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Integrating the Arts: Creative Thinking about FL Curricula and Language Program Direction

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Most successful artistic projects are the fortunate outcome of collaboration and creative thinking. This volume on integrating the arts in the foreign language curriculum is no exception, as it is the result of the creative cooperation of some especially dedicated colleagues, whose efforts deserve special mention here. Most important, this volume would not have come to fruition without the encouragement and guidance of Series Editor Stacey Katz Bourns, whose initial conversations about our common interests and work in arts integration planted the initial seeds in Boston and Bloomington, respectively. What followed would not have been possible without Stacey’s impeccable organizational skills, her unwavering support and patience, and her attention to editorial detail. We also wish to thank the AAUSC Editorial Board, all the anonymous reviewers, all the colleagues who proposed chapters, and all those, of course, whose work is contained here within. We are grateful to the editorial staff at Cengage, in particular to Beth Kramer, for ensuring such a smooth process. We are also indebted to our respective departments, the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at Harvard, and the Department of French and Italian at Indiana University, and to all the institutions who have provided financial and moral support in promoting arts initiatives in the foreign language curriculum.

Finally, we are truly grateful to Richard Bergin, for his support, not to mention creative energies, filming talents, and even highly resourceful set-building skills, that have carried Lisa through a decade of theater productions at UCLA and at Harvard; and to Paul Gaier for his prompt dedication to Colleen’s Imbianchini project, and his strong, steady hand of encouragement throughout the years.
Abstracts

Elvira G. Di Fabio and María Luisa Parra

Languages in Partnership with the Visual Arts: Implications for Curriculum Design and Teacher Training

This chapter considers the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of visual arts integration in FL language classes as a means of challenging students’ cultural beliefs through new forms of expression and through engagement with the beliefs of others. It does so by presenting a two-year project called “Language through the Visual Arts: An Interdisciplinary Partnership,” conducted at Harvard University. Responding to the call for cultural teaching in a systematic, meaningful, and innovative way, this project aimed to (1) incorporate work with visual arts (paintings, sculptures, installations, artifacts, and digital images) into the curriculum of Beginning Spanish (first and second semester) and Intermediate-Advanced Italian (fourth semester); and (2) develop an intra-institutional partnership with the university museums. Student assignments and their survey comments point to the benefits of expanding the teaching/learning spaces of FL courses, by allowing students to think outside the physical box of the classroom and the intellectual box of their cultural perspectives. Finally, following recent calls for greater FL professionalization, this chapter discusses the advantages and challenges of training TAs in effective strategies for arts integration. The authors argue that the instructional opportunities align more closely with graduate students’ literary backgrounds, and thus bolster their professional training as scholars of literature and of the humanities in general.

Bettina Matthias

Talking Images: Exploring Culture through Arts-Based Digital Storytelling

Most FL educators have enjoyed the opportunity to include the arts in their everyday teaching. Many have also reaped the benefits of working with technology in their teaching, most notably in the form of computer-assisted language learning platforms (CALL) and the vast opportunities offered by the Internet and new social media. The project presented in this chapter combines the creative use of technology and the inclusion of—or concentration on—(original) works of visual art in an advanced German culture course. Following principles for guiding digital storytelling projects, students created digital video-animations for original works of art in German (with subtitles). These videos were then uploaded to iPads and made available to visitors of a class-curated exhibition of Weimar German art at the school’s museum. Projects allowed students to explore both images creatively, as products and perspectives of the target culture and language, all while engaging learners in complex cultural comparisons. By creating their creative curatorial materials, students thus reached far beyond their classroom
and beyond the German-speaking community on campus. They also sharpened their skills in digital technology in the process. Finally, the students’ technological abilities and limitations also provided a different lens through which to read art and provided opportunities for discussions about the use(fulness) of technology and digital literacy in the 21st-century FL curriculum.

