

AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction 2011

Educating the Future Foreign Language Professoriate for the 21st Century

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Hiram H. Maxim
Editors



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Introduction

Foreign Language Graduate Student Professional Development—Past, Present, and Future

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“Le présent n’est jamais notre fin: le passé et le présent sont nos moyens: le seul avenir est notre fin.”

[The present is never our goal: the past and the present are our means: the future alone is our goal.]

—Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, Art. iii. 5

As the 22nd volume in the AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction series, *Educating the Future Foreign Language Professoriate for the 21st Century* addresses a topic that is not new to the AAUSC organization, to the series readership, or to the series itself. Already the second volume in the series, *Development and Supervision of Teaching Assistants in Foreign Languages* (Walz, 1992), and then again nine years later the volume *Mentoring Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, Lecturers, and Adjunct Faculty* (Rifkin, 2001) focused specifically on the issue of teacher development. One might then ask the reasonable question why the series needed another volume on a similar topic. Motivating our interest in pursuing this topic for this series were two complementary issues in foreign language (FL) teacher development: 1) the many still unanswered questions and challenges facing collegiate FL departments as they look to prepare tomorrow’s professoriate; and 2) the many changes the FL profession has undergone over the past 20 years that have significant implications for FL graduate student teacher education. In other words, despite repeated discussions about FL graduate student teacher development, the current model not only is not proving sufficient or adequate for educating teacher-scholars but it is also not consistent with recent developments in the profession that have resulted in different priorities, objectives, and approaches. As a result, these two intertwined elements, reconsidering the prevalent model of FL graduate student professional development and coming to terms with significant changes in the profession, figure prominently in this volume. In order to understand and address these two issues, an overview of recent developments and challenges involving FL teacher education at U.S. institutions of higher education is in order.

Looking Back: Advances and Challenges in Educating the Future FL Professoriate in Recent Years

Looking back to the era when the first AAUSC annual volume was published in 1991, one is struck by both notable strides as well as relative stasis in the professional development of FL graduate students since that time. For instance, one notes a great deal of similarity in the calls for change from the early 1990s regarding FL graduate student professional development with those from today. One notable example of this similarity is in the Introduction to the first AAUSC annual volume (Magnan, 1991). Magnan, the former AAUSC series editor and first volume editor, wrote the following:

How will the next generation of college foreign language instructors be prepared? ... Our changing student body is making new demands on our programs. As many colleagues have advocated, it is time to reject traditional divisions between beginning and intermediate language programs and upper-level study of literature, linguistics, and civilization ... We need to create a more continuous curriculum that begins an international and sociolinguistic perspective to language learning in our basic skills courses and continues and expands it through our advanced literature, linguistics, and civilization courses. (pp. vii–viii, our emphases)

She also stated:

[O]ur students will be able to pursue new directions in foreign language learning only if we prepare faculty to meet these greater demands. Establishing high standards for preparing future college faculty is now as necessary as creating innovative programs in which they will work. (pp. vii–viii, our emphases)

At least two elements in these citations from 1991 find echoes in present challenges that collegiate FL departments are facing. The first, moving beyond the language-literature divide in undergraduate FL instruction, has been a leitmotif of many professional deliberations dating back to the discussions ushered in by James (1997) and surfacing most recently and prominently with the 2007 MLA Report “Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World.” Advocating “a broader and more coherent curriculum in which language, culture, and literature are taught as a continuous whole” (p. 3), the Report proposed that the goal of collegiate FL study should be *translingual and transcultural competence*, or the ability to operate between languages, for which one suggested pathway was comprehension and analysis of cultural narratives embodied in textual genres such as poetry, prose, film, and journalism. In the years since the 2007 MLA Report’s publication, discussion and debate of its curricular recommendations have continued, questioning whether they are desirable and, if so, *how* they might be instantiated in U.S. institutions of higher education, particularly in light of present economic pressures that constrain new programmatic initiatives (e.g., Levine, Melin, Crane, Chavez, & Lovik, 2008; Maxim, 2009; Porter, 2009).

