Learner Agency: Developing a profile of learners' agentic resources

Shining a light on learner agency

Learners' Agentic Resources

Motivation · Self-Efficacy · Self-Regulation

Personal · Behavioural · Environmental

Triadic co-determination

Personal · Proxy · Collective

Modes of human agency
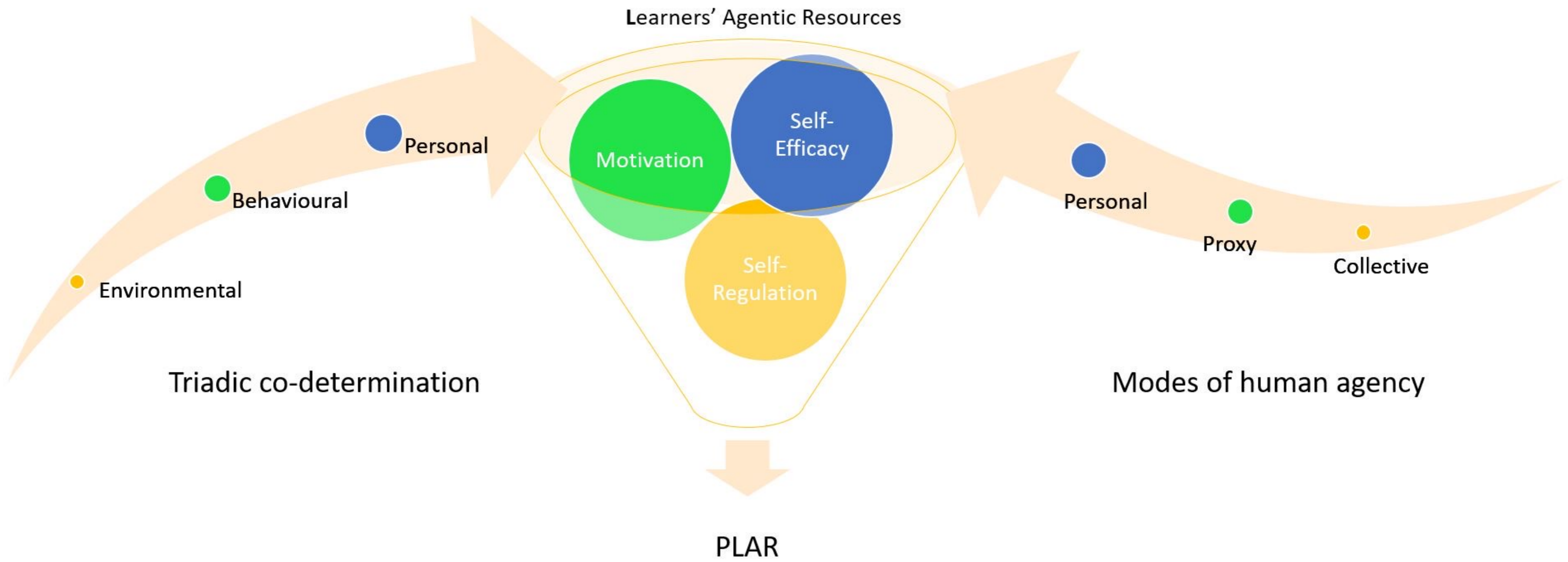
PLAR

Theoretical framework contributing to the development of a PLAR. Emergent Interactive Agency: where reciprocal determining factors combine to contribute to causation

Research Problem

A growing call for learners to have agency

"Agency is one of the strongest "contributors to improved learning outcomes" (Masters, 2019).

But what does that mean and how do we know if they have it?

Literature -Agency
Social Cognitive Theory

People with developed agentic resources have the capacity to "generate a wider array of options that expand their freedom of action" (Bandura, 2008, p.36).

Agentic people are "more successful in realising desired futures than those with less developed agentic resources" (Bandura, 2008, p.36).

Agency anchors learners' internal resources to the demands of the curriculum and the data-centric context in which they learn (Vaughan et al., 2020).

Reeve and Shin (2020) argue that "agency is motivation" and that students' "agency motivation emerges out of students' self-efficacy beliefs, psychological needs, and personal growth strivings" (p. 151).

