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ENSEIGNEMENT ENGAGÉ:
ENGAGING AND MOTIVATING FRENCH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

by

James T Workman

A portfolio submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of

MASTER OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Logan, Utah

2020

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ABSTRACT

Enseignement engagé:

Engaging and Motivating French Language Learners

by

James T Workman: Master of Second Language Teaching
Utah State University, 2020

Major Professor: Dr. Sarah Gordon

Department: Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies

This portfolio is a compilation of work that the author completed during the Master of Second Language Teaching program at Utah State University (USU). It represents the culmination of the author's personal learning and teaching experiences from his coursework and teaching experience both as a graduate instructor of French at USU and as a seventh-grade French Dual Language Immersion (DLI) instructor.

The portfolio consists of three main sections. The teaching perspectives section provides insight into the author's beliefs about the ideal roles of teachers and students in an L2 classroom, both in a foreign language setting and an immersion setting, including the importance of student and teacher engagement, a communicative environment, multiliteracies teaching strategies, and the importance of sociolinguistic pragmatics. The research perspectives section consists of two papers written during two different courses in the MSLT program. Last, the annotated bibliography examines a selection of current literature on multiliteracies pedagogy.

(83 pages)

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AATF = American Association of Teachers of French
 ACTFL = American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
 AP = Advanced Placement
 BICS = Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills
 CALL = Computer-Assisted Language Teaching
 CALP = Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
 CERCLL = Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language and Literacy
 COERLL = Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning
 CONFEMEN = Conférence des Ministres de l'Éducation des États et Gouvernements de la Francophonie (Conference of the Ministers of Education of French Speaking Countries)
 CLT = Communicative Language Teaching
 DLI = Dual Language Immersion
 DOM-TOM = Départements d'outre-mer et territoires d'outre-mer (French Overseas Departments and Territories)
 ELL = English Language Learner
 EU = European Union
 FACE = French-American Cultural Exchange
 FIPF = Fédération Internationale de Professeurs de Français
 FIT = Future Immersion Teacher
 FL = Foreign Language
 FPI = français populaire ivoirien
 FTA = Face-Threatening Act
 GDP = Gross Domestic Product
 INSEE = Institut National de la Statistique et des Études Économiques
 K12 = Kindergarten through twelfth grade
 L1 = First Language / Native Language
 L2 = Second Language
 MSLT = Master of Second Language Teaching
 ODSEF = Observatoire Démographique et Statistique de l'Espace Francophone
 OIF = Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie
 PASEC = Programme d'analyse des systèmes éducatifs de la CONFEMEN
 PLC = Professional Learning Community
 SLA = Second Language Acquisition
 TL = Target Language
 UEMOA = Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine
 UFLA = Utah Foreign Language Association
 UN = United Nations
 USU = Utah State University
 WWI = World War I
 WWII = World War II
 ZPD = Zone of Proximal Development

INTRODUCTION

This portfolio demonstrates the outcomes of my work during the Masters in Second Language Teaching program at Utah State University. The portfolio includes a selection of coursework and documents related to my journey as a teacher. It is divided into three sections: (1) teaching perspectives, (2) research perspectives, and (3) an annotated bibliography. The Teaching Perspectives section includes my Teaching Philosophy Statement (TPS), the central focus of this portfolio. My TPS explores what it means to be *engagé* (engaged) in the French cultural sense and my interpretation of how the idea of being *engagé* relates to teaching and learning French. It includes my experiences applying theoretical concepts from my coursework to my teaching, both as a graduate instructor of beginning French at USU, and as a seventh-grade Dual Language Immersion (DLI) teacher at Spring Creek Middle School. In the Research Perspectives section, I present two select papers completed during my coursework. In the first, I explore the sociopragmatics of disagreement in French through the pedagogical lens of the FACE model, and specifically discuss the role of being *engagé* in French discourse. In the second research perspective document, I present an overview of the role of French as a lingua franca in the world today. I start with a macro perspective of French worldwide, then as just one example, I zoom in to explore elements of the experience of one francophone country, Côte d'Ivoire. The final section of this portfolio is an annotated bibliography, in which I review a selection of existing literature around the multiliteracies approach, a newer language teaching pedagogy I have found effective, particularly in comparison with the older Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) pedagogy. These three sections represent the accumulation of learning from my graduate coursework and practical teaching experience, all hopefully demonstrating my enthusiasm for teaching French language and cultures.

TEACHING PERSPECTIVES

Professional Environment

I had my first experience teaching French while studying French literature in a postgraduate program in Canada in 2013-2014. I taught 25 college students beginning French for two semesters. Although I ultimately decided not to pursue a specialty in French literature, and then pursued other educational and professional paths for a few years, I realized that teaching French was one of my most rewarding professional experiences. So I was drawn back to USU to apply to the MSLT in 2018 to continue pursuing French teaching as a career. During my MSLT coursework and hands-on teaching experience, I have been able to teach beginning French as a graduate instructor to college students and put into practice what I have been learning in my program.

Also, starting in my second year of the MSLT, I began teaching French Dual Language Immersion to seventh graders (ages 12-13) at Spring Creek Middle School in Providence, Utah. There are many challenges in teaching DLI versus teaching a beginning world language, especially since my students will be expected to take the AP French exam in the ninth grade, but I hope to see improvements in their proficiency and in mine, as I challenge them and they challenge me. I look forward to building my career and further program building in French DLI.

Teaching Philosophy Statement

Engagé Teaching

In this Teaching Philosophy Statement, I will present some key concepts which are foundational in my teaching philosophy. To begin with, I provide context to explain my engaged approach to teaching within the context of my current teaching role. Then I will focus on three elements that inform my teaching. First, I will explain the benefits and challenges of the communicative language teaching approach. Second, I will discuss the innovations of the multiliteracies pedagogy. Third, I will examine how sociopragmatics can be successfully integrated into a curriculum. All of these concepts contribute to an optimal second language learning environment and all of these concepts help me with my goal to motivate students to become engaged language learners and citizens of the world.

On a personal level, learning French has been one of the most impactful and formative experiences of my life. The process of learning the French language and interacting with francophone cultures changed the way I think in general and the way I view the world in a positive way, and I want to be able to share that with others. This is why I have chosen to become a French teacher.

During my studies of French, including a total of three years spent in France and Canada, I was able to experience the process of Second Language Acquisition first hand. However, these experiences were about more than just learning to speak French. My sojourn in France exposed me to new ways of thinking about the world. I was exposed to new political philosophies, religious views, and different values. These were initially a shock to my immature and naïve worldview, but many of the ideas I encountered slowly percolated through my resistant mind. Over the years, many of those ideas have come to enrich my life and have helped me to become

a more understanding and compassionate person and certainly one who is not afraid to grapple with new concepts and engage with diverse viewpoints.

A core value prized in French culture is being *engagé*. *Engagé* means to be socially engaged. Each person has the right to his or her opinion, the right to state this opinion publicly, and the right to defend it. This is part of a cultural duty to participate in a continuous social discussion of policy, community values, and social justice (Béal 1993). Anyone can be *engagé* in their approach to daily life, from journalists, to healthcare workers, to homemakers, to teachers. Participation, interaction, and involvement are all valued in society. In the context of teaching, it is also fundamental for educators to be engaged—engaged in facilitating students’ own social engagement, engaged in researching and reforming pedagogies, and engaged in bringing the world to students who might not have much opportunity for travel or connecting with other cultures.

As a Dual Language Immersion (DLI) instructor at the secondary level in a public school, one of the biggest challenges I see with students is a lack of engagement. When the Utah DLI students were only six years old, their parents made a significant 9-12-year commitment for them to spend half of their day in a language that the majority will never hear a word of outside the classroom. They are told that it will make them smarter and more academically successful, that it will improve their educational and career opportunities as an adult. Many proud DLI parents love showing off their children and how they are “fluent” in the language they have “learned,” but realistically, most DLI children know all too well that they often struggle with basic conversations, let alone the complexities reading and writing. Anecdotally, I have noticed that by twelve years old, many students are personally questioning why they are doing something “so hard,” why they can’t just be “normal” like the other students in school. And yet their “normal”

peers already see them as exotic and strange. I have observed at my middle school that even some of the most fluent students look away and pretend like they cannot see me when I walk down the halls because they know I will call them by name and make them speak French to me in front of their monolingual peers. Their teenage angst or social sensitivity can be frustrating to a nerdy teacher like me, that is *engagé* and gets overly excited about all things French.

So, why am I painting this bleak picture? Is it because I do not believe in the Utah model of the DLI program? Quite the opposite. I am a teacher who is invested in the program's success. I simply want to point out the contrast of the DLI ideal versus the DLI reality and public perceptions. We need the ideal. Bluntly put, the ideal is what we emphasize to legislators and parents who fund and support our programs. We need the ideal to reassure the district school board that they made a good decision to invest in DLI programs. But the teachers on the front lines need the reality check and the DLI teachers we are training in programs like the MSLT or the DLI endorsement need to face the real challenges. The core challenge of DLI is not just finding the ideal teaching method using cutting-edge Second Language Acquisition theory, although that certainly can help. The core challenge of DLI, at least at the secondary level, is engaging and re-engaging students. It is retention through finding what interests and motivates adolescents to achieve something difficult. Furthermore, the challenge is finding how to engage and motivate students from diverse backgrounds, managing a wide variety of ACTFL proficiency levels. Teaching levels from Novice High to Advanced Low in the same classroom, teachers must endeavor to push the advanced students while not discouraging and overwhelming the novice students. Engagement is the key.

The problem that remains is, I do not know the *ideal* way to optimally engage all students at all times, nor does anyone else, as far as I have found, since every student is different, every

group of students has a different dynamic, each teacher brings a different personality, and even the time of day can affect motivation. I have observed many other teachers, including from other disciplines like History and English, and I have learned something from all of them (and a selection of observations is included in the portfolio below). I get ideas from my MSLT classes, conferences, and from reading current research in SLA theory. My classroom has become a laboratory where I try everything. I have had amazing, well-formed, well-planned lessons based on concepts I learned in class or in DLI training just crash to the earth in a fiery inferno of glaze-over eyes. I have had stressful days where I slap together a new lesson plan in 25 minutes that suddenly becomes the most popular and motivating activity we have shared all trimester. And I have had the opposite. As many teachers, know it can be very confusing sometimes.

I may not know the *ideal* way to all engage students, but I do know some *real* ways to engage many of them. Students like to be seen as individuals whose different viewpoints, interests, unique backgrounds, and feelings matter. They like to be given responsibility and be held accountable for their learning. They like to have some degree autonomy of choice over their options. They like to have a sense of community where they collaborate and interact to help each other. They like to see that I care about them and am willing to help them when they struggle. They like to discuss topics they are invested in, even if they seem trivial to me (for example, the latest TikTok videos). When they are engaged on a personal level, then they tend to be more engaged in the course materials and more committed to the language learning experience.

I believe that engaging Generation Z learners and beyond on a more personal level will eventually give them the tools and motivation that will help engage with the world. In turn, this will help them develop valuable communication, critical thinking, analytical, and problem-solving skills which will equip them to be good citizens of the world. While many subjects in

education can help students develop these skills, foreign language education (and in particular DLI) offers a unique advantage in that it requires students to see the fundamental human skill of language differently and to think metacognitively about why different cultures say and do things differently from each other. I am passionate about helping students become engaged in studying the French language as a way to help them become globally engaged world citizens.

What is communication?

Communication in a global environment is vital to students now and second language teaching today has a focus on communication skills. However, this was not always the case. Language instruction methodology has changed much since the early days of linguistics when early structuralists like Ferdinand de Saussure attempted to define and organize languages and understand how humans learn them. Early language instruction methods focused on learning grammar and forms through repetition, memorization, and correction such as in the grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods (Shrum & Glisan, 2016). Later, Noam Chomsky developed the theory of universal grammar, which in short is the idea that children learn languages based on innate capacities rather than through behavioral methods of rote memorization. Many current methodologies descending from Chomskian thought and the genealogy of generative grammar theory tend focus on the importance of comprehensible input (championed by Stephen Krashen) and communicative interaction through task-based learning. I include some of these elements in my own teaching, while recognizing their limitations and the need for more than one approach to promote communication and engagement.

