

AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction 2011

Educating the Future Foreign Language Professoriate for the 21st Century

Heather Willis Allen
Hiram H. Maxim
Editors



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Chapter 2

Reconsidering Graduate Students' Education as Scholar–Teachers: Mind Your Language!

Heidi Byrnes, Georgetown University

Introduction

Imagining the world in which the future foreign language (FL) professoriate will perform its professional work in teaching, scholarship, and service, and then imagining what actions current FL graduate departments should take to prepare their graduate students to become faculty members able to thrive in that imagined world is a daunting task. And yet informed projections and strategic reflections about the future professoriate are crucial, a conviction that undergirds the thematic choice of this volume. By issuing the challenge in a publication series devoted to language program direction and also identifying the 2007 MLA Report, “Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World,” as an impetus for the volume’s focus, the editors have signaled that they view language program direction and graduate student education as intricately connected to and vital for all aspects of faculty life. They convey that stance by highlighting that document’s interest in translingual and transcultural competence as a goal of FL education; by acknowledging its call to situate language study in cultural, historical, and cross-cultural frames as a desired approach within the FL discipline’s scholarship; and by foregrounding the importance of collaboration and changed governance to enable such work in the first place.

I have chosen such a connected interpretation of faculty work as the basis of my reflections. This means that even though I will focus on teaching, my interest is not to affirm once again its value against scholarship. Rather, my concern is this: Has the foreign languages field, understood as a discipline, been able to develop a foundation on the basis of which necessarily differentiated work in teaching, scholarship, and service can yet be realized with an intellectual coherence and shared educational philosophy that is conducive to the validity, success, and value of the contributions of individual faculty members and, ultimately, entire programs? Nowhere does that need for shared assumptions apply with greater urgency than in graduate programs, precisely because their faculty members must teach and research, must prepare the next generation of the professoriate and provide service to the program and to the profession, and must do all these things to high standards and in a publicly readable way—“coherent” in that sense.

In delineating the topic in this fashion, I have stated my belief that such a foundation is missing, a situation that has had increasingly negative consequences for the FL field. We may have learned all too well to ignore the many inconsistencies,

discontinuities, and even contradictions that grow like weeds in the field. But there is no doubt that these have crowded out, even smothered, the flowers that were supposed to have bloomed. The result is (1) compromised internal consistency for our work, in effect asking students to fashion some sort of intellectual continuity when we ourselves have failed to do so; (2) strained ability to inquire into the quality of our contribution to the field and to the educative work of the university, therefore also a strained ability to devise, chart, and implement principled approaches to enhancing that work; (3) serious obstacles to the accumulation of research-based effective educational practice (see Ucelli & Snow's discussion [2009] of this as a problem across educational linguistics) and therefore a seemingly endless array of proposals, recommendations, and new "theories" competing for attention in professional discussion and praxis; (4) great difficulty in adjudicating the trustworthiness and significance of research findings that are being presented in the research literature (Norris & Ortega, 2006), resulting in a lack of direction for how to move forward in research; (5) considerable ambivalence to the point of "anything goes" in educational practice (see Ellis' summative statement on grammar teaching (2006)); (6) near *rigor mortis* with regard to the construction of coherent curricula, both undergraduate and graduate, the one project that requires participation in and agreement on content, structure, and implementation by an entire faculty body; and (7) finally and quite unsurprisingly, a reduced sense of purpose, accomplishment, and sense of community, along with reduced external persuasive power regarding the value of a humanities education in contemporary higher education.

One could be forgiven if the above points bring to mind the listing of the seven deadly sins of the Christian tradition. But just like the intention of that compilation was not to draw attention to pride or greed or envy, but to encourage the faithful to develop the opposite virtues, my intention, too, is to argue that in order to develop the kinds of professional virtues that will be essential for the future professoriate, we too must (re)discover our foundational beliefs. That means, *how* we educate the future professoriate requires us first to specify *what* constitutes the foundation of the field. Only then will we be able to lay out appropriate proposals to be implemented in various educational contexts.

In that vein, I propose a re-envisioned focus on language as the area of inquiry best suited to providing the intellectual and professional coherence the discipline so urgently needs. In terms of professional knowledge, beliefs, and values, and, by extension, in terms of the educative preparation of the future professoriate, this translates into members of the discipline developing a shared set of assumptions, forms of inquiry, and well-grounded facts about language that, borrowing a term coined by Carter (1990) in an educational context that echoes current debates, I call *knowledge about language*. To be sure, such knowledge will be held to different degrees by different faculty members, as they have reason to acquire, develop, and deploy it in their professional work. But that is not the same thing as acceding to and thereby implicitly validating incoherently arrayed bits of knowledge within a faculty group, the situation that exists all too frequently now.

The remainder of the paper intends to substantiate this proposal. I begin by providing some historical context for the 2007 MLA Report in order to consider

the suitability of its treatment of language for conceptualizing and educating a future professoriate. What that future might demand in terms of *knowledge about language* is the subject of the following section. I turn to systemic functional linguistics (SFL), an explicitly meaning-oriented and unabashedly education-oriented comprehensive theory of language, in order to introduce core conceptual constructs and praxis-oriented insights about language that might help us tackle the issues before us. Making the same case, albeit through a critique of the current situation, the next section explores how an insufficient theory of language has invaded our professional conduct in three core areas of the FL field: in the construal of relations among language, culture, and textual literacy; in TA education in graduate programs; and in the construction of undergraduate curricula toward advanced ability levels. By combining both the advocated conceptual route and a critical awareness of current shortcomings, I then consider how a functional linguistic orientation might enable new approaches to TA development based on expanded foundations for knowledge about language. I conclude by suggesting steps that might enable us to “mind our language” in order to be able to “mind the store” so that the professoriate of the future may be assured a future that is viable and desirable.

Contextualizing the Call for *Knowledge About Language*: The 2007 MLA Report

In his groundbreaking book *Coral Gardens and Their Magic* (1935), the British social anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski concluded that it is impossible for any outsider looking in on another language to grasp the meaning of a word in that language without an awareness of the *context of situation* and the *context of culture* within which it was used. He thus set in motion the eventual incorporation of these notions into Firthian linguistic theory and from there into Hallidayan systemic functional linguistics, a theory of language that explicitly presents linguistic analysis as a study of meaning rather than as a study of form. I want to extend that trajectory by yet one more move, arguing that our understanding of the context of situation of the FL profession as the 2007 MLA Report portrayed it would be substantially enriched if it were embedded in a context of professional culture that could draw on a meaning-oriented theory of language. Most important for the present discussion is the possibility that such a linkage would provide and appropriate a firm foundation for the preparation of the future professoriate.