Research Question

How do measures of self-efficacy, motivation, and self-regulation in the subject English, combine to form a profile of learners' agentic resources?

Participants and Setting

- Students = 356
- Year 9 and Year 10
- 7 English classes
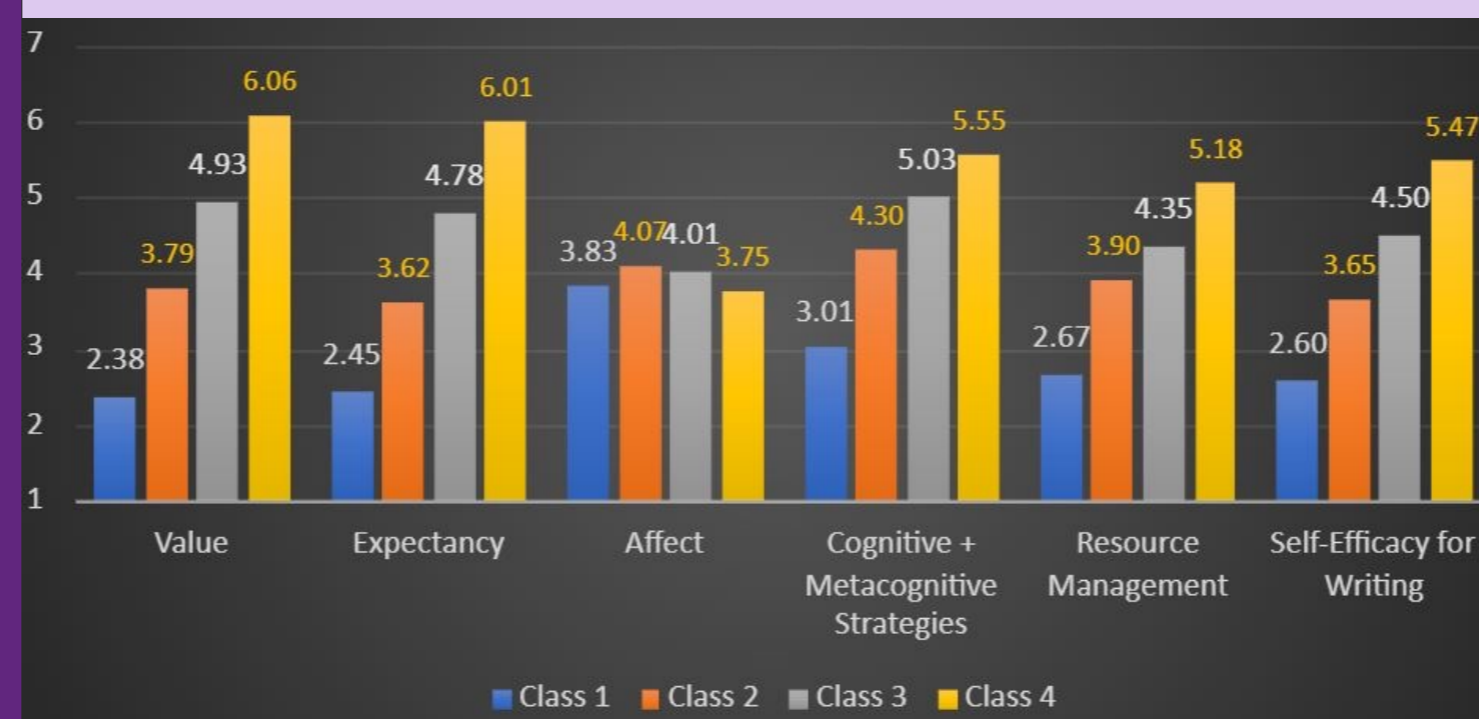- Four independent girls' secondary schools
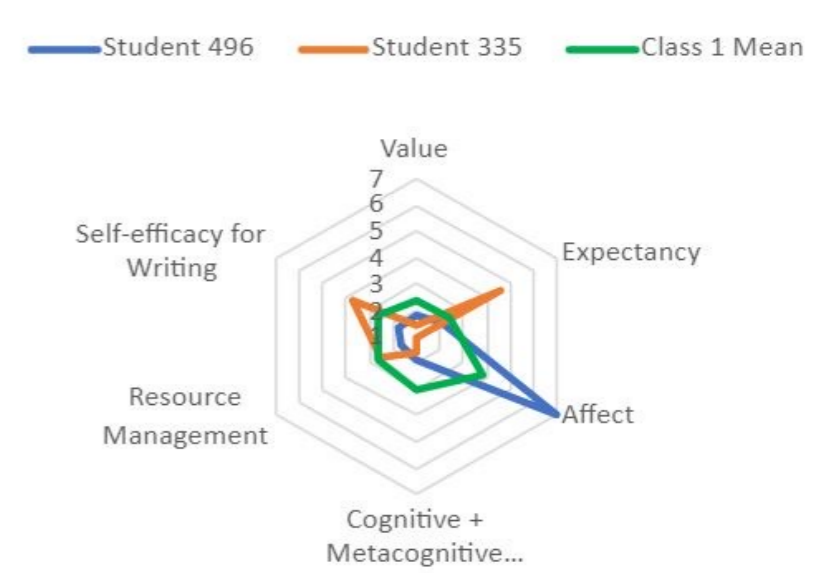- Brisbane metropolitan area.