Understanding what communication is and how it works is fundamental in implementing a communicative approach to teaching. Above all, communication is about meaning, because “Communication is the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning with a purpose in

a given context” (VanPatten, 2017, p. 27). Though succinct, this definition is dense and needs unpacking. First of all, communication requires at least two participants who are trying to express and/or interpret the meaning of language exchanged between them. Secondly, if there is no attempt to express or interpret meaning, there is no communication. This is significant, because in the earlier language teaching methods throughout prior decades mentioned above, students primarily parroted phrases and words given to them by the instructor. Although their mouths were moving, there was neither purpose nor meaning. If there is no meaning, there is no reason for either interlocutor to pay attention to what is being said. If there is no purpose to what is said, there is no cognitive process in which the L2 learner makes connections between the forms coming out of their mouths and the meanings attached to those forms (VanPatten, 2017). Without these processes, effective L2 acquisition will not take place (and by extension, learners risk losing interest or motivation if there is no meaning or context). As I design lessons, I try to provide meaningful context and a purpose for learning to facilitate communication, motivate students, and facilitate student engagement (below I use the term “student engagement” broadly defined, for example as the Great Schools Partnership 2016 and others have defined it).

Negotiation of meaning through interaction

Comprehension is crucial in communication, since “language acquisition is a byproduct of learners attempting to comprehend language during communication” (VanPatten, 2017, p. 76). Simply put, learners thus acquire language as they try to understand. When a person wishes to communicate an idea to their conversational partner, they attempt to get across their intended *meaning* by using grammatical *forms* that they think the hearer will recognize and interpret to comprehend the intended meaning. If comprehension is not achieved, the speaker will attempt to adjust their forms, and the hearer will also respond with attempts to repair the breakdown in

communication until comprehension is achieved. This phenomenon is called negotiation of meaning (Long, 1996). Negotiation of meaning is at the very center of learning process.

During this process, the interlocutors are forced to pay close attention to the connection between form and meaning. When an L2 learner makes these form-meaning connections during interaction, this is when they will actually acquire the language (Ballman, Liskin-Gasparro, & Mandell, 2001). This is why it is so important to provide L2 students with opportunities to interact: with the instructor, with each other, and ideally, with a variety of highly proficient speakers. In my teaching, I endeavor to provide as many opportunities for meaningful interaction as possible.

Communicative Language Teaching

A classroom is not the ideal environment for learning a language, as suggested by the proponents of Communicative Language Teaching that built on Chomsky's initial views of language acquisition. The ideal environment is being immersed constantly in a language from birth through earlier childhood, with a maximal amount of opportunities for input and negotiation of meaning. However, many people will not have access to this opportunity to learn a language beyond their native L1. The push to learn another language may come later from extrinsic or intrinsic motivations; one may begin to learn another language at a much later age, from elementary to secondary to university levels, or in another context such as immigration or travel for business or pleasure. Successful classrooms may attempt to imitate some aspects of immersion, or of communication that takes place in the interactions and daily life, in order to provide context and opportunity for interaction and negotiation of meaning.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology is in part a response to fill the gap between the ideal of immersion from birth and the reality of people needing to learn

languages at different stages of life. CLT seeks to provide as authentic an immersion experience for students in the limited space and timeframe of a classroom as possible. CLT focuses on opportunities for input and negotiation of meaning through interaction. Communicative classrooms should ideally be conducted in the target language (TL) 90% of the time or more, and classroom activities should always have a communicative purpose where interlocutors attempt to negotiate meaning together. This is often accomplished through conversational activities such as role-play, interviews, or information-gap activities (VanPatten 2017). While I do design many communicative oral activities and tasks for my classroom, my teaching is not restricted to CLT, since CLT has its recognized limitations. I also suggest below that CLT methods can be effectively combined with other pedagogies, such as the multiliteracies approach.

Criticisms of an over-emphasis on CLT

CLT communicative methods are very effective for helping students to obtain proficiency in Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS); however, CLT proves less effective in helping L2 learners gain Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) (Bilash, 2009). CALP represents more cognitively demanding language tasks that would be required in a professional environment, such as critical reading, writing (in various genres, registers and modes), and understanding appropriate sociopragmatic uses of language (as explored below). The analogy I like to use to simplify this is that for many monolingual students in the US, they learn language at home naturally through an immersive experience interacting with family members as babies and toddlers with little explicit instruction. However, once students enter elementary all the way through secondary school, teachers begin slowly incorporating more and more explicit grammar instruction and academic vocabulary.

In one sense, CLT method has much in common with that early childhood time of first language acquisition, enabling the learner to be immersed and learn with little explicit grammar instruction. However, if immersion with no explicit instruction is the only kind of target language instruction a student has received, then they will not benefit from all of those important academic features of the language. In other words, they can often hold a pleasant conversation, but may struggle to perform higher-order functions in the language. Often, when L2 learners who have been taught primarily through CLT exit the communicative classroom to enter an L2 workplace or continue to graduate level education, they are often deficient in CALP (Paesani, Allen, & Dupuy, 2016). Writing, textual analysis, and other skills are not emphasized in CLT.

As a DLI teacher, I can relate to this tension between a communicative immersion experience versus teaching explicit grammar and academic language skills. In the Utah DLI program, students spend 50% of their time during first through sixth grades immersed in the target language and content-based instruction. They spend little time on explicit instruction of the language (mostly on reading in the TL), but rather the teacher speaks the target language 100% of the time while teaching content such as math, science, and later social studies. The challenge is that when the students arrive at middle school, the format of instruction and the expectations of the students' work change from elementary school. Starting in seventh grade, they begin preparing to take the Advanced Placement (AP) exam in ninth grade. The AP exam is focused primarily on reading and writing, with small sections for listening to audio recordings and recording their own speech. There are inconsistencies with instruction and assessment models at this grade level. The instruction starting in seventh grade shifts to a focus on critical reading, structured writing, and improving grammar, but the expectation is that the classroom interaction remain communicative in nature (meaning 100% TL use, and learning about grammar in the TL).

Based on my observations of my own students in seventh grade, as well as feedback from other secondary DLI teachers across the state, most students are ill-prepared for this shift. The students' writing is full of fossilized errors, lack of verbal conjugation, literal translations, lack of appropriate use of articles and prepositions, and the list goes on. As a new teacher, I was frustrated by the lack of explicit grammar and writing instruction these students had received. As stated earlier, they could hold a decent personal conversation, but they lacked the grammar and spelling accuracy, as well as writing, interpretive, and analytical skills to succeed in the academically intensive tasks expected of them. I was left wondering whether the over-emphasis on CLT methodology had led to them being under-prepared for the tasks and assessment outcomes expected of them in secondary school. So, I sought to research other pedagogical methods that could address these issues.

A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies

The multiliteracies pedagogy was developed over the last decade in response to the deficiencies in the communicative approach as discussed above. The concept of multiliteracies is fairly straightforward on the surface: language users are exposed to multiple forms of language in their daily lives, such as printed text, online and digital media, film, art, advertisements, etc. Therefore, in order to provide an ideal classroom environment, the input, interaction, and output within the classroom should include all of these different modes of communication (Paesani 2016). In other words, CLT focuses too much on one mode of communication: speaking. By expanding the modes of communication, students are exposed to a much wider array of grammar, vocabulary, and sociopragmatic knowledge than they would receive in a classroom that focuses solely on oral communication. If incorporated earlier into language programs like DLI, this method could also help address the instructional gap between elementary and

secondary schools. Moreover, looking forward to post-K12 graduation, this method also prepares learners more fully for workplace demands in the L2, where employers will demand proficiency and accuracy in a wide array of both hard skills and soft skills. A multiliteracies approach to language teaching seeks to strengthen analytical and interpretive skills and promotes critical thinking (Paesani 2016).

Likewise, by expanding students' output into multiple modes of communication, students will have even more opportunities to negotiate meaning, particularly since this pedagogy focuses on collaboration in groups. For example, in an experimental course using multiliteracy pedagogical techniques, Allen (2009) observed that students self-reported that their approach at the beginning of the course had been to focus on using correct grammar and vocabulary, but that by the end, they found themselves constructing meaning and understanding that there were multiple ways to express the same thing. I suggest the multiliteracies approach can thus help DLI teachers at elementary and secondary levels by promoting further communication, collaboration, and opportunities for interaction in the classroom, by using a greater variety of texts and drawing on a greater variety of skills.

Communication does not suffer if we move from purely CLT methodology to a classroom informed by the multiliteracies approach. Because communication is all about meaning, the multiliteracies approach can help DLI teachers and others to improve their teaching by reconceptualizing the role of their learners: "Within this broader view of literacy and literacy teaching, learners are no longer 'users as decoders of language' but rather 'users as designers of meaning.' Meaning is not viewed as something that resides in texts; rather, deriving meaning is considered an active and dynamic process" (Warner & Dupuy, p. 119). In this concept, learning takes place within social, cultural and material contexts as students collaborate and interact,

designing and interpreting meaning together (Warner & Dupuy, p. 119). This is fundamental, because language itself is complex, implicit, social, and contextual. The best way to help students to learn language is in a complex, implicit, social, and contextual environment.

I have found through personal experience that the multiliteracy approach can inspire a very active learning environment that promotes increased interaction and collaboration as learners interpret and create meaning. To give a practical example of this theoretical approach, during the Spring 2020 semester as a graduate instructor of French 1020 at USU, I decided to change up my course instruction using what I had learned while studying the multiliteracies pedagogy. Instead of structuring my course around a traditional grammar-based final exam, I decided to assign a project where students wrote their own 250 to 500-word short story in French using the grammar concepts they had learned all semester, which they then presented to the class. I determined that this would allow students to not just memorize words and grammar formations and regurgitate them on the exam but be able to actively use grammar and vocabulary to convey a meaningful story to their peers. They completed the written project in three drafts, and then had to record themselves performing the story for their peers on video. In addition, they read their peers' stories and watched their performances and provided written feedback.

After the first draft in which they formulated their character and plot ideas, I gave them generalized feedback, and after the second draft, I gave them detailed feedback to help them identify grammar issues and explain how they were important to communicating the meaning of the story. For example, a central language goal during the semester was being able to correctly use the two past tenses, *imparfait* and *passé composé*, to be able to narrate a story in the past. Several students had issues using these tenses correctly during the second draft, and the detailed feedback helped me identify which issue they were struggling with, whether it was identifying

which tense should be used in a specific scenario, or whether it was correct selection and placement of the auxiliary verb for the *passé composé*. This enabled me to individualize their instruction and target the specific problems each student was having. It also gave them a context in which they pushed themselves to identify and correct their errors so that they could better negotiate meaning for their audience. Rather than giving them all of the answers, I worked through a couple of examples from their own work to show them the proper procedure, and then highlighted the remaining examples of that issue so they could correct the rest on their own. By the final draft, students were able to correct the majority of these issues on their own within an embedded context rather than just arbitrary and manufactured examples on an exam.

I feel that this kind of project using the multiliteracies methods was so much more effective than a traditional method because it gave the students a real scenario in which they needed to negotiate meaning through written text with their peers. The feedback allowed me to individually target issues in context, which they had a chance to apply immediately, rather than just getting a grade on the exam, shrugging their shoulders, and moving on to the next memorization task. Instead, the students were very proud of their work, and by the end, they had a finished, accurate product to show for their efforts which demonstrated their proficiency. I am also very proud of their hard work and the progress they made during that semester.

Teaching Sociopragmatics

We live in a social world, both face to face and online. L2 learners, and in particular Generation Z learners, must gain cultural awareness and learn to negotiate meaning in variety of social contexts. Even if all of the aforementioned principles were put in place effectively by the teacher, there would still be one ingredient missing: sociopragmatics. An L2 learner could have mastered and acquired every lexical and syntactical usage of their L2 and be able to interpret

texts and create linguistically beautiful phrases or pen paragraphs containing sophisticated arguments. However, if they do not know how to use that language appropriately within social settings, then they can create misunderstandings or serious problems.

Sociopragmatics involves understanding how people use language to interact with others according to a given culture's social norms and values. It is important for teachers to remember that this involves the concepts of *speech acts* and *face*. Speech acts are words and phrases that carry out specific social functions, such as apologizing, making excuses, or making requests, etc. While many speech acts are common to all languages, each culture will have norms surrounding each type of act (and the rules of politeness, or face) that vary considerably (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010).

Face is the public persona that individuals want others in society to perceive. Positive face relates to how a person wants to be included and validated by a group, and negative face relates to ways in which an individual designates themselves independent and autonomous from the group. Every culture has its own values in regards to face (of course out of the scope of this TPS to enumerate them all). Which values are most emphasized can vary between groups or individuals, and many cultural misunderstandings can be attributed to placing emphasis on certain core values over others. For instance, some cultures may emphasize conformity, tradition, and security over self-direction, stimulation, and hedonism (Spencer-Oatey, 2007). Values ranging widely, from individuality to equality to modesty to loyalty, and beyond may all come into play in social interactions for language learners. In addition, values play a vital role in social engagement. Awareness of these kinds of issues present in intercultural interaction need to be transmitted to students so that they can avoid cultural faux pas.