To readers familiar with the MLA Report, such a linkage and such a claim might appear strained. After all, the report scarcely mentions graduate education, including graduate education for teaching (Allen, 2009; Allen & Negueruela-Azarola, 2010; Pfeiffer, 2008; Schechtman & Koser, 2008). But Pfeiffer rightly made that connection when he noted:

Such intellectual inconsistency in the Committee's recommendations is a consequence of an inconsistent understanding of the academic core of FL departments, i.e., their disciplinary center. It

seems to me that this issue can be handled in a relatively straightforward manner: the disciplinary anchor to FL departments' teaching and research mission is its particular language because that is the one *distinctive object of study*. It follows that the intellectual substance of the teaching and research mission of an FL department is primarily located within the *courses of language instruction* where "language instruction" is understood as the teaching and study of language as it functions as a system that "*does things with words aesthetically, culturally, linguistically, and socially*" (Swaffar, 1999, p. 8), that is, as language in use. (Pfeiffer, 2008, p. 298 original emphasis)

In other words, the report has left unanswered central questions like these: Is FL studies a disciplinary area that can point to a unifying intellectual core; if so, might that be located with an expansively conceived understanding of language; and, finally, what would that mean for the conduct of those professing in the FL discipline through their teaching, scholarship, and service?

This silence is all the more puzzling as an earlier very public debate about the same issue had already taken place under MLA auspices. I am referring to the provocative article by Dorothy James (1997), "Bypassing the traditional leadership: Who's minding the store?," which led to responses from about 30 leaders in the profession, in literary-cultural studies and language studies, in two subsequent issues of the *ADFL Bulletin* (Response, 1998a and b). Specifically, in her seminal article, James had addressed key aspects of a humanistically oriented foreign language field, namely, the close relationship between student learning and faculty teaching; the centrality of sophisticated textual interpretations in faculty scholarship; and the importance of substantive curricular work within the multiple forms of service that faculty members render to a department. Accordingly, she had spoken of "genuine coordination ... of language and literature teaching within the humanistic framework of a liberal arts curriculum" (James, 1997, p. 7). While she did not explicitly advocate a new understanding of language as a unifying intellectual force, her call for "one faculty that will work with language in cultural-literary context and open the doors to the highest levels of literacy for our students" (James, 1997, p. 8) left little doubt about the centrality of language—and therefore the centrality of a shared understanding of the role and nature of language—for all faculty in the language studies field.

In fairness, the MLA Report, too, leaves little doubt about the centrality of language, inasmuch as it affirms language as "an essential element of a human being's thought processes, perceptions, and self-expressions; and as such it is considered to be at the core of translingual and transcultural competence" (MLA, 2007, p. 235). Kramersch, in particular, has provided similar emphases with her treatment of semiotic or symbolic competence (e.g., Kramersch 2006, 2009, 2010). But such fervent appeals have largely remained abstract notions. While it may be premature to expect to see flourishing projects that would realize the report's ambitious agenda, it is not premature to suggest that, absent a comprehensive, meaning-based theory of language, little in the current conceptualization of translingual competence is suited for enabling, much less supporting, the kind

of comprehensive curricular and pedagogical rethinking, not to mention the kind of reconsideration for the preparation of the future professoriate for teaching scholarship and service, that the report has grandly envisioned.

Preparing the Professoriate: Looking Toward the Future

To make that point, a brief excursion into the future is called for, with an emphasis on the role language will play in the world for which our educational efforts are intended. In general, one can expect many features that are already with us to continue in that individuals will be faced with multiplicity, hybridization, multi-functionality, and dynamic and repeated changes throughout their life span and across variously motivated, variously situated, and variously configured groupings in society. Irrespective of whether these groupings are created by affinity and choice, or by necessity and exertion of power, they will likely lead to consolidations, to dispersions, even loss, and once more to new consolidations in the phenomena we are by now well aware of: globalization, multilingualism, migration, formation of ethnic, religious, and political groupings in diverse diasporic situations that develop increasingly complex relationships with their new as well as their originating environments.

What they share is higher incidence of (1) deterritorialized communication in diverse mediated environments that will create their own shifting, unstable, dynamic and creative contexts of use; (2) expanding requirements for enhanced communicative abilities, in interpretive as well as productive language use in ever more opportunistic even playful, therefore less predictable settings; (3) formidable demands regarding literate abilities in several languages in knowledge-based societies and in language-based groupings within which one seeks to establish a sense of personal belonging, voice, and identity; (4) specialized language abilities in academic, institutional, and professional settings that will require continuous refinement; (5) awareness of diverse ideological stances and multiple identities and shifting subjectivities of interlocutors and diverse audiences; (6) careful consideration of manifestations of equality and power, solidarity and rejection, along with careful attunement to forms of granting or denying access to societal goods through language.

All these (re)figurations of language use will affect both the students being taught and the professors doing the teaching. They will be played out both inside and outside the classroom, with the educational system exerting strong normative and gatekeeping powers while at the same time attempting to assure more equitable access. Most important for the present argument regarding knowledge about language, they will require high and functionally diverse ability levels on the part of graduate students as future members of the professoriate in their respective native *and* foreign languages. They will also ask of them high levels of awareness of the specific context-dependent resources language makes available for meaning-making in a range of settings for a range of intentions and goals. One might refer to this group of abilities as *discourse-oriented knowledge about language*. As an

aside, though it is likely to bolster their own facility with the foreign language, particularly at the very advanced levels of interpretive and productive use, this aspect of knowledge about language is quite distinct from their L2 performance. At the same time, graduate students will require a second set of abilities. These include differentiated understanding of normal developmental trajectories in instructed language learning alongside intra- and interindividual variation. They will require some facility in translating this understanding into suitable bases for curricular and pedagogical work. They will need the opportunity to develop awareness of what constitutes expected sources and patterns of errors and how these relate to long-term development, therefore how student learning might fairly be assessed at different performance levels. And they will also need to acquire a well-stocked toolkit of sophisticated and differentiated pedagogical resources in order to facilitate learners' appropriating these resources for themselves. One might refer to this set of abilities as *education-oriented knowledge about language*.

