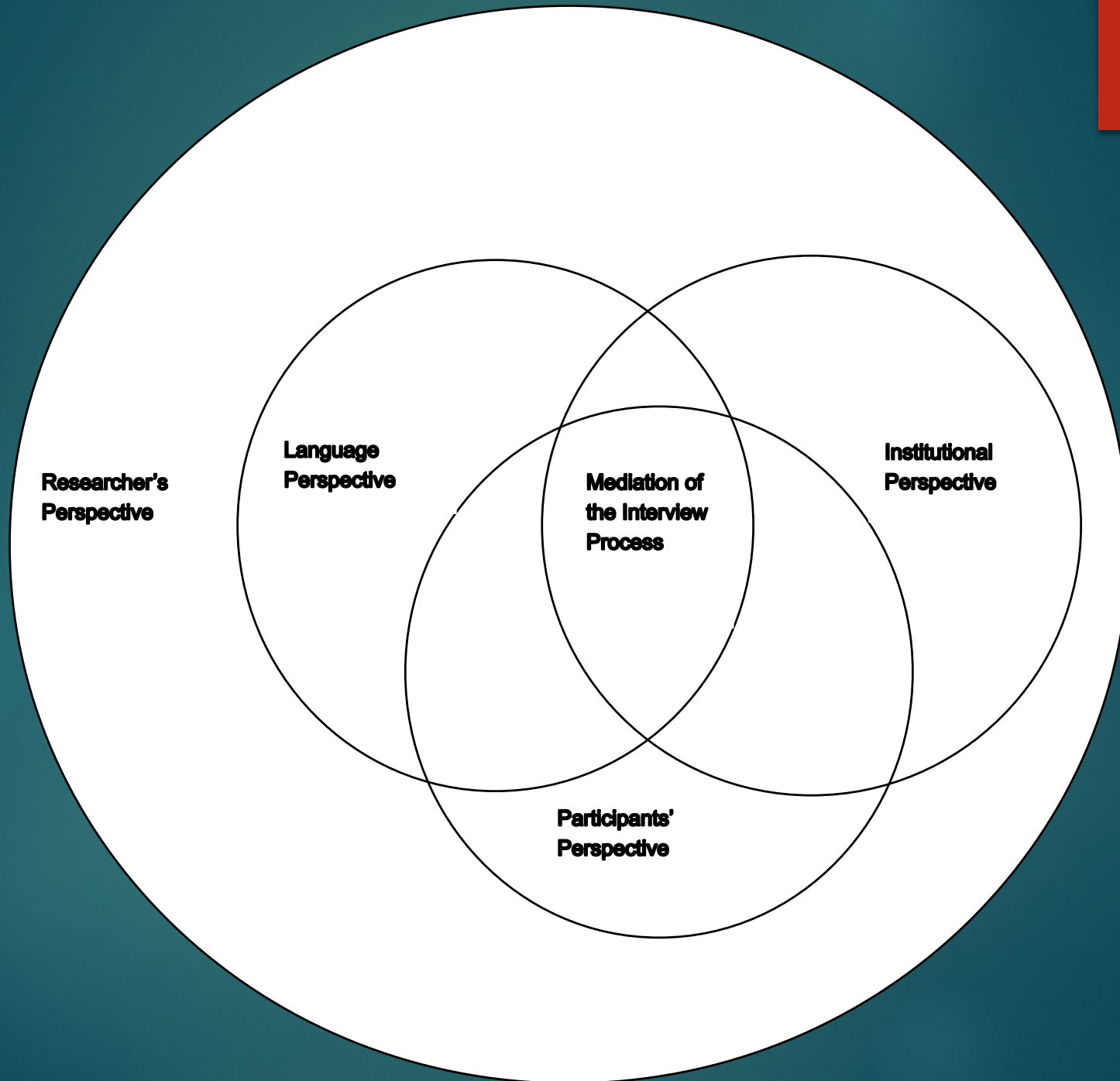


▶ Qualitative orientation

- ❑ “Implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency” (Denzin and Lincoln 2011)

Methodology – Cont'

- ▶ Multiperspectival approach (Crichton 2010)
 - ❑ Does not subordinate or exclude any of the perspectives
 - ❑ Keeps all perspectives continuously in play



Data collection



- ▶ There are three main sets of data:
 - ▶ Relevant LLNP policies and procedures
 - ▶ The recording of real PTA interviews
 - ▶ The recordings of the researcher's interviews of the assessors

Data analysis



- ▶ Recordings were transcribed
- ▶ The transcription was coded and informed by Thematic analysis

Findings



- ▶ The interpenetration of the institutional context in the language assessment process
- ▶ The institutional context driven assessment process being a process of managing the tension created by the institutional context
- ▶ The de-contextualisation of the language assessment process which is supposed to be contextualised as required by the ACSF
- ▶ The overpowering of policies over language assessment practice resulting in the compromising of clients' assessment outcomes

Implication and Limitation



▶ Implication

- ▶ Professional interactions, e.g. job interviews, educational assessments
- ▶ Educational programs

▶ Limitations

- ▶ Access to other training sites
- ▶ Limitation of sample size - limited data collection period
- ▶ Limitation of research expertise

Main references

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Q & A



Thank you!

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