According to Vasquez and Sharpless, "...unlike grammatical errors, pragmatic errors can

easily lead to misconstruals of speaker intentions, which can in turn lead to negative judgments about a speaker's personality or moral character" (2009, p. 6). Interaction and task-based learning are not sufficient to transmit such pragmatic knowledge. Pragmatics must be taught explicitly rather than implicitly since the classroom does not provide enough "...opportunities to observe how things are done with words" (Vasquez & Sharpless, 2009, p. 6-7). In my classroom I aim to integrate pragmatics as much as possible into role play and group work.

Implementing pragmatics into a curriculum can be a daunting task. It can be difficult to recreate authentic social situations within the classroom. However, of more importance than making sure that students are aware of every social faux pas they must avoid, it is more critical that students develop an explicit awareness that these social differences exist. This way, when they are in an actual immersion environment, they will be quicker to both recognize and adapt to differing sociopragmatic situations within their L2 culture. To this end, raising awareness can often be more important than trying to cram a list of cultural norms or sociopragmatic detail into students' heads.

Conclusion

Teaching an L2 effectively is complicated and multifaceted. My coursework in the MSLT program has shown me and helped me understand the underlying issues in acquisition, such as: what communication is, and how it functions as the site of acquisition in L2 learning through interaction and negotiation of meaning. Moreover, I have learned to implement the multiliteracies approach to language learning both by learning about it in my SLA Theory and Teaching through Literature classes, and through applying it in my own teaching as a DLI teacher and as a Graduate Instructor. As I have grown through my experiences teaching at both the university and middle school levels, it has become clear that negotiation of meaning does not

solely happen in oral communication. It is important to provide multiple modes and genres of communication, including reading and writing a variety of texts, in addition to listening and speaking. In addition, my MSLT coursework in Pragmatics underlined that in order to ensure that students can function appropriately in an L2 environment, they must be explicitly taught the sociopragmatics of the culture whose language they are learning. These are the fundamental underpinnings of my teaching philosophy. I hope that as I advance in my career and in my continuing efforts to grow and improve as an *engagé* teacher, I can use these concepts to help my students not only increase their proficiency in French, but also understand how to contribute to the world as engaged global citizens.

Professional Development Through Class Observations

During my time in the MSLT program, I have benefitted from numerous opportunities to observe other language teachers, including other French teachers, Spanish teachers, and ESL teachers. In addition, I have observed several teachers of other subjects my school, including English Language Arts and History that have also taught me valuable lessons about teaching middle school. I have observed a wide range of student age levels from elementary to secondary to university undergraduates. Teaching and observing many different ages, proficiency levels, and backgrounds has been invaluable. These observations were crucial in helping me improve my own teaching style and provided me with many ideas that I then incorporated into my own classroom.

This was particularly helpful as I began teaching in the DLI program. Going into that position, I had never taught that age group (12-13), and I had never had to teach content 100% in French. Although my coursework, my experience abroad, and my previous teaching experience as a graduate instructor had helped me prepare for the job, it was a steep learning curve as I adjusted to this new teaching environment in the content-based, immersion classroom. More than anything, observing other teachers was what helped me adapt successfully and gain confidence in implementing my own teaching style and philosophy. One of the most important things I learned is that no one has a monopoly on good teaching skills, there is no perfect pedagogical approach that fits all situations and all learners. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses in their teaching style. While there are common themes amongst the various teachers I observed, each brought a different teaching persona and energy to the classroom and implemented widely varying strategies to deliver the same core curriculum. Each was a good teacher, and each of them taught me important lessons about teaching.

In this document, I will reflect on three areas of my teaching that I improved as a direct result of my observations: positively motivating students, scaffolding, and improved group-work strategies.

Positive Motivation

As I mentioned in my TPS above, figuring out how to motivate teenage students can be a particular challenge as a DLI teacher. As a brand new DLI teacher, I was often frustrated by my students' apathy, and struggled to know how to motivate them to participate voluntarily or to complete their work in a timely manner. A couple of months into the school year, I arranged to observe an introductory Spanish teacher who used an ingenious peso currency system in his classroom to motivate his students. During class, he gave out (fake) pesos to students who completed work, participated in an activity, or who displayed exemplary behavior towards their peers. In addition, he told me about how he would have certain days where he would encourage the students to speak only Spanish by giving each student three pesos at the beginning of class. If a classmate spoke in English, a student could demand a peso from them; this system of accountability created an environment where he didn't have to police them—they policed themselves in their usage of Spanish. The goal of the pesos was for students to save them up for two auctions at the middle and end of each trimester. At these auctions, students with the most pesos could bid on popular items such as soda pop, candy, and snacks, while the class enjoyed a party. I liked that his peso system was a way to provide students with a positive reward for good behavior rather than having to constantly babysit or chastise students for negative behavior.

I was skeptical at first that such a simple reward system could be effective, but I decided to experiment with a similar system in my class, with “francs” instead. I was pleasantly surprised to find that it created a marked change in students' behavior as they had something positive to

work towards. Students voice their appreciation of this reward system and I gained a newfound appreciation for how even small positive rewards can help increase motivation in a classroom.

Scaffolding

Another way that I learned how to improve student motivation in my classroom came through observing how two fellow French DLI teachers, one in elementary, and one at another middle school, used scaffolding strategies to break up class work into smaller chunks. Earlier in the year, I had struggled to adapt my habits of teaching college students to my middle schoolers. The chunks of work I had were much too long to maintain the attention span of middle schoolers. However, I observed that these two more experienced DLI teachers broke their lessons down into smaller chunks to help break up the content and keep students' attention by varying the activities. For example, the elementary teacher broke his lesson down into 15-20-minute chunks. Although the theme was the same, the type of activity changed frequently to keep student interest. He started with a 15-minute lecture portion with a worksheet activity to help keep students engaged in the content while listening, then moved to a more physical gallery walk activity where students had to get up and gather visual information from several posters around the room, then he moved to an interactive vocabulary session where he and the students played charades to guess the vocabulary from the unit. Similarly, in part of another teaching observation I conducted, the middle school DLI teacher broke his lessons into smaller chunks, including an individual grammar warm-up, a group activity that required students to move around, an activity where students engaged in a Nearpod (an online student engagement platform) presentation through their own laptop, and finishing off with a 5-minute reflective writing activity.

I admired the way both of these teachers were able to scaffold their lessons through breaking them up into smaller chunks that built on prior learning. I mimicked them in my own lessons, and soon saw improvements in my students' engagement.

Group Work Strategies

Another way I found to improve student engagement and increase interaction was to improve my group work strategies. At the beginning of the year, I was spending too much time at the front of the class talking at the students and was constantly stressed about student interruptions and dealing with student questions and behavioral issues. I had tried some group work, but found that it could descend into chaos, with students mostly discussing their personal lives in English rather than completing the assigned task in French. After this initial attempt at group work, I limited myself to work in pairs because I was afraid to lose control of the class. However, after observing a history teacher and an English teacher, I learned some more effective strategies for organizing group work to help students remain on task and reduce my time in front of the class so that I could better address individual students' needs.

The history teacher I observed had a group-work activity where he divided his students into teams of four. Each group of four students had their desks joined in a table facing each other. The task was to read multiple historical source documents and to write down key points and summaries individually on a worksheet while working as a group. This task would then lead into another task where students would write an essay on the topic. The teacher had all of the source documents and would give each table only one document at a time at random so that students had to work together to extract the required information (in a jigsaw-style activity). When one source was completed, they could check off that document and obtain the next one from the teacher. I noticed that because the students received the documents in no particular

order, other groups would be working on a different document, and could not “cheat” off of other groups’ work. The students seemed to enjoy working together, and they liked the autonomy and self-pacing. In addition, the teacher was available to help struggling individuals and groups as needed without taking away from other students’ attention or work time.

I took this activity and experimented with it successfully in my own classroom. In addition, I appreciated the work with documents since I have an academic background in history. I loved how it got the students engaged in authentic materials while also providing them opportunities to work with each other to figure it out, thereby engaging in interpretive and analytical activities. Because the documents were in French, I heard students speaking a lot more French to each other to process the documents (which I of course rewarded with fake francs). I faced two main challenges with this activity: proficiency levels and behavior. A couple groups had one learner at a much lower proficiency level than their peers in the group, so the more advanced members of the group took over a lot of the work. I also had a couple of groups with one student who was less motivated to do the work and just copied off of their peers.

To remedy this issue, I applied some teaching wisdom I observed in an English teacher’s classroom. This teacher had showed me how she grouped students together according to a combination of their language level and their classroom behavior. I had also read about similar strategies in my MSLT reading involving how to match up students of different proficiency levels. I tried a blend of these strategies in my classroom and did the same activity as before with better results. I grouped advanced students with motivated intermediate students. This helped the intermediate students push themselves a little harder. Then I grouped less motivated intermediate students with students at lower proficiency levels. The students with lower proficiency levels worked hard but relied on the intermediate students to help them through the more difficult

sections (which helped them stay engaged). For the students who struggled with their behavior and tended to copy off of others' work, I grouped them all together so that none of them could rely on the others to copy their work. Since most of the other groups stayed on task pretty well, I had more time to help this lower motivation group stay on task and produce better quality work than they had in previous groups. Overall, I was very pleased that I had been able to apply group work strategies and task-based learning approaches from other teachers, and saw significant improvements in student engagement, classroom behavior, and quality of student work. My classroom has become more student-centered as a result of the changes I have made based on many such teaching observations and consultations with other teachers.

This reinforces to me how important it is for teachers to collaborate with and learn from other teachers, even across different languages and disciplines, so that they do not feel isolated in the issues they face. With every challenge I faced in the classroom, there was always a strategy I could learn from other teachers. Even though I also drew on ideas I had gained in my own coursework, it was so much more efficient and impactful for me to see strategies played out in real time in other teachers' classrooms. I will continue with face-to-face and online observations in the future.

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

CULTURE PAPER
Disagreement: *Engagé* Discussion in French Discourse

Orientation and Reflection

In the fall of 2018, I took a course taught by Dr. Karin deJonge-Kannan called Culture Teaching and Learning. This course included an overview of the field of sociolinguistics as it relates to language learning and teaching. She introduced us to the concept that even though a person could theoretically know all of the vocabulary and grammar features of a language, this does not mean that they would know how to use the language appropriately in a given social setting. We explored the concepts of speech acts and positive and negative face, and how learning these sociocultural competencies is an important component of communicative competence. Below is an exploration of one particular topic related to face that I have found particularly important in my teaching.

This paper compares disagreement strategies between English and French. Disagreement in English is usually a positive face-threatening act (FTA) because it calls into question the competency of the person one is disagreeing with, and generally anglophones seek consensus (sincere or artificial) and avoid disagreement. However, if one must disagree, then one must employ a number of hedging strategies to acknowledge the competence of the speaker and soften the force of one's own opinion. In contrast, French speakers value the concept of being *engagé* (socially engaged), which encompasses the right to one's own opinion, and the duty to express that opinion whether or not it agrees with the other speaker. Thus, francophones often embrace open and frank disagreement as a sign of engagement in a conversation. Indeed, failing to engage, not expressing a strong opinion, or hedging one's disagreements too much can be perceived as an FTA in which the one disagreeing is treating their interlocutor in a condescending manner, or even as a child who cannot handle the truth.

The example of the contrast between English and French disagreement strategies underscores how important it is to teach sociolinguistic strategies to language learners beyond the standard grammar and vocabulary. These are language concepts and cultural nuances that cannot be acquired implicitly, but must be learned through explicit instruction. Understanding that other cultures use language differently is crucial to avoid social faux pas and cultural misunderstandings and can make the difference between a positive and negative experience when students have the opportunity to study abroad or otherwise interact with speakers of their L2.

As a teacher, I value the importance of teaching the sociolinguistic differences to my students, not only for the above-mentioned benefits, but also because it helps them develop critical thinking skills and compassion for others who may not understand their own culture's expectations. I also love the concept of social engagement, and as a French teacher, I want to be engaged in my students' education and I want my students to learn how to be socially engaged with the world around them so they can become good global citizens.

Disagreement: *Engagé* discussion in French discourse

Introduction

Brown and Levinson's model of face (1987) argues that disagreement is a Face-Threatening Act (FTA) which needs to be mitigated within polite conversation. However, this model was based on English, and many scholars have called for a revision to the model to reflect differing values in other linguistic cultures. Within French culture, for example, disagreement may not actually be an FTA depending upon the context. Giving conflicting opinions within a conversation can actually be a sign of positive social engagement. This paper will examine this contrasting phenomenon within Brown and Levinson's model of face.

