Teaching Language Through the Words and Works of its Peoples

Aliza Marie Atkin Kroek
Utah State University

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TEACHING LANGUAGE
THROUGH THE WORDS AND WORKS OF ITS PEOPLES

by

Aliza M. Atkin Kroek

A portfolio submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of
MASTER OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

Teaching Language
Through the Words and Works of its Peoples

by

Aliza M. Atkin Kroek: Master of Second Language Teaching
Utah State University, 2015

This portfolio is the culmination of two years of study in the Master of Second Language Teaching and represents not only the development of the author’s teaching philosophy but also her professional development as a teacher over that course of time. The teaching philosophy is built on the three pillars of 1) use of the target language, 2) copious use of authentic materials, and 3) teaching the use of the mechanics, or rules of the language. Although understanding of the rules facilitates second language learning, they cannot be learned without using language and language will not really be understood without understanding the attendant culture(s)—which is what makes the use of authentic materials so valuable.

Included in support of the author’s teaching philosophy and professional development are three artifacts. The author showcases her research in Dual Language Immersion: Truly Bilingual, Biliterate, and Bicultural Education and what’s in it for US. In the artifact Zwischen Ehrenmord und Familiendrahma: Is the call for Integration in
Germany one for Transculturation or Cultural Selbstmord?, the author illustrates how the various voices within a culture interact in ways that are constantly remaking the living culture, and how these authentic voices can be used to create a dialogue about not only the evolution of the cultures tied to living languages, but also how they view each other. Finally the author describes what she has learned from the literature and experience about what a teacher can do to foster a language learning environment in Where to Go from Here. Also included are two annotated bibliographies. The first, titled My Three Pillars, covers literature that has been helpful to the author’s development of the three pillars of her teaching philosophy. The second, titled English as a Lingua Franca, elaborates on literature that was part of a background study by the author to better understand the current role of her first language, English, in the world, so that she could be a better ESL and EFL teacher. This study led her to ask the questions that motivated her development of her Language Learning and Culture artifacts.

(147 pages)
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I would like to thank the professors whose expertise has guided me through many drafts of this portfolio. They have supported my professional development through feedback both written and in person regarding not only my portfolio work, but my teaching which they also took the time to observe and discuss with me. I am grateful for the potential that they saw in me and have encouraged me to achieve. Thank you, Dr. Karin de Jonge-Kannan, for pointing out the weaknesses in my writing in such a way that I could be excited to improve my work rather than depressed by how much work I still had to do. Thank you, Dr. Maria Luisa Spicer-Escalante, for opening up so many opportunities for me to develop the extra-curricular talents I will need in my career, such as organizing events, seeking funding, and publishing. Thank you, Dr. Doris McGonagill, for providing that critical eye from the perspective of someone familiar with the field of German literature and culture.

I am also grateful to my first teachers, my parents. I am thankful for my mother who believed in me, perhaps more than she believed in herself - in any case, she pushed me further than she was able to go. I am grateful to my father who pressed me to be a critical thinker, particularly since his life might at times have been easier if I were not one.

Danke, Frau Schmidt und Frau Hopper, die meine ersten Deutschlehrerinnen waren. Auch Danke an Professor Cindy P. Brewer, Professor Michelle Stott James, und Mike Mudrow, die mich für die MSLT empfohlen haben. Ich sollte ihnen alle einmal
persönlich für Ihre Vorbildfunktion danken, aber falls das nie passiert, sollte das hier das Denkmal meiner Dankbarkeit sein.

I am grateful to my boys who currently occupy the other end of the language learning spectrum from the one I teach in. My sons, who are children learning two languages instead of adults acquiring a second one, enable me to have greater insight into why my adult learners at times produce very child-like language as they progress towards greater proficiency. Hearing my adult students say things in ways that resemble how my boys have recently played with the same language makes me excited where I might otherwise have been discouraged. Moving, as I do, between the worlds of child and adult language acquisition, I can see that my students are not so much making errors, but rather progressing in a very natural way of language development.
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INTRODUCTION

This portfolio represents my development as a teacher of both German and English to students for whom the target language is not their first. Although the writing has taken place over the last two years, the developmental process has been a much longer experience which will not end with the publication of this work. Much of what is represented here, or at least the questions that fueled my development as laid out here, is rooted in my experience as a student of languages other than my mother tongue. I am driven to teach, in part because I never want to stop learning, and in part because the value of what I have gained by entering the third spaces (Bhabha, 1990; Kramsch, 2009) between cultures is something I want to make available to others.

As I acknowledge in my Research Artifact, sometimes we sell the value of language education on its economic merits, because it turns out that language education can be translated into marketable skills. Those who will be most capable in their interaction, business or otherwise, with others are those who have learned to use the language of their exchange more profoundly than merely surface level lexical meanings. This is one of the reasons I use so much authentic material in my teaching, and why I highlight the value of bringing multiple voices (not just the teacher’s interpretation of them) into the classroom in my Language Learning Artifact. Most exciting to me personally, and I hope this comes across in my Culture Artifact, is the power potential that language education has to create residents in third space who can, to borrow an idea that Bertolt Brecht has played with in Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder (Brecht, 1939/1997), make peace break out.
TEACHING PHILOSOPHY
APPRENTICESHIP OF OBSERVATION

I had a professor, Cindy Brewer, who once characterized being a professor as being paid to continue learning, and I thought – that sounds like my dream job! By “learning” I understood her to mean, not simply memorizing facts for the next multiple choice test, but the things I observed her doing in the course of her work—developing ideas through the course of (classroom) discussion. She also introduced me to a new phrase, publish or perish. Although the impending threat of ceasing to exist is a bit daunting, the other end of the adage is exhilarating. The job requires one to keep hammering out ideas, putting them to paper, and passing them on (not having them all burned as a final willed decree, and not left undeveloped because there was never any deadline to require their development).

As I was excited to learn there was a profession for those who love to learn, I was also excited as a Master’s student when I read about the difference between foreign language learners who are “integratively oriented” and those with “instrumental orientation” (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, & Mandell, 2001, p.14). It was gratifying to learn there is a term to describe a person like me, who chooses the languages she learns based on the ability they will provide to interact with and relate to others. I opted for Modern Hebrew over Biblical Hebrew, because I was more interested in being able to communicate with the living than reading what the dead wrote, without an opportunity to question the original authors on the exact meaning of their words. I cannot really negotiate meaning with the author of an ancient text. Which is not to say that I am not drawn to speculating as to what might have been meant; but even this is most enthralling when there is the chance to discuss it with others. I took French before German, because I
had been jealous of my father, who was not excluded from the conversation when my aunt-by-marriage spoke with her sons, my cousins, in her native French. It was worth it to me to fill my elective period with another language, German, because it would open up another culture to me, which, based on what my best friend, Carol, who was currently taking the language told me, was full of fun-to-sing music.

At the end of my 6th grade year I was finally old enough (in the US public school context of the time) to sign-up for a foreign language class. I had been anticipating this day for more than a decade; the day I could finally sign up for French class and learn another language to talk with my Dad, who was so lucky to be able to join the conversation when my Aunt Nellie spoke in her mother tongue to my cousins. Unlike my cousins I had had to wait, I thought, for Jr. High and formal French education, because French was Dad’s second (not natural) language. As I was filling out my registration form for the coming year, my best friend’s mother was explaining to her (what I now know were) the instrumental reasons that she would be taking German—that language would be favored by the universities that were important to her mother. Since it was apparently a decision that needed to be justified, I explained to my mother that I would be taking French so I could talk with Dad. What I meant was, I would be taking French because I already knew people I could use it with.

Despite sticking to my original plan to take French, it did not take long for Carol to get me into German as well, with her constant tales of all the fun she was having in Frau Schmidt’s class. At the time, I knew this meant a lot of singing; what I recognize now, is that all this fun was centered around the use of authentic materials. Frau Schmidt
was constantly incorporating songs, stories, and plays from the German-speaking world into her German classes.

I do not remember the first day of every subject in 8th grade by any means, but the first class of French and German that year do stick out in my mind. I was amazed, after only one previous year of French, at how much of what Madame Hopper (who was sometimes also called Frau Hopper) said—then she started speaking French, and I realized it had been her German accent I had been filtering through to understand her as she spoke in *English*. She probably told us what we would be learning that year, went over a syllabus, or something along those lines—that the teacher used our first language to make it “easier” for us to understand did not make the content any more memorable. Frau Schmidt, who taught my German class that year, spoke in the target language and gave her students lots of extralingual cues. Though I had never had any German before, I do remember that her husband’s name is Tom—although at the time I misunderstood the German expression for husband, “Mann,” and thought he was just the guy she lived with. I also remember that she had cats, not children. These details from my introduction to Frau Schmidt and German are in and of themselves not particularly meaningful. What is meaningful, is that they have stuck with me all these years, because I was amazed that I could understand them—and because of the amazing way in which Frau Schmidt showed her students on the first day that they could be taught in the target language and understand so much.

In Frau Schmidt’s class we could say anything as long as we said it in German. My classmates took this as a license to learn, and use, lots of German swearwords. Consequently, even though I am not a swearer myself, I understood many German curses
before I ever made it to Germany. I did however, inadvertently manage to get one word blacklisted. In 10th grade Frau Schmidt had assigned us to write as many sentences about ourselves as we were years old. I was 16 and the first two sentences covered my name and my age. The other 14 described the different ways in which homework was making my life miserable. Her classes were so enjoyable, I had not even thought of the assignment as homework (or that Frau Schmidt would see it as such when she corrected it). I had saved it for the end of the day—as my reward after I had made it through all of the torture my other teachers had assigned. It was the last time I would be allowed to use the word “Hausaufgaben” (homework) until I went to college.

I recognize now that Frau Schmidt was a communicative teacher, because we spent the class period using German much more than talking about it. I knew that we were sent to Madame/Frau Hopper to bone up on our grammar in German III. Now that I have learned something of the various approaches to foreign-language teaching, I can see that Frau Hopper was more of an ALM teacher. I had felt grammatically anemic in Frau Schmidt’s classes, and the grammar-in-isolation supplement we got in German III with Frau Hopper did not do much to off-set the deficiency. My monitor (Lee & VanPatten, 2003) felt as though it was treading water, searching for the rules with which to govern my use of German. I am sure I was exposed to good input I just did not internalize (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, & Mandell, 2001), and I know now that I did not ask enough questions in High School; but regardless of its cause, I finally found relief from my grammar famine as a college Freshman in a grammar handbook that applied grammar in context (as opposed to just neat charts that make acing the test a snap but mean nothing on their own).
Although I do greatly appreciate the understanding I have gained of German grammar, it is not what I live for, and Ballman et al. (2001) indicate I have plenty of company in feeling this way. I love the richness of the German experience I can participate in through indulging in the way Germans (the Swiss, and even the occasional Austrian) use their words; through the exploration of those authentic texts and lyrics Frau Schmidt first introduced me to and the more complex ones I have been able to take on as my abilities have increased. Sharing this is something I could live for, however students cannot relish in the subtleties of great literature and thought-provoking poetry (set to music or otherwise), if they have not got a handle on the basics of the language in which these works are composed. They cannot dig into the layers underneath until they have broken through what is on the surface.

I have often wondered why French did not take the way German did for me, and my personal experience seems to confirm what the literature (Lee & Van Patten, 2003) in my current course of study indicates: that the method that most of my French instruction was delivered in was of a less effective variety than what was used in the majority of my German classes. However, I have also had much more opportunity to develop my German language abilities; I now count among my friends many more Germans, and certainly more monolingual Germans, than Francophones. Although Madame/Frau Hopper’s methods leaned towards ALM, there were some things she did that I still appreciate all these years later. In her German class (though not so much in her French classes) as a German expat she was able to provide her students with cross-cultural insights that I have been able to apply in ways I never could make use of the grammar drills we did. Also, she used to test our oral proficiency through a regular exercise in
which we were to speak on a pre-assigned topic, but we were not allowed to write anything down in preparation. The exercise did not necessitate any conversational interaction with others, but these monologues did force us to develop a habit of language play (Shrum & Glisan, 2010) from which my language development has benefited greatly.

There were some things that Frau Schmidt did amazingly well, and which I hope to be able to emulate. She was excellent at nourishing the motivation that kept students going at the language long enough to get to the point that they could become proficient. The use of the target language among her students was fostered by the example she set in using it, and the autonomy (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998) she gave us to use it freely. She created a low-anxiety environment and she made the culture and the words of the language we were studying fun and accessible through the use of authentic texts, music, and traditional celebrations. I wondered, when I first read about Dörnyei and Csizér’s Ten Commandments for Motivating Language Learners (Shrum & Glisan, 2010) if she had read them, because by doing the things I just outlined, she certainly kept Dörnyei and Csizér’s commandments. I have since sought out the primary source (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998) listed by Shrum and Glisan. I realize that Frau Schmidt would have had to have been reading Dörnyei and Csizér’s work almost before they wrote it, certainly before they published it—so maybe she was just familiar with the works they reference; in any case she was a talented and thoughtful teacher.

My reflection on the effects my varied language teachers have had on my language acquisition colors the type of teacher I am. However, it was not the varying styles of language teachers I had that drove me to seek after the teaching skills that would
enable me to best help my students make the most of their education. The reason I felt it necessary to follow-up a BA in German Literature with a language teaching Master’s (especially when I suspect a literature MA might make me more eligible for a literature PhD program) are the hours I spent in a particular class in high school only because truancy is a crime in my home state. My time would have been better spent reading the book on my own and thereby getting some intelligible instruction during the period. I do not ever want any students, who enter my class motivated to learn, leaving feeling like they have just wasted an hour of their life. I want to be able to help my students master the language well enough that they can appreciate the various ways in which it can be used even when I am not around.

Despite knowing that one of my university professor sparked my interest in her profession I almost failed to recognize the impact of my post high-school education on my development towards becoming a language teacher. I had not originally considered either my time living in Germany or my German coursework at BYU as parts of my apprenticeship in becoming a German teacher, because they were not so much experience I had had learning German as experience I had had learning in German. Of course I realize now that viewing the acquisition of language and academic content as inherently separate endeavors is absurd. One builds on and simultaneously facilitates the other; whether learning is taking place in the L1 (first language) or another language (Cloud, Genessee, & Hamayan, 2000). It is part of the reason that Dual Language Immersion works – students can learn language and content together.

It was gratifying and energizing as I was earning my BA in German Literature to be using the language I had been learning for 6 years, and to realize that I could use it
well. It was fascinating to experience other’s ideas through their words and learn about their experiences from their perspective, which was often different than the way similar things, or even the same events, had been presented to me in English.

I read German literature and watched films in preparation for class discussions and realized that arguing one’s case based off a text, or asking questions and exchanging ideas was as satisfying an endeavor in German as it was in English. I listened to just about any German music (lyrics) I could get my hands on, which was a bit more difficult in those pre-You-Tube days. I figured if I was going to listen to the same German phrases over and over to improve my accent, I might as well be entertained while I did it. I used German to discuss all the topics that one should avoid as they may be possible areas of contention with my northern German roommate. I fought with one German man on the other end of the apartment complex, realized I had sufficiently mastered German to express anger, and decided I did not want to practice that skill anymore. I found joking with another German from the guy’s dorms was a much better use of my time. I realized how funny Germans can be, and that I could be funny in German too. During the gap year I spent working in southern Germany, I made no effort to hang out with other Americans and when I did encounter them used German as much as they were able, because I had my whole life to make friends with Americans and only a year to interact with Germans on their home field. I began to understand how our experiences shape the way we use our language, and our language reflects the experience of our collective culture (Chandler, 1995; House, 2006).

As I consider my journey from language learner to language teacher, I cannot help but look back on the language instruction that I have received: what seemed absolutely
brilliant about it and what frustrated me. While I hope to be able to emulate most specifically the German teachers who have had a positive impact on me, surprisingly the teacher who motivated me most to pursue an education in second language teaching, once I had decided I wanted to share this subject (this language, this culture, and the captivating things that Germans do with their words) as a teacher, was not a language teacher - or even a very good teacher.

I want to be able to facilitate for other adults the kind of language learning I have enjoyed. However, I know that not everyone already has years of background in studying a foreign language before they start university, and not having taken the beginning courses at university, I had thought I had missed the modeling of the magic that makes it possible to teach languages to adults. I am learning that for adults, like children and adolescents, language acquisition takes time and copious attempts at language use to approach mastery. I am realizing that much of what made learning German so enjoyable with Frau Schmidt and the things that were beneficial to my language development with Frau Hopper are applicable to adult learners as well. One of the things that has been really exciting for me to recognize as I have had the opportunity to study Dual Language Immersion education (for elementary students) is that it is not necessary to have six years of language instruction before using the target language and its literature to learn the language. Interestingly, I can see this reading the literature and observing children younger than I was, in Cache Valley’s DLI classrooms, but was oblivious to how I was doing this in Jr. High and High School because I was so aware of what I still could not do. I began my Master’s to learn how to teach my students the language that would
enable them to enjoy the authentic material of the German-speaking world; it turns out the authentic material is a great medium through which to learn the language.
PROFESSIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Teaching German as a foreign language seems the most likely professional environment that I will find myself in, although I do find something intriguing about the possibility of teaching English to Germans (or others who wish to learn my first language). Morphology, phonology, and other such aspects of language are more interesting to me than they will likely be to many of my potential students. I am fascinated by the way American mouths can be retrained to make German sounds. These interests are piqued in my inner-linguist, however, the most exciting thing about teaching German is doing so with the words of Germans themselves. I love German literature: books, news, song texts, etc., because of the window they open into German culture and perspectives.

Yet it is not as if students can peer through this window and then just let the German culture pour into their minds. Sunlight does not pour into a room unfiltered by the glass in the window. As Freire (2005) puts it:

Reading of a text is a transaction between the reader and the text, which mediates the encounter between reader and writer. It is a composition between the reader and writer in which the reader “re-writes” the text making a determined effort not to betray the author’s spirit (p. 54).

I love this interpretative relationship we can have with the words others have employed in their works as we try to understand their world while simultaneously finding a place for their words in ours. I enjoy incorporating a wealth of authentic material in my classrooms and thereby giving my students the opportunity to do this. Since we generally
take so long to get started at second languages in the US that we hardly have any literature-specific classes in any language other than English until college (although this is changing with the growth of Dual Language Immersion education in the past decade), university is where I would like to teach German. I do not expect to teach literature all the time. I entered the MSLT program to develop my skills in teaching the other areas relevant to language acquisition. I do, however, want to have hours dedicated to exploring with my students the ways words are “manipulated”, and the multiple interpretations of those uses, and how the cultural and historical context in which those words were written affect their meanings (Chandler, 1995; House, 2006; Yule, 2014).

