AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction 2010

Critical and Intercultural Theory and Language Pedagogy

Glenn S. Levine
Alison Phipps
Editors

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Chapter 1
What Is Language Pedagogy For?

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Abstract

In this chapter, the authors take a critical look at two main issues: the relationship of theory to language pedagogy and the place of language pedagogy relative to "the state of the world." This examination is used to set the tone and introduce the chapters of this volume, showing how language pedagogy, far from being "atheoretical," is in fact deeply infused with theory; it is always theory-driven practice. The contributions of the volume bring the paradigms of language teaching and learning—and the paradigm shifts that have been under way for some time—into focus, linking them concretely with pedagogical practice. It argues that "theory" is not a reified object but rather is embodied in our teaching and learning practices, often in ways that are unassumed and even unrecognized. A step back to think and reflect on our practice and to consider patterns that are emergent in language pedagogy gives us an exciting glimpse of change and new directions, of new embodiments of thinking about teaching in practice. The authors suggest that language pedagogy needs emergent and critical conceptual tools to move beyond a heavily skills-based approach and take an active part in addressing the dire needs of a changed world, a globalized community in which conflicts are or should be worked out by people at every level of society. Deep knowledge of languages—or translingual and transcultural competence as formulated by the Modern Language Association (MLA) Ad Hoc Committee Report (MLA, 2007)—is a crucial component of this change. To this end, picking up where the ACTFL *Standards* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006) left off, the authors frame the contributions to the volume in terms of five "new Cs": context, complexity, capacity, compassion, and conflict:

> We can never be "after theory" in the sense that there can be no reflective life without it. We can simply run out of particular styles of thinking as our situation changes. (Eagleton, 2003, p. 221)

Language Pedagogy: What's It All For?

Let's be honest about this: this book began on the back of a napkin and over a beer with Beethoven in the background. It also began as a pair of complaints. The first was that language pedagogy is atheoretical, and the second, rather more broadly, was about the state of the world. Let's take them head-on.

Language Pedagogy Is Atheoretical

Language teaching remains, despite the cultural turn of 1990s, distinct from the larger work and the mission of the humanities, where languages are usually taught. In fact, language pedagogy has construed itself as a functional skills acquisitional mode of being where the aim is simply to get good at speaking, writing, reading,

and listening and to get students the grades that say that they have become good at this.

For their part, language instructors and language program directors have become incredibly good at helping students get good at speaking, writing, reading, and listening. A whole host of methods, approaches, techniques, practices, and technologies has grown up over the decades since the functional and communicative turns that have enabled many students to finish their language courses with another language inside of themselves that they can indeed speak, write, read, and listen to.

The State of the World

The world is in a bit of a mess, as are our human attempts to make things better. The anthropologist Mary Douglas (2002) makes the stunning claim that "the whole of the universe is harnessed to men's [*sic*] attempts to force one another into good citizenship" (p. 4). In a social and historical moment that places virtue predominantly in the acquisition of goods and skills, then, the energies of the universe are harnessed in the service of functional skills production. And so it has been. Energy is not harnessed toward the creation of beauty or the transformation of conflict, to the understanding of subtle contingency or the fostering of compassion.

The State of the Language Pedagogy World

Skills—language skills for our purposes—are what will save the day and make for a good life; this appears to be the popular "theory" about language pedagogy. With good grades in their language skills (and with good grades generally), students will get jobs, contribute to the economy, and make money, and all will be well. What is said in conversation, what is read or written during work or leisure time, is not as important as the fact that the skills exist for it to be said, heard, read, or written, to varying levels of competency.

When money makes the world go around, when society enjoys stability and security, such luxuries are affordable. Jobs and skills, jobs and skills. Language skills.