Instruments

The Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich, 1991).
Self-regulatory Efficacy for Writing Scale (SEWS). (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994).
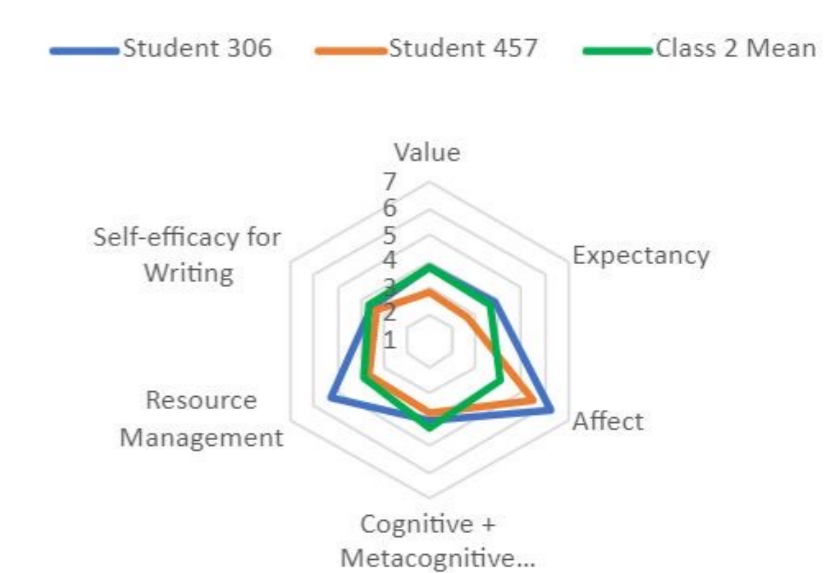
Latent Profile Analysis

Class 1

Class 1: (n=21; 5.9% of the sample) is characterized by **low agentic resources** scores across each of the measures of the constructs including, value, expectancy, cognitive and metacognitive strategies, resource management, and self-efficacy for writing.
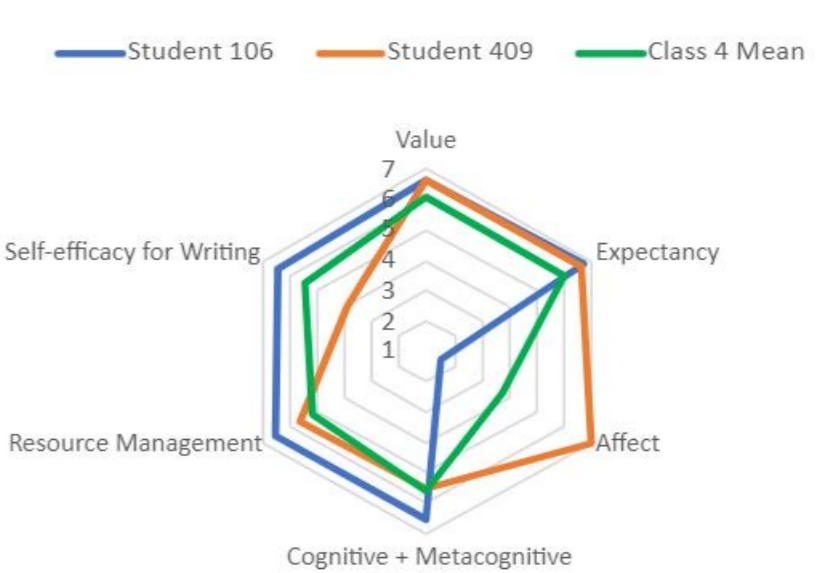