I sometimes fantasize about what it would be like to teach English in an interactive fashion involving a lot of (particularly American) English literature in Germany. Though I have spoken German for two thirds of my life, I am aware that, in some aspects, I will forever be more qualified to teach German-speakers English than English-speakers German. I am well qualified to teach German as a second language, not least of all because I know what it is like to learn it as a second language, but it is my second (technically third, but in terms of proficiency, definitely second) language. I can teach what I have learned of German and the people who speak it, but what I teach of English I will teach as an American (not just about Americans), from my accent to my points of view and experience. I could be a professor of German at an American university who takes the occasional sabbatical year to teach English at a Gymnasium in Berlin or (American) English literature at a university such as the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg that has an American Studies Program.
I wrote this portfolio with the language teaching environment of universities in mind, and I anticipate teaching students who are not young children, however this does not mean that I never find application for tricks of the teaching trade originally employed with younger learners. Rather I have taken on the challenge of applying what works well with young language learners in a way that takes advantage of, rather than insulting, the intelligence adult learners have developed.
PERSONAL TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

BEST OF BOTH WORLDS

Introduction:

I envision teaching a second language as being a truncated replication of those strategies that foster L1 (first language) acquisition while also taking advantage of the higher cognitive development L2 (second language) students generally have, which enables them to comprehend their second language in ways they may not have been able to grasp language when they learned their first. As Lee and VanPatten (2003) point out, second language acquisition is “dynamic but slow” (p. 15). The truth is that all language acquisition is slow and in many ways second language acquisition is actually faster than it was the first time around, precisely because of the language skills we bring with us from our first language as part of our cognitive development. One of the advantages that L2 learners have is that they have done this before—they are already experienced language learners. Children who are learning a second language come to the classroom with a background in what language is and that words can be put together to convey meaning, they have a degree of language awareness even before they are taught to read (McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998). If children have this metalinguistic awareness before they can even read, then certainly college students, even monolingual ones just embarking on their journey into bilingualism, also possess this “literacy” in what language is. This language “literacy” should not be discounted just because it was developed in tandem with the L1. Although we change as we develop in ways that will
keep most language learners from developing L1-like proficiency the second time around (Lee & VanPatten, 2003), we do not change so much as to make it either necessary or desirable to completely reinvent the wheel of language acquisition.

The strategies from L1 acquisition that I will employ to help my students gain proficiency in a foreign language are: 1) **Use of the target language**, even to teach the target language, and especially to perform real-life-like tasks. I want to provide my students with opportunities to use the language communicatively; so that they will not only be good test takers, they will also be proficient language users. 2) **Use, copious use, of authentic materials**. 3) Learning the **use of the mechanics**, because understanding how a language works enables people to better use the language.

1) **Use the Target Language (TL) and do it communicatively** (ACTFL, 2012):

Miraculously, we all learn to speak a language once without having it explained to us in another language. So I have no doubt that immersion is an effective medium in which to learn a language. As the mother of three young language acquirers, I do not pretend that learners have no questions and that the language being learned is never explicitly discussed. In fact experience has taught me that the more language learners have at their disposal, the better they are able to use that competence to increase their mastery of the language. For this reason, the TL needs to be used in such a way that students are not deprived of the use the language competence and the language literacy they come to the classroom with, just because this competence is not TL specific. L1 competence can actually facilitate L2 acquisition (McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998) when students are allowed to apply the skills and understanding of their first language to foreign language acquisition. While being conscientious of the language literacy students
already bring with them, if teachers will provide students with opportunities to develop their ability to communicate in the TL through actual use of the TL, their L1 can be a facilitator of further language learning, not a crutch that hinders that learning.

As I began my Master’s studies, I encountered a method of language teaching in the literature that did not allow for the flexibility that human languages have. It was so focused on the mechanics that it missed the liveliness of language. My first thought as I read through the explanation of the Audiolingual Method (ALM) and its accompanying Atlas Complex in *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen* (Lee & VanPatten, 2003) was: whoever came up with this method did not raise any children—that is, they had made no first-hand observations of how language acquisition works! Obviously, this is not the method of language teaching that I favor; my preferred method falls into the spectrum of the Communicative Approach. As Shrum and Glisan (2010) put it, “language-learning processes are as much social as they are cognitive” (p. 11). We need to be exposed to authentic language and have opportunities to practice it in natural ways in order to develop the ability to spontaneously use it in real-life situations. This means that students need interaction with the teacher and each other in the target language to develop proficiency in it.

As my experience raising young language acquirers made me think that nursery school teachers might have made better language teachers than the military school teachers who developed ALM (Lee & VanPatten, 2003), I was not surprised to read that the research done by Richard Donato’s doctoral students (Donato, 2003) found that student peer-interaction facilitated language learning and acquisition—even though the students offering the aid to their peers were not the masters of the language that the
teacher was. I have seen in the DLI classrooms in Cache Valley how, although the teachers have the degrees and years of experience using the TL, the positive peer pressure of classmates can get students to use the TL when the (perceived as) perfect model of the teacher does not. This and my observations of the ways in which my children’s language proficiency has benefited as my older sons have explained to the younger the parts of language they themselves have just mastered give me great confidence in the findings of research done by Porter (1986) and related in Lee and VanPatten (2003).

As I have heard with my own ears, and Porter’s research confirms, language learners benefit not only from the increased use of the language that peer exercise (one-to-one, or in small groups) allows them; they also benefit from interaction with fellow learners who are at a slightly different level of proficiency than their own. Learners benefit not only from negotiating an understanding of something currently just beyond their reach with a peer who is not an intimidating authority; learners also benefit from the process of putting into words for their peers what they have learned. As a teacher I have repeatedly benefited from the teaching that my students do between each other—as understanding spreads through the classroom when a few students, who got what I just taught, are able to convey that understanding to their classmates.

I believe that the student practice-use of the L2 should imitate as closely as possible L1 language use. This will seem more natural, and therefore be more comfortable for the students, creating the low-anxiety environment in which second language acquisition thrives (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Shrum & Glisan, 2010). It will also make acclimatization smoother when students (hopefully) find themselves immersed in the target language, because application of the language as they learned it in the
classroom will be easier. One of the ways through which to create a classroom in which TL use imitates real-life use of the language is through task-based activities (TBAs). TBAs set the stage for students to use language in a situation that could come up in real life, for example ordering food, buying a gift for a friend, taking a taxi from one place to another. Students should have the vocabulary and grammatical resources available to accomplish the task. Then they can act out the event, with students playing the various parts in any given situation. As they try using the language, they will become aware of what they can do and what they need to ask for help with. The teacher also gets a chance to hear students in action and thereby assess what instruction or review the students still need.

As this first section of my teaching philosophy indicates, I believe that extensive use of the target language facilitates language acquisition. In my efforts to determine if this use should be exclusive and what the benefits and disadvantages of exclusive target language use are, I have been reading about the work being done in bilingual or dual language immersion education (Christian, 2010; Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000; Collier & Thomas, 2004; Genesee, 2008; Hamayan et al., 2013; Pérez et al., 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 2005). In Sociocultural Contexts of Language and Literacy by Pérez et al. (1998) I read about the co-operative work between educators and local community members to incorporate the native language and culture into bilingual classrooms where it had previously been suppressed in favor of (the TL) English. One passage from the chapter Language and Literacy in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities, by McCarty and Watahomigie that stood out to me was:
Many of our own people and many other educators were painfully aware that we were different, and that difference – based on culture and language – had been internalized in a negative sense. In that respect, we had to get over our feeling of inferiority (quoting Ilutsik, 1994, p.10, p. 83).

As I read this I had to wonder if we are not still sending messages about “our” (American) superiority when we opt for non-authentic media in teaching a foreign language. Why show Disney movies dubbed in German, when there are several children’s shows (with simple language and subject matter) produced in German-speaking countries? Why do we not trust the content originally produced in a language as a viable vehicle to deliver that language to non-native learners, particularly when it works for native learners of that language? I find myself agreeing with Hamayan et al.’s (2013) sentiment that

while high-quality translated bilingual books can lend themselves to exploration of many cross-linguistic and cross-cultural activities, it is important for students to have firsthand experiences understanding both languages and cultures in literature written by bona fide members of those language communities (p. 184).

To Hamayan et al.’s observation that, “translated [works] may not depict the language in a truly authentic cultural fashion” (2013, p. 184), I would add, translating works of L1 culture into L2 words deprives students of half the learning opportunity.

On the flip-side, McCarty and Watahomigie (1998) report, the exclusionary repression of the L1 in favor of the L2 not only damaged how the American Indian and Alaska native communities viewed themselves, it actually hindered the acquisition of the
L2, because the students had been prohibited from using the language literacy they had already developed in their L1. Further, Cloud, Genessee, and Hamayan (2000) share the findings that students who come to school in the US (or other English-speaking countries) with no or limited proficiency in English make better progress in acquiring English and in academic development if they receive some schooling in their primary language at the same time as they are introduced to English as a second language (p. 3).

It turns out that continued use and development of the L1 does not get in the way of learning another language, it actually promotes it.

When I consider the benefits of this interplay of L1 and L2 (Cloud, Genessee, & Hamayan., 2000; Swain & Lapkin, 2005), I do worry somewhat about discouraging any use of (any) language, as the students’ L1 does not seem to be the villain it was once made out to be in acquiring an L2. However, when students are not lucky enough to be taught in a bilingual setting, foreign language teachers have to recognize that they are the main provider of access to the L2 (at least until they teach students to access it themselves); and if students’ L1 is the main language of instruction in their other subjects, they will not be suffering for lack of opportunity to continue developing their L1. Not only will such students’ L1 development not be at risk if its use is limited in the foreign language classroom, but as Christian (2010) points out:

The actual use of the second language is also a factor in successful language learning. When two languages are available, and one is “easier” than the other
because it is better known, it is natural for students to prefer that language…There is a need for a ‘strong language policy…that encourages students to use the instructional language and discourages students from speaking the non-instructional language (p. 15).

Such a policy is needed to ensure that the development of students’ L2 is not at risk, particularly when their L1 is the dominant language of the community. The creation of equality in value between the L1 and L2 may have to be intentionally promoted, such as by requiring the use of the L2 in certain spaces (like the L2 classroom) (Beeman & Urow, n.d.).

The foreign language teacher is most likely the first guide into the foreign language. It is therefore up to the teacher to make sure that the target language is the most prevalent in the classroom and ensure the integration of authentic oral and printed texts into language teaching [which] serves to merge culture and context with language, provide engaging topics for learners to explore, stimulate learners’ interest in language study, and offer a means for engaging learners in more challenging, higher-order thinking tasks (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 182).

Bearing this in mind language teachers should endeavor to keep as much of the media input used as possible authentic. Not only will students not likely get this type of L2 input elsewhere, but keeping it authentic can make the input more interesting, so that students want to get into it and even endeavor to use it.
2) Copious Use of Authentic Material:

As teachers are using the target language themselves and providing students with opportunities to use the language they have come to class to learn, teachers ought to also be taking advantage of authentic materials in their teaching. “It is a given that language and culture are inextricably linked,” write McCarty and Watahomigie (1998) in *Sociocultural contexts of language and literacy* (p. 77). So it is surprising that we do not immediately recognize that we will be more adept at the language as we better know the culture and that we will better understand the culture as we become more proficient in the language. As McCarty and Watahomigie (1998) rightly point out, “The great need is for authentic […] language texts” (p. 76). I draw my definition of authentic texts from Galloway (1998) who describes them as “those written and oral communications produced by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group” (p. 133). She elaborates further on this definition by explaining that:

as total communicative events, [authentic texts] invite observation of a culture talking to itself, not to outsiders; in its own context; through its own language; where forms are referenced to its own people, who mean through their own framework of associations; and whose voices show dynamic interplay of individuals and groupings of individuals within the loose general consensus that is the culture’s reality (p. 133).

Using authentic materials in teaching language is so wonderful because, not only does it provide a natural model of language use; it also gives the students a vision of the people with whom they can hope to use the new language—a powerful source of motivation (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). This authentic model and view into the culture associated with
a language is important because as Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan (2000) point out, “effective communication requires more than simply knowing a linguistic code. It requires knowing how to use the code in socially and culturally appropriate and meaningful ways; that is to say it requires cultural competence as well” (p. 2). Further, citing Heath (1983), they write, “There has been a pedagogical tradition of disconnecting second language learning… from culture learning. It is now recognized that this is undesirable and that culture learning is an integral part of language learning” (p. 2). When one strips away the people (as embedded in their culture) from the language, the most one can hope to have left is the “linguistic code.”

The linguistic code of a language is only the beginning of language competence. Even in instances in which it would appear that a handle on linguistic code is enough, cultural aptitude is applicable. English as the current lingua franca is an interesting example of how words (pronounced, ordered, and adjusted to appropriate morphemes so as to communicate meaning to someone else who knows the rules of the code) are only a beginning. Because English in its lingua franca function is so often used between speakers with cultural backgrounds other than a native English speaking one (Spicer-Escalante & de Jonge-Kannan, 2014), some (Berns, 2009; Modiano, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2009) argue that English, unlike other foreign languages, could be taught independent of cultural context because its most common usage no longer (necessarily) involves any native speakers. Some of these same people would even argue that native speakers of English cannot use it as a lingua franca. Having used English as a lingua franca as a native English speaker with other native English speakers who learned the language in a cultural context that was different than mine I have found that I was most successful in using
what was essentially my language if I was willing to adapt it in acknowledgment of the cultural norms of those I was communicating with in what were (to me) foreign countries. The trickiness of English as a *lingua franca* is that when using it, one may need to additionally adapt to a culture that may or may not have direct ties to the linguistic code being used. Using a language disconnected from (one of) its culture(s) requires extra work.

Even if it is possible, and at times necessary (Spicer-Escalante & de Jonge-Kannan, 2014), to use the linguistic code of a language separate from its culture, why deprive students of the aid that culture would provide in gaining proficiency in the language? Although Genesee (2008) notices a benefit derived from L1 literacy when learning a second language, de Courcy (2002) found that “the understanding of literacy is an individual construct growing out of personal experiences shaped by societal attitudes” (p. 105). One of the L2 learners de Courcy interviewed even reported “that her prior experiences with literacy in English were ‘dysfunctional when facing the task of attempting literacy as understood by a different culture’” (p.105). This presents another good argument for the use of authentic materials. Even something that would seem to be a universal concept—literacy—is colored by the culture of the language. Therefore literacy needs to be scaffolded in the context of the language’s culture.

In *Teacher’s Handbook: Contextualized Language Instruction*, particularly in chapter 6, Shrum and Glisan (2010) address the value of incorporating authentic texts into language instruction. In chapter 7 they go into more detail about how this can be done in practice, using the PACE approach developed by Adair-Hauck and Donato. The beauty of authentic texts is that because they are created by a group for that group, they
are not edited (either in content or in form) for the non-native who is learning from them. The learner is not kept ignorant of parts of culture or speech, because the teacher or textbook writer does not deem them able to handle them yet. Shrum and Glisan (2010) share the insight that, “foreign language teachers often express a concern that literary texts are too challenging for typical language students and restrict their use [...] Many leading scholars who conduct L2 reading research warn that this perceived difficulty is a faulty one” (p. 198). Teachers do not protect their students from culture shock or prepare them to function in the real-world in which the language is used if teachers expose students only to things they can already handle. As Lantoff and Poehner (2007) so aptly put it, “teaching should not wait for development to happen but should drive development” (p. 31). Teachers can help students navigate the sometimes confusing world of another culture, and help students reach new heights in their language understanding and ability. This “interaction between the expert and novice in a problem-solving task is called scaffolding” (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 26). “The teacher creates a community that assists and supports learners in activities that they would be unable to do alone or unassisted” (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 235).

As teachers are putting so much effort into creating this language community to assist students in their language acquisition, they do need to keep in mind that the authentic texts used to illustrate the current language aspect they want students to consider will include parts of real language beyond that. Therefore, as Shrum and Glisan (2010) point out it is important that “in addition to having clear goals and outcomes for the lesson, teachers should allow for the possibility that the grammatical agenda may be set by students when their curiosity about the language emerges” (p. 225).
means is that lesson plans (and teachers) need to be flexible enough to capitalize on the parts of language that students are currently motivated to learn as a result of their interaction with the authentic material.

As Shrum and Glisan (2010) admonish, it is important to recognize that the dialogue that the students produce in regards to authentic texts will not be produced at the same level as the work being discussed. Imagine if American high school students had to write all of their assignments and make all their contributions to classroom discussions about the works of Shakespeare they were studying in Elizabethan English. One does not have to be a master playwright to tackle the work of the Master Playwright. Teachers should remember to “edit the task, not the text” (p. 205-206). A little stretching is good; if students never stretch they will not grow. However, they need multiple bouts of stretching. It is not felicitous to wait until students can do a thing before allowing them to try—they need practice to learn. Beginners do not produce Masterpieces, but that is not a good reason not to expose them to the work of previous Masters. Novice speakers need regular and extensive exposure to authentic language if they are ever to approach native-like proficiency themselves.

It has been my experience that authentic materials are useful not only in piquing student interest, but also in maintaining it through the work that it takes to become proficient in a language (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998). This makes authentic materials a valuable tool for teachers and also a boon to students. Authentic texts are potential powerhouses for producing student motivation because they are so often created with the very purposes in mind that Oller (1983, as cited on page 84 by Shrum & Glisan, 2010) defines as being characteristic of, “a text that has motivation.” Such a text, “has an
apparent purpose, holds the attention and interest of the listener or reader, introduces a conflict of some sort, and is not dull or boring. [It] has the characteristics of a good story and connects meaningfully to our experience in the world” (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 84). Texts created as a byproduct of real-world experience are more meaningful than texts created purely to illustrate a feature of grammar.

Authentic materials are what originally drew me in as a student and what kept me going even as I was frustrated by my lack of proficiency, so that I continued in the struggle to gain it. As a teacher this motivating power of authentic materials is so important because I want to use my energy guiding my students in the work they are doing to acquire the language, not trying in vain to keep them on task.

3) Teaching the Use of the Mechanics:

When I say that I intend to teach language in a way that imitates the way a first language is taught, I mean of course providing students with the opportunity to use the TL in the way we use language to get through our daily lives. However, I recognize, as Cloud, Genessee, and Hamayan, (2000) point out that, “Schooling plays a critical role in language development because it promotes the development of language skills that go beyond what students normally learn in their day-to-day lives” (p. 1). For this reason I also take into account the beneficial ways in which we explore our L1, when we are focusing explicitly on the way we use it, so that similar application can be made to L2 learning. As Cloud, Genessee, and Hamayan (2000) write, “Language is both a prerequisite to a successful education, and it is an important outcome of a successful education” (p. 1). Successful education impacts the way we use our language(s), and even
enables us to make choices about how we present ourselves through the use of our language(s).

Christ (2009) describes this effect of education on our language as a confrontation that forces us to consider our language in terms of the norms of the language community in which we are receiving our education. As Christ (2009) explains it, this educational reformation of our personal language to remake it in the communal image, begins at latest when we learn to write. With the development of that skill, writing, we solidify our internalization of the rules or norms of the community’s language.