These statements may come across as compressed, but they are not intended to be simply dismissive of current practices; rather, our intention is to communicate the conviction that there is a deeper ethical basis for language pedagogy, one that teachers in the classroom know and feel daily but that often is not reflected systemically in the larger discourses about teaching and learning. We acknowledge that language teachers, in enacting their ethical practices, are often brought into conflict with established paradigms, one of which we believe to be the economic paradigm (but there are others). This dilemma of orientation is the product of theoretical analysis. The analysis is that of the theories that underpin the present global order: free trade, goods, and services make for good citizenship, so the labor force and citizenry need to possess the wherewithal to enable this to continue. It's a product of positivism and modernist rationalism. What you put in is what you get out. The more resources we commit to solving a problem or deficit, the more easily we will solve the problem and make up the deficit. In short, language pedagogy characterized in this way, somewhat simplistically for the sake of brevity, is a *theory-driven practice*. The theory is now so ingrained, so deeply inculcated, that

it does not feel like a theory any longer. Theory has to feel clumsy and difficult, we imagine. As such, the ideological energy that underpins the common practice of language pedagogy has been assumed to have lost its bearings, as Arens, Kramsch, and van Lier attest to in this volume.

How has this happened? Paradigms change, towers fall; ideologies are challenged, and new presidents are elected; what makes for good citizenship is not what used to make for good citizenship. Or, as Yurchak (2006) shows us in his book about the collapse of the Soviet Union, *Everything Was Forever until It Was No More* (Yurchak, 2006), we don't tend to notice the extent of paradigmatic change until a transition is well and truly under way or is accelerating perceptibly.

The obvious way to tackle the complaints we had on our napkin is with arguments for theory as the thing that solves the deficit problems—to argue for the benefit of "theory" for practitioners in solving their deficit problems, be they language teachers and practitioners or state-of-the-world practitioners. This seemed obvious. Somewhat arrogantly—or with some irony, we thought—if these people had only read Foucault, postcolonial theory, Bourdieu, Kristeva, and so forth, then we wouldn't be in this mess. However, to do this would be to fall into the same plug-and-play, functional-solutions model as we have just critiqued. It would be to propose theory as a new technical fix to a supposed theory deficit in language pedagogy. But we have just argued that far from being a deficit, the present state of theory in language education is one of an *excess*—an excess of positivist, functional rational modernist theory. And such an argument presupposed, also somewhat arrogantly, that somehow those who are versed in theory have answers for practitioners and that practitioners don't know what they are doing. And so we go around and around a perennial circle of complaint that classroom practitioners bring to theorists, which is one of countering the questioning of their legitimacy with a counterquestioning of the legitimacy of theory. Stalemate.

From its inception and throughout its development, this has been the refrain, back and forth, in the dialogue between ourselves as editors ("what are we going to offer to the language program directors?") and between contributors in a two-day symposium at the University of California, Irvine, to the instructions from ourselves to contributors and editors, to the discussions around the framing of the volume once the final chapters had been reviewed, revised, and received. In other words, in our own thinking we too have framed the questions around the "theory debate" and the deficit, the problem of the atheoretical nature of language teaching, as we have seen it in our complaint. The dominant ways of seeing the world are very pervasive, especially the theoretical ones. And yet the invitation to pause, to think about how we think about the language classroom, in a time of transition, opens a space for old ideas and new ones to meet and converse in the pages of this volume. Each of the chapters here represents not so much a *plaidoyer* for theory in the classroom or even "something practical for the language teacher"; rather, they offer a redescription of the present reality of the language classroom and some ways of thinking about the way things now appear to be; reflections, we might say, on the state of the language pedagogy world. As such, they are reflections on the paradigms in transition and offer a new set of descriptors of dispositions for "languagers," which are the seeds of theorizing the ways in which this world is

changing. In our view, these chapters also serve to demystify a range of theoretical models and thinking about theory as a distant, esoteric object and bring it up close for language program directors and language teachers. What is often discussed as a perceived "theory–practice gap" becomes instead a newly framed understanding of language pedagogy, of all kinds, as embodiments of assumed theories about the world and the way it is. What becomes clear through this collection is that there is no gap at all: theory is practice is theory.

