

Pedagogies of the 21st century: Supporting all stakeholders

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As the incoming editors of *Second Language Research & Practice (SLRP)* we are delighted to continue the rich tradition of the *American Association of University Supervisors, Coordinators, and Directors of Language Programs' (AAUSC)* annual volume *Issues in Language Program Direction* (1990-2019), and the first four volumes of the online open-access journal *SLRP* under the expert leadership of Johanna Watzinger-Tharp (University of Utah) and Kate Paesani (University of Minnesota). In addition to *AAUSC* leaders Amy Rossomondo (Past President) and Mandy Menke (President), we would also like to extend our gratitude to Johanna and Kate for their expert and thoughtful leadership in moving the book series to a journal, and for their commitment to social justice in platform (open access), format (articles and reports), authorship, and topics. We are honored to continue this tradition and stay committed to ensuring that all leaders – with formal or informal roles – feel welcome to submit their scholarship. Often marginalized in their own departments, language program leaders have complex roles (see also Crane et al. this volume) that include much invisible and emotion labor (see Marshall this volume). Our goal for *SLRP* is to be a place of hope, support, and validation for those leading language programs.

When the former editors started *SLRP* five years ago, their inaugural issue focused on the newly lived experiences and disruptions from COVID-19. COVID-19 (e.g., Goertler & Gleason, 2024) changed the educational landscape and served as a catalyst for change and innovation and shone a light on other issues – often referred to as crises – in language education such as enrollment trends (Looney & Lusin, 2019; Lusin, et al., 2023), anti-humanities and anti-language education sentiments (Bivens-Tatum, 2010; Diao & Liu, 2020), and the potential as well as the threat of technologies (ACTFL, 2017; Kessler, 2018) in particular artificial intelligence (Markauskaite et al., 2022; Pérez-Núñez, 2023) and online education/learning apps (Godwin-Jones, et al., 2024). To build on the previous volumes, volume 5, our first issue, focuses on the pedagogies of the 21st century from multiple stakeholder perspectives, with an eye towards the future of language learning in this transformative and transitional moment.

As new editors, we want to continue *SLRP's* tradition of including both empirical research articles and shorter descriptive praxis reports, while also expanding the thematic component previously limited to reports to include empirical articles across two stakeholder sub-themes. Furthermore, we want to stress the value of both reports and research articles by removing the prior separation by category and focusing on the content of their scholarship rather than the format. The result, as shown in the [table](#) below, includes a total of four research articles and five praxis reports. Two of the articles and two reports focus on the sub-theme of language program direction (Crane, Gorham, Hashemi, Hwang et al.), while two articles and three reports focus on teacher and student voices (Arnold & Ducate, Delfino, Marshall, Rutemeyer, Taft), each of which are highlighted below. We aspire that this additional layer of classification will help readers both readily access the topics they are interested in as well as identify the people/types of stakeholders they wish to focus on. Together, these nine diverse author contributions highlight the pedagogies of the 2020s that re-envision the roles of language programs, LPDs, teachers, and students.

Table 1. Publication Type and Volume Sub-Themes

Perspectives	Research Articles	Reports
Language Program Directors	Gorham Hashemi	Crane, Rubio & Stevens Hwang, Sato & Wang
Teachers and Students	Arnold & Ducate Rutemeyer	Delfino Marshall Taft

Language Program Direction: Stakeholder Perspectives

In their descriptive report, *“Practitioner Perspectives on Evaluating the Work of Language Program Directors,”* **Cori Crane, Laura Rubio,** and **April Stevens** focus on the important work of LPDs in modern language departments, and the difficulties associated with quantifying and compensating their labor from a traditional measurement perspective. Although this dilemma is not new, the authors admirably contribute to a potential solution by sharing collaboratively developed guidelines that aimed at more reliably in assessing LPD work.

Julia Gorham’s *“Language Program Directors Speak Out: Challenges and Opportunities in Enhancing L2 Pedagogy”* recognizes the important role LPDs play in changing language education. With the backdrop of the call for a more social justice focused pedagogy and decreasing enrollments, Gorham investigated teaching approaches and barriers to implementing best practices. Through their interviews they confirmed a prevalence of Communicative Language Teaching approaches – broadly defined – with some understanding that individual educators may or may not follow the approach. LPDs, the change agents and experts, faced a variety of obstacles such as institutional barriers, departmental/programmatic barriers, resource barriers, knowledge/skill barriers, and attitudinal barriers. Gorham argues for the central role LPDs play in change and the importance of collaborative and transparent goal-setting and curricular design and underscores the value of Open Educational Resources in this process.