Therein lies the heart of the need to teach, or more importantly for students to learn, the mechanics, the rules or norms, of any language. Being able to use a language within the parameters set by the community being addressed enables users, particularly L2 users, to express themselves rather than their foreignness (Matsuda & Cox, 2004). “Second language learning is not simply a process of putting second-language words into first-language sentences,” (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p.187) and not just because prepositions are tricky and do not translate one for one across languages. Learning about the pragmatics and culture associated with the target language is a valuable part of language learning. As the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, “stress […] knowledge of the language system, including grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and pragmatic and discourse features, contributes to the accuracy of communication” (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 217). The better we know the rules, the more familiar we are with the norms, the better we can understand the settings in which the rules can be broken, abused, and ignored. Understanding the deviation we are making
from the norms allows us to successfully ply the language to our purpose (and to understand others when they do so).

Passive use (understanding) precedes production; figuring out how to produce those words one understands (in which order and which forms) is more difficult (Swain, 1985). As Genesee (2008) has said, “schools are important vehicles for […] language learning” (p. 24). Christ’s (2009) observation mentioned earlier, that within the school setting, we are made explicitly aware of the adjustments we need to make to our language use to align it with the norms of the language ties in well with Genesee’s (2008) statement:

Arguably, more systemic and explicit language instruction that is linked to students’ communicative needs in the classroom along with more explicit focus on the linguistic forms that students have difficulty acquiring would advance students’ linguistic competence […] Thus in the same way that we must provide formal language arts instruction in general education programs for native speakers, we must also do so in […] language programs for second language learners (p. 33).

Part of foreign language teaching, like literacy education in the first language, should deal with the rules of the target language, grammatical and pragmatic (LoCastro, 2012). As Hamayan et al. have put it,

Being proficient in a language in school entails much more than being able to hold a conversation in that language. Students need to be able to understand how to use academic language to discuss and learn about different subjects in the
consideration of the use of language “in different settings and with different audiences” is important in the foreign language classroom, because this is an academic setting in which students are preparing to be competent not only academically, but also in the settings of daily living, travel, commerce, politics, etc. As Lightbown and Spada (2006) warn, “some common language forms turn out to be extremely rare in classroom language” (p.190) Therefore “learners have little opportunity to hear, use, and learn them if the teacher does not make a point of providing them” (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 190). This situation in the foreign language classroom is a mirror image of (so similar as to seem identical, yet somehow different from) the work that language arts teachers instructing students in the written use of their spoken L1 face. In both instances instructors must consider and be prepared to make students aware of the particular way language is used in certain circumstances.

Though my teaching philosophy deviates from the Natural Approach that Shrum and Glisan (2010) discuss in The Teacher’s Handbook the following quote not only describes part of the Natural Approach, but is also an accurate depiction of things I incorporate into my teaching philosophy in terms of language use:

Anchored in the philosophy that L2 learning occurs in the same way as L1 acquisition, the Natural Approach stresses the importance of authentic language input in real-world contexts, comprehension before production, and self-expression early on, and de-emphasizes the need for grammatical perfection in the beginning stages of language learning (Shrum & Glisan, 2010, p. 49).
I would underline “in the beginning stages.” I think that it is important as we attempt to imitate L1 acquisition in the course of L2 acquisition that we recognize that L1 acquisition also develops through various stages. As Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001) claim, “in fact, the higher the language level, the more grammatical detail a student can be provided” (p. 38). This holds true for both the L1 and the L2. So as we are recognizing the benefits of patterning our beginning L2 instruction after the environment in which we gain our L1, ought we not to also explore replicating the way in which we internalize “more grammatical detail” in our first languages? I see no point in not taking advantage of all of the tools available in students’ language acquisition. As Genesee (2008) says:

Older students have the benefit of a well-developed first language and, in particular, they have fully developed, or well developed, first language literacy skills […] The interdependence in language development that is evident in older learners is probably one explanation for why minority language students in developmental bilingual and two-way immersion programs in the US often exhibit the same or even higher levels of achievement in English than other minority languages students who have been educated entirely in English (p. 35).

Believing that my students will benefit from their L1 literacy skills, in the way that Genesee explains their link to advantages observed in bilingual minority students, particularly as Genesee is not the only one who sees this link (Crawford, 2003; May, 2008), I guide my students to connections between the language competence they have developed in their L1 and the L2 I am employed to help them learn.
My L2 students are generally well established in their L1s and also more likely to fall into the category described by Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001) as, “students [who] after a certain age expect explicit grammar instruction because they perceive it to be helpful and necessary. To not teach them grammar may cause them to feel they are being shortchanged” (p. 35). So I recognize that the needs of my students will include explanation of what we are doing with the language, in addition to practice using it.

My role as the teacher is that of a facilitator (Shrum & Glisan, 2010) and reliable resource in my students’ journey towards L2 proficiency. By reliable resource, I mean I am an authority in the sense that I am well versed (not all-knowing and infallible) in the subject matter. I found it perplexing when I entered the MSLT program that the ALM method with the teacher leading mindless drills was repeatedly referred to as the “traditional” method. Is not the method of teaching through questioning which causes students to consider the subject and therefore to think on their own and thereby learn (acquire knowledge) at least as old as Socrates? Should not a more dialectic method be considered traditional teaching? Regardless of which method of teaching the current fashion chooses to identify as traditional, the tradition of teaching that I try to employ is one in which students are urged to consider the language and the way they use it. I believe this investment on the part of the students promotes a greater connection between the student and the subject, and facilitates better retention of the subject matter (Shrum & Glisan, 2010).

Socrates and his students were more concerned with philosophical questions than the subject of foreign language acquisition, but although the Socratic Method does not
translate directly into the foreign language classroom, a similar *dialogical* method can be employed within the foreign language classroom which enables students to acquire grammatical, cultural, semantic, and syntactic understanding of the target language (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). The method I refer to is a story-based approach; the PACE approach developed by Adair-Hauck and Donato.

I discuss with my students the way grammar comes into play in the L2, as often as possible using the PACE Approach. My experience thus far in my efforts to teach grammar through the PACE model have borne out what Schmidt (1993) has also found and described in conjunction with his noticing hypothesis: “what must be attended to and noticed is not just the input in a global sense but whatever features of the input are relevant for the target system” (p. 209). Whatever feature of grammar is being taught must be specifically noticed by the students in order for them to acquire as intake, and thus learn, that feature of grammar.

I have often wondered why our English classes (because English is my L1) were mostly centered around stories, but other language classes were not (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). Then again as I consider my L1 education before the division of classes by subject that came with secondary education, I realize that we did get technical instruction on the use of our own language. All of our elementary education relative to English did not revolve solely around the literature that we read (though certainly a lot of it did). We had spelling instruction, which in the first 2-3 years included understanding the sounds which the letters, and therefore our mouths ought to, make. As we were taught how to read and write the words we had mostly learned auditorily to that point, we improved our pronunciation of the language we *already* spoke. We even got instruction as to the
different parts of the language and how we ought to use them. We often complained dismissively that this instruction was unnecessary, because we thought we already knew how to use our own language. Our English teachers’ red pens also frequently pointed out how mistaken we were in such complaining, and it became apparent that there was more we could learn about using our own language.

When we are learning a second language in an academic setting, we are attempting to learn a language in a compressed time frame, compared to what we had when we learned our first language. If first-graders benefit from instruction that helps them to polish the use of a language they have been learning for seven years (all their life), then L2 students can also benefit from explicit instruction and need more than just copious target language exposure and usage opportunities (Christian, 2010)—even though that too is necessary. Given the compressed time frame L2 teachers and students are working in, spelling, grammar, and pronunciation instruction will be introduced much sooner after students have begun learning a foreign language than it was in their L1. Even Lee and VanPatten (2003), who do not consider such instruction necessary, concede that “research has shown that explanation may be beneficial early on to help learners get into acquisition more quickly” (p. 125). Similarly Lightbown and Spada (2006), while making note of how much language learners of all ages are able to learn and reproduce without explicit instruction, cite “evidence [which] suggests that, without corrective feedback and guidance, second language learners may persist in using certain ungrammatical forms for years” (p. 184). As a teacher, and a language learner myself, I cannot see the benefit of this prolonged aberrant use, when a little “guidance” could speed the language learner’s progress.
I identify spelling, grammar, and pronunciation as areas worthy of explicit instruction earlier in the L2 than is given in the L1. Let me address pronunciation specifically. Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (2010) have pointed out that, “perhaps more than any other aspect, pronunciation is the salient feature of our language competence. It is the lens through which we are viewed in each interaction we have” (p. 279). Pronunciation is not only one measuring stick of our language competence, it is also an indicator of our identity. Sometimes this exposes us to prejudice, but (when it is not a hindrance to being understood) it can also be a positive marker of identity. Pronunciation can be executed in a manner so deviant from the “standard” that it gets in the way of comprehension, however an accent can also be worn as a badge of pride, evidence of where one comes from. The perfectionist in me takes pleasure in (nearly) eliminating my L1 accent in my L2 use, because for me it is evidence of my progress—proof of the work I have done. For my husband, however, his accent is a means of unfurling the colors of his homeland every time he opens his mouth. The thought of losing his native accent completely is a sad one; because for him it would be a loss of national identity.

Wall (2013) has suggested “that, instead of giving [Second Language Learners] the goal of attaining a native-like L2 accent, teachers can help them become highly competent L2 speakers—instead of frustrated native-speaker imitators” (p. 14). This sentiment is important for me to keep in mind. It is necessary for me to temper my inclination towards perfection, recognizing not only as Lee and VanPatten (2003) asserted that most L2 speakers will never attain L1 proficiency; but also that for some of
my students the cost of the identity that they would lose, if they did attain that elusive perfection, is too great, and based on the research, unnecessary.

This recognition is valuable, because it enables me to cultivate the kind of environment in my classroom in which students will not be too anxious to make the mistakes that are a natural part of learning (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, & Mandell, 2001; Dörnyei, & Csizér, 1998; Friere, 2005; hooks, 2010; Shrum & Glisan, 2010). I hope that my students attempt to use the language, understanding that perfection is not required before practice. As Shrum and Glisan (2010) have indicated, “teachers should recognize that the struggles they may observe in their students as they produce output are actually a sign that learning is taking place right before their eyes” (p. 23). Now that I have recognized it, I intend to let my students in on the secret, so that they can feel at ease using the target language.

I believe that students derive benefit from attacking grammar learning dialogically through the PACE method with its lessons built around stories or narratives. I also think that there is something to be gained from the head-on confrontation an academic setting can force between the way we are currently using a language and the way the rules or norms of that language outline we ought to be using it. At the very least such a confrontation makes us aware of the dissonance between the language we are using and the language we thought we were using, so that we can make conscious choices about the way we use our language.

I have begun looking into “Flipped Learning” (Hamdan & McKnight et al., 2013) as a means to provide students with the opportunity to get the most out of instruction, while maintaining limited class time for discussion and communicative learning. Flipped
learning gives students access to instructional material before class (and whenever they want it for review) so that they can come to class prepared to apply the material when they have direct access to immediate teacher feedback. Telling students to look at their books in class and then launching right into a lecture is a good way to make sure students do not read the text and are therefore unprepared to handle any grammar topic being (not) discussed, because the students have nothing to contribute. Class time is often better used on more motivating matter than a teacher-fronted grammar lecture offers.

The most beneficial grammar course I ever had (and therefore the one I pattern my grammar instruction after) was one in which it was up to the students to read the textbook, consider the examples, try their hand (better yet their brains) at the grammar exercises and then come to class; not for a lecture, but to ask questions—which invariably we had. The teacher had to be flexible enough to focus on whatever the students indicated they needed, and the students got what they needed out of the class because it was up to them to indicate what they needed. The exercises were not just decontextualized sentence arrangements (although truthfully there was some of that), but the chapters also included exercises that gave us the opportunity to use the current grammar aspect in a real-life way. For example, we would write a letter to convince so-and-so to do such-and-such, or interview someone in the TL about a political issue and write up a “newspaper” article based on the interview. There was not one set answer, the tasks required mental effort on our part and a real-live person to give us feedback on what we produced. Our labs for that class, with a native-speaking TA (Teacher’s Assistant), were an exercise in communication: an hour of spoken German about various topics (not a grammar focus)—except for a minute or two if someone had a specific grammar-related
question). Sometimes it was class discussions, sometimes the TA called on a single student to relate something in a presentational fashion, which would then lead into interpersonal communication as the floor was opened up for questions. The heavy-lifting, the time investment for learning the grammar, was placed on our shoulders as students. Even though it was listed as a grammar course, more of the in-class time was dedicated to using the language to communicate than to bore the students by talking about a language they were not getting a chance to use.

**Conclusion:**

I favor a communicative approach to teaching foreign language, with heavy use of authentic materials. I do not fall on the anti-grammar end of the communicative spectrum in my teaching philosophy. Providing instruction relative to the mechanics or rules of a language is beneficial to students, particularly when they want it. A lot of the time spent on learning grammar is time that students might as well spend on their own—not using class time, because it is work they can do on their own. Time in class is better spent on more motivating matter than a teacher-fronted grammar lecture can provide.

I am drawn to a communicative approach because it is a method of language teaching through the imitation of real-life language use. This is motivating to students because it is easy for them to picture how the skills they are attaining will translate into real-world use. Along those same lines, using authentic materials in teaching language is a powerful source of motivation because of the view it gives students into a natural model of language use. Use of authentic materials also enables students to build the cultural competence necessary to become truly proficient in a language.
As a language teacher I want to create a classroom environment that fosters and focuses on communication, because that is the whole point of language. As a teacher I do not want to be the authority figure who dictates. I want to be an authoritative resource that students can turn to after they have put in the work to learn, someone who guides them to understanding they have not yet been able to reach, but are motivated to seek.
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THROUGH TEACHING OBSERVATIONS
During the course of my studies in the MSLT program I had the opportunity to observe a number of second and foreign language classes. Here I share the ones that have been the most meaningful to me as I have considered how to best implement my teaching philosophy and what I can learn from the examples of my fellow teachers. I plan to teach adults. However, perhaps because of the correlation I see between the way we learn our first language and how we can learn others, the classes which stand out to me are those with students who are still children, or a teacher with several years’ experience teaching children before teaching at the university level.

Though I was able to observe a number of enjoyable classes my first semester as a graduate student, the one that I have chosen to include in my portfolio is the one that I would sign-up for if I had observed the classes as a means of deciding which foreign language class to register for (instead of in an effort to become a better teacher myself). When I think about the teacher I want to be, I most often think about the teachers whose classes I have enjoyed or gotten the most out of. Of the observations I made that first semester, this one was a little unusual in that I was not a silent observer and this was not a regular class. As part of a course I took, each of us, students, had the opportunity to teach our classmates half of a normal lesson, so that we could record our teaching for self-observation. The class I am reflecting on now, was one of my classmates’ lessons to fulfill this assignment.

The instructor was the only one in the class who knew the TL, but was not the only one using it by the time the lesson ended. He provided us with input as to various people in a family using his spoken Chinese and gestures, pictures presented through power point, and characters and pinyin words and sentences he wrote on the board, as
well as handouts that facilitated the activities. Soon he had us practicing describing who was related to who in “The Simpsons” cartoon. While we were divided in pairs practicing what he had just modeled for us; he was observing how we used the language, and was able to clarify, even in the TL, grammatical errors we were making that changed the meaning of the relationships we were trying to describe. His teaching was effective, because it was not only engaging, but also responsive.

A large portion of my teaching philosophy centers around the copious use of the target language in the classroom, however, even though I am aware of the value of this abundant target language use, sometimes my students have wanted to hear more of their first language. What my colleague did so well in this lesson, was to preemptively help us overcome our difficulties using the language. Such awareness of where students are at and where they need support from the teacher, can help to ward off their desire to rebel against the new and very foreign language they find themselves immersed in, when they were only expecting partial exposure.

As the teacher had remained focused on his students and their needs as we attempted to implement what he taught us, before the class he had anticipated what sort of visuals would facilitate our understanding. The materials the teacher used were prepared by the teacher to support the focus of the lesson that day. Although I try to use as much authentic material as possible, for the added cultural impact it provides, this use of teacher-produced material did not mean that culture was cut out of the lesson. He had us using pinyin to write and know how to pronounce the words which the characters represented. However, he also made it clear to us how the characters contain images that hint at the meaning of the word they are non-phonetically representing. I was surprised
that the characters representing big and little sister had similarities in the images, but not
the sounds we made to identify them. Also, I realized that what I had taken for a family
nickname for my best friend from elementary school, means “little sister” (which she
literally is) in her parents’ native language.

I would need more input, to really internalize the Chinese he taught, but of all the
languages taught that day, this was the only “class” from which I could still remember
sentences from the new language the next day. I could not have written anything, but I
could have said it and identified what the different written characters referred to; for
example I could have pointed out which characters must have something to do with a
female. The teacher seemed very in his element. I suspect this was a combination of
natural talent and the years of practice he had gotten while teaching English to children in
China. He was prepared to present the lesson and teach the communicative skills needed
to enable us to talk about our family members. He was also able to adapt quickly to get us
back on track when we started speaking nonsense (describing a boy as being his mother’s
mother or something silly like that) because of our beginner’s grammatical incompetence.

After watching an experienced children’s language teacher apply his knowledge
to teaching adults I spent some time observing in the Dual Language Immersion
classrooms here in Cache Valley’s elementary schools to test my theory, through
observation, that what works in learning our first language works in learning the second.

During one of these observations, I spent an hour at the start of the school day in
Maestra Floyd’s first grade Spanish immersion class at Heritage Elementary in Nibley,
Utah. I was awed at the amount of preparation that the teacher had obviously put into the
class. In the space of an hour the class had engaged in 13 activities, and the teacher just
moved the students smoothly from one activity to the next, like she did not even have to think about it. I think these smooth transitions benefited the discipline in the classroom, the children did not have time to get distracted; instead the students were directing their energy towards the lesson. In this way Maestra Floyd maintained a disciplined classroom with close to thirty 1st graders without creating an environment that felt like a boot camp.

I was also impressed with the help that the teacher had. The aid in the class—which in Utah schools are usually drawn from the parents, was, like the teacher, a proficient Spanish speaker, who was able to support the teacher in presenting the curriculum and taking care of classroom business in the target language thereby maintaining an atmosphere of exclusive target language use. I also really like that the teacher picked a student helper for the day, who assisted in calling on classmates and asking questions, modeling for her peers that the students, not just the teacher could use the TL. Student recognition that they, and not just the teacher, are capable users of the language is necessary if it is going to be the main language used in the classroom.

Although many students were willing participants in the TL there was some fallback into the student’s first language, English. Maestra Floyd gently, but firmly redirected the students who strayed into their L1 back to Spanish. She was so consistent about maintaining the use of Spanish in the classroom in fact, that when I tried to thank her before I left (in English, because I cannot speak Spanish), she quickly led me out of the room so that her students would hear no evidence, that she could even understand English.