Raymond Williams referred to this kind of reflective activity, this kind of transition, these seeds in language, literature, and art, as a "structure of feeling": "For structures of feeling can be defined as social experiences in solution, as distinct from other social semantic formations which have been precipitated and are more evidently and more immediately available" (Williams, 1977, p. 143). The social experiences in transition, or "in solution," as Williams would have it, are those of the former things that are presently crumbling and revealing the extent to which they can neither make us safe nor make us happy. Skills and competences, goods, and trade as the basis for theory-driven practice have failed us in both regards. From this very realistic and practical understanding of the limits to our past and ongoing functional practices come tentative tryouts, partial glimpses of alternatives, signs of confidence in different ways of being and doing language pedagogy. The astute, often subtle descriptions and analysis of these social experiences from language classrooms are what offer us alternative theories and enable us to "structure feeling," to show what is distinct from the way things were and the ways we thought would be forever but that are now, it seems, no more. Put another way, theoretical and paradigmatic change occurs first in myriad everyday practices and personal reflections manifested in practice; in essence, paradigm shifts are *emergent*, to use a term from complexity theory, not storm-the-barricades revolutions.

To link this notion to language teaching and the chapters of this volume, it is usually teachers, with their intimate knowledge of their learners and the changes they intuit in their classrooms and through their students' work, who start to notice and adapt to the changes. Every contributor in this volume is now or has been a language teacher—and a passionately committed one at that. We see evidence of their teaching and feel their hard-won understandings of the transitions between the pages of this volume and in the diversity of voices that come together here. In fact, these are some of the most committed of language practitioners who happen also to be gifted in thinking about and describing the new realities of the worlds they are finding emerging in the classrooms of this time of transition. From out of the old certainties we find a tone, hesitant in places, full of excited conviction at discovery in others but determined to describe in fresh words something of the way the world may be becoming.

Transition and change of any kind is a tricky business. Anthropologists theorize movement from one structured state into a new set of social structures, as a "liminal" phase, an antistructure, where the old certainties are dismantled and new ones have not yet solidified. The transitions described in this volume are not comfortable. They point to serious dangers to the humanities, to our self-understandings, to the economic and social ways in which we have organized ourselves, and they show that language pedagogy is embedded and implicated in different ways in the competing

alternatives of the future as we try, again, with the philosophers of old, to work out what it is that might make us safe and happy and what languages and their learning and living have to do with this. Because, of course, languages are relational; they show us that other worlds are possible and offer a redescription of reality with their own cadence and poetry, principles, patterns, and possibilities for living.

So out of these chapters emerge loose sets of principles for, at the very least, curricular design and, at best, concrete steps for classroom practice, even though this involves an interpretive reduction of theory that itself might at times fly in the face of the original theory. Pedagogy and curriculum are of necessity reductive, so that they can be conveyed to others in a package for implementation. It's part of the quandary of the "theory–practice gap" that bedevils the teaching profession overall. At what point does a paradigm shift, including the constructivist, sociocultural, and ecological one that the chapters in this volume largely represent, become dilettantish dogma, unreflected and unquestioned, so that, as we said in the opening, it becomes so deeply ingrained and inculcated that it does not feel like theory any longer? It is our hope that the probing, provocative message of many of the chapters—and indeed the set as a whole—will mark a milestone toward a paradigm that remains not just critical but *self-critical* as well so that the paradigm shifts cease to be pendulum swings based on pronouncements that earlier we just had it all wrong, toward recursive, emergent layers of new insights, at all times keeping the well-being and benefit for our students at the center of our attention.

In sum, what these chapters index is initial evidence of a different theoretical project/language that is growing out of the intense relational experience of different kinds of language classrooms, language students, and expectations of good citizenship. They are all relational chapters in that they are reflecting on dimensions in the experience of being language teachers and program directors that jar with the heavily theoretical activities (assumed practices) that dominate the skills-based language teaching and on the changing nature of educational materials, the body social, and the students themselves.

Why "Critical and Intercultural"?