Brown and Levinson's Model of Face

Face is a theoretical concept of politeness developed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Face represents how an individual desires to be perceived by others in a social context. Each individual possesses two types of face, negative and positive. Negative face regards being an autonomous individual within a social unit. Positive face regards being perceived as a useful and attractive member of a social unit. Both positive and negative face can be threatened by the words (known as speech acts) of others within the social unit. These threats are called Face Threatening Acts (FTAs). One's negative face is threatened when another individual imposes upon one's autonomy (e.g., threats, orders, advice, or requests). One's positive face is threatened by another individual maligning one's reputation, exposing one to social embarrassment, or calling into question one's competence (e.g., insults, accusations, or disagreements) (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1992).

Disagreement, under Brown and Levinson's model, is considered a positive FTA. A disagreement occurs when a speaker offers an opinion, and then the hearer responds in

disagreement to that opinion, and often then provides a countering opinion. That response is called a dispreferred response, meaning that it is not the response that would have been preferred by the speaker, implying that the preferred response would have been agreement and acknowledgement (Béal, 1993; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1992; Mullan, 2012). In most Anglo cultures, consensus is preferred because disagreeing too prolifically can be viewed as calling into question the competency of the speaker (thus threatening their positive face). However, if disagreement must be given, then one must use mitigation strategies to soften the disagreement, such as hedges, verbal hesitations, and downgrading strategies. This doesn't mean that expressing opinions is not valued, it just means that one has to be careful not to set up one's opinion as fact and acknowledge others' autonomous right to their own opinions (Mullan, 2012).

Critiques of Brown and Levinson's Model Within French Cultural Norms of Disagreement

Several scholars disagree as to how Brown and Levinson's face model fits within French conversational norms. For instance, Kerbrat-Orecchioni, a key figure in interactional studies within La Francophonie, voices some basic critiques of Brown and Levinson's original model of face. She is generally in agreement with them, that "...all social subjects are endowed with a face-want" (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2011, p. 134). When individuals interact socially, they inevitably intrude upon others' positive or negative face through Face Threatening Acts (FTAs). Individuals must employ facework in order to minimize the social risk of these FTAs, generally through the use of speech acts which follow cultural norms (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2011). However, she also argues that their model should be re-examined, stating that, "The general principles of politeness are universal, but their application varies from one culture to another (divergent conceptions of face, so of what constitutes a face-threatening act/face-flattering act, according to place and era)" (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2011, p. 136).

In terms of disagreement, Kerbrat-Orecchioni observes that in contrast to Anglo culture, French culture values an ethos of confrontation, which is welcoming of conflict and skeptical of consensus. Disagreement is the driving force behind conversation, and exchanging opinionated views with a conversation partner is socially desirable (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 1992).

Likewise, Béal questions whether Brown and Levinson's positive and negative face model can be accurately adapted to French sociopragmatics. In her estimation, negative face corresponds to the Anglo-Saxon values of the autonomy of the individual and of non-interference in others' business. Imposing the idea of negative face onto a French cultural setting is therefore ungainly and does not reflect French cultural values and norms. Even to say that the French value the opposite, that they make greater usage of positive face, is to deny that French speakers can be threatened or hurt by the unwitting transgression of French conversational norms by anglophones (Béal, 1993).

Il paraît cependant plus correct de dire que, si une autre norme culturelle l'emporte sur le désir de sauver la face, le choix de telle ou telle stratégie conversationnelle relève d'une logique différente qui n'entre pas dans le système de P. Brown et S. Levinson (Béal, 1993, p. 101).

[It seems therefore more correct to say that, if another cultural norm takes precedence over the desire to save face, the choice of this or that conversational strategy emanates from a different logic which does not figure into the system of P. Brown and S. Levinson.]¹

¹ All translations of French to English are my own.

Béal disputes the universality of Brown and Levinson's claim on the basis that their system is biased towards anglophones; the very structure of their face theory is based on Anglo-Saxon cultural values. Perhaps were Brown and Levinson French, they may have framed the system differently. She takes Kerbrat-Orecchioni's view a step farther in saying that politeness norms are not universal, but should be evaluated and given a framework within the culture's own social values (Béal, 1993).

Béal's definition of French conversational politeness can be useful in understanding and teaching how opinion-giving and disagreement function within French culture:

Chacun a le droit d'avoir ses propres désirs, ses propres opinions, ses propres sentiments. Mais chacun a le devoir d'exprimer ses désirs, ses opinions, ses sentiments, de façon claire pour les autres, et si les autres veulent l'influencer, il a le devoir de défendre et de justifier ses désirs, ses opinions, ses sentiments (Béal, 1993, p. 102).

[Each individual has the right to his own desires, his own opinions, his own feelings. However, each individual has the duty to express his desires, his opinions, his feelings, in a clear fashion to other individuals, and if other individuals want to persuade that individual otherwise, that individual has a duty to defend and justify his desires, his opinions, his feelings.]

This need to share and justify one's opinions is encapsulated within the French term *s'engager*. While the term's direct translation is "to engage oneself," its cultural significance is not directly translatable. *S'engager* is to be involved, interested, and informed about the world around oneself, and to share these views with others in public, and if necessary, to defend them. To not be *engagé* is to appear antisocial, poorly raised, and apathetic (Béal, 1993). This can cause intercultural conflict when coming into contact with cultures who value a sense of social non-

committalness. Non-committalness is the concept that committing too readily to one's own opinion in a conversation infringes on the interlocutor's right to their own autonomous opinion, and thus pretending to agree or strongly hedging disagreements is preferred over direct disagreements. To anglophone cultures, who prefer non-committalness, the more confrontational ethos can make the French seem opinionated, egocentric overconfident, arrogant, and sometimes belligerent.

Béal argues that within French conversational norms, losing face in the moment does not negatively affect one's face in the long term, because to not voice one's opinion is more damaging to one's permanent face than voicing an unpopular or critical opinion in the moment. She contrasts this with English (Australians, in this study), where threatening face in the moment can have long-lasting negative repercussions. She calls this cultural value of opinion exchange *franchise*, or frankness. Sparing the listener, or subjecting them to tact, is an act of cowardice on the part of the tactful speaker, akin to treating the listener like a child who is not ready for the truth (Béal, 1993).

Mullan (2012) agrees with Béal that applying Brown and Levinson's model to disagreement in French can be problematic. He used conversational analysis to examine excerpts from three conversations, each with a differing configuration of native English and French speakers: English-English, French-French, and English-French (both speaking English). From his analysis, he concludes that "disagreements do not present a face threat for French speakers in the same way as for English speakers. Neither can they be considered dispreferred responses to the same extent as they are in English" (Mullan, 2012, p. 329). In reading the conversation transcripts, the French speakers appear to be much more comfortable both disagreeing and being

disagreed with, whereas the English speakers employ many hedges and downgraders, or actually call out their French interlocutor for being so quick to disagree.

In analyzing a disagreement in the English-English conversation, Mullan points out that dispreferred responses are full of hedges and other negative politeness strategies. Dispreferred responses here indicate responses by the hearer that are contrary to the speaker's statement or speech act. In English, the mitigation of dispreferred responses is meant to reduce the illocutionary force of disagreeing with the speaker and threatening his or her negative face. Generally the more sensitive a disagreement, or the greater the social distance, the more hedging, pausing, and apologizing will be proffered (Mullan, 2012).

In contrast, when the French speakers engage in a disagreement, there are no hedges or verbal hesitations. They explicitly utter their disagreements without negative politeness strategies. Mullan interprets this to mean that "neither participant viewed any part of this exchange as a face threatening act, either to themselves or their interlocutor" (Mullan, 2012, p. 336). Although admitting that a sample size of one does not indicate an entire linguistic trend, Mullan notes that both speakers were relative strangers, having met only once briefly ten days before. Mullan believes that this lack of familiarity would mean that both speakers would rely heavily upon implicit cultural conventions, and that it can be safely taken as within the realm of normativity (Mullan, 2012).

The third conversation in the Mullan article provides a contrastive example from a conversation in English between a native English speaker (Heather) and a native French speaker (Marie). In it, Heather uses dispreferred responses when disagreeing with Marie, while Marie does not when disagreeing with Heather. Furthermore, Marie verbally acknowledges and approves of Heather's disagreement, stating that she prefers honest opinion, reflecting her

cultural norm of an expectation of honesty and an autonomous right to one's beliefs and opinions. In contrast, Heather states that she would rather be polite than offend someone, or at the very least attempt a compromise of opinion, reflective of her cultural norm that disagreement with someone can be taken as a personal insult without the proper negative politeness strategies. Mullan observes that in French culture, friendships can not only withstand disagreements, they are even welcomed. Being opinionated indicates honesty and trustworthiness (Mullan, 2012).

Mitigation and Impersonal Expressions in the Co-construction of Arguments

Knutson, while acknowledging these cultural particularities of French conversational norms, urges hesitation in assuming that the “animated back and forth” and “a confrontational or conflictual ethos” (Knutson, 2015, p. 57) mean that in general the French always value conflict over consensus. In her qualitative study of seven informal conversations, she found that actual disagreements were rare, and were often mitigated and attenuated through impersonal expressions and indirect communication (Knutson, 2015).

Knutson found that interlocutors made use of personal expressions such as *je pense que* [I think that] to introduce their opinion, and often used downgraders such as *un peu* [a little] to reduce the illocutionary force of their opinion. Knutson noted that speakers often use these expressions in tandem with one another to jointly construct arguments, which she highlights as a counterpoint to the idea of opposition as central in French conversation (Knutson, 2015).

One indicator of this was the frequent occurrence of impersonal expressions, particularly with the impersonal pronoun *on*. Interlocutors often used these impersonal expressions to introduce arguments or opinions. What is different about these versus the personal expressions is that they are inclusive of the other speaker. Although impersonal, *on* is often used in French as a first-person plural pronoun to include the hearers as subjects with the speaker. It is different from

the English “one.” Thus, when introducing an opinion, it can give the impression that the speaker is stating common knowledge rather than declaring a personally defended opinion. In this way the speaker engages the hearer in co-construction on an argument and reduces direct oppositional conflict. She concludes that “...in this corpus, there is more mitigation, more indirect communication that what is sometimes suggested about the French in conversation in both research and textbooks” (Knutson, 2015, p. 62).

While these findings may complicate the evaluations of Béal, Kerbrat-Orecchioni, and Mullan, it is still fair to say that French conversational norms differ in their evaluation of disagreement from norms in English norms in many English-speaking countries. While co-constructing an argument may not be as conflictual as a spirited exchange of differing opinions, it is still indicative of the value that French culture places on having regular, engaged conversations about controversial topics. Sometimes individuals may actually be in agreement, like the educated subjects in Knutson’s study. In this case disagreeing just to disagree would not be constructive, but rather the individuals can build on each other’s social awareness of the topic.

In comparing these articles, it is important to note that they are all qualitative. None have sample sizes large enough nor statistical analysis to indicate whether these conversational strategies truly represent a norm. However, at face value they seem to be concordant on several themes. The first is that, in conversation, the French value the opinions of individuals. In contrast with English, who see unmitigated opinions as arrogant and insulting, the French see proffering opinions and disagreement as a personal and cultural duty. The second is that the French do not see disagreement within a single conversation as a face-threatening act. On the contrary, an over-willingness to agree, especially for the sake of tact, can be seen as self-damaging to the positive face of the tactful speaker—a sign of a greater flaw in character and a breach of social contract.

That said, as Knutson points out, this does not mean that the French need to disagree all the time. Sometimes the speakers' positions may be in agreement, and in this case, the speakers may use inclusive impersonal pronouns to build a co-constructed narrative. This fits well within Béal and Mullan's theories. In such a case, the speakers may cease to view each other as independent opinion-givers, but rather as one opinion-giver, sharing and building upon each other's ideas. In this way their autonomy of expression is preserved, and in fact becomes inclusive.

Kerbrat-Orecchioni and Béal's critiques of Brown and Levinson contribute to an understanding that cultural values and context must be taken into account when trying to analyze conversation according to the face model. Knutson helps balance Béal's arguments, however, by pointing out that the French are still capable of, and in fact employ regularly, mitigating speech. The cultural constructs surrounding conversational norms are complex, and it is important not to overgeneralize or stereotype them.