Beyond exemplifying how much target language can be used in a class of beginners, watching these children learning what was a second language for them I
realized how much language is in fact learned through communicative activity—how much language is learned by using it. As a child I had not realized that my classmates and I were being given a vocabulary lesson when our teacher talked to us about the different people in the community and asked what we wanted to be when we grew up. Until I watched the same scenario (from the outside) play out in another classroom and language decades later, it had never occurred to me that Mrs. Bell (my Kindergarten teacher) might have had any other objective then to learn what her students wanted to be when we grew up. Of course, unlike first graders, university students are cognitively aware that they are learning vocabulary as they learn foreign names for professions they already know in their first language—but the exercise in using those words to describe who they are or what they hope to become, is still a natural experience. They know the subject matter—themselves—and can therefore focus their mental energy on applying the right newly learned terms for the subject they already know.

On another day, after my visit to Maestra Floyd’s class, I spent the hour before lunch at Bridger Elementary in Logan. I had come to observe a two-way Spanish immersion class, two-way meaning that at least a 1/3 of the class is made up of students who are native speakers of each of the languages the whole class is being immersed in (Collier & Thomas, 2004) – so the students are getting the language modeled from two directions, from the teacher and at least a third of their peers. I had intended to spend all of my time in the Spanish classroom observing the way the teacher taught and managed the classroom. However, I was so spell-bound by what the students were doing, that it was hard to focus on what the teacher was doing. Every word that came out of the children’s mouths while I observed them in the Spanish classroom was Spanish. The
teacher might help a child who was stumbling over a Spanish word, but she was not
reminding anyone to speak Spanish. I was floored! I had observed a one-way (TL
expertise coming from the teacher, not classmates) Spanish immersion class the day
before, and even though I have read the research that states that two-way immersion is
more effective (May, 2008; Collier & Thomas, 2004), I was still blown away. Native-
speaking TL peers, had a greater impact than a native-speaking teacher (Maestra Floyd)
in getting students for whom the TL was an L2 to exclusively use it. The setting in which
I will be teaching will not include the asset of a student body in which a third of the class
speaks the language I am teaching as an L1, however I do recognize the value of getting
my students to encourage and support their peers in consistently using the TL if it is to be
the main language used in our classroom.

When it was time for the class “Rojo” to switch places with the class “Azul” and
go over to English, I had to follow them, to see what the students did in the other
language environment. The shared space of the hall did result in some switch back to the
L1 among those for whom the L1 was English; even though technically they were not
supposed to switch languages until they had switched teachers—as I noticed one
Hispanic student reminding his friend who had slipped. I found it very amusing to
observe how the Hispanic boy stubbornly refused to engage in conversation with his peer
as long as he was using the wrong language. Once they were in the English classroom,
however, this same Hispanic boy had no problem participating in English. Also the move
into the hall had not resulted in a complete language free-for-all. One little boy was
lagging behind, and since I did not have the skills to tell him to come in Spanish, I just
motioned to him that he should follow the rest of the class. He asked me, in Spanish, if I
speak English. When I indicated that I did, he was very excited and gave me a hug, but he did not speak English until Maestra Reeder had turned him over to Mrs. Bailey.

While there had been no English in the Spanish class, the reverse was not the case in the English classroom. Not that Spanish could be used in place of English, but students were allowed to repeat in Spanish what they had said in English. While I can understand that this may be an attempt to curb the tendency towards English hegemony in the students’ world, it bothers me somewhat that this method would undermine the equality of the students’ languages. It felt like an over-correction; and I have to ask myself if the third of the students who are native Spanish-speakers are being deprived of something their English L1 peers are getting by having such clearly defined spaces for their L1 and L2. It is a question for further research.

After observing the DLI classes I returned to making observations at the university and in adult classrooms. One of the first such observations was in an IELI (Intensive English Language Institute) level 4 listening class. IELI is designed to prepare adult English-learners to attend university classes in their second or foreign language, English. Four is the last level students complete in their preparation to enter regular university courses. Because there was no other common language to fall back on, the target language was the only language the class had to use, not that students did not attempt to figure out what might be cognates between their L1 and English—they certainly took advantage of the language capital (Fishman, 1996) they brought with them to the classroom.

One thing that was eye-opening to me, was that the teacher was filling the students in on what I had understood were useful extra-linguistic tools a teacher could use
to convey more meaning than the new words that students were being exposed to. It had never occurred to me to make my students consciously aware of these cues I use hoping they will understand the context, if not every word: the gestures, the images, the words I write on the board. In the past, as a foreign language teacher when I have asked my students to focus their attention on my gestures or what I write, it has been to highlight some difference between the language I am teaching and what I know of their L1. Since observing this IELI class I have made an effort to bring to my students’ attention that they have more at their disposal than the foreign words we are using—they also have a number of communication skills they bring with them from the first time they learned a form of human communication.
ANALYSIS AND REFLECTION OF TEACHING VIDEOS
My observations come from three class periods across three semesters. The first was a second semester German class. I had not taught any of these students the previous semester and they were unused to the amount of Target Language I brought to the class. It was a struggle to get some of them to not resent the use of German in the classroom – it would have been amusing if I had not cared whether they progressed in the language. They did teach me a lot though about how to meet students where their motivation lies. These students let me know that they wanted to do more, spend more time, with the German songs that I used to illustrate the features of the language we were covering through the course work.

This was something that I could work with. The three pillars of my teaching philosophy are 1) copious use of the Target Language (TL), 2) use of authentic materials, and 3) helping students learn the mechanics of the language. Given my teaching philosophy, we could not just ditch actually using German and just talk about German in English. However, we could certainly delve deeper into the authentic material to better understand the mechanics of how the words are used.

Near the end of the semester, the grammar (mechanical) focus of the text we were using as a guide was the Subjunctive II, expressing hypotheticals. We used a song by Tim Bendzko called “Wenn Worte meine Sprache wären” in which the speaker talks about how he could show his love for a girl if only words were his language. We discussed how else he could show love – without words, which got the students using the subjunctive and recognizing how many things they could talk about (potentially) doing—in German. Then the male students in the class got to try their hand at writing the words that the song’s speaker could not. The female students in the class voted on the best
“Liebeserklärung” or declaration of love that their classmates came up with. I should have given the women the same chance to produce the TL in the second activity, as I had given the men, but there was certainly a lot of creatively entertaining use of the TL. Students were engaged and participating—paying attention to what their peers would say, when not speaking themselves.

During my second semester as a Graduate Instructor at Utah State, I observed myself teaching a first semester class. The goal of the class was to get students to realize that they can talk about time and weather and the seasons. I incorporated a clip about telling time from a children’s show produced in Germany. I also used a personal narrative about how my husband always wishes me a happy birthday a day early (because he confuses the date with our twins’ birthday) and how it is a good thing I am an American because it is unlucky to wish a German a happy birthday early.

I could not tell from observing the class, however, it became apparent as I evaluated their weekly quiz, that my students had understood that my husband mixes up my birthday, but had not caught the cultural difference between German and American sentiments about whether it is better to wish someone a happy birthday late or early (if it is not possible to do on the day itself). I have read that pragmatics often need to be taught explicitly (LoCastro, 2012) and points of grammar, sometimes are most effectively taught in the L1 (Shrum & Glisan, 2010), and while I will resort to the L1 for these things as needed, I often try first in the TL. My students are much better at alerting me to the grammar they are not comprehending through TL instruction, than pragmatic points. With pragmatics, I have to observe their use (or the lack thereof) of what is taught, to know when we need to revisit a concept, perhaps in English. In regards to the revisiting,
as I go over the notes I have made as I have observed myself, I note that repeatedly I find things that students had not understood, or I had not initially, sufficiently prepared them to do. I often find myself altering my weekly lesson plans to allow for the adjustments necessary to get my students using the language in new and more complex ways.

I had noticed that my students enjoy more than just music in the TL. When I have used clips from children’s shows they have responded positively. I decided during my 3rd semester as a Graduate Instructor to see how my students would handle a clip geared towards native-speakers their age. I was teaching second semester students who were less resistant, and more comfortable with, the copious amount of German I use in teaching than the previous class of second semester students I had taught. The task might have been a bit more taxing than \( i + 1 \) (Krashen, 1982; Shrum & Glisan, 2010). My students’ cognitive overload was causing some funny memory lapses. One student asked what a certain first-week vocabulary word meant. She laughed when I repeated the German word back to her and she realized what she had asked.

One observation, that probably should not have surprised me, and yet frustrates me, is, that although I can ensure that the language I use is mostly in the target language, I cannot control the language that comes out of my students’ mouths. This is not unique to native English-speaking students. When I have taught ESL classes with a majority of native Spanish-speakers, there was a strong temptation for them to use Spanish. My students who have been in a language minority, often the only one with their L1 in the class, have not had the same tendency to slip into their L1. They have, however, voiced (in English) similarities they notice between their L1 and the TL.
As I have stated in my teaching philosophy, I do not worry that my students (particularly native English-speakers) are at risk of losing their L1 or having their L1 competence diminished if they spend a whole hour every day using only another language. I do have concerns about how to get them to use their L1 only as a last resort during their hour with me, without promoting an antagonistic us vs them dichotomy. As can be observed in the video from my most recent semester, I try to prod my students toward using the TL by using it myself, or humorously pointing out the TL skills they have, but did not choose to use. However, there has to be more that I can do to foster student use of the TL.

My students are more willing to write in German without prompting, than to speak German without prodding. Is that because it is up to me, as the reader, to “pronounce” the words properly, rather than bearing that intimidating burden themselves as speakers? Part of the difference may also lie in it being more natural to think before writing than before speaking. Either way they are more willing to bungle through written German than spoken.

Although I certainly still have questions about how I can improve my teaching, so that my classroom better facilitates language use and learning, I am less stressed about being the perfect teacher. This is because, through my observations, I have realized that teaching often requires adjustments—it seems to be an integral part of the profession. Even if I could figure out the “perfect” environment for one class, I would get a new batch of students the next semester, and adjustments would have to be made to the previous semester’s “perfect” formula.
LANGUAGE LEARNING ARTIFACT
Where to Go from Here?

Introduction and Reflection

This artifact began as the final paper I wrote for a Teacher Education and Leadership (TEAL) course I took as an elective while earning my MSLT degree. It was a Diversity in Education class taught by Dr. Cinthya Saavedra. We could wrestle with ourselves, but not fight with the texts we were reading. Adopting the viewpoints presented in the literature was not required. Such a requirement would have made the push for critical thinking as an integral part of the course a farce. The point was less to think as others think, and more to understand how and why they think the way they do. It was a difficult and fascinating task—one essential for a person whose profession it is to teach a language and culture from one people to a group of others for whom that language and culture are foreign.

During the summer that I took that TEAL course, I was also able to work closely with Dr. Maria Luisa Spicer-Escalante to organize the 4th annual John Lackstrom Linguistics Symposium at Utah State, which we put on early in the following fall semester. We needed an additional, more permanent or tangible, venue for the research that MSLT students are producing and will be publishing a selection of that research later this year in the on-line publication, *Second Language Research Practices: Exploring Foreign Language Teaching*. As closing comments on the role of the second/foreign language teacher for that publication, I have been developing the ideas that I first presented in my TEAL final. They will look very much like the language learning artifact that follows.
Abstract

A good deal of research focuses on what teachers need to prod their students to do, what sort of situations they need to set up for students, to get the best language learning outcomes. However, the effectiveness of teachers and the effectiveness of the classroom environments in promoting learning are broader than the activities around which lesson plans are built. This piece explores the use of feedback and what the teacher *can* do and how the teacher can turn over the responsibility for learning to the students to promote critical thinking and learning.

*Keywords*: critical thinking, feedback, language learning.
Where to Go from Here?

Introduction

In the summer of 2014, I took a Teacher Education and Leadership (TEAL) course that pushed me to focus on my role as a teacher and its impact on my students’ learning. Was I creating a language-learning environment that fostered not only the acquisition of language, but also critical thinking? After all, the best language learning includes more than the mastery of vocabulary and syntax. Pragmatically capable second language (L2) learners have to be able to view the world more broadly than they initially did upon embarking on L2 learning. As I have been ruminating on the texts for this course, I have also been reflecting on my work in past semesters and what adjustments I want to make in my future teaching. How can I be a better teacher, how do I prepare my students to be better learners? I was fortunate to be teaching ESL at Utah State University’s Global Academy during the summer as well, so I began testing out the improvements that this TEAL course inspired me to make immediately. As I consider hooks\(^1\) (2010) and Freire (2005) (the main texts for the course), I see three themes emerging, three things that I want to implement better in my classroom. 1) I need to open myself up to my students in vulnerability and love. 2) The words that I love are a great medium through which to teach—however it’s not what I do with the words, but what the students do with them that will determine their learning. 3) My students’ success in learning will be enhanced if evaluation guides them to improvement, rather than just punishing them for the progress they have not yet made.

\(^1\) Because bell hooks uses a slave name as her pen name, it is written all in lower-case.
A teacher’s heart exposed:

In high school, I had a teacher I loved. It was very obvious that she loved us, because she talked about us as people. Part of our personhood included being students, but she did not act as though that was all there was to us. Recognizing that this teacher’s love fostered our efforts as students to learn—or as bell hooks’ students once told her, “the more you loved us, the harder we had to work” (2010, p. 163)—I have become aware that I need to develop such a capacity for love to create a classroom environment that will promote the kind of work ethic I wish to see in my students. One way in which this is accomplished is through exposing our flawed humanity to our students, rather than trying to keep up a façade of false perfection.

I have learned that students need the freedom to fail, in order to take the risks necessary for success. What was eye-opening to me was the concept presented by hooks (2010), that we allow students this freedom by allowing them to see our imperfectness. We need to demonstrate use of the content we teach, but also how it is learned through sometimes imperfect use (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). It is not sufficient to tell students they will make mistakes and that is okay, but rather “by making ourselves vulnerable we show our students that they can take risks, that they can be vulnerable, that they can have confidence that their thoughts, their ideas will be given appropriate consideration and respect” (hooks, 2010, p. 57).

I have been nervous, in the past, to share with my students the setbacks that I have had when I was in their position for fear that they would doubt my reliability as a resource for the subject they were studying with me. However, I decided during the aforementioned summer to have a bit more courage and test hooks (2010) and Freire in
their assertions that “a demonstration of being human and limited” (Freire, 2005, p. 87) as a teacher will actually inspire more confidence in students and that “it also helps to promote an atmosphere of safety wherein mistakes can be made, wherein students can learn to take full responsibility for gauging their learning skills so that they are not teacher-dependent” (hooks, p. 161). The first week of class with my ESL students in Global Academy, I did not just tell them it was better to ask a stupid question than to remain stupid by not asking the question—I shared with them the experience I had had, which taught me that. It was embarrassing, but my students laughed with me, not at me—and they asked me lots of questions throughout the course.

My L2 learning experience was not in the L2 or even L1 of any of the ESL students I then had, however, my experience could be applied generally to their Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Sharing my initial failure and the long route I took to overcome it not only illustrates for my students the value in asking about what they are unsure of, it can also reduce their fear that they will be judged when they expose what they do not yet know. When I teach German, my personal anecdote also has the added benefit of presenting the language application I spent so long failing at through the interesting medium of narrative. As hooks (2010) points out, there is power in teaching through our stories; this power even has application in the language classroom. I have found in the semesters since I have exposed my humanness more to my students that they have become more willing participants in their education. Teaching by example the benefits of learning though questioning has been more effective than teaching by admonition.
It was a bit nerve-wracking to illustrate for my students the responsibility they had in their learning, through an experience in which I had failed to do so and the consequences I suffered as a result. However doing so, I realize I have experienced what hooks describes when she says, “letting students know that they were participants in creating and sustaining a constructive classroom dynamic helped to lessen my initial sense that it was solely my responsibility to make the classroom an interesting learning place” (2010, p. 118). It was not just that I was lessening my stress as a teacher, by opening myself up so my students could understand their responsibility, I was actually showing them how to truly be learners, because, “studying requires the development of rigorous discipline, which we must consciously forge in ourselves. No one can bestow or impose such discipline on someone else; the attempt implies a total lack of knowledge about the educator’s role” (Freire, 2005, p. 52). I needed to turn over the responsibility for their learning to my students, not for my sake, but for theirs.

2. **Words and the (new) Worlds they can create:**

In elaborating on how students take an active role in their learning, Freire describes how the relationship that readers have with written words forms their understanding of the world. As he says,

to study is to uncover; it is to gain a more exact *comprehension* of an object; it is to realize its relationship to other objects. This implies a requirement for risk taking and venturing on the part of a student, the subject of learning, for without that they do not create or re-create (2005, p.40).
Reading facilitates learning when it becomes more than a “mechanical” (Freire, 2010, p. 34) process of interpreting symbols as words—when those words are exchanged, reworked, and given new life not only by the writer, but also the readers who receive them.

As my experience with my ESL students, and the German students who followed them, illustrates, personal “stories […] can] become the sparks that ignite a deeper passion for learning” (hooks, 2010, p.52). However, it is not just the personal anecdotes teachers share in class that drive learning. As a student of literature in my undergraduate career, I recognize in my experience, and want my students to also experience how, as Freire has said, “reading is an intellectual, difficult, demanding operation, but a gratifying one […] not just that […] reading is engaging; it is a creative experience around comprehension, comprehension and communication” (2005, pp. 34-35). As the work of Reagan (2005) and McLaren (2007) illustrates, we deprive ourselves of knowledge when we exclude from our study the first-hand narratives of those we are trying to learn about. It seems absurd that the scientific community of which Reagan writes would be so oblivious to what their neighbors on college campuses, in the humanities departments, seem to understand instinctively—to understand the human world one has to explore human voices. What this means for language teachers is that for students to understand the language communities they enter by learning their L2, they need experience with L2 voices. Students need the opportunity to work extensively with L2 narratives, not just L2 structures.

The humanities’ way of understanding people through what they create is perhaps less precise than some of the methods used in the sciences, because the instruments for
measuring—fellow humans—are not uniform. However, as Kincheloe (2006) makes apparent in his call for critical ontology, sometimes scientific study has excluded too much of the essential humanness of the subject being studied, and not enough of the human bias of those doing the studying. Hall’s (1996) treatment of European study of Orientalism highlights how humans can go awry in their study of “others.” However, sometimes the human effort to know others, even if the method is somewhat flawed, leads to a human sense of understanding—as another experience from my time in the Global Academy illustrates. I wanted to share an idea of Goethe’s (Germany’s best-known writer of the 18th and early 19th centuries) with one of my fellow teachers from Egypt. When I asked my co-worker if he was familiar with Goethe, he answered yes, because Goethe had been interested in (and written about) “Orientalism.” My colleague’s sentiment focused not on where this European’s characterization of the “Orient” had gone wrong, but rather on Goethe’s interest in the world of Islam, making him relevant to the Muslim world.