In **Tara Hashemi’s** empirical research study, *“Implementing Multiliteracies-Oriented Curricula in Introductory Language Programs: Language Program Directors Share Their Insights on the Process,”* we see how LPDs who took up a multiliteracies framework inspired by the 2007 MLA report navigated significant challenges, including a lack of support from their colleagues and an increased workload. Using a combination of questionnaire data and in-depth interviews, seven current and former LPDs gave testimony to the roadblocks involved in implementing a multiliteracies-based curriculum, moving away from textbooks, and getting buy-in for curriculum reform in our current era.

In *“Promoting Intercultural Engagement in Beginner Language Courses: Principles and Implementation,”* **Jiwon Hwang, Eriko Sato,** and **Yi Wang** report on three different task types to move from “performance-based to intercultural reflective pedagogies” in beginning courses of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean. They developed seven scholarship-informed principles for their tasks. The tasks included awareness raising pair activities with authentic materials, conversation time with expert speakers, and reflective discussion forums. The first two activity types were especially effective in achieving the desired transformation.

Classroom Voices: Student and Teacher Perspectives

For their article on *“Visual Methods as a Window into Teacher Cognition and Technology Integration,”* **Nike Arnold** and **Lara Ducate** embrace the visual turn in research methodologies using mind map activities to determine pre-service teachers’ attitudes toward and development of cognition in regards to technology-mediated language learning (CALL). Using pre- and post-CALL course mind maps and associated reflection, they conducted a holistics and an inductive analysis. Their results showed minimal

changes in attitude and mixed cognition development. Development was partially impacted by prior knowledge and experience. Most of the participants developed surface learning, while others showed deep learning or non-learning. While beliefs did not change, participants were able to form more connections and provide examples for the affordances of CALL.

Intercultural competence development is highlighted in **Maximiliano Delfino's** "*Preparing the Ground for Intercultural Communicative Competence through Stereotypes*" as an important yet underdeveloped language course goal. Contextualized in theories of intercultural communicative competence, he describes a module in an Italian class intended to critically evaluate stereotypes about Italian culture both by others as well as Italians. The activities described in detail are based on advertisements.

In "*Caring Pedagogy and Supervision in Times of Crisis and Tragedy*" **Kelle Marshall** proposes a "caring community of practice" approach to teaching, supervision, and coordinator self-care. With the example of four tragedies (three on her campus and one related to her course content) Marshall tells the story of her successes and challenges in supporting others and herself through crisis and grief inside and outside the classroom. Building on her own experiences, she presents strategies for caring approaches to teaching expanding from communities of care, pedagogy of care, and ethics of care.

"*Learner Agency and Investment in a Basic Language Program*" by **Mary Ellen Rute Meyer** summarizes the results from an interview study on learner agency, investment, and capital in a basic language program. While many German educators think of learners in German basic language programs as motivated by heritage, economic factors, and language requirements; the three focal participants in Rute Meyer's study do not exhibit such a profile. Their motivation is related to their (imagined) role in multilingual contexts. Learners intended to invest and take agency, but were differently aware of resources and benefitted from assignments that helped them in setting goals and taking agency.

In his report "*TAFT: A New Version of Pinyin to Help Foreign Mandarin Learners Remember Tones*," **Marcus Taft** (incidentally both the author and the acronym) offers students an innovative way of retaining Chinese syllables and tones based upon their alphabetically formed tokens. Although technically a report, this piece empirically suggests that the TAFT method may offer learners advantages for comprehension and retention of syllables and tones over standard pinyin script.

We hope that you enjoy this volume and its nine contributions.

Preview of SLRP at the 2025 MLA Conference

On January 11, 2025, at 3:30 PM we are kicking off our theme for *Second Language Research & Practice* Volume 6 "*New normal, new urgency: Invisible and emotion labor in language program advocacy*." Come join us for our panel (session 607) at the [Modern Language Association Convention](#) in New Orleans. The panel includes the following presentations:

- Megan Ferry (Union College): *Applying systems thinking to address invisible and emotional labor in language programs.*
- Julia Götze (University of Wisconsin, Madison): *'Are you okay?': Language instructor's health and well-being in program leadership and administration.*
- Kimberly Morris (University of Wisconsin, La Crosse): *Reach out, research, and reform: Strengthening World Language education in Wisconsin.*

We look forward to their presentation and the contributions for Volume 6.

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