From the outset, we knew that including "critical and intercultural" in the title was going out on a limb. We might have simply called the volume "Theory and Language Pedagogy" and been done with it. For this book is not placed squarely in the areas of inquiry generally subsumed under critical theory, such as postcolonial theory, feminist theory, psychoanalytic theory, Marxist theory, and so forth. While the works of Derrida, Bourdieu, Kristeva, Butler, Freire, and others are cited and discussed in several of these chapters and many of the analyses and assertions in them are rooted in the philosophical traditions in which these critics also operate, the volume is not just about how works in critical theory or philosophy can inform language pedagogy. Rather, we understand "critical" in broader terms, in the ways it is used by poststructuralist scholars themselves, and similarly to the way Pennycook (2001) or van Lier (2004) approach criticality. Leo van Lier (2004) writes that "critical language education should be neither

proselytizing nor indoctrinating, because then it basically ceases to be critical, it just becomes dogma, and dogma controls thought and action, and that is not being critical" (p. 189). For van Lier, a critical approach is "an explicit and overt rational, moral and ethical stance to the treatment, interpretation and documentation of a particular state of affairs" (p. 191). For addressing our two initial complaints about language pedagogy and the state of the world—and how we see the language classroom as a site to address both of these—*critical* theory is a means for language program directors, teachers, and students to unpack, examine, and transform assumptions that have become so ingrained in curricular, language-program-direction, and teaching practices that they are considered second nature. This is the critical dimension of theory, as theory without the "critical" is simply a means of understanding or explaining a given phenomenon. Our aim is to emphasize with a critical dimension the stakes of theorizing about language pedagogy.

The term "intercultural" is used broadly and widely not only in applied linguistics and language pedagogy but also in the world of business, government, and even the military. But unlike critical theory, there isn't really a field of "intercultural theory" that one can turn to. There are numerous theorists who examine the scope and depth of the intercultural; in language pedagogy, the most notable are Claire Kramsch (1993, 1998, 2002, 2006, and this volume) and Mike Byram (1997, 2008; see also Byram, Nichols, & Stephens, 2001). Some colleagues who heard the planned title of the volume asked, "Why not translingual and transcultural?" following the MLA Report? The best answer is that while there is no clearly identifiable field of intercultural theory, translingual/transcultural competence as a construct does not purport to be theory at all. This is the reason that Kramsch's contribution to this volume aims to draw connections to that term and theory and/or to lay the theoretical foundation for its usefulness to language pedagogy. For her part, Kramsch distinguished between intercultural competence and translingual/transcultural competence with the dimension of discourse and with the placement of the learner *operating between cultures*. For Byram (1997, 2008) and for many of the contributors to this volume, envisioning the intercultural is a fundamentally theoretical undertaking, one that goes well beyond the nuts-and-bolts creation of curriculum and teaching practices. It is about seeing the learner in her or his own "third place," to use Kramsch' s (1993) pedagogical notion. This is not just between cultures but rather is indicative of a culture all its own, a learner's culture. And there is a good deal of theory that delves into that world, most notably sociocultural theory; ecological approaches to language, learning, and communication; and critical pedagogy.

To varying degrees, *all* the contributions to this volume thematize and explore both the critical and the intercultural as we have just framed these terms. What is more, all the essays in this volume are deeply personal; these are not simply intellectual exercises to help get you, the reader, thinking in new ways about language teaching and learning, though they hopefully will also achieve this. The analyses and assertions derive from the authors' own experiences as teachers, teacher trainers, and learners and from their most passionately felt convictions about teaching and learning as well as about the transformative power of learning and teaching overall and, of course, the state of the world.

In this regard, these contributions are not merely astute analyses of the central issues of language teaching and learning but rather also a testimony of *why* and *how* what language teachers and program directors do matters to students and their education and to our colleagues in the academy.