There is great potential to know the world as we make room for the various voices it holds. It is true that the humanities departments have traditionally not done a sufficiently well-rounded job in selecting the voices they have chosen to listen to when their professed aim was to fully understand humanity. However, this has been improved, as previously excluded voices assert themselves more and are given space, rather than continuing to be pushed to the margins (hooks, 2010).

3. **To Promote Learning, not Punish it out of Existence:**

It is not just in determining curriculum that more thought should be given to what has previously been excluded. Freire voices a concern that I also have, “we evaluate to
punish and almost never to improve [...] we evaluate to punish and not to educate”
(2005, p. 13). When we test only for how much of what we thought was important our students took notice of, and fail to also ask about what they were fascinated to learn, we create a culture in which “having successfully regurgitated the material, [students] feel no need to hold onto the knowledge once it has been used to meet the material demands of the course” (hooks, 2010, p. 43). For this reason, “it is impossible for education to take place within a context where a discipline-and-punish model” (hooks, 2010, p. 111) is the method of evaluating student work.

There is a long-held notion that assessing what has not been learned creates a representation of what has been learned. However, such a model does not allow us to give our students the opportunity to tell us what they learned that we did not think to ask about. A fellow classmate of mine, and compatriot of Freire’s, who had come to Utah State as a Fulbright student from Brazil, once shared an activity that he used to motivate his ESL students. In order to help his students realize the progress they were making, he had them identify one thing they learned in class each day. I have implemented my colleague’s idea in such a way that a section of my weekly evaluations call for my students to illustrate what they have learned in class, not just tell me what skill or principle I taught, but show me how they can use it. Like the “Can-Do” statements promoted by ACTFL (2015), this places the focus on what students can actually do with the language they are learning. However, with this setup, it is the students, not the teacher, who determine which aspect of the week’s in-class focus to demonstrate they can apply. I began this practice thinking it was a way to reward students for what they were learning that I might not specifically ask about—and it does do that. An unexpected
benefit of turning over more responsibility to my students in the choice of what to show me they have learned is the regular feedback it gives me on how effectively I am teaching—how effective, or not, the input I provide is. Not all input becomes something learned, yet more is learned than what teachers focus on explicitly (VanPatten & Williams, 2007). This feedback from my students on what they have, and have not yet, processed from input to intake enables me to better adjust the focus of the curriculum to fit the actual needs of my class.

Since I believe, as hooks does, that my students “need not to think as I do. My hope is that by learning to think critically they will be self-actualizing and self-determining” (2010, p. 183), I have to assess them in a way that enables them to express what they think, and why, rather than evaluating how much of what I think they can remember. I also have to prepare them to be evaluated in such a way—because it is not likely what they have been trained for in their previous education (Freire, 2005; hooks, 2010). In terms of language teaching, promoting this type of critical thinking is most applicable to the way in which I teach the attendant cultures of the languages that I teach.

The Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprache\footnote{The society charged with making observations of and recommendations for changes to German language use and orthography.} or Duden\footnote{An authoritative German dictionary, published in multiple volumes addressing various aspects of language use.} might get to rewrite the rules of German orthography, but this is not an area where I encourage self-determination on the part of my students. I recognize that as a human being with real lived experiences I cannot (despite my best efforts) be a neutral source in teaching about target cultures (LoCastro, 2012). Even when I am teaching my native language and culture, I realize that I am only one voice among many (LoCastro, 2012), so using written and oral media I
bring a number of authentic voices into the classroom and then “playing the devil’s advocate by asking [sometimes] difficult, probing questions” (LoCastro, 2012, p. 244), I endeavor to get my students thinking about not only the target culture, but also their own. Thinking about how we may be viewed by others can alter the way we view them (Chun, 2011).

Besides failing to sufficiently address what students have learned, as opposed to just memorized for the test, an evaluation model focused on punishing mistakes, rather than rewarding for what is learned, can make it too dangerous to risk failure—too dangerous for students to express their own ideas rather than parroting what the teacher said. If we tell students that they should expect to make mistakes as they progress towards mastering a subject, that it is normal and acceptable, and then punish them when they make these mistakes, we undermine our message. As Freire (2005) has pointed out, our actions speak louder than (and will be believed over) our words when they do not correspond.

At some point, semesters end and we do need to somehow gauge how much students have learned and communicate to them and to the next instructors they will have how adequately they have mastered the subject of the class. I am not arguing for a completely nebulous grading system. I have found it useful, and my students seem to agree, that providing feedback and allowing students time to rework their assignments before giving a final grade not only facilitates learning, but requires responsibility on the students’ part, that might not otherwise be present.
Conclusion

In the works of Freire (2005) and hooks (2010) particularly, though not exclusively, I have found some of the tools that I have been looking for to help my students be as excited about their learning as I am. I need to not only love my students, but show them how to take the risks that will be necessary to really learn and grow. I can share the words written in the field that I teach, but that will not be enough to expand my students’ participation in the world, if I do not also teach my students to take responsibility for what they do with those words. As I am expecting my students to take responsibility for their learning, I need to focus my evaluation on their work, not on punishing them for what they have not mastered, but on guiding improvement and acknowledging (so that I can help them recognize) what they do know.
Dual Language Immersion:

Truly Bilingual, Biliterate, and Bicultural Education

and what’s in it for US

Introduction and Reflection

This artifact’s origins can be traced to the final paper I wrote for LING 6700 with Dr. Maria Luisa Spicer-Escalante, in the Spring 2014 Semester. I further developed the article for presentation at the Fifth International Conference on Language Immersion Education held in Salt Lake City, Utah, on October 15-18, 2014. Although, with bilingual children, I have personal reasons to be invested in the increasing foothold that early multilingual education is taking in the state of Utah, professionally, I spend much more time involved in adult SLA. However, this piece has a valid place in this portfolio, which is related to my professional development, because many of the same prejudices that must be overcome in order for Americans to value Dual Immersion Education for their children must also be overcome so that the value of foreign languages education at the university level is not dismissed—particularly in a country where the world’s main lingua franca is the default national language.
Abstract

This piece examines the forms that bilingual education in the US has taken, with a special focus on understanding of the benefits of Dual Language Immersion (DLI) education. Before describing the forms of bilingual education, the difficulties associated with bilingual education are explored. A major difficulty arises from misunderstandings about what the “bilingual education” means. Therefore it is necessary to first deconstruct these misconceptions. Only then can it be understood what bilingual education really is. While acknowledging that language users do not always act rationally when it comes to something tied so closely to their identity as their language is, the hope is that by understanding what is in it for the US - what benefits American children can derive from a DLI education - Americans can stop letting irrational fears deprive children of the benefits they could enjoy from maintaining their home and national language(s) while developing the skills to be productive citizens of a global community as well. Data for this piece come from the author’s observations of the Utah Model of DLI in action in the classroom and from parent surveys as to the motivations and benefits associated with their choice to enroll their children in DLI programs in Cache Valley.

Keywords: bilingual education, dual language immersion
Dual Language Immersion:

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Introduction

This piece is written with the aim to increase understanding of the benefits of Dual Language Immersion (DLI) education, specifically as they apply to the United States. This piece addresses difficulties associated with bilingual education and outlines what forms of bilingual education – transitional, maintenance, enrichment, and heritage - are available and how they relate to Dual Language Immersion education. I acknowledge, as Christ (2009) has pointed out, that language users do not always act rationally when it comes to something tied so closely to their identity as their language is. Still, I do hope that by understanding what’s in it for the US – what we, as Americans, have to gain from providing our children with a DLI education - we can stop ourselves from letting irrational fears deprive our children of the benefits of bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism they could enjoy from maintaining their home and national language(s) while developing the skills to be productive citizens of a global community as well. After discussing the benefits of the three “bi’s” to the US generally, the article focuses in on how DLI is being implemented in the State of Utah.

What Makes Bilingual Education Unpopular?

Perhaps the question should be: What has made bilingual education so unpopular here in the US (Crawford, 2003)? After all, “there are many more bilingual or multilingual individuals in the world than there are monolingual […] In many parts of the
world, [...] approaches to education that involve the use of two or more languages constitute the normal everyday experience” (Tucker, 2001, p. 332, as quoted in Christian, 2010, p. 6). Watzinger-Tharp (2014) claims that “multilingual societies are the norm” (slide 3) and Christ (2009) has asserted that there is “not a modern society [the US included] in which only one language is used (p. 37)⁴, and yet despite its ubiquity, the idea of bilingualism/multilingualism often seems to be accompanied by uneasiness and strife in our modern world (Christ, 1991; Christ, 2009; Crawford, 2003; Fishman, 2005; Gogolin & Neuman, 2009; McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998). Christ (2009, p. 38), citing Ehrlich and Hornung, explains that with the rise of nation-states people began to adopt the view of “Einsprachigkeit als [...] Normfall,” (Ehrlich & Hornung, 2007, p. 7), that is, they began to accept, even expect, monoligualism as the norm. The norm hardened into the rule (Gogolin, 2008) so that governments and schools not only doubted the benefits of multilingualism, they even actively hindered its development in the individuals in their domain (Fishman, 2005; McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998).

In the US this has sometimes taken the form of banning the use of non-majority languages (i.e., non-English) altogether, as was the case in the Indian Schools that operated until the 1980’s (McCarty, & Watahomigie, 1998) and anti-German legislation in the wake of World War I written to end the established use of that non-English language in education (Fishman, 2005). By the 1970’s, the US was engaging in a sort of benevolent destruction and calling it bilingual education (Crawford, 2003). However, this transitional education (which will be described later in greater detail), although it started out bilingual, quickly morphed into monoligual education – because its main goal was

⁴ “In keiner modernen Gesellschaft wird nur eine Sprache benutzt.”
to transform non-English speakers, not into bilinguals speakers of English and whatever their non-English language was, but into English-only speakers.

As Crawford (2003) illustrates, a main cause of the unpopularity of bilingual education among the American public is misinformation or misunderstanding. We do not even stop to think about what the English word *bilingual* (which indicates ability in or use of *two languages*) means. Because we do not stop to think about the meaning of the word, or its misuse, we get easily caught up in prejudices and fights without even understanding the cause we are fighting for or against. The term bilingual has so often been misused as if it meant “non-English-speaking” (Crawford, 2003) that voters are easily led to believe that bilingual education is taking resources (taxes) from all to serve the needs of a minority of the population. In other words, the perception is that everyone is paying for something that benefits only some.

So what are the needs, both of the minority and the majority? All people in a society need some common means of communication. Is it wrong to ask the few to meet the needs of the many – to ask the minority to learn the language that most speak? Is it wrong to ask the majority to fund a program so that others will learn a language that will make their (the majority’s) life more convenient? Many majority-language-speakers want this courtesy, and more important (from my vantage point as a parent), many minority-language-speaking parents want their children to have the same freedom of movement through the majority community that those from majority-language-speaking homes have. Minority-language parents want their children to have the advantages that come with being able to use the majority language.
If majority- and minority-language-speakers feel a need for children from minority-language homes to become proficient in the majority language, should we not consider what research (Cloud, Genessee, & Hamayan, 2000; Crawford, 2003; Fortune & Menke, 2010; May, 2008) has shown to be the most effective way of filling this need expressed by both sectors of the community? Crucially, “a generation of research and practice has shown that developing academic skills and knowledge in students’ vernacular supports their acquisition of English” (Crawford, 2003, p. 4). If English-speaking Americans want non-English speakers to learn English (regardless of what the reason for wanting this is), the best way to make this happen is to provide an education that enriches the language competence they bring with them and builds on their already existing knowledge of language to support their acquisition of English.

Even as we become aware of the benefits to everyone that offering bilingual education to minority-language-speakers provides, we do ourselves a disservice if we think that having a common language available is the only benefit that bilingual education offers. As Riley (cited in Crawford, 2003, p. 2) points out, “it is high time we begin to treat language skills as the asset they are, particularly in this global economy.” As minority-language parents desire the advantage that English proficiency gives their children in America, English-speaking parents should be made aware that fluency in another global or regional language also gives their children an economic edge (Genesee, 2008). Why handicap our children with a need to be accommodated (as monolingual English-speakers) in international business and politics when we could instead enable them to reach out to others, in other markets and arenas of influence, with the linguistic and cultural competence to approach others on their home turf?
Bilingual education can be an asset not just to those who desire to add the “natural resource” (Fishman, 2005, p.117) of the English language to their linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Christ, 2009). Bilingual education would be, and is becoming more popular, as parents and students realize that it is beneficial, not only to others, but also to themselves (Bearse & de Jong, 2008; Fortune & Tedik, 2008; Leite, 2013; Roberts & Wade, 2012).

**The Four Models of Bilingual Education**

Now that we have established what bilingual education is not (it is not education just for non-majority language speakers, nor is it only for the benefit of “others”), let us identify what it is, so that we can more effectively implement it to fill the needs of our community. The four models of bilingual education, as identified by May (2008) are: transitional, maintenance, enrichment, and heritage. These models will now be discussed further.

As pointed out earlier, *bilingual* indicates the use of two languages, thus to be bilingual education, that education must be provided using two languages. *Transitional* bilingual education is subtractive (Christian, 2010; Genesse, 2008), because although it starts out using two languages, its aim is to replace the minority language with the majority one. Students receive less and less education in their L1 (first language), until they are being educated in only their L2 (second language) (Christian, 2010), often with an emphasis being placed on the speed of this transition (May, 2008). It is this culturally supported, and often government-funded, push for the demise of non-English L1s that has caused Fishman (2005) to lament that America is a “spendthrift and gravedigger on the multilingualism front” (p. 116). We are a nation of immigrants that is constantly being
replenished with wave after wave of new immigrants. Yet instead of taking advantage of
the linguistic capital these immigrants bring with them, we destroy it. Not only does this
destruction deprive our nation of resources, but also this swapping of one language for
another wounds the souls of those pressed to make the trade (Christ, 1991).

**Maintenance** bilingual education (Christian, 2010; Genesse, 2008), as an additive
form of education for minority language speakers (adding an L2 while simultaneously
developing the L1), is less wasteful with the “great natural and national resources”
(Fishman, 2005, p. 115) that non-English-speakers offer our country in terms of
language. Maintenance bilingual education, as the name implies, maintains the L1, while
using it as a foundation on which to build proficiency in the students’ L2 (Cloud et al.,
2000).

**Enrichment** bilingual education is another form of additive education, in this
case geared towards majority-language-speakers. Like maintenance bilingual education,
it is a one-way form of immersion; the new language in which the students are being
immersed comes at them from one direction - from the teacher (Christian, 2010; Fortune
& Tedick, 2008; Genesee, 2008; Watzinger-Tharp, 2014). With both maintenance and
enrichment bilingual education, teachers do not promote a competitive atmosphere for
one language to dominate the other – though this “hegemony” (Bearse & de Jong, 2008,
p. 337) of one language over the other may occur in practice among the students because
of extra-curricular influences from the wider community.

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5 Wenn Sprachenlernen und Spracherwerb Prozesse sind, die die Person in ihren tiefsten Schichten treffen, dann sind Sprachverlust und Sprachwechsel – also Aufgabe einer Sprache zugunsten einer anderen – Vorgänge, die wiederum die Seele berühren, die sie möglicherweise verletzen (p. 28).
**Heritage** bilingual education has a restorative focus with the aim of preserving or rejuvenating indigenous languages (Christian, 2010; Fishman, 1996). It is an additive form of bilingual education in which the students and their community have cultural ties to the language of instruction, whether or not it is their L1. Generally, the culture is as significant a part of instruction as the language itself (Song, 2007).

The importance of these forms of bilingual education to the development of dual language immersion (DLI) programs is two-fold. We have learned what is not effective bilingual education – the transitional form destroys bilingual potential in students (Fishman, 2005) and is the least successful method of developing proficient English users (Cloud et al., 2000; Genessee, 2008). In fact, it never fully closes the academic gap between minority and majority language speakers (Collier & Thomas, 2004). Dismantling a whole car before souping it up [modifying it to increase its power] would be a waste of energy and money. When that car is a metaphor for language use, the dismantling process actually prevents the project from ever reaching completion. While being bilingual has cognitive benefits (Bialystok, 2009; Cloud et al., 2000), being deprived of one language in order to attain another causes deficits (Cloud et al., 2000). As Genessee (2008) has pointed out:

> While there is no evidence to support this assumption […] that students’ language learning capacity is limited, and thus they should spend all of their time in school focusing on English…and indeed, most research contradicts it, such a belief can result in subtractive learning environments that jeopardize the education of minority language students (p. 31).
We need to understand that their language does not disable students (Fortune & Menke, 2010), their educators do, when they treat bilingualism as a disability.

The second important thing to note about these forms of bilingual education is that the one-way additive forms were a precursor to two-way dual immersion. Two-way dual immersion classes are made up of both majority and target language speakers (Christian, 2010; Fortune & Tedick, 2008; Genesee, 2008; Watzinger-Tharp, 2014), meaning that each language is modeled for L2 students by both the teacher and the fellow students for whom that language is the L1. We have realized that “segregation” (Christian, 2010, p.13) based on students’ L1 is neither necessary, nor desirable when bilingualism is our goal. Ideally, two-way classes draw half of their students from majority language speakers, and half from target language speakers, but at a minimum a third of the class should have the target language as an L1 (Bearse & de Jong, 2008; Watzinger-Tharp, 2014).

In observing both one-way and two-way DLI classes in Utah, I have heard with my own ears that native-speaking TL (target language) peers have a greater impact than a native-speaking teacher on whether or not students for whom the TL is an L2 will not only understand, but use it. When students are immersed in their L2 from two directions (the teacher and, ideally, half, their classmates) they are most likely to become bilingual, biliterate, bicultural, and not only close the academic gap between themselves and their monolingual peers, but even overtake them (Collier & Thomas, 2004; May, 2008; Watzinger-Tharp, 2014).
The Benefits of DLI

Dual language immersion students become bilingual, biliterate, bicultural, and are even likely to achieve more academically than their peers (Collier & Thomas, 2004; May, 2008; Roberts & Wade, 2012). Let us address why these effects of DLI education are beneficial. “We discuss academic content learning first because, although the hallmark of DLI programs is the development of proficiency in two languages, learning academic content is fundamental to any educational program” (Hamayan, Marler, Sanchez-Lopez, & Damico, 2013, p.115). As exciting as the bi-s are, we cannot afford to trade them against all other academics. In fact, this is not one of the costs of a bilingual education.

DLI students may exhibit some initial lag in content attainment compared to students who receive a monolingual education in their L1 (Fortune & Menke, 2010), because as Cloud et al. (2000) put it, “Language is both a prerequisite to a successful education, and it is an important outcome of a successful education” (p. 1). However, this lag is not a permanent condition for DLI students (Cloud et al., 2000; Fortune & Menke, 2010). Students for whom the majority of their elementary education is bilingual suffer no long-term deficits in content learning compared to their monolingual peers (Collier & Thomas, 2004; May, 2008; Watzinger-Tharp, 2014); they do however acquire the added asset of another language. There is also the interesting “irony” reported by Bialystok, (2009) “that a linguistic experience [bilingualism] appears to have its greatest benefit for nonlinguistic processing” (p. 62). Brains that regularly have to work between two languages develop an increased capacity to process multiple things efficiently.