The second element seen in Magnan's (1991) call for change referenced above, articulating standards for the preparation of the future FL professoriate, remains a challenge of continued relevance if for no other reason than the fact that graduate students are responsible for a substantial percentage of collegiate FL instruction. According to MLA statistics (2007), 41 percent of all undergraduate FL courses in departments with Ph.D. programs (including 57 percent of first-year language classes) are taught by graduate students. That there are not more systematic and codified standards in place for graduate student development in today's age of accountability is indeed surprising. Whether it is No Child Left Behind or the *Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* project, the larger U.S. educational community has witnessed a substantial increase in the attention devoted to measurement and evaluation. However, for various reasons that this volume explores, collegiate FL departments have not responded to this educational trend when considering their respective graduate programs.

Inattention to graduate student teacher development is not just limited to the discussions surrounding standards and accountability, however. In the 2007 MLA Report's proposals for curricular change, it said very little about how the nature of FL graduate student professional development should evolve in light of its recommendations. In other words, although the Report urged the profession to move toward a wholly integrated approach to undergraduate FL education, it remained largely silent as to what future FL professors will need to know and be capable of doing to teach effectively in such a radically transformed curricular landscape. In fact, the only related recommendations in the Report were "teach[ing] graduate students to use technology in language instruction and learning" and "enhanc[ing] and reward[ing] graduate student training" (pp. 8–9).

Although troubling, this lack of attention in the MLA Report to the essential linkage between the content of undergraduate FL education and graduate students' preparation as future professors is in many ways symptomatic of how the collegiate FL profession has approached teacher development. That the profession's leading organization devoted so little attention to graduate student teacher education in one of its most highly anticipated and discussed publications speaks volumes. According to Allen and Negueruela-Azarola (2010), who reviewed research on professional development practices for future FL professors in the U.S., three recommendations to enhance FL graduate student professional development recurred from 1987 to 2008: requiring more coursework related to teaching or linking teaching and scholarship; offering graduate students the chance to team-teach with faculty members; and including opportunities for graduate students to independently teach courses beyond the lower-level language program. Regrettably, and consistent with the notion of relative stasis to which we alluded earlier in this introduction, such recommendations have not been heeded. Allen and Negueruela-Azarola reported that the *desire* to move beyond training and put into place articulated professional development programs to meet the long-term needs of future FL professors had not occurred to any meaningful degree across U.S. collegiate FL departments based on the body of research they reviewed¹. Among other factors, they attributed this situation to structural constraints in collegiate FL departments to transforming how graduate students are educated as teachers and scholars (Byrnes, 2001; MLA, 2007)

coupled with a dearth of professional discourse between applied linguists in FL departments and those working in linguistics and education departments (Katz & Watzinger-Tharp, 2005).

To their credit, some in the profession have not allowed this inaction to go unnoticed. For example, beginning shortly after the Report's release and continuing to this day, scholars have critiqued it for precisely its omission of graduate studies (e.g., Allen & Negueruela-Azarola, 2010; Pfeiffer, 2008; Schechtman & Koser, 2008). Furthermore, this professional inattention has served as an impetus for much of the scholarship discussed in this volume that aims to address elements not included in the Report such as: identifying pedagogical approaches appropriate to unify the study of language and literary-cultural content (Blyth; Byrnes; Reeser, this volume); designing professional development activities and tools for FL graduate students to instantiate reforms advocated in the Report (Allen & Dupuy; Kern; Paesani, this volume); and determining how other departmental constituencies beyond the Language Program Director could lend their expertise to preparing the future FL professoriate in light of the Report's statement that curricular transformation can take place only "through sustained collaboration among all members of the teaching corps" (p. 6) (Kern; Ryshina-Pankova, this volume). The profession has thus been able and willing to respond to limitations in its paradigm.

Another example of professional engagement with teacher education has been the move beyond a teacher *training* paradigm toward the establishment of *professional development* as the guiding metaphor. Although the dominant model for preparing FL graduate students to teach has consisted of a pre-service/early in-service pedagogy seminar on techniques for lower-level language instruction complemented by teaching language courses under the supervision of the Language Program Director, the scope and content of this model have been deemed profoundly inadequate in that it does not take into account the long-term development and responsibilities of future FL professors.

