



**Title of Project:**

Multimodal Learning and Communication Through  
Transnational Digital Storytelling

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**Project Summary:**

Multimodal representation has been recognized by educational scholars as a key feature of 21<sup>st</sup>-century English language learning across borders, cultures, languages and technological resources (Kress, 1998; Lam, Warriner, Poveda, & Gonzalez, 2012). As sites of knowledge have shifted from page to screen, offering hybrid spaces for digitally mediated translocal and transnational communication, it is crucial to extend the social interpretation of English language learning as meanings are made through ensembles of semiotic resources across different cultural modes (Jewitt, 2006).

While recognition of multimodal features continues to grow in language education, few empirical studies have been conducted to investigate how digitally mediated social interactions shape language learning (for youth) beyond classroom through multimodal design and production. Further, it is not well understood how access to multimodal transnational communications might lead to more equal access to language and literacy education, with a critical awareness of how status and power relations are constructed, reified and/or contested within such global engagements.

Grounded in Vygotskian sociocultural theories (1978), this study, through the dual lenses of multimodality (Kress, 2010) and communicative repertoires (Rymes, 2014), explores how English youth learners living in communities of poverty encounter one another locally and globally, and how they represent understandings of themselves and local/global others through digitally mediated communication. Findings from multiple data sources will provide a critical lens on how digitally mediated transnational interactions can offer plurilingual multimodal transformative spaces for English learners to authentically engage in transnational interactions to develop language, academic and intercultural knowledge and skills.