“Immersion students typically develop greater cognitive flexibility, demonstrating increased attention control, better memory, and superior problem solving skills as well as
an enhanced understanding of their primary language” (Utah State Board of Education, 2010). These increased cognitive abilities, despite being developed in tangent with bilingualism, present as advantages in non-linguistic accomplishment, which may explain why, despite the initial lag, bilingual students gain eventual academic parity, or even exceed their monolingual peers (Collier & Thomas, 2004; May, 2008; Watzinger-Tharp, 2014). Dual language education also “dramatically improves the likelihood that students will complete high school and enroll in college” (Roberts & Wade, 2012, p. 12).

It is easy to view this high level of academic achievement as a benefit, but what is the value of the three “bi-s”? Bilingualism – the use of two languages – serves both the needs of the minority-language-speakers and the majority-language-speakers. Those whose language is maintained, through the educational development of their biliteracy, are the ones who succeed at becoming bilingual; among minority-language-speakers, they are the ones who become proficient users of the majority language.

Research has […] shown that students who come to school in the US (or other English-speaking countries) with no or limited proficiency in English make better progress in acquiring English and in academic development if they receive some schooling in their primary language at the same time as they are introduced to English as a second language (Cloud et al., 2000, p. 3).

The L2 benefits from the development of the L1! This is true whether the L1 or the L2 is the majority language.

Besides being an effective environment in which to learn and develop two languages, “the integration of the two language groups” in a DLI classroom “contributes
to the development of positive intergroup relationships between language minority students and language majority students” (Christian, 2010, p.13). This sense of biculturalism, or at least bicultural “sensitivity” (Bearse & de Jong, 2008, p. 331) is particularly fostered in “two-way bilingual classes taught by sensitive teachers [and] can lead to a context where students from each language group learn to respect their fellow students and valued partners in the learning process” (Collier & Thomas, 2004, p. 3). This mutual respect is a foundation for greater harmony in the community, starting in the classroom where “behavior problems lessen because students feel valued and respected as equal partners in the learning process” (Collier & Thomas, 2004, p. 11). However, DLI provides not only the potential to change perspectives, nor does it only boost the low measure of self-esteem that can lead to “behavior problems” in undervalued students. A crucial added benefit is, as Christ (1991) explains,

>a piece of the egocentrism or ethnocentrism that was developed with the mother-tongue is deconstructed with the expansion of the communicative abilities and cultural assets, with the increased possibilities of identity and value systems that come with learning (and to a degree adopting) the new norms and values that are part of the total development of a “foreign” language (p. 25).⁶

It is not just a new perspective of self-worth on the part of minority language learners in a DLI educational setting that keeps them from developing “behavior problems” (Collier &

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Thomas, 2004, p. 11); but also a change in how their majority language peers view and treat them that facilitates the greater harmony in this multilingual community.

The time has come to recognize, as Cloud et al. (2000) point out, that “the global village is here and it confronts us with linguistic and cultural differences that can be a source of conflict and misunderstanding or of celebration and enjoyment” (p. 4). DLI education is a means to bring up the current generation of students with both the linguistic and cultural competence they need to approach those who would otherwise be “the others” as friends instead of foes.

This ability to approach others on their cultural and linguistic terms also has the potential not only to deter conflict but to also translate into economic benefits. Increasing use of English worldwide is not eliminating the need to know any other language, but is actually making knowing English plus another language more crucial to employability (Crystal, 1997; Genesee, 2008). It may be tempting to think that having English as a first language puts (many, if not most) Americans in the advantageous position that many with another L1 are seeking when they learn English for its utility in reaching the greatest numbers of people (Christ, 1991; Christian, 2010). However, those who are linguistically and culturally competent in more than one language are able to make the first move as leaders in business and world politics, rather than waiting to be accommodated by others (Roberts & Wade, 2012). This economic and influential edge is of course not limited to the bi/multilingual individuals, but extends to their greater communities and nations as well, as Fishman (2005, p.126) illustrates in reporting “the European Union’s increased protection of lesser used languages in pursuit of its impressive economic progress in the last two decades of the twentieth century.”
Some Problems and their Possible Effects

In order to reap the benefits of DLI, gained by initiating and maintaining successful DLI programs, it is necessary to understand potential problems and their likely effects (Cloud et al., 2000) so that they can be avoided or prepared for and overcome. The main challenges associated with bilingual/immersion education and their possible effects on the development of DLI programs (increasing numbers of elementary programs and expanding into secondary education) can be divided into two categories: logistic and political – with a social aspect overlapping the two.

As can be gleaned from the research by Bearse and de Jong (2008) and Montone and Loeb (2003), to date in the US there are not large pools from which to draw representative samples to do research on the development of DLI beyond the elementary grades, simply because not many such programs exist. The nature of secondary education, with multiple subjects taught by multiple teachers and the increased choices this offers students, complicates the logistics of supporting and carrying out a DLI program in secondary education. Implementing and maintaining a well-balanced DLI program in secondary education requires much planning and support from the parents, the students, the schools, and community power centers.

As Montone and Loeb (2003) have outlined, parents, students, teachers, and administrators need to plan carefully and collaborate effectively to address concerns of how to ensure that qualified teachers and sufficient numbers of courses and the connected materials are available for the students each year; and that these immersion language courses are not scheduled at times that put them in conflict with other required core classes. Before hiring teachers who can teach these courses in the target language and
purchasing the needed materials, it is necessary to ascertain that there is sufficient student motivation and parent support for the continuation of DLI into the secondary school. This may be a matter of ensuring students that they will have sufficient opportunity to be a part of the mainstream of the school as well as participating in the DLI courses. As it is necessary to assure parents sending their children to DLI elementaries that their children’s English academic achievement will not be harmed (Cloud et al., 2000), parents may need to be reassured that their children in DLI secondary schools will have the needed support from staff and the continued English academic development that will prepare them for university education in English. They may also need to be presented with viable transportation options if the DLI programs are not in their local schools.

These logistical matters can be planned for and provided for, when there is the will to do so in the community (Montone & Loeb, 2003). The political climate of the community can make or break this will. Regarding this political climate, Swain and Lapkin (2005, p. 176) cite Rolstad (1997, p. 48):

While in the U.S. bilingualism among ethnic minorities is often viewed as threatening to political and cultural unity, in the European context, multilingualism is frequently seen as a solution to the problem of easing ethnic conflict and increasing solidarity among various groups.

This is a bit of an idealized view of Europe’s multilingual/multicultural experience. As recently as October of 2007, the University of Hamburg held a conference to discuss the “Bilingualism Controversy.” The impetus behind this gathering of researchers from the field of Multilingualism, in the heart of Europe, was the two-fold question: “whether, or not, bilingualism among migrants is a positive competence, and whether, or not, it is
useful to the individual and the community? The question was and is a point of contention” (Gogolin & Neumann, 2009, p. 11). 7 It has been my observation (mostly in Germany) that European (EU) languages are viewed and treated differently than other ethnic minority languages, and all tension has not been erased between the various European nationalities and language communities. Which is not to say there is nothing useful we can glean from Europe’s more extensive experience in multilingualism – just that they have not quite figured out perfect cultural/linguistic harmony yet either. It is understandable that in the EU, the first priority is given to European languages. As Christ (1991) says, “all considerations must start at one’s neighbor. Whoever wants to live in peace with him, must recognize and respect him linguistically” (p. 22). 8 This quote from Christ (1991) brings to mind the words of a more often quoted Christ and his illustrative narrative on how being a neighbor requires reaching out to those who are beyond one’s cultural definition of “worthy” (Luke 10:25-37).

What Europe could learn from its success with EU languages and apply to other ethnic minority languages, and what the US does not need to wait for Europe’s lead on, but could itself recognize, is that it already has at its disposal the means to “easing ethnic conflict and increasing solidarity” (Swain & Lapkin, 2005, p.176) – language education. It has been found repeatedly, and on various continents (Bearse & de Jong, 2008; Swain & Lapkin, 2005), that when people learn each other’s languages, instead of just expecting


8 Alle Überlegungen müssen beim Nachbarn beginnen. Wer mit ihm in Frieden leben will, der muß ihn auch sprachlich anerkennen und respektieren.
“others” to learn theirs without offering to reciprocate (Christ, 2009), people are more effective at building communities of “we” instead of “us” and “them” (Banks & Banks, 1995). Even when communities do not fully become one group of “we,” they at least develop “sensitivity” towards each other to replace the antagonism that might have otherwise been (Bearse & de Jong, 2008).

**What is Happening in Utah**

Here in Utah, we have decided to cultivate the asset that multilingualism can be and reap the benefits that it provides our community and economy. We are getting over the American tendency that Fishman (2005) has noticed to kill non-English languages in infancy and then try almost futilely to transplant foreign languages into adolescents. Although “Utahns speak 90% of the world’s languages collectively” (Leite, 2013, p. 74), currently Spanish is the only language resource of which we have sufficiently concentrated numbers of speakers to be maintaining (in the bilingual education sense of the word) through our DLI program. As a consequence, Spanish is currently the only language in which we are able to offer two-way DLI education. However, we are working to develop one-way enrichment DLI programs in other languages, which have been “determined to be essential for Utah’s economic future: Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese, and Russian” (Leite, 2013, p.65). In the 2014/2015 school year Utah has 118 DLI programs, and so far DLI is provided in six of the eight proposed “essential” languages: Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and Russian (Spicer-Escalante, Leite & Wade, 2015; Utah Dual Immersion, 2014; Watzinger-Tharp, 2014).
The pioneering architects of the Utah Model (including Ofelia Wade, Craig Poll, and Becky Hunt) considered what had been done before and elsewhere in terms of immersion education, and also what kind of immersion education Utah’s social/political climate would support (Leite, 2013; Roberts & Wade, 2012; Spicer-Escalante, Leite & Wade, 2015). “They did not feel that their community would accept the 90/10 model because parents would be concerned about the development of English language literacy” (Leite, 2013, p. 54). As a parent in Utah, I have to say that the developers of the Utah Model rightly judged the climate of parental attitudes in Utah. I want bilingual, biliterate children; not just bilingual. I want to give my children more in terms of their language skills. I want to give them more than just English, but definitely want them to master the language my mother uses with me, the language the world uses to conduct much of its business – English. However, even though we understand the power of our state and nation’s majority language and want our children to have the assets English provides, parents in Utah understand, as one of our State Senators, Howard Stephenson, has put it:

In this increasingly competitive world, it is critical for Utah students to be able to deliver services and information in various languages and appreciate the subtleties of doing business in other cultures, much of which is learned through language study (Roberts & Wade, 2012, p. 10).

To successfully interact with other cultures, our children will need to know more languages than our own and to understand not just words, but also the cultures intertwined with those languages (Christ, 2009; Genesee, 2008; Spicer-Escalante, Leite & Wade, 2015).
A 50/50 balance between the languages of instruction is the right fit for our State (Leite, 2013). Half of the day is taught in English and half is taught in the target language (Leite, 2013; Spicer-Escalante, Leite & Wade, 2015). Unlike the 90/10 model which starts heavy (with 90% of the instruction) in the TL in Kindergarten or 1st grade and moves slowly towards a 50/50 split in instruction time between the TL and majority language by 6th grade, in the 50/50 model this equal split between the languages of instruction exists throughout the duration of the program (Christian, 2011).

In addition to fitting the cultural needs of our state, the 50/50 balance of our one-way immersion programs has the surprising benefit of the potential to protect bilinguals against a misdiagnosis of language impairment. “An important distinction between delay and disorder is that the former is largely the result of external factors such as a lack of sufficient linguistic input for the student while the latter is innate to the learner” (Fortune & Menke, 2010, pp. 20-21). Because it is “innate to the learner” a disorder will present itself in both languages. A delay, caused by the lower amount of input a child has received in the weaker language, will be present only in that language, not the main one. For this reason, such “one-way immersion programs may have a slight advantage in teasing difference apart from disorder” (Fortune & Menke, 2010, p. 19).

In Utah, the 50/50 split is accommodated by sharing two teachers between two classes; one class is taught by the English DLI teacher and one by the TL DLI teacher, then half-way through the day, the classes switch teachers. This model of two teachers sharing two classes of students provides the added benefit of no extra costs incurred to provide teachers for the education in the TL. The school only needs the number of teachers it would need to teach each of those classes even if they were offered only in
English. It does mean that a school has to have the demand to fill two or more DLI classes at every grade, but as has been noted “if [we are] really serious about language instruction, [we need] to start the children younger and get more students involved at a lower cost” (Leite, 2013, p. 58). “Parents are aware of and want for their children the cognitive, educational, social, cultural, and economic benefits associated with learning a second language” (Roberts & Wade, 2012, p 10), and as a state we realize that the economical way to provide for this in our education system is to open access to bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism to more, rather than fewer, children (Spicer-Escalante, Leite & Wade, 2015).

To better understand what this sort of education entails, I have observed multiple DLI classrooms, in two school districts, in Utah’s Cache Valley. I have heard how the TL teacher never uses English in front of the students, even if there are visitors in the class who cannot speak the TL. This is in accordance with the DLI Program Fidelity Assurances of the Utah model (Utah Dual Language Immersion, 2014). It fosters an environment in which it is clear to the students that the TL is the language to use and develop when in that classroom, or with that teacher.

In addition to how well the TL teachers are able to foster an environment in which students understand that the target language is the one to use, these teachers are able to convey content in the target language. While I had been vaguely aware as a young reader that reading was a vocabulary-building experience, I was still naively egocentric enough as a child to think that classroom conversations were about us (what we wanted to be when we grew up, what countries we had ancestors from, what our favorite seasons were), that I was oblivious to how we were being introduced to new words and concepts.
However, because I do understand the dual purposes of the DLI program of content and language learning, the observations I have made of classes conducted in a language I have no fluency in have been eye-opening in more ways than one. I have come to realize how much learning children do without being aware they are being taught, and I have been awed by the teachers who can put meaning into words that students (and observers with no proficiency in the language) are just being introduced to.

One of my colleagues, Jenna Rounds, during her presentation *Lessons from the Classroom* at the 11th Annual Student Research Symposium at Utah State University, shared how it is possible to teach content and language simultaneously. Having transitioned from an English to a Portuguese classroom, she realized that she could not just use words to teach (Cross, Doxey, Jiménez, & Rounds, 2014). DLI teachers have to be great actors, and they are, and they get their students involved in the fun. Like any good teachers of young children, DLI teachers have to plan well and be flexible so that students do not have the opportunity to get distracted. As Jenna’s co-presenter, Makae Doxey, had learned through her work in the Spanish DLI program in Logan, Utah, it is important to “keep it simple” (Cross et al., 2014). Especially in a second language, children need to be instructed in a form of language that is within reach. They can stretch a little to get it, but teachers must start simple. If the language is within reach the content will be too.

Interestingly enough, it is not just the children in our state who are stretching themselves because of Utah’s DLI program. We are finding at the University that, as the state is providing this multilingual education to children, parents who put their child in a DLI program offered in a language in which the parents are not fluent, are enrolling
themselves in adult foreign language courses so that they can share in these broader worlds their children are becoming part of.

In order to better understand parent views on the DLI program in Cache Valley, I arranged to conduct a survey of the parents of Maestra Rachel Reeder’s 1st grade two-way immersion class at Bridger Elementary in Logan, Utah. In order to respect the equality of the two languages in the program, the surveys were prepared and offered in both Spanish and English. I prepared the English version, and then developed the Spanish version with the help of an Argentinean colleague, Alicia Romero, and Maestra Reeder. In order for me to understand and incorporate the data they provided into my analysis, Alicia Romero also translated the comments from the surveys that were returned in Spanish into English.

In their study of two-way immersion students in the northeastern states, Bearse and de Jong (2008) reported that while “Latino” students identified as bi-cultural, “Anglo” students were more likely to be bi-culturally “sensitive” than to feel bicultural. My study did not ask participants whether they were Anglo or Latino. The distinction did not seem necessary to me. Although there is a strong correlation between language, culture, and ethnicity where languages are indigenous, by the third generation removed from a homeland, geography rather than heredity tends to be a greater indicator of cultural self-identification (Fishman, 1996). Also since one of the goals of DLI education is the development of bi-culturalism, thus asserting that culture is something that can be attained and therefore is not inborn, the ethnic distinction seemed irrelevant.

Although it would be worth further study to determine how hereditary ties to a target culture might facilitate bi-culturalization, I only asked whether respondents felt
their and their children’s (the students’) cultural horizons were being broadened by their participation in the DLI program. Among those who answered in English, parents found their child’s cultural horizons broadened more than their own. However, for those who answered in Spanish, it was the parents whose horizons were doing more spreading. In both languages, parents indicated that even after a year of DLI there is development towards bi-culturalism in both students and their parents.

The survey consisted of seven questions, the distribution of the answers given are presented in the following graphs.

**Figure 1.** Parents’ responses to Question 1) Why did you enroll your daughter/son in the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) program? (Check all that apply).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family/heritage cultural ties</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better economic prospects for my child</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The language offered</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic advantages of knowing another language</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One/both of my child's parents speaks the language</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To broaden my child's cultural horizons</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
another language”. For the surveys answered in Spanish, “family/ heritage cultural ties” and because “one/both of the child’s parents speaks the language” ranked equally important to the academic draw. Surprisingly, the non-English language offered was marked as affecting the choice to enroll their child by a much higher proportion of the parents who answered in English than in Spanish. This was surprising because of how important family ties and parents’ abilities to use the language were on the surveys answered in Spanish. Of much greater importance on the English than the Spanish surveys were “the better economic prospects” enrollment in the DLI program seems to offer. It appears that English speakers in Utah see Spanish as an economically advantageous language to know, in addition to English.

Figure 2. Parents’ responses to Question 2) Did what the non-English language was play a role in your choice to enroll your child in DLI?
As Figure 2 shows, three of the four parents who answered Question 2⁹ in Spanish, checked the box “no.” However, what the graph does not show is that 2 of the 3 wrote comments explaining why they chose Spanish that seem to contradict the assertion that the non-English language did not affect their choice. One family is here from Argentina while the parents attend the university and wanted their daughter to get her education in the family’s language. The other felt better that their daughter not only speaks Spanish, but will be able to write in Spanish as well.

Question 3 was unnecessary to graph as it asked “How long has your child been in the DLI program?” I knew that all of the children whose parents were surveyed were 1st graders, however I would like to track how parent’s attitudes evolve over the course of time that it takes for students to become truly bilingual – the 5-6 years (Blake, 2013) that the students are in the DLI program in elementary school.