Many readers are likely to assent, at least in a general fashion, to these diverse "shoulds." But that sentiment might risk overlooking the fact that their real value and validity derives from resting on a coherent foundation for the field in the form of a functional meaning-oriented conceptualization of language. For only with an understanding of language as a textual meaning-making resource can thinking, knowing, believing, and acting by the educators of teachers and the developing teachers themselves overcome its current ad hoc quality; fortify educators against the seemingly never-ending appearance of yet another bright idea (not to mention "theory"); enable them to relieve ever-present intellectual tensions that are brought about by their desire to "make things work"; and, last but certainly not least, reduce the extraordinary time commitments they have had to make so that workable arrangements are at all possible.

In short, just like Larsen-Freeman (2006) has recently alerted us to the high costs for the quality of research into learners' language development when applied linguistics continues to maintain a static, computational, and information-processing oriented view of language, so would I point to the even steeper costs being incurred by faculty, students, and society when we continue to operate with theories of language whose inadequacies are in plain view and cannot be remedied by tweaking at the margins, much less by continually placing the onus, even the blame, on teachers and learners.

SFL: An Education-Friendly Functional Theory of Language

On that account, a brief characterization of SFL is now in order, beginning with this general description in light of the paper's focus on education: SFL is well nigh unique in theoretical circles for its commitment to educational concerns (see, e.g., Halliday, 2007a) and, as a functional theory of language, it is unique for its textual and meaning orientation. That this is not merely an expedient posture can be ascertained by Halliday's insistence on an applicable linguistics, where applicability is determined by the domain in question, not the other way around. When a theory

of language has to be “good to think with” for the issues at hand (Halliday, 2010), it must find answers that are viable and useful in that domain and its contexts. The mutually beneficial consequences of the resultant two-way street between a particular cultural and situational context where language plays an important role and the development of usable theoretical constructs is made abundantly clear in overview treatments of SFL, such as those presented in Hasan, Matthiessen, and Webster (2005, 2007), particularly Matthiessen’s summary (2007) of developments in the theory since 1970. Finally, and not insignificantly, the vast majority of educationally oriented writings, including those by Halliday himself (see the representative sample assembled in Volume 9, *Language and Education*, of his collected works, edited by Webster), are remarkably accessible even for a first-time reader not steeped in the otherwise considerable intricacies of the fully worked out theory (e.g., Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999, 2004).

I mention these characteristics as encouragement and intellectual enticement. Just as important, I mention them as practical motivation for colleagues and programs that are similarly inclined. My general reference to the experience of faculty and graduate students in my own department, the German Department at Georgetown University (GUGD), nearly all of whom are specialists in literary-cultural studies, intends no more and no less than this: beginning with their own educative practices, they saw in SFL-inspired notions the potential for devising educationally viable solutions in line with their particular interests and concerns as members of a graduate department in the humanities. One might sum up this attractiveness in terms of the contributions SFL can make to the inherently textual interests of FL studies.

Not surprisingly, by far the most compelling construct within SFL is likely to be the construct of “genre.” As I have detailed elsewhere (Byrnes, 2011), the favored notion of “genre” is not that which has influenced so much work in ESL, particularly in English for Specific Purposes, including English for Academic Purposes, where work by Hyland, Johns, and Swales is especially prominent. There, genre is interpreted primarily as social practice that is translated into an overall genre moves perspective. By contrast, an explicitly SFL orientation, as it continues to guide educational research and practice in schools (see particularly Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Coffin, 2006a and b; Derewianka, 1990, 1998; Martin & Rose, 2008; Rothery, 1996; Unsworth, 2001), devotes considerable attention to the intricate relationship between lexicogrammatical resources that are being deployed in particular genres and their multifunctional qualities for meaning-making in oral and written texts.

Such an orientation is appealing for U.S. college-level FL programs because collegiate FL instruction must anticipate learners with no or mostly rudimentary FL abilities. At the same time, programs seek to move their learners to academic ability levels in a very short time period (see the discussion in Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010). Accomplishing that feat, among other things, requires a well-theorized and educationally transparent understanding of language as a meaning-making resource, a way of foregrounding a program’s intellectual aspirations within and contributions to higher education. And it most certainly requires a theory of language that is suited to curriculum construction, itself always a choice about what comes first and what follows thereafter, and why and to what end.

Given these facts and parameters, the following constructs in SFL were particularly persuasive to the GUGD faculty as they began to espouse a functional and meaning orientation for understanding language (for extensive explication, see Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010, particularly Chapters 3 and 5). At a first and foundational level, it was the theory's emphasis on the situatedness of texts in context. That emphasis became a bit more concrete through positing three central metafunctional modes of meaning in language—the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual. These would make it possible to begin to think of lexicogrammatical features as being linked to aspects of the social world in a transparent and systematic fashion: the ideational metafunction addresses how we go about making meaning of physical and social reality around us; the interpersonal metafunction speaks to the fact that any utterance always involves an interactional positioning vis-à-vis an interlocutor/reader; and the textual metafunction specifies how the primary metafunctions come to be realized in the sequential ordering that characterizes oral and written texts. The central contextual variables of *FIELD*, *TENOR*, and *MODE* could be conceptually deployed in order to capture these metafunctional modes. Through prototypical bundles of lexicogrammatical features, themselves the result of interaction among *FIELD*, *TENOR*, and *MODE*, one could come to understand registers as idealized textual variants within the overall potential of a language. Finally, and most importantly, those potentials would be instantiated in actual texts, more precisely, in particular genres.

Upon that foundation and at the next two levels, as it were, SFL links language, text, and culture: (a) grammar is metafunctionally interpreted and metafunctionally analyzed in terms of its meaning-making potential: meaning as representation, meaning as exchange, and meaning as message, all interacting with each other at the multiple levels of the lexicogrammatical stratum of the language; and (b) genres with their particular ways of calibrating *FIELD*, *TENOR*, and *MODE* are related to diverse cultural domains, to situation types with their semiotic potential, and, ultimately, to culture itself.

Finally, at a fourth level, two additional concepts in SFL, those of instantiation and realization, clarify these aspects of a social-semiotic understanding of language: (a) specific texts are instances of the overall meaning potential that characterizes an entire language system; (b) the language system does not exist anywhere but in the specific texts that instantiate it; (c) at the same time, specific texts realize a particular context of situation, much as the language system realizes a context of culture; and (d) the array of possible contexts of situation (as realized in texts) instantiates the total context of culture (see Figure 3.3, p. 53, in Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010).

Taken together, these and other SFL-inspired insights facilitated proposing curricular continua that were themselves placed into yet more encompassing global continua in order to make sequencing decisions: the oral-literate continuum; the semiotic continuum of congruent and noncongruent semiosis; and the generic continuum, conceptualized as moving first from the overt dialogicality of the utterance in dialogic interaction to the covert dialogicality of intratextual aspects of coherence and cohesion and from there to the dialogic relationship of texts with the entire language system as it realizes a culture.