Comparisons of Disagreement in French L2 and L1 Classrooms

Can L2 learners of French successfully acquire native-like pragmatic interactional competence in disagreements? To answer this question, Doehler and Pochon-Berger conducted a cross-sectional study of disagreement in the French L2 learning environment. The subjects were French L2 learners from German-speaking Switzerland. There were two age groups representing two different competence levels: lower-secondary students at the intermediate-low level, and upper-secondary students at the advanced level (no indication of level within the advanced tier). These groups were compared to the control group of French L1 students also at the lower-secondary level.

The authors analyzed disagreements in student-to-student classroom conversation using the theoretical framework of Conversation Analysis. Within this model, the focus is on "how

learners use language in naturally occurring talk-in-interaction to accomplish situated actions, such as...(dis)agreeing with others” (Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2011, p. 208). The authors find disagreements useful as micropractices which can “provide evidence for interactional development as observable changes in the way participants accomplish recurrent situated actions” (Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2011, p. 210). When the disagreements are studied either longitudinally or cross-sectionally (as in this study), they can provide evidence for acquisition of student pragmatic interactional competence over time.

The marker of interactional competence here is the ability to use a diverse range of native-like disagreement strategies within a given interaction. The authors found that the intermediate-low French L2 students used primarily immediate direct disagreement strategies (which according to face would be dispreferred responses without hedges or other mitigation strategies), whereas the advanced students had a much more diverse array of disagreement strategies, including mitigated indirect disagreements. Within each group, the disagreement strategies were broken down into percentages of overall use. When compared to the control group of native French L1 students, the advanced L2 group’s results matched the native speakers’ results much more closely than did the results of the intermediate-low L2 students. While no statistical analysis was conducted to confirm the significance of this correlation, the authors draw the conclusion that L2 learners of French can effectively learn native-like disagreement strategies (Doehler & Pochon-Berger, 2011).

In comparison with the earlier analysis of disagreements in French, one thing that jumps out from Doehler and Pochon-Berger’s study is that the native French speaking school-aged children actually employed a lot of mitigation techniques in their disagreements, more than would be hypothesized based on conclusions drawn by Béal, Kerbrat-Orecchioni, and Mullan.

Again, context is crucial. We may speculate that perhaps within some peer-to-peer learning environments, arguments are constructed with more mitigation, or perhaps children at such an age are still being socialized into the adult methods of being *engagé* in discussions or in other parts of everyday life. To form either conclusion properly would necessitate more research in that context.

Conclusion

In synthesizing all of these authors' arguments about disagreement within the model of face, the conclusions are as follows. First, the face model was originally constructed by native English speakers and is inherently biased. The model must be revised and adapted to each different linguistic culture in order to be effective since each culture has different values and different conversational norms of politeness. Second, French differs from English in that it values the qualities of social engagement and frankness. Within these values, each individual is entitled to his or her own opinion and is expected to share and defend that opinion. Individuals who do not do so risk being seen as uninformed, dishonest, or untrustworthy. Generally speaking, within conversations, French people can give unmitigated opinions and disagree with each other without necessarily incurring an FTA. Conversely, being too quick to agree or sparing another's feelings can be an FTA. Third, this does not mean that French people have to disagree or argue all the time. However, even when agreeing, speakers must demonstrate their social engagement and awareness in co-constructing arguments with their interlocutors. Fourth, there is room for mitigation within disagreement depending upon the context. Social distance and environment can create situations where French people can and do regularly employ mitigation strategies when necessary. Finally, as always, understanding language within a cultural context is complex, and answers to such questions should always be complicated and messy.

LANGUAGE PAPER

Issues of French as a global lingua franca:

General themes worldwide and local specifics in Côte d'Ivoire

Orientation and Reflection

In the fall of 2019, I took another course taught by Dr. deJonge-Kannan called Teaching English in a Global Context. This course examined the complex reasons why English became a dominant worldwide language, and the most commonly used lingua franca across the globe. We discussed the concepts of core, inner circle, and outer circle Englishes, and how the English-speaking countries at the core are often privileged over other Englishes, even though the core Englishes do not possess any inherent traits that make them superior. This made me want to examine the same concepts within the French-speaking world to see if there are similarities to this phenomenon with English and world Englishes. For French speakers, Metropolitan French (those dialects spoken within Europe and Switzerland, and more specifically in the Paris or Ile-de-France region) is often held up as the standard by which all other Frenches are measured. Also, the word francophone, while generally meaning anyone who speaks French, is often used pejoratively to differentiate the *français* (French from metropolitan France) from the *francophones* who live *outré mer* (abroad) all around the world. Paradoxically, however, *francophones* outnumber the *français* three to one. In this paper, I explore how French spread worldwide, and how a legacy of colonialism shapes the politics of what it means to be a French speaker in the world today. Below I also have chosen as just one brief example Côte d'Ivoire investigating further the implications of postcolonialism, language, and francophone identity.

In the class, we also discussed how native-speaker teachers are often privileged over non-native-speaker teachers even when a non-native-speaker teacher possesses equivalent or better qualifications. This struck a chord with me personally, as I often feel this bias against me as a non-native-speaker teacher of French DLI. Many parents and administrators subscribe to the native speaker fallacy: that somehow being a native speaker of a language automatically makes a

person better qualified to teach that language (Phillipson 1992). However, that idea that native speakers make “better” teachers is as unfounded as saying that someone who is naturally good at math will also be an excellent math teacher. This is not correct because understanding a subject implicitly does not mean that one understands how to teach the subject explicitly using proper pedagogical methods. Any language teacher, whether a native speaker or not, needs to have proper pedagogical training to be an effective teacher. Moreover, it is my contention that both native speakers and non-native speakers bring important perspectives and backgrounds to a classroom. For instance, non-native speaker teachers understand how difficult it is to acquire the language. They have felt the same frustrations and misunderstandings that their students have felt and are well-equipped to guide students through the many pitfalls of language learning. They may also be sometimes better positioned to help students notice linguistic or cultural differences or make cultural comparisons.

People learn languages for widely varying reasons, and someone’s accent or dialect should not be automatically associated with their proficiency, competence or education level. In places like Côte d’Ivoire, the subject of the second half of this paper, for example, people often learn four or more languages to meet various needs in their daily lives. Even though French is the official language of the country, and is the sole language of education and government, it does not reflect the native language of the majority of the population. Yet, many Ivorians have adopted the French language as their own and have incorporated it into their identity. Their French may not sound like it is from Paris, but it is still French, and they are entitled to it just as much as anyone born in Paris, Nice, Brussels, or Geneva. I think it is important to break down those barriers between the core and the periphery, between the *français* and the *francophones*, and for me, being a DLI teacher is a fundamental part of that challenge because I can show my

students how learning French can benefit their lives even if they never leave Utah, and how it can also become an important part of their identity, just as it is to me and 430 million other people around the world.

Issues of French as a global lingua franca:

General themes worldwide and local specifics in Côte d'Ivoire

Introduction

France has long prided itself in its language and culture, and culture is, in a way, its number one export. Refined dining experiences, high fashion, gritty and picturesque films, and a philosophical existentialism are among many stereotypes of French culture known around the world. This international awareness of French culture far outsizes the numerical presence of francophones in the world. Many people continue to consider French as a prestige lingua franca despite its decline in the face of the growing power of English. The first half of this paper will explore the reasons for this at the macro level, responding to the following questions:

1. How did French become a lingua franca historically?
2. Can French still be considered a global lingua franca today?
3. How do francophone peoples and countries continue to promote French as a lingua franca in the face of the growing dominance of English as a lingua franca?
4. What speculations can be made about French's future as a lingua franca?

The last half of the paper will explore the micro level by examining a sample country, Côte d'Ivoire, to see how global trends impact one country where French serves as a local lingua franca, answering the following questions:

1. How does French serve as a lingua franca in Côte d'Ivoire?
2. What are the characteristics of the relationship between Ivorians and the French language?
3. How does the use of French impact politics, education, and culture in Côte d'Ivoire?

French today

French is an official language of 32 countries in the world, with an estimated 300 million L1 speakers worldwide, and an additional 130 million L2 learners of French. It is the fifth most spoken language in the world after Chinese, English, Spanish, and Arabic. In addition, French is the fourth most used language on the internet after English, Chinese, and Spanish (OIF, 2018). France itself has a population of 67 million (Insee, 2020), or about 22% of worldwide L1 French speakers,² and if all European francophones are included, they make up approximately 34% of daily speakers of French worldwide.

These global statistics suggest that French continues to be influential in many countries despite the continuing rise of English, and can definitely be considered an important global lingua franca, especially for the 430 million users of French worldwide. That number is only expected to grow, particularly in Africa along with population growth and growth in educational systems, with a projected 477-747 million L1 speakers of French worldwide by 2070 (OIF, 2018).

On another level, in terms of world politics, French still holds an important place in international diplomacy as an official language in many international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the World Trade Organization, the International Olympic Committee, Doctors without Borders and the Red Cross. This begs the question, how did French become such a powerful language worldwide? The answer is in its colonial past.

² This does not account for the percentage of L2 learners of French living in France including immigrants, which would be included in the census population. This is just to show a rough estimate.

Rise of the “lingua franca”

From the seventeenth century through the World Wars, French became a prestige lingua franca throughout Europe and beyond, and as European influence spread around the world through imperialism and expansionism, it became a global lingua franca. French spread from the courts of the powerful French absolutist monarchs like Louis XIII and Louis XIV to courts all over Europe, and soon became the de facto language of diplomacy. Royal courts in Austria, Prussia, Russia, Sweden, and England, among others, communicated to each other in French. Political treaties and scientific treatises were written increasingly in French instead of Latin, with the French language strictly regulated by the *Académie Française*. For all of the negative impact, hegemonic discourse, and violence it brought, through colonialism, French colonies around the world ensured a global presence of French (Dubois & Mbembe, 2014; Wright 2016). Even our word for a common language used by speakers of different languages to communicate, *lingua franca*, literally refers to the French language because this Latin term came into usage during the height of French power.

Starting in the 17th century, with the founding of Québec in North America, France began to expand its empire outside of the European continent as an imperialist power. Although French influence remains in a small part in the Americas and in France’s Caribbean *départements* and beyond, France’s biggest linguistic colonial legacy is in Africa, both in sub-Saharan African and in the Maghreb region of North Africa. During the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, France colonized several countries in Africa, made both negative and positive impacts, and left an indelible mark on their politics, cultures, and economies.

The decline

However, world politics shifted drastically during and after the World Wars. France was ravaged by both World War I (WWI) and World War II (WWII), and it took the country (and overseas colonies and territories) a couple of decades to rebuild their economy and repair their infrastructure. To generalize, the United States, and to a lesser extent, the United Kingdom, took a more important position of power in European (and hence world) politics, lending further power to English. This rebalancing of power also played out on a linguistic level; for example, the US insisted that the Treaty of Versailles ending WWI be written in English rather than just French. In addition, the British and the Americans insisted that English be one of the working languages of the UN after WWII, even though French remained an official UN language (Vigouroux 2013, Wright, 2016).

Thenceforth, English, already becoming a powerful world language through British global imperialism, American western expansionism, and the World Wars, took center stage in world politics as the United States made advances in diplomatic, military, economic and scientific power. Perhaps somewhat belatedly, France tried (and continues to try) to deploy several strategies to maintain their position as the world lingua franca, but, as Wright (2016) points out, “If the factors for lingua franca status are present, the language will spread. If not, there is no political action that can replicate them” (p. 153). The political, cultural, and economic situations which first gave rise to the ideal climate for French to become the lingua franca were gone.

However, despite a decline in power vis-à-vis English, French retains a firm linguistic grip on the world through its former colonies and current overseas departments and territories (DOM-TOM), and the number of French speakers in the world is growing rapidly. While it may not occupy the same place on the world stage as English, it is still a powerful world language in

its own right, and France continues to invest in spreading its language and maintaining French's influence in countries where it is already present. In addition, many francophone countries have appropriated French as an official language of their own, and as members of l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), they also continue to promote the interests and power of French speaking countries. This organization sees their common language as empowering.

Though somewhat controversial in some circles, the OIF and *la Francophonie* can be a unifying form of empowerment for some nations or groups. The OIF is surprisingly centralized, organized, and well funded by its member states. It has many auxiliary organizations which carry out research, promote education, and advise francophone countries on their linguistic and educational policies. Such organizations include: the Observatoire démographique et statistique de l'espace francophone (ODSEF), which carries out statistical demographic research of francophone communities wherever they reside, and the Conférence des ministres de l'Éducation des États et gouvernements de la Francophonie (CONFEMEN), which carries out studies of all francophone educational systems throughout the world. Both organizations publish regular reports on the status of French usage and education in each country. In addition, the Fédération Internationale de Professeurs de Français (FIPF) promotes teacher training, online resources, and academic collaboration around the world for elementary, secondary, and professional education in French, including languages for specific purposes (such as French for business or healthcare).