Lisa Parkes

From Creative Adaptation to Critical Framing: Dramatic Transformations across the Foreign Language Curriculum

This chapter considers the cognitive and affective benefits, as well as the practical considerations, of integrating dramatic arts in the foreign language curriculum. How can arts integration motivate student learning, and how can we motivate graduate student instructors, in turn, to become more creative language instructors? To what extent can arts integration strengthen curricular goals and connect language to higher-level thinking skills? Drawing on documented pedagogical initiatives, as well as on research on genre-based approaches to curricular design, this chapter demonstrates how a single dramatic text can be used and reused, adopted and adapted at different levels of the curriculum, through intertextuality, linguistic creativity, and performance. It is at this intersection that graduate students can be guided better in the task of connecting foreign-language instruction to their background in literary and cultural studies. This challenge is particularly pertinent for the professionalization of graduate students who, we hope, will enter the profession in a post-two-tiered system that regards the acquisition of language, content, and analytical skills as a seamless whole.

Federico Pacchioni

Italy at Your Fingertips: Integrating Puppet Theater in the Italian Classroom

This chapter makes a case for integrating puppet theater in the foreign language curriculum. The case is grounded in an acknowledgment of the art’s cathartic effect, its ability to engage and develop multiple intelligences and various skills. It is also based on the cultural value and uniqueness of the puppet theater’s many traditional forms. The chapter begins with an examination of the literature currently available in support of this creative approach, identifying recurring themes and issues, and evaluating educators’ reflections vis-à-vis certain historic and cultural dynamics and influences. While the application of puppetry in education has almost always been considered in relation to the primary and secondary school levels of teaching, a number of puppet theater techniques translate remarkably well into higher education, especially for languages whose cultures present strong puppetry traditions, such as Italian. The final section of the chapter addresses the pertinence of puppetry to teacher training and curriculum development, exemplified by the case of Italian, both as a tool in the instructor’s lesson and in student-led productions.
Barbara Schmenk

**Drama in the Classroom: Post-Holistic Considerations**

This chapter looks at the use of drama in language education, focusing on the notion of holistic learning to which proponents of drama in language education often refer when outlining the educational backdrops and goals of using drama in the foreign language classroom. The first part offers a brief account of what holistic learning entails and how it has been implemented in foreign language education. Taking the notion of the holistic seriously, it shows that many communicative language classrooms do not truly engage the “whole learner.” Integrating holistic learning into foreign language learning environments requires more explicit dramatizing of the communicative, i.e., using elements of drama. Subsequently, in light of more recent and poststructuralist views on language learning and learner identities, we have the argument that drama allows for holistic learning in foreign language education. These approaches challenge some of the basic assumptions about holistic learning and drama in foreign language education as they imply a subversion of the notion of holistic learning. Therefore, the argument reconstructed in part one of this chapter gets deconstructed in the course of part two. Section two outlines an alternative theoretical framework within which drama in language education can be viewed less as a pedagogical process that involves the “whole learner,” but that is instead based on a view of subjectivity as dynamic, in-process, and fragmented. In conclusion, the proposed framework is discussed (a) with respect to its practical implications for language learning integration of the arts, using an example to illustrate the points discussed; and (b) in light of language teaching and TA training in university level language education.

Per Urlaub

**Dramatizing/Digitizing Literacy: Theater Education and Digital Scholarship in the Applied Linguistics Curriculum**

Applied linguists who have their professional homes in foreign language departments at North American universities need to gear their graduate courses towards a broad variety of students. In order to reach sustainable enrollments in their graduate classes, their courses must appeal to graduate students in their home and sister departments as well as to students who are located outside the humanities in programs offered by their university’s School/College of Education. This essay argues that connecting graduate courses in applied linguistics to the arts not only attracts students with diverse academic backgrounds, but also establishes a unique profile for applied linguistics courses offered by foreign language departments with respect to those offered by other units in the university. The first part of the chapter compares the diverse learner profiles that applied linguists must consider when developing graduate courses of broad interdisciplinary appeal. The second part of the chapter documents a class project that integrated applied linguistics with arts education, public scholarship, and digital media production. This collaborative project, entitled *Death Is a State of Mind—The Duchess of*
Malfi, exemplifies such an integrative learning environment. Students from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds completed a digital public scholarship project that featured an educational outreach program supporting a production by an independent community theater.