From an educational standpoint, such a framework should encourage the development of sophisticated forms of language use that can be referred to as cultural literacy.

Preparing the Professoriate: Learning from the Past

For good or ill, a call for change, particularly for dramatic change, as I am here presenting it, receives important justification from critiques of the current situation. In the case at hand, radical change is motivated by observing three long-standing friction points in professional thinking and practice: (1) how we address the relation among language, culture, and advanced textual literacy in oral and written texts, the focus of education in the humanities; (2) how we prepare TAs in graduate programs, a central educational responsibility of graduate programs and also the topic most directly related to the volume's focus; and (3) how we go about constructing articulated curricula toward advanced forms of literacy, as constituting the means and the goals of academic programs.

The Defective Link: Exploring Language and Cultural Meaning in Texts

Assuming that the interpretation of oral and written texts, or “discourse,” is the intellectually privileged preoccupation of scholars in literary-cultural studies departments, how we imagine language is fundamental for a principled ability to engage in that work. Speaking as a linguist who takes a textual-functional approach to ways of theorizing about language and engaging with language, Halliday affirms two mutually reinforcing needs: the need for a meaning-oriented theory of language and a need to incorporate its findings into scholarship in literary-cultural studies or, as he terms it, discourse. It is worth quoting a somewhat lengthier passage in order to clarify both how this comes about and what is at stake.

The aim has been to construct a grammar for purposes of text analysis: one that would make it possible to say sensible and useful things about any text, spoken or written, in modern English....

In any piece of discourse analysis, there are always two possible levels of achievement to aim at. One is a contribution to the **understanding** of the text: the linguistic analysis enables one to show how, and why, the text means what it does. In the process, there are likely to be revealed multiple meanings, alternatives, ambiguities, metaphors and so on. This is the lower of the two levels; it is one that should always be attainable provided the analysis is such as to relate the text to general features of the language—provided it is based on a grammar, in other words.

The higher level of achievement is a contribution to the **evaluation** of the text: the linguistic analysis may enable one to say why the text is, or is not, an effective text for its own purposes—in

what respects it succeeds and in what respects it fails, or is less successful. This goal is very much harder to attain. It assumes an interpretation not only of the environment of the text itself but also of its context (context of situation, context of culture), and of the systematic relationship between context and text.

... A text can be a highly complex phenomenon, the product of a highly complex ideational and interpersonal environment.... [But discourse analysis without grammar] is an illusion. A discourse analysis that is not based on grammar is not an analysis at all, but simply a running commentary on a text. (1994, p. xv–xvi, original emphasis)

Halliday's challenge is clearly not a narrow one to be heeded only by linguists; rather, it applies to all participants in the work of FL departments. For example, Wellmon commented on recent developments in literary–cultural studies like this:

absorption [of cultural studies] lacked reflection on the particularity of languages as meaning-making systems, both in terms of the place of language in cultural analysis and the place of particular languages in the study of particular cultures. (Wellmon, 2008, p. 293)

Similarly, Berman, now president of the MLA, observed nearly a decade ago that “cultural studies has paid scant attention to the intersection of language and culture” (Berman, 2002, p. 5). He added presciently that the language-blindness of the cultural turn must be rectified precisely so that FL departments might “strengthen their positions within the university and to contribute better to the needs of students in the context of globalization and its linguistic consequences” (Berman, 2002, p. 7).

Taking a yet broader perspective, the educational linguist Christie (2006) observed that appearance of the term literacy in the literature for primary and secondary education signaled a renewed focus on language education per se after an overemphasis on the child's self-expression. One is reminded that communicative language teaching, with its focus on learners' “creative communicating,” precipitated a similar downplaying, if not to say essentially dismissing, of the teacher as an “explicitly teaching” classroom presence. In a corrective move, we would do well to ponder Halliday's memorable phrasing (1980) that developing native language literacy throughout the entire educational experience involves *learning language*, *learning* subject-matter content *through language*, and *learning about language* in order to develop a heightened awareness of its resources for meaning-making. That should enable collegiate FL programs to make the crucial connection between language and culture or cultural content that animates them: “learning language and learning *through* language involved learning the language system and learning through that about aspects of one's world”—and FL programs would add, “other worlds” (Christie, 2006, p. 48; original emphasis).

That connection is even more strongly oriented toward the interests of the humanities *and* language learning in the work of Hasan (1996), an influential voice in SFL, when she characterized literacy as “language-based semiosis” that

should be imagined along a continuum: in terms of a *recognition literacy* that foregrounds language as an inventory of forms with little interest in language as a form of social action; as *action literacy*, which focuses on the development of discursive abilities in line with the expectations of a discourse community (e.g., in terms of genre expectations); and as *reflection literacy*, which “is concerned with the reflexive capacities of language when it functions as meta-discourse, analyzing both the nature of expression and of content by relating both to the exchange of meanings by socially positioned speakers for the living of life in society” (Hasan, 1996, p. 415).

It is not difficult to see that such an approach to literacy and, by implication, the knowledge about language it presupposes at least logically (if not necessarily sequentially) can help direct thinking for educating the future professoriate toward addressing a number of the challenges that were previously identified, not least the challenge of attaining upper levels of L2 abilities. Indeed, Byrnes, Maxim, and Norris (2010) presented such an SFL-inspired notion of literacy in their comprehensive description of the development of writing toward advanced ability levels made possible by a principled curricular progression. In so doing, they provided on-the-ground detail for understanding how a faculty's approach to curriculum fundamentally depends on the intellectual validity, capaciousness, and educational specificity of the theory of language chosen for such curricular work.

When a coherent educational culture is created, graduate students repeatedly have the opportunity to encounter diverse aspects of the chosen orientation, in classrooms and formal and informal discussions among the teaching staff, a situation that research identifies as perhaps the most important ingredient in teachers' evolving identity as scholar-teachers. It is here that the aforementioned education-oriented knowledge about language would gradually be developed, a kind of knowledge-creation through educational action reminiscent of Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of communities of practice. To forestall even subtle denigration of “practice” in favor of “theory,” I hasten to add that just such participation in practice is likely to be necessary for a truly well-developed understanding of the second kind of knowledge about language, namely the discourse-oriented knowledge of language that lends itself well to generalizations and, ultimately, theorizing about educational and intellectual practices. A decade ago I stated that “it takes a department!” to educate graduate students toward such a rich understanding of their professional work (Byrnes, 2001); I might also have stated that, before that, it takes a theory of language suitable for the spectrum of intellectual and educational work that characterizes FL graduate departments (see also Byrnes, 2005).