Part of the change in approach to graduate student's education as teachers in U.S. collegiate FL departments can be traced to the change in the profile of those charged with professional development. Two decades ago, this responsibility was typically in the hands of a junior faculty member in literary studies whereas today it is most often "the domain of applied linguists and FL education specialists" (Schulz, 2000, p. 516), a change that transpired between 1987 and 2003 (Teschner, 1987; Katz & Watzinger-Tharp, 2005). Due to this shift, applied linguists and FL education specialists working in collegiate FL departments have contributed to a growing body of descriptive and empirical research on graduate students' beliefs and identities as well as processes and outcomes of professional development practices. According to Allen and Negueruela-Azarola (2010), research published between 1987 and 2008 revealed increasingly sophisticated study design, theoretical frameworks, and methods of data collection and analysis, in stark contrast to the few survey studies comprising the entire research base on FL teacher education in the years preceding their review.

However, when research on FL graduate student professional development is compared with research from related fields, much work remains to be done.

This includes the defining of critical concepts, building upon research findings in related disciplines, developing discipline-specific instruments, and articulating practical solutions to calls for change in FL graduate student professional development from the past two decades. Critical questions to be addressed include how to establish connections between theoretical knowledge (i.e., “reading the research”) and classroom teaching experiences, what professional development activities can most effectively build on graduate students’ experiences teaching language to prepare them for advanced literary-cultural instruction, how collaborations both across languages and institutions can contribute to FL grad student professional development, and how technology might support the attainment of both curricular and personal professional development goals. It was our objective therefore that this 22nd issue of the AAUSC Language Program Direction series would respond to these needs and questions.

Looking Ahead: Educating the Future FL Professoriate for the 21st Century

The chapters that comprise this volume represent a collection of perspectives on FL graduate student professional development. Contributors to the volume include faculty members from U.S. public and private universities who teach and conduct research related to both more commonly (French, German, and Spanish) and less commonly taught languages (Japanese, Korean, and Swahili). Although the majority of these contributors hold administrative roles in lower-level language programs in their respective institutions, other perspectives are also present, including those of several directors of campus Language Centers and Title VI Language Resources Centers, a Director of Graduate Studies specializing in literature, and a faculty consultant in information technologies.

The diversity of the contributors’ profiles is reflected in the composition of the volume, which is comprised of position papers, reports describing how a specific form of professional development has been implemented, and empirical research on professional development practices and graduate students’ views and experiences of it. We have organized the volume into four sections: reconceptualizing teacher development for FL graduate students; developing teacher-scholars in FL graduate education; envisioning new forms of FL graduate student professional development; and researching FL graduate student professional development.

In Part I, we begin the volume with two position papers that boldly advocate for a reconceptualization of teacher development for FL graduate students. Taken together, both chapters argue that before determining *how* we will educate the future professoriate, we must first articulate *what* constitutes the foundation of our work in relation to FL teaching and learning. In Chapter One, “Teaching Language and Culture in a Global Age: New Goals for Teacher Education,” Richard Kern argues for a reorientation in how we conceive of teaching FLs and cultures, moving away from a language acquisition paradigm toward one focused on understanding *relational* dimensions of language and FL use. He discusses four concepts consistent with such a reorientation that have received attention within the

FL profession in recent years: *literacy*, *translingual / transcultural competence*, *plurilingualism / pluriculturalism*, and *symbolic competence*. The common thread among these concepts, according to Kern, is that they question the idea that a ‘how, when, and why to say what to whom’ can be established in any absolute or *a priori* sense in today’s globalized society. In the second half of the chapter, the author describes three implications of this reconceptualized view of FL use and teaching for graduate student instructors, drawing on examples of how each implication has been embodied through professional development activities in his own institution.

In Chapter Two, “Reconsidering Graduate Students’ Education as Scholar-Teachers: Mind Your Language!” Heidi Byrnes argues that the FL studies discipline needs to rediscover its intellectual and foundational mooring in order to establish a coherent, long-term graduate student teacher education agenda. For Byrnes, that intellectual foundation centers around a meaning-based approach to language. Despite the different interests and sub-fields in the profession, Byrnes proposes that orienting ourselves around the examination of how language functions to make meaning provides a coherent, theoretical basis that will then allow for the construction of programs (e.g., undergraduate curricula; graduate student education programs) that support the goal of developing advanced literate users of the language. Such a move is admittedly no small task, but, in addition to offering ways and approaches within departments and within the profession to address this challenge, Byrnes reminds us that failing to establish an intellectual foundation and educational philosophy comes with great cost, particularly for the most vulnerable in the profession, namely, FL graduate student teachers aspiring to join the professoriate.

