

Title:**Decolonising Academic Literacies Through the Use of an Embedded Hybrid Model****Authors:** Lutasha Ndesi and Venicia McGhie**Proposal**

Students accessing institutions of higher learning in South Africa are faced with several challenges. Challenges include limited cultural capital, language barriers, adjusting from high school to university, having to meet high academic demands and expectations regarding a heavy workload and effective time management skills, low self-efficacy, and not using their agency to become self-regulating students. This paper reports on a study conducted at a historically Black university in South Africa during the 2019 and 2020 academic years. It examined how the use of an embedded hybrid academic literacies (ALs) model contributed towards the decolonisation of academic literacies' as academic development support provided to first-year students in four of the university's seven faculties.

The study's overall purpose was to assess the academic literacies' modules to ascertain whether they provided holistic support to first-year students through a decolonised curriculum. The main objective was to arrive at an embedded hybrid academic literacies model that faculties could use within their specific contexts and disciplinary fields.

The main question that this paper attempts to answer is: *Did the academic literacies' modules offered to first-year students decolonise their curricula?*

The conceptual framework was based on a combination of the strengths of the three academic literacies models as conceptualised by Lea & Street (1998, 2006) and Gutiérrez's (1992, 1999) hybrid language practice model's characteristics. The combined strengths and features allowed the researcher to construct an embedded hybrid academic literacies model consisting of four main dimensions: students' personal factors, students' academic factors, content knowledge and skills development factors, and ALs lecturers' pedagogical factors. Each dimension had

sub-dimensions, which formed the basis for the analysis of the data collected and the discussions and interpretations of the results.

This study was positioned in a qualitative research paradigm because the researcher wanted to examine the effectiveness of the academic literacies' modules and how the research participants' experiences and behaviours were shaped by their social, economic, cultural, and physical contexts. A participatory evaluation research design was used, which allowed the researcher and the research participants to actively engage and participate in the facilitation and progression of the study.

Regularly reviewing and overhauling curricula is imperative and can be enhanced with hybridity as a transformational tool. This can be realised by providing hybrid learning spaces. In these spaces, indigenous knowledge is embraced to contribute to transformational projects related to decolonisation, particularly the embedding of ALs practices into the cognate discipline programmes.

Thus, it is argued that a student-centered approach, a decolonised curriculum that encompasses hybrid pedagogical methods and teaching strategies, combined with collaboration and a pedagogy of care, can profoundly contribute towards the holistic transformation and success of first-year students at tertiary institutions in South Africa.

Keywords: embedded hybrid model, decolonisation, academic literacies, cognate disciplines, self-efficacy, agency, first-year students