Such insights are worth relating to the findings in the study by Allen (2011) in which she reported on the arduous path taken by two graduate TAs as they attempted to embrace, in their pedagogical thinking and their pedagogical actions, a literacy orientation such as that advocated by Kern (2000). But because that notion of literacy does not build on a well-specified theory of language, is constrained in its implementation by its location within the first two years of collegiate FL education (see Byrnes, Maxim, & Norris, 2010 for further considerations), and had little presence in the TAs' total educational environment, their difficulties might be just as attributable to those factors than to the purported ineffectiveness

of current models of teacher education. Of course, the question always is, where does one begin? If we take the multifaceted evidence provided in the study by Allen and Negueruela-Azarola (2010), I believe the answer is clear: We must replace the existing approaches to educating the professoriate with their wholly inadequate conceptualization of the role of language in FL studies with a language-based framework that can account for and provide insights to the entire field as it exists now and will evolve in the future.

The Missing Link: Teaching in the FL Discipline “Without Language”

If readers found Halliday’s connection in the previous section between theoretical linguistics and a textually oriented cultural studies unusual, they are likely to consider the following quote unremarkable.

Our approach to the teaching of any phenomenon depends critically on our conception of this phenomenon. Unless we can base language teaching and learning on a richly revealing comprehensive account of what kind of phenomenon language is, we are not in a position to answer the many questions that arise in educational contexts. (Matthiessen, 2006, p. 31)

But such familiarity should not veil the statement’s deeper message: the FL discipline lives (or perhaps survives) without a “richly revealing comprehensive account” of language; and because educators must nevertheless “answer the many questions that arise in educational contexts,” they have all too often created, in great profusion and with great earnestness and conviction, ad hoc, unconnected, and even contradictory positions for themselves and others that then take on a life of their own.

The incongruity of the situation has, of course, not gone unnoticed. The response in the field of teacher education has been to redirect its focus away from language-based interests. Specifically, in a retrospective published a decade ago, Crandall (2000) characterized language teacher education as having increasingly distanced itself from its earlier lead disciplines, all of which had a strong language focus (e.g., applied linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis), and having positioned itself much more strongly in general educational theory and practice. In that discussion, she referenced approvingly the almost liberationist, manifesto-like quality of a much cited article by Freeman and Johnson (1998) that expressed close to outrage against the fundamental mismatch between teachers’ classroom reality and their roles in the educational process and the dictums of SLA research with their claim to scientific status. Teachers are not

empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills; they are individuals who enter teacher education programs with prior experiences, personal values, and beliefs that inform their knowledge about teaching and shape what they do in their classrooms. (Freeman & Johnson, 1998, p. 401)

Then years later, Wright’s (2010) overview of teacher education affirmed that trend inasmuch as teacher education now draws much more on notions of

reflective practice, teacher cognition, and professional cultures than it does on the contributions from the original feeder disciplines.

In light of these developments, the foreign language field has arrived at a most curious crossroad: a discipline that is engaged in assuring that its learners attain high-level abilities in the most complex semiotic system of the human species, language, has essentially blocked out substantive consideration of that system in support of its educative work. But the requirement for differentiated knowledge about language on the part of professionals does not thereby disappear. Instead, it is sublimated or repackaged—at great cost to the educators. How and where these costs have accumulated, how they have been covered up or converted into different currencies in different environments, and how those currencies have subsequently been traded for valued knowledge in the field provides ample food for thought. A few indicators of this distressed marketplace of ideas will suffice.

The most visible nod toward the claimed continued importance of language within the now prominent construct of teacher cognition is in terms of references to “grammar”: after the less-than-stellar outcomes of a form of communicative language teaching that well nigh banned explicit grammar teaching, the literature now asserts that it is no longer a matter of *whether* one should teach grammar but *what* grammar should be taught and *how* this is to be done. One example in the collegiate FL community of this (re)affirmation of a place for “grammar” is the edited volume by Katz and Watzinger-Tharp (2009), with its primary readership of language program coordinators in college FL departments. An examination of the volume’s particulars reveals the different views within the profession on how knowledge about language is represented.

At their core, the divergent interpretations of “grammar” in the volume reflect differing understandings in the profession of the nature and role of grammar. Whereas one treatment considered meaning-oriented engagement with whole texts to be the appropriate environment for the consideration of “grammar” (Maxim, 2009) and another treatment, that by Negueruela (2009), acknowledged that “grammar” might itself be meaningful, others located grammar exclusively within a psycholinguistic processing model of language learning (Leow, 2009) despite the conflicting or inconclusive findings in previous psycholinguistic research about its role in language instruction and long-term conduciveness to language learning as a form of meaning-making. Another area of divergence related to a focus on “discourse” and “text” rather than the morphosyntax of the decontextualized sentence as the essential elements of language learning and use (Katz & Blyth, 2009), even as much of the research focus remained at the sentence level (Farley, Peart, & Enns, 2009). A third recurring source of tension in the profession captured by the volume was the language program coordinators’ research and administrative focus on the beginning levels of language learning within a humanistically oriented discipline that needs to emphasize the development of advanced literacy abilities if it is to be an intellectual presence in the academy.

The final, and perhaps most consequential, issue reflected in the volume was the language teaching profession’s uncritical appropriation of the distinctions

made by Canale and Swain (1980) in what has arguably become *the* foundational theoretical statement for communicative language teaching: the distinction between grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. The customary interpretation of the theoretical construct itself, with its pervasively componential and additive notion of language, would seem to run counter to the meaning-based discourse orientation that characterizes the desired outcomes of collegiate FL learners. Moreover, Canale himself warned against its facile transfer into educational contexts:

This theoretical framework is not a model of communicative competence, where model implies the specification of the manner and order in which the components interact and in which the various competencies are normally acquired. Halliday's (1973) theory of language qualifies better as a model in this sense ... Ultimately it is a model of communicative competence that must be articulated for second language pedagogy since a model has more direct applications for pedagogy than does a framework. (Canale, 1983, p. 12)

Indeed, as Canale implied, SFL has done away with the familiar componential landscape. As a “natural” functional theory of language (Byrnes, 2011), SFL recognizes that *any* language use, and therefore the lexicogrammatical features that realize it, will *always* involve the three previously mentioned metafunctions. There is then no need for a separate pragmatics nor a separate sociolinguistic competence, nor is there a “grammatical” competence that does not involve the three metafunctions (see the insightful discussion in Chapter 10 in Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999). There is, instead, an urgent need to understand the entire lexicogrammatical system of a language as a set of resources whose meaning potential is realized when language users make situated choices and engage in acts of meaning-making (Matthiessen, 2009).