Part II of the volume addresses the development of FL teacher-scholars through graduate education. Common to the three chapters that comprise Part II is the specific goal of preparing future FL professors for instruction in a curriculum that is not bifurcated but integrated regarding how language and literary-cultural content are taught. Further, each of the three chapters embraces a notion of graduate students as *teacher-scholars* (Arens, 1993), or that a linkage between teaching and scholarship as complementary aspects of their developing professional identity must be explicitly fostered in courses within the graduate curriculum.

In Chapter Three, “Preparing Foreign Language Graduate Students to Teach: The Role of Literature Faculty,” Todd Reeser presents an expanded vision of the graduate literature seminar that includes attention to how literary texts and related scholarship can translate into undergraduate teaching. Drawing on his own experience teaching 16th century French literature to graduate students, the author demonstrates how faculty members beyond the Language Program Director can help to socialize graduate students into teaching and contribute to their capacity to adapt pedagogical knowledge about teaching lower-level courses to teaching advanced-level courses. In doing so, he addresses the need for FL graduate student education programs to guide graduate students in integrating their scholarship into teaching. Whereas the traditional FL teacher education model offered few opportunities for graduate students to conceptualize how they might teach their

research topic, Reeser challenges his students to make connections between their studies and their teaching so that they discover the coherence and productive symbiosis that arises from unifying these two pillars of their graduate studies.

In Chapter Four, “A Literacy-Based Approach to Foreign Language Teacher Development,” Kate Paesani offers a detailed account of how one graduate pedagogy seminar, formerly skills-based and communicative language teaching-oriented, was redesigned to focus on a literacy-based approach (Kern, 2000) to teaching oral and written FL texts. Not only does the author make a compelling argument for the use of literacy to frame the seminar in light of the 2007 MLA Report’s recommendations, she also presents specific ways of integrating theory and practice through assigning pedagogical and research-based projects. A final notable contribution of Paesani’s chapter is its depiction of how the author shaped the seminar in light of its diverse participants (FL graduate students as well as K-12 teachers enrolled in an M.A. program in FL pedagogy), taking into account the needs and identities of those individuals. Given programmatic constraints in higher education today, the challenge of adapting professional development to fit various constituencies (e.g., teaching assistants and adjunct instructors) should be a situation familiar to many readers of this volume.

In the final chapter of Part II of the volume, entitled “Preparing Graduate Student Teachers for Advanced Content-based Instruction: Exploring Content through Grammatical Metaphor,” Marianna Ryshina-Pankova provides one possible response to the question of how the integration of language and content in the advanced undergraduate FL curriculum advocated in the 2007 MLA Report can truly be instantiated. Building on insights from systemic-functional and genre theories and focusing on the notion of grammatical metaphor, the author describes how FL graduate students can be taught to discern relationships between meaning and linguistic expression in different textual genres and how grammatical metaphor can be used as a pedagogical tool in a German cultural studies course. Further, similar to the sorts of activities included in Paesani’s literacy-based pedagogy seminar, Pankova presents a project from her methods course, in her case on materials development incorporating the use of grammatical metaphor, as a means of making theory-practice connections through instructional design.

Part III of the volume presents steps that U.S. collegiate FL departments have undertaken to expand and revise their approaches to graduate student teacher education. All three chapters in this section look beyond fields that traditionally have influenced FL teacher development and find direction and inspiration in recent research that has examined areas as diverse as teacher belief systems, teacher collaboration, and cultural linguistics. Moreover, in each case, the Language Program Director has implemented the new approach as an addition to the standard methods seminar, thereby providing models for expanding teacher education beyond the typical one-semester introduction to FL teaching course.