The MLA Report

Serendipitously, the concerns and complaints that we sought to address with this volume, about the problem of theory in language pedagogy and the state of the world, coincided with the publication and scholarly discussion of the 2007 MLA Ad Hoc Committee Report, titled "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World." The report identified several key problems of (especially) U.S. foreign language departments and language programs and offered a set of specific proposals to address those problems (MLA, 2007). This document has served many of the contributors to the volume as a foundation on which to build their analyses or as an anchor to prevent their explorations of theory and language pedagogy from drifting off into the stratosphere. The problems detailed in the MLA Report all center around the division between skills-based language teaching and literature "content" teaching, between the lower- and upper-division curricula of many language/literature departments, between nontenured lecturers and tenure-track and tenured faculty, and, fundamentally, between language specialists and humanities researchers. In other words, there are deep-seated structural and institutional obstacles that often undermine the very missions and objectives we set for ourselves as language departments and schools of humanities.

With the aim of forcing our collective focus toward the goals of teaching and learning, the MLA Ad Hoc Committee that drafted the report proposed that we move toward

> a broader and more coherent curriculum in which language, culture, and literature are taught as a continuous whole, supported by alliances with other departments and expressed through interdisciplinary courses, will reinvigorate language departments as valuable academic units central to the humanities and the missions of institutions of higher learning. (MLA, 2007, p. 3)

The primary proposal the committee offers is thus to frame the objective of language teaching toward "translingual and transcultural competence." As will be cited several times in this volume, this is defined as

> the ability to operate between languages. Students are educated to function as informed and capable interlocutors with educated native speakers in the target language. They are also trained to reflect on the world and themselves through the lens of another language and culture. They learn to comprehend speakers of the target language as members of foreign societies and to grasp themselves as Americans—that is, as members of a society that is foreign to others. They also learn to relate to fellow members of their own society who speak languages other than English. (MLA, 2007, p. 4)

Students learn not just functional language abilities (though they also learn these) but also "critical language awareness, interpretation and translation, historical and political consciousness, social sensibility, and aesthetic perception" (MLA, 2007, p. 4). A very tall order, to be sure. The means the report proposes to help students achieve translingual and transcultural competence are built around the transformation of degree programs, in which the two-tiered system of skills first and then content is done away with, along with reforms to who teaches what and who has a say over what is taught and how. Part of this transformation is also a reorientation of basic language teaching and integrating language learning in meaningful ways with work in other departments and fields, in essence, to enhance the institutional imperative to study languages other than English in degree programs.

For our purposes in this volume, the report on the one hand holds important theoretical implications and on the other mandates a somewhat unified theoretical framework to ground it. In this vein, several of the contributors have opted to more or less explicitly orient their papers toward the MLA Report as a way of linking theory and practice. This has proven quite fruitful, showing that the report is successful thus far as a means of getting many language professionals—and indeed whole departments—pulling in a common direction toward reform. That being said, the present volume should serve not simply as a response to the MLA Report but rather as a path for language teachers and language program directors toward a theoretical foundation and the conceptual tools with which to implement the report's recommendations.

Five New Cs

In chapter 14 of this volume, Katherine Arens links the "theory projects" of recent generations to both the MLA Report and the "five Cs" of the ACTFL *Standards* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006). As is generally known, these are communication, cultures, comparisons, connections, and communities. Arens argues that they are useful not only for theorizing language practice but also for framing research in the humanities, in particular in literature and culture studies. For the purposes of our introduction to this volume, rather than offer a laundry-list synopsis of the chapters to come, we offer five additional Cs, ones that relate to and help structure our own "theory project" in this volume, and mention which chapters overlap with each of these. They are context, complexity, capacity, compassion, and conflict.