Class 2

Class 2: (n=133; 37.36% of the sample) is characterised by **low to moderate agentic resources**. Students in this profile group report around or below four on the seven-point Likert scale for all measures in the two instruments.

Class 3
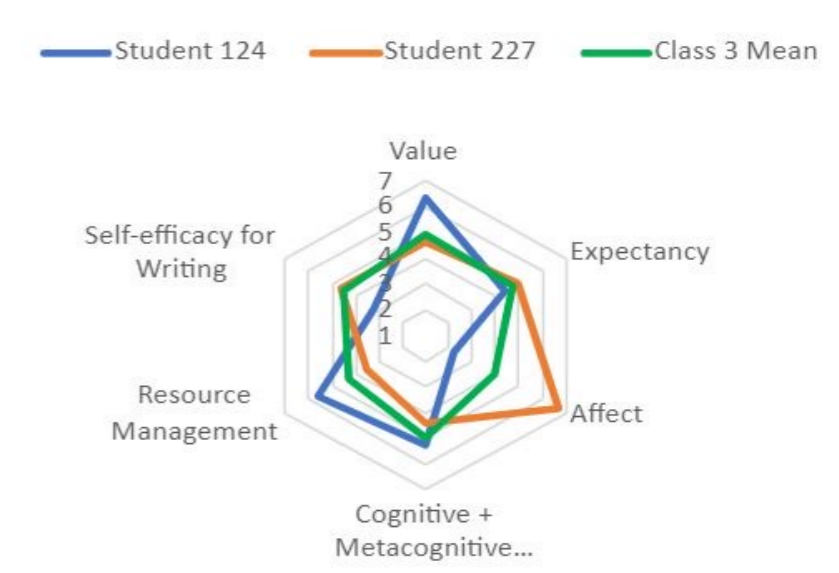
Class 3: (n=150; 41.85% of the sample) represents the largest proportion of the sample population and indicates over 40% of learners with **moderate agentic resources**.

Class 4

Class 4: (n=52; 14.89% of the sample) represents approximately 15% of the participant population who exhibit high motivation profiles and overall have **strong agentic resources** on which to draw to achieve their goals.

Conclusions and Implications: Evaluation of the data suggests that the PLAR has sufficient promise as a tool to justify further research. This research provides valuable preliminary insight into the ways in which learners' agentic profiles differ and the implications of this in the English classroom. This research highlights the key components of learner agency in the Secondary School English class context with the current findings providing educators with a clearer conceptual understanding of learner agency and its implications for the classroom. The PLAR is a tool that teachers may be able to use as a diagnostic tool to support their understanding of their students.

References: Bandura, A. (2008). Toward an agentic theory of the self.; Masters, D. (2019). Speaking at the 5th Educational Data Symposium hosted by Independent Schools Queensland.; Pintrich, P. R. (1991). A Manual for the Use of the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ).; Reeve, J., & Shin, S. H. (2020). How teachers can support students' agentic engagement. *Theory into Practice*, 59(2), 150–161. ; Zimmerman, B., & Bandura, A. (1994). Impact of self-regulatory influences on writing course attainment. *American Educational Research Journal*, 31(4), 845–862.

jennifer.levitt@uq.edu.au
Jennifer Levitt
@jenlev6
uq.edu.au

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND AUSTRALIA
CREATE CHANGE

Jennifer Levitt, Annemaree Carroll, Cam Brooks, Christine Ablaza