The previous explication regarding the functional character of language ushers in another key feature of SFL, namely that grammar is *the* driving energy underneath the meaning-making potential of any human language and that it has a constitutive function in the process of meaning-making. With that more nuanced understanding of the role of grammar in SFL, it might be worth rereading the previous Halliday quote, with its repeated reference to “grammar.” Such a notion of grammar as the semiotic energy underneath any language has to be distinguished from “grammatics,” the variously theorized (e.g., UG grammar, structural grammar, tagmemic grammar) and variously focused (e.g., historical grammar, variationist grammar, pedagogical grammar) *study* of a language as a phenomenon. Once that distinction has been made, it makes no sense to even consider whether “grammar” is to be included in teaching—and there contemporary sensibilities have things right; the question is rather the nature of the grammatics that one translates into pedagogical action—and there contemporary educational practice is floundering. It is chronically unsure of the *how* because it frames it as a pedagogical issue—which is forever variable—rather than beginning with the meaning-making potentialities of language, as a functional theory uncovers them, and then translating these into variable practices. Indeed, the inconclusive debate about the permissibility or appropriateness of explicit teaching of grammar as

contrasted with implicit teaching and implicit learning; the difficulty in upholding the distinction between focus on form and focus on forms in a classroom setting; the separatist treatment of sentence-level and discourse-level grammars—these and similarly vexing, because irresolvable, issues would take on a totally different status in professional discourse and in teachers' lives within a meaning-oriented functional theory of language that sees grammar itself as a meaning-making resource. Perhaps they would even become largely irrelevant.

One would expect a teacher cognition framework with its emphasis on teacher reflection to be able to expose and overcome such disjunctures more readily than the earlier knowledge transmission framework. But even here, incongruities abound, providing powerful testimony to entrenched patterns of thinking and doing. First, once again, knowledge of language is essentially equated with “grammar” as a formalist construct, even though such a notion does not accord with the otherwise situated understanding of acts of teaching and learning (see, for example, Chapter 4 in Borg, 2008). Second, grammar has a place in the study of teacher cognition only as research on teacher knowledge taps into it. But rather than drawing on a functional theory of language and building up teachers' knowledge of language in that fashion, grammar teaching for use by teachers simply perpetuates the earlier unsatisfactory paradigm. Third, recognition that knowledge about grammar does matter has precipitated quite naturally an interest in determining teacher's level of knowledge about grammar; not surprisingly that exercise found them severely wanting. Fourth, in line with the emancipatory interests of contemporary teacher education, studies then shifted to ascertaining the extent to which teachers' knowledge of grammar meshes with their classroom practices. The study by Phipps and Borg (2009) is one of a long line of inquiries that takes that approach, when it focused on understanding teachers' beliefs rather than on questioning the suitability of the theory of language that underlies the research evidence. Postulated are ever more differentiated categories (here the distinction between core and peripheral beliefs) in order to account for the variability in teacher classroom practice. Not postulated are alternative solutions for the analysis of language that might be much more congruent with the experience-based beliefs, values, and interests that teachers hold.

I realize that moving toward a functional theory of language is likely to be a long journey for the SLA research community because it is so heavily invested in the old paradigm. The educational community, however, ought to be able to embrace such an orientation much more readily and, increasingly, there are signs in just that direction. For example, the untenable distinction between learning and use from an ontological perspective is well queried by Lantolf and Johnson (2007) who recommended a theory of mind along Vygotskian lines, one that also enabled a relinking of language and culture through concept-based instruction. And yet, for all its merits, Vygotskian sociocultural theory is not a theory of language, nor a theory of language use, not even a sociocultural theory of language use, but “a psychological/psycholinguistic theory ... that explains human mental functioning on the basis of situated sociocultural activity that is mediated in large part by communicative practices” (Lantolf, 2005, p. 341). Negueruela's recommendation to link communicative development and grammar recognized that shortcoming when he suggested that, according to sociocultural theory, at least some aspects

of grammar—and these were the ones considered to be teachable—could be interpreted in terms of categories of meaning. In the end, in their own ways, such explorations point even more decisively to the need for an encompassing notion of language if it is to influence the work of entire FL studies departments, most especially in the construction of a coherent educational philosophy that might support the construction of a coherent curriculum.

The Necessary Link: Imagining Language Development in Curricular Contexts

At this point of my considerations, discussion of the third friction point, curriculum construction, might almost appear to be anticlimactic and out of place even though it is surely at the heart of the matter. As should be clear by now, it would be difficult to imagine how a faculty group in FL studies *could* construct an articulated curriculum that would serve the multiple interests of collegiate FL education, including the interests of graduate programs to prepare the future professoriate, without having access to a meaning-oriented functional theory of language. When one takes that perspective, the customarily offered reasons for the well-known fact that college FL departments have not engaged in curricular work, despite the achingly obvious demand for it, may not be invalidated, though would surely be substantially recontextualized. Among the reasons cited for curricular inaction are the language–literature split, the faculty hierarchy chasm, the teaching–research dichotomy, the unsupportive and unresponsive faculty rewards system, the ideological minefield quality of much curricular work, the incommensurable disciplinary discourses within FL studies departments, a legacy of different paths of academic preparation, and, finally, the sheer labor-intensiveness of curricular work.

In that case, one need not further belabor the absence of curricular thinking nor wonder why numerous attempts to engage in curricular work have fallen short of the intended goal of an integrated, sequenced undergraduate curriculum. The most frequent proposals in that direction, “bridge courses” at the third-year level, only underscore the patchwork, course-based, and therefore noncurricular nature of such efforts. Their local benefits notwithstanding, they cannot appreciably contribute to the conceptual integration of a program nor to the humanistic educational goals that such programs so fervently desire.

To my knowledge, only two collegiate FL programs have succeeded, in some measure, at creating integrated undergraduate curricula: the engineering program at the University of Rhode Island (URI) and the German Department at Georgetown University (GUGD). They have done so under different starting conditions, with different motivations and goals, and with different intellectual underpinnings. In their own way, they illustrate how a functional approach to addressing educational challenges can manifest itself differently in different settings. In the URI case, an interest in preparing students for work in the engineering profession provided the nonnegotiable focus for curricular innovation and the ability to discard disjunctive notions and practices. In the GUGD case, the driving force was a keen awareness that the values of a humanistic education in the context of a graduate foreign

language department would demand particular attention to developing advanced forms of multiple literacies over the four-year span of undergraduate education. Perhaps precisely because that educational interest was not narrowly needs-based, as recommendations for curricular work otherwise stipulate, capacious intellectual foundations and richer research and experiential underpinnings had to be found. As reported in numerous publications and extensively described in Byrnes, Maxim, and Norris (2010), the program's faculty adopted a genre-oriented task-based approach to the integration of language and content learning whose intellectual source is SFL. Over 10 years of experience have made it possible for the program's faculty and an ever-changing group of graduate students to draw from SFL invaluable inspiration, supportive research evidence, practical guidance for a genre-based pedagogy, insights for curriculum-based assessment, and enriching conceptual constructs that inform ongoing internal discourse and focused educational work.