Context

An ecological approach to language teaching and learning does not view context as just a factor to be considered when analyzing how teaching or learning happens or should happen. Rather, what happens in the classroom responds to aspects of the context, and the context is also created out of teaching, learning, and language use. In Goffman's terms, context is not just a separable "frame" surrounding a system that is needed to describe its behavior (Goffman, 1974, cited in Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p. 35); the context shapes what happens in the classroom and is

shaped by it. What this means for language pedagogy and theory is that the learners, teachers, and program directors; the physical space in which learning happens; and the materials used for learning, such as books, Internet resources, reference grammars, and so forth—all are part of context and must be considered in designing curriculum and teaching students. In addition, the historical arc of the teaching taking place, including the institutional norms and their history, is also a part of the context of teaching and learning. In this volume, several pieces address aspects of context. Kramsch and van Lier deal most explicitly with the complexities of teaching and learning contexts. Train considers in depth the historical trajectories of language pedagogies, showing us ways to regard how contemporary teaching practices derive from centuries of multifaceted practices. Parker also traces and critiques the historical progression of classical language teaching against the backdrop of the MLA Report. Lu and Corbett delve into a particular context, that of intercultural language learning for medical professionals. Likewise, Coleman and colleagues unpack the contexts of distance learning. Arnett and Jernigan show us how grammar teaching, through the model of Cognitive Grammar, can be enriched by principled consideration of many aspects of context often ignored when considering grammar curriculum. Urlaub offers a way to explore pedagogical, literary, and filmic contexts through hermeneutics.

An ecological and sociocultural perspective of language and language learning asserts that everything is about context, that everything in a given context is contingent on everything else in that context. It also makes explicit the contingencies that shape languages—the contingencies of the body, of the languages already embodied, and of context—which suggest that—and this is a signal to our shifting paradigm—we cannot have it all, that there are limits, and that is true as much of money and resources as it is of languages. Contingency suggests a certain pragmatism that will accept that contexts will suggest which languages may most usefully—or even justly—be taught in a given place or time and also how this may be done with greatest expediency and attention to conflicting pulls and directions. Put another way, context doesn't just mean we look at *everything* when examining a system such as teachers and learners in the classroom; contingency shows us—and validates—which aspects of context are most salient to solving the problems at hand. Thus, the contributions of Coleman and colleagues, Dasli, Lu and Corbett, Arnett and Jernigan, Parker, Elola and Oskoz, Gramling and Warner, and Urlaub all elegantly parse out dimensions of context based on the contingencies identified among aspects of the pedagogical problems to be solved. Their analyses can serve the reader as a sort of how-to of identifying contingencies in their own contexts of practice, of engaging in a "thick description" of their own theory-driven practices.

Complexity

That language and language learning are complex is not a new idea. This complexity confronts teachers every day in the classroom. In recent years, several scholars have sketched out what this means for language and language learning, in particular the ways that language and learners learning language are complex systems

and how this notion relates to pedagogical choices (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; van Lier, 2002, 2004). In a nutshell, an ecological or complexity approach sees all aspects of language—its use, structures, and the ways these change and, of course, its development in individuals and groups—as complex, dynamic systems. Complex systems are comprised of agents, elements, and processes, each of which can be a complex system unto itself. In order to understand any one part of the system, one must consider not only all the other parts of the system but also the parts in relation to each other. This is also context as described above, which is not extraneous to the system but is part of the system itself. With regard to language pedagogy, a complexity approach means viewing the entire system in which learners learn a new language, which includes the curriculum and all its components, as a social ecosystem. In this volume, complexity is thematized explicitly in several chapters. For example, van Lier offers a useful framework for regarding language learning in different time scales and regards through an ecological lens notions of awareness, agency, and autonomy. Gramling and Warner's innovative notion of contact pragmatics flows from a view of literary discourse "as a dynamic site of intersection between language and culture." Kramsch frames translingual and transcultural competence in part in terms of an ecological, that is, a complex and dynamic, approach to teaching and learning. Train delves into lived complexity in the classroom. Though not explicitly grounded in complexity or complexity theory, the contributions of Brenner, Arnett and Jernigan, Elola and Oskoz, and Train accord seamlessly with the idea that the language classroom is a complex, dynamic system, as does the paradigmatic thinking of van Lier and Kramsch and the ethnographic orientation of Dasli.