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⁹ The actual question on the survey was, “Did what the non-English language was affect your choice to enroll your child in DLI?”
**Figure 3.** Parents’ responses to Question 4) Please share any benefits you notice your child is already enjoying. (Check all that apply).

Even after one year, as Figure 3 illustrates, parents are noticing that their children are starting to enjoy the benefits that motivated the parents to enroll them in the DLI program. The exception was economic benefits, but considering the non-existent job market for 1st graders in the US, this is not surprising.
Figure 4. Parents’ responses to Question 5) And you? How is having a DLI child affecting you? (Check all that apply).

Comparing the benefits that the 1st graders (represented in Figure 3) are experiencing to what their parents are (in Figure 4), it appears that those who answered in Spanish are becoming a bit more cross-culturally integrated than their peers who answered in English. However, those who answered in English do appear to be becoming more biculturally “sensitive,” similar to the older Anglophone students in the 2008 Bearse and de Jong study – which suggests that earlier exposure to the minority language community enables majority language L1 speakers to better identify with both communities.
**Figure 5.** Parents’ responses to Question 5) And you? How is having a DLI child affecting you? (Check all that apply).

As the data from question 5 portrayed in Figure 5 show, having children educated in a language that perhaps is not used at home can sometimes make it difficult for parents to help with homework. However, the exciting thing that the data reveal is that this is by no means a given.

Question 6 asked: “Would you like to have your child continue in DLI education after elementary school?” Currently, school districts in Cache Valley, Utah, unlike the areas studied by Bearse and de Jong (2008), offer DLI education in elementary schools only. However, as my survey indicated, parents are very interested in this opportunity remaining available to their children throughout their public school education. It was the answer most uniformly given – only one parent surveyed indicated s/he was not interested in having his or her child continue with DLI beyond elementary school.
The seventh question was an invitation to share any comments about the experience the families had had with the Dual Language Immersion program. The following is a sampling of those comments:

a) Our daughter only speaks Spanish. I think this is an excellent opportunity for her to keep advancing her elementary education, because she has a place where she can communicate in her own language and at the same time learn English in a better way.

b) We share more time doing homework in which I have the opportunity to learn English with her.

c) Of all our son’s cousins, he speaks the best Spanish, so that makes me proud of him.

d) My daughter says learning Spanish is fun and they do fun activities. We see that it has provided a needed academic challenge for her and kept her engaged at school.

e) This program has strengthened his self confidence in a way I didn’t expect (good way) I just absolutely love the program.

f) My son loves learning Spanish, he speaks to other kids who speak Spanish everywhere we go.

**Conclusion**

Dual Language Immersion is a form of education that offers students the opportunity not only to become bilingual, and biliterate, bicultural, but also to excel academically. These benefits are available to minority- and majority-language-speaking
students and will radiate into the larger community—when we choose to foster the three “bi-s”. The development of a rising generation of bilinguals will enable the US to maintain and enhance its position as a world leader in business and influence as we will be able to approach others rather than waiting for them to come to us. Here in Utah, we are leading the nation in the implementation of a DLI program in our elementary schools that will prepare our children to be these global citizens that we envision, and are finding that we as parents are also benefiting from this expansion of horizons. The establishment of DLI education in our elementary schools, has also created a demand for its continuation into higher public school grades.
CULTURE ARTIFACT
Zwischen Ehrenmord und Familiendrama:

Is the Call for Integration in Germany one for Transculturation,

or Cultural Selbstmord?

Introduction and Reflection

This began as a pragmatics paper for class I took with Dr. Karin de Jonge-Kannan. I am indebted to Dr. Doris McGonagill, whose critical questions grounded in her expertise in German literature and culture enabled me to further develop the reflections found here. A version between this and the original assignment was presented at the conference Conceptualizing, Investigating, and Practicing Multilingualism and Multiculturalism held at Georgetown University, February 27th and 28th 2015. I am grateful to the Center for Women and Gender, the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, and the Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies, whose generous grants made my participation in that conference possible. All translations of quotes in footnotes are my own, provided for the ease of my audience, whose common language is English.
Abstract

In his song “Almanya” from the 2012 album *Ehrensache*, Alpa Gun illustrates the split and evolving worlds that succeeding generations of Turks in Germany find themselves pulled between. He asks, in essence, what extent of assimilation will be required of the Turks before they are truly integrated into German society – in the land where many of them were born and in all likelihood will die. In this article, the author investigates this question against the backdrop of contemporary German news media and political declarations, such as those from Chancellor Merkel apparently proclaiming the terminal failure of multiculturalism in Germany. In his song, Alpa Gun seems to rebut some of the recent accusations lobbed against those who are perceived as not doing enough to actively integrate (for example, through learning the German language). In the process he turns the almost unspoken question of how integration can be achieved back on those calling for it. In order for multiculturalism to be successful, intercultural competence needs to be achieved not only by linguistic or cultural minorities, but also the powerful majorities calling for integration. All sides will need to enter the “third space” between cultures.

*Keywords:* Intercultural competence, third space
Zwischen Ehrenmord und Familiendrama:

Is the Call for Integration in Germany one for Transculturation, or Cultural Selbstmord?

In his ballad “Die Legende der Dirne Evlyn Roe”, Bertolt Brecht (1918/2002) tells the tale of a young woman who loses her soul in her effort to reach the Holy Land and her Lord. Like Brecht before him, who often used entertainment genres to expose human hypocrisy and make political commentary, Alpa Gun (2012) in his song, “Almanya”, wraps poetic social and political commentary in a genre generally considered entertainment. Neither work, however, creates a climate that promotes escapism, but rather critical reflection. The experiences of Alpa Gun’s characters echo Evlyn Roe’s unsuccessful soul-selling search for salvation. There is Fatma, whose dress and behavior align with modern German values rather than traditional Muslim modesty, but whose hair and skin deny her entrance into Germanness. Or there is Cem, whose intelligence is evident through his proficiency in German, yet this proficiency has come at the cost of his mother tongue. His efforts to enter the “promised land” of German society have closed off participation in the Heimat\textsuperscript{10} of his Herkunft\textsuperscript{11}. Yet it remains unclear whether Cem will ever be able to really enter this “promised land” or whether he will spend his

\textsuperscript{10} Home(land)
\textsuperscript{11} origin
life wandering the wilderness between his home culture and the one he views daily around him.

I studied German for years before I moved to Germany and by that point I felt I had reached a point linguistically where I could converse in German like a person my age. In Germany I was a special kind of Ausländerin,\textsuperscript{12} I was an Ami.\textsuperscript{13} Being an American in Germany was a hybrid life between that of a celebrity and that of the incompetent outsider. Being an American seemed to evoke animosity from Germans for reasons I struggled to identify. The random occurrences of celebrity status were bizarre, but probably did a lot of good because they off-set the negativity I got for being an American outsider. It softened the blow of being scolded, in English, by people I only every spoke German to, for American cultural imperialism, i.e. being attacked for the way my culture was changing German culture based purely on my national origin, not my personal behavior. The backhanded compliment “you’re not like other Americans” was not that much better. In essence it made me a poor example of an American while simultaneously implying that a good example of an American was not something one should want to be. In my case it was an American, but this not-so-compliment has many variations with American swapped out for any other cultural or geographic minority. It makes me shudder to think what it would be like if I had believed I was a “lower-status” outsider.

The hostility I sometimes felt directed at me was a problem I hoped to solve, because I initially thought it was caused by something within my control. It took me a bit

\textsuperscript{12} The feminine (because the author is female) for Ausländer, or foreigner.

\textsuperscript{13} German slang for American.
to realize that the “blöde Amis” some Germans around me were railing against were not me personally. They were often not anyone really, but stereotypes or caricatures of Americans informed by the media or brief (if frequent) encounters with monolingual Americans they could not understand, often for reasons more pragmatic than semantic.

Even though I begin to articulate here the reasons for the animosity I sometimes felt directed at me in Germany (and have observed in reverse directed at exchange students and immigrants in the USA), I have continued over the last fifteen years to search for better understanding of why this happens, and whether I can do anything to reduce it. Can I approach non-Americans in a way that does not get their hackles up while still remaining true to the American part of myself? Can I prepare students (German or American) to approach others while recognizing the validity of others’ perspectives without selling out who they are? Both my German/American hybrid world and the place occupied by Alpa Gun and his German-born Turkish contemporaries have been described as a third space (Bhabha, 1990; Kramsch, 2009). Is the third space a bridge between cultures, or limbo? If it is limbo now, is that all it can be? Can we transform it to a bridge? Who are the we that have to be involved for that transformation to happen?

Goethe (1821/1949) recognized that, “wer fremde Sprachen nicht kennt, weiß nichts von seiner eigenen” (p. 17). Others (Cloud, Genessee, & Hamayan, 2000; McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998) have since pointed out that inseparably tied to language is culture. LoCastro (2012) voices a sentiment reminiscent of Goethe’s regarding

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14 stupid Americans
15 Whoever does not know foreign languages, knows nothing of his own.
language and extends it to pragmatics as well. I have experienced that sometimes knowing the words of the language is not enough—there is something deeper to human language than just the use of words. Still the argument can be made that we do not know our language/culture until we have someone else’s to compare ours to (Kincheloe, 2006). This expanded understanding of the world and our place in it has both negative and positive potential. The humanities’ way of understanding people through what they create is perhaps less precise than some of the methods used in the sciences, because the instruments for measuring and the entities being measured—fellow humans—are not uniform. However, as Kincheloe (2006) makes apparent in his call for critical ontology, sometimes scientific study has excluded too much of the essential humanness of the subject being studied, and not enough of the human bias of those doing the studying. Hall’s (1996) treatment of European study of Orientalism highlights how humans can go awry in their study of others. Said (1995), though well known for his treatise on “Orientalism”, extends the sinister side that the study of others can take beyond the discipline of Orientalism and characterizes it as “a chronic tendency to deny, suppress, or distort the cultural context of such systems of thought in order to maintain the fiction of its scholarly disinterest” (pp. 13-14/18). However, sometimes the human effort to know others, even if the method is somewhat flawed, leads to a variety of very human understanding (Said, 1995; Said, 2004)—as a recent experience with a colleague of mine illustrates. I wanted to share an idea of Goethe’s with one of my co-workers, a young man from Egypt. When I asked him if he knew who Goethe was, he answered yes, because Goethe had been interested in (and written about) “Orientalism.” Interestingly, my colleague’s sentiment focused not on what a botched job this European’s
characterization of the “Orient” was, but that because Goethe had been interested in the world of Islam, the Muslim world was interested in him\textsuperscript{16}.

Whether I teach English or German as a foreign language, I endeavor to guide my students to a point where they, like Rudyard Kipling\textsuperscript{17} (1913), recognize:

\begin{verbatim}
All good people agree,  
And all good people say,  
All nice people, like Us, are We  
And every one else is They:  
But if you cross over the sea,  
Instead of over the way,  
You may end by (think of it!) looking on We  
As only a sort of They!
\end{verbatim}

Every group of “we” is a “they” to someone else. We are all outsiders somewhere, or as it is so aptly captured on German bumper stickers “Alle Menschen sind Ausländer. Fast überall”\textsuperscript{18} (linke-t-shirts.de). I have come to recognize that there will never be enough that I can do to integrate myself sufficiently to be indistinguishable from Germans I may live among. Conversely, even if he wanted to, my German husband could not ever “unGermanize” himself enough to never have conflict with American neighbors and co-

\textsuperscript{16} Said’s (2004) characterization of Goethe’s study of the “Orient” is also positive, and seems to place it in-line with the intercultural competence that Chun (2011) describes.

\textsuperscript{17} If Kipling could “question the […] presuppositions” (Chun, 2011, p. 393) of Imperial Britain enough to write this, there is hope that this generations “cultural imperialists” might also be able to adopt such a view.

\textsuperscript{18} All people are foreigners. Almost everywhere.
workers; because part of our otherness is external (it comes from the perceiver of the otherness).

Just as Goethe pointed out the necessity of learning about others in order to understand oneself, it is an exercise in futility to expect others to know or understand people whom they have not learned extensively about. I had gathered that one of the main, if not the only, reasons Americans seem so unlikable—one reason that some would like to disparage Americans as outsiders, even in an ELF (English as a lingua franca) context (Berns, 2009; Modiano, 2009; Seidlhofer, 2009)—appears to be deeply rooted in Anglophone use of language. Americans apparently do not know enough other languages beyond their mother tongue, and the one, often only, language, they do know well (English) puts them at a contemptible advantage. Sometimes those with a power-language\[^{19}\] L1 know of their advantage and are smug about it. Sometimes, not knowing how hard it is to work in a second language (having never done it themselves), power language natives expect too much of others using it as an L2. Sometimes being willing to use another’s first language, one’s L2, is not enough to spare one contempt as the outsider (this is something I have been slow to learn, and still want to reject).

The article, “English as a Business Lingua Franca in a German Multinational Corporation: Meeting the Challenge” (Ehrenreich, 2010), helped me to understand that it was not my language, English, that was drawing hostility, but the power connected to it in the global community. In the article, Ehrenreich explores the role not only of English, but also of German (the home and power language of the company at the center of her

\[^{19}\] A language, which in the given context, has more power or prestige attached to it than other languages.
study) and other languages that come into play in the course of the company’s international business dealings. She does this through observations at a number of business exchanges and events and through interviewing the managers of the firm. Through this she finds that English is seen as necessary, except when everyone in the room speaks German. However, English, plus whatever the local language is wherever an international branch is located, is seen as best business practice. Even with English as the business *lingua franca* of the company, the main (German) managers will use German in the presence of international branch managers who understand English, but not German, when using English would prevent the managers from working out necessary details to precision. Ehrenreich observed some resentment towards native English speakers because of the advantage that their linguistic skills give them and also because they tend not to adapt their language for the non-native speakers with whom they are conversing. In fact, the managers prefer non-native English-speaking interlocutors, because they speak on a level comparable to the German managers and are more practiced in negotiating meaning (and it is less embarrassing to admit to another non-native that something has not been understood). However, this comparable level, being below native-like proficiency, does mean that sometimes more complex things cannot be discussed or details are lost.

As a native English speaker, I found this research paper useful because of what it revealed about the attitudes that non-native ELF users may have towards native speakers. Native English speakers can learn to slow down (not just get louder) and negotiate meaning so that others can understand them. However, they can know to reformulate the way they express something only if their partners in discussion are brave enough to
indicate when they have not understood. Intercultural clashes cannot be eradicated with action from only one side.

Although Ehrenreich does not, I would argue that native speakers of power languages (which is of course a relative term) ought not to simplify their language so that they do not have a linguistic edge, or even on the assumption that their co-conversants using the language as an L2 must be less competent and need the accommodation without any indicator from the L2 speakers that it is needed.\footnote{Deutsche Sprache, schwere Sprache is not meant to facilitate conversation between native speakers and L2 German speakers. Rather, this grammatically simplified expression is meant to mock the L2 speakers’ incompetence. Assuming that an L2 speaker is unable to understand, independent of the L2 speaker initiating a negotiation of meaning, would be to act based on prejudice, not knowledge.} Just as the German managers in the study sometimes use German because it is the only language in which they have the skills to get the finer points of business done, native English speakers should use their linguistic skills to do the best job for their respective companies.

While Ehrenreich (2010) gives us a view into how the use of English is perceived from a German business perspective, House (2006), in “Communicative Styles in English and German”, focuses on how German use of language (German and English) is perceived from the vantage point of American English speakers. It turns out that it is not only a matter of Germans viewing native English speakers’ way of using English as “inconsiderate” (Ehrenreich, 2010, p. 422). The transfer of German linguistic and cultural/pragmatic norms into English is often interpreted “by members of the Anglophone cultures as being essentially rude and aggressive” (House, 2006, p. 255). After illustrating why Anglophones would consider Germans’ language use as “impolite,” House explains the effect that culture and a shared history have on a group’s
specifically Germans’) understanding of politeness, and how learning about others’ backgrounds should temper cross-cultural judgments. The article comes across as being written for Anglophones, and not just because it is in English, but because of how, after devoting a good portion of the paper to showing why Germans come across as rude to Anglophones, the later part explains why this perception is undeserved.

As I consider how Americans have been presented to me by Germans (and research papers about German perspectives) and how Germans have come across to me, and how easy it is to notice the obnoxious and rude things that others do and say, I have been wondering if others are as rude as we assume them to be, or if difference is just upsetting enough to us that we are inclined to label it as wrong without any effort to understand why it might be right from their view of the world. Intercultural competence “involves an understanding not only of the culture and language being studied but also the readiness to suspend disbelief and judgment about the other culture [...] and the willingness to reflect on one’s own culture [...] and question the values and presuppositions in one’s own cultural practices” (Chun, 2011, p. 393). In her 2006 article “Indirectness and politeness in Turkish-German bilingual and Turkish monolingual requests”, Marti notes that Turks who return to Turkey from Germany (after experiencing cross-cultural transfer, i.e., after entering the third space) “encountered instances where [they...] were categorized as too direct, disrespectful or even too naive or unrestrained” (p. 1837, italics in original). Marti’s research did not find any statistical difference in the overall frequency of directness between monolingual and bilingual (Turkish/German) Turks. She did, however, find significant differences when she compared the two on a situation-by-situation basis. Marti’s research participants were all Turks (about half of
them with a bi-cultural background), but those who brought unexpected behavior home after cross-cultural exchange in Germany were upsetting to those who were unfamiliar with the environment in which such behavior is considered normal.

As has been established, bilinguals/biculturals inhabit a third space. “Their identities […], developed from […] experience [in both cultures] enable them to feel comfortable in both environments—or perhaps not comfortable in either” (LoCastro, 2012, p. 246). Alpa Gun, in his song “Almanya”, illustrates this as he describes the split and evolving worlds between which succeeding generations of Turks in Germany find themselves pulled. He calls on the Germans (the power-language natives in Germany) to assess their role in the integration of German-born Turks into German society. He does this by asking, in essence, what extent of assimilation will be required of the Turks before they are truly integrated into Germany. (Do they not look integrated in dress, do they not act integrated enough when their sexual behavior is more in line with what is taught at school, by secular German society, than in Muslim homes? Are they not integrated when their mother tongue gives way in successive generations to German?). Yet even as he alludes to these questions, he acknowledges the difficulty of multiple cultures living within one country and plays off stereotypes enough to keep the discussion alive about the integration that has not happened. At the end, Alpa Gun incorporates a clip from Hagen Rether that is a bit chilling when considered in light of the Chun quote on suspending belief and questioning one’s own values: “Ehrenmord gibt’s bei uns ewig schon, immer haben wir Ehrenmorde, das heißt bei uns bloß anders. “Familiendrama”
heißt das bei uns.” Rether is an ethnic German who has, judging by his words, been able “to suspend disbelief and judgment about the other culture [...] and [demonstrate] the willingness to reflect on [his] own culture” (Chun, 2011, p. 393).