MARGARET KENEMAN

**Finding a Voice in the Foreign Language Classroom: Reading, Writing, and Performing Slam Poetry to Develop Critical Literacies**

This study expands on existing notions of foreign language literacy and critical literacies by positing students’ voices as central to the development of critical literacies in a foreign language. From this expanded definition, a pedagogical approach using the slam poetry art form was designed and integrated into a standard intermediate curriculum (French 201) to foster critical literacies. Students were asked to analyze and (re)produce slam poems, and qualitative data were collected to investigate how the pedagogical approach influenced student learning. Findings indicated that most students valued the opportunity to practice linguistic features (i.e., grammar points) by producing work that was of personal importance to them. While students were not always aware of their own linguistic progress and critical literacies development, their final slam poems revealed important efforts to convey their sense of self as well as their “cross-cultural awareness” in a way that was often linguistically appropriate and stylistically sophisticated. Student development of critical literacies in a foreign language is ongoing and extends well beyond one semester of instructed learning, but this study illustrates potential learning outcomes, should such a pedagogy be implemented. Finally, practical implications for LPDs’ supervisory work and suggestions for future research are discussed.

GLENN S. LEVINE AND JAIME W. ROOTS

**Performing Poetry in the Foreign Language Classroom: Pedagogical and Language Program Considerations**

This chapter addresses the theory and practice of poetry performance in the German language classroom, as well as the collaborative development of projects of this sort by the language program director and graduate student instructors. Drawn from scholarly work on the roles of poetry in language learning, the focus is a curriculum component called the **Wortkonzert** (“Word-Concert”) project, in which the students select and learn to perform a German poem during the academic term. Activities include individual exploration of the sounds and rhythms of the poetic work, one-on-one mentoring with the instructor, consultation with an advanced German speaker in person or through digital media, collaborative work among the students, investigation of the poet’s biography, the epoch and the particular lyric genre, and, of course, performance of the poetry in the classroom. Involving as it does extended, playful use of language in a performance mode, and privileging aesthetic over literary-analytic aspects, the project serves as a foil to the often primarily quotidian uses of language typical of the language classroom. Data from a set of surveys of student experiences are presented, which identify
the pedagogical paradox that poetry is considered “off-putting” by many students, though it also serves as a gateway to cultural knowledge and other insights not as easily accessible through other genres. The chapter then details key language program concerns, such as articulating the project with the curriculum overall, and justifications and considerations for graduate-student instructor involvement in all phases of the project.
Elvira G. Di Fabio is Senior Preceptor in Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, where she has been working since 1990. She coordinates Italian language instruction and is responsible for training and mentoring teaching fellows and teaching assistants. Di Fabio’s research areas include second language acquisition, translation studies, and pedagogical models for refining interpretive, interpersonal and presentational communication through an arts interface. She is co-author of Parliamo italiano! A Communicative Approach, a first-year Italian textbook (5th ed., 2016). She has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association, the College Board’s Advanced Placement cross-linguistic review committee and AP Italian Test Development Committee, and she has organized a number of professional development workshops for K–12+ teachers of Italian in the greater New England area.

Margaret Keneman is Lecturer of French at the University of Tennessee–Knoxville, where she teaches and supervises language courses at the beginning and intermediate levels. Her primary research setting is the FL classroom, and her interests are related to curriculum design, literacy-oriented instruction, and assessment. Her second line of research focuses on pedagogical approaches in a variety of artistic disciplines including dance, theater, music, and yoga. She has presented her work at ACTFL and AATF conventions, and she has published in the Research in Dance Education journal. She holds a PhD in French and Educational studies from Emory University.