Capacity

It is one thing to be competent; it is another thing entirely to have the creative capacity, which is developed and enabled, to *language*, to work with others—be they teachers or other social actors—in such a way as to enable a new language to grow, both within and outside the classroom's own enabling context. For contributors in this volume, this creative, collaborative capacity overlays competency as a disposition for action. It is important that a person tries to overcome conflict, consider critically, reflect on context and contingency, and perhaps one day do this very well, as part of a lifelong endeavor. However, it is not about how well someone can do something but rather about continuously creating conditions in which the capacity to language is nurtured, out of which full competency may one day be achieved.

Capacities, abilities, competences, and literacies: these are all terms that have been used to conceptualize and describe what foreign language students should know and be able to do. We all agree that we need to envision the goals of what we do, and we treat these as synonyms. But the nuances of meaning become important when decisions about educational resources and practices are at stake. The MLA Report is all about the development of translingual and transcultural competence, as things students should be able to know and do. The five Cs of the ACTFL *Standards* (National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project, 2006) also make up a set of competences for learning and using language.

Byram (1997) offers his "five *savoirs*" to frame the intended outcomes of foreign language learning and use. And the Council of Europe, following the dimensions outlined by Michael Byram together with Genevieve Zarate (see Byram, Zarate, & Neuner, 1997), has sought to bring these forward as the frame for language teaching and learning in intercultural context across the European Union and supported by many different European pedagogical research projects. All these are useful documents that provide us with many ways of approaching curriculum design, language program direction, and classroom teaching. Byrnes (2006) offers "capacities" as a further elaboration. Byrnes notes that "competence" and "performance" had long ago become "theoretically burdened and needlessly dichotomous," and even "communicative competence is essentially restricted to mostly oral and mostly transactional performance" (p. 4). She also notes that the "capacities" clearly can include "literacies," whereas competences alone may not. The term "capacities," synonymous as it may be with "abilities," allows us to move past competence in a dichotomous relationship with performance, or an overemphasis on oral communication to the exclusion of literary and other modes of communication.

Yet beyond the theoretical and terminological distancing from older debates, how is "capacity" really different from competence? We suggest that it is the disposition for action, not just about how well someone can do something but with competences subsumed beneath it. It is the *capacity for creativity and collaboration*, which is above all what foreign language education should expect of learners. This notion is a thread in several of the chapters in this volume. Brenner argues for ways critical pedagogy can help language learners move beyond their own frames of reference and cultural norms. Kramsch offers a model for framing the MLA Report's translingual and transcultural competence as a means for learners to "trans-late" between cultures and languages in creative and empowering ways. In concrete ways, Elola and Oskoz, Arnett and Jernigan, Coleman and colleagues, Train, and Gramling and Warner and, through their hermeneutic approaches, Parker and Urlaub show us ways to convey creative and collaborative capacities into classroom action for learning and language use in the "real world."

Compassion

Language learning is compassionate. In the chapters by Brenner, van Lier, Lu and Corbett, and Train, we find the dimension of compassion coming to the fore. In answer to an implicit question—what is language pedagogy for?—we find these authors showing us that it is for compassion. Again, compassion in language pedagogy is contextual. For Lu and Corbett, it is in the context of health care and of learning to offer empathy to those suffering physical pain in intercultural contexts. For Brenner and for Train, we also find language learning explicated in contexts of pain and as a compassionate activity: for those suffering the pain of inequality and for those experiencing legacies of colonialisms. Dimensions of affect and support, dimensions of accompaniment and critical friendship, require languages to body forth compassionate modes of being, individually and, critically, in intercultural social contexts. Much of this learning fuses the long lessons we have learned from

both Marx, in the social domain, and from Freud, in the therapeutic context. It shows that the social bond is not given but made in language, in its often most basic form. To meet and greet someone who is traveling, tired, suffering, or just thirsty, in their language, in whatever the context—from hospital to tourist bar—embodies language in compassion. Language learning under this paradigm is not for functional transaction but for compassionate transaction.