Minding Our Language: Toward a Coherent, Language-Based Foundation of the FL Discipline

Upon that background, let me highlight specific qualities and constructs of SFL that recommend it broadly for a revisioning of the intellectual foundation of graduate FL departments and, by extension, the preparation of the future professoriate. Paralleling my department's engagement with the theory, this discussion, too, will progress from the particular to more general issues, from concrete to abstract and theoretical reflections. The initial impetus for curricular reform and, by implication, the search for suitable intellectual underpinnings was driven by educative interests in the department that demanded particular answers. How and why those answers came about and what they might say about instructed FL development in writing is the focus of the monograph by Byrnes, Maxim, and Norris (2010). Both explicitly and implicitly SFL-inspired notions about the nature of language and about the nature of teaching and learning are evident in that work. They have been much refined as the faculty gained insights through their educative work and new, more abstract theoretical constructs within SFL were incorporated. Their complexity notwithstanding, they can now be seamlessly integrated into the faculty's knowledge about language, even if not necessarily effortlessly. In any case, they stand in continued dialogue with educative practice. Thus, most recently, we have begun to explore one of the most vexing issues in instructed language learning, that of a suitable conceptualization of the simultaneous development of *both language and content* (see Byrnes, 2011; Ryshina-Pankova, in press) and suitable forms of assessment for both.

Moving from the general to the specific, the question to be posed is this: How might graduate students as the future professoriate in literary-cultural studies programs benefit from a functional orientation such as that developed within SFL with its textual or discourse orientation? The answer I can provide based on the many opportunities I have had to observe cohorts of graduate TAs being socialized

into an approach to teaching and learning that at entry into the program was just as unfamiliar to them as I suspect it is to most readers might be surprising. But it is of crucial importance for the point to be made: Beyond the formal course work (the program requires two courses related to language teaching); beyond the careful monitoring of the students' evolving teaching abilities across the curricular levels; beyond opportunities for classroom observation, co-teaching, participation in pedagogy-oriented workshops; beyond engagement in materials development; and beyond reflection on practice in the regularly scheduled level meetings—the conceptualization of the curriculum itself becomes an educational context that is conducive to the TAs preparation as members of the professoriate of the future. It allows them to seamlessly connect their own work as emergent scholars in their field of choice with their work as emergent teaching professionals who construct the context for their students' learning.

As repeatedly mentioned, it is through its genre focus that the range of the academic and scholarly interests assembled under the umbrella term of foreign language studies can be addressed: from the nuanced interpretation of literary texts to often highly proceduralized, even largely formulaic texts of diverse professional cultures that nevertheless allow for fine gradations; from an oral presentation by a student offering a summary of a text to the performance by a student group of scenes from a drama; from composing a personal reflection in a diary entry to creating an annotated bibliography in advance of a research paper to the shaping of an expansive argument in the full version of that paper. In each case, SFL provides sophisticated, well-theorized and empirically well-specified ways of understanding how layers of meaning, whether complementary or in some semiotic tension, are created through the nature of the lexicogrammatical choices that are available at all levels of the system. Consequently, students' entire program of study, whether it involves them as graduate student scholars or as graduate student-teachers or as graduate student nonnative language learners, continually provides them with rich and (and this is all-important) coherent experiential knowledge and occasions for reflection and action on the basis of evolving insights into the nature of language, of teaching, and of learning. Research into teacher development rightly considers this to be its most important aspect; it also acknowledges it to be quality that is particularly difficult to obtain.

Steps Toward an Educational Linguistics—Foundations for Knowledge about Language

I began this paper with the claim that the future professoriate (and the FL discipline) requires a conceptualization of language that is capable of addressing the full range of the scholarly and educative work as graduate departments perform it. That conceptualization must at the same time be capacious enough to accommodate key features of communication in a global and multilingual environment.

Fortunately, by now published resources are readily available in the most elaborated functional theory I know, SFL. Even more gratifying, all were written

in wonderfully accessible style. From among these, I single out the following: Coffin, Donohue, and North (2009) traced the very movement from a formal to a functional understanding of language; Derewianka's two introductory treatments (1990, 1998) outlined what a textual orientation could contribute to language teaching praxes; Coffin (2006) provided in-depth treatment of genres that are particularly appropriate for collegiate FL programs that consider students' awareness of the history of the L2 culture a key knowledge area in their programs; McCarthy and Carter (1994) presented one of the earliest SFL-inspired treatments of discourse in language teaching, while Unsworth (2001) gave an excellent more recent overview; finally, Christie and Derewianka (2008) presented extraordinary details about language and content development in writing in L1, from primary to the end of secondary schooling, using an SFL optic.

By comparison, a more conceptual treatment is provided in an article by Halliday in which he explored some outstanding qualities of an educational linguistics, thereby identifying aspects of knowledge about language that he deemed particularly important for educators (Halliday, 2007b).

At the outset, he circumscribed his proposal through a schematic listing of the areas that would fall within an educational linguistics in native language education in primary and secondary schooling. From the standpoint of overarching theory construction, teachers should have an awareness of general models of literacy and a theory of literate cultures; of meaning systems, that is, a semiotic theory; of language as system and as institution; and of individual and societal bilingualism. These are flanked by a general model that is focused on the ontogenesis of knowledge, from the commonsense knowledge of the preschooler, to the impact of the shift from spoken to written language in which certain domains of knowledge arise, to increasingly more organized knowledge that is compartmentalized and requires technical terminology, to a general model of language development in the sense of "learning how to mean" (p. 355). While college-level instructors of already literate learners might find little need to consider the ontogenesis of knowledge *through* learning as it characterizes mother tongue learning from preschool through secondary education, the underlying concern is critical for their work. They, too, need to understand "the notion of reality construction linguistically" because it is just such awareness that is at the heart of the link between languaging and knowing. Here, the operative interpenetrating components around which language is organized lie in its grammar: "the component of construing experience ... [and] the component of enacting interpersonal relationships" (p. 361) where both construct reality, in the first case through reflection, in the second case through action. The third component is that of "constructing the discourse itself" where "language is used to construct reality, but it is itself also part of reality" (p. 361). With that as background, Halliday considered the following aspects as crucial for teachers' knowledge about language (cf. 362–365):