Glenn S. Levine is Professor of German at the University of California, Irvine. His areas of research include second language acquisition and socialization, and curriculum design and teaching. His publications address code choice in second language learning; constructivist, ecological, and critical approaches to curriculum design and teaching; language and digital media use during study abroad; connections between instructed language education and globalization; and issues of language program direction. He is the author of Code Choice in the Language Classroom (2011) and co-editor (with Alison Phipps) of Critical and Intercultural Theory and Language Pedagogy (2012).

Bettina Matthias is Professor of German and the director of the German Summer Language School at Middlebury College. She is the author of Masken des Lebens, Gesichter des Todes: zum Verhältnis von Tod und Darstellung im erzählerischen Werk Arthur Schnitzlers (1999); The Hotel as Setting in Early Twentieth-Century German and Austrian Literature: Checking in to Tell a Story (2006); and co-author of Naked Truth: The Body in Early Twentieth-Century German-Austrian Art (2015). She has published several articles and chapters on early 20th-century literature and culture, as well as on theater and music in FL pedagogy. More recently, her work as the liaison between Middlebury’s German Department and the college's
art museum has inspired research on digital humanities and on opportunities to create bridges between FL teaching and the arts through the use of technology.

**Federico Pacchioni** holds the Sebastian Paul and Marybelle Musco Endowed Chair in Italian Studies at Chapman University, where he coordinates the Italian Studies program, teaches a variety of Italian and interdisciplinary courses, and leads outreach cultural programs. Pacchioni’s research focuses on Italian and Italian American Studies through the lenses of artistic collaborations and intermediality. He is the author of numerous essays on Italian literature, cinema, and theater and of the book *Inspiring Fellini: Literary Collaborations behind the Scenes* (2014).

**María Luisa Parra** is Senior Preceptor in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University. Her areas of expertise are Spanish language development, foreign language acquisition, Spanish as a heritage language, and child bilingual development. She has pioneered the track for heritage Latino students at Harvard. She has published her findings on heritage learners’ individual differences in the *AAUSC Journal* and her research on critical pedagogy and service learning in the *Heritage Language Journal*. Her work with immigrant families and children focuses on new strategies to assist parents and teachers in supporting school adaptation and academic success. She is co-author with Martha Garcí-Sellers of *Comunicación entre la escuela y la familia: fortaleciendo las bases para el éxito escolar (Home-School Communication: Strengthening the basis for academic success)* (2005).

**Jaime W. Roots** is a PhD candidate in the German Department at the University of California, Irvine. Her areas of research include the effects of oral storytelling on collective memory, and the influence of new media on the storytelling process. She is also the online materials developer for a new introductory German textbook and a Pedagogical Fellow at UC Irvine.

**Barbara Schmenk** is Professor of German at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, where she is in charge of graduate teaching assistant training. Her research focus is second/foreign language education. She has published monographs on gender and language learning and on learner autonomy, as well as articles on various aspects of language learning and teaching. These include two monographs: *Geschlechtsspezifisches Fremdsprachenlernen: Zur Konstruktion geschlechtstypischer Lerner- und Lernbilder in der Fremdsprachenforschung* (2002, 2nd ed. 2009); and three volumes, the most recent of which is co-edited with John L. Plews, on *Traditions and Transitions: Curricula for German Studies* (2013).

**Per Urlaub** is an Associate Professor in the Department of Germanic Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. He holds a PhD in German Studies from Stanford University. His contributions to the areas of reading research, curriculum development, and instructional technology have been published in various venues such as the *Foreign Language Annals*, *System*, *Unterrichtspraxis*, the *ADFL Bulletin*, and the *Profession*. His volume “Transforming Postsecondary Foreign Language Teaching in the United States,” co-edited with Janet Swaffar, appeared in 2014. During the academic year 2014–2015, Per Urlaub served as the Scholar-in-Residence at Vanderbilt University’s Center for Second Language Studies.