Judging by the massive quantities of data generated by these organizations, the OIF is well equipped to support the efforts of francophone countries to be an integral part of the francophone community at large. Just from reading the materials on Côte d'Ivoire (covered below) even given limited funding and resources, they are fairly successful at their mission to promote the continued learning of French and of its use as a lingua franca to promote economic

growth, education, and positive human rights improvements. It is rather encouraging, and seems to be a sign that French is alive and well as a global lingua franca that can be both useful and unifying for speakers of French, and it will continue to grow in the near future.

The OIF's current enthusiasm for promoting French may have good intentions, but it is important to note that the origins of the idea of la *Francophonie* came out of the colonial era, when many French people believed they had a *mission civilisatrice*, a mission to civilize, towards their colonies. The idea behind the hegemony of French was that the French language had a supposedly universal power (similar to colonial beliefs about the "Manifest Destiny" of English) to inculcate the ideals of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité*, and thereby to "free" the colonized peoples from their alleged savagery and ignorance. The irony is that when the colonized peoples did seize upon those republican ideals to liberate themselves from French oppression, the French government was not keen to give them liberty, equality, or brotherhood. Examples include the Haitian Revolution and Algeria's war for independence (Murphy 2002).

Initially, the term *francophonie* was coined in 1880 by Onésime Reclus to inclusively designate a worldwide community of speakers who share the same French language, but it quickly became used to label those outside of the core European French-speaking community in French colonies, former colonies, and overseas departments and territories as peripheral and less important. An example of this use of the term *francophone* was also evident within academia both in France and elsewhere as French-language literature studies were often divided into "French studies" and "francophone studies," with French authors and works given more attention and prestige than francophone ones (Dubois & Mbembe, 2014; Judge, 1996; Murphy, 2002; Vigouroux 2013). Today, this is changing, as authors and filmmakers of francophone expression are studied more and more widely in academic settings.

During the 1960s, many leaders of former French colonies, such as Léopold Sédar Senghor of Senegal, and the former, highly westernized Tunisian president Habib Bourguiba embraced the concept of *La Francophonie* as a network of French-speaking nations who could join forces in promoting solidarity among French speaking nations, in particular against the increasing hegemony of the United States and other anglophone nations. Leaders like Senghor and Bourguiba were educated in the French system and saw French language and ties to France as a way to unite peoples in their nations across local linguistic and political borders, and so in 1970 they and 19 other representatives of various francophone states and governments founded the OIF (Judge, 1996; Murphy, 2002; Vigouroux, 2013).

This creates a conundrum, because on the one hand, the OIF was founded by, and is maintained by, member states who have banded together to promote their interests and to use French for their own purposes to empower themselves against bigger and stronger countries, including their former colonizers, France and Belgium. Supporters of this *Francophonie* tout their institution's power to spread education, opportunity, and equality (Judge, 1996). However, others argue that the institution retains vestiges of the colonial relationship which favor elitist doctrines about the "universal" nature of French at the expense of other linguistic and political units within their countries, as Murphy (2002) points out:

It is also deeply misleading to imagine that the position adopted by the African elite [to promote French] reflects a wider popular set of beliefs in African countries... The French language may still enjoy great prestige at all levels of African societies but this is because French gives access to education and employment, and not because all Francophone African nations feel a deep attachment to French language and culture. The creation of *la*

Francophonie has been, almost entirely a ‘top-down’ affair with little or no popular initiative involved. (p. 167)

This critique contrasts sharply with the OIF’s brightly optimistic rhetoric that French education is empowering people based on the French republican ideals of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*. Perhaps it is best to take the middle path. It seems to me that most of those involved in OIF administration today are keenly aware of their institution’s post-colonial legacies. They are educated and skeptical themselves and seem genuine in their desire to accomplish good purposes through their efforts. However, it is also important to retain a critical and skeptical approach to make sure that institutions like the OIF can be held accountable for their stated mission’s effects on people. In the following section, I will be examining the Côte d’Ivoire as an example of a participating member-nation of the OIF and the complex ways in which French language promotion and education affects people. The results vary according to each individual, and at the micro level it is impossible to take a Manichean stance of whether the OIF’s mission there is positive or negative because it is so complex.

French and education in Côte d’Ivoire

Côte d’Ivoire is a country of about 24.9 million people in West Africa, situated on the Atlantic coast between its neighbors Liberia, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Ghana. Its capital is Yamoussoukro, and its largest city and economic center is Abidjan. There are around 70 different languages spoken within Côte d’Ivoire, but French is the sole official language, as well as the primary language of education (PASEC, 2016). According to the official 2013 census, 47.45% of Ivorians consider themselves francophones. However, the Observatoire démographique et statistique de l’espace francophone (ODSEF) estimates that about 33% of Ivorians above 10 years old can read and write in French (Beck et al., 2018). Of course, language

and identity are inextricably tied and can also be a matter of contention, so some speakers that view French negatively as the hegemonic language of the colonizer, might choose not to self-identify or self-report as francophone, even if they are proficient in French or French language education was available to them.

Moreover, in addition to questions of identity and the controversy over whether or not to refer to oneself as francophone or a member of the global Francophonie, these figures can be misleading, as most people from all layers of society are familiar to some extent with French, and urban areas in particular use French in one form or another to communicate with each other. Language and education are a matter of access and tend to be related to a socio-economic hierarchy in this country and others. There is a dialect continuum of French in Côte d'Ivoire: educated French (*français scolarisé*), Popular Ivorian French (*français populaire ivoirien*) (FPI), and Nouchi. Educated French is, as the name implies, the language of the educated and elite. It is fully mutually intelligible with Metropolitan French, with a few minor phonological and syntactic differences unique to the region. FPI is somewhat akin to a creole. FPI's roots and grammar are recognizably French, with simplified morpho-syntax and a high degree of mutual intelligibility with Metropolitan French. Nouchi started out as a type of slang used by youths starting in the 1980s, but spread quickly throughout Côte d'Ivoire, especially in the poorer suburbs of the cities. Its morpho-syntax is similar to FPI, but its lexicon is heavily influenced by local African languages, particularly Dioula, and also by the English pidgin of neighboring Ghana (N'Guessan, 2008; Gonzales-Garcia & Mlachila, 2016). This dialect continuum is therefore not contained by political borders, as language and culture tend to transcend borders in powerful ways.

This complex continuum makes it very difficult to actually pin down concrete numbers of francophones in Côte d'Ivoire (and indeed in some other countries and regions). Using any particular statistical set poses problems. If we take only those who can read and write proficiently, then it eliminates a large number of people who use FPI on a daily basis orally, but who may not be able to pass a reading/writing proficiency examination. To add to this complexity, is the question of where the speakers of Nouchi fit since it has a low degree of mutual intelligibility with Metropolitan French. The OIF and its subsidiaries and associates seem primarily concerned with the French education of Ivorians, and their ability to interact with other members of la Francophonie more globally, so for the OIF reading and writing seem to be the true mark of francophone status. Therefore, Nouchi would not be important to them except as a marker that French has influenced the local slang, but it does not carry the educative value that standard French or even FPI does. Unfortunately, the OIF is not as inclusive as it could be.

Language became divisive, rather than unifying, in the beginning of the postcolonial era. In regard to education, colonial policy in some former French colonies largely ignored teaching the general populace French except for a small elite who served in some administrative capacity. However, this changed after the conference of Brazzaville in 1945, near the end of the colonial period. French education policy was strict and not inclusive: it was to exclude all local languages from school, and to require 100% French language from students while at school. Anecdotally, students who slipped up were reportedly required to wear an object of shame, such as a skull or an old tin can, singling them out. This harsh policy ignored the plurilingualism of the students, and the fact that they were not only learning how to speak French, but that they were also learning to read and write in a language they didn't know. Demonstrating proficiency in these two activities was the true mark of belonging to the educated class. This policy only served to

further stratify linguistic markers of class and to discourage many Ivorians without French linguistic resources at home from pursuing further education in French than what was necessary (N'Guessan, 2008). Literacy and French language proficiency proved a dividing line in the country for many people.

However, attitudes shifted toward French with independence in 1960 and with other former colonies asserting their independence. In contrast to many other Sub-Saharan African countries, there is no dominant local language in Côte d'Ivoire. For example, in the country of Sénégal, Wolof is the primary lingua franca of the country for most affairs, while French remains important for government and education (and Arabic for cultural and religious purposes). It is similar for Bambara in Mali and Lingala in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Côte d'Ivoire, however, no one local language counts more than 20% of the population in terms of native speakers, and even though many individuals speak one of the 6 biggest local languages in addition to their own native language, French remains the lingua franca of choice for most Ivorians between ethnic groups (Gonzales-Garcia & Mlachila, 2016; OIF, 2018; Leclerc, 2018). The multiplicity of languages, dialects and cultures in Côte d'Ivoire thus represents a special case and engenders a unique relationship with the French language.

At the time of independence in 1960, it was this factor of plurilingualism in the country that encouraged political leaders in Côte d'Ivoire to rally behind French as a “factor of cohesion within Côte d'Ivoire where [French] favored the coming together of our approximately one hundred ethnicities” (Leclerc, 2018).³ The first president of the newly independent Côte d'Ivoire,

³ “Le français, librement accepté par nous, a été un facteur de cohésion à l'intérieur de la Côte d'Ivoire où il a favorisé le regroupement de nos quelque cent ethnies.” All translations are the author's.

Félix Houphouët-Boigny, felt that the use of French was utilitarian in that it was a neutral outsider's language that would not privilege one local language over another, which could help unite the country and defuse tensions between ethnic groups. In this way he tried to detach French from its colonialist legacy and reframe it as a unification tool for his new country. In addition, he promoted French as a way to maintain politically and economically important links to France and other Western powers, and to have access to the global networks of francophone countries through the OIF and its auxiliaries (Leclerc, 2018; N'Guessan, 2008). Thus, French was not rejected or criticized as the language of the colonizer but seen as useful in some areas.

This language policy was actually quite effective at promoting the growth of French. Ivorians have, in large part, adopted French as their own and have shaped and changed it to address their own needs. Even the educated Ivorian French has taken on its own endogenous accent and characteristics unique to Côte d'Ivoire. Literature, the press, music, and the internet have all given Ivorians a forum in which to appropriate French as their own language (Gonzales-Garcia & Mlachila, 2016; N'Guessan, 2008). Many Ivorians might define themselves as writers, journalists, authors, artists, or musicians "of French expression." In addition, choosing to publish on line or in print in the French language helps some reach a wider global audience.

As more and more Ivorians pursue their university educations locally in French, the middle class has appropriated French for its own purposes, and "*le français ordinaire*" has become no longer just a language of the elite, but the language of everyday successful middle class Ivorians. (Gonzales-Garcia & Mlachila, 2016; N'Guessan, 2008). This affects more than the middle class, though, as N'Guessan (2008) points out:

Today no level of society escapes the grasp of French. Thus, civil servants and intellectual administrators communicate in French, the workers at the construction sites,

the little employees who make up the majority of the urban proletariat are obliged to communicate amongst themselves or with their bosses in a language which they master only imperfectly. The same can be said for uneducated youths, children in the street, etc.⁴ (paragraph 22).

In a survey of 2578 people in Abidjan, 88% considered studying French as the key to both personal and professional achievement. In addition, 98% considered mastery of French important to overall success in life. They scored the highest out of thirteen francophone African cities surveyed in these categories. This holds truer in urban areas than in rural, but that may be due in large part to the fact that education is more accessible in the cities (OIF, 2014). Again, accessibility to formal education and to language education is a major factor.

Despite the national and cultural valorization of French education, there are several issues with the educational system in Côte d'Ivoire, many stemming from economic issues and poverty. Côte d'Ivoire spends 20.7% of its public service budget on education, or about 4.7% of its GDP. Between 2009 and 2014, there was a significant increase in the number of children educated in Côte d'Ivoire, rising from about 57% to 75%. While this is good progress, it is important to note that there is still a quarter of the population that remains unreached by public or private school systems and there are many people that remain illiterate. There is also a gender skew in education, with almost 60% of the uneducated children being girls, and girls are more likely to drop out of school by the end of elementary versus boys. However, this has improved

⁴ “Aujourd’hui aucune couche sociale n’échappe à l’emprise du français. Ainsi les fonctionnaires et hauts cadres intellectuels communiquent entre eux en français, les ouvriers sur les chantiers, les petits employés qui forment la majorité du prolétariat urbain sont obligés de communiquer entre eux ou avec leurs patrons dans une langue qu’ils ne maîtrisent qu’imparfaitement. De même les jeunes déscolarisés, les enfants de la rue, etc.”

significantly in the last decade, with the main issues remaining in rural versus urban areas (PASEC, 2016).