Some people have been aghast at the equation Rether made (Arprin, 2011) and others have cool-headedly pointed out that there is a difference in the social reactions of the communities in which honor killings vs. Familiendramen occur (see comments under Schuster’s 2009 article). The less cool-headed reactions against the parallels Rether draws between “Ehrenmord” and “Familiendrama” highlights why some fear the idea of re-evaluating their values in order to understand others better and to develop a degree of intercultural competence. Of course, the discourse about integration stirred up through Rether’s quote may be something Alpa Gun intentionally promotes. He may be borrowing a trick out of Brecht’s bag; using a bit of the Verfremdungs-effect to get the audience to think about their actions, by alluding to the almost rhetorical questions: Do others not integrate because of lack of effort on their part, or are the attitudes of Kipling-esque we’s what is blocking integration? In the latter case, as much energy needs to be

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21 Honor killing, we’ve had that for an eternity, we’ve always got honor killings, they’re just called something different. “Familiendrama/family drama” [when someone snaps and kills family members - usually multiple family members] is what we call it.

22 Sample comment:

ANDREAS 09.02.2009 | 16:48

spent teaching power language natives to understand others and their languages and cultures as is being exerted to get non-native speakers to learn power-languages.

More recently (Deutsche Welle, 2015) than Rether comment or Alpa Gun’s sampling of it in “Almanya”, the German political/cultural scene has provided us with further evidence of how frightening and difficult navigating the re-evaluation of one’s culture can be. For over half a century, in Germany a culture has been cultivated to counteract the devastating consequences of the racist culture of Nazi Germany. Now an organization known by the acronym PEGIDA\(^{23}\) has begun to question some of the openness of postwar German society. The reaction against these newly voiced questions has been seen in the democratic exercise of free speech and counter-demonstrations by those who do not agree with PEGIDA. However, it has also generated violence against the police, who are protecting both sides’ rights to free expression (regardless of the merits of the ideas expressed), by those who oppose the new direction for Germany that PEGIDA proposes (Die Welt, 2015). As PEGIDA’s agenda so well illustrates, questioning the values of the culture one grew up in is not the panacea to cure all xenophobia. However, an unwillingness to open one’s mind to at least understand (not necessarily adopt) other views of the world is a serious roadblock to harmony where multiple cultures meet.

I asked earlier if the third space is a bridge or limbo. As I am raising children whose father’s land is German and whose mother’s tongue is English, I hope that their dual identities act as a bridge between the two families, lands, and languages they have

\(^{23}\)Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des Abendlandes (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident).
claim to. As a language teacher I am not interested in pushing my students into a state of limbo. I teach because I believe that the *third space* has the potential to be a bridge between cultures—even if it is not automatically such.

Anyone scanning the headlines (Evans, 2010; Schrader, 2010; Spiegel Online, 2010; Springer, 2010) after Chancellor Merkel’s (2010) speech at the *Deutschlandtag der Jungen Union* could easily have thought that the Chancellor considered multiculturalism (and its attendant *third spaces*) an irretrievable failure. However, it was not multiculturalism that Merkel called a failure, but the attempt that had been made at it thus far in Germany, and she further elaborated on what that failed attempt was. Merkel described the *Multikulti* effort that failed as one in which various people live next to each other (separately). Although the one sentence, “Der Ansatz für Multikulti ist gescheitert, absolut gescheitert!”\(^{24}\) got a lot of air time, it was only a sound bite out of a 40-minute talk. Merkel began the speech by taking her audience back to a time twenty years previous in which the impossible, the unbelievable had happened—Germany was (re)united as one country. As she pointed out:

> Es hat sich gelohnt an Idealen festzuhalten. Es hat sich gelohnt für die deutsche Einheit einzustehen, auch wenn es ein Ziel war, was viele, viele Jahre als nicht besonders realistisch aussah, […] weil man Werte verteidigen muss, auch wenn sie noch nicht erreichbar sind.\(^{25}\)

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\(^{24}\) That attempt at multiculturalism has failed, absolutely failed.

\(^{25}\) It was worth it to hold fast to ideals. It was worth it to advocate for German unity. Even though it was goal that for many, many years did not seem especially realistic, […] because it is necessary to defend values, even if they are not yet attainable.
Chancellor Merkel is not saying that multiculturalism cannot work in Germany. Rather she is calling for a new attempt at unity within Germany. Even as she talks of defending “values,” she alerts her audience to the fact that “wir können nicht sagen, das passt uns nicht”\(^\text{26}\) in the face of a changing world. We have to adapt and not only promote, but press for, the change we wish to see. We, natives of power languages, need to take an active part in the world we wish to see created, not just demand that others change to our liking. We need to be bridge builders willing to cross outside our first view of the world to approach others rather than only expecting them to forsake their world and meet us in ours. Of course, because bridges join spaces and allow intercourse between those spaces, bridges lead to exchange, which means power language natives (just like natives of relatively less powerful languages) do not need to sell themselves out and will have a marked influence on the greater world they cross into.

\(^{26}\) We can’t just say, that doesn’t suit us.
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES
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My Three Pillars
INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

My Three Pillars

This section of the portfolio presents the literature that has been most influential in my development as a teacher. This annotated bibliography is divided into three sections that correspond with my teaching philosophy: 1) Use of the Target Language, 2) Use of Authentic Materials, and 3) Teaching the Use of the Mechanics.
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My Three Pillars

Use of the Target Language

When teachers plan lessons, they decide, among other things, what input to provide their students with that day. In *Making Communicative Language Teaching Happen*, Lee and VanPatten (2003) restate Krashen’s claim (1982) that, “comprehensible input causes acquisition,” (p. 16) and further insist, “every scholar today believes that comprehensible input is a critical factor in language acquisition” (p. 16). Based on my reading of Lee and VanPatten (2003), the more input the teacher provides in the target language the better.

The input that I provide my students is not the only input that they benefit from in the classroom, as input from their peers also fosters their language acquisition. This is what I found exciting about the write-up of Richard Donato’s research (Donato, 2004) on the benefits of student-to-student interaction to second language development—one can infer from the findings that not only teacher-student TL use improves language acquisition among students, so does student-to-student use. Teachers are not the only ones who provide students with useful input – their classmates do as well.

Beyond contemplating what type of language input to provide my students, I also question what messages my teaching style communicates to my students that are tangential to their L2 use. A few works have caused me to consider how foreign language teachers avoid unintentionally disparaging their students’ L1, while trying to provide students with an abundance of TL input that they may not have much opportunity to get elsewhere. As I am learning from the literature, in their zeal to get students producing the
TL, teachers run the risk of depriving these learners of the linguistic advantages that building on their L1 can give them. These works include Herbert Christ’s Über Mehrsprachigkeit from Gogolin and Neumann’s Streitfall Zweisprachigkeit – The Bilingualism Controversy (2009) and a chapter from Pérez and McCarty et al.’s Sociocultural Contexts of Language and Literacy (1998) written by Teresa L. McCarty and Lucille J. Watahomigie titled Language and Literacy in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities.

Christ (2009) deals with how the overabundance of praise and pride connected with the mastery of a second language (such as English as used among German scientists) can lead to the neglect of the further development of the L1. That is to say, the native language is not being developed to reflect the developments in the discipline. He also addresses the tension created by the political pressure to abandon one’s L1 (and the identity inextricably connected with it) for the benefit of the majority, even in spaces that belong to the minority using them (such as in the Mosques in Germany). If the minority learns the majority language to approach the majority in their spaces, why must the minority also use it in their spaces for the ease of the majority in approaching them? Society and the individual benefit from multiple language use and should in practice continue to find place for, and develop, this variety of languages.

In terms of target language use, the chapter in Sociocultural Contexts of Language and Literacy (McCarty and Watahomigie, 1998) deals mostly with advances in bilingual education – and recognizing the benefits of allowing students to bolster their proficiency in either/both of the languages in which they are simultaneously being educated by tapping into their L1 literacy and knowledge. This treatment of the benefits
of such bilingual education is carried out against the backdrop of the damage that was done in previous generations by seeking to build English proficiency by excluding any L1 use.

Swain and Lapkin (2005) also highlight the benefits of allowing students’ use of, or better yet promoting student development of, their L1 in tandem with the development of their L2. They discuss not only how this benefits the students cognitively and academically but also how this benefits the society at large, because of the way it eases tensions between the various language and cultural groups that make up the society involved.

While bilingual or dual immersion education is increasingly becoming an option, what about the still highly prevalent foreign language instruction that is delivered as one isolated subject among many (such as the German classes I teach to university students)? Within the course of only one hour a day, foreign language teachers need to provide plenty of TL input, while still encouraging students to draw on their L1 proficiency, which will benefit their L2 development, which in turn will increase their L1 proficiency (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). This co-affective phenomenon does not seem to be limited to dual immersion language learning, nor does it seem limited to child language learners. Although I began my foreign language study in childhood and noticed how learning other languages helped me understand my first better – my ESL students, who began foreign language study as adults, make similar observations in class about what studying English is teaching them about the languages they have used all their lives without thinking about it.
While the literature and personal observations and experience make me confident that learning another language will have a positive effect on my students’ L1, I still wonder about possible negative effects and what should be done to mitigate them. I do not worry about those American students whose L1 is English getting the idea that their language, and therefore they themselves, are inferior because 1/8th of their classes are taught (even exclusively) in another language—when the other 7/8ths of their classes are taught in their L1—particularly when that one class is an elective (a choice they make). I am concerned about how to allow students to confidently apply the metalinguistic awareness they bring with them from their L1, while encouraging them to use as much TL as possible (Shrum & Glisan, 2010). I also worry that if the target language is not the overwhelmingly main language used in the class, that my students just will not get sufficient “actual use of the second language,” which Christian (2010) identifies as “a factor in successful language learning” (p. 15). This is a particular concern I have with my German students in the US who have English as an L1, and also to some degree with my ESL students who have a large number of classmates who share the same L1, with whom it is easier to switch into that L1 than figure out how to say what they want to in English.

In identifying what target language use should look like (beyond that students have to be willing participants in its copious use), I draw on Hamayan et al. (2013) who point out that language education needs to prepare students to function in a variety of contexts, and Lightbown and Spada (2006) who remind teachers that some very prevalent language uses will not occur spontaneously in an academic setting and need to be intentionally introduced by the teacher.
Use of Authentic Materials

One of the benefits of drawing on authentic materials, is that they can provide a segway between the language being studied and real-life uses of that language. *Constructing Cultural Realities: “Facts” and Frameworks of Association* was a boon for my teaching philosophy, since Galloway (1998) provided my definition of authentic materials: “those written and oral communications produced by members of a language and culture group for members of the same language and culture group” (p. 133). This is the definition around which I have built the corresponding section of my teaching philosophy. The window authentic materials give students into the culture of the language they are learning often functions as a gateway as well, through which they enter that culture as these authentic materials are often big motivators for students to learn the language.

Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan (2000) address the connections between language learning and culture when they write about dual immersion education in schools, particularly in the US and Canada. As they point out, building on the work of Heath (1983), “there has been a pedagogical tradition of disconnecting second language learning…from culture learning. It is now recognized that this is undesirable and that culture learning is an integral part of language learning” (p. 2). This highlights the importance of bringing the TL culture, as well as the TL grammar and vocabulary, into the classroom. A sterile dose of the language, removed from its cultural context, is not sufficient to lead to proficiency. Students need models of the language in real-life action—used by native TL speakers, among native TL speakers.
As important as the culture of the TL is to developing competence in the L2, learners bring some things with them that are also beneficial to their SLA. One thing that has been surprising to me, a common theme I was not looking for, but that I find repeatedly in the literature about dual immersion (Cloud et al., 2000; Genesee, 2008; McCarty & Watahomigie, 1998; Shrum & Clisan 2010), is that student SLA actually benefits when students continue to use and develop proficiency in their L1. However despite the benefits students derive from their L1 literacy, I learned from de Courcy’s 2002 research that L1 literacy in and of itself is insufficient “when facing the task of attempting literacy as understood by a different culture” (p. 105). This dependence on cultural awareness in developing L2 literacy underscores the value of authentic texts, which present the language in the context of its attendant culture.

Teaching the Use of the Mechanics

Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, and Mandell (2001) gave voice to feelings I had had as a student, that “students after a certain age expect explicit grammar instruction because they perceive it to be helpful and necessary. To not teach them grammar may cause them to feel they are being shortchanged” (p. 35). At least in my case, that certain age came long before college. Since college students are the age group I anticipate teaching most, I need to be prepared to meet the needs my students are likely to have. The question becomes then, not if but how and what grammar will need to be explicitly taught, and when.

Genesee (2008) focuses not on what older students expect, but the advantages of the language competence they bring with them to the L2 classroom. He observes a link between the literacy they have in their L1 and increased success in L2 acquisition as
compared to learners who receive education only in their L2 (without the opportunity to develop literacy in their L1). He views schools as “important vehicles for [bi/multilingual] language learning in all communities” (p. 24) and argues that in the same way that we must provide formal language arts instruction in general education programs for native speakers, we must also do so in […] programs for second language learners” (p. 33). In the US, these SLLs are sometimes in a position to be developing L1 and L2 literacy simultaneously, however when they already have developed L1 literacy, systematic L2 instruction is still useful in helping them to learn the L2 and understand how the metalinguistic awareness they already have can be applied to their L2.

In a strain similar to Genesee, Christ (2009) points out that we are confronted with the rules of our own language when we enter school. These rules enable us to read and write well in our own language and also lead to a standardization of our language use and pronunciation. We come to expect this standard use, or something approaching it, even among those for whom the language is a foreign one (Christ, 2009). However, as Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (2010) point out, though a certain level of proficiency is necessary for focus to be on what the speaker’s message rather than accent is, perfection is not required. As I prepare my lesson plans, teach using the target language whenever possible, and provide my students with authentic models of the language, I understand that the goal is not to eradicate all traces of their L1 identity from their L2 use, but to help them be competent L2 users.
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

English as a Lingua Franca
INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

English as a *Lingua Franca*

This annotated bibliography provides a view into some of my struggles to understand and come to terms with the many views on the language I grew up thinking of as “my own” but which many people, not all L1 speakers, lay claim to as a vital part of their linguistic repertoire. The implications of English’s *lingua franca* function on its standing as a foreign language are relevant to me as a native English speaker who regularly uses the language with others for whom it is an L2 and as an ESL teacher whose students intend to use the language in an ELF function. I therefore had to establish what English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) means. This section of the portfolio presents the literature that has influenced the development of my understanding of English as a *lingua franca*. This annotated bibliography explores the varied views on the subject from those who consider ELF something so different from native use of English that they would teach it and study it separately from English taught as a foreign language to those who consider it a use of English as a common language between speakers of various languages.
Thinking, as I did, that ELF or English as a *lingua franca* was a way to use English—not a language separate from the language I use with my mother and teach to students who use something else when speaking to their parents—I found Berns’ (2009) effort to delineate two such languages within a family of language called English hard to follow. She did however sufficiently pique my curiosity as to how they could be two separate languages, that I searched further for others with a similar view of ELF.

Berns makes multiple references to Seidlhofer, whose work adds clarity to the concept of ELF as a language. Although Seidlhofer’s (2009) explanation of ELF as a separate language rather than a separate function of English presents something that is a little too simple to be a linguistic reality, the simplicity of the representation is useful, because it makes the concept understandable. She argues for recognition of ELF as a language to legitimize the study of the variation in use and form between ELF and native varieties.

In a strain similar to Seidlhofer’s (2009), Modiano (2009) argues that variations in English use by L2 speakers should not be seen as errors because they are not the way the language is used by L1 speakers in native English communities. If a particular usage is prevalent among a group of L2 speakers, that variation should be recognized as an ELF standard usage. As a native speaker of a variety of English that is not native to the land of English’s nativity, I was surprised at the necessity that Seidlhofer describes for defining a variety as a separate language to justify studying it. However, I can see why Modiano could argue that sufficient communities of speakers using a language a certain way can
lead to that usage becoming a standard. However I expect that there will be variations between the way Germans or Japanese or Dominicans use English in a *lingua franca* function; so I am still not convinced that all non-native use of English ought to be classified as one language ELF.

I am more inclined to believe, as *MacKenzie (2011)* states, that the *lingua franca* variety of English used in Europe (and I would expand this to ELF usage throughout the world) is not “independent of native English norms” (p. 224). *Christ (1991)* claims that whether or not ELF could be taught as a separate language is irrelevant. It is unnecessary and in fact undesirable to teach ELF as a separate language. Teaching it as a foreign language, enables students to learn the language in such a way that they can use it not only to communicate on a minimal level with others with whom they have no other common language, but also to use it effectively as a foreign language when native speakers are involved in the communication.

*Decke-Cornill (2003)* report that teachers in German Gymnasium (secondary schools specialized to prepare students for university) favor teaching English in the context of British or American standard usage and culture, however teachers at *Gesamtschulen* (multi-track secondary schools) focus less on a specific English. Still, the *Gesamtschule* teachers, who were “more at ease…with the concept of English as a lingua franca” (p. 59), did not view ELF as a separate language. As one of them put it, to teach it as such they “would have to invent the language that [they] are supposed to teach” (Decke-Cornill, 2003, p. 65).

*Prodromou (2001)* argues that, rather than focusing on the variety of English and the authentic way in which it is used, the focus ought to be on who students are. That
what they bring to the classroom should be the starting point of lesson development. We should borrow from “authentic” and other sources of English in teaching, only after considering what students can do with (and how they will benefit from) these resources.

That English use as a *lingua franca* could be more than a separate function of English was not the only surprise I found in the ELF literature. The idea that native speakers ought to be excluded from its use as a *lingua franca* (Christ, 1991; Seidlhofer, 2009) also shocked me.

My concept of English as a lingua franca was most accurately captured in Crystal’s (1997) *English as a Global Language*. For Crystal, a lingua franca is simply a “common language,” particularly in situations where the participants are coming from multiple first language backgrounds.
LOOKING FORWARD
Although I begin this portfolio by looking back on what I learned by observing those who have taught me, much of this work is my look forward – to what I want to be and how I can improve my craft. My language-learning artifact, “Where to Go from Here” is a look forward as I consider how to implement what I have learned from the literature and recent teaching experience. Each semester as I receive feedback from my students, I consider how I can use that feedback to be a better teacher.

Now as I am approaching my graduation, I am embarking on the next part of my journey. I want to be a professor, so I have begun the process of applying to doctoral programs. In the mean time, I plan to continue teaching as an adjunct and producing work for publication.

When I presented my culture artifact, “Zwischen Ehrenmord und Familiendrama: Is the Call for Integration one for Transculturation or Cultural Selbstmord” at the “Conceptualizing, Investigating, and Practicing Multilingualism and Multiculturalism” conference at Georgetown, I met a number of people who gave me reason to hope that there is work after graduation, although sometimes it is not what one envisioned beforehand. So I am now looking a little broader than I once did.
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