1. *Exploring synoptic and dynamic perspectives* recognizes that any phenomenon can be looked at from two perspectives, as an entity and as an event. That leads to different language choices in construing a particular phenomenon as either one or the other; but it also leads to differential privileging of one or

the other at different time periods in Western thinking, at times foregrounding how things are organized (“synoptic”), as in the preference for natural laws in the eighteenth century, or on how things change (“dynamic”), as in the increasing preoccupation with evolutionary phenomena in the nineteenth century. In the experimental paradigm of the sciences, things are held still—and language forms are deployed to signal that fact. In the increasingly favored dynamic view of language and language learning, Halliday challenges teachers to be aware of three types of histories of a linguistic phenomenon: “its evolution in the system, its growth in the learner, and its individuation in the text” (p. 363).

2. *Deepening and extending the “grammatics”* refers to the fact that the grammar of languages is the site where these two viewpoints are realized, inasmuch as “the features that are more accessible, more specific, and more volatile are construed in words ... and the more hidden, more general and more lasting features are construed as grammar. This means that the grammar of a natural language is a general theory of experience” (p. 363). Not surprisingly, it provides its own complementarities, among them tense and aspect as complementary theories of time, or the possibility of expressing events taking place as either objects or events (e.g., “rain” or “raining”). Such complementarities are unlikely to be obvious on the surface; instead, they are “cryptotypes” that “carry the ideologically pervasive message of our species and its diverse cultures” (p. 363). As such, uncovering them would seem to be critical knowledge about language that FL educators should possess.

3. *Investigating semantic variation* recognizes that “different human groups tend to mean in different ways” (p. 364), and not only across cultures but within cultures. In other words, there are “systematic patterns of variation in semantic choice” (p. 364) which amount to “meaning styles” or “fashions of speaking.”

4. *Exploring the “higher” strata of language use*, an extension of the previous topic, is crucial in order to investigate how higher-level meaning systems “constitute what we think of as ‘a culture’” (p. 364). Here the carefully theorized notions of register and, based on that, the development of genre theory in SFL are likely to be dually important for educators in collegiate education. First, through genre, theory teachers are able to “use linguistic insights in their teaching,” without having to start with grammar but in order to “lead on to grammar” (p. 364, original emphasis). Second, through genre, understood as forms of cultural action where language matters, genre can become a “way of modeling a higher level of organization [of language] whereby language construes the culture” (p. 365). Sophisticated awareness of these higher level patterns is crucial for both teachers and learners inasmuch as education itself, in the various disciplinary areas, is conducted in and with and through genre or genre-like patterns and also inasmuch as observation of “thematic systems” (here reference is made to work by Lemke) provides insight into “the underlying directions of educational praxis and educational change.”

5. As a fifth, but particularly urgent task, Halliday mentions the need to work “towards a language-based theory of teaching/learning” (p. 365). If it is the case, as Halliday (1993) explicates, that educational knowledge is fundamentally

verbal learning, teaching and learning must be linkable and linked to features of language development. By highlighting “the dialectic of system and process, whereby each instance is both an addition to the repertory of “text” and a trigger for the construction of “system,” SFL suggests a way for understanding growth of semiotic systems in terms of internal processes being engaged in exchanges with the external environment. We have an environment functioning as teacher and a teacher functioning as environment who “constructs the context in ways such that the learner will learn” (p. 365, original emphasis).

Coda

Between 1873 and 1876, Friedrich Nietzsche wrote a group of critical essays on the contemporary condition of European, particularly German culture. I could not help but recall the German title of the published collection, “Unzeitgemäße Betrachtungen” which, in English, has a range of renderings, including “Untimely Mediations,” or Unfashionable Observations.” As I conclude my own critical observations of the current state of the FL studies discipline, some of which might well have been “unfashionable” in the sense of “unexpected,” I nevertheless hope that they can become timely in the sense of “useful and actionable for our time.” To bolster that possibility, I conclude with a few summary points and recommendations. As a list that might stimulate contemplation on the virtuous life of the FL studies field, they once again come in a group of seven:

1. Developing the kind of knowledge about language that will be suitable for preparing the future professoriate will be a long-term project for the profession, all the more so as its key qualities are not currently part of the discourse about language and language learning in the FL profession. But it is a project that, in my assessment, is urgently needed and long overdue.
2. Assuming that the basic argument regarding a need for such a knowledge is correct, a first challenge will be to create “islands of knowledge” from which, through a kind of spreading activation, programs that are interested in such work can become sites for the development of both practical educational and applicable linguistic knowledge. All manner of strategic resource sharing would be necessary, particularly at the beginning of engagement with a project of that sort.
3. Because, for now, the major professional organizations that represent foreign language study at the college level are unlikely to lend their prestige and organizational capacities, one should consider an approach that locates the necessary professional development activity between institution-based departments and national professional organizations.
4. Regional consortia, variously constituted centers for language study (with diverse missions and organizational reaches), and separately funded initiatives that would opportunistically highlight (in light of available funding sources) one or several of the aspects of the educational

effort that I have outlined could well be sites for creating the necessary flexibility, understanding, and motivation to sponsor such work.

5. To the extent possible, faculty members and graduate students from across the spectrum of the scholarly interests customarily represented in FL programs should be involved in faculty development, particularly if program-wide and coherent curricular work is at least envisioned, even if not implementable right from the start.
6. Where expansive work with the intent of enhancing both a department's degree programs and the preparation of graduate students as future teachers is not possible, a reconceptualization of the first two years of instruction, usually the purview of language program directors, can achieve important aims for that part of the program. In time, it might be able to exert upward pressure for change in the remaining program components. Or else, such action might begin to create a sympathetic context for future, more comprehensive approaches.
7. Finally, as the national organization of supervisors, coordinators and directors of foreign language programs, the AAUSC might want to consider to what extent a textual, meaning-oriented understanding of language might enhance the intellectual life and research work of its members, might support their crucially important role in preparing graduate students for teaching now and into the future, and might thereby contribute to assuring the quality of language teaching and learning in collegiate education. How the organization might initiate such efforts would be worthy of considered reflection.

I hope to have contributed persuasive arguments and a sense of the direction such a project might take as it contributes to the future of the professoriate.

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