One of the issues with the recent growth of education is the shortage of qualified teachers. The Ministry of Education has sought to ameliorate this situation by searching the wider region of West Africa for qualified teachers, as well as by investing in their university-level teacher-training programs, some of which they are accelerating temporarily to help fill the gap. French organizations such as the FIPF try to promote French language education, sending resources or publicizing the efforts of teachers in small urban or rural schools. Despite this push to generate new teachers as quickly as possible, because of limited personnel, space, and funding availability, the student-teacher ratio in elementary remains high at 43 to 1 (PASEC, 2016).

Even given the many financial, political, and logistical challenges of their growing educational system, the government of Côte d'Ivoire seems to be committed to continuing to improve both access to education and the quality of education. The Ministry of Education has put together an action plan for the next decade, which includes: increased access to education for children living rurally, better recruitment of teachers, better training of teachers, including long-term professional development plans; standardized testing reforms, reform of grade-repeating issues, and building middle schools closer to neighborhoods served by the feeder elementary schools (PASEC, 2016). These solutions promise to provide better access and better-quality education, not only in the field of French language.

Nowhere in any of these reports or data is there any information on the use of children's L1 (most frequently not French) in school. In studies of other African nations whose education systems also rely on a former colonizer's language as the primary medium of education, it can be a challenge for both the students and teachers to learn and teach in a language that is not the L1

of either group. Furthermore, use of a language other than the target language is discouraged and can incur punishment. This is another legacy of colonialism, that local languages are not given the same status or validity as the colonizers' language. (Arthur & Martin, 2006; Clegg & Afitska, 2011). The Ivorian government seems committed to backing French as the sole language of education in Côte d'Ivoire. This could be problematized as a continuation of colonization, but according to the ODSEF surveys, the vast majority of people surveyed feel that French is important for a successful life (OIF, 2014). So perhaps the government is simply addressing the people's needs. Thus, it is difficult to determine whether the net outcome is positive or negative because it varies so much by individual and by region and country, but this could be an area for further research.

Conclusions

Overall, Côte d'Ivoire seems to fit into the overall scheme of la Francophonie quite comfortably. French may be viewed by some speakers there as even more useful and unifying than it is considered to be by francophones in countries where plurilingualism is less prevalent. Ivorians have, in large part, appropriated French as their own, and Côte d'Ivoire benefits from a number of international Francophone organizations, most importantly the OIF, and its auxiliary organizations (ODSEF, PASEC, CONFEMEN, etc.). However, it also benefits from regional francophone alliances, the most important of which is the UEMOA, the Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine. The members of the UEMOA are all neighboring West-African states that share the same currency (CFA Franc) and have a free-trade zone similar to the EU. The member states are Bénin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinée-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Sénégal, and Togo. These member states have worked together frequently since decolonization, and, notably, exclude their anglophone neighbors, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Ghana. Although these

separations may date to colonization, and continue to bear the scars of colonization, it is nonetheless significant that these political and economic alliances still lie along linguistic boundaries despite the fact that some of these countries share some of the same local language families and similar cultures (in some cases). It can be easy to get into the mindset that all effects of colonialism have been negative since, of course, many bad things did happen as a result. The very notion of “*francophone*” or “*la francophonie*” with or without a capital “F” remains controversial in many areas today (Vigouroux, 2013). However, it is important to acknowledge the complexity of the issue, and that some effects are more neutral than negative, and may be even occasionally positive. For instance, French is seen by many to be the language of rapacious colonizers who pillaged and enslaved Africa for their own economic, political, and religious gain, then foisted their language and culture upon the residents. And this view is not wrong. However, the example of Côte d’Ivoire shows that a formerly colonized nation can still capitalize upon its colonizer’s language for its own gain, for both unity and utility, and can appropriate it for the furtherance of their own cultural identity. The *Académie Française* in Paris cannot control all speakers of French expression or all internet and social media users, so the language is bound to change and evolve in new geographic, social, and technological contexts.

This can be compared to the issues of English as a global lingua franca as well, on some levels. Although the “core” English-speaking countries have used and continue to use their language as a tool of dominance in the world arena, this does not stop expanding and peripheral countries from using it for their own gain and their own purposes, often creating new linguistic entities along the way that belong to neither party, but have become independent entities in their own right, much like Singlish, Chinglish, Hinglish, etc. It is important to recognize that languages are far too complex to deify or demonize. We can never generalize, and languages are

forever fluid, transformed by their users. Their influence waxes and wanes according to a multitude of factors. French is no different from English in that aspect. Indeed, both of those languages are themselves a product of Roman, Germanic, and Viking colonizations. Although French's global influence has waned since the beginning of the 20th century, it is still a very important player in world politics, particularly in those countries which continue to grapple with the legacy of French colonization. French can now be used by the people of those countries as a tool for their own benefit if they desire to do so. And if not, then it will be interesting to see how the linguistic map shifts yet again. As a teacher, the complex notion of la Francophonie and the many cultures around the world that it touches will be an important and evolving global topic for me to continue to explore with my students in the classroom. It is important to me that my students understand that French is not the sole property of the French Republic. It is important for US students to encounter the worldviews of people around the world who claim the French language as part of their identity, just as I hope my own students will someday.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Multiliteracies Approach to Second Language Acquisition

Introduction

In a multiliteracies approach, second language (L2) learners acquire language through exploring multiple modes of communication: writing, reading, listening, speaking, and viewing, and students interact with authentic samples such as podcasts, films, advertisements, literature, social media, oral conversation, etc. In this way, students experience authentic source materials that are situated within a communicative context, rather than artificially manufactured materials which are created to meet the linguistic goals of a target language textbook. A multiliteracies pedagogy “is a dynamic process of reusing and reshaping forms and conventions to understand and create meaning through texts” (Paesani, 2016, p. 270). Authentic texts are essential. Students work collaboratively to design meaning through interpretation and transformation of texts.

I first became interested in the multiliteracies pedagogy while taking Dr. Joshua Thoms’s course on Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theory. As I began teaching as a graduate instructor of French, then again later when I was hired to teach Dual Language Immersion (DLI), I began to see ways that this pedagogy could be applied in a real classroom setting. Many current world language and immersion curricula are based on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which as discussed in further detail below, is very beneficial for learning Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) but is deficient in building Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Multiliteracies, however, when integrated into a communicative classroom, can be very effective at building students’ CALP, so I began experimenting with various multiliteracies-based tasks in my classrooms to see if the theory matched the praxis. So far, I feel like a multiliteracies approach, in combination with already tried and true communicative practices, has been very helpful in constructing tasks for my students which help

them increase their language proficiencies, particularly in the reading and writing modes which are often deficient in a communicative classroom. This bibliography aims to provide an introduction to multiliteracies theory to anyone who wishes to understand what it is and how it can be useful in a language classroom.

Theoretical framework

The multiliteracies approach fits within Vygotskian Sociocultural Theory. The basic premises of this theory are that higher order functions of the brain are developed by humans through social interaction. Vygotsky theorized that social factors influence the path of intellectual development, and as such, different cultures affect cognitive development differently because each culture values and prioritizes various intellectual skills differently (Mitchell, Myles, & Marsden, 2013). Another fundamental concept in his framework is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD represents the difference between what a learner can accomplish if left to his or her own devices versus what a learner can accomplish in collaboration with more advanced learners, or with peers. Essentially, this means that learning is accomplished within a social environment, and teachers provide scaffolding to help learners advance from one level to the next until they can perform each task independently (Lantolf & Poehner, 2007).

Literacy, the ability to interpret and create texts, fits within this theory because it represents a set of *social practices* which are mediated by texts. Individuals do not interpret or create texts for their own sake; texts exist to facilitate communication between individuals within a cultural context. Within literacy, there are multiple genres (e.g., prose, poetry, advertisements, drama, letters, legal documents, etc.), each with its own set of rules and its own social context and communicative purpose. Even though an individual may be literate within one genre of texts, it does not necessarily mean that they are literate in all of them. The genres of literacy valued by

a society vary from culture to culture, and an individual's literacy level affects his or her social status (Perry, 2012).

Traditional literacy pedagogy focused on the reading and writing of print texts. However, in the world today, texts are everywhere. Texts are no longer bound by printed media. In my office, at the very moment of writing this, I am surrounded by an astounding variety texts, from the social media and SMS messaging applications on my smartphone, to the two computer monitors in front of me with a word processor, internet browser and a host of other applications abounding with texts of all kinds, not to mention the piles of paper books and articles strewn about. This constant stream of texts has fundamentally changed the way that humans communicate with each other. I no longer have to leave my home to interact with speakers of other languages. With a few touches of my screen, I can be completely immersed in any language and I can buy goods from across the world with a click and they arrive at my doorstep a few days later.

The theory of multiliteracies was developed by the New London Group (1996) and refined by Cope and Kalantzis (2000, 2009) as a response to this fundamental shift in human communication. This shift necessitated an expansion of foreign language pedagogies to include multiple modes of communication, not just oral skills as emphasized by CLT or print texts as emphasized by older pedagogies like the Audiolingual Method. In addition, multimodal texts take many forms, including print literature, film, visual art, digital media, social media, oral conversation, and audio content, among many others (Perry, 2012). Meanwhile, social media, new genres of film and writing, and digital storytelling continue to broaden the range of "texts."

Multiliteracies works within the sociocultural context in two ways: first, teachers scaffold the instructional materials so that students can successfully interpret and create texts within the

ZPD, and second, learners are required to collaborate with peers (learning through social interaction) in the interpretation and creation of texts in order to derive and create meaning together (Warner & Dupuy, 2017). This collaborative negotiation of meaning is the site of L2 acquisition, and in the multiliteracies framework, learners are able to negotiate meaning in several different modes and genres through collaboration with peers.

Multiliteracies theory responds to deficiencies in CLT

Multiliteracies theory builds upon previous theories such as comprehensible input (Krashen 1982), interactional theory (Long, 1981, 1996) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). L2 learners need authentic sources of input and need to negotiate meaning through interaction. However, multiliteracies theorists critique these previous methods (especially CLT), arguing that they focus too much on oral competence. Proponents of multiliteracies point out that focusing too much on spoken competence is not a reflection of real-world language use, where language users are required to use language to interact with the world through many media. That said, they do not discount the need for oral competence either, as I suggested above. They simply point out that oral competence (as one type of literacy) is only one aspect of a variety of literacies. Each literacy can build and strengthen others. For example, by increasing reading and writing proficiency, students will be exposed to a much wider array of grammar, vocabulary, and sociopragmatic knowledge than they would receive in a classroom environment which focused primarily on oral CLT (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, 2009; Kalantzis, Cope, Chan, & Dalley-Trim, 2016; New London Group, 1996).

While CLT has been effective in improving learners' spoken proficiency, learners often fall short in other important communicative skills, such as reading, writing, sociopragmatic usage, cultural context, and knowledge of cultural content. When learners exit the

communicative classroom, and enter higher education or the workplace, they lack the skills necessary to function in those environments. They can hold a pleasant conversation, but often are unable to perform other functions in the language (Paesani, Allen, & Dupuy, 2016).

Bridging the collegiate language-literature divide

At the collegiate level, this disconnect is stark. Most lower-division (introductory) courses focus on oral acquisition of language, while upper-division courses focus on literary study and cultural analysis. This makes the transition from lower-division courses to upper-division course jarring for students. Applying a multiliteracies approach even from the beginning of language instruction can help students prepare to interact more successfully at more advanced levels, as well as prepare for immersion environments, whether in study abroad or in the workplace, where they will be required to interpret and create all sorts of authentic language materials and to produce both written and spoken French.

A multiliteracies approach can integrate “language development and textual thinking...it facilitates the integration of interpersonal and interpretive communication...[and places] equally high priority on both communicative modes, regardless of curricular level” (Paesani, 2017, p. 131). Paesani has several suggestions for implementing this kind of curriculum at the college level, making sure to integrate multiliteracies from the very beginning. First, it will be important to design and test standardized instruments to measure the impact of a literacies approach, and to align with and contribute to the ACTFL proficiency guidelines. Second will be to broaden educators’ definition of *text* to include not only traditional sources of prose, poetry, and drama, but also to include modern texts such as graphic novels, social media, films, advertisements, paintings, podcasts, etc. Third will be to incorporate sociocultural perspectives into texts to

enable students to “recognize the dynamic, variable, and relational nature of culture” and to prepare to become “globally aware, multilingual citizens” (Paesani, 2017, p. 134).