Chapter Six, “Beyond the Methods Course: Using Exploratory Practice for Graduate Student Teacher Development,” by Cori Crane, Misumi Sadler, Jeeyoung Ahn Ha, and Peter Ojiambo provides a compelling example not only of a useful framework for continuing graduate student teacher development beyond the methods course but also of the benefits of collaboration among Language

Program Directors representing different languages. Dissatisfied with the challenges of implementing action research in their individual teacher development programs, the authors turned to the relatively new framework of exploratory practice for engendering reflection and discussion about teacher beliefs and practices. Central to the authors' implementation of this approach were collaborative, non-hierarchical meetings between graduate students and faculty, at which they shared, researched, and discussed specific issues in their teaching or their students' learning. The flexibility and applicability of this framework, not to mention its positive effect on graduate student teachers' morale and pedagogical development, presents FL educators with a potentially rich learning environment for developing instructors.

Collaboration as a facilitative component of teacher development is also a central theme in Chapter Seven, "The *Acceso* Project and Graduate Student Professional Development" by Amy Rossomondo. In this chapter, the author describes an ongoing project at her home institution that has allowed graduate students instructors to collaborate with each other under the guidance of FL faculty in the development of the lower-division Spanish course sequence. In addition to describing the project and related opportunities for teacher development that resulted from collaboration, Rossomondo reports on a qualitative study that examined the graduate students' reactions to such a process. With its focus on the role of collaboration in curricular development, this chapter complements the previous chapter's examination of collaboration's role in teacher development. Above all, the chapter highlights the possibilities and benefits within graduate FL studies when faculty and graduate students work together in a systematic fashion to develop articulated curricular materials.

Although Carl Blyth's contribution to the volume in Chapter Eight, "The Relevance of Cultural Linguistics to Foreign Language Graduate Education: From Language-and-Culture to Language-as-Culture," is not about collaboration *per se*, his discussion of the revision of a graduate linguistics seminar to increase attention to the meaning-making potential of language is a conscious attempt to bridge the two unnecessarily separated fields of literary and linguistics study. As such, it represents an implicit collaboration between two disciplinary sub-fields that arguably have more in common than acknowledged in recent professional discussions. Specifically, Blyth found the growing discipline of cultural linguistics to be efficacious for highlighting to his students how worldview and language intersect to make meaning. Similar in that sense to Byrnes' (this volume) discussion about the need to focus on developing knowledge about language, Blyth gives specific examples from his revised graduate linguistics course in which he worked with graduate students of Francophone literature to raise both their meta-cultural and meta-linguistic awareness.

The final section of the volume, Part Four, presents three empirical studies of FL graduate student professional development. As the profession evolves and moves to address some of the outstanding issues in FL graduate student teacher development, there is a pressing need to not only document but also investigate empirically the effectiveness of steps taken and approaches attempted. The centrality and importance of graduate student development is such that the profession cannot rely on anecdotal evidence or intuitive appeal when implementing new

measures intended to educate tomorrow's professoriate more successfully; rather, in every FL graduate program there needs to be a systematic research component that is able to investigate and evaluate the program's efficacy, particularly when there are changes to the program. Such was the motivation behind the three studies in this section. In each case, the respective FL departments implemented a new component to the teacher education program and, then, under the leadership of the Language Program Director, conducted an empirical study to evaluate its effectiveness.

In Chapter Nine, "Evolving Notions of Literacy-Based Foreign Language Teaching: A Case Study of Graduate Student Instructors," Heather Willis Allen and Beatrice Dupuy present findings from a case study on the evolution of graduate students' theoretical understandings and instructional design practices in relation to participation in a graduate seminar on literacy-oriented FL teaching. The authors begin by pointing out the benefits of a literacy-oriented approach for both teacher education and FL learning and then move to a discussion and analysis of the challenges that graduate students face when confronted with a new paradigm for FL teaching and learning. Although Allen and Dupuy report progress in their participants' development as literacy practitioners, they also remind us that teacher development is a long-term, non-linear process that cannot be addressed completely in one graduate seminar.