Conflict

Related in a somewhat ironic link-up to compassion is the notion of conflict. Freirian critical pedagogy, as well as the interpretations of it by American scholars, such as Graff (1996), Reagan and Osborn (2002), and Giroux (1992, 2001), brings the whole project of emancipatory education together with grassroots community programs to encourage transformation. Such programs also include language pedagogy and the careful work of enabling intercultural communication in areas of deprivation, conflict, and rapidly changing language diversity. This literature has been both transformational and, at times since its inception, tamed. The use of such transformational methods in leadership programs and in management studies to support the status quo of present hegemonic structures is a reminder of the dangers of co-option. Language of change and transformation can move in many directions, some of which are highly conflictual and oppressive and a long way from being emancipatory. As always, there is a need for the contextual historical understanding of the conditions that produce Freire's work and that of other emancipator educators, such as bell hooks, and to the necessity of political action and conflict transformation. Docile bodies, as Foucault (1991) called them, or banking knowledge, in Freire's (1970, 1998) terms, produce the amiable and anodyne and translate into classroom-sized examples that never get beyond the classroom to challenge the structures that keep the outdating functionalisms in place.

There are two basic dimensions to keep in mind in thinking about pedagogy and the classroom as a site of social conflict. Brenner, Arens, and Dasli, all in their own distinctive ways, show that Graff's maxim that we should "teach the conflicts" (Graff, 1992, 1996) and Agar's (1994) insistence on the value of critical incidents or "rich points" are crucial sites of learning, that is, if, following Brenner and Dasli, they are taught through a critical and intercultural lens.

Conflict can occur anywhere where language is in play: domestically, intergenerationally, in diverse linguistic communities, ecologically, economically, and politically. Each of these contexts, in a translingual world, requires language pedagogies that can rise to the challenges of conflict transformation because conflict transformation occurs in languages and is sensitive to language as potentially inflaming or transforming the injustice that leads to conflict. The past three decades have seen research and understanding of conflict transformation and peace building develop out of contexts of considerable violence and suffering. This literature has not touched the world of language pedagogy to any great degree, except perhaps in the context of the British Council Peacekeeping English Project (available at http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-elt-pep.htm), where language, particularly the English language, was understood to be crucial for the peacekeeping activities of the armed forces around the world.

Throughout the contributions to this volume, we see thinking on language pedagogies and examples of practice that arise from tackling profound conflicts: conflicts of ecology (van Lier), conflicts of understanding (Urlaub), of colonial and imperial histories made manifest in language classrooms (Train), in the political challenges of enabling new programs to come into existence (Parker), and in struggles to evidence change brought about by technological revolution and to ensure access for all (Coleman et al. and Elola and Oskoz). So, far from language pedagogy being a technicist add-on enabling diplomacy or military phraseologies, we find the critical and intercultural theorized from the different conflicts that occur at interfaces with cultures, languages, curriculum designers, humanities policymakers, and technological innovators. Without the conflicts and their considered integration into a conflict-transformational framework for language pedagogy, the strong peace-building potential of languages for everyday and for extraordinary life circumstances is not laid down.

Conclusion

They are not small challenges, those outlined in this volume, those beginning on the back of a napkin, those that had us initially moaning about theory and practice and the state of the world and then engaging with a rich array of descriptions of alternative understandings of how language pedagogy can step up and be fit for its twenty-first-century purposes: purpose-driven language pedagogy where the purposes are creative and collaborative, critical and yet contingent, striving for compassion, conflict transformation, and capacity shaping for unknown complexities and ecological diversity. We believe that the chapters of this volume are practical and necessary for the purposes of language pedagogy. More than anything, though—and something we find implicit through this volume—we believe that the purposes here require considerable courage and imagination. Change is never easy and only sometimes welcome. Many stand to lose as established and ingrained ways of doing language pedagogy are challenged and critiqued and as alternatives are offered. It is never an easy thing to watch what one has been very good at and what has offered privilege and success giving way to something not yet fully tested, not really fully theorized or understood. The chapters in this volume offer us way markers, showing us both how and why we might move into a different theory as practice.

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