Fourth, Paesani notes that a multiliteracies approach can and should promote skills that are transferable across disciplines, such as analytical thinking and teamwork. These skills will be particularly important for students pursuing careers in an L2 workplace. Fifth, tying back into the first, will be to integrate with and improve upon the ACTFL guidelines and standards. Finally, and crucially, is providing support to instructors who implement literacies-based pedagogies. She suggests providing FL educators with scaffolded development opportunities such as workshops, as well as to enlarge and improve open sources of multimodal materials (Paesani, 2017).

Four Key Concepts

There are four key concepts which are necessary to understand in developing a multiliteracies pedagogy: meaning design, textual interpretation, textual transformation, and Available Designs. Meaning design, as touched on above, is the process of “understanding and creating meaning through textual interaction” (Paesani, 2016, p. 270). This is where L2 learners make connections between the forms of words and their meanings within a cultural context. Again, this negotiation of meaning is the cognitive site of L2 acquisition, achieved by means of social interaction (Paesani, 2016; Warner & Dupuy, 2017).

Textual interpretation involves interaction with a text (i.e., reading, hearing, or viewing), in which students move beyond the surface forms of words to comprehend their “underlying and varied cultural meanings and points of view” (Paesani, 2016, p. 270). Textual transformation is the process where students take the meanings understood in the previous step and use them to transform the text into something new. For example, if the students just interpreted an opinion essay, they might then transform the text into a different genre, such as song lyrics. This creative

exercise, usually done collaboratively with their peers, provides yet more opportunities to make form-meaning connections because the students are required to think about how the language was used in the original text, and how they will use language in the new context, reflecting a new genre, a new audience, and perhaps even a new mode of communication (Paesani, 2016; Warner & Dupuy, 2017).

In order to design meaning while interpreting and transforming texts, learners will work within the Available Designs. “Available Designs are the linguistic, schematic, visual, gestural, audio, and spatial features of texts a learner attends to when engaging in the act of meaning design” (Paesani, 2016, p. 271). They are the resources that L2 learners will draw on to use while developing their L2 proficiency. Some Available Designs can be transferred from L2 learners’ first language (L1), and others will be acquired piece by piece. The more Available Designs a learner acquires, the more competent they will become in interpreting and transforming texts. (Paesani, 2016; Warner & Dupuy, 2017).

A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Instructional Sequence

One model of implementing a task-based multiliteracies curriculum is by using a sequence of situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing, and transformed practice. Within each task, there will be a primary genre, and one or more texts within that genre. In the first step, situated practice, learners will use their Available Designs to describe the text and make hypotheses about its origin, context, and meaning. Second, the teacher uses overt instruction to teach about the genre and context, then learners are asked to identify the text’s relationship to the genre, and make comparisons to other genres. In this phase, they will also cover necessary instruction on lexical forms. In the critical framing phase, learners will complete an activity, such as answering critical focus questions, or writing a reflective journal entry, where

they will compare the cultural context to their own culture, and explore the how the meanings relate to the text in context versus how those words might be used more generally. Lastly, learners will be asked to transform the text in a creative fashion. This can be accomplished in multiple ways, for example through elaboration of new ideas expressed in the text, or through rewriting it to fit a different genre or audience (Allen & Paesani, 2010; Kalatntzis, Cope, Chan, & Dalley-Trim, 2016; Menke & Paesani, 2019).

This sequence can be tailored to any level, starting from beginning lower-division courses all the way up to advanced literary analysis courses. The tasks help students understand not only the meaning of the language used in the text, but also the social context, and the parameters and uses of its genre. As they complete more and more tasks, they will increase their pool of Available Designs, and they will augment their critical reasoning skills.

A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies: Developing Content

One challenge of implementing new methods lies in finding and creating new materials. Textbooks have always lagged behind the avant garde, at best implementing CLT, but in many cases still stuck in the veritable stone age of SLA--grammar-heavy explicit instruction. A multiliteracies pedagogy relies on contextually relevant media, and so it is inutile to expect textbooks to magically appear with relevant content. This has been a particular problem in the Utah French secondary DLI program because it is very difficult to find textbooks that meet all of the criteria that our middle-schoolers need in order to prepare them for the AP exam in ninth grade. A good textbook would strike a balance between being relevant and age-appropriate, proficiency level-appropriate, 100% in the target language, and including authentic texts. The current textbook we use is geared towards AP students in eleventh and twelfth grade in the US; much of its metalinguistic explanatory text is in English and it has material that is not age-

appropriate, even though it does meet the other two criteria. If one were to search existing French textbooks written for native French-speakers, it would be easy to find ones that contained age-appropriate authentic texts 100% in the target language, however, the proficiency level is often too high for American DLI students at the same age as their native-speaking peers. It is my goal as a teacher to collaborate with other secondary French DLI teachers to create materials that meet all of the criteria necessary for DLI students in our program, since it is so difficult to find good textbooks otherwise.

A foundational concept of multiliteracies is that texts should be authentic to the extent possible; that is to say that they are texts written by proficient speakers of the language to an audience of proficient speakers of the language. Most textbooks instead use manufactured texts because they can be more easily tailored to suit the grammar and vocabulary of a given instructional unit. Unfortunately, this also means that they usually lack a real cultural context and often use forms which are not in current usage or are overly generalized. Also, textbook passages are usually short—less than 500 words, even if they do happen to come from an authentic target language source. Some scholars criticize these short texts, arguing that longer, authentic passages provide repetitions of cultural scripts and opportunities for chunking. Also, longer texts encourage learners to read for meaning rather than trying to translate each word individually. This can encourage the use of metacognitive reading strategies, as well as extralinguistic capabilities that can transfer from their L1 and help them scaffold their learning (Allen & Paesani, 2010; Menke & Paesani, 2019; Warner & Dupuy, 2017).

Sifting through texts to find appropriate materials can be very time consuming. Fortunately, many multiliteracies proponents have contributed to databases of open educational resources, which allow L2 educators find and share relevant authentic texts, as well as other

relevant content such as lesson plans, tasks, and activities. Such content continues to grow in popularity and can be found online via national foreign language resource centers such as: the Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language and Literacy (CERCLL), the Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning (COERLL) and Foreign Languages & the Literary in the Everyday (FLLITE).

Research overview

Three relevant studies demonstrate current research techniques in using a multiliteracies approach to second language acquisition. Researchers have found that teaching through multiliteracies can help students succeed in all areas of linguistic acquisition, and that they not only become better language learners, but better learners across the board, since they are better equipped with critical thinking skills. In addition, students tend to become more culturally literate and better able to conceive of both language and culture as complex and ambiguous.

Michelson, in researching the divide between lower and upper-division curricula, conducted a semester-long global simulation task in a French foreign language course. Her question was, “How do students understand and represent culture and culture learning at the end of a semester-long Multiliteracies [global simulation]?” (Michelson, 2018, p. 6). In the task, learners took on the persona of a fictional character and engaged with authentic texts in writing a final portfolio.

Michelson drew several conclusions from her findings. The first was that students came to understand culture as variable and dynamic. They saw that each individual’s experience was unique and the part did not always represent the whole. On the other hand, some students still managed to retain cultural stereotypes despite the attempt to complicate their narrative.

Discussing the intersection of politics, language, and culture also helped students to understand

the meanings of nuanced, untranslatable words that are essential to understanding French culture. Overall, the approach focused on meaningful communication through interaction, both with peers and with the texts. Michelson found that this approach not only improved communicative competence, but also sociopragmatic competence, and cultural literacy (Michelson, 2018).

Paesani, in her 2016 study, wanted to analyze the connection between reading and writing to language development through empirical research. The research questions were:

1. Do students recognize connections between FL reading and writing and their contribution to language development?
2. Do students perceive FL reading and writing as contributing to their understanding of linguistic and schematic Available Designs?
3. Are students able to design meaning by applying the linguistic and schematic Available Designs targeted in reading activities to creative writing tasks?

Students completed tasks oriented around reading and writing where they were required to actively interpret and design meaning. This was accomplished through literary analysis, metalinguistic discussion and tasks, and completing creative writing activities. Students also completed journaling tasks to better evaluate their “meta” understanding of the activities and whether students found them useful (Paesani, 2016).

While students struggled to understand the pedagogical motive of Available Designs as tools for creative self-expression, Paesani found that students did effectively design meaning, and in doing so, became more able and literate French users. Paesani concluded that a literacy-based approach positively affects learner competency outcomes as part of a more holistic multiliteracy approach to language teaching and learning (Paesani, 2016).

Allen, in her 2009 study, argues that the standard practice of class discussion in an advanced foreign language course does not necessarily augment students' advanced language skills. She promotes careful structuring of a course using a multiliteracy approach so that content knowledge can be balanced with foreign language skill development. Her study examined an advanced-level writing-based French literature course designed with a multiliteracies pedagogy. Specifically, Allen used a genre-based approach which treats language learning and use as contextual. Students ideally learn that different writing styles can be used in specific contexts, and analyses of these differences increase the students' overall competences in the language (Allen, 2009).

In their self-evaluations, some students noted that their approach at the beginning of the course had been to focus on using correct grammar and vocabulary, but that by the end, they found themselves constructing meaning and understanding that there were multiple ways to say the same thing. Allen concludes that in using a multiliteracies approach, students were able to play with the language (i.e. to use language creatively) an indication that students were active in designing meaning, which is crucial in the cognitive process of acquiring the L2 (Allen, 2009).

Conclusion

This exploration of the multiliteracies approach is certainly not exhaustive. One thing that stood out while examining the literature is the sheer amount of research that has gone into this approach in the last decade, indicating its popularity and success. Although it initially aimed to address pedagogical issues at the university level, it has now reached K12 education as well. It has also expanded beyond foreign language applications into other disciplines such as English Language Arts and history. I support the multiliteracies approach because it is a very holistic approach, not just targeting learning a language, but also critical thinking, analytic, and

presentational skills. It is centered around the idea that learning a language helps students learn how to think and build skills that will be useful to them beyond the foreign language classroom, in their future careers. Texts that are interesting to students may increase their curiosity and even motivation. Knowing they are learning skills that employers value may also help to motivate them. Along the way, it strengthens all modes of communication, reading, writing, speaking and listening and prepares students to interact with the vast varieties of texts they will encounter in their daily use of their L2. Multiliteracies is an approach I will continue exploring in developing my own teaching philosophy and practice.

LOOKING FORWARD

After finishing my MSLT degree, I plan to continue to teach in the Utah French Dual Language Immersion program at Spring Creek Middle School in Providence, Utah. Next year, I will be teaching both seventh and eighth grade French DLI and one section of introductory French for non-DLI students. Above all, I am excited to be able to take everything I have learned in the last two years and apply it to improving my teaching.

I also look forward to collaborating with other secondary DLI teachers in my district and across the state to improve DLI curriculum and develop strategies that will help students be *engagé* in their language learning. I will continue to participate in professional development and training for DLI and endeavor to keep up with the latest research in DLI, Francophone Studies, and second language pedagogy. I will be a lifelong language learner, and I hope to motivate my students to become lifelong language learners.

I want my students to be engaged, and I will strive to remain a teacher that is *engagé* throughout their career. This means advocacy and program building. Utah is a model for DLI in the nation, offering approximately 200 dual language state-funded DLI programs with over 40,000 students. I will continue in my efforts to help students thrive in this program and to raise awareness of the importance of language learning in the community.

I am committed to renewing my own engagement with my profession regularly through involvement with local and state professional development opportunities through my Professional Learning Community (PLC), the Utah DLI program, the Utah Foreign Language Association (UFLA), and the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF) and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). I will participate in conferences, meetings, and webinars and engage in advocacy under the auspices of these

associations. I hope through my involvement in these programs to be able to advocate for and promote the interests of language learning to the general public, and particularly to my community to help grow our DLI and world language programs here in Cache Valley and throughout Northern Utah.

In these unprecedented times, the challenge of online teaching with new technology has become part of my journey as a teacher. I will continue to learn best practices for online and video teaching, incorporating new platforms and applications as they become available to enhance my students' experiences. I realize online learning can be a challenge, but I look for ways to use the strengths of technology to foster a more interactive, student-centered learning environment that truly emphasizes a multiliteracies approach and prepares students for future careers in this globalized, online world.

On a personal note, I plan to travel more and visit as many French-speaking regions as possible to see how the French language is experienced around the world. I hope that this more global perspective will also enrich my teaching and give me interesting experiences to share with my students. I am so grateful for everything I have learned and the opportunities I have had in this program, and I look forward to the future.

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