In Chapter Ten, "Investigating Foreign Language Graduate Student Instructors' Perceptions and Use of Technology in the Classroom," Joshua Thoms presents cross-institutional survey research focused on graduate student teachers' opinions and experiences related to instructional technology. Responding to the growing presence of technology in students' lives, the author investigated both the level of technological support that graduate instructors receive and their facility in implementing various technologies in the classroom. In light of the aforementioned oversights in the profession regarding teacher education, it is perhaps not surprising that Thoms discovered a general absence of familiarity with the latest technologies stemming from a lack of training as well as limited time for incorporating such technologies in teaching. These findings serve to highlight what will become a recurring theme by the volume's end: namely, the need for FL graduate programs to devote significantly more time and resources to graduate student teacher development.

In Chapter Eleven, "Video Reflection in Foreign Language Teacher Development," Emily Scida and Yitna Firdyiwiek investigate the role of video reflection in FL teacher education. Specifically, they examine the effects of linking video reflection with online teaching portfolios as a way to promote teacher reflection and development. Prompted to respond to particular videotaped teaching sessions, the FL graduate student instructors provided specific and focused observations of the teaching they observed. Scida and Firdyiwiek reported that whereas comments about class observations tended to remain at a general level, videotaped segments that allow instructors to concentrate on certain aspects of a lesson elicited much more reflective analysis. Not only does this study provide compelling evidence for including video in teacher development activities, it also highlights once again how guided attention to specific features of teaching is immensely helpful to developing instructors.

Because of the many proposals and issues raised in this volume, we felt it incumbent on us as editors to conclude the volume with a brief coda that synthesizes the major themes discussed in the eleven chapters. We note that the FL profession still faces significant challenges as it moves toward developing structures and programs that acknowledge the centrality of graduate student teacher development for the field and that provide the necessary support and knowledge for the future FL professoriate. At the same time, we are encouraged by the current level of engagement within the profession regarding teacher education and are heartened by the higher level of dialogue that is taking place between different stakeholders. Just as teacher development is gradually being recognized as an issue that requires sustained commitment by the entire FL profession and its professional organizations, we feel that individual departments also need to recognize that the education of their graduate students as teacher-scholars necessitates departmental and programmatic thinking and involvement.

When FL departments begin to conceptualize teacher education as a programmatic undertaking, then their programs develop a coherence that accomplishes several important objectives. First, it provides graduate students with greater transparency for them to see and understand the pathway that they will follow during their graduate studies. Second, with consensual and increased involvement by the graduate faculty in establishing a coherent graduate teacher education program, graduate students will be able to make connections between their scholarship and teaching so that they are better prepared to enter the profession and contribute substantively to the direction of collegiate FL education. Third, increased programmatic coherence will allow graduate student teachers to make better sense of the different and, at times, competing paradigms that influence the profession. Possessing such a knowledge base about the profession, FL graduate student teachers become better equipped to handle new pedagogical and curricular situations, make informed decisions, and contribute to professional discussions. Finally, coherent FL graduate teacher development programs can themselves become objects of study that allow other departments to observe and understand how teacher education can take place. For a profession that has been developing future teachers for generations, we know surprisingly little in empirical terms about what exactly happens during a graduate student's development as a FL teacher-scholar. Conducting empirical and programmatic inquiry into the efficacy of collegiate FL teacher education will provide the profession with much needed information about how to continue its progress.

It is hoped that through the types of discussions included in this volume, the field of collegiate FL studies is now in a better position to understand and respond to issues that will affect its future professoriate and ultimately the entire profession. The stakes are too high and the issues too important for the field not to act professionally and programmatically in relation to how FL graduate student teacher development takes place. To conclude, and with reference to the opening quotation by Pascal, we are located and working in the present, but the critical issue at the center of this volume, FL graduate student teacher development, is one that ultimately will shape the future of our profession.

Notes

1. Allen and Negueruela's (2010) statement is supported by an informal survey that they conducted of 24 Language Program Directors in U.S. collegiate FL departments that confirmed the limited scope of required professional development for graduate students. Other empirical research that they reviewed regarding FL graduate students' own experiences and perceptions further substantiates the limitations of the dominant professional development model, particularly regarding the learning outcomes of the "methods" course and the difficulty of translating techniques for teaching language into teaching advanced literary-cultural content.

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